



PAC

PAN AFRICANIST CONGRESS OF AZANIA

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The pseudo “science-guided” proposed five levels

The ANC-led government said that its decisions are and will remain guided by science in regards their comprehensive response to COVID-19. But is there science in unbanning the sale of cigarettes? This contradicts their earlier science about smoking. Essentially, the logic of the proposed five levels is neither scientific, logical, nor practical; instead, there is political pressure from business lobby groups like the tobacco industry, period. Science is an abused political concept to hide this immense pressure. Additionally, allowing one-third of workers to go back to work implies allowing the customer base of related businesses, otherwise there is no use opening them in the first place: you can't open a cigarette shop, for example, and prohibit a cigarette-smoker from walking about to buy it; that is illogical and unscientific.

It is plausible that the sharing of the “skuif” could pose a greater challenge to the containment of the disease as much as it can expose people to infection. We have seen this with other pulmonary diseases. If there are asymptomatic people, screening process cannot tell, and not everyone will be tested. The whole “science-guided” approach is riddled with practical challenges that no regulation will overcome. That is why we do not wish to pretend to propose a “science-guided”, but only our position on what we believe needs to happen.

Rather have a zonal lockdown



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What little, if accurate, facts we have are that a million people have been screened, with only 130 000 tested and only around 3 635 tested positive. About a 1 000 have recovered. Effectively, over 3 000 people are infected with the virus. Other facts show that there are specific provinces (GP, WC, KZN, and EC) with high infections, and districts or municipalities which are hotspots in these provinces. These facts inform our view in regards lockdown post April.

- The lockdown should be zonal, concentrated *only* on those areas where there are infections. Restrictions should be put there, with bounded movement; where there are no infections, movement – with social distancing encouraged – should be allowed.
- The economic activity should be allowed to operate. The first to be allowed back must be the self-employed.
- We support the view that social activity – entertainment, crowded sporting events, and large gatherings etc. – should remain restricted. The implication is that if the economic activity is opened, people are going to move around, except in zones deemed extremely infectious. This is not science; it is a point of view.

On the much talked about R500 billion

1. The 50 billion for the most dispossessed and unemployed

Whilst the PAC believe that the most dispossessed masses of our people will benefit from it in some way, we put it on record that the underlying intention is to send to sleep the masses in order to hide the ideological and moral bankruptcy of the real crisis of capitalist imperialism which is under threat from a potential mass revolution. To prove this fact, the money (R50 billion) put aside for the hungry, unemployed, and impoverished, lives obvious questions and answers: what will happen to this category of the masses after the 6 months? When the current virus affecting the exploiters and the rich has come to end, will the virus called hunger and poverty have come to an end? Will there be any solidarity fund and national campaigns to end hunger? The obvious answer is no, at least not without the revolutionary action of the masses to see to it.

That is why:



- We are asking the masses to demand that **this relief be retained forever into the future**, and that more be demanded from the state. The PAC has a clear history of calling for the unemployed and the poor to get permanent relieve;
- We believe that it is through the **resolution of the land question** that Africans will stop being a charity case of capitalism with a human face. Anything else is a farce, a scam, and an attempt to save this neo-colonial set up; and
- Government must prioritize the changing of the social welfare system and the ailing national healthcare system.

2. On borrowing money from international finance capital.

The thought of borrowing money from international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF is to contemplate not only condemning our children to indebtedness, it is to actually auction the country and its independence to the same forces that have colonized Africa. Azania MUST NOT be auctioned to vultures like IMF even if those loans are packaged in ways that appear scrupulous. IMF has no scruples, period. We firmly hold that imperialist capital has already colluded with the *three* imperialist Rating Agencies (Moody's, Filch, and Standards and Poor) to push this country to a junk status in order to drive it to the arms of international finance capital.

Those who are naïve to think that either interest-free or “fair” interest rates from these instruments are the end of it fail to see the unwritten rules, the entrenchment of imperial power to direct political economic policy of the country. The ultimate end to which these institutions aim is the privatization of public entities and natural resources, i.e. giving national assets to capitalists. We are opposed to the use of sweat and blood of workers to bail out capital under the guise of any soft loans whatsoever.

Whilst reject the West, we are not oblivious as to propose an acceptance of soft loans from the East and China, either. In the global geopolitical power dynamics, we cannot falter in our responsibility to warn against perpetuation of a dependency syndrome.

Instead,



- We believe that the Reserve Bank must be completely nationalized and put at the service of the masses,
- As a currency issuing nation, we have the capacity to spend in the economic for the benefit of the masses without looking to the East or West for help of a nod,
- We demand the publication of previous and present loan agreements with the fine print for the toiling workers and Africans to see the foreign debts this country is already subjected to, and
- We reiterate our call of reparations for the 400 years of exploitation of africans by global capital and imperialism.

3. The reprioritized R130 billion.

It was our understanding that a budget is debated and ratified. We thought it mattered for the parties in parliament to participate whether such and such an amount of money must be reduced for this or that department, for this or that reason, including playing whatever oversight is available in terms of the use of the money. Willy-nilly, this quasi-democratic was flouted when this decision was taken. Various indictments of fruitless expenditure, etc. abound under this government.

This being the case, we are left to believe that this budget rechanneling will happen clandestinely, and will travel along a sophisticated route to criminality and corruption. The governing party leaders are already using food parcels in a corrupt, political way. They steal with impunity. Who knows if artificial inflation of quotations are not taking place as we speak?!

Suspension of democracy during lockdown.

The idea of empowering a State President to deploy instruments of state violence like soldiers during a state of disaster such as the virus in question contradicts the notion of democracy the neo-liberals hold dear. Whether it is constitutional in its current form, we believe it is essentially anti-democratic and must be overturned. There must never be a time where the entire democratic process is suspended.



Whilst PAC questions the architecture of this country's constitutional democracy in its current form and content, we reserve our right to question the concentration of power to unelected (but appointed), ministers and bureaucrats to procure whatsoever they deem necessary from whomever they please, using whatever justification at their disposal for their decisions.

The ANC runs ruthlessly nepotistic, corrupt state machinery, and by suspending democratic participation it is given a free hand to extend this at the expense of the masses. In our previous statement, we have asked who supplies the PPE, why those and not others, at how much, and how these were procured. We also ask about the procurement of the fencing that had happened at the "boarder" and what the procurement processes were.

For this reason,

- We demand that the paper trail of the interactions between government and suppliers be made available to the public;
- We also demand that phone records in this connection be made available to the public. If these two things cannot be done, we believe the toiling masses of this country have every reason to suspect corruption and fraud. Africans have a right to know what the government is doing with their money and in their name.

Militarization and lockdown.

We are opposed to a military state even on a temporary basis; we do not take the word of Mr Ramaphosa as true when he suggests that 73 000 soldiers will be deployed only to assist in other areas rather than to wield violence on the masses of our people. In this context, we have and still do condemn the use of state violence against the African people. It is already bad enough that police officials are overstepping their boundaries in communities – killing people, injuring others, spilling food and traditional beer down. We call on all those who have been victims to contact the PAC office for free legal assistance. We do however condemn instances of some shops selling expired goods to the Africans: this act is dangerous and merits condemnation.



- the walk-like language engaged in by ministers must come to an end;
- the military or soldiers not related to extension of health care services must be limited; and
- All acts of violence which resulted in death and loss of property and dignity, etc. should be thoroughly investigated and culprits brought to book.

In conclusion.

We believe that this pandemic has shown both the possible and impossible, and the extent to which imperial capitalism will go to protect itself and conceal its inherent crises and imminent collapse. The only way out of poverty, hunger, inequality, and exploitation is the overthrow of neo-colonialism and neo-liberal policies meant to safeguard imperialism.

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Prepared by PAC Publicity Department

