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TABLE of CONTENTS

Analytic coverage

Provincial coverage

EDITORIAL TEAM
Ebrahim Fakir, Jackie Kalley, Alka Larkan, Khabele Matlosa

ANALYTIC COVERAGE

The ANC and COPE: Fleeting phenomenon or substantive opposition?

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Introduction

On the surface, COPE appeared to be a political party unlike any other that had emerged in the opposition domain since 1994. In its origins it was significant. In its potential catalyst role, it seemed to have the potential to ring in a new era in opposition politics. Whilst the chances remained that it could still emerge battered and belittled from the 2009 election campaign, also because of its Mbeki links, there was little doubt that party politics in South Africa would never be the same again.

The ANC's 2009 contest with COPE was also nothing like its engagement with any other opposition party in South Africa's preceding three post-apartheid democratic general elections of 1994, 1999 and 2004. COPE fell into the category of 'legitimate' opposition, helping to break the compulsive closing of electoral ranks around a hallowed ruling party. COPE also wreaked uncertainty about electoral outcomes. For the first time in the post-1994 period an opposition party would carve into the ANC's support base, challenging its hegemonic status. Triggered by COPE's potential to precipitate a decline in ANC support, it also handed new prospects to opposition parties, besides possibly also inflicting damage on *them*. The new prospects came through potential opposition alliances that were envisaged as substantial enough to capture enclaves of power from the ANC.

However, undermining these COPE prospects, were questions of whether COPE was in fact the sum total of the Polokwane Mbeki camp's refusal to accept that the wheel had turned and that it was time to give others a 'turn at the trough', or whether it had accumulated an

identity that transcended the immediate circumstances of its origins.

This analysis focuses on the malleability, ambiguity and uncertainty, also the anticipation, which the 2009 COPE phenomenon unleashed on party and opposition politics in South Africa. The analysis thus equally poses questions as to the COPE agenda, its character as party, and the question whether it may evolve from fleeting to substantive opposition. The questions are assessed against the background of emergence of COPE, COPE in the campaign period, possible election results, and COPE's post-election prospects. Because of the March 2009 time of writing, the analysis is concerned principally with the pre-election period.

COPE in Campaign Contest with the ANC

COPE in its under-siege-by-the-ANC 2009 election campaign period proved itself to have an effective period-specific opposition party presence. It demonstrated the long-held common political wisdom that effective opposition would have to be 'legitimate' opposition (even if this legitimacy was denied by the ANC). Much of COPE's pre-election presence was through the party establishing itself, and developing an identity, whilst every aspect of its evolvement was closely interrogated and challenged by its ANC nemesis. In exploring the contest between the ANC and COPE, this section considers COPE's 'privileged' origins in garnering significance, its emerging identity vis à vis the ANC, and the broader impact of COPE on the field of opposition politics in South Africa.

COPE's Origins: Leveraging opposition status

COPE derived legitimacy largely through its origins. As Jordan (2008) notes, it is 'an opposition formation sprung from the very loins of the ANC and led by former ANC leaders'. COPE nurtured this status in the face of pervasive ANC efforts to prove COPE to be illegitimate and virtually treasonous in its dissent and digression from the ANC. There was the ANC argument of inviolability of the liberation movement bond, suggesting opportunism, sore losers, and the dissident's rejection of processes of

ANC internal democracy (see COSATU 2008). For example, Malema (2009) stated that COPE was not a new political party, but only a continuation of the Polokwane third-term (for Mbeki) campaign. In contrast with COPE, many ANC members recognised internal problems in the former liberation movement yet insisted on staying inside and riding out the storm from this perch.

Parts of the ANC's discomfort with COPE stemmed from COPE having externalised internal ANC-liberation movement matters, pushing these into the domain of inter-party competition. The democratic-liberal domain is conventionally a space with limited forbearance for the deeper dynamics of social relations, especially in the context of the historical wrongs against which the liberation wars were fought, and (what could amount to) the long-term justification of slow transformation. From the liberation movement ethos, liberation movement governments are afforded more time and understanding for turnaround.

In addition, in the party political arena, it troubled the ANC that the issues for contest that COPE aired resonated with both the perceptions of a large segment of the ANC's usual support base, and also the bulk of the opposition attacks.

Ideology, power and class

The ideological lines in the ANC COPE contest were intensely blurred. More than ideological, it included a dimension of an ANC census on whether it had been time for Mbeki to exit. In a further division, there was a notion of the wheel turning and giving a new group of aspirants access to state power and the benefits that accrue from privileged placing. The division bell thus rang along the lines of an amalgam of ideological, rotation of power (to defeat personal power monopolies in the heart of democratic systems), and profound class interests (on the latter, see Jordan 2008; also see ANC 2009).[1]

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[1] Jordan (2008) links the rise of COPE to the collective failure of the post-2002 ANC leadership (inclusive of both Zuma and Mbeki) to address the contradictions of class formation and capital accumulation that the post-1994 policies had brought about. Many in the emerging classes had come to treasure their access to public sector positions, and the control of these positions over resources. These developments were also articulated in the ranks of the ANC, with, for example, ANC structures

What resulted ideologically was a COPE that was in some respects to the centre-right of the contemporary ANC, as articulated in policies and formal proclamations. As judged by conflicting class interests in the ANC that combined with feasible and likely levels of conversion of policy statements into government action (also see COSATU 2009), however, the ANC and COPE were largely equivalent. COPE positioned itself as the party that would ensure that government operated in line with South Africa's founding constitutional ideals, and a government that would be in touch with popular needs. Its vision was one of anti-post-Polokwane ANC and what this ANC was seen to embody. The Mbeki shadow loomed large over many of these ideals and programmes (see, for example, Rossouw & Mataboge 2009). Amongst others, COPE's presidential candidate Mvume Dandala was being portrayed as the compromise candidate installed with the crucial support of the Shilowa grouping, said to be backed by Mbeki; all to the chagrin of Mosiuoa Lekota, the interim President of the party who had invested much energy building the party.

COPE as catalyst in debates countering the ANC

COPE's positioning in the campaign was anchored in its countering of the post-Polokwane ANC and the ANC's style in government, thereby building an identity that harnessed a more general growth in disaffection from the ANC (see Ipsos-Markinor 2009; Schultz-Herzenberg 2009). This fuelled penetrating debates on the nature of democracy and opposition in South Africa, and positioned the debates in the heart of the 2009 election campaign.

COPE thus attempted to put its direct linkage to the losing camp of Polokwane behind it, focusing instead on the year 2008, the principles in the September 2008 recall of Thabo Mbeki by the ANC as the President of the Republic, and in particular on the ANC errors of the time. COPE portrayed the ANC as having deviated from the ideals on which it was formed. It argued that the ANC had become arrogant in power and weak in the quest to uphold clean and accountable government. 'It is important for people to have a feeling of a grassroots response to a serious political problem: the deviation of the ANC from the ideals of the movement' (COPE's Saki Macozoma in Kgosana 2009).

In squaring with COPE and other opposition parties, the ANC telescoped its period in government, since April 1994, into virtual uncontested territory of the ANC working against colonialism-apartheid to make an increasingly substantive 'difference to people's lives'. It was a continuous process, the outcome certain. In contrast, COPE adopted the shorter term focus of what had gone wrong in the period since the ANC had started deviating from the ideals of the liberation movement, roughly equated with the run-up to December 2007. COPE stressed the ANC's aberrant ways of government and relating to the community (corruption, disrespect for the Constitution, judiciary and Rule of Law, arrogance of the post-Polokwane ANC). It placed less emphasis on policy divergence, accentuating cures for the ills (COPE 2009). COPE clearly was affected by its complicity of having been in power along with the 'accused', yet advocated the virtues of what amounts to political 'new page-ism'.

The question of COPE's status as opposition force cannot be divorced from the subtexts of the Zuma-Mbeki fallout, which climaxed in Polokwane and had its *denouement* in the subsequent recall of Mbeki. (Mbeki was subsequently replaced by Kgalema Motlanthe.) COPE's emergence brought a reversal of the preceding conviction that the ANC would split to its left (see Booysen 1998), to the extent that a left-right split was at stake.

It came to pass that the ANC split would, in fact, be to the right. The numerically weak left, through the political opportunity structure that was manifested, backed Zuma against Mbeki for the 2007 ANC leadership contest, mobilising to deliver an apparently permeable candidate that could further its cause. This backing would help rid the ANC of a leader who was reluctant to see a successor whom he had not anointed step into 'his' seats of power.

Debates were also directly prompted by the legal charges against, and tentative trials around, Jacob Zuma. Whilst the shadow of Mbeki encouraging or facilitating the charges loomed, these were immediate campaign-

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and members being active in capitalist enterprise and its associated practices, often through Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BBBEE) deals.

relevant issues such as clean government and respect for the judiciary that impacted on the contest. Real or artefact, it was COPE's lifeblood. Many South Africans who had either become disillusioned or alienated from the ANC, or had never actually been close to it, converged in the chords that the anti contemporary ANC objections struck.

COPE in campaign combat with the ANC

The ANC was waging an unprecedented electoral onslaught on COPE. By all indications, COPE was the opposition party of choice for ANC attacks (see, for example, Joubert 2009). This ranged from unleashing its propaganda machine on COPE, rooting out possible defectors in wall to wall provincial grassroots clean-outs of leadership on all levels (for example in the Eastern Cape; Frölick 2008), and also using Chancellor House[2] proceeds to help fund election campaign expenses. It was the scope of this quest to counter COPE, more than any formal acknowledgement, which indicated the ANC's self-perceived vulnerability in the face of the COPE challenge.

The timing in this contest was advantageous to the ANC. The movement had the time, roughly from November 2008 onwards, to allay fears (for example, on respect for the judiciary, the Rule of Law) and correct some of its ways (reconnect with grassroots and mobilise in new populist forms). COPE was only going to perform optimally until the ANC had the time to regroup, mobilise and unleash its formidable election and propaganda machine. COPE had little unhindered space and time to solidify as a party. From the moment of its conception, it was continuously pinned down by the ANC. In line with its post 1994 track record with opposition parties, the ANC was masterful in its efforts to delegitimise and contain specific opposition parties.

Early traces of effectiveness as opposition party

Irrespective of flaws and questions, COPE's early pre-election efficacy as opposition party was tangible in a series of ANC signals, both in direct and indirect form. In direct form, the ANC campaigned to stress its respect for the institutions of democracy, including the judiciary, and its respect for the Constitution of South Africa. It emphasised how much it would work for clean, corruption-free government (see Zuma 2009). In indirect form, the efficacy of COPE as opposition in the campaign period could be read from the vehemence of the ANC reaction against both the formation and the subsequent campaign of COPE (see above).

Another profound pre election COPE impact was in the general opposition domain. Opposition was elevated from a staid field of opposition parties that was often pushing decimal changes in electoral performance, without detracting from the ANC's support base. COPE's penetration of this base (the extent remained uncertain) would result in a loosening up of opposition politics. Whilst it was unlikely (see below) that COPE, in its own right, would pull off huge national damage to the ANC, opposition parties came to be on a brink of pooling election percentages to stage new inroads, such as provincial take-overs, in which COPE could potentially be instrumental.

In the campaign period there was continuous talk of possible alliances (although tentatively so; and occasionally even with reference to a possible alliance between the ANC and COPE; see below), including COPE with the DA and ID in the Western Cape, and with the UDM in the Eastern Cape. The differences between many of these parties were often overridden by their shared critiques of the ANC.

From these perspectives, it could be surmised that even if COPE would turn out to have been a mere catalyst, a trigger or a fleeting opposition phenomenon at best, it would in retrospect be justified in claiming a substantive impact on opposition politics in South Africa.

COPE in the Stakes for Election Day Support

Irrespective of noble sites of origins and being the catalyst in debates and realignments that go to the heart

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[2] Chancellor House is the ANC's investment arm, directly engaging in the business world, swooping up profitable contracts (often from government), and was virtually single-handedly responsible for a formidable ANC financial turnaround in the 2000s.

of South African democracy and government, COPE could still, come 22 April 2009, end up as 'just another opposition party'. On the other hand, it could become vindicated as the opposition party that broke the mould of undisputed ANC dominance, blocked a further two-thirds ANC majority (also see Pityana in Forde 2009b), played catalyst to a possible realignment of opposition, and worked in alliances with opposition to give the ANC a run for its money, in places, in an expression of 'liberation movement blood is not thicker than water'.[3]

Early indications were that COPE persisted in its ambition to cooperate with other opposition parties to oust the ANC in some provinces. The 2009 election was being noted as an event of ten elections – one national and nine provincial. Later on, there were suggestions that alliances with the ANC were not impossible (also see Forde 2009a).

Outcomes of the ANC COPE duel

By March 2009 the jury was obviously out on the exact outcome of the ANC-COPE duel. There was little doubt, however, that the ANC would emerge substantially victorious. Yet, for the governing party, for COPE and opposition politics in general there would be a world of difference between a COPE with a stature of 5, 10, 15 or 20 per cent. Veiled in these percentages were the three main dangers-prospects of the ANC losing its two-thirds majority, in an extreme option even defending its outright parliamentary majority, and the DA running the risk of being eclipsed as official opposition.

As time proceeded, the scope of the COPE challenge became clearer. At the outset, in the heat of Mbeki 'recall', and upon evidence that the new party was actually splitting off the ANC, expectations reached upward of 20 per cent support for COPE. Enthusiasts translated Mbeki's roughly 40 per cent of Polokwane support into national electoral totals. However, it soon became evident that COPE was most unlikely to become

a 40 percent party. Rather, it seemed to be fitting into the range of, at best, just above the DA.[4]

Second only to the ANC, or to the ANC and DA?

An assessment of the past election performances of South Africa's post-1994 opposition parties sheds light on the likely fate of COPE, should its electoral performance not match the expectations of its emergence. Opposition parties had slipped in the percentage stakes as the ANC first reached a two-thirds majority in 1999, and when the ANC in 2004 and the 2005 floor-crossing episode broke the 70 per cent barrier (see Booysen 2006). At the time, debate often centred on the ANC increasingly building larger and larger majorities, on the basis of shrinking turn-outs and ritualistic affirmations of the ANC. COPE could have put an end to this trend.

A common tendency in the three preceding elections was that only four to five parties, including the winning ANC, would achieve more than 2 per cent of the national vote. In 2004, the only opposition parties that could garner more than 2 per cent were the DA, IFP, UDM and ID. In addition, it is usually less than half the parties that register for parliamentary participation that gain representation. In 1994, 1999 and 2004, respectively, 8, 12 and 11 parties gained parliamentary status. Of these, again respectively over the elections, 4, 7 and 7 gained representation but entered on below 2 per cent of the national vote, thus joining South Africa's notorious band of micro parties (see Booysen 2004), which have proven to have few prospects to flourish and grow.[5] In 2009, 28 political parties were set to contest for parliamentary representation.

In assessing COPE's specific chances, it is useful to recognise the odds of opposition parties claiming huge proportions of ANC support. Political and class realities of contemporary South Africa, along with the ANC maintaining its substantial infrastructure, and its

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[3] By early March 2009 there were only a few, indirect indicators as to possible electoral strength of COPE, and these were often province specific.

[4] This article was submitted to *Election Update* on 6 March 2009.
[5] There was also the further phenomenon of nano parties – those that split off from the micro parties, either in the course of the former practice of floor crossing or through non parliamentary splits (for example, the split of the Pan Africanist Movement (PAM) from the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC).

reputation of both former liberation movement and post-April 1994 governing party, opposition parties are virtually assured of not making far-reaching gains. In the run-up to April 2009 there was a widespread consensus that the ANC would lose some support and that the opposition harvest could just be sufficient to carve away its two-thirds majority. COPE was likely, given the balance of forces and judged by prevailing poll and by-election trends, to be the main opposition beneficiary of ANC losses.

There was not as much consensus on other forecasts. It was a recognised possibility that COPE could surpass the DA's 12.4 per cent of 2004, but the DA might subsequently have improved on this score. There was a further possibility that COPE could eclipse the IFP but not the DA, given the IFP's apparent decline in KwaZulu-Natal (see Ipsos Markinor, 2009; HSRC 2009; Plus 1994 2009). The UDM (2.3 per cent in 2004) and the ID (1.7 per cent in 2004) had small niche voter appeal that could be sustained but they appeared more likely to suffer shrinkage.

Based on the totality of available opinion poll data, and the results of the four sets of municipal by-elections from late 2008 to March 2009, it became possible by March 2009 to venture rankings of how COPE might perform, come 22 April 2009, in the race against the other opposition political parties.

The following two sets of trends thus inform the rankings that are proffered, in hypothetical form and based on the author's interpretations, in Table 1:

1. Regarding polling data, huge amounts of uncertainty resulted from divergent polling results, based on data that at the time of writing mostly came from late 2008. Different polls also had different treatments of the undeclared voters (stating either that they had not decided whom to vote for, or that they refused to share their preference). These ranged from the HSRC's (2009, based on 2008 data) 3 per cent, to Ipsos Markinor (October 2008, released December 2008) asserting a range of 8-12 per cent, to Plus-1994's (2009, based on 2009 data) 15 per cent vis-à-vis the 16 per cent national support forecast for the DA. Ipsos-Markinor (February 2009) data support for

party and political leaders (Harris 2009) also showed a marked decrease in support for and trust of senior governing party leaders. In addition, there was a possibility that, given a certain amount of persecution that COPE supporters had experienced, COPE would come in with the known survey research 'IFP effect' – that of opinion polls under-measuring the party's level of support.

2. The by elections of 10 December 2008, and of 28 January, and 4 and 25 March 2009, spread across most of the provinces and mostly in seats vacated through defections through COPE, probably revealed significant trends. These included: the ANC continues to win a huge majority of the seats that it had previously occupied, mostly by solid to huge majorities. However, these majorities were mostly also sliced into far more modest dimensions, and largely so because of COPE. COPE would often garner 15-25 per cent of the vote, seemingly off the ANC slate.

Table 1: COPE in possible election result standings*

Scenarios for COPE vis-à-vis ANC & opposition parties	Ranking of possible party standings out of 5**
Beat the ANC	1
Assist in cracking the ANC's two-thirds majority	3.5
Help reduce ANC support to below 50%	1.5
Emerge as stronger than the DA, in 11-15% range	1.5-2
Come out in third place in 8-10% range	2.5-3
Appear in fourth place, after the IFP, in 2-7% range	1-2
Become another below 2% micro party	1

* These projections are specific to conditions on the ground in March 2009; see the section above regarding the data informing the rankings
** Lowest likelihood:1 & highest: 5
Source: Author's assessments, informed by the March 2009 balance of polling and by-election evidence

Voter targeting

Much of COPE's April 2009 election result will depend on the effectiveness of its voter targeting. COPE will draw its supporters from three main sources: ANC ranks, supporters of other significant opposition parties (such as the DA, ID and UDM), and 2009 first time youth voters, combined with dormant older voters who are unlikely to have voted since 1994. Shilowa (2009) referred to the proportions of these targets, noting 'We can target 20

per cent of those who had not voted since 1994; we can target even more than this from the ANC's vote.'

To illustrate numbers of votes from the three target sources, and working on the author's hypothetical formula of COPE obtaining 50 per cent of its 2009 votes from ANC ranks, 25 per cent from opposition ranks, and a further 25 per cent from the body of new and dormant voters, the following is vote requirements emerge (working on a 78 per cent national turnout, amounting to 17.9 million voters out of the total electorate of approximately 23 million):

- To get 15 per cent of the national parliamentary vote, COPE would require 1.4 million of former ANC supporters voting for it, plus draw 0.7 million from the ranks of, first, the opposition parties and, second, new voters.
- For 12 per cent national support, COPE would require 1.2 million votes from ANC supporter ranks and 0.6 million each from former opposition supporters and new voters.
- The corresponding required number for COPE on the two respective support levels of 10 and 8 per cent national support would be 1 million ANC supporters and 0.5 million from each of the other two categories; or 0.8 million ANC supporters plus 0.4 million each from the two other sources.

In Lieu of Conclusion: COPE's Post Election Prospects

The result that COPE achieves on 22 April 2009 will greatly impact on the future track of opposition politics in South Africa. In the broader context, the COPE result will indicate whether the South African electorate is ready for post-liberation politics. It will indicate whether voters were prepared to accept that COPE had emerged as a political party that bears an identity that is more than the Polokwane loser's circle. These factors will obviously directly impact on the future of COPE, suggesting, for example, whether COPE would proceed as an autonomous party, or enter into alliances that could, in due course, precipitate new political parties, especially if these would be opposition parties.

The result would thus offer hints as to possible future realignments in opposition politics, with COPE potentially acting as a catalyst for post-2009 permutations in opposition politics. With COPE having acted in the role of ice-breaker, it could be easier in future for other groupings to split from the ANC – although it is similarly possible that the ANC's reaction in 'dealing with COPE' could have an inhibitive effect.

Comparative history of other liberation movement governments was furthermore suggesting an increasing legitimacy of post-liberation movement politics. COPE, to date, had already reinvigorated opposition politics in South Africa in general, and had shaken up the ANC to the effect of trying to correct apparent flaws and shortcomings.

As this analysis shows, COPE was a party with many flaws. Election 2009 would show whether this mattered and made voters turn away (also back to the ANC), or whether antipathy and disappointment with the ANC had grown to such an extent that a sizable group of voters would support COPE.

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South Africa: the State of Democracy and its Implications for 2009 Elections

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Introduction

The advent of the Congress of the People (COPE) the new party formed by defectors from the ruling African National Congress (ANC) has generated disproportionate interest in the forthcoming general elections. Questions have been raised about the sustainability of South Africa's democratic institutions, especially following the recall of former president Mbeki and the war of succession within the ANC.

More interestingly, fears have been expressed about possibilities of the ANC government expanding its executive powers and deploying it for intimidation of the opposition and rigging of the elections as has happened in many African countries. On the other hand, it has been predicted that the formation of COPE from within the bowels of the ANC does present a real possibility of the South African political system moving away from a dominant party system.

These concerns raise a broader question about the state of democracy in South Africa and its implications for the 2009 elections. Perhaps an important question here is whether indeed democratic institutions have taken deep root and built the required legitimacy so as to contribute towards the legitimisation and stabilisation of the political system, or whether the democratic gains of the past 15 years are still capable of being reversed.

This contribution constitutes an attempt to assess the state of democracy in South Africa and its implications for the forthcoming elections. This is organised as follows: it starts with a discussion of the discourses around single party dominance and the prospects of consolidation. This is followed by an analysis of the architecture of electoral institutions, which provides a

springboard for assessing the possibilities of the abuse of those institutions, and a basis for assessing the broader implications for the 2009 elections.

Single Party Dominance and the State of Democracy in South Africa

The dominant role of the ANC as a governing party since the advent of democracy has provoked a debate on the extent to which single party dominance has compromised democracy and democratic institutions in South Africa. It has been argued for example that in a context in which one party dominates the political landscape and faces little prospect of electoral defeat as the ANC does, concerns are raised that democracy and governance are more likely to be compromised. Despite provisions and mechanisms in place to protect the constitution and prevent the abuse of power, this view maintains that liberal democracy is being steadily eroded in South Africa and that the dominance of politics by one party and the seemingly bleak prospects for the alternation of power, are instead directing South Africa towards mere 'majoritarianism'.[6]

These scholars argue that democratic systems "…rely on institutionalised oppositions, and it is doubtful that any regime could long survive as minimally democratic without them. The argument goes that "… if there is no possibility of an opposition being seen as a 'realistic opposition', an alternative to government of the day, then the likelihood of a turnover of power is diminished and the crises of government are correspondingly more likely to be the crises of the democratic regime…[7] Thus, Southall[8] concludes that the absence of powerful opposition signifies the hollowness of South Africa's democracy.

The problem with the theorists of single party dominance in South Africa is that they fail to make a distinction between dominant parties and authoritarian dominant parties, the latter of which, as Suttner points out, are more likely to create conditions of oppression for their opponents.[9]

The reality is that there is no evidence to suggest that the ANC has deployed its dominance towards undermining democratic institutions. The ANC dominance of elections since 1994 (it has steadily increased its electoral support from 62% in 1994 to almost 70% in the 2004 election); its support in the local government elections over the three periods of local elections from 1995/6 to 2006, (also increasing steadily from 58% to 66% in 2006) has not led to the collapse or fundamental erosion of democracy, such as the turning of the country into a one party state. On the contrary, the ANC has made consistent efforts towards strengthening and consolidating democratic institutions as can be seen from the rigorous manner in which the electoral institutions have been crafted since 1996.

Moreover, as Suttner suggests, one has in South Africa a public sphere where citizens and civil society engage the state and express a diversity of views, which is another indication of the growing strength of democracy. To this extent therefore, the state of democratic institutions and particularly the electoral infrastructure, do seem to provide some guarantee that a level playing field has indeed been established for the conduct of elections in South Africa. However, let us look at some of these institutions, particularly the electoral institutions, in a bit more detail.

Architecture of Electoral Institutions

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC)

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) is the body responsible for managing and administering elections. The IEC was established in terms of the 1993 Interim Constitution and later through the 1996 Act of Parliament. The IEC's Vision declares as its main

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[6] Southall, R., 2003a, The State of party politics: Struggles Within the Tripartite Alliance and the decline of Opposition, in Daniel, Habib, and Southall (eds), *State of the Nation: South Africa 2003-2004*, Cape Town HSRC Press, pp. 53-78; Giliomee, H., and C. Simkins (eds), 1999, *The Awkward Embrace: One Party Domination and Democracy*, Cape Town, Tafelberg
[7] Jung, C., and Shapiro, I., 1995, South Africa's negotiated Transition: Democracy, Opposition and New Constitution Order, in *Politics and Society*, pp. 272
[8] Southall, R., 2003a, The State of party politics: Struggles Within the Tripartite Alliance and the decline of Opposition, in John Daniel, Habib, and Southall (eds) *State of the Nation: South Africa 2003-2004*, Cape town HSRC Press, pp. 53-78

[9] Suttner, R., 2006, Party Dominance Theory: Of What Value? *Politikon* vol. 33, no. 3, pp. 277-297

objective the strengthening of constitutional democracy through the delivery of free and fair elections.

The IEC comprises five Commissioners appointed through a fairly elaborate and rigorous process. The appointment of the Commissioners for the IEC is done by the Constitutional Court, and conducted through five different stages as follows:

- Call for candidates through newspaper advertisements, and short listing of candidates
- Interviews of successful candidates conducted by a panel consisting of:
  - President of the Constitutional Court (Chairperson)
  - Representative of Human Rights Commission
  - Representative of Commission on Gender Equality
  - The Public Prosecutor
- The interview panel then submits the names of eight nominees to the Portfolio Committee for Home Affairs (PCHA) for recommendation
- The recommended candidates are submitted to the National Assembly for approval
- Following National Assembly approval, the names of successful candidates are forwarded to the Minister of Home Affairs for submission to the president for appointment.

This elaborate process ensures that the appointments to the Electoral Commission are transparent and non-partisan and therefore have the confidence of all political players. The body so established, is therefore autonomous and an impartial manager of the electoral process. Furthermore, the Electoral Act of 1998 contains a binding Code of Conduct for political parties and their candidates. The purpose of the Code is to promote conditions that are conducive to holding free and fair elections, including the promotion of political tolerance, free campaigning and open public debate.

Since its establishment, the IEC has managed and conducted elections with impartiality and professionalism that has earned it the confidence of all political and social players. The IEC has in fact become a role model of an Electoral Commission on the continent, and has been invited by a number of countries to assist with their respective election processes.

The Electoral System

The electoral system in use since 1994 is Proportional Representation (PR) based on party lists. Prior to that, the apartheid regime used the British First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) system. The PR system applies only to the national and provincial elections. For the local elections, a combination of the FPTP and the OPR system was preferred. The rationale for this arrangement was the need to maintain some degree of accessibility and accountability at the local level.

The choice of the PR system was, however, informed by the political expediency of reconciliation. Recognising the exclusionary character of the FPTP, it was felt that the PR system would achieve the objective of deliberately broadening representation at the national and provincial levels, as each vote would count and there would be no winner-take-all outcome. Furthermore, it was recognized that it would be a logistical nightmare attempting to demarcate non-racial constituencies in a country where apartheid social engineering had designated residential areas on a racial basis. Hence, no constituencies were drawn up and the entire country was treated as one constituency. Finally, in order to accommodate all political players, the PR system was deliberately designed to provide for a very low threshold, determined primarily by voter turnout.

The Workings of the Electoral System

As indicated above, under the PR system the whole country is treated as one constituency. Parties contesting elections prepare lists of candidates for the National Assembly as follows:

- A National Assembly List
- Province to National Assembly List
- Province to Province List for the nine provinces

The number of seats a party would win would be proportional to its electoral strength. For example, if a party won 10 per cent of the vote, it would have

parliamentary representation proportional to the 10%. At the same time, voters would also choose candidates on provincial ballot for nine provincial legislatures.

As with all PR systems, candidates contest elections not as individuals but as party members, and voters vote for the party and not individuals. This, as has been pointed by some scholars, can have negative tendencies of alienating voters from their representative.

Limitations of the Proportional Representation (PR) System

As indicated above, the PR system was introduced as a compromise to accommodate minority interests and obviate the occurrence of single party dominance. Despite the continued dominance of the ANC, it can be argued that the system has indeed achieved the original intention of accommodating minority interests and achieving some degree of political stability.

But the PR system is not without its limitations. One of the consequences of its accommodation is the inevitable proliferation of minority parties and a weakening of the opposition parties, which has been the case since 1994. Furthermore, this may in certain cases result in 'ethnicisation' or 'racialisation' of politics.

Secondly, the PR List system invariably removes power from the electorate to the party, which ultimately exercises the powers of drawing up the Lists with the inevitable accusation of manipulation. Ultimately, party candidates become more accountable to the party rather than to the electorate, and therefore minimum links exist between the electorate and public representatives.

It is these perceived limitations which have led to calls for the reform of the PR system. According to some scholars, a more efficacious system appears to be the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) representation system, where PR is combined with FTPT. This, it is argued, provides a much more effective representation and provides effective linkages between public representatives and the electorate.

Floor Crossing

Finally, let us consider the impact floor crossing has had on the state of democracy. Floor crossing was not part of the package of the transition agreement. It was only in 2000 after the second election when the smaller parties, assuming that they could erode the dominance of the ANC in parliament, started agitating for the institution of floor crossing. Eventually legislation was put in place to establish floor crossing: The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Amendment Act of no 18 of 2002 (for local government) and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Amendment Act of 2003 (for provincial and national government). The two acts provide for two designated window periods, each lasting two weeks, during which public representatives are allowed to cross the floor to another party or to form a new party without losing their seats.

As it turned out, floor crossing did not benefit opposition parties. The ANC was the main beneficiary. In the floor crossing period since 2003, the main opposition parties fared badly; the ANC, on the other hand, succeeded in attaining a two-thirds majority in the National Assembly, further undermining the representation of the already smaller parties in the wider political system.

Thus, despite its positive attributes, floor crossing in South Africa has engendered the proliferation of smaller ineffective parties and further weakening of the opposition. Thus it is reasonable to conclude that the opportunistic experimentation with floor crossing by the opposition parties has not advanced the processes of democratic stability.

Implications for the 2009 Elections

Against the background of the foregoing analysis, what then are the implications for the 2009 elections? What impact is the electoral infrastructure likely to have on the elections?

The foregoing analysis would seem to suggest that democratic institutions have taken deep roots and legitimacy, so contributing towards the consolidation of

the electoral system. Indeed it can be argued that South Africa's transition to democracy and the experience of the last three general elections have been accompanied by great successes, so that South Africa is now indeed in a position to hold successful elections without any challenges to the legitimacy of the electoral processes and their outcomes. The system appears to have entrenched itself and the professionalism and impartiality with which the Electoral Commission has conducted past elections has earned it legitimacy from all political players and from society at large, witnessed by the high trust ratings the IEC receives in public opinion surveys.[10] Thus it is unlikely that we will witness any possibility of the ANC government expanding its executive powers and deploying them for the intimidation of the opposition, or the rigging of the elections, as has happened in many other African countries.

Local Government, the 2009 Elections and Party Manifestos

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It is election year in South Africa and as with every election contesting parties develop manifestos that become the basis of their campaigns. Manifestos are meant to give the electorate a clear picture and understanding of what they represent and what they will do/offer/change, if and when they get into office. This paper will be looking at the absence of the mention of local government and service delivery at the local level, in the manifestos of selected parties. We will look at the seven main parties, since 148 parties have registered in total to contest the elections. We argue that local governance and democracy was elevated to a sphere, equal in importance to others, but that the way in which parties treat local government and accord it influence and profile in their national manifestos appears to suggest that it is being relegated back to a tier, despite the lip-service paid to the importance of local government. Most of the major parties, it seems, have ignored the importance of local governance and local democracy to the detriment of the overall health and well-being of South Africa's democracy and governance system.

African National Congress (ANC)

In their 2009 Manifesto the African National Congress has identified the five following points as its priority areas for the next five years:

- Creation of decent work and sustainable livelihoods
- Education
- Health
- Rural development, food security and land reform
- The fight against crime and corruption[11]

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[10] '68% of citizens trust the IEC compared to the 52% that trust National Parliament', Roberts, B., 2008, Between trust and skepticism: Public confidence in institutions, *HSRC Review*, vol. 6, no. 1 - March 2008, Human Sciences Research Council, Pretoria

[11] African National Congress 2009 Manifesto http://www.anc.org.za/show.php?doc=elections/2009/manifesto/manifesto.html&title=2009+Election+Manifesto

There is no mention of local government and the local governance system or how the local governance system will aid service delivery. This could perhaps be justified on the basis that the parties are contesting for national and provincial seats and are only concentrating on issues at this level and relegating local government issues to the local government elections of 2011. However, given that improved service delivery is a critical component of the ANC's manifesto, and that there is a specific focus on rural development, issues of local government ought to have been included in the overall governance manifesto. After all, the ANC is expected to win the 2009 election. They have also said that the manifesto will provide the basis for the medium term when re-elected, and so it thus follows that within the overall governance framework and system, local government is an important component of both integrated and cooperative governance.

However, in terms of the ANC election campaign, there is a central telephone number that can be called for information and queries, and the pre-recorded message narrates the ANC's plans for local government. It is, however, unclear whether the message was recorded for the 2006 Local Government elections or that it is always online and the message periodically updated and improved upon.

These are some of the promises that the ANC makes towards its goal of improving local government; that there will be high calibre teams (with skilled personnel) put together to work with weak municipalities. Improve services such as water and sanitation, health at clinics and hospitals, expand free basic services to all households. Improve the quality of houses and improve services at all government centres i.e. police stations, clinics etc. implement large projects for economic development, implement projects in rural areas, food gardens, small to medium enterprises. Improve functioning of local government through public participation. This at least gives an indication of the ruling party's drive to improve local government by constantly reporting back to the people on the gains made and challenges still to be overcome. While local government is a feature of the ANC's manifesto it does not form a central component. One of the most critical

oversights has been a lack of proposals as to how the ANC as a government will attempt to address the many thousands of local protests of the last decade, some of which were violent. Many of these protests centred on issues of a lack of Local Councillor accountability, lack of facilitation by local representatives of service delivery and the general unhappiness in relation to local democracy and service delivery. In some instances, such as Khutsong, these violent protests were aimed at National Governance decisions, which affected both the local government system as well as citizens in a particular locality. While it is unrealistic to expect that party manifestos for National and Provincial elections would focus substantially on local governance, it is not unrealistic to expect that issues of national government, which affect local government, as well as the feature of local government as a component of the Governance system and the Democratic system, should be recognised. The ANC however, despite any substantive focus, does seem cognizant of Local Government issues in its 2009 manifesto.

The Democratic Alliance (DA)

The DA's top five priority areas are:

- Reducing poverty
- Improving the quality of education
- Improving the quality of health care
- Fighting crime and corruption
- Protecting and defending the Constitution[12]

Being the official opposition, the above mentioned points are the priority areas of the DA and they, too, do not speak directly to issues of local governance. While the priority areas identified by the DA have an impact on local government, the degree of depth that may have been expected in their manifesto in relation to the successes in local government that the DA has scored in areas where it is in government, have not been narrated and highlighted in the manifesto. In a wide-ranging, comprehensive and detailed manifesto with some very sound proposals the DA has, it seems, identified many

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[12]Democratic Alliance 2009 Manifesto, pp. 2-3, http://www.da.org.za/campaigns.htm?action=view-page&category=6329&sub-page=6330

areas in which local governments are a critical component of governance but in its manifesto detail, seems to have assumed the integration of local governance as a component to such a degree, that it disappears from view. Thus local governance and local government is not addressed in any degree of depth or detail in the DA manifesto, and yet again, while a national and local government manifesto would not dwell on matters of local government, given its critical centrality to many service delivery areas it ought to at least be among the focus areas, or integrated into identified priority areas of the election manifesto, where local governments have a role.

Congress of the People (COPE)

COPE identifies the following as its priority areas - to:

- Fearlessly defend the constitution and uphold the rule of law
- Systematically eradicate poverty, grow the economy, create decent work and substantially reduce unemployment
- Protect the environment and our natural resources for future generations
- Equip and educate our children to be globally competitive and ready to function in the knowledge economy and provide our people with opportunities to acquire the necessary skills to realise their full potential
- Significantly improve the quality of health care and increase health literacy
- Fight and reduce crime and provide better safety and security for all;
- Enhance the gains made in the empowerment of women to achieve gender equality
- Empower and develop the youth to realise their full potential and play their rightful role in society
- Strengthen families, family life and communities
- Unite the nation to act together to build a truly non-racial South Africa; and, contribute to the development of Africa, strengthen South South cooperation and build a more just world.[13]

Examining the priority areas of COPE, there really is no direct or significant mention of local government or service delivery. The focus seems to be solely on issues of national and provincial significance. Many of these identified issues have a direct bearing on local government and COPE may yet come to find that a lack of any focus on local government may be a serious omission.

United Democratic Movement (UDM)

The seven priority areas of the UDM are:

- Socio-economic development; create jobs and eradicate poverty. The UDM refers to saving costs by reassessing government spending and a point that is made which is relevant to this paper is 'reassessing excessive spending on municipal and provincial executive salaries'
- Combating crime and creating a safe South Africa
- Quality education for all South Africans
- Clean governance for all South Africans. Fighting corruption and nepotism. (The ruling party has also institutionalised nepotism with its so-called 'deployment of cadres', which elevates party membership above qualification or ability, and which has bred a culture of mediocrity, incompetence and corruption in many parts of the civil service as well as municipalities.)
- Reliable health care for all South Africans
- Protect the environment for all South Africans
- Electoral reform.[14]

The UDM does refer in part to local governance when it talks to clean governance /fighting corruption in the civil service, most especially in municipalities. As skills shortages are one of the factors that contribute to the underdevelopment and incapacity of municipalities, reassessing excessive spending on municipal and provincial executive salaries, attracting the right skills at municipal level and combating corruption at the municipal level are all well identified by the UDM.

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[13] 2009 Congress of the People Manifesto

[14] 2009 United Democratic Movement Manifesto p. 11

election update

Independent Democrats (ID)

The ID's ten priority areas are as follows:

- Provide a minimum grant funded through taxation on luxury goods and sin taxes
- Create jobs by massively boosting small business development and tackling youth unemployment by providing wage subsidies
- Position South Africa as a world leader in renewable energy and create thousands of jobs
- Fight crime by boosting the Police Service to 200 000 and employing 5 000 more social workers
- Extend the rollout or ARVs, introduce National Health Insurance
- Fill the 55 000 vacancies in the health sector
- Provide all schools with infrastructure within two to five years, improve teaching and introduce a Child Education Grant
- Institute a comprehensive rural development strategy that rolls out basic services, supports farmers and builds rural markets
- Cut wasteful government expenditure on the Arms and Nuclear industry and save the taxpayer billions
- Fill all vacancies in the public service and fire incompetent officials and ministers who fail to deliver
- Continue to fight for the realisation of constitutional rights, especially those of the poor people with disabilities, women and children

While many of the ID's core manifesto points relate directly to issues of local government, primarily those on building rural markets and development strategies that enhance service delivery, in its broader 57 page manifesto, local governance issues are well integrated into the ten priority areas listed, but as in other parties, there is little substantive focus on local government and governance.

Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP)

The IFP is focused on ensuring that the needs of South Africa and South Africans come first, and its key objectives are:

- Economic growth and job creation
- Combating poverty
- Law and Order
- Education
- Health
- Redressing the past
- Land reform
- The role of South Africa in the world
- The moral challenge(IFP manifesto p 9)

African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP)

The ACDP will focus on addressing these critical challenges:

- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Education
- Housing
- Health
- Justice and Crime
- Moral Regeneration and Integrity[15]

The pursuit of control of National Government seems to epitomise the very existence of political parties, hence the large investment that goes into the campaign process during national/provincial elections, and the focus then goes to issues that at the local level, and which are assumed to be solely local government issues, are shelved for the next round of local government elections. Once the national elections pass, only then do parties concentrate on local government through 'deployment' and developing strategies for local government elections. The logic seems to suggest that once control or seats in National Government are secured, the influence of the party trickles down to the rest of the other spheres of government. During national elections parties develop manifestos around key areas that are of significance or importance to the entire nation, but with local governance manifestos, parties have the opportunity to look to key issues that are local-specific i.e. water and sanitation, free basic services etc.

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[15] African Christian Democratic Party 2009 Manifesto p. 1

In conclusion it is evident that local government and its issues are not clearly outlined in the manifestos of parties contesting the April 2009 elections. Most of the issues mentioned are those of priority at the national and provincial levels, but because the different spheres of government are interrelated some of these issues do have a marked impact on local government. The focus of these elections is solely on national and provincial elections and understandably that is what parties are concerned about. However, local governance should not be totally sidelined considering how many protests have been held in the past year by disgruntled community members. It is also little wonder that turnout at local government elections has been tremendously low, at around 48% of registered voters in the 2006 local government elections. Despite the rhetoric that local government in our political and democratic system is not a relegated subordinate sphere of government, it seems as if all parties treat it as such, and it may just be that much of the malaise at local government level, ranging from poor staff quality, lack of skills and capacity, ill defined mandates which are sometimes unfunded, unrealistic expectations of delivery, and the manifestation of citizen dissatisfaction through violent direct action. This may be partly caused by the lack of attention and application afforded by political parties to both local government and democracy at these critical and crucial moments in South African history.

South Africa Elections 2009: Political Parties Manifestos on Electoral Reform

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Consistent with one of its founding values of the South African Constitution, namely "universal adult suffrage, a national common voters roll, regular elections and a multi-party system of democratic government to ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness",[16] the Republic of South Africa will go to the polls on 22 April 2009 for the National and Provincial elections. This will be the fourth multi-party democratic elections after apartheid. To date, 156 political parties have been registered with the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). Out of these parties, only 40 parties will contest national and provincial elections. This paper looks at election manifestos of the five main parties, namely the African National Congress (ANC), the Democratic Alliance (DA), the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), the United Democratic Movement (UDM) and the Congress of the People (COPE) with regard to their proposals on electoral systems i.e. specific proposals about the direct election of the President, Premiers and Mayors; and some parties arguing for a move away from a pure closed list proportional representation system towards the adoption of a mixed system

The electoral system has been raised by some parties as a contributing factor to what they perceive as lack of, or absence of, accountability towards the electorate and greater dispositions towards accountability to party bosses. These are important considerations since the electoral system is the method adopted by a country for choosing its leadership. Such a method stipulates procedures and rules on the conduct of elections, as well as how the chosen leaders occupy their seats in parliament and other representative institutions.[17] South Africa operates the proportional representation electoral system (PR). As early as 2002, questions regarding the appropriateness or otherwise of the PR have been raised.

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[16] Section 1 (d) of the South African Constitution
[17] Matlosa 2002

A formal process looking into this matter was led by the Electoral Task Team (ETT) chaired by Dr. Van Zyl Slabbert. The details of this process are beyond the scope of this paper, save to say that a report was produced and its recommendation was to introduce a mixed system consisting of proportional and first-past-the-post (FPTP) systems[18].

It is necessary to reflect briefly on the reasons that may have influenced South Africa to adopt the current proportional representation system in the first place. Following decades of apartheid rule, the advent of democracy in South Africa ushered in by the 1994 democratic elections marked the beginning of a new social, economic and political discourse in the country. A democratically elected government came into being with a mandate to craft and implement policy and institutional reforms that would, among other things, ensure the creation of a free and just society and improve socio-economic conditions (especially for the marginalised groups).[19]

It was necessary that in line with this democratic transition, the country adopted an electoral system that would hold the fragile peace together. The adoption of the PR system therefore was informed by this principle. In the spirit of consociational democracy whose main features include among others, decision making by consensus and proportionality in terms of representation,[20] the country ensured that all parties irrespective of their size were represented in the legislature. While broad representation has arguably been achieved, there is a growing perception among opposition parties that the unintended consequence of the PR system is that it promotes unaccountability. The views of these parties are presented in seriatim in the next section.

COPE believes that government has to be accountable to the people and committed to serving the people instead of personal interests. It is opposed to the promotion of kith and kin politics. They believe that accountability will be ensured through changing of the electoral system from the proportional system to the direct election of senior office bearers like the president, premiers and mayors. The party believes that this will also improve public participation in all forms of governance. It also undertakes to ensure that these popularly elected representatives can only be removed from office by the people, through clearly defined and nationally agreed to, constitutional procedures. COPE proposes that the people should be able to elect public representatives at the national and provincial spheres so as to achieve a mix of the electoral system as is the case at the local government level.[21]

The changing of the electoral system is also echoed by the DA which although admitting that the proportional representation system is fair and inclusive, argues that voters have no say over who represents them. According to the DA, 'voters should be able to elect their public representatives such as the President, Premiers and Mayors directly, and know who their MP or MPL is, without sacrificing the fairness of a proportional system'. For this reason the party advocates for a mixed electoral system consisting of proportional representation and a constituency based system. It proposes a formula where "75% of national and provincial public representatives will be elected in 90 three-member constituencies, while 25% of national and provincial representatives will be appointed on the basis of a list system in direct proportion to their party's share of the vote. The DA's argument is that this system will ensure MPs accountability to voters. Furthermore, 'the three-member constituencies allow voters to feel they have at least one representative who speaks and acts in their interests'.[22]

The Electoral system also features in the Independent Democrats (ID) 2009 election manifesto. According to the ID, the recommendations of the Van Zyl Slabbert Commission on Electoral Reform pertaining to the adoption of a mixed system of both proportional representation and constituency system should be implemented. Similar to the other parties which use the electoral system as an important electioneering issue for this elections, the ID argues that the proposed system

[18] Chiroro 2008
[19] Shale 2006
[20] See Deschouwer 1994

[21] COPE manifesto
[22] DA manifesto

will 'ensure that our public representatives are far more accountable' to the voter. This will be achieved without compromising the important aspect of the proportional component of the system which is the protection of the diversity of political party voices in South Africa.

The Inkatha Freedom Party does not necessarily bring up the question of electoral system. But, it is a known fact that the party has been agitating for the electoral system reform since the time its president was the national minister of Home Affairs and it has never changed or wavered in its position on the nature of the electoral system. The president of the IFP has been a strong critic of the now defunct floor crossing provisions and is on record as saying that there should have been electoral reform which would enable MP's to cross the floor with the 'moral legitimacy that they are accountable and directly linked to the electorate...'[23] One of the core values mentioned in the IFP manifesto is freedom under which the party considers transparency and accountability as critical elements. It is not farfetched therefore to suggest that in not so many words, the party shares similar sentiments with other parties on the issue of accountability. On the basis of the foregoing it can also be concluded that it supports electoral reform given its known position on the electoral system.

The ANC manifesto does not dwell on the issue of electoral reform. It departs from the point that the "ANC led government has made much progress in the past 15 years" in terms of delivery in housing, water and electricity, economic growth, job creation, provision of social grants and deepening of democracy. The central message of the ANC manifesto is that there is need to work together to achieve more in the areas above. It is important however to note that the party recognises the need to change the way government relates to the people and in the delivery of services. It also commits to ensuring a service delivery culture that will put every elected official and public servant to work for the people, and ensure accountability to the people. Unlike the opposition parties, who apportion the lack or absence of accountability to the electoral system, the ANC seems

to consider this a question of working closer with the people and not the electoral system.[24]

Having looked at the arguments raised by the respective parties above, it is critical to then ask the question, is the question of electoral system raised because there is a real threat to our nascent democracy or is it used as a mere electioneering point? Better still, against the background of societal divisions under apartheid, has the political environment changed to a degree that warrants electoral reform? Lastly, can the question of lack of accountability be attributed to the PR system solely? In order to answer the first question, it is important to first address the second and the third question in their sequence. It is argued that while a lot has been achieved in terms of political stability in the last 15 years, it is axiomatic that the country still has to strive to close the gaps in society to ensure that all interests, particularly of the minorities, are catered for. In fairness to the parties, none seems to suggest a complete removal of the PR system, but the introduction of a mixed system. The degree to which proportionality is retained should therefore be cognisant of the need to protect minority interests, no matter how inconvenient or politically problematic it may be seen to be.

The introduction of the mixed system is however not a panacea for the perceived lacks of accountability. There are other reasons that may be the cause of this problem, rather than solely the electoral system. In part this accountability malaise may be attributable to divided loyalties, where elected officials are in the dilemma of feeling compelled to account to two principals, firstly, the party and then constituents or the people.[25] To confirm a cliché, whereas under the FPTP system the elected official is accountable to the voter, the official under the PR system has no direct link and therefore accountability, to the voter. This notwithstanding, our argument here is that the officials fail to account not so much due to the PR system, but due to factors that are due to the internal functioning within a party, where a carrot and stick approach is often used by party leaderships, forcing the elected official to become more loyal to the party than to the people because their

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[23] See Matlosa and Shale 2008

[24] ANC Manifesto
[25] See Shale 2008

continued presence on party lists is dependent on the party hierarchy rather than on other factors. It follows therefore that under the circumstances, changing the electoral system may not be the right solution to the problem of lack of accountability but that a change in the internal functioning and democratic culture within parties as well as public democratic culture can also be part of the solution.

Against the foregoing, it is important to point out at the risk of repetition but by way of conclusion, that the question of electoral system reform is not new. It dates back to 2002. It has been established in the paper that while there are calls for electoral system reform by opposition parties, the timing may not be ideal given the pending national challenges that still need to be addressed- challenges which can in part be addressed under the current PR system. It is not farfetched therefore to conclude that the overwhelming call for the electoral reform at this time may not have been well thought out by some of the parties and may be being used as an electioneering stunt rather than a substantive issue. After all, even those calling for the direct election of the President and other office bearers may not have considered the implications of the adoption of such a system for other aspects of the governance system, as well as for political and democratic culture in South Africa.

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PROVINCIAL COVERAGE

Eastern Cape Province

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Review of Previous Elections and Pre Election Processes

This preview discusses, in turn, the Electoral Performance of parties that contested the 2004 provincial elections, Voter Registration issues, Party Manifestos development, Nomination Processes and Media Coverage of the election campaign.

The Performance of Political Parties in the 2004 Elections

Thirteen parties contested the provincial elections. Four of them, the African National Congress (ANC), the United Democratic Movement (UDM), the Democratic Alliance (DA) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), constituting 30 percent of all contestants, succeeded in being represented in the provincial legislature.

Table 1: Eastern Cape Provincial Elections Results 2004*

Political Party	Votes	% Votes	Seats
African National Congress	1 768 987	79.27	51
United Democratic Movement	205 993	9.23	6
Democratic Alliance	163 785	7.34	5
Pan Africanist Congress	22 324	1.00	1
African Christian Democratic Party	17 372	0.78	0
Independent Democrats	17 314	0.78	0
New National Party	14 084	0.63	0
Freedom Front+	5 692	0.26	0
Inkatha Freedom Party	4 373	0.20	0
Azanian People's Organisation	3 884	0.17	0
Socialist Party of Azania	3 356	0.15	0
United Christian Democratic Party	2 707	0.12	0
National Action	1 672	0.07	0
Total	**2 231 543**	**100**	**63**

Source: Adapted from tables posted on: http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/sou2004results1.htm and http://www.elections.org.za/Elections2004_Static.asp?radResult=50&se1Province=1

The ANC, as in the 1994 and 2009 elections won the province with 1 768 987 votes (79.27 percent) translating into 51 seats in the 63 seat provincial chamber. What was significant in the ANC's win was that its margin of victory surpassed that of its national performance, in which it

had gained 69.69 percent. It was followed by the United Democratic Movement (UDM) which was contesting its second provincial election. The UDM reclaimed the official opposition status it had gained in 1999 by registering 205 993 votes (9.23 percent) with six seats. Third was the Democratic Alliance (DA) with 163 785 votes (7.34 percent) with five seats, while the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) had 22 324 votes (1 percent) and one seat.

The remainder of the parties that contested the elections, the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP) Independent Democrats (ID), New National Party(NNP), Freedom Front Plus (FF+), Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo), the Socialist Party of Azania (Sopa), the United Christian Democratic Party (UCDP) and National Action (NA), all failed to gain representation in the provincial legislature as individually they all had under one percent support.

The voter turnout was 79.31 percent with less than 1.2 percent of spoiled ballots and it is instructive to note that the turnout was higher than the national average, which was 76.73 percent.

As a brief prognosis for the 2009 elections, it is most likely that all these parties will contest the election, except the New National Party (NNP), which was disbanded after the 2004 poll, and with a new party, Congress of the People (COPE), entering the race.

Voter Registration: Elections 2009

The registration of voters in the province followed national trends, with the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) noting the high level of national interest among voters which surpassed its initially projected target of 22 million to 23 million.[26] As in other provinces, the special registration drives undertaken by the IEC, in addition to the regular day to day registration at Municipal Offices, was held in the province in two segments on the 8 and 9 November 2008 and 7 and 8 February 2009.

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[26] http://www.elections.org.za/news_get.asp?press=0&NewsID=398&Opt=&Data=&Re

In the first election drive in November 2008, the province came third after KwaZulu Natal (451 030) and Gauteng (369 623) in registering new voters, who totaled 193 444.[27] Indeed the high level of voter interest among Eastern Cape voters was revealed in the findings of the voter participation survey of 2008, undertaken by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) on behalf of the IEC, in which 81 percent of voters indicated that they had already registered; a figure that was only surpassed by the Northern Cape at 82 percent.[28]

In terms of the final tally of voters registered in the province, the IEC noted in its parliamentary briefing on the process after the second registration drive, that the province registered the third highest number of voters with 3 055 655 voters registered.[29] Most significantly, as the IEC indicates on its website, according to its percentage voter registration municipality maps, over half of the municipalities in the province reflect more than 50 per cent of registered voters.[30]

Two major trends revealed themselves from these high registration figures. The first was that the majority of registered voters are both female and young. There are 1 772 489 registered female voters versus 1 283 166 million males, and the age group which reflects the highest number is that of 20-29 year olds, at 727 339, translating into 24 percent of all registered voters in the province[31] This means that if young female voters come out in high numbers on polling day, they will have a significant impact on the results.

The other revealing issue about these figures is that the high turnout for the registration drives and heightened enthusiasm for the forthcoming election means that there is going to be serious contest between parties that will compete for votes in this province.

Party Manifesto Development

Developing an understanding of the process that leads to production of party manifestos and analysis of this process from the provincial perspective hinges on two issues: the formal procedures outlined in party documents and the actual activities undertaken by parties to solicit input to their internal structures.

It is notable that at both levels of analysis there are serious challenges in engaging an exposition of these processes as parties provide scant information to assist informed comment. To contextualize this observation, very few parties make such information available in terms of the activities that they carry out to actualise the production of these documents from information that was gleaned from their websites [32] The common thread that runs through such documents, which were accessed from only two parties, the ANC and Cope, is an emphasis on the consultative processes that these parties enter into with their general membership and interested stakeholders, in producing their manifestos.

For example, in the lead up to its manifesto launch, Cope published on its website a detailed programme of activities that indicated scheduled consultation with different sectors such as civil society organisations, Traditional Leaders, the Business Community and Labour Organisations.[33] The ANC on the other hand, in addition to the input sourced from its internal structures, launched various campaigns that encouraged the general public to contribute their ideas for the manifesto via sms, fax and email.[34]

Other parties such as the Independent Democrats (ID) and Azanian People's Organisation (Azapo) provide relatively scant information on the process they follow to produce their manifestos. Parties such as the African Peoples Convention (APC) and the Freedom Front Plus (FF+) exhibit what can be considered to be poor political organisation during election time, as their websites do not provide information on their election activities.[35] Given this scenario it is difficult to analyse how most political parties produce their manifestos. Furthermore, it is difficult to gauge the level of participation of party

27 *Ibid*
28 http://www.elections.rog.za/news_get.asp?press=0&NewsID=395&oPT=&dATA=&Re
29 http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=3086&art_id=nw2009021715352
30 http://www.elections.rog.za.Percentage_Register.asp
31 http://www.elections.org.za/Statistics1.asp?page=1
32 See for example the following website pages:
http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/pr/2008/pr1128.html;
http://www.congressofthepeople.org.za/page.php?17
33 https://www.congresofthepeople.org.za/page.php?17
34 http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/pr/2009/pr0123.html
35 http://www.theapc.org.za ; http://www.vryheidsfront.co.za

provincial structures in the production of these documents.

In summary, two conclusions may be drawn. Firstly, relatively small parties, and those who have no presence or inclination to contest the province competitively, tend to give very little attention to input from provincial structures or do not have mechanisms to do so. Secondly, it is the parties that are seriously competing for votes in the province that take tangible steps to involve not only their internal structures, but the general public, in soliciting input for the final production of their manifestos. However, the question here is to what extent these inputs, especially those from the general public, have an impact in terms of being included in the final manifestos. This is simply impossible to analyse and assess as these parties do not indicate which suggestions they have carried into the final manifesto and which they have discarded.

Nomination Process of Candidates

The nomination of candidates for public office, by placing them on national and provincial lists, can be gleaned from consulting the constitutions of political parties. Some parties explicitly do so and others do not. Those parties that provide this information in their constitutions (usually the major ones such as the ANC and DA) stipulate that this process is initiated at the lowest level of the party structure, usually at the branch level, through to the sub regional, provincial structures, and ultimately to the national structures which make the final decision.

In the context of the lead up to the provincial election, these list producing processes have been underpinned by major controversies within political parties about which candidates should be finally endorsed to stand for the elections. This issue has been highlighted in the media with respect to parties which are very active in the province. In this regard, the major focus has been on such parties as the ANC, Cope and the DA.

Within the ANC, the debate has been to what extent its alliance partners in the province, the Congress of South African Trades Unions (COSATU) and the South African

Communist Party (SACP) should be represented on ANC lists. This contestation was illustrated when these alliance partners' preferred candidate for premier, Phumulo Masualle, who is also an SACP office bearer, was provisionally placed third on the draft list.[36] Indeed, some confusion crept into the process because Jacob Zuma, the ANC candidate for National President, was nominated for the premiership of the province.[37]

The former scenario indicates the highly contested intra-alliance conflicts around lists, while the latter points to poor political management that Zuma, the party candidate for president could even be considered by some branches and regions for the position of premiership of the province.

The other sub-text to these tensions has been the suspension or expulsion of suspected Cope sympathisers who are still ANC members in various areas of the province, most possibly in order to open space on the nomination lists.[38] The highest profile individual to suffer this fate is Professor Wiseman Nkuhlu, who was expelled as the head of the board of the Eastern Cape Economic Development Corporation (ECDC) after indications that he appeared on Cope's list for the post of provincial premier.[39]

The simmering tensions over nomination to party lists have also surfaced within Cope's provincial structures. One of the most serious conflicts arose in the party's Amathole Regional Conference held in Butterworth in early February, when some delegates accused the provincial leadership of not consulting them enough about the nominations.[40] Most revealing of these tensions was the complaint that Cope was promoting 'a family dynasty' as Professor Nkuhlu, the mooted party's premier

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[36] Msimelelo Jwabane, Alliance partners 'ready for war' over E Cape ANC lists, D*aily Dispatch* 27 January 2009, p. 1

[37] Nsimelelo Njwabane, Shocks galore on ANC's nominations list, *Saturday Dispatch*, 24 January 2007, p. 7

[38] For these accounts, see for example, *Daily Dispatch* Premier denies 'rebels purge', 25 November 2008; *Grocott's Mail*, ANC puts the boot in, 9 December 2008; *Daily Dispatch*, ANC leaders sack 15 councillors for Cope links

[39] Patrick Cull, Cope candidate Nkuhlu axed from ECDC board, *The Herald*, 25 February 2009, p. 2

[40] Nsimelelo Njwabane, Battle for Cope posts heats up, *Daily Dispatch*, February 28 2009, p. 4

designate, is the uncle of the Provincial Chairperson, Andile Nkuhlu.[41]

Heated debate has also accompanied the list nomination process within the DA with party insiders alleging that the national leader, Helen Zille, was interfering in provincial affairs by placing her favourite candidates on the list.[42] This prompted the regional leader, Athol Trollip, to vehemently reject the charges by noting that candidates were nominated by their regions and their potential for leadership assessed by a party selection committee and an outside agency, Deloitte and Touche.[43]

Provincial nominations within prominent political parties in the province have been highly charged, although differentially, given that it is clear that the province will be strongly contested in the forthcoming elections; an observation emphasised by the high voter interest noted earlier.

Media Coverage of the Campaigns

Both print and electronic media coverage has been vigorous. The print coverage has been dominated by The *Herald and the Daily Dispatch* and their weekend editions, the *Weekend Post* and *Saturday Dispatch* respectively. These publications have, in addition to general news coverage of the campaigns, focused on dedicating specific election pages in their editions. Furthermore, coverage and the unpacking of election issues has been assisted by regular contributions from columnists and commissioned articles from independent analysts and academics.

A notable factor is that the print media has remained relatively unscathed by criticism of biased reporting, most likely because they are private concerns, unlike the public broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) which has come under intense criticism for alleged biased reporting. This was illustrated by an incident on 22 February when Azapo members disrupted a live broadcast of an election debate on SABC

2 which resulted in a brawl, with protesters accusing the broadcaster of ignoring their party.[44]

Generally the media coverage has been incisive and extensive in bringing election news to the broad population. This can be gleaned from the fact that, for example, the SABC notes that each day its viewers and listeners reach the 27 million mark nationally and access these services in various languages.[45]

[41] *Ibid*
[42] Myibongwe Maqhina, DA leaders dilemma: where shall I serve, *Daily Dispatch,* 28 January 2009, p. 4.
[43] *Ibid*
[44] http://www.mg.co.za/article/2009-02-03-zapo-blasts-sabc-for-biased-reporting
[45] *City Press*, SABC News Election Coverage Special, 7 December 2008, pp 30-31

election update

Free State Province

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Elections build governments and set agendas for the country. Elections serve as an opportunity to evaluate and assess the achievements and failures of a government and develop a plan for the future. It is a time when promises, formulated in their manifestos, are made by political parties. Elections provide an opportunity for both the electorate and political parties to demand an accounting from government of expenditure and the level of representation for the period served. It is also a chance to renew the mandate of the party in government and assure potential public representatives of society's support. Civil society participation is critical for democracy. An election time is thus an opportune moment at which to critically consider what this potential participation means.

How did the elections of 2004 run? Which parties were involved and how did they perform? Let us refresh our minds.

Electoral Performance of Parties in the Province in 2004

The elections of 2004 were highly competitive and some of the parties registered to contest the 2004 elections in the Free State were the African National Congress (ANC), Democratic Alliance (DA), African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), United Christian Democratic Party (UCDP), Freedom Front (FF), Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), New National Party (NNP), United Democratic Movement (UDM), and Dikwankwetla Party of South Africa.

For these parties to perform well in the 2004 elections, campaigning had to be powerful and strategic. As you might know, campaigning requires volunteers and leaders who are well informed and very clear and bold about party policies and strategies for delivery. Political parties had to organise workshops to empower their members who would be on the campaign trail, to sharpen their skills and pump up their commitment and confidence in the ability of a party to deliver.

Through campaigns, members gain depth of knowledge about a party and commit to its standpoint. Members also develop their charismatic leadership skills to influence the decisions of the voters in favour of their party.

The result of the elections of 2004 reflected the performance of political parties and all came out as winners due to Proportional Representation, the electoral system being used. This electoral system allowed even the minority parties to be represented, with the African National Congress (ANC) coming out as the obvious winner of the majority votes, followed by the Democratic Alliance (DA) as the official opposition in the Free State.

It should be noted that as much as the parties performed well at the ballot box, this was not necessarily a reflection of sound service delivery. Instead, the outcome in the Free State confirmed the high level of hope the African National Congress represented for the majority of the electorate. The people still believed strongly that the ANC had the capacity to deliver and given the socio-economic challenges of the province and taking into account that the rural vote is stronger, the ANC gave the electorate in this area the hope that one day, poverty would be eradicated and people would have the basics such as food, shelter, education and safety and security.

It should also be clear that one was dealing with an electorate in transformation. Based on the changes in the demographics of the voters and the different motivations of South African voters, it is clear that there was a trend developing over the years, one that will have a bearing on the performance of political parties at the polls. According to Sakhele et al (2007:115), voter behaviour is shaped by social and economic conditions and therefore, rapid socio-economic and political transformation can alter long-standing or frozen cleavage structures that often guide electoral behaviour.

To support the above observation, Sakhele et al noted the following facts within the South African society. The enormous changes the electorate has undergone. For example, the demographics of the electorate are vastly different to that of 1994. Generational changes

drastically altered the age composition of the population with an increasing proportion of young voters aged between 18 and 30. This has been experienced within the Free State province as well, where there has been a clear increase in the number of youth registering as voters, from 2004. Approximately one-third of the potential electorate in 2004 had been too young to vote in 1994. Demographic population shifts and growth have also altered the regional and racial composition of the electorate, with the urban and African share rising.

Given these definite shifts, one has a mental picture of how the performance of political parties may be affected and might continue to be shaped by how the electorate makes decisions about its voting power.

Voter Registration

Voter registration leading to the elections of April 14, 2004, was a success in many ways. Both women and the youth registered in great numbers. It was clear that civil society was beginning to realise and understand the seriousness and the value of voting.

The IEC also reported at an Election Indaba that out of 1.8 million eligible voters, 1.1 million had registered to vote in the 2004 election. These figures showed the commitment of the electorate and it was clear that democracy was strengthening and in comparison with the 1999 figures, a trend was developing where over 90 percent of the registered voters actually voted.

The management of the voter registration process was very efficient; the process was smooth and peaceful. Political parties gave their support and co-operation as promised and that complemented the job of the IEC. For voter registration, 1063 registration stations were open and 3186 registration officers were appointed and thoroughly trained. All points were accessible as the issue of distance travelled by citizens was taken into account, and that maximised the achievements.

Despite the successes recounted thus far it is important to note that in 2004 there was considerable apathy among the youth. To encourage the youth to register took some effort which involved facilitating an understanding of the importance and power of the vote.

There was a strong feeling of detachment from the electoral process, as though elections did not affect the lives of young people.

When comparing 2004 to what is happening now in 2009, it shows that "the penny has dropped" - the message has become clearer to the youth. There is a better understanding and ownership of the future and the kind of leadership the youth would want to be represented by. There is a realisation that if they do not participate in electing the leaders of tomorrow, someone else will choose them for them and it will take five years to exercise the right to vote again.

The 2004 elections were significant and will be remembered as the election when prisoners first gained the right to vote. This development was an achievement for democracy as prisoners remain citizens of the country and in the Free State, the IEC was ready to face the challenge of voter registration in prisons. The prisoners were also excited and used the opportunity to register as voters and eventually voted.

Voting Station and Staffing

Throughout the years since 1999, the IEC has tried to set up a stable network of voting stations and it was stated by IEC personnel that this strategy allowed voters to use a venue where they know that voter registration and voting will consistently take place. Therefore, the IEC worked hard to try, as far as possible, to use the same venues used in 1999 and in 2004 elections, for registration and voting. There were basic principles followed to reach the decision on voting stations, for example:

- the requirement to have one voting station per voting district;
- the same venue to be used for both voter registration and voting;
- permanent structures having to be used as venues as far apart as possible; and
- identification of alternative venues in a voting district, to serve as an alternative, in case the 'first choice' venue not being available.

The criteria used to identify a new venue in situations where the venue used in the past elections was not available, were as follows:

- the centrality of venue in relation to the Voting District;
- accessibility;
- safety and security;
- size (the venue had to be roughly 100 square metres to accommodate 25 officials and related administrative materials); and
- availability of water, toilets, electricity and a telephone.

The Free State province managed to comply with the requirements and extra work had to be done to ensure that the permanent venues were accessible to physically disabled voters.

Party manifesto development

The development of the manifestos of political parties is a process which requires serious thought and commitment. It requires focus and understanding of the challenges of society and how far a party wants to go. This puts a party in a position to decide on the issues which are critical to the party and what its belief system is. A party can decide to have a single focus or multi-focuses depending on the number of issues the party feels strongly about. This process has to be guided by the ideology of a party so as to formulate strategy.

Developing a manifesto has to involve members at branches of a political party. It has to be an inclusive process so that all members can associate with its result, that being the manifesto. The process requires rigorous discussion, debate and consultation of a broader membership, as well as critical thought around possible questions that might be asked directly in relation to the manifesto.

The manifesto has to be realistic to be attractive to the electorate and it is also important to consider the financial implications of what stands in the manifesto. It is important to develop a manifesto which is real and not full of empty promises since the electorate has learned

to differentiate what is achievable from what is not. It is essential to avoid ambiguity and use simple, easy to read language which the electorate can comprehend. Citizens should be able to relate to issues, thereby improving the party's chance of gaining support.

Having participated in two national elections, it may be said that the electorate of 2004 was more sophisticated than that of 1999 and 1994. The electorate is beginning to be more critical and demanding and that confirms that citizens have begun to value the power of their vote.

Once the draft of a manifesto has done its rounds of approval through the levels of authority within a party and is endorsed as the official document to campaign for an election, then the manifesto is launched formally to mark the beginning of campaigning. This document gets to be put to the test and also to be held as the way to the future. The manifesto guides nomination processes. Once the agenda of elections is clear, then the best drivers of this agenda have to be nominated to serve the people.

Nomination process

The candidate nomination process in the Free State was vibrant in 2004, with parties forming alliances and partnerships for the elections. Dikwankwetla Party of South Africa had formed an alliance with the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC). This was a strategy that some of the opposition parties were using to strengthen their power and their chances of being represented in Parliament.

It is important to note that representation is at the core of democracy and democratic governance. Therefore, the process of nominating those representatives is crucial.

Another alliance was the Freedom Alliance (FA), formed between the Freedom Front (FF), the Conservative Party (CP) and the Afrikaner Eenheids Beweging (AEB). This was a move by opposition parties which were predominantly Afrikaans and were perceived and known to represent the interests of Afrikaners, to consolidate their support and strengthen their voice. A strategy like this helped to avoid votes being split, to the detriment of all parties

involved. Parties then focussed on common policy issues and manifestos and promoted those as a collective.

The Independent Democrats (ID), a new party in 2004, was represented in the Free State province. What was noticeable about it then is that there was a huge representation of women in the leadership and its nomination processes at branch level in the Free State, were largely transparent.

Party lists of all parties registered for participation in the 2004 election were required to be submitted to the IEC provincial office, in this case, in the Free State, together with all the other essentials; a prescribed acceptance of nomination signed by each candidate, a certified copy of the green bar-coded identity document (page of the photo and identity number). This process occurred immediately after the date of elections was announced. Even for the elections of 2009, it should be expected that the same would be required.

The process of compiling party lists carries a huge responsibility and should be done with great sensitivity. Nomination lists and campaigning determines the level of representation and therefore the level of support possible. It is the responsibility of the political parties to ascertain that the people nominated on their lists have the best interests of the parties and of society in general, and that they are willing to serve.

These are the people into whose hands society puts their trust and they will be expected to represent the hopes and aspirations (needs and wants) of the broader society in all their operations. The electorate depends on the discretion of their party leaders to nominate appropriate people for the job.
Nomination processes, like all other election activities, attract a lot of media attention. In 2004, the media played their part.

Media coverage of election campaign

Campaigning without media would not be the same. Media plays an essential role in a democracy and according to Roskin, media should be there to transmit and provide factual information, to raise awareness, and to a large extent, educate and develop critical thinking among the public.

In 2004, media coverage was great. There was a variety of print and electronic media bringing election coverage in several languages and for the Free State, there was enough broadcast in Sesotho, Afrikaans and English, among other languages. Coverage in Setswana reached areas like Thaba Nchu and Zulu language speakers were catered for, especially in the Harrismith area, close to KwaZulu-Natal. Generally, no community was left out, as small towns of the Free State were visited and people were afforded an opportunity to air their views.

From the IEC's side, there was a program on Sundays on Radio Lesedi at 10h00 called "Thuto tsa selehae". This program was aimed at educating the voters and general society about electoral issues and their responsibilities in a democracy, with reference to the 2004 elections. Another programme was broadcast in the mornings between 5a.m. and 7a.m., focusing on elections and the people's experiences around the Free State. Furthermore, Radio Lesedi was broadcasting from different areas in the Free State, to increase access to the media.

It is important to note that the media has a responsibility to bring news to the attention of the people. The media has a role in assisting government to spread information to society. Political parties, being part of society, have a share of coverage that they can claim. Throughout the process objectivity is critical as it determines reliability of source.

Political parties that had registered to contest elections in the Free State received coverage of some of their campaigns while in other instances the issue of party financing was brought to the fore.

Having experienced the media in operation in the Free State, one waits in anticipation to see the level to which the media has improved coverage. There is also far more media at play in the Free State, many more accessible and free. Technology has also taken media to another level and that is a critical level where the youth

operates. To target the youth for the 2009 elections, more creativity is necessary.

Having touched on several aspects of the previous elections of 2004, it is also crucial to reflect on the safety and security aspect of the elections as this is vital in creating an environment conducive to free and fair elections.

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Limpopo Province

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A Brief History of Elections Since 1994

When the democratic dispensation was ushered in 1994 there was no voters' roll. It was only introduced in 1999 and since then, with electoral reports and recorded statistics about the electoral process and its outcomes, society could begin to have a sense of the evolution of the democratic order with respect to one of its indicators, i.e. elections, and what was needed to advance their conduct further. However, in view of the systems in place for Election 2009, it is evident that the IEC has since covered a lot of ground.

An estimated number of eligible voters in April 1994 was 27 092 153 and 19 726 610 cast their ballots on that historic day. A voters' roll was not compiled in 1994 and voters' eligibility documents (temporary voter cards) were issued up to and on voting day. South African citizens abroad and permanent residents were eligible to vote in 1994, although not in 1999.

In keeping with international practice, the calculations of voter turnout for the 1995/6 municipal elections and the 1999 provincial and national elections are based on the voters' roll compiled for those elections.

Table 1: Elections since 1994 – Voter Turnout in the Province

1994 National Election	84.70 %
1995/6 Municipal Election	46.15%
1999 National Election	91.55 %

Table 2: Spoilt Votes

1994 National Election	0.93%
1995/6 Municipal Election	2.01%
1999 National Election	1.82%

The voter turnout for national elections has been consistently high in the Limpopo province. What is disturbing is the low turnout for municipal elections. There is a sense that the municipal elections are less important, and that the status quo will prevail, regardless of whether or not one casts a vote. The party list system and the poor calibre of the majority of

councillors at local level seem to discourage participation at local level.

Table 3: Electoral Performance of Parties in the Province in 2009

Party	Acronym	Votes	%
African Christian Democratic Party	ACPP	18 281	1.10
African National Congress	ANC	1 464 432	88.29
Afrikaner Eenheids Beweging	AEB	6 598	0.40
Azanian People's Organisation	AZAPO	8 931	0.54
Dabalo rivhuwa Patriotic party	DPF	8 229	0.50
Democratic/Demokratiese Party	DP	23 486	1.42
Federal Alliance/Federal Alliansie	FA	5 365	0.32
Inkatha Freedom Party	IFP	5 644	0.34
New National Party/Nuwe Nasionale Party	NNP	28 159	1.70
Pan Africanist Congress of Azania	PAC	23 325	1.41
United Democratic Movement	UDM	41 700	2.5
Vryheids Front/ Freedom Front	VF/FF	10 727	0.65
Ximoko Party	XP	13 817	0.83
Number of registered voters		1 847 766	
Total valid votes		1 658 694	
Spoilt votes		25 137	
Percentage poll		91.13	

There is consistency and predictability of performance with respect to the province. The ANC is far too powerful, with the DA almost assured of a second place. In a sense this could lead to voter apathy and arrogance on the part of the elected officials. It is also evident that in certain areas and for certain political parties, voting is according to ethnic or tribal affiliations. This would be confirmed by the fact that parties like Ximoko and Dabalorivhuwa Patriotic Party, are only active in their areas of origin and aligned almost solely to one ethnic group. In the long run this strategy would not be healthy for democracy and could be a recipe for civil war, in the event of national instability.

Analysis of Voter Registration in the Province: Elections 1999

Out of a total calculated voting – age- population of 25 564 000 an estimated 22 798 845 had an identity document issued on or after 1 July 1996, which was required for registration as a voter. A total of 18 476 906 people applied for registration and 18 172 751 of these were registered as voters. Details of voter registration are given in terms of the following categories: age, gender, residence in rural and urban areas - the last is further subdivided into the following formal (surveyed) and informal (unsurveyed) areas.

Table 4: Gender breakdown

Male voters	732 067
Female voters	1 115 699
Total	1 847 766

Table 5: Rural/ Urban Breakdown

Urban	363 305	19.66%
Rural	1 484 461	80.34%

Table 6: Formal Residential Area /Informal Settlement Breakdown

Settlement	Percentage of groups registered
Urban informal	60.05
Urban formal	92.4
Rural informal	75.1
Rural formal	76.1

The statistics indicate that usually men are less inclined to vote than women, in both national and municipal elections. Another observation related to the rural versus urban voting patterns is that voters in rural areas are often better represented at registration and the polls. As far as formal residential areas and informal settlements are concerned there is not a vast difference in terms of registration and voting.

Voter Registration: Elections 2004

General registration of voters occurred on the weekend of 8–9 November 2003 and the weekend of 24-25 January 2004. A comparison of the registration activity of 1999 and 2004 yields the following information:

- In 1999, 18 172 751 people were registered on the voters' roll that was used in the elections.
- In 2004 the figure was 20 674 926. Data in *South African Atlas of Results: National Election 2004*, indicates an increase in registration between 1999 and 2004 as well as a fair comparison of gender and rural/urban distribution of registered voters.
- Cognisance must be taken of the 483 local municipalities in 1999. This was reduced to 284 in 2000 and therefore the concentration of voters per municipality was different.

The IEC hopes that the Youth Ambassador programme will also reinforce the momentum that was gained through improved registration figures of the youth during the first and second voter registration on the 8–9 November 2008 and 7-8 February 2009 respectively. Both registration drives have surpassed expectations, with the youth

representing the majority (85%) at both registration weekends. This translates to 208 562 new youth applications in Limpopo. The IEC announced that both weekends were their most successful voter registration drives since 2000. The involvement of other youth structures in steering this mobilisation action has made a notable impact and continued collaboration is to be encouraged.

Nomination Process

Each registered political party has its own process and procedure for purposes of nominating candidates. These should comply with the provisions of the Constitution as well as the legal requirements for each election as provided for by the IEC. There are guidelines with respect to the process of submission of lists of candidates for national and provincial elections. These are prescribed by the Electoral Act (Act 73 of 1998 and hereafter referred to as the Act) together with regulations concerning the submission of Lists of Candidates (2004) as amended.

Limpopo Provincial Legislature is allocated 49 seats. For parties to secure these seats they should ideally start with consultations resulting in recommendations that are considered by the district structures, then the provincial executive committees (PEC), and finally approved by the national executive committees (NEC).

In spite of the legislative provisions some parties still seek advice and assistance from the IEC office as to how best to manage the process. For example, some parties operate under the false assumption that the documents are and must be lodged at the Limpopo IEC office. To this end the IEC is playing a commendable role in terms of educating and assisting concerned parties ex gratia.

The process is supposed to be open, transparent, and democratic. This is, however, not always the case. Internal party disputes result at times in more than one person claiming to act on behalf of the party. The IEC does not get involved in internal disputes and the parties concerned must seek appropriate relief from a court. Parties at times attempt to re- order, substitute or remove candidates in circumstances other than provided

for in the legislation. In some instances there is a deliberate failure to clearly indicate the order of preference of names.

In almost all instances of irregularities alluded to above, party bosses seem to wield more power than they duly have. The recommendations from consultations with some stakeholders confirm that there is an urgent need to review the current electoral system.

A mixed mode system, that is, proportional representation coupled with a constituency based system should be the route to consider. With the necessary adaptation, parties think the Westminster system would be a fair option.

There are, to this writer's knowledge, no prescribed norms and standards set for parties to observe, when they develop their manifestos. Investigations point to party think tanks being charged with their development, then after endorsement by the NEC it would be filtered down to the branches. This is a top down approach that is fraught with problems. Consistent with the slogan, 'the people shall govern', it would be prudent to include the branches at the outset.

For the 2009 elections the African National Congress tried this approach with commendable results and input. Party policies should guide the development of the manifesto. A manifesto should be concise, practical and accessible to the electorate. It would also be helpful if it could be translated into all official languages, especially in provinces where the parties intend to contest the elections.

Media Coverage of Election Campaigns

The IEC can be commended for inviting journalists to a workshop in Mokopane where legislation with respect to elections was discussed. ICASA was one of the participants and it explained how decisions around event coverage are made. Coverage, it was averred, was based on equity rather than equality. Journalists felt empowered and appreciated the workshop. It is hoped that after this intervention, complaints about less coverage and broadcasting time on television and radio will be less frequent.

As far as local media is concerned it should be acknowledged that there is plenty of coverage by the press, SABCTV, radio stations and community based radio stations. Apart from these, there are public lectures organised by civic organisations and tertiary institutions. In most instances you will find the media present, and at times actively participating. On Wednesday 27 February 2009, the IEC convened a press conference to inform them about the youth summit with the theme: A Youth to the Polls. This writer was privileged to give a keynote address on *Youth Apathy and Elections, A comparative analysis with other Emerging Democracies*. The media also attended. At the same event, the concept of Youth Ambassadors was introduced. This followed a successful national launch on 19 February 2009, at which 35 Youth Ambassadors representing a broad spectrum of categories from sport, media, entertainment and business, to students, were introduced to the media. Their responsibilities will be to act as the Commission's champions by promoting electoral democracy and driving activities in their communities and respective areas of influence through various initiatives. Their role will complement the implementation of the IEC's broad communication, civic as well as voter education strategy.

The IEC in Limpopo encourages youth from different sectors to work together in pursuing the objectives of this noble venture. The start is certainly encouraging.

Kwazulu-Natal Province

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This section of the *Update* focuses on democratic achievements, the political processes surrounding elections and electioneering, and the way elections are conducted[46]

Democratic achievements[47]

Elections since 1994 have generally been free and fair. Voters have largely been free to make informed and considered political choices and procedurally the voting process was fair. Election results have been willingly accepted, voter turnouts have been high initially (85% in 1994, but declined in subsequent years to 67% in 1999 and 58% in 2004[48]). All political parties were committed to participation. That said, some have argued that the 1994 elections were generally free but not necessarily fair.[49] Fairness has mostly to do with the ability to cast your vote and for that vote to be correctly counted. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), which is responsible for the electoral process, experienced many difficulties in the hurried run-up and execution of the election in 1994. Some of the problems encountered were: the lack of a voter's roll, pirate polling stations, illegitimate voting and counting irregularities. Ballot fraud was high in KZN, Gauteng and the Eastern Cape, and there were even rumours that the main parties in KZN were negotiating the outcome of the election when there was a delay in announcing the results in the province. Widespread violence led to 165 no go areas in the country, of which 70 were in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), where political violence reached record levels in the months before the elections.

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[46] *Ibid*
[47] In this section (for 1994 and 1999) I have drawn mainly on the first and last chapters of Tom Lodge's book *Democratic Consolidation: South Africa's second democratic election*
[48] ANC win South African Elections in low voter turnout, *World Socialist Website*, www.wsws.org, accessed on 26 February 2009
[49] Lodge, Tom, 1999, Introduction: Consolidating Democracy, in *Consolidating Democracy: South Africa's Second Popular Election,* EISA, pp. 6-18

Procedurally, the election in 1999 was fairer, largely because the IEC had more time to prepare and clearly learned from the 1994 experience. Voting fraud was minimised[50] mostly because voters had to register in advance; there was consensus that most people had the opportunity to register. Polling stations were manned by trained staff and party agents acted as monitors, so counting and voting irregularities were further minimised.

The results were generally accepted, especially because ballots were counted at the polls and immediately made available online.[51] A post-election poll by the HSRC also found that only 3% of voters surveyed thought polling was not free and fair. The 1999 election was also freer compared to 1994 – complaints to the IEC were down by more than two-thirds in 1999 compared to the complaints received in 1994 – and most importantly, politically motivated election related violence in KZN went down from 338 incidences in April 1994 to only 17 recorded in April 1999, though unreported and unrecorded incidences may push this figure up.

The 2004 elections were widely regarded as free and fair. The IEC made further procedural improvements to the counting process, notably the auditing of the counting process at municipal offices. The political death toll in the KZN was minimal but political intimidation was widespread.[52]

A number of political rallies attended by Thabo Mbeki were disrupted, notably at Umlazi, and violence was recorded in Magwaveni, Ulundi, Folweni and other areas in Northern KZN. In Nhlanzeni (KwaMbonambi) a son returned home wearing a T shirt emblazoned with Thabo Mbeki's face, and was shot and killed by his own father. In other traditional IFP strongholds, especially in Northern KZN, tensions were high after the election

resulted in the ANC's favour, especially in the regions around Eshowe, Hluhluwe and Mandini.[53]

Election results since 1994

The table below shows the rise and fall of fortunes of the main political parties in South Africa since 1994.

Since its victory in the first democratic elections in 1994, the ANC has further consolidated power by receiving 66.35% of the vote in 1999 and 69.69% in the 2004 elections. The DA (born from a short-lived alliance with the National Party or NNP, and smaller parties) has made some headway and is generally regarded as the main opposition party. As the then Democratic Party (DP), it received only 1.7% of votes in 1994, but increased its share in 1999 to 9.56%, and 12.37% in 2004.

The IFP's fortunes have declined from 10.5% of the national vote in 1994 to 6.97% in 2004. The UDM, who many had hoped would be a viable opposition to the ANC, only received 3.42% of the popular vote in 1999 and 2.28 in 2004. The NNP has been in an alliance with the ANC since 2001; its support waned from over 20% in 1994 to less than 2% in 2004.

Table 1: Voting outcomes in percentages, 1994 - 2004[54]

Party	National			KZN		
	1994	1999	2004	1994	1999	2004
ANC	62.6	66.35	69.69	32.23	39.77	47.47
DA	1.7 DP	9.56 DP	12.37	2.15 DP	9.76 DP	10.00
IFP	10.5	8.58	6.97	50.32	40.45	34.87
UDM	-	3.42	2.28	-	0.09	0.84
NNP	20.4 NP	6.87	1.65	11.21 NP	3.96	0.58
MF	-	-	-		1.45	1.84

In 2004 in the KZN province, out of the 3.8 million people who registered for the 2004 elections, over 2.7 million voted; a turnout of 72.84%. The ANC received 47% of the vote, the IFP 37%, trailed by the DA at 8.35%.[55] This is compared to the IFP's victory in the province in 1994 and in 1999. The Minority Front, which traditionally represents the Indian community in KZN, received votes from just fewer than 2% of voters in both 1999 and 2004.

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[50] Lodge (1999, p. 198) reports that '5% of South African observers claimed they had observed people attempting to vote more than once and 4% witnessed party agents objecting to the admission of ineligible voters'
[51] Ibid, p.198
[52] Natal Monitor, Violence Monitor, 2004, www.violencemonitor.com accessed on 14 February 2009

[53] Ibid
[54] Compiled from IEC elections data, www.elections.org.za
[55] Election Results, Independent Electoral Commission, www.elections.org.za, accessed on 13 February 2009

Political Parties

The ANC

Support for the ANC was stable from 1994 to 2004 when it received votes from about two thirds of the electorate. It is inconceivable that it will not win the elections on 22 April but by all accounts, the ANC is a party facing largely self-inflicted difficulties. Bitter power struggles raged after Mr Zuma (a popular and charismatic leader who topped party lists even in 2004[56]) was selected party president in Polokwane in 2007, which eventually lead to the ousting of Thabo Mbeki and the deployment of then deputy president Kgalema Mothlanthe as acting president. After Mr Mbeki's recall, COPE was formed and a number of ANC members defected, with others rumoured to be on their way.[57]

Even though Jacob Zuma has faced the threat of prosecution over the last eight years, with a resolution from the National Prosecuting Authority made in April 2009 not to pursue the case against Mr Zuma due to the NPA's own processes of decision making being compromised, several scandals linked to other members and ministers of the ANC, and reports of widespread corruption, a general lack of accountability to constituents is common. This comes amidst accusations that the ANC and its members are trying to undermine democracy and manipulate the justice system for political means (the introduction of the SABC bill and Jacob Zuma's trial proceedings are oft cited cases in point). Julius Malema, the leader of the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) has done little to endear himself to voters, particularly women. Some voters fear a leftist turn in economic policies because of Mr Zuma's close ties with SACP's Blade Nzimande and COSATU, who are pushing for a review of the treasury's powers.

The ANC, with Kgalema Mothlante at the helm, seems to have taken note of these and other concerns. There have been efforts to reassure voters. Mr Zuma and other key figures have, for example, indicated that they do not intend to change the treasury's functions, and that the Finance Minister will work in conjunction with a planning commission to decide budget allocations[58]. The manifesto is also explicit in that economic growth is a key contributor to poverty reduction. The party's manifesto also states that the party "can do more" and that it has had problems implementing policies and securing service delivery. In an SABC 3 interview on 28 February, Trevor Manuel mirrored these sentiments.

When dissatisfied with the ANC government's performance voters tended to stay home[59] in 1999 and 2004, instead of transferring their vote to another party. More recently, the proportion of undecided voters has increased and party identification has declined, indicating that voters are carefully considering their choices. Whether this is an indication that the ANC has alienated some voters, or that voters are just more discerning, is unclear. The question is to what extent the controversy and criticism that surrounds the ANC will affect election support for the party.

COPE

In the wake of Thabo Mbeki's recall, COPE was formed by Mosiuoa Lekota and Mbhazima Shilowa. 'Terror' Lekota, who was appointed the President of COPE, is an old hand at politics. He joined the ANC in 1990, with good struggle credentials and was elected to the party's executive in the 1990s. He resigned from government in September 2008, after the ousting of Thabo Mbeki. Mbhazima Shilowa was the premier of Gauteng from 1999 until September 2008. Mr. Shilowa helped form Cosatu in the eighties and became its general secretary in 1993. He was a member of the ANC's NEC from 1997. COPE's national leadership includes many familiar ANC faces. Mluleki George (who also resigned in protest to Mbeki's recall) is national organiser. Charlotte Lobe (who served on the ANC's executive committee before resigning in 2008 as provincial secretary of the Free State), Smuts Ngonyama (former ANC spokesperson) is COPE's head of policy. He served on the ANC's NEC until last year, but

[56] Independent Electoral Commission, www.elections.org.za accessed on 20 January 2009
[57] Du Plessis, C. COPE calls off defection press conference, *The Mercury*, 27 February 2009
[58] Bungling ministers days 'are numbered', *Mail & Guardian*, 13 to 19 February 2009
[59] Lodge, Tom, 2004, *Election Update*, EISA, www.eisa.org.za, accessed on 20 February 2009

lost his position. Others include Lynda Odendaal (second deputy president), Phillip Dexter and Lyndall Shope-Mafole.

Voters, analysts and other parties have reacted to the formation of COPE in mixed ways. Many regard COPE as (potentially) a viable opposition to the ANC, and another step on the way towards democratic consolidation in the country. Others argue that COPE was formed by disgruntled ANC members who did nothing for the people of the nation while they were in power. The party responded to these criticisms in a number of ways. Its strongly worded manifesto outlining anti-corruption and pro-democracy priorities indicates that it has taken note of the ANC's difficulties. It has also taken a strategic but risky step that will pit COPE, in moral and intellectual terms, against the ANC's Jacob Zuma. Dr Mvume Dandala, who until 2003 was the presiding Bishop of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, was appointed the party's presidential candidate. Dr Dandala, not well known, without political experience and younger than Mr Zuma, holds a masters degree and two honorary PhDs. He is rumoured to be close to Thabo Mbeki[60]. Dr Dandala is a Xhosa with no ANC baggage, which may further challenge the ANC's supremacy in the Eastern Cape, for example, where COPE performed well in by-elections of December 2008.

As a new party, COPE and its leadership face many challenges, among which internal power struggles[61] and difficulties in convincing individuals to stand as premier candidates[62]. The election results and post election surveys will show whether the party has convinced voters that they are not merely disgruntled, ex ANC Mbeki-ites.

DA

The DA was established in 2000 in a then Democratic Party merger agreement with Louis Luyt's Federal Alliance and the NNP. Despite a split from the NNP in 2001, the DA has been the main opposition party since the 2004 elections. At the launch of the party's election campaign in Kliptown, Soweto, Helen Zille, the party's leader and Cape Town mayor, said that the DA will win the Western Cape. She also reported that the DA won more by-elections than COPE in December and that by 2011 the DA will govern in towns and cities across the country and will be part of the national government in 2014.[63]

As a traditionally white and coloured party, it is unlikely that it will attract large numbers of black voters in this year's election. Indications are that people still and probably will continue to vote largely along racial lines, with some exceptions in KZN and the Western Cape[64]. In a conscious effort to be more alluring to black voters however, the party "relaunched" (read rebranded) in 2008 and now projects itself as a non-racial party with large support from the black electorate.[65] It has also put forward Joe Seremane, the only black person in the majority white national leadership, as its presidential candidate. The DA's 80-page manifesto hints at a black support base and the songs sung at rallies are adapted ANC songs. Even the faces on lamp post posters come in white, Indian and black. Yet, critics argue that the new brand does not represent real change in the party and that the real power still lies with white people, despite indications that candidate nominations will be more representative of the party's new non-racial image.[66] The party will have to do much more – especially organising in townships and rural areas – to convince African voters that it is a party worth considering.

IFP

In previous elections, the IFP was the ANC's greatest competitor for the black vote, nationally. Although IFP constituents are based mostly in the rural KZN areas, it clinched 7% of the national vote in 2004. As a coalition partner of the ANC it may seem that the two parties share similar ideologies. Although relationships appear cordial and cooperative, the IFP differs from the ANC in

[60] Cope plays moral card, *Sunday Tribune*, 22 February 2009
[61] Cope plays moral card, *Sunday Tribune*, 22 February 2009
[62] Du Plessis, C., COPE calls off defection press conference, *The Mercury*, 27 February 2009

[63] Western Cape will be ours, says DA, *Sunday Tribune*, February 1 2009
[64] Lodge, Tom. (2002), Democratic consolidation in a dominant party system, in *Politics in South Africa*, New Africa books, Cape Town, p. 154
[65] See party website and 2009 election manifesto
[66] New DA election candidates combine excellence and diversity, DA News room, *Democratic Alliance*, 25 January 2009, www.da.org.za accessed on 20 February 2009

election update

terms of its support of decentralisation, free market ideals, "support for inherent leadership, traditional law and communal land".[67] To that end, the IFP has better relationships with the DA in the KZN municipalities where they share power, as the DA is reported to be more sympathetic to traditional leadership.[68]

Fierce and somewhat bloody electioneering marks the 2009 election season in KZN between the IFP and the ANC. The ANC aims for 60% support (Mr Zuma is a Zulu, which will no doubt help) and so have invested heavily in media and marketing. It is also focusing on traditional IFP strongholds, especially in the north, where it held the first election rally in Nongoma, an IFP stronghold. Although the ANC won all the January 2009 by-elections in the province, it lost seats to COPE, the DA and the ID, and support for ANC municipal councillors reportedly fell by double digits.[69]

The IFP aims to win back the province after losing it to the ANC in 2004. Like the ANC, their strategy is through door-to-door campaigns, mass meetings and a focus on young and urban voters, lured away by the ANC. COPE, despite reported intimidation, are "launching branches, talking to *amakhosi* and holding rallies and mass meetings as part of [their] recruitment drive"[70]. The party was also planning door-to-door campaigns. The DA pitches itself as the only real alternative to the ANC and IFP in the province. Zille claims that COPE is just another faction and that 'when the ANC splits, the DA can win [in KwaZulu Natal]'.[71]

The violence that erupted between ANC and IFP in Nongoma, Northern KZN, on 1 February was extensively covered by the media. ANC members and IFP supporters were hurt in separate incidents when ANC and IFP held rallies on the same day in Nongoma.[72]

Three ANC leaders in the province were also shot in separate incidents over a two week period. ANC Youth League chairman Sthembiso Cele was shot dead on 22 January at Umgababa. Inkosi Mbongeleni Zondi, an ANC member and Jacob Zuma supporter, was killed in Umlazi; the week before,[73] another ANC member was shot and injured. In another incident DA officials were confronted by IFP supporters when the DA tried to visit patients in hospital.[74] There is some disagreement as to whether 'no go' areas should be implemented. Independent violence monitors report that ongoing low-level political intimidation has been increasing in the run-up to the election, especially in areas that have traditionally been hotspots for political violence. It is said that former IFP warlords actively prevent free political association in those areas.[75] The South African Institute of Race Relations says however that the violence is isolated and overplayed and that parties should not be restricted to campaign in certain areas.[76] There have been calls for parties (the ANC and IFP) to rein in members[77] and the Human Rights Commission and IEC are to intervene to prevent further violence in the province.[78]

Voter registration

Nationally, 23.1 million people have registered to vote in 2009 compared to 20.6 million in 2004, 18.7 million in 1999 and 19.7 million in 1994. Nearly 50% of registered voters are in the 20 – 39 age range, and the bulk of those who registered during the last weekend of registrations are in this age group. Nationally, an estimated one million people visited registration stations on the first day of the last registration drive -while nearly twenty thousand registration stations were open on the Sunday 8 February.[79] In KwaZulu Natal, over 4.4 million people have registered to vote. Nearly half of those who

[67] *Ibid*, p.156
[68] Kindra, Jaspreet, Inkhata joins the 'the better devil' to twist ANC arm on amakhosi, *Mail & Guardian*, 12 January 2001, quoted by Lodge (2002, p.157)
[69] De Lange, Deon, ANC's winning margins narrow, *The Mercury*, 30 January 2009
[70] Makhaye, Chris, Knock around the clock, *Sunday Tribune*, 1 February 2009
[71] Zille says DA has won more by-elections than COPE, *The Mercury*, 4 February 2009
[72] Flashpoint at Nongoma, *The Mercury*, 2 February 2009

[73] Shooting: Nongoma tense, *Sunday Tribune*, 1 February 2009
[74] Zille says DA has won more by-elections than COPE, *The Mercury*, 4 February 2009
[75] *Mail & Guardian*, 6-12 February 2009
[76] No crisis of pre-election violence, says institute, *The Mercury*, 6 February 2009
[77] All eyes on election safety: Safe polls crucial to country's image, *Daily News*, 2 February 2009
[78] Steps to end ANC-IFP war of words, *The Mercury*, 10 February 2009
[79] Brisk turnout for IEC voter registration drive, *Daily News*, 9 February 2009

registered are in the 20-39 age range;[80] 57% of those who registered are female.

In an HSRC survey on voter participation commissioned by the IEC in November 2008, only 67% of KZN's eligible voters indicated that they have registered with (nationally) lower registration figures in rural formal (64%) and urban informal (66%) areas. A higher percentage of women indicated, nationally, that they have registered (75%) compared to males (69%). A lower percentage (58%) of those who were unemployed registered,[81] 97% of those surveyed said they found it easy to register, while 6% of rural formal respondents found it difficult to register. On the last weekend of registration, the only incidence was in Western Cape where three people were arrested in Nyanga for preventing voters from entering registration stations.

The survey also found that 80% of those surveyed were very or slightly interested in national and provincial elections; the lowest interest in KZN among Indians and coloured youth aged 18-24.[82]. The IEC has also given KZN's prison population of roughly 22000, the opportunity to register although not many may have been able to do so. It has been argued that prisoners have not been given enough time to apply for identity documents (IDs) or inform families to deliver their IDs.[83]

Party Manifesto Development

In 2004, party manifestos focused largely on tackling crime and HIV/AIDS. In 2009, job creation, poverty reduction and employment feature high on most parties' agendas, followed by education, health, addressing corruption and tackling crime. Most of the bigger parties including the ANC, IFP and DA have placed job creation and poverty at the top of their agendas, recognising that the global economic downturn will severely affect those who are already desperately poor. The parties probably also recognise that the government's ability to deliver on poverty reduction – and achieve all its other objectives –

will be severely challenged because of the downturn. In recognising the role that the state can play in job creation and poverty alleviation, the parties all mirror the ANC's policy to grow the manufacturing sector and state funded infrastructure projects.[84] Most parties also include land reform, rural and agricultural development, and HIV/AIDS high on their agendas.

There is much that is the same, but there are some interesting differences. COPE lists the protection of the constitution highest on its list, focusing on good governance and the protection of democracy before poverty reduction and job creation. It also included a strong moral message, saying the party will fight against corruption, nepotism and moral decay. Strategically, COPE also included the environment as a key priority but, prioritised *before* education, health and crime reduction. (The party's '*A new agenda for change and hope for all*' is also somewhat reminiscent of the recent US elections.) That said, COPE's mix of priorities may be a reflection that it is trying to appeal to the widest range of constituents (jobs for the poor; environmental policies and a protected constitution for those whose basic needs have already been met.)

There are areas where the ANC's plans differ from that of opposition parties. Most parties - including the ANC - promised to fight crime, corruption, cronyism and nepotism. The ANC was the only party not to pledge that the special crimes unit, the Scorpions, should be reinstated. The ANC was also the only party that did not make mention of some form of joint constituency-based/proportional representational electoral system in order to improve accountability between office holders and the electorate.

Manifesto Launches in the Province: ANC and IFP

In KZN, the IFP launched its manifesto on Saturday 14 February at Curries Fountain. Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi promised that an IFP leadership in the province would stamp out corruption, incompetence and inefficiency. He also promised increases in child and social grants and

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[80] Registration statistics as on 13 Feb 2009, *Independent Electoral Commission*, www.elections.org.za, accessed on 13 February 2009
[81] Independent Electoral Commission, www.elections.org.za accessed on 13 February 2009
[82] Independent Electoral Commission
[83] Prisoners need their IDs to vote, *The Mercury*, Monday 2 February 2009

[84] www.anc.org.za, www.da.org.za, www.ifp.org.za, & Terreblanche, Christelle, Welcome to the party, *Sunday Tribune*, 1 February 2009

free education for children up to grade 1.2[85] The IFP admitted that it lost the previous election in the province because it failed to attract urban and young voters – two constituents it is targeting in 2009.

The ANC, which aims to take 60% of the KZN vote, launched their manifesto in the province on the same day in Newcastle. The party took the opportunity to reassure voters that Nelson Mandela remained a loyal member of the party. Interestingly, the party made two other statements that probably indicate it is sensitised to the potential impact on the female vote of controversial statements by Mr Malema, about the rape case against Mr Zuma (on which he was acquitted). Mr Sexwale told the audience that Jacob Zuma cares for the women of the country. The chairwoman of ANC women's league, Lungi Gcabashe, took the opportunity to encourage women to vote for "this very reputable party". [86]

Conclusion

There is strong evidence to suggest that the IEC will again, in 2009, ensure that South Africa's upcoming elections are fairly conducted. Whether electioneering and voting will be free depends largely on whether IFP and ANC leaders will be able to rein in their members and discourage violence and political intimidation. If the media, analysts and voters seem unduly preoccupied with the struggles, scandals and failings of the main political parties, it is probably because the outcome of this election will be an indication of whether viable opposition is emerging and whether South Africa is ready for the next step towards democratic consolidation.

Mpumalanga Province

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During the first fully democratic elections in 1994 South Africa learned how valuable observers – both foreign and domestic – could be to the electoral process.

First of all, the legitimacy of the electoral process is enhanced by the presence of neutral observers. Outsiders who have been present and actually seen what has happened during voting, counting and the determination of results can tell the world that the process was transparently free and fair, and can put any problems in their proper context. The opinion of an impartial witness carries a great deal of weight.

Secondly, respected outsiders can contribute greatly to the propriety of the process. Their presence probably has a stabilising effect on would-be troublemakers and ensures that everyone concerned is on their best behaviour.

Thirdly, international observers from organisations such as the African Union and the Commonwealth often have vast experience of elections in various parts of the world and are able to give IEC staff invaluable advice and support. It has become practice for international organisations to observe elections in emerging democracies and to produce reports. Thousands of international and domestic observers flocked to be present at the founding elections of South Africa's democracy in 1994 and the Electoral Act makes specific provision for the accreditation of observers of South African elections.

In the 1994 elections, at the height of political tolerance, intimidation and violence between ANC and IFP supporters, especially in Kwazulu-Natal and Gauteng, with the National Party accused of being or orchestrating the third force, were declared free and fair by all the observers including the international observer missions. This played a big role in getting all the political parties to accept the election results. However, most political parties claimed that their supporters were intimidated

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[85] IFP promises to clean up, *Daily News*, 16 February 2009
[86] Celebrate only after placing votes: ANC, *Daily News* 16 February 2009

election update

one way or the other and could therefore not accept the results of the elections. The violence continued even after the elections in some parts of the Kwazulu-Natal province where the IFP and the ANC command a lot of supporters.

The results for both the national and the Mpumalanga Provincial (then Eastern Transvaal) elections in 1994 were in the past generally accepted without much contestation of the outcome of the elections. Past results for the province are as follows:

Table 1: National Election 1994

PARTY	E.CAPE	E. TVL	KZN	N CAPE	N TVL	N. WEST	OFS	PWV	W. CAPE	TOTAL VALID VOTES	SEATS
PAC	56 891	17 800	23 098	3 941	20 295	24 233	23 310	52 557	21 353	243478	5
SOCCER	918	636	2311	245	666	959	857	2 953	1030	10 575	
KISS	900	415	1 010	293	365	548	403	1 107	875	5 916	
VV-FF	18 656	45 964	17 092	17 480	29 000	49 175	50 386	154 878	41 924	424 555	9
WRPP	524	311	955	151	273	568	398	1 850	1 404	6 434	
WLP	374	309	1193	167	259	331	258	554	724	4 169	
XPP	574	416	1 501	113	1 354	578	683	828	273	6 320	
AMP	1 235	906	6 790	320	437	1 386	324	7 413	15 655	34 466	
ACDP	10 879	4 474	17 122	1 294	5 042	3 901	4 523	20 329	20 540	88 104	2
ADM	1 869	611	3 819	189	597	701	553	1 062	485	9 886	
AMCP	4 919	2 625	3 305	864	3 168	3 244	2 644	5 635	1 286	27 690	
ANC	2 411 695	1 072 518	1185 669	201 515	1 780 177	1 325 559	1 059 313	2 486 938	714 271	12 237 655	252
DP	35 435	5 492	60 499	5 235	3 402	5 826	7 365	126 368	88 804	338 426	7
DPSA	1 098	834	1 927	415	722	2 088	8 796	2 424	1 147	19 451	
FP	750	527	3 347	162	310	500	519	6 844	4 704	17 663	
LUSAP	263	269	961	138	253	252	203	490	464	3 293	
MF	981	503	6 410	494	662	772	490	1 575	1 546	13 433	
NP	302 951	134 511	591 212	169 661	69 870	160 479	198 780	1 160 593	1 195 633	3 983 690	82
IFP	6 798	20 872	1 822 385	1 902	2 938	7 155	8 446	173 903	13 895	2 058 294	43
Total	2 857 710	1 309 993	3 750 606	4 045 79	1 919 790	1 588 255	1 368 251	4 208 301	2 126 013	19 533 498	400

Table 2: Provincial Elections 1994

EASTERN TRANSVAAL	VOTES	SEATS
Pan Africanist Congress of Azania	21 679	
Right Party	921	
Freedom Front	75 120	2
African Christian Democratic Party	6 339	
African Democratic Movement	5 062	
African National Congress	1 070 052	25
Democratic Party	7 437	
National Party	119 311	3
Inkatha Freedom Party	20 147	
Total		30

In the national elections in 1994, a total of 19 533 498 voters participated in the elections for the National Assembly which has 400 seats. The ANC won 252 of the 400 seats, which was 63% of the total votes, the National Party won 82 seats which constituted 20.50% of the total votes, the IFP got 43 seats which were 10.75%, and the

DP got seven, while the PAC and the ACDP got five and two seats respectively.

In the Mpumalanga Province, there were thirty (30) seats available in the provincial legislature and the ANC obtained twenty-five (25) of those seats which constitutes 83.33%, while the NP and the Freedom Front obtained three (3) and two (2) respectively. A total of 1326068 voters took part in the provincial elections in 1994.

After the 1994 elections, the names of four provinces were changed. The province referred to as Eastern Transvaal became Mpumalanga Province, Northern Transvaal became Northern Province, Orange Free State became Free State Province and PWV (Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging) became Gauteng Province.

The other five provinces remained the same viz. KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape, Western Cape and the North West Province.

In the 1999 election, many of the smaller parties that participated in the 1994 elections disappeared and a few new political parties were formed to contest the elections. The United Democratic Movement (UDM) was formed by General Bantubonke Holomisa who had been expelled from the African National Congress (ANC) and they were registered for the 1999 elections. The National Party (NP) upon realising that their support base was decreasing with white South Africans accusing them of selling out to the ANC, changed its name to the New National Party (NNP) because they wanted to rid the party of the stigma of being the perpetrators of apartheid rule. They wanted to be regarded as a new non-racial party with a new vision that would embrace and advance the rights of all South Africans irrespective of their colour, creed and religion.

Mr Lybon Mabasa defected from the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) to form the Socialist Party of Azania (SOPA) citing ideological differences. He also registered his party to contest the 1999 elections. In addition to the above-mentioned parties, a few others were formed which were not there in the previous elections and they too contested the 1999 elections viz.:

- The Government by the People Green Party (GPGP)
- The United Christian Democratic Party (UCDP)
- The Abolition of Income Tax and Usury Party (AITUP)
- The Afrikaner Eenheids Bewiging (AEB)

Electoral Performance of Parties in the Mpumalanga Province in the 2004 Elections

The Mpumalanga Province was contested by 21 registered political parties with a total population of 1 442 472 registered voters in the 2004 elections. Of the 1 442 472 registered voters only 80.28% turned up at the various polling stations in the province, which translates to 1 157 963 voters with 1 134 092 valid votes and 23 871 spoilt votes and 80 524 special votes. The 21 parties that participated in the 2004 Mpumalanga Provincial elections were also registered for the national elections. The

results of the Mpumalanga provincial elections for 2004 are shown in the table below.

Table 3: Mpumalanga Provincial Elections Results, 2004:

Party	Acronym	Results	%
African Christian Democratic Party	ACDP	11 321	1
African National Congress	ANC	979 155	86.34
Azanian People's Organisation	AZAPO	2 149	0.19
Christian Democratic Party	CDP	662	0.06
Democratic Alliance/Demokratiese Alliansie	DA	81 313	7.17
Independent Democrats	ID	3 927	0.35
Inkatha Freedom Party	IFP	11 730	1.03
Keep It Straight and Simple	KISS	263	0.02
Minority Front	MF	298	0.03
Nasionale Aksie	NA	740	0.07
New Labour Party	NLP	263	0.02
Nuwe Nasionale Party/New National Party	NNP	4 878	0.43
Pan Africanist Congress of Azania	PAC	8 675	0.76
Peace and Justice Congress	PJC	606	0.05
Employment Movement of South Africa	EMSA	719	0.06
The Organisation Party	TOP	411	0.04
The Socialist Party of Azania	SOPA	1 056	0.09
United Christian Democratic Party	UCDP	1 795	0.16
United Democratic Movement	UDM	11 480	1.01
United Front	UF	626	0.06
Vryheidsfront Plus	VF Plus	12 025	1.06
Total Valid Votes		1 134 092	100
Total Number of Spoilt Votes		23 871	
Percentage Poll		80.28	
Total Votes Cast		1 157 963	
Total Number of Special Votes		80 524	

- The ANC obtained 86.34% from 979 155 votes.
- They were followed by the Democratic Alliance with 7.17% from 81 313 votes.
- The ACDP, UDM, Freedom Front plus and IFP each received 1%.

The ANC therefore obtained 26 of the 30 seats in the provincial legislature while the DA got two seats. The ANC in the Mpumalanga Provincial Legislature has a very big majority with virtually no opposition at all.

Voter Registration For 2009

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) used the weekends of 8 and 9 November 2008 as a voter registration weekend and more recently, the weekend of 6- 8 February 2009. This was done to afford potential voters a chance to register to vote in the upcoming national and provincial election on 22 April 2009. Voters whose names did not appear on the voters roll and those who had lost their bar-coded identity document and had

acquired new ones were allowed to reregister. In order to vote in National, Provincial and Municipal elections, you have to register as a voter. You only have to register once, unless the person's voting district changes. You must be a South African citizen, be at least 18 years old and have a green, bar-coded ID book.

In the Mpumalanga province 1 696 025 potential voters were registered for the 2009 Provincial elections, 772 207 of whom are men and 923 818, women. This is higher than the 1 442 472 voters who registered for the 2004 provincial elections.

Party Manifesto Development

A manifesto is an election document which details the party's vision, strategies, approach to elections and issues of governance, past achievements, problems identified and solutions to those problems, as well as the party's focal points when conducting its election campaigns. This document is developed by each party by engaging with its structures from the branch level, provincial and national structures.

Parties hold conferences from time to time and the decisions and resolutions taken at those conferences (where all its structures are represented) form part of their election manifesto. In developing this document parties would also conduct *izimbizo* to have input from the general public. Traditional and religious leaders are also engaged to give input on traditional and religious issues and other issues affecting their communities.

The party manifestos in the 2009 elections focus on almost the same issues of governance, especially where weaknesses were identified in the ruling party's policies and service delivery strategies, and most of them are not necessarily different. The following are some of their focal points which are mostly common between them:

- Health – each party outlined how it is going to improve the health care facilities and provide proper and accessible health care for every South African and how service can be improved in those facilities. HIV/AIDS and the roll-out of ARV treatment and counselling, cholera treatment and prevention and health insurance are mentioned.
- Education – a strategy on how each party can provide free education to all citizens up to a particular level, improving the level and quality of education.
- Safety and security – this involves what each party would do to fight crime and improve the justice system. They all promise to fight corruption and fraud within government and by politicians, reinstating the Scorpions
- Housing and land – strategies for the provision of houses to enhance the people's dignity, the redistribution of land, agriculture and rural development.
- Social development and food security – basic income grants, the creation of a safety net for the unemployed and low income earners.
- Economy – creating sustainable jobs so that they fight poverty, labour laws and the attraction of foreign and domestic investment, the fiscal and monetary policies, economic empowerment, affirmative action policies and the creation of small and medium entrepreneurs.
- Infrastructure development (including 2010), tourism and international relations.

Each party has a different approach to the above and are guided by their founding policies and constitutions. The ANC's founding document being the Freedom Charter, which guides most of their policies. Some of the smaller parties' and opposition parties' manifestos are based on what they perceive to be the shortcomings of the ruling party in their fifteen years in government. It has been observed however, that most parties do not release their party manifestos until after the ANC has released theirs and they have an easy job of opposing whatever the ANC comes up with, or on improving their ideas.

The Candidate Nomination Process

According to the Electoral Act, the requirements for parties to contest elections are that the political party should be a registered party and should have submitted a list of candidates. A registered party intending to contest an election must nominate candidates and submit a list or lists of those candidates for that election to the chief

electoral officer in the prescribed manner, by not later than the relevant date stated in the election timetable. The list or lists must be accompanied by:

- prescribed undertakings, signed by the duly authorised representative of the party, binding the party, persons holding political office in the party, and its representatives and members, to the Code
- declaration, signed by the duly authorised representative of the party, that each candidate on the list is qualified to stand for election in terms of the Constitution or national or provincial legislation under Chapter 7 of the Constitution
- acceptance of nomination, signed by each candidate
- undertaking signed by each candidate, that that candidate will be bound by the Code; and a deposit
- The Commission may prescribe the amount to be deposited in terms of subsection (2) *(e)*.

The date set by the IEC and stated on the election timetable for the submission of candidate's nomination lists by political parties is 2 March 2009 at five o'clock in the afternoon, after which no candidates list will be accepted. Parties, through their structures and branches, are expected to nominate candidates that they feel are best suited to lead their respective parties after the elections. Any party that fails to submit the candidates list will not be allowed to contest the elections as they will have contravened one of the requirements for contesting elections.

Some parties go on to have list conferences at which candidates are nominated. Each party, though, should allow the nominated candidates to either accept or reject nominations by declaring whether or not he/she is available. After the elections the parties will then deploy their candidates accordingly, depending on whether they won the elections or not. If a party wins the elections their candidates will represent it in parliament. If it does not win the elections they will be deployed elsewhere, depending on the number of seats they are allocated.

Some parties send a bigger nomination list of candidates to the IEC so that they can decide after the election as to which candidate is suitable for what position, without any limitations. In other parties the list is drafted in such

a way that they achieve gender balance and the most equitable distribution of skills and talent.

Media Coverage of Election Campaigns

The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) is the biggest broadcaster in the country with three different television channels i.e. SABC 1, 2 and 3, and a host of radio stations. There is another television station called e-tv which also falls under the electronic media. The difference between the two broadcasters is that the SABC is a public broadcaster and e-tv is a privately owned television station which is free to the public which does not pay any fees to watch this station. These two television stations are regulated by the Code of Conduct enforced by ICASA and the Independent Broadcasting Complaints Commission, to bring to the public viewing that is factual, fair, does not amount to hate speech, is not harmful to children and reporting that is not prejudiced and does not favour any particular individual.

The SABC has pledged to give equitable coverage of the political parties' election campaigns. This equitable coverage, according to the SABC, will be based on the number of seats that the parties have and their representation in the National Assembly. According to this arrangement we should see the SABC showing more of the ANC election campaigns because they have the most number of seats in the National Assembly followed by the DA, which is the official opposition party. The other small parties would see less of their campaigns being covered on the SABC because they do not have enough seats in Parliament.

This criterion has sparked a lot of debate because of the newly formed Congress of the People (COPE), which does not have any representation in Parliament but enjoys a lot of media coverage by both SABC television and SABC radio. For a long time other parties have accused the SABC of reporting mainly on ANC events, thus fuelling suspicion that they are the ruling party's mouthpiece. The birth of COPE has seen it claiming almost equal coverage with the ANC at the expense of the other smaller parties despite their lack of representation in Parliament. The SABC claims that COPE is an interesting party and brings change to the political dimension of the

country; therefore it is in the public interest to report on their events.

The UDM, the ID, IFP, the APC, AZAPO and to a lesser extent the DA, were very vocal about the action of the SABC, alleging that the SABC is being used to achieve the political interests of some people. Snuki Zikalala, the SABC's head of news, has been accused of being pro-COPE (because of his alleged support for the former president Mr Thabo Mbeki) thus allowing it more air time.

Recently the Alliance of Free Democrats (AFD) accused the SABC of insulting it in one of the interviews for which the party was invited to a morning news show. They claim that they were not given enough time to express themselves on their policies while the ANC and the DA, who were invited onto the same programme, got generous time. AZAPO delegates disrupted a live SABC Sunday election debate citing that their representative was not given enough time to express the views and policies of the party to the viewers.

While e-tv is not bound by any pledge to report on the election campaigns of the various parties there is a general feeling among political parties that this television station is pro DA and reports negatively about other parties. The print media is also not free from bias.

Northern Cape Province

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The preparations for the 2009 elections are underway in the Northern Cape and both political parties and the voting population each have certain tasks to fulfil in preparation for the April 22 election. According to the election timetable for the Northern Cape Province, voters have an obligation to ensure that they are registered to vote, and they should attend rallies and participate where possible in the nomination process to finalise the candidates' list of the party to which they belong. The political parties have to address their supporters at rallies, have discussions regarding their manifestos and have submitted their candidates' lists by 2 March 2009.

This report will investigate the following: the trends and patterns in electoral performance of political parties in the Northern Cape, the launching of political parties election manifestos, the voter registration process, and some of the key political leaders in the Northern Cape.

Patterns and Trends: Electoral Performance of Political Parties in the Northern Cape

Table 1: Support for political parties in the Northern Cape in the 2004 general election (percentages)

Political Party	Results
African Christian Democratic Party	1.88
African National Congress	68.83
Azanian People's Organisation	0.52
Democratic Alliance	11.08
Independent Democrats	7.06
Inkatha Freedom Party	0.24
New National Party	7.52
Pan Africanist Congress of AZANIA	0.43
The Cape People's Congress	0.12
United Christian Democratic Party	0.33
United Democratic Movement	0.45
Freedom Front +	1.55

The New National Party was disbanded and therefore it will be interesting to see how the 7.52% of votes they received during the 2004 election will be redistributed among the remaining parties. A new party which wishes

to challenge the ruling ANC is the newly formed Congress of the People Party (COPE).

By elections were held at the end of January 2009, which some political parties regard as a 'dress rehearsal' for the official 2009 general election. During this by election the ANC won with an overwhelming majority. According to Sandi Kwon Hoo (2009:2) from the Diamond Fields Advertiser, reporting on the results of the January 2009 by elections in the Northern Cape: "the ANC won an 80 percent landslide victory in the municipal by elections in the Northern Cape and trashed claims that it was no longer the choice of the majority."

Party Manifesto Development

As the 2009 election draws closer the political parties have started introducing their manifestos to their members and potential supporters.

The Northern Cape Province has begun to host high profile politicians who are visiting the province to launch their party's manifestos. These include ANC president Jacob Zuma and ANC members Derek Hanekom and Trevor Manuel, (National Executive Committee members) who addressed the community in Springbok at the Springbok Showgrounds. Manifesto rallies were also held in the Siyanda Region and in the Francis Baard Region in the small town of Ritchie, which was attended by 6000 people. The key priority issues highlighted at these rallies were the creation of quality employment opportunities, the provision of quality education, 'health, rural development, food security, and land reform and the fight against crime and corruption' (DFA, 2009:7).

High profile politicians have visited the Northern Cape to promote their respective parties. These include Dr Allen Boesak, Nick Koornhof, Simon Grindrod and Anele Mda (president of COPE's youth movement) representing COPE. The visit included addressing supporters in Kamiesberg, Groblershoop, Upington, Pampierstad, Roodepan and Galeshewe (Cahill, 2009:2). Dr Mosibudi Mangena, president of the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) and the Minister of Science and Technology has also visited the province, as well as the Democratic Alliance's Helen Zille and the Independent Democrats'

(ID) Patricia De Lille who lobbied voters in Kakamas.(Cahill, 2009:2 and SABC News, 2009).

Voter Registration

Justice Bekebeke, the provincial electoral officer, encouraged voter participation by stating that '…don't make your right a privilege but rather go out and determine your future and use this opportunity' (Fielding, 2009:4).

The Independent Electoral Commission's (IEC) first registration drive was held in November 2008. It became evident from the results of the November 2008 registration process that gender voting was still very much a factor for consideration during the forthcoming elections in 2009. Nationally, with regard to first time registrations, 882 536 women applied for registration as opposed to 765 653 men. With regard to the age demographics Dr Brigalia Bam, the national chairperson of the Independent Electoral Commission, stated that (DFA, 2009:7):

> *…the drive has far surpassed our expectations and the IEC is delighted to see the success of the weekend drive to register new voters, especially the youth, who represent a majority of the weekend registration activity at 77,9 percent.*

Voter registration in the Northern Cape constituted 1.64 % of the total voting population in South Africa. Provincially 25 634 new registrations were recorded which equals 42.35% of the Northern Cape's voters. The amount of re registrations totalled at 28 786 which constitutes 47.56% of voters in the Northern Cape (DFA, 2009:7).

On 7 and 9 February 2009 the voters received a second opportunity to exercise their democratic right to participate in the election process through registering for the forthcoming 2009 elections. Elkin Tolpin, the manager of electoral matters at the IEC in the Northern Cape indicated that there had been a very favourable turnout during the voter registration process, with 45 000 voters visiting voting stations of which 21 000 made application to register or to reregister. Elkin Tolpin also

election update

indicated that the registration process went smoothly with only a few voting stations keeping the doors open beyond closing time due to the influx of people to voting registration points. While the weather remained challenging, especially in De Aar, where a flooded river prevented voters from reaching voting registration points. An argument has been made that where circumstances may have prevented potential voters from voting, other opportunities and outreach by the IEC ought to occur to provide an additional opportunity for registration in instances where circumstances may have prevented intended registrants from registering.

Political parties went all out to encourage the public to exercise their democratic right to participate in the 2009 elections. Political parties included prominent politicians in this drive which included the president of the ANC Women's League, Angie Motshekga, and Dr Mosibudi Mangena, president of the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO) and also the Minister of Science and Technology (Fielding, 2009:5).

Both registration drives by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) have totalled the voter registration as at 20 February 2009 in the Northern Cape at 554 900 with 298 018 female voters and 256 882 male voters (Independent Electoral Commission 2009:1-2).

Who's Who in the Northern Cape's Election Race?

The political environment in the Northern Cape is electrifying as potential candidates enter the race for premiership in the 2009 multi party elections. These potential candidates include John Fikile Block (ANC), Neville Mompati (COPE), Mohammed Desai (ID) Chris Liebenberg (DA) and Francois van Wyk (ACDP) (Cahill, 2009:2).

John Fikile Block is 'the popular choice for the provincial leadership even though the party's national executive committee (NEC) member, Tina Joemat Petterson, received the highest number of votes for the national list for the ANC' (DFA, 2009:9). John Block is a charismatic political leader and successful businessman who has moved swiftly through the ranks of the ANC, occupying

positions such as a member of the Upington Branch Executive Committee (1990), provincial chairperson of the African National Congress Youth League (1991), a member of the National Executive Committee of the ANC Youth League (1991), a member of the ANC Provincial Executive Committee of the Northern Cape (1991), a member of the Northern Cape Provincial Legislature (1994-2004), a consultant for the Ministry of Youth Affairs (1994-1995), a member of the Executive Council (MEC) for the Department of Transport, Roads and Public Works (1999-2004) and later, MEC of Education (2009). Mr Block has a significant following which resulted in his election as the Provincial Chairperson of the ANC at the party's provincial conference held in Kuruman in 2008 (Who's Who: Government, 2009).

The election of John Block as the provincial chairperson of the ANC in the Northern Cape has paved the way for his possible appointment as Premier of the province should the ANC win the Provincial elections. Block defeated his political rival Neville Mompati at the ANC's 2008 Provincial Congress and Mompati subsequently defected to the newly formed Congress of the People party (COPE).

Mompati, now COPE's possible candidate for premiership was born in Kimberley. He was initially a teacher by profession and taught English and History in and around Prieska. Apart from teaching, he has served on a number of youth and education committees. He later resigned from the teaching profession and entered the political arena serving the ANC on a full time basis. He subsequently became the provincial secretary of the ANC in the Northern Cape. After his defeat at the ANC provincial conference in Kuruman at the hands of John Block, he decided to join COPE in November 2008. After his political defeat at the provincial congress Mompati stated that '...it was a tough decision but I could no longer be a proud member of the ANC due to its entrenched factionalism, purging and evil victimisation of comrades with opposing views within the democratic movement' (Cahill, 2009:2).

While the attention is on the struggle between COPE and the ANC in the electoral race for votes, it is important not to ignore the rivalry between the opposition parties

as COPE is presented as the most viable alternative to the ANC.

Despite speculation that the African Christian Democratic Party will struggle to maintain its current standing in the political arena, the party's provincial leader, Francois van Wyk remains positive. Van Wyk, originally from Calvinia, has a keen interest in agriculture, religion and politics. He started his political career in 2003 as a member of ACDP's Provincial Executive Committee. In 2004 he ranked first place on the party's nomination list for premiership. After the 2004 general elections he was appointed as the provincial leader and represented the party nationally as the ACDP's agricultural representative. Van Wyk is known as the opposition's watchdog over any alleged provincial 'financial inadequacies' and has been '…fighting for a member of the opposition to head up the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (Scopa)' (Cahill, 2009:2).

Dr Chris Liebenberg is the Democratic Alliances' candidate for Premiership of the Northern Cape. During apartheid he served as a South African diplomat in California from 1984 to 1989. Thereafter he returned to his family's farm and became involved in politics. In 1993 he assisted in the drafting and publication of a document which promoted the creation of the Northern Cape as a separate province, on '…regional autonomy as a constitutional model for the Northern Cape'. (Cahill, 2009:2). In 1994 he was elected as a member of the legislature in the province and was the Chief Whip of the Opposition. In the same year, with the establishment of a Government of National Unity, Liebenberg became MEC of Transport. He has subsequently been elected, in September 2008, as the provincial leader of the Democratic Alliance (Cahill, 2009:2).

Mr Carel Willem Hendrik Boshoff has been the Northern Cape provincial leader of the Freedom Front Plus since 1994. He is married to Anna Verwoerd. He has a long history as an Afrikaner leader in the province. He was appointed as chairman of the Afrikaner Broederbond (1979-1983), the Afrikaner Volkswag Cultural Organisation (1984-1999), the Afrikaner Vryheidstigting (1983), the Orania Bestuursdienste (Pty) Ltd (1990), and

Member of the Provincial Legislature (1994) (Who's Who: Government, 2009).

Mr Sampie Cloete, leader of the Independent Democrats, was on a campaign drive when he had a very serious car accident and passed away due to his injuries. ID leader Patricia De Lille, upon receiving the news, left immediately for Springbok to be with his family (IOL, 2009:1). He has been replaced by Mr Mohammed Desai as provincial leader of the party.

The IEC set 2 March 2009 at 17:00 as the deadline for political parties to submit their respective party's candidate lists. The IEC then began a process of verifying these lists. Any errors detected in this verification would then be communicated to that particular political party. The IEC has set a deadline of 16 March 2009 for political parties to correct these mistakes, after which the final candidate's lists will be published. Many of the main political parties had not submitted their list by the 24 February, but reported that they were in the process of finalising these lists (Cahill, 2009:2).

As the political parties rush to complete their candidates lists for the forthcoming elections they still took time to comment on the procedures. Opposition parties voiced concern about certain decisions made by the ANC concerning the possible nomination of candidates to their list whom parties felt were inappropriate, such as the nomination of Winnie Mandela, who, it is posited by opposition parties, is ineligible due to a criminal conviction, even though suspended. With regard to the Province, this included criticism about the non-nomination and absence of the current Premier Dipuo Peters' name on the ANC's possible candidates' list. ANC spokesperson Monwabisi Nkompela responded to the opposition parties' criticisms of the ANC's nomination process of the candidates' list for the 2009 election and issued a statement stating that (Fielding, 2009:6):

> *The ANC noted the responses of the opposition parties in respect of the democratic processes undertaken by ordinary members of the ANC and its branches in nominating prospective public representatives to the Provincial Legislature and National Parliament, specifically the non-*

nomination of comrade Dipuo Peters. The ANC respects and abides by its internal democratic processes and so do disciplined members of the ANC, it does not function on the basis of appointed leaders and representatives.

Despite all the deliberation regarding the nomination process and the finalisation of the candidates' list, political parties have to keep the deadline for the submission of these lists in mind, as failure to do so will cut them out of the electoral race. The Provincial Gazette in the Northern Cape Province published the election table for the province which clearly states that registered parties that wish to participate in the 2009 election go through a nomination process and submit their candidates' lists to the Independent Electoral Commissions chief electoral officer by 17:00 on 2 March 2009 (Provincial Gazette, 2009: 3).

Conclusion

If political parties have submitted their candidates' lists but did not comply with section 27 then the chief electoral officer has to inform the respective party thereof by 6 March 2009 and the party needs to correct this by 10 March 2009. The process of listing political parties and their candidates is to have been finalised by 3 April 2009 (Provincial Gazette, 2009: 3).

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Western Cape Province

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The Western Cape is a politically volatile province. It has not been won outright by any single political party since 1999. The province has been governed, at first after 1994 elections, by the (now defunct) National Party (NP), then after that, either an African National Congress (ANC) provincial government or a Democratic Alliance (DA) coalition (with smaller parties). It is currently ruled by the ANC in coalition with several other minor parties. However, the ANC's hold on the Western Cape seems to be slipping as a result of growing factionalism and tension within the party. Most observers predict that the ANC will lose power in the Western Cape Province at the 2009 elections. Opposition parties are aiming to take advantage of the ANC's loss of support. The DA, in particular, has a good chance of winning the province, or at least becoming the biggest party in a coalition that will govern with other parties. This report provides a background of previous elections in the province and a discussion of some key issues regarding party manifestos and candidate nominations in the run up to the election.

Electoral Performance in 2004

The 2004 Provincial elections were hotly contested in the Western Cape. In 1994 and 1999 the province was won by the National Party which went into an alliance with the Democratic Party (DP) in 1999 to form the DA. This alliance was dissolved in 2001. Thus the 2004 elections were the first time when it was likely that a party other than the NP would get control of the province. The contest was particularly important for the ANC, which had been unable to win the province in previous elections but whose support had increased significantly in 1999.

The 2004 election was characterised by an effort by all political parties to woo Coloured voters. Coloureds (the racial majority in the province) do not identify with any particular party in the same way as Africans and Whites do. As a result much of the electioneering of various political parties has been designed especially to attract the 'Coloured vote'.

20 parties contested the provincial election. Of these, six parties gained seats in the 42 seat provincial parliament. The ANC won the majority of seats with 45.25% of the vote (19 seats). The DA won 27.11% of the vote (12 seats) and the NNP won 10.88% of the vote (5 seats). The remaining seats were split between the ID (3), ACDP (2) and UDM (1). Through a coalition government, an alliance of the ANC and the NNP was able to gain majority control of the province and Ebrahim Rasool was elected Premier of the Province. In 2008, following the "recall" of then President Thabo Mbeki by the ANC, in what is perceived to have been a purge by the new leadership of the ANC of Mbeki supporters; Ebrahim Rasool was replaced as Premier of the Western Cape by Lynne Brown, and was subsequently appointed an advisor in the Presidency to President Kgalema Mothlante. There have been arguments advanced that suggest that the replacement of Rasool by Brown may hurt the ANC's chances in the 2009 elections, but Rasool's appointment in the Presidency may counter this view. Electoral support, in any case, will be contingent on a range of factors, rather than just the question of leadership and personal popularity.

Voter registration

Voter registration for the 2009 provincial election was a success. Two voter registration weekends were held on the 8 and 9 November 2008 and 7 and 8 February 2009. Apart from a few isolated incidences the registration process went off smoothly. The number of voters on the Western Cape Voters roll increased from 1 910 866 in 2004 to 2 634 439 in 2009. This is in line with the national trend. On 11 February 2009 the IEC announced that it had exceeded its target to register 22 million voters nationally for the 2009 elections.

Party Manifesto Development

With the announcement of the election date as 22 April 2009, provincial election campaigns have began in earnest. Most of the big political parties began their campaigning before President Kgalema Motlanthe's 10 February 2009 announcement. As was the case in 2004, the Coloured vote is a focal point for all political parties in the Western Cape. The racial make-up of the Western

election update

Cape is 26.68% African, 53.91% Coloured and 18.41% White (Cape Argus, 25 August 2008) so, political parties are pulling out all the stops to attract Coloured voters. Opposition parties aim to take advantage of the in-fighting in the ANC to weaken its hold on the province. The ANC's loss of 18 ward seats in the 10 December 2008 by-election is seen by opposition parties as proof that the ruling party will lose control of the province in this year's provincial elections.

The manifestos of the major parties in the province are not all that different from each other. They all highlight the eradication of poverty; job creation; improvement of health care and education; and fighting crime and corruption, as top priorities. Opposition parties also include defending the constitution in their manifestos, as recent statements against the judiciary by members of the ANC have led some to conclude that the constitutional foundation of the country is under threat. This report looks at the party manifestos and election campaigns of the ANC, DA, ID and the newly formed COPE. The ANC, DA and ID are the biggest parties in the Western Cape while COPE, new to the political scene, also has a large following in the province.

ANC

The ANC in the Western Cape has been faced with a number of difficulties in the last few years. The party's provincial structures have been fractured as a result of fighting between different factions. In 2008, Ebrahim Rasool was removed from the premiership and replaced with Lynn Brown. Following the failure of the party to register its name with the IEC in time to contest December 2008 by elections in local government wards, there were plans to disband the entire provincial executive committee. However, these were shelved in favour of setting up a National Executive Committee (NEC) task team to strengthen leadership in the province. Another team has been set up to run the party's provincial election campaign (PEC). The NEC task team is headed by Gauteng housing MEC, Nomvula Mokonyane. The PEC has effectively been left with no powers until after the election.

The elections task team is headed by Chris Nissen, a businessman and former ANC provincial chairman; and includes Tony Ehrenreich, Cosatu's provincial secretary; Ebrahim Patel, general secretary of the South African Clothing and Textile Workers' Union and labour minister Membathisi Mdladlana. They are responsible for preparing the party for the provincial elections. The party is targeting Coloured voters and will focus its campaign on eradicating poverty and creating jobs. The prominence of trade union leaders in the elections team is part of a strategy to attract voters who are active in the workers movement and other social movements in the province.

The ANC launched its election manifesto in East London on 10 January 2009. Its five priority areas for the next five years are the creation of decent work and sustainable livelihoods; education; health; rural development; food security and land reform; and the fight against crime and corruption. These priorities all tie in with the aim of creating "a better life for all". The party's campaign strategy aims to emphasise the achievements of the last 15 years while acknowledging the challenges which remain. Experience and political will are emphasised as necessary in helping South Africa address poverty, crime and job creation in the future.

DA

The DA has set its sights on winning the majority in the Western Cape. The party is hopeful that its leadership record in several municipalities in the province, Cape Town in particular, will attract voters and make it the ruling party. As mayor of Cape Town, Helen Zille's chief aim has been to illustrate that the DA can not only be an effective opposition, but can also be a successful government. The ANC-COPE split and the results of by-elections towards the end of 2008 have only strengthened belief within the party that it 'is on track to win this province' (Ryan Coetzee, DA Chief Executive). As it has in the three previous elections, the DA is promising to keep the ANC out of the province's leadership. The party's leadership is confident that this will happen. At the Western Cape election campaign launch on 28 February, Helen Zille said her party was looking for an outright victory in the province and was not looking to form any coalitions.

As part of its campaign strategy the DA has conceptualized two opposing political philosophies in South African politics. The first creates an "open, opportunity driven society for all", while the second creates a "closed, crony society for some". This dichotomy allows the party to compare itself to the ANC and other opposing parties. The DA manifesto is based on the first philosophy of an open, opportunity-driven society. The manifesto promises to reduce poverty (using a basic income grant and other appropriate social grants); improve the quality of education (by, among other things, setting performance targets for schools); improve healthcare (by addressing management issues and recruiting and training more doctors); fighting crime and corruption (some suggestions to do this include increasing the number of police officers on the street, reducing backlogs in court and reintroducing prison labour so that prisoners have skills when they leave prison); defend the constitution (putting power back into the hands of the people by introducing direct election of the president, premiers and mayors).

Recent protests regarding the pace of housing delivery and in particular the eviction of people from government housing along with the protests about prepaid water meters in some poor areas of Cape Town, reflect some dissatisfaction with the city's administration, which might undermine the DA's efforts to woo the poor.

ID

The ID contested its first election in 2004 winning three seats in the Western Cape Province. The party views itself as socio democratic and advocates government intervention in addressing inequality in society. Many of the ID's supporters are from the rural areas of the Western Cape and its leader, Patricia de Lille, holds significant respect among the Coloured community in the province. The ID's top policy priorities in its manifesto are job creation, poverty alleviation through a minimum income grant, combating crime, improving the health sector, improving education, focusing on rural development, defending the constitution, cutting government expenditure on the arms and nuclear industries, improving service delivery through filling vacancies in the public service and positioning South

Africa as a leader in renewable energy. The party took five seats in the province in the December 2008 by-election, gaining from the growing disaffection with the ANC in the province. Although it is not likely to win the majority of votes, the ID could win enough votes to go into coalition with one of the bigger parties and could be in a position to be kingmaker in the province.

COPE

The Congress of the People (COPE) is the new kid on the block in this election. Formed by former ANC members who broke away from the party following Thabo Mbeki's removal as president of South Africa, the party has a large following in the Western Cape. At the December 2008 by-elections the party won 10 seats in the province. Some of the most prominent COPE organisers, including former provincial MEC, Leonard Ramatlakane, are based in the Western Cape.

COPE's manifesto was launched on 24 January 2009 under the slogan "A New Agenda for Change and Hope for All". The party has set itself up as the moral alternative to the ANC, with a leadership that is dedicated to serving the people and is not itself. The manifesto includes an extensive list of policy priorities and aims. Among the issues it deals with are transparency in leadership, youth and women empowerment and economic bail-outs for industry. The manifesto also aims to empower people by changing the electoral system to enable the electorate to directly elect the President, Premiers and Mayors. This, they argue, is to enhance accountability to the electorate directly and to promote greater control by the electorate over political leaders in government. The recommendations for supporting the manufacturing industry and implementing social plans to help retrenched workers could be welcomed by workers in the Western Cape who have lost their jobs because of the closure of textile factories and other manufacturers. It is somewhat concerning that the party has not taken a particularly strong stance on HIV/AIDS, which is one of the major problems facing the country. Apart from a few lines about implementing a comprehensive HIV and AIDS strategy there is no mention of the disease in the manifesto. There is also no acknowledgement of the grave impact of HIV/AIDS on the country's population.

Nomination Process

Parties contesting elections in South Africa must nominate candidates and submit lists to the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). Each party has its own system of nomination and selection of candidates. The deadline for submission of candidate lists to the IEC was 3 March 2009 at 5pm. A major point of speculation in the run up to this deadline has been around candidates for premiership of the Western Cape. The ANC has yet to announce its candidate in the province. Conflict between various factions of the party has delayed the selection process. The DA announced on 1 March that Helen Zille would be its premier candidate in the province. This further underlines the effort the DA is making in ensuring that it wins the province by making its party leader Premier candidate for the Western Cape. Zille has been reported as saying that she wants to make the Western Cape an example of competent DA leadership to attract voters around the country. Patricia de Lille has also announced that she will be running as the premier candidate in the province for the ID. She is also number one on the party's national list. Alan Boesak has accepted the nomination for COPE's Western Cape premiership. This follows his initial decision in early February not to make himself available for nomination. Boesak's nomination has caused some controversy because of his former conviction on fraud and theft charges in 1999, which were later rescinded after he received a Presidential pardon from Thabo Mbeki. Boesak still enjoys support in the Western Cape from those who remember his work in the anti-apartheid movement as part of the UDF.

All the completed candidate lists of all the parties will be publicly available from 3 March 2009.These lists can still be objected to and will be finalised at a later stage and confirmed as such by the IEC.

Gauteng Province

Ebrahim Fakir, Ntokozo Ngidi and Sydney Letsholo
EISA

Electoral Performance of Parties in the Province in 2004

A prospective election, like the 2009 National and Provincial elections in South Africa is an opportune time at which to review the electoral results and thereby the performance of political parties in previous elections. This article will focus specifically on the election results for the Gauteng Province in the 2004 elections and the clear picture that emerges is the electoral dominance of the African National Congress (ANC) not only in the Gauteng Province. Eighteen political parties contested the elections in Gauteng in 2004, and of those, only eight parties, on the basis of the proportional electoral outcomes, managed to secure the corresponding number of seats[87] (see Table 1) in the Provincial legislature.

Table 1: 2004 Election Results for Gauteng

Party	Votes	% Votes	Seats
African National Congress	2 331 121	68.4	51
Democratic Alliance	708 081	20.78	15
Inkatha Freedom Party	85 500	2.51	2
African Christian Democratic Party	55 991	1.64	1
Independent Democrats	51 921	1.52	1
Freedom Front Plus	45 648	1.34	1
United Democratic Movement	33 644	0.99	1
Pan Africanist Party	29 076	0.85	1

Source: http://www.elections.org.za/2004results

The Gauteng legislature has a total of 73 seats. Of all these seats, Table 1depicts the electoral dominance of the ANC with 51 seats. Trailing behind in second place, with a huge gap between it and the ANC in first place, was the DA (15 seats) which after these elections became the official opposition party in the province. Among the main reasons given for the impressive electoral performance of the ANC in Gauteng in the 2004 elections, were its strong liberation credentials and its fluid ability to move between different identities depending on the tactical outcome it desired. The ANC was able, at one and the same time, to shift its organisational and political/ideological identity from being a modern

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[87] Matlosa, K. 2004. Gauteng: The Election and Its Aftermath, in *Election Update South Africa 2004,* p. 226; EISA.

political party with all the organisational, institutional, policy and decision making processes of a modern party, to that of a broad social movement with deep penetration into society's grassroots (even though its performance in government and many decisions taken by the ANC in government may not have suggested this), its identity as a liberation movement with the continents longest longevity record (in existence from 1912), a popular front in the form of the mass democratic movement (principally through its alliance with the Congress of South African Trade Unions and the South African Communist Party, but also through the inclusion of sectoral interests such as religious groups, professional associations and business groupings which lends the ANC a multi class character). Its vigorous electioneering, which included an extensive campaign across the entire Gauteng Province, intensive in its approach through mixing traditional political activist campaigning, mass rallies and door to door visits, interest group bilateral and multi lateral meetings, billboards, flyers and radio, newspaper and magazine advertisements, together with the use of new media technologies such as internet website and banner adverts on selected websites, blogs, and cell phone messaging.

Television adverts were not allowed in 2004, so did not feature in any of the political parties campaigns, including the ANC's campaign. For the 2009 election, most parties had television adverts in addition to the traditional campaign media. These were restricted to the larger parties who could afford placing television adverts, with smaller parties, which could neither afford the production costs nor the placement costs of televisions adverts, having to forgo the luxury. Not unexpectedly, none of the political parties contesting only the National elections, or the national and some provincial elections or just the provincial elections, placed any television adverts and thus none of the parties contesting the elections in the Gauteng province only, placed any television adverts.

28 parties have submitted candidates' lists to contest the elections for the National assembly: 17 in the Eastern Cape, 14 in the Free State, 20 in Gauteng, 18 in KwaZulu-Natal, 18 in Limpopo, 15 in Mpumalanga, 16 in the North-West Province, 13 in the Northern Cape and 22 in the Western Cape. Eleven Political Parties will contest the National as well as all nine provincial elections. The Gauteng Province will also have the New Vision Party, Alliance of Free Democrats, Great Congress of SA, Movement Democratic Party, Christian Democratic Party, Women Forward and the National Democratic Convention. All these parties will be contesting at least the National and some provinces including Gauteng, with only one party the African Christian Alliance, contesting no other elections except for the Gauteng Provincial legislature and the North West legislature. None of these parties really made any showing in past elections and it seems reasonable to surmise that many will not feature at all in the coming elections.

The emergence of the Congress of the People (COPE) however, has raised the electoral stakes in the battle for control of Gauteng province. This will be the party's first electoral contest and former COSATU general secretary and ANC Premier of the Province, Mbhazima 'Sam' Shilowa, who resigned from the ANC after Mbeki's axing as President of the Republic in 2008 to join COPE, remains popular in the Province. However, Shilowa is not the COPE Premiership candidate for Gauteng and his popularity may not necessarily boost COPE's electoral prospects in the Province. Matters for COPE could be further complicated by the recent and sudden resignation of its Gauteng election coordinator; Mlungisi Hlongwane, (former leader of the South African National Civics Organisation and ANC member) who has since left COPE to rejoin the ANC.

A trend which manifested nationally from the 2004 election was also evident in the Gauteng Province. Indicative in this regard was the political decline of both the New National Party (NNP) and the IFP, with some of the leaders of the NNP (and a smaller number of followers joining and folding into the ANC) while some of the supporters of the erstwhile NNP migrated its political support to the DA or any number of other opposition parties. Most analysts predict that the effect of past NNP voters on this election will be negligible, since the migration of NNP voters had already been precipitated at the 2004 elections leading to the NNP decline, and the political support available for distribution and its impact is bound to be negligible since its voters had already

election update

expressed alternative political preferences. On other fronts the 2004 elections saw the surprise newcomer, the Independent democrats (ID) formed by Patricia de Lille after crossing the floor from the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) but retaining none of the PAC's ideological bent or its dysfunction. In its first contested election in the Gauteng Province in 2004, it amassed a total of 51 921 of the votes. Table 2 below depicts the 2004 voting statistics for the province.

Table 2: Gauteng Election Statistics- 2004

Registered Voters	4 650 594
Ballot Cast	3 452 225
Percentage Poll	74.23
Valid Ballot	3 408 308
Spoilt Ballot	43 917
% Spoilt	1.27

Source: http://www.elections.org.za/statistics2004

The provincial electoral commission was highly satisfied with the 2004 voter turnout. This high voter-turnout was largely attributed to vigorous voter-education initiatives and intensive electioneering activities that were undertaken by the electoral stakeholders. It is expected that turnout at the 2009 election will be high, and this assumption is premised on the final registration figures. The turnout may not be as high as expected, due to a number of considerations. However, the registration figures do provide some indicator of the level of interest in political activity, and as the registration figures, suggest, this number is highest in Gauteng Province.

Gauteng Voter Registration

After the two registration drives, and continuous registration at municipal offices, the IEC's registration figures reveal that overall, across South Africa, close to 23 million voters registered, compared to the 20 million captured for the 2004 election registration process. 1.2 million voters registered in Gauteng province across 2 238 voting stations. 9 930 of these registered in the final registration weekend of 7 and 8 February 2009. In the 18 to 29 age group, Gauteng Province has the highest number of voters among the 18 to 29 age group with 30 1 743 out of a nationwide 18 to 29 age group of 6 million voters, compared to 4 million in this age cohort in 2004. This figure however is not as impressive for young and first time voters, when considering that there are '6

million people in the 18-24 age cohort, but only 3.8 million who are actually registered to vote'.[88]

Party Manifesto Development

Very little is publicly known about political parties manifesto development processes in South Africa. Political party media, campaign materials and websites, while often containing the actual policy detail and manifesto content, do not provide any detail of the process by which policy and manifesto processes are developed. Parties also do not reveal what their internal procedures entail. Formal electoral or statutory provisions also do not require disclosure of any of these details. This may in fact be due to inadequate reportage of the manifesto development process or a lack of interest by the media in reporting what some assume to be simply descriptive detail.

The little that is known about internal political party policy and decision making processes is due to glimpses received from press releases, press statements and occasionally from other media reports. The ANC, however, has publicised its manifesto development process extensively on its website as well as through radio and print advertisements, flyers, pamphlets and other media – inviting primarily its members, but also the public, to contribute ideas to the ANC manifesto. Other parties publicised their manifesto development process much less, except for the respective launches of the manifesto.

Every party has a an ideological predisposition informed by a set of core principles, values and beliefs that guide the content and the course of the manifesto development process and the political identity of the party may in part determine how open, transparent, participatory and consultative a party might be and therefore how inclusive or exclusive its party manifesto development process may be. It is however generally agreed that a party's processes need only be maximally open to its members, and possibly supporters, even though an individual's support for a party may in fact be hard to verify and prove. Consequently in some parties the manifesto

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[88] Harris, M. Ipsos/ Markinor press release, 27 February 2009

development process is dominated by internal party elites, or party leaders, or a core group of policy elites who guide, and in some instances dominate, the manifesto development process to the exclusion of others, rank and file members especially.

Other parties have an inclusive process in which all members are given a chance to contribute to the development of the manifesto and other parties are inclusive only to the extent that others in the party are consulted on aspects of the manifesto and yet others, inclusive only to the extent of sharing the and explaining the manifesto and what informs its content before releasing it to the public.

Other parties may be so closed that the manifesto development process is not only dominated, but solely determined, by a select group of leaders or party policy makers. Yet other parties follow a process in which the manifesto is developed by a select group and then consulted upon within the various organs and structures of the party. It may thus be evident that the process by which a manifesto is arrived at by a party follows permutations of inclusivity and exclusivity and processes that are as diverse and numerous as there are parties.

As such the ANC anchors its 2009 manifesto on the ideals of the Freedom Charter; appropriating to itself in its battle with the newly formed COPE, the Freedom Charter. In reality, however the Freedom Charter and its meaning is itself contested and both COPE and the ANC's appeal to the freedom charter represents a particular understanding interpretation of it.

In drawing up the manifesto, the ANC explicitly states that its adopts the conference resolutions of its December 2007 Polokwane conference which translates into its manifesto that becomes the blueprint for governance once it wins the elections, with the current manifesto being aimed to serve as an ANC government ANC Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) for the 2009-2014 period.

The ANC manifesto, the ANC argues, is also rooted in the Strategy and Tactics document, a conceptual and political guide, as the name suggests, to the strategies it

seeks to adopt and the tactics it seeks to follow in incrementally achieving its vision of the Freedom Charter. The 1996 Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP); the Constitution of South Africa; and the resolutions and policies of 52nd ANC National Conference (Polokwane 2007); the 2008 January 8th National Executive Committee (NEC) Statement and the 15 Year Review of Government also contribute to providing the overarching framework for the crafting of the manifesto.

The ANC NEC, sub-divided into portfolio Sub-Committees, spelled out the 2007 conference policy resolutions, which process itself involved consultation with the ANC's Alliance Partners (the Congress of South African Trade Unions, the South African Communist Party and the South African National Civics Organisation) through the Alliance Summit which was held in May 2008, the Mass Democratic Movement (MDM) Summit held in September 2008, and the Alliance Economic Summit held in October 2008.

In November 2008 the ANC launched a public manifesto campaign entitled *My ANC; My Vision; My Future* that invited the public to submit suggestions on what the manifesto should contain through a website, cell-phone short messages (SMS), or through letters and by telephone. In addition, various public meetings were called and ANC branches were mandated to conduct community visits and consultations, all with the aim of gathering information regarding what issues South Africans felt needed addressing, so that these could be included in the manifesto.

A Manifesto Policy Conference was held on 29-30 November 2008, after which time a manifesto drafting committee went through all of the submissions and suggestions received through the public campaign, integrated them with the main policy resolutions, the summit resolutions and the thrust of the content of the framework documents. The manifesto was launched on 10 January 2009.

Not many other parties have actually provided a description of the process by and through which their manifestos are drafted, and the same applies to the candidate nomination process, except for the Democratic

Alliance, whose candidate nomination process is extensively described in a publicly available document on its website.

Candidate Nomination Process

Each party follows a different nomination process. The ANC[89], the IFP and the UDM facilitated candidate nomination processes through its branch structures and grass roots membership. The IFP applied the constituency system in respect of the process of nominations of its candidates in which the branches and constituencies could nominate candidates for them to be carried in the party lists. This has brought about profound transformation for the IFP's lists, both in terms of having new faces and of senior party members finding they are lower down on the list than many of their junior colleagues[90].

The party lists of the United Democratic Movement, it is argued, have been the result of an expensive bottom-up approach which engaged the party branches and enlisted their views and priorities in both the drafting of the manifesto as well as in the nomination of candidates. The UDM arrived at these lists after a wide-ranging consultation process within its party structures. This process culminated in a Special National Council meeting on Friday 27 February, when the extended national and provincial leadership and delegates from the UDM's provincial structures carefully considered each candidate on a range of criteria, balancing the considerations of Expertise, gender and youth representation, race, geographic and regional diversity.[91]

The DA usually deals with the nomination process through its electoral college, and for the 2009 process it was no different, even though significant innovations were introduced. For the 2009 election nomination process, the DA followed an unusual and unorthodox practice by placing advertisements (like job adverts) in the media, to which interested candidates could respond. The candidates were short listed and interviewed if they were already members of the party and if not, naturally had to join the party. In terms of the DA's own Constitutional processes, the entire process was conducted through its federal candidates' election committee (FCEC). In addition, electoral colleges were established by the party in each province, which were mandated to elect the pool of candidates for the National Assembly and for the provincial legislature for that province, and further interview the candidates nominated for election to the National Council of Province. Overall the FCEC consisted of The Chairperson of the Federal Council; the Chairperson of the Federal Legal Commission; the principal representative of the Party on the National PLC of the IEC; the chief executive officer; a representative from each province and a representative of the Association of Democratic Alliance Councillors (ADAC).

The evaluation of the candidates comprised a written evaluation of contribution to the party, a written evaluation of the candidates contribution to his or her community or the wider society, and the leadership role that candidate occupies in the community or society and an assessment of the training of a nominee. The DA's process is clearly a thorough and intensive one, aimed at attracting the best available and committed talent. It also featured an innovative way to recruit new members, but it is not certain that DA membership figures went up dramatically because of a response to the call for adverts. Most respondents to the DA adverts were existing DA members or sympathisers, and the pool of respondents was without any strongly identifiable political allegiance and affiliation either to a Party or a strong set of political ideals, and who wished to take a shot at being an MP for the DA, was small overall.

COPE also followed a process that was unconventional and controversial. The nomination process was conducted through a selection panel chaired by the University of South Africa Vice-Chancellor, Professor Barney Pityana. Pityana tabled a report of the selection, process, evaluations and selection criteria which included a list of options of names to be on COPES's candidate list, which was submitted to COPE's Congress National Committee

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[89] For a full description of the candidate nomination process and criteria for nomination and eligibility and evaluation, see www.anc.org.za_list guidelines; A case study: the ANC nomination process, *Election Update: South Africa*, No. 2, p. 35. EISA.
[90] Speech by Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, MP. President of the Inkatha Freedom Party. 5 March 2009
[91] Statement by Mr Bantu Holomisa MP, UDM President; 1 March 2009

for discussion and debate.[92] This Committee then finalised the names for the candidate list, which were initially solicited from the approximately 500 000 members claimed by COPE, and the structures around the country. Given that COPE, by the time of the elections and since its formation, will be approximately 100 days old, its membership figures and branch organisational configuration cannot be verified, save for purposes of nomination and the manifesto process. Its membership and branches were provided with an opportunity to contribute to the selection panel chaired by Professor Pityana.

After much controversy and reports of unhappiness over the selection of the Presidential nominee, it was reported that Mosiuoa Lekota the COPE president, was unhappy at the selection of Dandala, and Lekota had then to be persuaded by Senior COPE officials, Smuts Ngonyama (former ANC presidency spokesperson) and Thozamile Botha (former ANC local Government Guru) to accept the outcome of the nomination process. The COPE presidential candidate is Dr Mvume Dandala, former head of the Methodist church of Southern Africa. Though not being high profile, Dr Dandala has impeccable struggle credentials and is widely credited as working extremely hard at negotiating an end to violence both in South Africa before and after the 1994 elections as well as more recently in Kenya, after post election violence threatened the peace and stability of that country.

Media coverage of the election campaigns

While the media coverage of the election campaigns of the different parties in different provinces has been vigorous and dedicated, there have been criticisms of the nature and content of the election- related coverage. While all media, print, electronic and broadcast have dedicated election coverage and programmes, most coverage in Gauteng is from a National perspective. Some dedicated provincial level coverage is carried by *The Star*, *The Pretoria News* and the *Sowetan*. In the case of the Star and *The Pretoria News*, election coverage is syndicated through its parent holding company, the Independent Group of Newspapers. The South African

Broadcasting Corporation will also feature specific coverage of the nine provinces across its television and radio coverage, with dedicated daily broadcasts from the provinces, broadcast within that province.

Regarding the content of media coverage of the election campaigns, media monitoring by Media Monitoring Africa suggests that the media has publicised statements made by political leaders without providing a context for them, thereby leading to confusion, misinterpretation and misunderstanding.[93] Incidentally, most of the national media coverage of the elections covers the three major provinces of the country, Gauteng, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal to the detriment of adequate coverage from other parts of the country. The *Sowetan* has been singled out for its attempts to provide coverage with broader geographic provincial spread. Because the nature of the coverage has been without adequate context and reportage of facts, though South Africa enjoys a free and vigorous independent media, the perspective that the media has communicated has been from that of the politicians rather than of the concerns of citizens, and this has allowed for the media agenda to be set by politicians. Overall, the reporting however, has been 'fair and balanced and somewhat accurate, even though on balance, accuracy has been uneven, the quality, diversity and depth of the media reportage and coverage has thus far been mediocre'.[94]

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[92] Cope membership figures show political mood of South Africans; SAPA; 15 December 2008

[93] Election Coverage 8 April 2009, Zikalala and confusing stories, Media Monitoring Africa, 9 April 2009. www.mediamonitoringafrica.org/index.php/news/entry/elections
[94] Media must adopt its own agenda, 13 February 2009, Media Monitoring Africa.

election update

ABOUT EISA

Since its inception in July 1996 EISA has established itself as a leading institution and influential player dealing with elections and democracy related issues in the African continent.

The organisation's strategic objectives are

- To enhance electoral processes to ensure their inclusiveness and legitimacy
- To promote effective citizen participation in democratic processes to strengthen institutional accountability and responsiveness
- To strengthen governance institutions to ensure effective, accessible and sustainable democratic processes
- To promote principles, values and practices that lead to a culture of democracy and human rights
- To create a culture of excellence that leads to consistently high quality products and services
- To position EISA as a leader that consistently influences policy and practice in the Democracy and Governance Sector.

The vision of EISA is 'an African continent where democratic governance, human rights and citizen participation are upheld in a peaceful environment'. This vision is executed through the organisational mission of 'striving for excellence in the promotion of credible elections, participatory democracy, a human rights culture, and the strengthening of governance institutions for the consolidation of democracy in Africa'. EISA staff members are essentially drawn from the whole African continent.

In conjunction with the Electoral Commission's Forum of SADC countries (ECF), EISA has helped develop *Principles for Electoral Management, Monitoring and Observation in the SADC Region, PEMMO*, a document reviewing guidelines for running a professional and legitimate election. EISA is also one of the organisations which developed, adopted and launched the Declaration of Principles for International Election Observation in 2005 at the United Nations in New York.

EISA has extensive experience in formulating, structuring and implementing democratic and electoral initiatives. It has built an internationally recognised centre for policy, research and information and provides this service to electoral commissions, political parties and civil society in a variety of areas, such as voter and civic education, electoral reform, electoral observation/monitoring and conflict management and transformation. EISA initiated the formation and establishment of the civil society-based SADC Electoral Support Network (SADC ESN) in 1997 and the Electoral Commissions Forum of SADC countries (ECF) in 1998. EISA was the Secretariat of both regional bodies over several years from their inception.

EISA is also helping inter-state institutions like the African Union, the Pan-African Parliament and the SADC Secretariat to reinforce their capacity in the area of election observation and will provide similar assistance to ECOWAS and the East Africa Community in 2009.

EISA has observed and co-ordinated over 30 electoral processes in the continent and beyond. It has conducted training of political party agents, local monitors and regional observers in election monitoring and observation. It has deployed election observation teams to observe electoral processes and possesses the logistical expertise for coordinating such exercises. Countries in which EISA has observed elections include Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia, Zanzibar and Zimbabwe. Beyond the SADC region EISA has observed elections in Burundi, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda and Somaliland.

EISA has been involved in all the elections in South Africa since 1999 in three important ways namely (a) production of election updates; (b) election observation; and (c) public dialogue especially around electoral reforms.