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Swathi
**The Freedom
Charter**

adopted by the Natal Indian Congress In 1955.



**The Congress road
to freedom...**

Cover: Yusuf Dadoo,
Albert Luthuli
and Monty Naicker



Introduction by
George Sewpersadh
President — NIC

If you could make the laws, what would you do?

In 1954, after years of passive resistance and defying of unjust laws, Congress asked the people of South Africa this question.

Over 10 000 Congress organisers spent 6 months going to the people, finding out what type of South Africa we would all like to live in. Millions of people were consulted, and all their ideas were put together. On June 25 and 26, 1955, 3000 delegates, — workers, farmers, students, women and professionals of all races and colours, gathered at Kliptown, near Johannesburg.

This meeting, known as the "Congress of the People", was the most democratic meeting ever held in South Africa. Organised by the African National Congress, the Indian Congresses, Coloured Peoples' Congress, Congress of Democrats (white democrats), and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), the meeting adopted the peoples' demands and ideas for a democratic future.

These demands and aspirations became enshrined in the document of the people — the Freedom Charter.

Today after 29 years the Freedom Charter remains an inspiration to all freedom loving people of South Africa. Congress continues to strive towards a democratic South Africa based on the Charter.

Issued by the Natal Indian Congress, P.O. Box 769, Verulam 4340

THE FREEDOM CHARTER

PREAMBLE

We, the people of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know: —

That South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of the people;

That our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality;

That our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities;

That only a democratic state, based on the will of the people can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief.

And therefore, we the people of South Africa, black and white, together — equals, countrymen and brothers — adopt this FREEDOM CHARTER. And we pledge ourselves to strive together, sparing nothing of our strength and courage, until the democratic changes here set out have been won.

Printed by P&G's Print 20 St. Andrews St. Durban

THE FREEDOM CHARTER

THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN!

Every man and woman shall have the right to vote for and stand as a candidate for all bodies which make laws.

All the people shall be entitled to take part in the administration of the country.

The rights of the people shall be the same regardless of race, colour or sex.

All bodies of minority rule, advisory boards, councils and authorities shall be replaced by democratic organs of self-government.

THE FREEDOM CHARTER

ALL NATIONAL GROUPS SHALL HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS!

There shall be equal status in the bodies of state, in the courts and in the schools for all national groups and races;

All national groups shall be protected by law against insults to their race and national pride;

All people shall have equal rights to use their own language and to develop their own folk culture and customs;

The preaching and practice of national, race or colour discrimination and contempt shall be a punishable crime;

All apartheid laws and practices shall be set aside.

THE FREEDOM CHARTER

**THE PEOPLE SHALL
SHARE IN THE
COUNTRY'S
WEALTH!**

The national wealth of our country, the heritage of all South Africans, shall be restored to the people;

The mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole;

All other industries and trade shall be controlled to assist the well-being of the people;

All people shall have equal rights to trade where they chose, to manufacture and to enter all trades, crafts and professions.

THE FREEDOM CHARTER

**THE LAND SHALL
BE SHARED
AMONG THOSE
WHO WORK IT!**

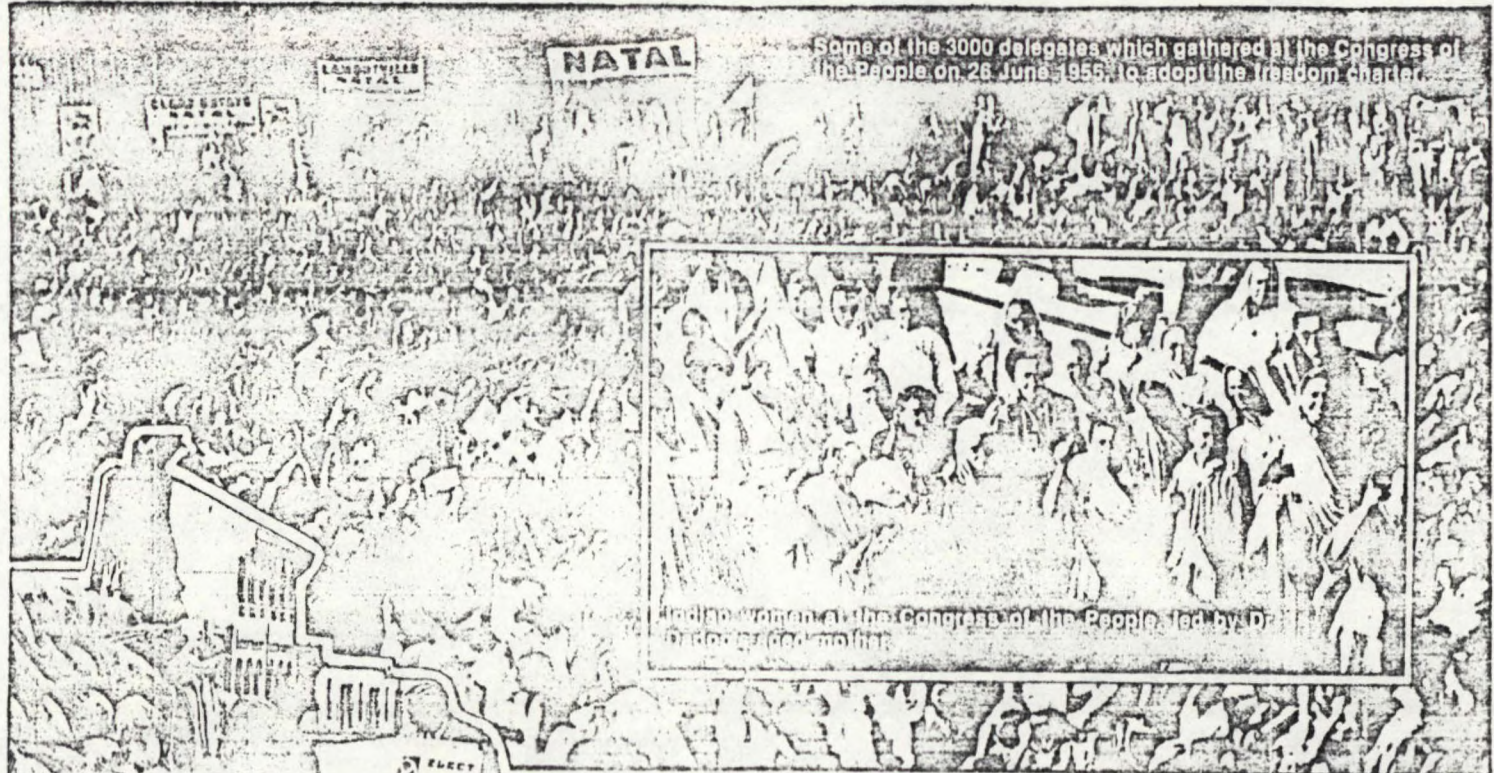
Restriction of land ownership on a racial basis shall be ended, and all the land re-divided amongst those who work it, to banish famine and land hunger;

The state shall help the peasants with implements, seeds, tractors and dams to save the soil and assist the tillers;

Freedom of movement shall be guaranteed to all who work on the land;

All shall have the right to occupy land wherever they choose;

People shall not be robbed of their cattle; and forced labour and farm prisons shall be abolished.



NATAL

Some of the 3000 delegates which gathered at the Congress of the People on 26 June 1955 to adopt the Freedom Charter.

Madhewidoman at the Congress of the People, led by Dr. Nelson Mandela.

Thousands of people gathered with Dr. Mandela for the first time in the history of South Africa.

The Congress of the People was a historic event, the first time that all the people of South Africa gathered together to discuss their common interests. It was a landmark in the struggle for freedom and democracy in South Africa. The Congress was held in the town of Natal, and it was there that the Freedom Charter was adopted. The Charter set out the basic principles of a new South African constitution, and it was a clear statement of the people's demand for freedom and equality. The Congress was a great success, and it showed that the people of South Africa were united in their struggle for freedom.

—MURDERER OF MANDELA

THE FREEDOM CHARTER

ALL SHALL BE EQUAL BEFORE THE LAW

No one shall be imprisoned, deported or restricted without a fair trial;

No one shall be condemned by the order of any Government official;

The courts shall be representative of all the people;

Imprisonment shall be only for serious crimes against the people, and shall aim at re-education, not vengeance;

The police force and army shall be open to all on an equal basis and shall be the helpers and protectors of the people;

All laws which discriminate on the grounds of race, colour or belief shall be repealed.

THE FREEDOM CHARTER

ALL SHALL ENJOY HUMAN RIGHTS!

The law shall guarantee to all their right to speak, to organise, to meet together, to publish, to preach, to worship and to educate their children;

The privacy of the house from police raids shall be protected by law;

All shall be free to travel without restriction from countryside to town, from province to province, and from South Africa abroad.

Pass laws, permits and all other laws restricting these freedoms shall be abolished.

THE FREEDOM CHARTER

THERE SHALL BE WORK AND SECURITY!

All who work shall be free to form trade unions, to elect their officers and to make wage agreements with their employers;

The state shall recognise the right and duty of all to work, and to draw full unemployment benefits;

Men and women of all races shall receive equal pay for equal work;

There shall be a forty-hour working week, a national minimum wage, paid annual leave, and sick leave for all workers, and maternity leave on full pay for all working mothers;

Miners, domestic workers, farm workers and civil servants shall have the same rights as all others who work;

Child labour, compound labour, the tot system and contract labour shall be abolished.

THE FREEDOM CHARTER

THE DOORS OF LEARNING AND CULTURE SHALL BE OPENED!

The government shall discover, develop and encourage national talent for the enhancement of our cultural life;

All the cultural treasures of mankind shall be open to all, by free exchange of books, ideas and contact with other lands;

The aim of education shall be to teach the youth to love their people and their culture, to honour human brotherhood, liberty and peace; Education shall be free, compulsory, universal and equal for all children;

Higher education and technical training shall be opened to all by means of state allowances and scholarships awarded on the basis of merit;

Adult illiteracy shall be ended by a mass state education plan;

Teachers shall have the rights of other citizens;

The colour bar in cultural life, in sport and in education shall be abolished.

THE FREEDOM CHARTER

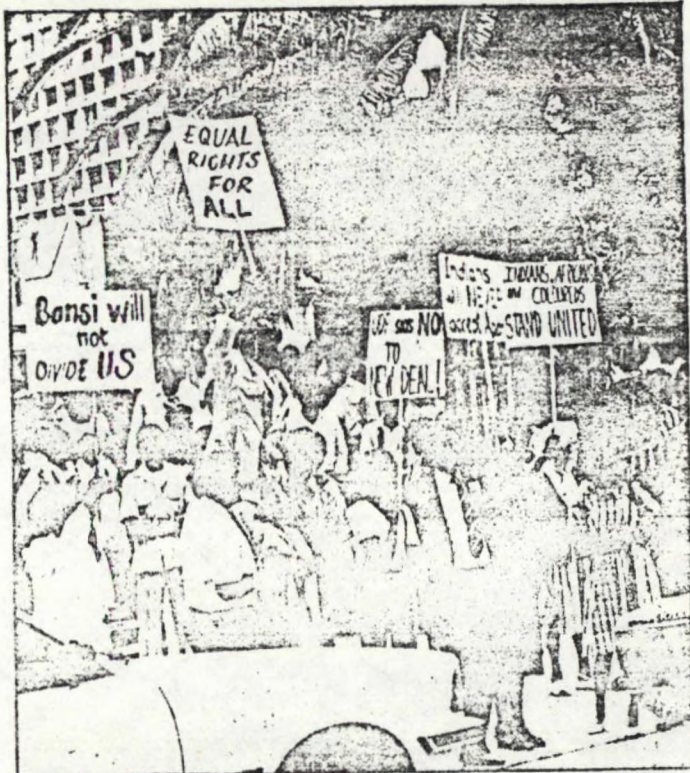
THERE SHALL BE HOUSES, SECURITY AND COMFORT!

All people shall have the right to live where they choose, to be decently housed, and to bring up their families in comfort and security; Unused housing space to be made available to the people;
Rent and prices shall be lowered, food plentiful and no one shall go hungry;
A preventive health scheme shall be run by the state;
Free medical care and hospitalisation shall be provided for all, with special care for mothers and young children;
Slums shall be demolished and new suburbs built where all have transport, roads, lighting, playing fields, creches and social centres;
The aged, the orphans, the disabled and the sick shall be cared for by the state;
Rest, leisure & recreation shall be the right of all;
Fenced locations & ghettos shall be abolished & laws which break up families shall be repealed

THE FREEDOM CHARTER

THERE SHALL BE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP!

South Africa shall be a fully independent state, which respects the rights and sovereignty of all nations;
South Africa shall strive to maintain world peace and the settlement of all international disputes by negotiation — not war;
Peace and friendship amongst all our people shall be secured by upholding the equal rights, opportunities and status of all;
The people of the protectorates — Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland — shall be free to decide for themselves their won future;
The right of all the peoples of Africa to independence and self-government shall be recognised, and shall be the basis of close co-operation.



THE FREEDOM CHARTER

Let all who love their people and their country now say, as we say here:
**THESE FREEDOMS WE WILL FIGHT FOR,
SIDE BY SIDE, THROUGHOUT OUR LIVES
UNTIL WE HAVE WON OUR LIBERTY.**

Collection Number: AK2117

DELMAS TREASON TRIAL 1985 - 1989

PUBLISHER:

Publisher: **Historical Papers, University of the Witwatersrand**

Location: **Johannesburg**

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