



Greater Tshwane SACP secretary Apson Makaung explains the outcome of the party's district conference.

PICTURE: BONGANI SHILUBANE/AFRICAN NEWS AGENCY (ANA)

City SACP set to fight metro poll solo

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THE SACP Greater Tshwane district has expressed its intention to contest the metropolitan council elections in 2021 on its own.

Speaking to the Pretoria News yesterday, party secretary Apson Makaung said the political move would be a way of asserting its independence within the alliance partners.

Makaung said the matter was deliberated upon by about 300 delegates during the two-day district congress at the Pretoria Hotel at the weekend.

Participants were mindful of the amount of work they needed to undertake to secure seats in the Tshwane council, he said.

"In Metsimaholo (local municipality), the SACP didn't have branches when it contested for power, but it managed to obtain three seats. As we are speaking now, the SACP has a mayor through a coalition governance there.

"In 2021 the SACP Tshwane is very vocal about contesting for power. We are saying we want the party to be identical. We want to control our own deployees. We will mobilise the left forces," he said.

The aim was not to contest against the ANC, but to take part in the elections. "We are not contesting (against) the ANC. We are contesting the elections; there is no organisation that owns the elections."

Makaung said the party would lobby its provincial and national structures to support its effort to participate in the municipal polls.

He said delegates also expressed concern about the state of the regional ANC ahead of its elective conference. "The ANC in Tshwane is going to encounter problems of division because most see themselves as possible candidates for the position of the chairperson.

"As long as the ANC can't come under one roof and discuss the leadership, they will continue to have a problem," he said.

More concerns were raised

regarding tribalism, which allegedly threatened unity within the ANC.

"There is this problem within the ANC of not wanting people who are born outside Gauteng to contest for positions. This is also questionable because the Freedom Charter and constitution are very clear on that.

"We can't have a situation where they are saying this one is not born in Tshwane, and therefore he or she can't contest for a leadership position. We saw it during the 2016 municipal elections when the ANC appointed Thoko Didiza to lead the Tshwane campaign. There were people who declared no Sputla, no votes," Makaung said.

Also under the spotlight were issues related to the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) under the DA-led administration.

"We marched against the City of Tshwane, wanted them to audit the EPWP, but no one has ever listened to us. When the DA came in, they also did things that were questionable. They even employed grannies instead of getting people who can do

great work," he said.

He said the SACP was the first organisation to blow the whistle on alleged corruption related to the pre-paid electricity smart meter contract to Peu Capital Partners in 2013.

"We first complained about the tender and said they didn't follow the right procedure before appointing the contractor. We said they must investigate it. The last administration didn't listen to us.

"Recently, we have witnessed the DA taking them to court and then winning the case. It is not the DA that won the case; it is the case that was won by us because we were the first people to raise the Peu issue," he said.

Regarding the one percentage point increase in value-added tax (VAT), he said the party would soon roll out mass protests against the decision.

"We will roll out mass action until the National Treasury reverses this issue. They cannot say they support the poor while at the same time they punish them," Makaung said.