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**South African Democratic Students Movement National Conference Report
6th August 2011
Mangosuthu University of Technology
Durban, KwaZulu- Natal
THEME: Regaining lost ground through leadership of honesty and integrity**

On Saturday the 6th of August 2011, The South African Democratic Students Movement held it's annual elective conference where we saw delegates from across the country come together to pave a clear way forward for the movement. There were four provinces represented by their delegates which were respectively Free State, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal and the Western Cape. Delegates at the conference exceeded 100 members of SADESMO who were both Senior Members who were from institutions of higher learning and junior members who were from institutes of basic learning. Members were generally well behaved throughout the whole process where we did not encounter any problems whatsoever. We would like to thank all who made this conference a huge success and may we build on it at we go forward as a movement.

Session 1

1.1. Opening Devotions by Rev Musa Zondi MP (Inkatha Freedom Party Secretary General)

Rev Musa Zondi the Secretary General of the Inkatha Freedom Party opened with a couple of scriptures from the bible. The scriptures were meant to motivate the delegates from all over South Africa who made it to the South African Democratic Students Movement National Elective Conference.

1.2. Introduction of Guests.

We were honoured to have leaders of the Inkatha Freedom Party, Inkatha Freedom Party Women's Brigade and Inkatha Freedom Party Youth Brigade present at the SADESMO National Conference. We would like to thank IFP President Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, IFP Secretary General Rev Musa Zondi, IFP Acting National Chairperson Dr BV Mthethwa, IFP National Organiser Mr Albert Mncwango, IFP Liaison Officer Mr Nhlanhla Msimang, IFPWB National Chairperson Mrs Thembeni KaMadlopha-Mthethwa, IFPYB National Chairperson Mkhuleko Hlengwa, IFPYB National Spokesperson Ntuthuko Majozi, IFPYB Officials Nhlanhla Mhlongo and Mpume Mngadi. We would also like to thank the Independent Elections Council (IEC) for overseeing the smooth running of the SADESMO National Executive Committee Elections.

1.3. Remarks by Cde Ntuthuko Majozi.

(SADESMO outgoing President and Inkatha Freedom Party Youth Brigade National Spokesperson)

I am honoured to ascend to this podium and address you for the last time as the President of the South African Democratic Students Movement. This is a very emotional but also joyous moment for me. It has been a long and challenging journey with a lot of criticism and compliments.

We have undertaken this journey guided by the principles and values of both SADESMO and IFP. We placed much emphasis on Unity, Discipline, Loyalty and Obedience. We worked very hard to instil respect and discipline in this Movement. We could not compromise any of these values for the sake of popularity.

I can say without any hesitation that this out-going leadership did not enjoy support of all members of the Movement or IFP due to our clear position on issues of principle. More often, we had to endure insults and called names by those who wanted to use SADESMO to fight their individual battles and those who were seeking popularity.

Accordingly, we had to take disciplinary measures against other comrades who were quickly becoming loose cannons. In that process, we had to expel few members who were in the forefront of the activities of the "Friends of VZ" and who eventually wanted to hijack SADESMO to the newly formed NFP.

If it was not for comrades like Lungisani Mbatha, Xolani Ngwezi, Mkhuleko Hlengwa, Brian Masondo, Wiseman Simelane, Dalsy Manganyi and many others; SADESMO would be an affiliate of the NFP today. However, with these comrades, we had to swim against the current and as a result we successfully defended this Movement. Opportunists tried to approach NEC members individually to accept their cause but they failed because we were a united force.

This process affected the functioning of the Movement. We saw SADESMO losing SRC elections at University of Zululand and other branches becoming dysfunctional. Comrades from these branches were reluctant to ask for assistance from the NEC, with others refusing assistance. They ended up losing ground and support. They preferred to lose a political battle for the sake of individual battles driven by anger and personal ambitions.

Many of these comrades did not want to be associated with us; they perceived us as being anti-change. I am proud to announce that many of those comrades have contacted me to apologize for their actions and confessed that they were not aware that those so-called change agents wanted to hijack the IFP and SADESMO. We still welcome those who want to come back as long as they are prepared to be disciplined.

As this is an elective conference, I wish that the new leadership will also stand firm on issues of values and principles. They must not buy popularity at the expense of honesty and integrity. The theme of this conference is "Regaining lost ground through leadership of honesty and integrity". There is an enormous necessity for such leadership in our days. SADESMO needs such leadership in order to regain its membership that ignorantly joined VZ KaMagwaza Msibi's self-development project called NFP. SADESMO needs such leadership in establishing more branches and winning the hearts of students during SRC Elections.

I truly believe that the leadership in which I have been privileged to serve with as the President of SADESMO acted and worked in the true spirit of these fundamental values.

Accordingly, among many things we did, we introduced SADESMO in institutions where it never existed and where branches were dysfunctional; we introduced SADESMO at high school level through an on-going programme called Operation Siyabahlangabeza, we tackled issues that affect students nationally and those affected individual institutions. We also advocated for free education from grade one to grade twelve. This is an ongoing call, as the government's selective No Fee School strategy is not yielding any results.

Most importantly, SADESMO undertook an active role in campaigning for the IFP in the past local government elections. I hope the new leadership and future leadership of SADESMO will also take part in campaigning for

the IFP from our branch levels to the national level.

We pride ourselves for grooming leaders who are capable of leading at any level. I am proud to announce that three members of the out-going NEC are already leading in the IFP Youth Brigade. Cde. Mkhuleko Hlengwa who was elected SADESMO Media and Publicity is now leading the IFP Youth Brigade as its National Chairperson.

We also engaged with the Department of Higher Education and Training on a number of issues. Among many, the issue of fly-by-night institutions that are all over the country. Many of our brothers and sisters register in these institutions and get no certificates at the end or get certificates that are not recognized by industries. We also managed to put forward the issue of unemployed graduates to the department; we demanded that institutions of learning be forced to take some responsibility in terms of placing its graduates for in-service training or internship. We also made suggestions in the administration of the National Financial Aid Scheme.

It is unfortunate that we only received promises on the majority of these issues. We are faced with a challenge of working with government of empty promises. It was in 2008 when SADESMO proposed that there should be a university in Mpumalanga and Northern Cape, we also called for the opening of Colleges of Education and Nursing that we closed on the basis that they were established under Inkatha and KwaZulu Government. We are yet to see this government building even a single institution.

It remains our utmost desire and demand that the Department of Higher Education and its Minister Dr. Blade Nzimande should stop making empty promises. FET Colleges are neglected in terms of getting funding. We are tired of strikes during registration period. Institutions like UKZN, DUT and TUT can hardly finish registration without a strike. Now DUT is closed. The Minister is not decisive and quick to act on issues that affect students.

SADESMO is continuously advocating the importance of quality education in our lifetime. We are driven by the IFP's lifelong philosophy of "EDUCATION FOR LIBERATION". In any of our gathering, we emphasized the importance of education to our members and leadership of SADESMO. We did this to develop leaders and graduates who can be able to independently get employment without demanding to be deployed by the IFP or anyone and thus creating the kind of leadership that is not easily manipulated. We made it very clear that the IFP remains a political party not an employment agency.

Through education, we can also be able to achieve Economic Freedom. We have heard of the calls for the Nationalization of mines and banks as the means of achieving economic freedom. We fully support the IFP and IFP Youth Brigade stances on this issue. It would be insanity at its best if our government can agree to these calls, which are driven by individual agendas of self-enrichment. We support the Youth Brigade's call for emphasis on Training and Development as the means of achieving economic freedom

I sincerely hope that today you will elect the kind of leadership that will be able to take over from where we left off. SADESMO needs this kind of leadership, which will remain loyal and honest to the movement and the IFP as our mother-body; leaders who will not by any chance forget that SADESMO is the affiliate of the IFP Youth Brigade.

Once more, I thank you for affording me this opportunity to lead you as your President. It was indeed a very challenging task. I wish to also thank all members of NEC and the entire membership of SADESMO, which remained with the Movement when some of our members were looted to join the group of the then disgruntled IFP members called NFP and NASMO.

I would like to sincerely thank every member of SADESMO and IFP who supported me during my years as SADESMO Chairperson at the Durban University of Technology and as both the Deputy President and President of SADESMO.

The journey towards quality education continues.
I thank you.

1.4. Brief Remarks and Introduction of guest speaker by Cde Mkhuleko Hlengwa (SADESMO Outgoing Spokesperson and Inkatha Freedom Party Youth Brigade National Chairperson)

Today we meet almost two years after our last meeting. A lot has happened since then and we should be grateful that an opportunity has been granted to us to reflect on the past and chart a clear and informed direction forward with renewed leadership of honesty and integrity.

Today we meet to celebrate our survival after intense attacks were launched against this Movement in the form of the rogue activities of the then "Friends of VZ", who desperately wanted to use SADESMO to further their dirty political agenda of destroying the IFP, with the explicit help of the ANC.

I commend every single one of you for exercising political resilience, honesty and integrity of the highest order during those trying times.

Your exemplary discipline has ensured that SADESMO lives another day.

You have done South Africa an eternal favour. The continued existence of SADESMO is a national imperative.

On behalf of the IFP Youth Brigade I wish to convey our most sincere appreciation to Cde Ntuthuko Majozi and his entire leadership collective, from branches to provinces, to national, for a job well done in leading this Movement. You have proven beyond measure your genuine leadership strength, character and integrity.

We must now bring those qualities to bear as we consider some of the most pressing issues in our country.

Last week it was revealed in the Labour Force Survey that unemployment in South Africa had risen once again, from 25% to 25.7% in the second quarter of 2011. The continued lack of political will by the government to take unemployment seriously has resulted in this latest crisis. This is completely unacceptable. It is you that will bear the brunt of government's shortfalls. It is the youth who are the victims of the continued failure to create jobs.

The reckless debate on nationalisation is adding fuel to this fire that we ought to be putting out. It threatens the prospects for stable business activity and undermines investor confidence. The latest unemployment figures, coupled with this unnecessary talk of nationalisation, make it difficult to chart a clear direction forward in terms of job creation. We are faced with great uncertainty about our future.

The ANC government is fast failing South Africans. Their administration appears directionless and visionless. It is distressing that the number of unemployed people has increased by 174 000 to 4.5 million people. If we do not act with necessary speed, the patience and tolerance of the unemployed will regrettably turn into something uncontrollable. We are teetering on the brink of an unprecedented revolt, as frustration continues to mount. You can smell the stench of dissatisfaction throughout the country.

South Africans need jobs, and they need them fast. Government must create an environment for businesses and investors to create jobs.

Government must also focus more on the development and maintenance of infrastructure and the provision of basic services.

As SADESMO, our focus is on matters of education to ensure that South Africa competes without compromise with international standards. We need an education system and curriculum that is responsive to the expectations of the job market. Education in this country receives the largest percentage share of the budget yet very little progress is being made to fully equip schools with the necessary resources to improve our situation. Previously disadvantaged schools are now presently disadvantaged. There is great neglect of education in this country. I call upon you all to step up to the task of improving education in South Africa.

It is my honour and privilege today to introduce our keynote speaker.

In fact His Excellency Prince MG Buthelezi needs no introduction. He is an iconic international statesman who has served South Africa and the world for over fifty years. We are proud to call him our leader and comrade. He is a committed servant of the people. He is the anvil on which apartheid collapsed. He is a tried and tested leader, who has stood and passed the test of time.

In April 2002, former President Nelson Mandela said, "We have used every ammunition to destroy [Prince Buthelezi], but we have failed.

And he is still there. He is a formidable survivor. We cannot ignore him."

In June 2008, former President Thabo Mbeki said, "In the years since he stopped serving in the national government, I have made it a point to listen carefully to everything he says. Constantly, I have marvelled at his wisdom and his deep concern to sustain a value system that is critical to the survival of our democracy. I was very pleased, when, yesterday, the Hon Essop Pahad acknowledged Shenge's unfailing sense of courtesy. Even at my age, this is a deeply human characteristic I must emulate successfully from uMntwana wakwaPhindangene. Shenge, many thanks for everything you have done for all of us."

Shenge is rightly an international statesman with many accolades to his name. He has received numerous recognitions for his selfless and distinguished service to South Africa and the world, including -

- The King's Cross Award, awarded by HM King Zwelithini ka Bhekuzulu in 1989
- The Key to the City of Birmingham, awarded by Alabama in 1989
- The Freedom of Ngwelezana, awarded by Ngwelezana in 1988
- The Unity, Justice and Peace Award, from the Inkatha Youth Brigade in 1988

- The Magna Award for Outstanding Leadership, awarded by Hong Kong in 1988

- Honorary Freedom of the City of Pinetown, awarded in 1986
- An Honorary LLD from Boston University in 1986
- The Nadaraja Award by the Indian Academy of South Africa in 1985
- Man of the Year, by Financial Mail in 1985
- Newsmaker of the Year, by the Pretoria Press Club in 1985
- An Honorary LLD from Tampa University, Florida in 1985
- Apostle of Peace (Rastriya Pita) by Pandit Satyapal Sharma of India in 1983
- The George Meany Human Rights Award by The Council of Industrial Organisation of the American Federation of Labour, in 1982
- The French National Order of Merit in 1981 Honorary LLD from the University of Cape Town in 1978
- Citation for Leadership by the District of Columbia Council, United States of America, in 1976
- An Honorary LLD from the University of Zululand in 1976
- Knight Commander of the Star of Africa for Outstanding Leadership, by President Tolbert of Liberia in 1975
- Newsmaker of the Year by the South African Society of Journalists, in 1973
- Man of the Year, by the Institute of Management Consultants of South Africa, in 1973, and
- The Freedom of Zululand in 2005

I introduce to you His Excellency uMntwana wakwaPhindangene, the President of the IFP, Member of Parliament, Inkosi yeSizwe SakwaButhelezi, uNdunankulu kaZulu, Chairman of the Zululand House of Traditional Leaders. I introduce to you The Man You Can Trust.

SHENGE!!!

1.5.Address By Guest Speaker Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi MP (President of the Inkatha Freedom Party)

I wish to thank the President of SADESMO, Mr Ntuthuko Majozi, and the National Council of SADESMO, for inviting me to address this elective conference. As we reiterated earlier this year, SADESMO is a structure of the IFP and serves the interests of the IFP among South Africa's students. The IFP's successes are therefore the successes of SADESMO, just as the challenges the IFP faces are the same challenges faced by our Student's Movement.

Like the threshing basket, this organization has been agitated and shaken. In so doing, the wheat has been separated from the chaff, for the chaff has been blown away on the winds of division and deceit.

What is left seems like less than what we started with. But what we have now is far more valuable. What we have in SADESMO now can be turned into political bread to nourish and strengthen.

But I must still add a warning that SADESMO is still facing elements who are determined to undermine it or even destroy it. So there must be no time for relaxation. As long as you are operating as the principled organization that you are, accept that you will have enemies that will crop up even within your own ranks. This has been the story of my life. This has been the story of the IFP. Accept that this will be the story of the life of SADESMO.

Any organization would be severely tested by the kind of storms the IFP went through in the past two years, from the first ructions caused by the "Friends of VZ", to the failed court case of Mrs kaMagwaza-Msibi in which her treachery was exposed, to the split she created and the formation of the National Freedom Party mere weeks before the Local Government Elections. Then the election results, which proved the destructiveness of the NFP splitting the vote, and the NFP-ANC coalition that proved the NFP was a surrogate of the ruling Party.

The IFP weathered all these storms with resolute faith in our principles, our legacy and our supporters. There is no question that we were bruised and damaged by what transpired, particularly by the election results. But after all this; after the consistently negative media coverage we received; after the escalation of brown envelope journalism and biased reporting; after the pundits repeatedly penned our obituary; and after we struggled to compete with the flush flow of funds in the ANC and NFP; the IFP emerged with the support of so many South Africans that we regained the position of third largest political party in this country. Those who were gleeful about what happened during the local government elections must accept the fact that while we are bruised by the ANC/NFP onslaught, they are far from done with us. Let me remind them of the famous words of President Mandela in April 2002; "We have used every ammunition to destroy 'Buthelezi, but we failed. And he is still there. He is a formidable survivor. We cannot ignore him."

We did it because we never stopped working when the odds were stacked against us. We never gave up and we never gave in. Ironically, through this storm we have proven ourselves perfectly cut out for the role that has now been thrust upon us; that of opposition politics. The election result has shed us of the responsibilities of governance in most municipalities and given us the mandate to pursue a no-holds-barred opposition role. The tensions between being in government and being a watchdog over government have been removed, enabling us to focus all our energy and resources on being a vigilant and vocal opposition.

This is a role the IFP is well-equipped to play, and it is a role that politically active students are naturally drawn to. History proves that ideological revolutions are born on university campuses.

Institutions of higher learning are the crucible in which social change is forged. This is not because students become presidents and ministers, but because students become the voice of dissent, demanding that what is wrong in a society and a government is put right.

As the IFP takes on the role of opposition, we rely on SADESMO to ignite a new passion within students for opposition politics. In some ways, that is not hard to do, because opposing the many inefficiencies, corrupt

practices and inadequacies of government is easy. We do not need to look far for a fight, or a cause to adopt. But opposition politics is about more than complaining loudly.

It is about serving the interests of our people by protecting and promoting first the Constitution, then the institutions that uphold our Constitution and the values that support them.

The task ahead is made more difficult by the handicap we suffer in the IFP of being a cash-strapped party. There are not enough resources for us to accomplish all that we envision, and often our good ideas cannot be implemented for lack of finances. I know that SADESMO has suffered because of this. It is frustrating when you know what needs to be done, but you cannot do it. One of the areas in which we will need to develop our skills is that of fund-raising. We have no other choice.

We in the IFP are unfortunate in that unlike what happens in the ruling Party, for instance, hardly any of our entrepreneurs ever think of giving the Party any financial assistance. So SADESMO as part of our movement suffers the same fate as we do, as a Party. That is why we see some of our unprincipled Tenderpreneurs leaving the IFP like rats who think the ship is sinking. It is sad that we find these even amongst people of your age group. You have no idea of the clandestine meetings similar to those meetings which preceded the birth of "the friends of VZ" which these elements are attending with the top leadership of the governing party. They continue to plan and plot my downfall and the destruction of the IFP.

If we are to build up our support base once again, we will need to find creative ways of commanding attention and making our message heard. One of the rich veins we have not yet tapped into is that of high school learners who will be 18 years old at the next elections.

SADESMO has gained ground in many tertiary institutions, but we have made no in-roads at high schools. This is a mistake. We need to take full advantage of students' organizations, linking up with them and promoting the IFP's message of strong opposition to all that is wrong in the present system.

The voters of 2014 are in Grades 11 and 12 right now. They are already aware of the challenge they face when they finish school, because poverty and high unemployment levels threaten their future. They are already familiar with social challenges like HIV/Aids, crime and substance abuse. They already know that housing is a problem, and food is expensive, and there is too much corruption going on in politics.

They have already been exposed to ANC Youth League slogans and ideas.

At an age when they are most easily influenced, their opinions are already being formed.

We cannot afford to miss this opportunity to match their ideals to the sound principles of the IFP right now, hoping instead to change their minds when they reach tertiary level. We need to reach them now, in high school, and show them a political home that expresses their passion, patriotism and concerns. This is the challenge for SADESMO in the coming year.

We face this challenge in the full awareness that students are questioning the value of joining the IFP in the light of all the divisions and ructions we have gone through. We lost several SADESMO leaders and members to the split in the IFP and some of them defected to NASMO, believing the NFP to be a better option. When the NFP climbed into bed with the ANC, several NASMO members wanted to come home to SADESMO, for they were disenchanted by the truth about the NFP. They had believed a lie, but their eyes had been opened.

Whenever I sound warning bells, I never do so lightly. When I warned about "the friends of VZ" and later the NFP being birthed through funding from some of the top brass of the ANC, I knew what I was talking about. I had all the evidence. The present coalition between the ANC and the NFP has proven that what I said was by no means just sheer idle talk.

We welcomed these people back to SADESMO, for we cannot hold a lapse of judgment against anyone and leave them out in the cold. We are a grassroots movement; a movement of the people. We will never exclude anyone who aligns themselves with the principles and values of the IFP. But we demand that those who join SADESMO accept the responsibility of representing the IFP and the IFP's values. Too much confusion has been sown about SADESMO and NASMO, about the IFP and NFP and the role of the ANC in fomenting tensions. We cannot expect to move forward if confusion persists. The Constitution of the IFP provides that those who return to the Party must be accepted, but that a cooling off period be observed before they are given positions of trust again in the Party. Remember what happened with Mr Sikhumbuzo Khanyeza. Others were opposing his election as chairperson of the Youth Brigade in the Province, because he had just joined the IFP from the ANC. Just look back now and think of how right they were about this gentleman, when we think of how he denied that he was joining the NFP and the amount of crocodile tears that he shed, as he made these denials in the NEC.

Confusion is often created on the ground by internal conflicts. The kind of conflict we are still seeing within SADESMO is not acceptable, for it threatens the stability and the future of the movement. We cannot grow in the midst of conflict. Who would want to join an organization that is riddled with tensions and squabbling? We cannot offer a political home to students when our message is diluted by our behaviour. When students look at SADESMO, they need to see the principle of unity reflected in the unity of our structures and the cooperation of our members. They need to see a movement that is functioning well; is disciplined, cohesive and focused on the goal.

In order to create that kind of movement, SADESMO needs sound leadership. This conference is important to the future of the IFP, for it is here that you will decide the future of SADESMO. It is here that you will choose the leaders who can rebuild our students' movement into a vibrant, unified and focused structure. I urge you to choose leaders who can work in a team, as part of the team, for the benefit of the team. This is not the time for lone rangers and status-seekers.

This is the time for leaders who can draw people together around a common goal.

The leaders you choose today will also represent SADESMO in the IFP's elective Conference in October this year. They will be responsible for carrying your mandate to Conference. As you know I was asked by the National Council, backed by the IFP Women's Brigade, and the IFP Youth Brigade and the Executive Committee of SADESMO to continue leading the Party until such time as we may have a smooth leadership transition.

I have neither said yea or nay to that. The ructions created by the "Friends of VZ" and the treachery of our former National Chairperson made it impossible for me to step away from leadership, for I could not abandon our Party to disorder and division. Now that the NFP has been formed and the Local Government Elections are over, some commentators think it is time I leave. I would welcome an opportunity to do so as long as the Party is not wrecked by the interferences from the ANC's leadership.

Of course, that has been the old refrain for years; that it is time for Buthelezi to retire. I have tried to retire on two occasions, and we know that Conference unanimously asked me to remain. Our detractors like to pretend that I am somehow clinging to power, as though I have anything to gain at this stage in my life from titles or positions.

This lie that I refuse to leave is painful to hear, for I have remained at the behest of my Party and have sacrificed the reward of rest that people my age have earned. When the ANC continues as it is doing at present, to undermine and destroy the IFP, I have a great dilemma as to what to do. Should I run away or rather be destroyed with the IFP? I pray that God finally guides me.

Securing the future requires continuity of leadership. That does not necessarily mean electing the same people, but it means supporting people who are committed to upholding the legacy of the IFP. In terms of this conference of SADESMO, it means choosing leaders who seek to unify our Party and grow our support base. As the President of the IFP, I leave it in your hands to ensure continuity of leadership.

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I have not yet had the opportunity to thank you in person for the hard work you performed during this year's Local Government Elections. We were disappointed with the results, but not with our efforts. Many of you worked passionately to keep our supporters and to get them out to vote. For that, I thank you. I hope that you will build on that work and learn from those experiences as you continue to recruit and mobilize students to support the IFP in 2014. That is not a task for some future date. It is the task at hand. I urge you to start now, become more active and keep going.

We have a lot of ground to make up and a lot of organizing to do. We have fires to put out, and fires to light. The conflicts and divisions must be quelled, and a new enthusiasm must be ignited. I know the difficulty you have faced due to the lack of resources. We feel it everywhere in the Party. Cost-cutting measures have affected our reach. But a lack of resources does not affect our message. We cannot attract students with fancy events and costly festivals. But we can draw them into debate, get them thinking and show them a political home that shares their hopes, their concerns and their values.

If, at the same time, we can model a movement that is unified, focused and undeterred by the fickleness of political fortunes, we will grow our support base. Our voice of opposition will increase in volume and strength, and SADESMO will be heard at the vanguard of change in South Africa. That is where you should be. That is the birthright of the legacy we have created in the IFP. But you will need to fight hard for your birthright, for there are those in the ANC and in the NFP and even in the media who are all too ready to strip it away. By rights, SADESMO should lead the call for change in our country.

As you emerge from this conference, I pray that SADESMO will be equipped with the leaders and the mandate to take up this role.

I thank you.

Session 2

2.1

In session 2 of the SADESMO National Conference report, we were supposed to be entertained with a Secretary General's report from the outgoing SADESMO Secretary General Mr Xolani Ngwezi but unfortunately we did not receive such. It was a great loss because we were also supposed to be afforded the opportunity to have a plenary session where we would discuss more about issues affecting the movement and thus derive the resolutions meant to assist us on our pursuit to be the true vanguard of the students.

Session 3

3.1. Elections held by Independent Elections Council (IEC) and Mr Albert Mncwango MP (Inkatha Freedom Party National Organizer)

The National Executive Committee of SADESMO elected on the 6th of August 2011 is as follows

The election of the new South African Democratic Students Movement went by in an orderly fashion and without any hindrances. Most of the positions were contested and we even had a scenario where the position for Presidency of the movement was contested by 3 comrades who were well capable of leading the organization. Below is the list of all the SADESMO National Executive Committee members who were elected at the conference.

- President** – Mthokozisi Nxumalo
- Deputy President** – Mthobisi Shandu
- Secretary General** – Thabiso Dlamini
- Recording Secretary** – Nozipho Mbingo
- Treasurer** – Zamani Mpungose
- National Spokesperson** – Wendy Queen Dlamini
- Academic Co-Ordinator** – Khayelihle Dladla
- Political Education Officer** – Mlungisi Ndimande
- Projects and Activities Co-Ordinator** – Dalsy Manganyi
- National Junior Member** – Tswelopile Dikgaso

These are the comrades that were elected and have been tasked with the responsibility of growing SADESMO throughout South Africa and they will be working together with all structures to realize this vision. As stated on the constitution of SADESMO, the new NEC will have an NEC meeting within 14 days chaired by the outgoing leadership.

3.2. Remarks by newly elected SADESMO Secretary General Thabiso Dlamini

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the comrades who availed themselves for the SADESMO National Conference; we would like to thank the branch leaders and members who have stuck with the organization through the turbulent times we have encountered in the past couple of years where doom sayers and people with sponsored views mistaken for the ability to foretell the future predicted that SADESMO would succumb and vanish from the face of student politics yet unfortunately they fail to analyse their own fly by night organizations. We would also like to thank the previous SADESMO National Executive Committee led by Comrades Ntuthuko Majosi the former President of SADESMO, Comrade Lungisani Mbatha the former Deputy President of SADESMO, Comrade Xolani Ngwezi the former Secretary General of SADESMO, Comrade Mkhuleko Hlengwa the former National Spokesperson of SADESMO and Last but not least Comrade Brian Masondo the former Political Education Officer of SADESMO National, we would like to thank these comrades for guiding us during their term of office with distinguished honesty and integrity, it is through their painstaking efforts that we were able to have gathered together on the 6th of August, if it wasn't for their leadership skills and determination we could have found ourselves in an unfavourable situation where we could have played right into the hands of the same people who were wearing the same t-shirts as ours who tried to hijack this gigantic movement, these people cannot be trusted because yesterday they were wearing the same t-shirts we are wearing but today they are wearing a different colour t-shirt and tomorrow they will most probably be wearing a different t-shirt to the one they are wearing today due to their confusion and lack of vision. We would like to thank the Inkatha Freedom Party Youth Brigade leadership for their continued support for SADESMO and we believe we will build on this mutually beneficial relationship in our term of office, we will rely on the IFP Youth Brigade to assist us in fulfilling our mandate and we will also assist the IFP Youth Brigade in its efforts to be the voice of the youth of South Africa. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Inkatha Freedom Party for their continued support for SADESMO, we were honoured to be in the presence of leaders like President Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Secretary General Rev Musa Zondi, Acting National Chairperson Dr BV Mthethwa and last but not least National Organizer comrade Albert Mncwango at our National Elective Conference. We are where we are today because of the IFP, this is made possible through the financial assistance we receive to keep this organization in motion, the campaign material our branches receive in order to advance the mandate given to them by the students, we are also grateful for the IFP head office that is made available to us for our meetings. We are truly indebted to the IFP and we will do all in our might to support the party at all times. We would also like to wish its leadership long life so they can continue leading us with integrity when some political organizations have lost the true essence of Ubuntu in favour of greedy and selfish self enrichment at the expense of the people they are meant to lead. We would like to wish the President of the IFP Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi a long life and may we draw great inspiration from the great icon our leader is, may we also aspire to follow in his footsteps and be well educated when some leaders seem to imply that education is merely a formality, let us state that education is a right not a privilege, may his legacy live on forever and be passed down many generations.

Comrades SADESMO is a students organization formed by the students for the students. We are not merely an ally that was formed due to the fact it was perceived that it is fashionable to have a students movement by your side when you launch a political party. SADESMO was an initiative developed by students who believed it is their responsibility to take matters in their hands instead of watching helplessly from a distance. We would like to thank those former leaders who made things possible, these are leaders like Comrade Chris Ntuli and

Comrade Thabo Xaba whom we will uplift and honour as the comrades who withstood the test of time in order to see this movement where it is today, we are greatly indebted to them and we shall keep growing from strength to strength knowing well that we are the product of young visionary leaders.

We came together on the 6th of August 2011 to pave a clear way forward, I am of the belief that all of us who were delegates at the National Conference want to see SADESMO develop into a powerhouse in South Africa, we want to be the vanguard of the students of South Africa. We know there is a certain organization that claims to be the voice of every student in South Africa but in true essence that is utter rubbish coming from them and it is merely a stunt they are performing to please their masters. Education is a right not a privilege; we cannot have a students organization that shares the same vision as the ruling party claiming they are the voice of every South African student. We see them organizing and asking our fellow brothers and sisters to march to provincial education departments claiming they are doing all of that in the name of free education. Comrades do not be fooled by these antics because they are done in order to boost the political aspirations of certain individuals, it is very difficult to go to the very same people who assist you financially and ask for something they have clearly shown little interest in and that's why we see those perceived projects hanging on the balance today. It is a difficult prospect to fight against the very same people you meet on the corridors of your party's head quarters yet expect to be supported when you implement projects of that magnitude. We have seen how the ruling party has responded to the dire state of education in our country, their number one priority is not to give us the best education possible which is evident when we take a look at our foundation phase statistics but their number one ambition is to line up their pockets with as much money as possible before they leave office and then the same vicious circle starts all over again when a "new administration" takes over as long as we have the same organization in power. We find ourselves with a poor state of education where our brothers and sisters are ill equipped and are put in grave risk due to the standard of education given to them. This is evident with the scarcity of institutions of higher learning in this country, we find ourselves queuing and sleeping on the pavements in an effort to acquire the education much needed. The ruling party has shown clearly that the issue of a scarcity of institutions of higher learning is not top priority for them, that is why we find ourselves with a situation where provinces such as Mpumalanga and the Northern Cape don't have universities yet we are able to spend billions of rands on stadiums and projects such as the Gautrain just so we can look good in the eyes of other countries, a country that fails to address the grievances of its youth and equip them with the necessary skills to run this country one day is a country with a bleak future. we need to ask ourselves whether the money used to fund projects such as the Gautrain, the building of new airports and stadiums couldn't have been better spent on projects that include improving the state of basic education in South Africa, is the ruling party not concerned about this or are they oblivious to such in the hope that their members will be sorted out irregardless through Cadre deployment and other forms of corruption we have come to associate them with ever since they came into government. If we do not accept the findings that state that our education system is in crisis mode and needs to be addressed immediately who will make things right? Is it the very same people we are giving this education to? Hoping for this is no different from planting apple seeds yet expect to harvest fresh plum oranges which you will again expect to produce orange seeds. There is only one way we can address that and it is by identifying the root of the problem and taking precautionary steps in order to prevent the situation we find ourselves in today. The let all break loose before we can fix it mentality of our government is utterly disgusting and needs to be addressed as soon as possible. We will heed the call of the President of the Inkatha Freedom Party Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi to go and establish SADESMO branches in institution of basic education, it is our duty as leaders of the vanguard of

students to do what is best for the country and groom future leaders while they are young. We are extremely happy with the fact that Operation Siyabahlangubeza which was launched by the predecessor leadership was not in vain, it shows that the leadership was clear when they decided on launching the project and having Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi encourage us in respect of Operation Siyabahlangubeza gives us more confidence knowing that it has been endorsed by a leader of his stature.

As SADESMO we have a lot of work to do, we also need to reach out to students in institutions of higher learning through SRC elections where we have to contest and try by all means to be victorious. Communication across all structures of the movement need to be at a very progressive state in order to prevent a situation where we encounter a barrier in communication thus resulting in the aims and objectives of the movement having minimal effect. We will go out there with all guns blazing and aim to be the voice for all students. We will not be ceremonial leaders who seek to boost their egos through having the notion that because you are a leader you will get some sort of respect, we will aim to be tireless leaders like the President of the IFP who has disappointed a lot of opposition leaders with his hard work and dedication, while a lot sit back in their plum office chairs in government department, Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi continues to go out there to the people advocating for a better South Africa, we will aim to emulate uShenge and also make our opposition leaders wish we could retire.

Let us not forget the slogan for the conference and shall we aim to be leaders of honesty and integrity as we return to our respective structures.

I thank you