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NEW SEASON'S MESSAGE BY AZAPO PRESIDENT NELVIS QEKEMA

The year 2022 is virtually behind us. But its scars are all over our bodies and souls because it was a year in which we felt we fell below our efforts to realise the annual objectives we set ourselves. Just check out how our objectives have narrowed to basic things like getting a job; owning a house; and escaping from poverty.

Because of the structurality of the problems of Black people, these annual wishes will remain the same as the ones we had during the era of white settler-colonialism and apartheid. The people who fraudulently own the land and wealth of Azania have as their objectives the opening up of new markets and the rapid growth of the profit of their businesses.

The festive season has come and gone. Though we deserved to be happy during the festivities, January 2023 has moved in with lightening speed to remind us that such happiness was nothing more than a dummy. Our children have to go back to school; and that means school fees, uniform and stationery. Yet there is no money left because the one we had was never sufficient to even make us happy during the festive season.

In this new season we need to do things differently. That means we need to reboot our energies and reset our priorities in the correct order. Our original and fundamental objective is the return of our land and wealth to their rightful owners. As soon as possible, we need to get the country's politics in order by ensuring that we vote and delegate our power to political organisations that have the interests of the people at heart. The actualisation of these objectives require that we act not as individuals, but as organised citizens or the fighting masses, to be exact.

While social grants like the R350s are welcome, there is a problem once they become a permanent feature of the economy. They make sense only as a temporary relief measure. The government has a political responsibility to formulate policies that will grow and develop the economy to be able to absorb a greater number of the people in the working age bracket. Human beings are yearning to work and foot the bill

for their living. Further, they expect their government make space for a lot more Black people to be entrepreneurs. Black people are conscious of their worth as human beings. They reject being patronised by the political elites. We deserve more than food parcels and T-shirts of political parties during elections. Black poverty should not be perpetuated and instrumentalised for the political advantage of the ruling parties.

AZAPO said it from time immemorial. Education should be made a top priority. It is through the education of our children that this society will be able to better and reinvent itself to be counted among the great nations of the world. This objective can never be realised if education is commodified. Education should be free up to the first tertiary qualification. An educated nation, is a prosperous nation.

With that said, there is a desperate need for Black people to close ranks and deliberately support Black business. When you are sick, consult a Black doctor. When you have a legal problem, consult a Black lawyer. When you have to buy your groceries, spend your Rand at a Black shop. In return, Black business and professionals must plough back the Rand into the Black communities for our targeted development as a people. When you Buy Black, you Stretch the Rand. We need to develop the mentality to support and grow ourselves at all times. We should do this with pride and unapologetically so.

On the other hand, AZAPO is moving with speed to rebuild itself into the Weapon and Shield of the people. We have already demonstrated our political resolve in how our Action Platoon fearlessly bulldozed into a court of law and protested against the criminalisation of the struggle songs and heritage. EFF leaders were appearing in that court. AZAPO was not done. Our Platoon forces marched into action and defended Black people against the practical manifestation of white supremacy by one Verwoerd descendant, Belinda Magor. AZAPO opened a case against her, and got her arrested before chasing her out of her residence into uncomfortable hiding. AZAPO has once again jumped into action to defend the Black youth who were abused by white racists at a Bloemfontein holiday resort. The racists could not stomach the sight of Black people appearing to be happy.

AZAPO wishes you and your family peace, health, happiness and prosperity in the New Year.

A Happy New Year in this Fighting New Year.

Season's Greetings!