

# GREAT DECISIONS

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## South Africa's fragile democracy

### Acronyms and abbreviations

<b>ANC</b> —African National Congress	<b>NEPAD</b> —New Partnership for Africa's Development
<b>AU</b> —African Union	<b>NP</b> —National Party
<b>COSATU</b> —Congress of South African Trade Unions	<b>NUMSA</b> —National Union of Metalworkers
<b>DA</b> —Democratic Alliance	<b>RDP</b> —Reconstruction and Development Program
<b>EFF</b> —Economic Freedom Fighters	<b>SACP</b> —South African Communist Party
<b>GEAR</b> —Growth, Employment and Redistribution	<b>SAFTU</b> —South African Federation of Trade Unions
<b>IFP</b> —Inkatha Freedom Party	<b>SANNC</b> —South African National Natives Congress
	<b>UDF</b> —United Democratic Front
	<b>VOC</b> —Dutch East India Company

### Glossary

**African National Congress (ANC):** South Africa's social democratic party, which has maintained majority rule in the country since the abolition of apartheid.

**“African Renaissance”:** A concept developed in the 1940s and popularized by former South African President Thabo Mbeki which argues that African people and nations should collaborate on the continent's challenges.

**African Union (AU):** A union of all 55 African countries established in 2001 that works to foster continental belonging, security and stability, champion international cooperation and protect the rights of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

**Anglo-Boer War (Second Boer War; South African War) (1899–1902):** A war between the British Empire and two Boer states—the South African Republic

(Republic of Transvaal) and the Orange Free State—over British patronage of South Africa. In the resulting British victory, both republics were incorporated into the Union of South Africa in 1910.

**apartheid:** The system and policy that institutionalized racial segregation and discrimination in South Africa from 1948 until 1991.

**Boer:** Literally meaning “farmer” in Dutch and Afrikaans, a boer is also a label applied to South Africans who are descended from the country's early Dutch settlers.

**BRICS:** An acronym designating five countries with major emerging national economies—Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa—which have met annually since 2009.

**Cecil John Rhodes:** A British imperialist and businessman who served as prime minister of the Cape Colony (1890–96) and founded the southern African territory of Rhodesia. Rhodes University and the Rhodes Scholarship are named after him.

**Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU):** The largest trade union federation in South Africa, founded in 1985.

**Democratic Alliance (DA):** The main opposition political party to the ANC. The DA is a centrist party founded in 2000 that has its roots in the anti-apartheid Progressive Party. The DA is the most multiracial party in South Africa and the only party that has won an increasing proportion of the votes in each national election since the end of apartheid.

**Dutch East India Company (VOC):** Established in 1602, a multinational founded the Cape Colony in South Africa in 1652 to establish a supply station and layover port for trading ships on route to Asia (the Cape Colony later grew into a settler colony).

**Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF):** Founded in 2013, a revolutionary socialist party, now the third-largest party represented in the South African parliament.

**F.W. de Klerk:** The last president of South Africa before the end of apartheid (1989–94).

**Homelands (bantustans):** Areas outside of urban centers where the South African apartheid government moved the majority of black Africans to further segregate politics and society.

**Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP):** A political party in South Africa that advocates for more transfer of power to traditional African authorities.

**International Criminal Court (ICC):** An international court headquartered in the Hague that prosecutes individuals for international crimes including genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

**Jacob Zuma:** President of South Africa (2009–present), Zuma has faced calls for his resignation and a failed impeachment attempt based on multiple allegations of corruption.

**National Party (NP):** Founded in 1915, the official party of apartheid, in power in South Africa until it was disbanded in 1997.

**National Union of Metalworkers (NUMSA):** Founded in 1987, the biggest single trade union in South Africa, which, after the end of apartheid, gained a reputation for speaking out on controversial ANC policies like privatization and the ongoing issue of mass poverty.

**Nelson Mandela:** A South African anti-apartheid revolutionary who served as the first post-apartheid president (1994–99). Mandela was a member of the ANC, and while in office, prioritized creating a political, social and economic system that championed racial equality.

**New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD):** An economic development program established by the African Union in 2001 to promote economic cooperation and integration among African countries.

**Omar al-Bashir:** The president of Sudan (1989–present). Al-Bashir received an indictment from the ICC in 2009 for his alleged crimes against civilians in the Sudanese region of Darfur.

**Ogoni Nine:** A group of nine activists from the Ogoni region of Nigeria who were executed in 1995 by the Nigerian military dictatorship.

**pass laws:** An internal passport system, repealed in 1986, that segregated the South African population and controlled the movement of black Africans and other minorities by requiring them to carry pass books whenever outside of their homelands.

**Reconstruction and Development Program (RDP):** An economic policy proposed by the ANC before it participated in the first post-apartheid elections in South Africa, which sought to address long-standing socioeconomic issues created and reinforced by apartheid. RDP was replaced by the more coherent Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) program in 1996.

**Robben Island:** An island off of Cape Town, South Africa that historically housed political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela for 18 of his 27 years of incarceration.

**Robert Mugabe:** A Zimbabwean revolutionary and former president (1987–2017), accused of dictatorship, poor economic governance, corruption and crimes against humanity, culminating in his 2017 resignation following a coup.

**Sharpeville Massacre:** The killing of 69 demonstrators by the South African police during a 1960 protest against the pass laws.

**South African Federation of Trade Unions (SAFTU):** A trade union federation in South Africa founded in 2017.

**South African National Natives Congress (SANNC):** Founded in 1912, the SANNC was an early version of the ANC that sought to establish universal suffrage and end apartheid.

**Thabo Mbeki:** The former president of South Africa (1999–2008) who popularized the concept of “African Renaissance,” founded the economic program NEPAD and forged economic relations with the BRIC countries. Mbeki received international criticism for not acting robustly enough against the Zimbabwean dictator Robert Mugabe, as well as for his AIDS denialism. He resigned in 2008 after being charged with improper behavior by South Africa’s National Prosecuting Authority.

**Union of South Africa:** Established in 1910, a predecessor state to present-day South Africa, which unified four British colonies—the Cape, Natal, Transvaal and Orange River—and annexed territory from Boer republics. A dominion of the British Empire, the Union of South Africa gained full sovereignty in 1931 and left Great Britain in 1961 to become the Republic of South Africa.

**United Democratic Front (UDF):** Founded in 1983, the UDF became a robust non-racial, anti-apartheid alliance that promoted the creation of a non-racial, united South Africa. Many UDF activists were at one point imprisoned and accused of treason and the UDF itself was banned along with the ANC and SACP until 1990.