

MARAWU TO DUMP ANC FOR ATM

Sanco troubled by entry of new party in E Cape

ZINE GEORGE
POLITICAL EDITOR

Eastern Cape ANC heavy-weight Thandiswa Marawu is defecting to the African Transformation Movement because she believes in toeing her church's line.

She said whatever apostle Caesar Nongqunga – the head of the Twelve Apostles Church in Christ (TACC) and the brains behind the new ATM party – told his congregants to do, they did in a heartbeat with no questions asked.

“When apostle said we must vote for the ANC, we did it without question. Now he says the church has cut ties with the ANC, and so as loyal church members we have no choice but to follow suit – no questions asked,” said the former ANC provincial treasurer and public works MEC.

Such a senior defection would be a major coup for the new kid on the block.

Marawu's comments come after a video of her dancing with women clad in ATM regalia went viral at the weekend – the first sign that she would soon dump the ANC.

But ANC provincial secretary Lulama Ngcukayitobi warned Marawu not to play with fire.

“She knows that when you decide to join another political party, which operates in hostility to the ANC and its allies, you automatically expel yourself,” said Ngcukayitobi.

Marawu defended herself, saying the other women in the video may have been in ATM T-shirts, “but I am not in ATM regalia. Have another look at that video.

“But in the same breath, that



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Thandiswa Marawu
Former MEC for public works

does not mean that I am not considering making serious decisions about my political career,” said Marawu.

She blamed factionalism within the ruling party as one of the main reasons the church decided to cut ties with the ANC. “The factionalism and violence in today's ANC makes one wonder whether, as staunch church members who are preaching peace, we are in the right place in the ANC.

“Those are the questions Tat'uNongqunga wanted to ask ANC leaders but no one listened.”

Should Marawu join the ATM, she would join the likes of Mzwanele Manyi, a former cabinet spokesperson, and former DA provincial chair and MPL Veliswa Mvenya.

Journalist and gospel singer Zama Ntshona has also joined the party and was announced as its spokesperson.

“The ATM project will not fail. With its approach in politics, being placed where the people are, as well as having the numbers that it has, securing our seats is definite,” Ntshona said.

Marawu said as a long-serving

TACC member, has been part of meetings at which Nongqunga publicly announced his interest in meeting President Cyril Ramaphosa and his ANC officials, but a meeting never materialised.

“It was at that meeting where tata [Nongqunga] wanted to raise an issue about violence and factionalism in the ANC, but no one came to listen. The Eastern Cape provincial conference, which also turned violent, was the last straw.”

This was the October 2017 conference at which Phumulo Masualle lost his bid for a third term as the ANC provincial chair. He was beaten by incumbent Oscar Mabuyane.

Marawu was part of the group that walked out of the conference amid an uproar that included delegates throwing chairs at each other.

“I understand when tata [Nongqunga] says this is not the ANC we once knew, and so forming [the] ATM was the last option and now that the apostle has shown us the way – as the church we have to follow suit,” Marawu said.

She said she would make an official announcement about her future in a week or two.

The SA National Civic Organisation (Sanco) in the Eastern Cape said that Marawu's possible move to the ATM was an attempt to destabilise the alliance with the ANC.

Sanco's Tony Duba said: “This was a carefully concocted plan to destabilise the revolutionary programme of the alliance in the Eastern Cape. The continued attempts at destabilising Sanco in the Eastern Cape was all a plan to assist their new political home to make inroads in the Eastern Cape.” – *With additional reporting by Soyiso Maliti*