The occasion of the 26th July remains one of the most iconic dates in the history of liberation struggle in the world. Fidel Castro began what would become the victorious struggle against US imperialism, and went on to build one of the most successful examples of a Marxist-Leninist government, ran with a socialist and people’s mandate.

It was on this very day, that on the shores of Africa, a new revolution was born in 2013, led by EFF Secretary General.
by a youthful and vibrant movement known as the Economic Freedom Fighters. This organization, would be the first genuine attempt in a fractured and unequal post-Apartheid South Africa, to establish itself with a mandate of national presence and economic emancipation.

As a nation haunted by a dark past of colonialism and Apartheid, South Africa was in desperate need of an alternative to the dominant racist, white power structure, which survives on the poverty of black people in South Africa. This alternative was tasked with responding to the failures of the former liberation movement, while confronting the white supremacy that has stolen the land and monopolized the wealth of Africans.

In Uncle Tom’s Hall in Soweto, activists from the lengths and breadths of the country, gathered on 26 July 2013, on the question of What Is To Be Done? From this historic moment, a baby was born with the ability to walk, and set its target on liberating our people under the guidance of Seven non-negotiable Cardinal Pillars for economic freedom.

The EFF upon its formation made critical observations of what constitutes South African reality, as diagnosis is the foremost part of waging any revolutionary struggle. Having observed that there has been no fundamental change in power relations since 1994, it was resolved that a grass-roots organization that will contest political power to reshape the post-colonial South African situation must be formed.

The basic blueprint of this organization would be 7 non-negotiable Cardinal pillars, namely:

1. Expropriation of South Africa’s land without compensation for equal redistribution.

2. Nationalisation of mines, banks, and other strategic sectors of the economy.

3. Building State and government capacity, which will lead to abolishment of Tenders.

4. Free quality education, healthcare, houses, and sanitation.

5. Massive protected industrial development to create millions of sustainable jobs.


7. Open, accountable government and society without fear of victimisation

by the State Defence, Police and other Agencies.

It is these cardinal pillars, that have allowed the EFF to continue to shape and guide national politics for 8-years and continuing securing critical victories outside of the corridors of governance.

As a movement inspired by the determined Communist Party of China (CPC), which recently observed its centenary, the EFF has become a dominant force in the South African body politic. We have achieved critical victories that have shown that the EFF has the necessary capacity to govern.

The EFF has achieved verifiable victories which represent an organization that is on a correct path of liberating our people.

The mandate of accountable governance has been achieved, through holding the former President Jacob Zuma accountable for non-security related upgrades to his Nkandla homestead.

It is the EFF that ensured over 4000 workers were insourced in the Johannesburg Metropolitan, and in Nelson Mandela Bay and Tshwane, decisively undermining the parasitic tender system.

Consolidating the ground towards socialist power
The EFF has been at the forefront of the land discourse, elevating it into legislation and initiating the process to amend Section 25 of the Constitution to allow for expropriation of land without compensation.

The EFF remains the only organization that has shown verifiable support to the rallying call for Free Education, and through our Student Movement, have secure free registrations, walk-in registrations and debt clearance, and turned the youth environment into a vibrant and militant arena for ideas and resistance.

We are now in the progress of presenting a Student Debt Cancellation Private Member’s Bill, to clear student debt of young people who have met the requirements to receive their qualifications.

This is among various legislation such as the proposal to establish a State-Owned Bank, and superior submissions to curb corruption by the financial sector, to allow government to control monetary policy.

The EFF has in all sectors surpassed the so-called former liberation movement and toothless trade unions, in championing struggles upon which they base their existence.

The fact of the matter is that the ruling party and all of its allies have become managers of the affairs of capital, as such are unable to maintain their legitimacy. It is for this reason that it is a government that is unable to engage its people and sends the army when there is political instability. By doing this, the puppet regime of the ANC has become an illegitimate government similar to those in Myanmar, Uganda and eSwatini.

As we celebrate the 8th Anniversary, the primary objective of the EFF must therefore be the establishment of the EFF as an organization with national presence. It is only through this national presence that we will accomplish sincere restoration of land to its rightful owners, the black majority, not the artificial attempts of amending the constitution currently being pursued by the ruling party.

It is only through the building of this National and continental economic emancipation movement, that we will be able to rescue our judiciary from the apparent and obvious capture,
by capital and its lackeys. The character of the judiciary has become regressive, this is shown by its refusal to align itself with accountability in terms of the CR17 bank statements, which carry evidence of premeditated capture of the state.

This capture has become so entrenched, that even during a global health pandemic, the President of the country has turned himself into a marketing agent of a Western-aligned vaccine in Johnson and Johnson, at the expense of life.

It is a capture that permeates in the media and has subjected all members of society to misery and promotion of mediocrity.

The EFF must therefore use its growth as a motivation to not only win municipalities to ensure they are people-orientated and deliver basic services but rescue all sectors of society whose collapse has been fast-tracked by the poor-handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is from the creative industry, that is subjected to neglect, and artists who are victims of super-exploitation by record companies and even the public broadcaster in the form of SABC radio.

The EFF must continue being the only dependable organization for the creative industry, improving in our existing efforts of the Artist Solidarity Fund, by pushing legislation to protect workers rights and ensuring they receive royalties for their contributions of maintaining the soul of society.

Ground forces must remain disciplined, and protect and love one another, as we intensify our organizational building process, in Branch and Regional People’s Assemblies. We salute all of our members for building this movement of the people without spilling a single drop of blood.

This is a sign that once the EFF governs, we will never see internal political party warfare, spill into the streets of the nation.

Let us continue to build a continental organization that understands the need for Pan-Africanism and progressive internationalism at the centre of our struggle. May we forever remember that we will never be free until the people of Africa and the people of Palestine are all liberated.

May we remain true to the identity that inspired our existence, of the Cuban Revolution that always practiced internationalism in its outlook for building a socialist world. Our solidarity with the oppressed people of the world must be meaningful and practical, in the same way the Cubans did, for the people of Africa.

Hasta La Victoria Siempre, Long Live the Economic Freedom Fighters!
The Economic Freedom Fighters joins millions of progressive forces worldwide in celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Communist Party of China (CPC). With over 90 million members, the CPC is the largest and most prominent Communist Party, one of the biggest political parties, and one of the most successful revolutionary movements in the world today. As revolutionary forces that subscribe to Marxism-Leninism, we are always inspired and driven by so many achievements of a revolutionary movement that defied all odds to lead one of the most successful and still growing socialist economies in the present age. The Communist Party of China continues to demonstrate the superiority of Marxist-Leninist logic in the organisation of the party, management of the economy and leadership of society as a whole.

The story of the Communist Party of China is a constant reminder to all revolutionaries around the globe that a different world is possible, free of the exploitation of the majority by the minority. A world where the interests of the majority matter more than the greed of the minority. China has exponentially grown its economy over the last 40 years to account for almost 20% of the global economy and trade. China has uplifted more than
700 million people from absolute poverty. All these happened under the superior logic of Marxism-Leninism, which were denounced as failed ideologies by neoliberal reactionaries who have no appreciation of Marxist science.

The CPC was founded on the 1st of July in 1921 in Shanghai by Chinese intellectuals such as Chen Duxiu, who was referred to as China’s Lenin and Li Dachao. The party drew its inspiration from the 4th of May Movement, which was an anti-feudal movement founded by students in China. The Bolshevik Great Socialist Revolution in Russia spired the 4th May Movement. The inspiration speaks to the internationalist nature of the 1917 Bolshevik revolution and the fact that it inspired worldwide revolt against repressive systems and awakened working-class consciousness across the length and breadth of the globe.

From the formation of CPC, we also learn that consciousness has been purposely planted in the minds and hearts of people, particularly young people. The struggle for socialism in China owes its success and durability to the foundation laid by several leaders, key among which are Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, and the present leader of the Party, Xi-Xinping. It is therefore important to highlight their achievements here:

**MAO ZEDONG’S CONTRIBUTION**

Mao was a founding member of the CPC and one of the key leaders of the revolutionary strides made by the CPC before the establishment of the People's Republic of China. Thus, Mao was already an accomplished leader even before the end of the civil war in China. However, his lasting contribution has to be forming the People's Republic of China itself in 1949 and the firm commitment to Marxism as a guiding theoretical framework for the country.

His commitment to the leadership of the working class is best captured in his paper entitled “ON THE PEOPLE’S DEMOCRATIC DICTATORSHIP”, wherein he says:

"The people's democratic dictatorship needs the leadership of the working class. For it is only the working class that is most farsighted, most selfless and most thoroughly revolutionary. The entire history of revolution proves that without the leadership of the working-class revolution fails and that with the leadership of the working-class revolution triumphs. In the epoch of imperialism, in no country can any other class lead any genuine revolution to victory. This is proved by the fact that the many revolutions led by China’s petty bourgeoisie and national bourgeoisie all failed".

Mao is the undisputed founder and inspiration of China’s forceful entry into the realm of global power steeped on Marxism.

**DENG XIAOPING CONTRIBUTION**

Deng Xiaoping took over the leadership of China in 1978 and embarked on State reforms that would transform China from a low-income economy into what is today the second-largest economy in the world. He introduced the socialist market economy concept in 1978, and from the reforms he introduced, poverty was almost eliminated in China within a generation. Through his Four Modernisations in agriculture, defence, industry and science
and technology, he marked the beginning of the reforms that would drive China’s development.

He was able to drive this development while deeply rooted in Marxist theory and not flirting with quasi-capitalism, as some have argued. In his paper titled “In Everything We Do We Must Proceed from the Realities of the Primary Stage of Socialism”, Deng was clear of the pragmatic steps China had to take and articulated them as follows:

"China is developing its economy in three steps. Two steps will be taken in this century to reach the point where our people have adequate food and clothing and lead a fairly comfortable life. The third step, which will take us 30 to 50 years into the next century, is to reach the level of the moderately developed countries. These are our strategic objectives and our high ambitions".

Xiaoping’s contribution to the CPC’s ideological and political direction is perhaps the most impactful in the past 40 years. The 1984 remark by Deng Xiaoping in the Sino-Japanese Council of Non-governmental persons seems to have underpinned China’s growth and expansion in the last 30 years. In what was subsequently published as “Building Socialism with Chinese characteristics”, Xiaoping said:

"What is socialism, and what is Marxism? We were not quite clear about this in the past. Marxism attaches utmost importance to developing productive forces. We have said that socialism is the primary stage of communism and that at the advanced stage, the principle of from each according to his ability and to each according to his needs will be applied. This calls for highly developed productive forces and an overwhelming abundance of material wealth. Therefore, the fundamental task for the socialist stage is to develop productive forces. The superiority of the socialist system is demonstrated, in the final analysis, by faster and greater development of those forces than under the capitalist system. As they develop, the people’s material and cultural life will constantly improve. One of our shortcomings after the founding of the People's Republic was that we didn't pay enough attention to developing productive forces. Socialism means eliminating poverty. Pauperism is not socialism, still less communism" (Xiaoping, 1984).

The scientific socialism EFF ascribes to should necessarily lead to the development of the productive forces and ensure greater workers control of the economy, and we have no hesitation about saying that. There are various interpretations and even distortions of what Deng Xiaoping meant. However, an observation he made that "Socialism means eliminating poverty. Pauperism is not socialism, still less communism" is correct. There are also areas where China can make significant progress, particularly on the democratic participation of the people in the economy and society. Yet, its rapid industrial development, agrarian reform, and state-led economic expansion since 1978 are admirable. China moved from being 100th in the world economy in 1978 to the 2nd biggest economy today.

Overall, the CPC has demonstrated since 1953 that a planned economy is almost a
panacea to developmental challenges. China has a planned economy, implemented and monitored through five-year plans. From 1953 to date, China has implemented thirteen five-year plans and is now implementing its fourteenth. All these plans have dealt with practical ways of growing the Chinese economy, eliminating poverty, and making China a respected global economy.

As a growing Marxist-Leninist organisation, the EFF has several lessons to learn from the CPC, and these include

1. Marxism-Leninism remains the most logical ideological foundation for building a revolutionary movement and guiding the economy and society towards shared prosperity.
2. Marxism is not dogma and must always be adapted to changing domestic and global conditions, and this is reflected in China’s adoption of and adherence to ‘Socialism with Chinese Characteristics’.
3. Revolutionary solidarity must define and guide all revolutionary forces in the world.
4. Neoliberalism is not and cannot be a sustainable and correct mechanism to drive the development of productive forces.

The rise of a socialist, humanitarian and more progressive China is a welcome relief after decades of American imperialism. However, there is practically nothing in the world that can stop the rise of socialist and developed China. As it celebrates 100 years of its formation, our call to the CPC is that it must play an ever-increasing role in nurturing and protecting emerging socialist economies globally and leading the creation of an enabling environment for alternative development paths. As the Economic Freedom Fighters, we will continue to draw inspiration from the CPC and its leadership.

Floyd Shivambu is EFF Deputy President
Eight years ago, no one would have imagined the formation in South Africa of an entirely new radical leftist, anti-capitalist, and anti-imperialist movement with an internationalist outlook – led by the youth. Yet, in the last eight years, the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) has established itself as a political movement anchored by popular grassroots formation and struggles. The EFF is present across all corners of South Africa, taking up its generational mission of economic freedom in our lifetime.

The EFF Pan-Africanist message for continental unity and economic freedom in our lifetime has reverberated across the continent. It has led to the formation of EFF structures in Namibia, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Liberia, Eswatini, Malawi and Ghana. However, the most immediate and significant achievement of the EFF in the eight years since it was formed is the recognition by young people throughout the continent that there cannot be economic
emancipation in one country while the rest of Africa remains in neocolonial and neoliberal clutches.

The EFF was founded on economic questions as a response – by activists, young and old, the unemployed, and workers – to the clarion call for economic emancipation in our lifetime on the African continent. Millions of South Africans found a home in the EFF’s generational mission, and they actively participated in building qualitative and quantitative structures in every street and ward. Through the hard work and mobilisation of activists, the EFF has enjoyed a faster qualitative and quantitative growth in South Africa than any other party formed outside the ruling party.

In the past three elections, held in 2014, 2016 and 2019, millions voted for the EFF. The organisation grew its number of public representatives from 61 in 2014 to more than 900, with representation in parliament, provincial legislatures, and the majority of municipal councils in South Africa. EFF public representatives used their participation in parliament, provincial legislatures, and municipal councils to represent the voices of the forgotten, oppressed, and neglected masses, while holding the executive to account.

Black people remain landless, and the expropriation of land without compensation is central to economic development. Before the formation of the EFF, the land question was marginalised, even though the majority of the population continues to occupy less than 10 per cent of South Africa’s land. The existence and popularity of the EFF is synonymous with land struggles. The EFF has led and supported land occupation programmes, resulting in residential land being given to many landless people in all the provinces, such as the people of MooiDrat farm in the Free State. In Bela-Bela, the EFF tabled a motion for a land expropriation programme that led the municipal council to allocate 700 fully serviced stands to deserving landless people.

Today, the land question is at the centre of most meaningful discourse and debates – thanks to the EFF. Parliament is currently occupied with the amendment of Section 25 of the Constitution to allow land expropriation without compensation – after the EFF successfully tabled a motion in parliament in 2018 to address land hunger.

The EFF was formed at a time when the South Africa Government was under the control of the Gupta criminal syndicate, involving corrupt and malicious control of key departments and state-owned enterprises. The EFF effectively led a political process, including action in parliament, that stopped the Gupta criminal syndicate. One of the by-products of the EFF political programme against the Guptas is a vibrant political landscape that extends to parliament. This has led to improved oversight over the executive and government across all spheres, and it has made politics fashionable. For example, the EFF got former President Jacob Zuma to pay back money spent on non-security related upgrades at his homestead in Nkandla because of improved oversight over the executive. It is on account of the EFF that the country can speak of a people’s parliament with a recognisable voice that holds the government accountable.

The EFF has used its parliamentary participation to table legislation that will change the economic architecture of South Africa. South Africa’s economy continues to be concentrated in the hands of a few minorities. According to the Reserve Bank, South Africa’s banking sector is dominated by the five largest banks, which collectively hold 90.1 per cent of the total banking sector assets without state participation. The same ownership patterns can be found in other financial sector industries, such as insurance and asset management.
The EFF tabled a private member bill in parliament to amend the Banks Act of 1990. This would allow the creation of state-owned banks that would register and conduct commercial banks. The bill was passed by parliament and signed by the president into law under the Finance Act. However, it is the EFF’s persistence that led to the amendment allowing for creation of state banks. In addition, an EFF private member bill to nationalise the South African Reserve Bank and to discontinue private ownership of the central bank is currently before parliament for consideration.

The EFF continues to champion workers’ interests. The EFF, through its public representatives in Johannesburg, Tshwane, and Nelson Mandela Bay municipal councils, tabled successful motions on the insourcing of municipality workers. Consequently, thousands of security guards, cleaners, and other low-paid workers are now full-time employees with proper salaries. For example, security guards in Nelson Mandela Bay were insourced with a salary increase from R4 000 to R11 000. In Rustenburg, the EFF fought for workers to be reinstated after their employment was wrongfully terminated.

The EFF’s most outstanding achievement in the eight years since its formation is the fight against anti-black racism and continued disregard for black lives. Despite the attainment of political freedom, black people are subjected to racism perpetrated by institutions such as banks, insurance companies, many other service providers, and right-wingers. The EFF has built the confidence of black people – in particular black workers working in racist companies – to confront racism wherever it is encountered.

Commissar Marshall Dlamini is EFF Secretary General
The Economic Freedom Fighter’s: Becoming a People’s Government

Poppy Raisibe Mailola

As the third-largest political party in South Africa – and arguably the fastest growing on the continent – the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) has made immeasurable contributions to the lives of ordinary people.

Being a grassroots protest movement that is also styled as a political party, the EFF has been able to essentially govern without governing, assuming massive responsibilities while making life-changing interventions based on its primary mandate of promoting economic freedom.

This piece will briefly reflect on how the interventions made by this budding people’s movement signify an organisation with a blueprint to govern. In order to reflect on this, we must read the EFF’s small-scale interventions in their structural context. These interventions should not be likened to the liberal philanthropy that defines the capitalist order, which continues to feign an ethical character, while only maintaining the parasitic dependency that has defined African life in relation to business interests.

To measure all the interventions made over the past eight years is no small exercise, but there are notable programmes that speak to the developmental character of the EFF. These programmes characterise an organisation that cannot be compared to any other.

The aviation sector in South Africa is defined by racial exclusion. In recent memory we saw the collapse of the national...
airline, South African Airways (SAA), in the interests of privatisation and the further exclusion of black people, pilots this time. Black pilots rightfully questioned the criteria of the useless business rescue practitioners at SAA, who were using a “last in, first out” policy for retrenchments at the entity.

This essentially meant that those retrenched would be black people, because the longest serving pilots are white. This is due to the racial separate development that is ingrained in South African society.

The EFF Pilot Programme, which has already produced three young black graduates, represents a structural response to a problem created by separate development. The EFF initiative identifies young black people to be taken through aviation school to obtain their professional licences.

Observing the racial patterns in certain spheres of society, the EFF has made a deliberate attempt to create a pool of black pilots who will become the experienced fliers of the future. In this way, the organisation is helping to gradually undermine the worn-out excuse of experience and competence that underpins racist systems that have been developed over time.

Through this EFF programme young black people are able to become pilots, ensuring that they will constitute the majority in one of the most sophisticated and technical sectors in our country.

This case study shows how the EFF has a verifiable intent to build a developmental country where black people will be capacitated to lead in the long-term.

The EFF also intervened to help Mama Ndanduleni Winnie Makoka, whose 14-year-old son was left destitute in Venda – failed by our public healthcare system. The EFF, which ran a Year of Public Healthcare Campaign in 2018, intervened after the family was ignored by numerous institutions it wrote to for help.

Jabulani Mnisi, from the Clau-Clau community in Mpumalanga, suffered heart-breaking difficulty with a dehumanising tumour. Mnisi was a beneficiary of the EFF’s concerted efforts to intervene in healthcare matters that government had simply ignored.

South Africa’s healthcare system has continued to victimise our people. Nowhere has this been more evident than in the forced sterilisation by the Department of Health of women who are HIV/AIDS positive. In what can only be referred to as targeted depopulation, the department identified black women infected with HIV and stole any prospect of them having children, without their consent.

The EFF tackled this matter by reviving a Commission for Gender Equality report into this issue, meeting the victims, and elevating the matter into public and legislative discourse. As an organisation, the EFF has thus sided with black people against the biological warfare waged against them, a war that is as old as colonialism itself.

The EFF’s interventions stem from a commitment inspired by the Cuban revolutionary attitude towards healthcare. The medical cases are complex and widespread, and they are symptomatic of neglect of the most downtrodden and forgotten.

By resolving to assist these people, the EFF has shown that it has an overwhelming appetite to develop and intervene in community healthcare, particularly in complex medical situations that involve transgressions.
The EFF’s continuing solidarity toward the disabled is well-documented. In 2015, the organisation donated wheelchairs to the Helen Bishop Home in Kimberley, Northern Cape. The EFF also upgraded the home by donating stoves and relevant tools, thus contributing toward the well-being of the children the home caters for.

Phumelela Kati, from the Eastern Cape, is another beneficiary of the EFF’s commitment to those who have been forgotten. The EFF practically saved her life by buying her an electric wheelchair.

Koko Mohlala from Sekhukhune, Limpopo, benefited from the EFF’s commitment to providing decent housing and healthcare to the disabled. Koko lived in a one-room shack. The EFF built her a house, thus rescuing her from hopeless confinement to a dangerous, one-room shack that posed a threat to her already fragile well-being.

The last years of Koko’s life are marked with dignity: she was able to provide a safe haven to her grandchildren. This intervention exemplifies an organisation that is committed to community and grassroots programmes, as all these individuals were encountered in EFF community programmes. The EFF does not go door to door simply to leverage votes: it does so to actually confront the challenges facing our people.

Sthandiwe Hlongwane, who lived in a mud house in Nkandla, Kwa-Zulu Natal, also had a house built for her by the EFF in a community that has been living in the shadow of a palace. The EFF’s determination to provide decent housing for our people has been demonstrated in such cases, where people’s lives are drastically changed for the better.

These interventions must be seen in a humanising context. There is nothing as dehumanising as being forgotten, helpless, and unable to live a life of dignity due to illness or disability.

With an acute understanding that the morality of a society is measured by how it treats its most desperate and incapacitated, the EFF has been able to link its revolutionary attitude to tremendous compassion for those who are less fortunate.

It would therefore be naïve to argue against the basic truth that the EFF has impacted meaningfully on the lives of ordinary people in the eight years of its existence. The organisation has already built a legacy of grassroots assistance and presence.

The EFF continues to mature and grow electorally in leaps and bounds, and as it gears up to build a school for orphans, may it never lose its compassion – the character that all revolutionaries should carry.

May the EFF continue to have an undying love for the people of Africa as it progresses toward becoming a People’s Government.

Happy Birthday EFF!

Poppy Raisibe Mailola is the EFF Deputy Secretary General and Head of the Gender Based Violence Help Desk.
The formation of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) eight years ago has brought into focus the economic question in South Africa and across the African continent. The EFF exists because without economic freedom all the others – including political freedom – are meaningless. Throughout the last eight years the EFF has remained clear about ownership, control, and redistribution of the economy for the benefit of all. In the South African case, this talks directly to the financial sector.

The financial sector is one of the most important in South Africa’s economy. It includes banks, insurance companies, and investment funds, which play a critical role in the economic life of our country. In 1994, the financial services sector contributed 7 per cent to the...
total GDP. By 2020 the GDP share of the financial services sector had increased to 21 per cent, making it the highest contributor to GDP.

Unsurprisingly, in terms of ownership and control, the financial sector remains in the hands of a white minority, men in particular. According to the Reserve Bank, South Africa’s banking sector is dominated by the five largest banks, which collectively hold 90.1 per cent of the total banking-sector assets. South Africa’s life insurance sector is dominated by the five largest insurers, who collectively hold 72.9 per cent of total assets, while the non-life insurance sector is dominated by eight large insurers, who hold more than 55.8 per cent of gross premiums. Ownership patterns are similar in the stock exchange and asset management.

Past discourse has focused on superficial ownership through black economic empowerment schemes, while large-scale financialisation has contributed to consolidation of wealth in a few white hands. The South African economy, in the meantime, has still failed to productively expand in a manner that would create jobs and dismantle the racial character of the system. The reality, had the EFF not responded to the clarion call and its general mission, is that the discourse about genuine economic transformation would have continued in its current sterile form.

In the last eight years, EFF intervention in the financial sector discourse has conscientised black people to the need for a fundamental shift from the clutches of neoliberalism. Because of the EFF, it is now clear that transfer of wealth from the minority should encompass the commanding heights of the economy: anything less would be posturing.

EFF intervention in the last eight years has not been limited to changing the financial-sector discourse. The EFF’s practical interventions go a long way toward a fight for political power – to take over the economy and introduce meaningful transformation. The Portfolio Committee on Trade and Industry has held public hearings on transformation of the financial sector – and marginalisation of black practitioners in the financial sector – thanks to intervention by the EFF.

Before formation of the EFF there was no meaningful talk about creation of state banks, as the banking sector continued to be concentrated in the hands of a few. The EFF tabled a private member’s bill in parliament to amend the Banks Act of 1990 and thus to allow creation of state-owned banks that would register and conduct the business of commercial banks. While the amendments were passed by parliament and signed by the president under a different bill, the objective was achieved. Despite legislation that allows state-owned enterprises to apply for banking licences – and related commitments by the finance minister in 2019 – there is no evidence that there will ever be a state-owned bank.

The EFF is the first political party in South Africa to have a known policy position on establishment of a sovereign wealth fund in its Founding Manifesto. The EFF canvassed for the establishment of such a fund to ensure that the free-carry shares in mining and other resource sectors be retained by the state, acting as custodian of the people as a Consolidating the ground towards socialist power
whole. Thus far, government has committed itself to establishing a sovereign wealth fund – even though this is likely to be empty rhetoric. It is evident that only an EFF government would establish and manage a sovereign wealth fund to generate economic activity, expand productive forces, and create jobs from South Africa’s natural endowments.

The EFF is the first political party to table concrete, enforceable legislation that will advance persons, or categories of persons, disadvantaged by unfair discrimination. We have consistently placed this at the top of the financial transformation agenda. This includes legislation prescribing that all the country’s legal businesses, including those in the financial sector, should comprise a minimum of 50 per cent of black people. Current economic inclusion policies have proven very weak in principle and practice. Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) Codes only provide for black people to be indebted economic staffriders, who borrow money from the banks, buy shares, and do not genuinely participate in economic activity in any meaningful sense. The majority or all of the BEE beneficiaries are staffriders in white companies: they do not even know how the companies are run. The content of black ownership must not be limited to black male elites alone: it must include workers and communities – and it must always prioritise women. While it has not yet been fully accepted, a shift is beginning to yield results due to the EFF’s consistent championing of economic transformation.

The EFF has made it clear that we need a radical economic revolution – premised on the consensus of all stakeholders. The creation of the EFF eight years ago has laid a very important foundation for thorough political deliberation on how we should strive, as black people, to take part in the economy in a meaningful manner that will dismantle inequality, poverty, and unemployment. We carry individual and collective responsibility, and an obligation, to undo the economic injustices of the past and to build equitable economic and social development for the future.

As we celebrate the EFF’s Eighth Anniversary, we reflect subjectively and objectively on our responsibility and obligation to undo the economic injustices of the past. To build equitable economic and social development will need the dedicated focus and commitment shown by the EFF. It is impossible to imagine the current financial sector discourse on transformation – and the centrality of economic questions in political programmes on the African continent – without thinking of the EFF.

Omphile Maotwe is EFF Treasurer General
The spirit of Internationalism is the lifeblood of all revolutions, as is evident in the closing words of *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) by Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx: ‘The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working men of all countries, unite!’

During the liberation struggle, we were beneficiaries of progressive internationalism in financial and military aid; clothes, health, education, passports and accommodation assistance. We sang songs thanking the people of Angola, Mozambique, Zambia, Cuba, and Russia: “Here we are far from home, we shall need you, we shall love you for the best you have done for us.” We achieved our political freedom, thanks to the great sages of Africa, Presidents Kaunda, Nyerere, Machel, Mugabe and many others.

The Founding Manifesto of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) states that the organisation is “a radical, leftist, anti-capitalist, and anti-imperialist movement with an internationalist outlook anchored by popular grassroots formations and struggles. The EFF will be the vanguard of community and workers’ struggles and will always be on the side of the people.”

The Founding Manifesto defines us as a “movement with a progressive internationalist outlook, which seeks to engage with global progressive movements”. We “believe that the best contribution we can make in the international struggle against global imperialism is to rid our country of imperialist domination.” The manifesto further cogently elaborates our policy posture on progressive internationalism as “premised on building solidarity and working relationships with all movements in the world that identify ideologically with anti-capitalism and anti-imperialism. In this regard, the EFF will ideologically and politically support movements that seek the economic decolonisation of
the African continent. The EFF will also advocate for free trade across the entire African continent, with common tariffs for goods and services from country to country.

"The EFF will also advocate for the ultimate integration of the African continent through the erosion and eventual elimination of unnecessary borders, which in the case of South Africa will entail the Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland borders in a manner that involves and includes the participation and approval of those countries. This will also be encouraged in other parts of the African continent. The EFF will also advocate for common infrastructure for transportation (roads, railways, harbours, etc.), electricity, and water. Africa should use its resources to benefit all the people of the African continent in a manner that will lead to collective upliftment"

We have deliberately and exhaustively quoted from the Founding Manifesto to demonstrate to those who join – or intend to join – the EFF that we are not a narrow, nationalist, and chauvinistic movement that is self-seeking to the exclusion of poor people in the rest of the world, who suffer at the hands of oppressive and abusive regimes.

In the eight years of our existence, we have become the only political formation in the world that has a footprint outside the African borders that were imposed by European leaders at the 1885 Berlin Conference.

We remain an inspiration to young and old in the rest of Africa.

The newly independent Namibia has two members of parliament on the ticket of EFF Namibia.

Our militancy and fearlessness have seen dictators trembling in Uganda and eSwatini as organisations emerge styled along the lines of the radicalism and revolutionary philosophy of the EFF in South Africa.

The red berets regalia movements are emerging in Ghana, Liberia, Lesotho, Malawi, and Zimbabwe – to the annoyance of despotic and autocratic governments in those countries.

True to our commitment to international solidarity, for eight years we have engaged in pragmatic and programme-based solidarity with people throughout the world who are oppressed under the yoke of colonialism and imperialism of any type.

We have at all material times identified with the struggle for economic emancipation of Africa and the African diaspora. We demonstrated at Israel's apartheid-state embassy to show that an EFF government will close their mission if their suppression of the people of Palestine – in their striving for self-determination – does not cease.

We have marched to the Moroccan embassy on our soil to demonstrate that there will be consequences from an EFF government if the self determination of the people of Western Sahara is not achieved in our lifetime.

We have signalled in border blockade demonstrations to the nonsensical family government of King Mswati that the days of its archaic, undemocratic, and corrupt parasitic junta are numbered.

Consolidating the ground towards socialist power
We have loudly shouted to the inept ruling party executive and its majority in parliament to renounce relationships with these three axes of evil: Israel, Morocco, and eSwatini. We have on many occasions called for the recall of their diplomatic representatives as the highest form of diplomatic protest against the conduct of their governments. We have issued statements – and debated in parliament – calling for closure of diplomatic missions representing these axes of evil on our soil and recall of our own diplomats from their countries. At the peak of the #Covid19 pandemic, we challenged the US Government superpower in the #BlackLivesMatter demonstrations at its embassy over its failure to clamp down on anti-black racism by security forces on its shores. We have asserted our superior logic at the Pan-African Parliament and stopped the shenanigans of French imperialism acting with impunity in Africa. We have condemned the self-hate of South Africans, who foolishly believed the white mantra of xenophobia, and we called it for what it is, Afriphobia. The tragic events of #FreeZumaProtests have silenced the #PutSouthAfricaFirst imbeciles who have always rehashed the notion that our problems in South Africa are caused by Africans from other parts of Africa.

The eight years of our existence have infused the necessary impetus into our struggle for economic emancipation – and into the international struggles against tribalism, racism, inequality, and poverty.

Judge us on the walk of our talk as we cruise nicely to the anniversary of our first decade on 26 June 2023. A happy and hearty eighth birthday to the giant revolutionary movement, EFF!!

Godrich Gardee is a Member of EFF Central Command Team responsible for International Relations

ONE AFRICA

Consolidating the ground towards socialist power
The first non-negotiable and cardinal pillar of the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) is ‘expropriation of land without compensation for equal redistribution and use’. This is a foundational pillar, upon which rests the core of our generational mission of economic freedom in our lifetime. This cardinal pillar not only seeks to correct historical land dispossession, but more fundamentally, it seeks to redefine the very concept of landownership in South Africa so as to ensure equitable distribution of this very important and finite resource to the dispossessed majority. The Founding Manifesto of the EFF does not limit itself to expropriation as a panacea for land reform. It goes much further than that and recognises that expropriation of land without compensation constitutes an essential aspect of future landholding in the country. Expropriation of land without compensation, while critically important, is merely a way to acquire land. Real hard work lies beyond the expropriation discourse. This hard work involves the determination of what constitutes land in our national discourse; who gets to possess it; under what conditions; and for what purpose. These questions were never asked in any substantive way before the EFF forcefully opened discussion on the national land discourse.

Prior to the formation of the EFF, the land discourse in South Africa was stale. It was limited
to academic halls and a few conferences organised by a handful of dedicated civil society organisations. All these bemoaned the slow pace of land reform, attributing this to government inertia; lack of political will; and the policy of ‘willing-buyer willing-seller’, which the government has used to articulate its approach to land reform since 1994. Very few challenged the constitutional foundations of land reform as the main stumbling block toward more meaningful redistribution. The constitutional provisions for land reform were sanctified and could not be messed with. The reality, however, is that 27 years after the attainment of political freedom, the state has managed to restore less than 10 per cent of the land to black people. This falls far short of its 1994 target of redistributing 30 per cent of land to black people by 1999.

When the EFF spoke of radical transformation of society – centring its discourse on the return of dispossessed land to its rightful possessors – the South African Government, and the largely white quasi-intellectual base upon which the government depends, were caught unawares. For this reason the ruling party repeatedly rejected EFF attempts to amend the Constitution prior to 2018. For the ruling party, and the intellectual base on which it depends, the pain of landlessness was something that could be postponed indefinitely – despite the shocking revelations of the 2014 land audit report. This report stated that 79 per cent of South Africa’s 122 million hectares of land was privately owned; 14 per cent was owned by the state, and 7 per cent was unaccounted for. In the face of these glaring revelations, the EFF strongly believed that the state should be the custodian of fair and meaningful redistribution. Most importantly, the state should avail land for public purpose with no unnecessary hurdles.

There is no gainsaying that – as the result of pressure applied by the EFF – the ruling party was forced to adopt a resolution on land expropriation without compensation at its 2017 conference. Implicit in this resolution was the recognition that society was paying considerable attention to the ideal of land expropriation without compensation. Millions of people across the country had actually responded to the EFF call to occupy land. The ruling party, however, did not favour a fundamental resolution of the land question, but merely wished to derail the EFF and its uncompromising push for substantive constitutional amendments.

Then in February 2018, parliament passed a motion on the question of expropriation of land without compensation. The original motion, tabled by the EFF, called for the establishment of an ad hoc committee to:

a. Review and amend Section 25 of the Constitution to make it possible for the state to expropriate land in the public interest without compensation, and in the process conduct public hearings to get the views of ordinary South Africans, policymakers, civil-society organisations, and academics about the necessity of – and mechanisms for – expropriating land without compensation;

b. Propose the necessary constitutional amendments with regard to the kind of future land tenure regime needed, taking into account the need for the State to be the custodian of all South African land.

To enable its support for this motion, the ANC introduced amendments, which included the need for it to be investigated by the Constitutional Review...
Committee before substantive work on the constitutional amendment could take place. This, while not ideal, allowed the public to participate in the lawmaking process in a manner that has not been seen since 1994.

It was no surprise therefore, that the report of the Constitutional Review Committee on this process noted overwhelming public support for amendment of the Constitution to allow for land expropriation without compensation. The establishment of an ad hoc committee to introduce legislation that amends Section 25 of the Constitution – to allow for land expropriation without compensation – is meant to conclude this process.

What the EFF still seeks to do with this process, however, is to tackle land questions in as comprehensive a manner as possible. The Founding Manifesto enjoins the EFF to fight for reconfiguration of land tenure so that the state becomes the custodian of all land, as it is for water and minerals. This, the EFF contends, will give the state sufficient authority to redistribute land-use rights to the vast majority of the people, who are currently locked out of landownership. Furthermore, this will break the stranglehold that a few rich people and companies have over land.

Land dispossession and the system of freehold tenure that it introduced created an exclusionary system of landownership, what Sampie Terreblanche called a “politicoc-economic system that was insensitive to notions of joint-interests and shared justice, while economic interest of each system thrived recklessly on unequal freedoms and the unequal distribution of power, property, and opportunities”.

Land is central to all of this unequal distribution of power, property, and opportunities. This is not only limited to the so-called slow pace of redistribution of land, but more fundamentally by the very nature of the country’s land tenure system. The end of apartheid and the dawn of democracy did not result in any massive shifts in the distribution of power, property, and opportunities. The EFF contends that it is impossible to ensure a broad-based land redistribution programme when the land tenure regime is still primarily that of freehold tenure.

As a consequence of the EFF’s intervention, South Africa has now started talking about the inevitability of radical land reforms; about the Constitution as a hindrance to thoroughgoing transformation of society; and about the untenability of private ownership of key productive resources at the expense of the vast majority of the excluded and the marginalised. That the EFF has managed to do this within eight years is a miracle that history will have to study in greater detail.

Ntombovuyo Veronica Mente is EFF National Chairperson
One of the products of the committed struggle waged by the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) in the South African landscape has been the establishment of its student movement, the Economic Freedom Fighters Students Command (EFFSC).

Established in accordance with resolutions of the First National People’s Assembly of the EFF, the EFFSC was formally launched on 16 June 2015 as a movement that would echo the cries and bravery of the 1976 Soweto Uprising generation. This student vanguard was tasked first and foremost with the primary duty of mobilising students behind the banner of economic freedom, with a comprehensive understanding that no liberation can be achieved on campuses without liberation in broader society.

EFFSC has undoubtedly had a marked effect on the lives of ordinary, poor students, who would normally be turned away from the gates of a higher education sector that is defined by capitalist and racist knowledge production – as well as elitism that determines who participates in the tertiary sector on the basis of money.

It is therefore no coincidence that formation of the EFFSC coincided with one of the most organised, militant, and national uprisings on university and
Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) college campuses post-1994. This uprising took the form of what is popularly known as the Fees Must Fall Movement. Imbued with a working-class character, and the revolutionary defiance that the EFF brought to a liberal body politic in the country, the EFFSC laboured to create an identity that is defined by selfless struggle.

From this moment the EFFSC organised itself around the “Sizofunda Ngenkani” mantra (we will study by force). The campaign has thus far achieved remarkable victories, not only for the student populace, but for workers within the higher education sector.

Any organisation, however, must determine its progress and measure its achievements against the objectives it sets for itself. The EFFSC holds the following seven non-negotiable principles as a guide to its revolutionary struggle;

1. Mobilising students behind the struggle for economic freedom, as embodied in the EFF Founding Manifesto.
2. Pursuit of radical higher education transformation that aims at free, quality, and well-resourced education.
3. Championing the interests of students and all workers in institutions of higher learning.
4. Building a dynamic relationship between students and community struggles and campaigns.
5. Participating in progressive international campaigns and programmes.
6. Promoting academic and research excellence and progress.
7. Contributing to intellectual and ideological discourse in a manner that seeks to promote the struggle for economic freedom.

Armed with these clear-cut objectives we will measure the victories of the student wing of the Economic Emancipation Movement.

We note the EFFSC’s first notable victory and contribution to the academic sector – and by association to the very lives of students – as the student movement’s pedagogical challenge to the character of higher education. In its efforts to shift academia from its capitalist and racist underpinnings, the EFFSC has challenged what is taught; who teaches; how knowledge is taught; and its purpose in institutions of higher learning.

This can be seen in case studies involving the University of Pretoria and the University of Stellenbosch, at the level of challenging a language policy that sought to entrench volkdom. Public institutions of higher learning that taught fields in the Afrikaans language served to exclude black students. By virtue of their background, black students struggled to grasp what was being taught to them by inept translators of a language that has been used historically for purposes of dominance.

The call for Afrikaans Must Fall gained prominence, culminating in the abandonment of the language as a primary medium of instruction.

Rallying calls such as this represent an invaluable contribution by the EFFSC to broader discourse. These calls are accompanied by demands to diversify representation of lecturers and senior professors; inclusion of black intellectual scholarship; and developmental and purpose-driven research.
that speaks to the realities of our society. These EFFSC activities undoubtedly contribute to intellectual and ideological discourse, while further radicalising higher education.

This is the essence of what the EFF and EFFSC stand for: a fundamental revamping of the education sector and decolonisation of knowledge in order to centre Africa and its experience.

This militant posture by the EFFSC has defined protest culture and associated demands at the University of the Witwatersrand, Tshwane University of Technology, and North-West University – in the most regressive of spaces such as Potchefstroom.

At a material level, the EFFSC has been a gift that keeps on giving. After swooping to victory over Student Representative Councils – only two years after its inception – the student movement began changing the terms of engagement. It encompassed the character of a protest movement while it developed adept skills at managing bureaucracies designed to turn student leaders into glorified prefects.

Free registration, walk-ins, and clearances of historic debt – once viewed as unobtainable goals – became a yearly feature on campuses. Practising selfless activism, EFFSC members leave home each year – before the formal academic year begins – to become bearers of the hopes and dreams of those who have no money. In doing this, the EFFSC fulfils its objective of free, quality, and well-resourced education.

At the University of South Africa, hundreds of thousands of students were allowed to conduct walk-in registrations in 2018, through the persistence of the EFF Students Command. At the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, Durban University of Technology, and Mangosuthu University of Technology, a new wave of activism was born, characterised by an overwhelming love for revolutionary song and dedication to the poor. Students flooded the gates of institutions, pursued their education, and obtained their degrees – whether the powers that be agreed or not.

The doors of learning were forced open, in pursuit of the objective of academic and research excellence. Multitudes of young people were removed from the doom of loitering on the streets and succumbing to substance abuse, which is the life of a young person in a country determined to hate its children.

At the University of Cape Town, African students – who are so often categorised along with their European and American counterparts as international – were for the first time allowed to register without making exorbitant up-front payments. At the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, students graduate yearly under the watchful eye of the EFF Students Command, receiving their qualifications without paying a cent for them.
From Mthatha to Venda, the red t-shirt has become a symbol of hope, as the product of the Economic Emancipation Movement continues to punch above its weight.

Perhaps the most notable achievement of the EFFSC was the insourcing of workers, cleaners, kitchen staff, gardeners, and all labourers. This accorded with the pursuit of two critical EFFSC objectives: mobilising students behind the struggle for economic freedom, and building a dynamic relationship between students and community struggles.

This feat is one of the most tangible and monumental achievements of our young student organisation. The student movement of an organisation – which is only eight years old – has succeeded in a struggle in which unionists and shop stewards have failed to rally workers for decades.

As the Economic Freedom Fighters turns eight, it must be commended for giving the South African higher-education sector a precious gift, thus changing forever what it means to be a student movement.

May the EFF live long, and may the EFFSC continue as a spear in the hands of the vulnerable.

Happy Anniversary, EFF!

Sinawo Tambo is a Member of EFF Central Command Team and Head of Presidency.
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