

**THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE PEOPLE'S UNITED DEMOCRATIC
MOVEMENT (PUDEMO) TO DEMOCRATIC CHANGE IN SWAZILAND,
1983-2013**

2018

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**THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE PEOPLE'S UNITED DEMOCRATIC
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1983-2013**

**BY
HANKY PRINCE SEREO**

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Supervisor: Professor Hamilton Siphon Simelane

DECLARATION

I acknowledge that I have read and understood the University's policies and rules applicable to postgraduate research, and I certify that I have, to the best of my knowledge and belief, complied with their requirements. In particular, I confirm that I had obtained an ethical clearance certificate for my research and that I have complied with the conditions set out in that certificate.

I further certify that this thesis is original, and that the material has not been published elsewhere, or submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university. I declare that this thesis is, except for the supervisory guidance received, the product of my own work and effort. I have, to the best of my knowledge and belief, complied with the University's Plagiarism Policy and acknowledged all sources of information in line with normal academic conventions. I have subjected the document to the University's text-matching and/or similarity-checking procedures.

HANKY PRINCE SEREO, Author

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated with love and gratitude to Mr. Eric S. Sibanda, the finest man I have ever known.

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First, I would like to thank God, the Almighty, who has kept and sustained me throughout my life and the production of this work.

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ABSTRACT

This is a historical study of modern politics in the Kingdom of Swaziland. It is a study of a leading driver for democratic change in Africa's 'only absolute monarchy'. The leading driver is a modern political formation known as the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) and the study demonstrates a variety of ways in which the Swazi monarchy responded to PUDEMO's struggle to democratise the Kingdom of Swaziland. These ways are presented as signs of democratic practice in a country that abolished the Independence Constitution and cardinal practices of liberal democracy in 1973, five years after the end of formal British rule. The thesis uses the experience of PUDEMO to show that the signs of change were not simply products of monarchical benevolence, but came about as a result of pressure put by PUDEMO on the Swazi leaders. It is a study of the history of PUDEMO and its contribution to the process of democratisation of Swaziland. It interrogates the various ways in which PUDEMO has influenced change towards a democratic dispensation in the country.

Key words: King Sobhuza II, King Mswati III, Democracy, Democratisation, Monarchy, SWAYOCO, PUDEMO, UMBANE, Likoqo, Tinkhundla.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANC	African National Congress
CDC	Constitutional Drafting Committee
CIEAS	Coalition of Informal Economy Associations in Swaziland
CRC	Constitutional Review Commission
FSEJ	Foundation for Socio-Economic Justice
HIV/Aids	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HUMARAS.....	Human Rights Association of Swaziland
INM	Imbokodvo National Movement
NCA	National Constituent Assembly
NNLC	Ngwane National Liberatory Congress
PUDEMO	People's United Democratic Movement
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SACP	South African Communist Party
SDA	Swaziland Democratic Alliance
SDC	Swaziland Democracy Campaign
SNUS	Swaziland National Union of Students
STA	Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008
SFL	Swaziland Federation of Labour
SFTU	Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions
SRC	Student's Representative Council
SRWA	Swaziland Rural Women's Assembly
SUDF	Swaziland United Democratic Front
SSN	Swaziland Solidarity Network
SWAYOCO	Swaziland Youth Congress
SWADEPA	Swaziland Democratic Party

TUCOSWA Trade Union Congress of Swaziland
TRC *Tinkhundla* Review Commission

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

The Kingdom of Swaziland was a British protectorate from the early 1900s¹ until it regained its independence on 6 September 1968. The 1968 Independence Constitution was largely written by the British authority and it guaranteed a multi-party democracy. However, the liberal democracy that had been agreed upon with the British soon broke down. King Sobhuza II, together with the traditionalist majority under the Imbokodvo National Movement (INM), repealed the 1968 Independence Constitution on 12 April 1973, proclaimed a state of emergency, banned demonstrations, political parties and meetings in the process, and began ruling by decree.² In short, the year 1973 presented a period when cardinal practices of democracy were abolished with the abolishment of the 1968 Independence Constitution, exactly five years after the end of formal British rule.

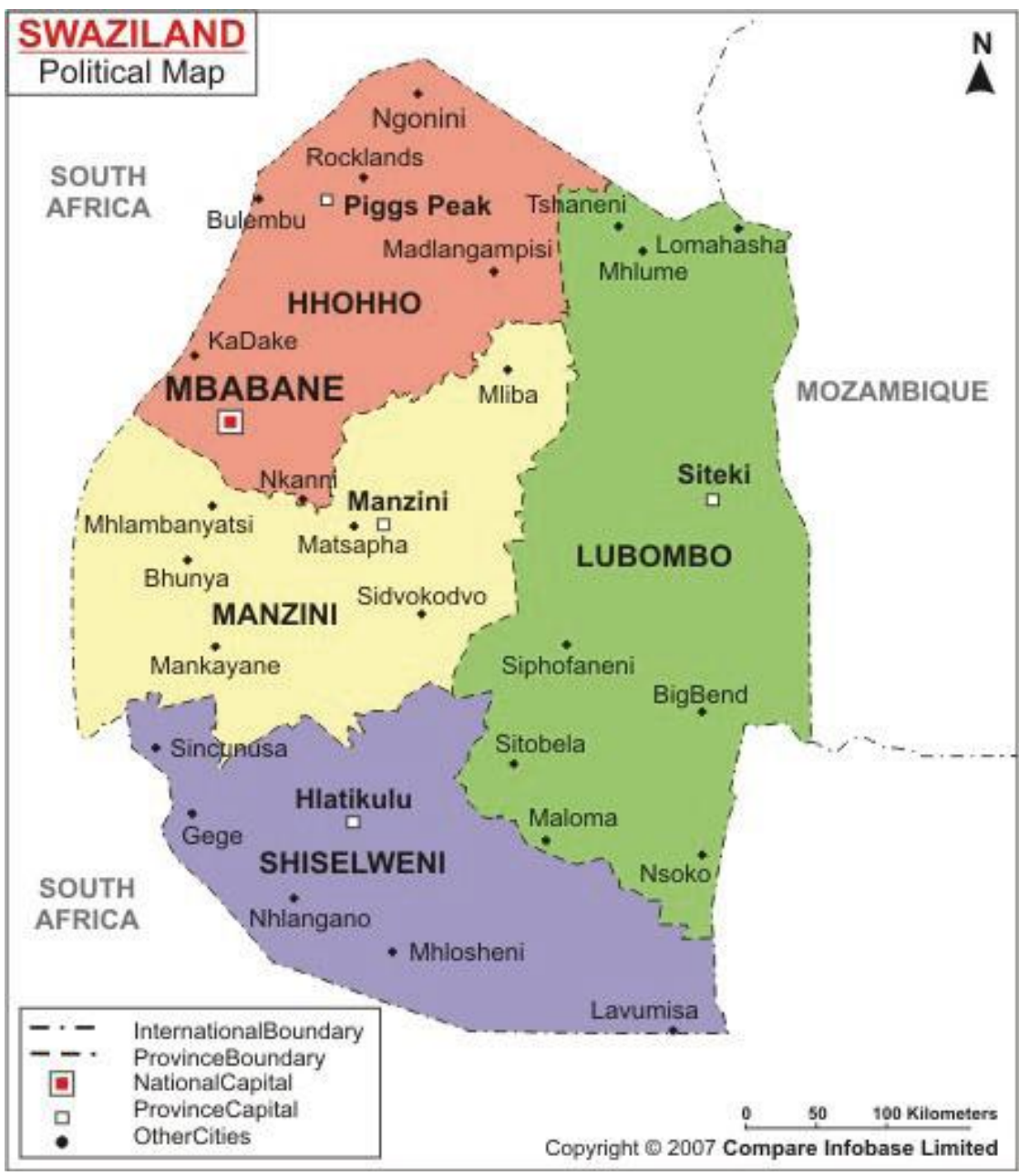
The Constitution was repealed because it allowed modern political parties to operate in the country. The traditionalists were convinced that it did not accommodate the monarchy's primacy in the country's political affairs.³ The traditionalists and the INM believed that the Swazi nation was not fully independent if their King was controlled and

¹ J. S. M. Matsebula, *History of Swaziland* (Cape Town: Longman, 1988), p. 177.

² In this regard see the original Proclamation by His Majesty King Sobhuza II, King's Proclamation 12th April 1973, Sections 2 (a), (b) and (c).

³ H. S. Simelane, "Conformers and Pretenders: The Case of Middle Class Political Opposition in Swaziland, 1962-2000", *Lwati: A Journal of Contemporary Research*, Vol. 3 (2003), pp. 235-251, p. 240.

Map 1
Political Map of Swaziland



Source: www.compareinfobase.org

derived authority from a multi-party constitution.⁴ As a result, the Kingdom of Swaziland has been a no-party state since 1973. This was significantly different from certain African countries that adopted a one-party political system. For example, on 13 December 1972 Zambia became a one party state. The United National Independence Party that had had a majority seats in parliament after January 1964 election that led to regaining independence on 24 October 1964 became the only legal party. In Tanzania Chama Chamapinduzi became the only legal party in 1966.

In 1978, after a period of five years in which the country was ruled through a decree, King Sobhuza II introduced the *Tinkhundla*⁵ system as the country's governance system. The legal basis of this system was established through the Establishment of Parliament Order No. 23 of 1978.⁶ In terms of this Act, multi-party democracy was outlawed in favour of traditional rule. Consequently, when King Sobhuza II died in August 1982, the country was left with a power struggle by those who opposed the current system of authoritarian government. Following King Sobhuza II's death in 1982, Queen Regent Dzeliwe assumed duties as a Head of State. In 1984, an in-house quarrel led to the removal of the Prime Minister Mabandla Dlamini and replaced by Prince Bhekimpi. Queen Regent Dzeliwe was also replaced with Queen Regent Ntfombi. Ntfombi's lone son, Prince Makhosetive, was entitled successor to the Swazi throne. Actual authority during this period was in the hands of the *Liqoqo*, a supreme traditional consultative body that claimed to give requisite counsel to the Queen Regent. In October 1985, Queen Regent Ntfombi proved her authority by sacking the *Liqoqo*'s prominent individuals. Any remaining elements of democracy were now completely destroyed. This period produced a new impetus in Swaziland's democratisation struggle as new democratic elements emerged.

⁴ A. M. Kanduza, "The Political Economy of Democratisation in Swaziland", K. K. Prah and A. G. M. Ahmed (eds.), *Africa in Transformation*, No. 2 (Cape Town: OSSREA, 2001), p. 197.

⁵ An *Inkhundla* (plural- *Tinkhundla*) is an area comprising several – about four or five – chiefdoms which, at election time, serves as a constituency area for the election of a parliamentary representative.

⁶ R. Levin, "Swaziland's *Tinkhundla* and the Myth of Swaziland Tradition", *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (1991), p. 3.

One prominent movement for the democratisation of Swaziland is the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) which came into being on 6 July 1983.⁷ Since its formation, PUDEMO has been the main advocate for democracy in Swaziland. Its overall aim is to attain a multi-party democracy in Swaziland.⁸ The People's Manifesto, which PUDEMO adopted in 1996, demanded the creation of a constitutional, multi-party democracy with an elected and accountable government.⁹

The Swaziland democratic movement and emerging civil society organisations have been calling for the restoration of a democratic multi-party dispensation in Swaziland. Comments have been made that PUDEMO has failed to make a contribution to democratic change in Swaziland, premised on the fact that up to now the country has failed to implement a democratic dispensation. There are several facets of Swazi political life that have been shaped and influenced by the involvement of PUDEMO in the political arena. The purpose of this study is to make a historicised analysis of the extent to which PUDEMO has contributed to democratic change in Swaziland.

Statement of the Research Problem

The Kingdom of Swaziland remains the only surviving absolute monarchy in Africa and the country has a huge democratic deficit. As a result of the social, economic, and political dominance of the monarchy some commentators have posited a condition of no change towards democracy. However, evidence indicates that several cosmetic changes, with democratic attributes, have been implemented in Swaziland. For instance, while the country is still under monarchical dominance, it holds periodic elections that are an important element of democracy. Different scholars have analysed these evolutions in favour of democracy, but no study has interrogated the drivers of these changes. This thesis closes this gap as it argues that the limited changes of democratisation that have

⁷ R. Levin, *When the Sleeping Grass Awakens: Land and Power in Swaziland* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1997), p. 195.

⁸ *Ibid*, see Prologue.

⁹ PUDEMO, *The People's Manifesto. As Amended as per the resolution of the 4th General Congress 1996*. 1996.

taken place in Swaziland are a product of the pressure put by the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) on the Swaziland Government and the monarchy. As such, the thesis provides a counter argument to the generally accepted view that these changes are a result of monarchical benevolence.

Study Aims and Objectives

The study's principal aim is to make a historicised analysis of the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO)'s contribution to democratic change in Swaziland.

The specific objectives of this study are to:

- Analyse the steps taken by PUDEMO in putting pressure on the Swaziland Government to implement democratic changes.
- Investigate challenges faced by PUDEMO as a democratic opposition.
- Evaluate the extent to which PUDEMO has been successful in influencing democratic change in Swaziland.

Research Questions

- a. What is the contribution of PUDEMO towards the process of democratisation in Swaziland since its formation in 1983 to 2013?
- b. What are the difficulties and challenges faced by PUDEMO in influencing democratic change in Swaziland?
- c. In which areas has PUDEMO been most successful in its efforts to bring about democratic change to Swaziland?
- d. In which areas has PUDEMO failed so far while being engaged in the process of attaining democratic change in Swaziland?

Significance of the Study

This particular research is the first academic study on the topic in Swaziland. Given its originality and the nature of the work, it provides an innovative and worthwhile contribution to the field of history. This research is also very important to the Swaziland democratic movement, people who work in solidarity with the Swaziland democratic

movement in bringing about democratisation in Swaziland for the people of Swaziland at large.

Methodology

This study used qualitative research methodology. The researcher chose this methodology because “the search for data must be guided by processes that will provide rich detail to maximise the range of specific information that can be obtained from and about that context.”¹⁰ It was also chosen because of its main strength which “is the comprehensiveness of perspective it gives researchers. By going directly to the social phenomenon under study and observing it as completely as possible, they can develop a fuller understanding of it.”¹¹

Another methodology that was used was desk-top research. This comprises the examination of existing literature to help situate the study within the context of available evidence. Desk-based research usually refers to the collection of secondary data or information which has already been collected. C. Dawson says “it involves the collection of information from studies that other researchers have made on the subject.”¹² The researcher then used the research findings as backing for his own work. With this method, C. Wineberg says:

You can use material from books and journals, as well published and unpublished research reports to support your own research opinions, to develop your own research ideas, to help you solve research problems, to quote from in order to persuade or convince others; and to disagree with experts.¹³

This data collection method can also be referred to as secondary research or analysis. The easiest and most accessible places to find this information are, according to Wineberg,

¹⁰ A. S. des Vos, H. Strydom, C. B. Fouché and C. S. L. Delpont, *Research at Grassroots for the Social Sciences and Human Service Profession, Third Edition* (Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers, 2005), p. 329.

¹¹ E. Babbie and J. Mouton, *The Practice of Social Research, the South African Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 309.

¹² C. Dawson, *Practical Research Methods* (Oxford: How To Books, 2002), p. 41.

¹³ C. Wineberg, *Learning How to Research and Evaluate* (Cape Town: Juta & Company Limited, 1997), p. 78.

“libraries, government departments and the internet.”¹⁴ A. S. des Vos, H. Strydom, C. B. Fouché and C. S. L. Delpont refer to secondary analysis as:

The reworking of already analysed data over which the present researcher had no direct involvement . . . it is an empirical exercise on data already collected, and the researcher normally starts where the primary analysis of the data has been completed.¹⁵

Documents or Document study, in which documents are studied and analysed, was another useful source of data in this research. A. S. des Vos *et al* argue that “the utilisation of document study enables the qualitative researcher to investigate people, events and systems in depth, by analysing authentic written material.”¹⁶ The researcher mostly used official and personal documents in his documentary study. Official (PUDEMO) documents included, but were not limited to, minutes of meetings, planning papers, newspapers, magazines, newsletters and journals, files and statistics, and official letters.¹⁷ All of these were useful sources of information which helped to reconstruct events in this study. Personal (political activists’) documents included diaries, personal letters and notes.¹⁸ Since these had already been created, they are part of the ‘natural’ situation, and tell the researcher a great deal about the topic. Official and personal documents might all present a truth of a kind, but perhaps not the complete truth. The researcher’s task was not to take such documents at face value, but to find out how they were constructed, and how they were used and interpreted.

The researcher also made use of the internet, on-line databases and libraries. The internet was particularly useful to the researcher because it has revolutionised the way in which people search for information. Chris Wineberg describes the internet as “an internationally-linked system of computers that contain information on just about any

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

¹⁵ A. S. des Vos, H. Strydom, C. B. Fouché and C. S. L. Delpont, *Research at Grassroots for the Social Sciences and Human Service Profession*, p. 319.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

topic you can imagine.”¹⁹ Its constant evolution means that archived data is now readily and publicly available. For this research, the internet was an important source of information because it has websites created by democratic movements and individuals to promote or communicate their views and activities.

In addition to the use of the Internet and on-line databases, libraries were another important resource needed to carry out the research. Despite the marvels of the information highway, some data will be easier to access from hard copy and off the library shelves. C. Wineberg says “there are many different kinds of libraries, and some specialise in education and research. Some of these are located at universities and others are run by the government.”²⁰ In Swaziland there are national and university libraries open to the researcher. For the most part, the reference books and journals found in these libraries were of great help. There is also the specialist library at the Swazi National Archives which offers a range of services including important government resources, amongst other documents. Government departments commission a lot of research, and keep all their research reports at the Swazi National Archives.

The study’s empirical aspect employed the individual in-depth interview method. This is to say that another means of locating data sources was through direct contact with (organisations and) individuals who have knowledge of this particular research topic. A. S. des Vos *et al* say that “interviewing is the predominant mode of data or information collection in qualitative research.”²¹ The researcher therefore used the person-to-person format which allows for open-ended conversations. The researcher made use of a digital voice recorder. Bryan notes that “in qualitative research, the interview is usually audio-recorded and transcribed.”²² The digital voice recorder has the obvious advantage of preserving the entire (verbal part of the) interview for later analysis.

¹⁹ Wineberg, *Learning How to Research*, p. 78.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

²¹ des Vos, *et al*, *Research at Grassroots for the Social Sciences and Human Service Profession*, p. 287.

²² A. Bryan, *Social Research Method, Third Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 438.

However, when the need arose, the researcher also employed the use of semi-structured interviews. This was at times when “the researcher want[ed] to know specific information which can be compared and contrasted with information gained in other interviews. To do this, the same questions need to be asked in each interview.”²³ The researcher also wanted the interview to remain flexible so that other important information could (and did) still arise. On the use of this method, A. S. des Vos *et al* say that:

It is used in order to gain a detailed picture of the participant’s beliefs about, or perceptions or accounts of, a particular topic. The method gives the researcher and participant much more flexibility. The researcher is able to follow up particular interesting avenues that emerge in the interview, and the participant is able to give a fuller picture. Semi-structured interviews are especially suitable where one is particularly interested in complexity or process, or where an issue is controversial or personal.²⁴

There are several reasons why the present study used this research method. Interviews are particularly useful for getting the story behind the participant’s experiences. Dawson says “the researcher attempts to achieve a holistic understanding of the interviewees’ point of view or situation.”²⁵ Interviews help to discover how individuals think and feel about a topic and why they hold certain opinions. They also enable the interviewer to pursue in-depth information around the topic or to investigate issues in an in-depth way. A great deal of data came from talking with people – mainly PUDEMO activists and persons in civil society organisations – through these formal interviews. The interviews tapped into the depths of reality and uncovered the subjects’ meanings and understandings.

The researcher used purposive sampling as a sampling procedure relying on his judgement to select the interviewees. Purposive sampling, according to E. Barbie, is “a type of nonprobability sampling in which the units to be observed are selected on the basis of the researcher’s judgement about which ones will be most useful or

²³ Dawson, *Practical Research Methods*, p. 27.

²⁴ des Vos, H. *et al*, *Research at Grassroots for the Social Sciences and Human Service Profession*, p. 296.

²⁵ Dawson, *Practical Research Methods*, p. 27.

representative.”²⁶ A. S. des Vos *et al* agree by saying that “this type of sampling is based entirely on the judgement of the researcher, in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the population.”²⁷ Interviewees were therefore selected based on their knowledge on the topic and this was meant to enable the researcher to answer the research questions emanating from the study. Due to available time and resources, the researcher interviewed 20 participants or interviewees.

Some of the better information was gathered through participant observation. These were cases when the scholar attended meetings, by invitation, held by PUDEMO. Since it is a banned organisation and cannot hold meetings in the country, these meetings were held in the Republic of South Africa. Attending such meetings would provide an excellent opportunity for the scholar to talk to PUDEMO activists, including those that are exiled in South Africa. But since most PUDEMO members live in Swaziland and they are allowed to move freely, most of the interviews were held in the country. This was mostly done at the offices of PUDEMO’s auxiliary – the Foundation for Socio-Economic Justice in Manzini. This was then that the scholar was given PUDEMO’s documents.

Most of the information on PUDEMO was therefore collected through face-to-face interviews with party members. Specifically, these were party leaders/officials. Sometimes the interviews required more than one sitting with a leader or official. In choosing the participants for the interviews, care was taken to interview top party leaders preferably at national level, a woman leader and a youth leader. Thus, the internal functioning of PUDEMO is based primarily on the information and responses of the party leaders. In short, a big attempt was made to develop an analysis of PUDEMO which was presented by the party leaders themselves.

²⁶ E. Babbie, *The Practice of Social Research, Twelfth Edition* (Wadsworth: Cengage Learning, 2010), p. 193.

²⁷ des Vos, *et al*, *Research at Grassroots for the Social Sciences and Human Service Profession*, p. 202.

Structure and Focus of Chapters

The study is divided into ten chapters. Chapter 1 is the general introduction. It introduces the context of the study. It also defines the research problem, showing how this study explores an area that has previously not been explored in the way that this study uses. It also introduces the present research, shows how it is going to fill a research gap and add knowledge to the field. This chapter also shows the benefits of undertaking a study on PUDEMO's contribution to democratic change in Swaziland and how it can be used. It announces what was found from doing the research. It also explains the objectives and clarifies the scope of the research. It also presents the methodology of the research in which the thesis is based.

Chapter 2 focuses on theoretical framework and literature review. Democratisation is used as a theoretical framework of the thesis and PUDEMO is viewed theoretically as a democratising party. The literature review summarises previous research on democracy, democratisation and democratising parties and then situates the current research to what other scholars have written on the subject.

Chapter 3 discusses the political background of the Kingdom of Swaziland from 1968 to 1981 and shows how it prepared the ground for the formation of PUDEMO. On 6 September 1968, Swaziland was declared an independent country by Britain. At independence, it saw the establishment of a parliamentary multi-party system. In reality, however, this system was dominated by the King's political party, the Imbokodvo National Movement (INM). In the 1967 elections, the INM won all seats. The country remained a multi-party state for five years after independence until 12 April 1973. However, it is worth mentioning that, during this period, many traditionalists were unhappy with the 1968 Independence Constitution because it was imposed by foreign powers.

This chapter further shows how the years after 1973 would see Swaziland move away from being a multi-party democratic state to being a non-party state by 1978. It shows how King Sobhuza II outmanoeuvred a relatively small group of modernists who sought

to reduce his role to that of a constitutional monarch or figurehead. On 12 April 1973, he issued a decree that changed Swazi politics and history. The decree suspended the 1968 Independence Constitution, dissolved Parliament, banned all political parties and effectively ended multi-party politics. Opposition to the absolute monarch was banned and opposition parties went underground. Swaziland's political landscape was therefore changed up to 1978, when a new political system was adopted. This was the *Tinkhundla* system of government under which the Kingdom has continued to be governed. A new non-party Parliament, which was partly appointed by the King and partly chosen in indirect elections, was formed in 1978. This chapter argues that these political developments prepared the ground for the birth of PUDEMO.

Chapter 4 examines the historical circumstances surrounding the birth of the PUDEMO. After King Sobhuza II's death in August 1982, and the political disorder within royal household that ensued, organised political opposition to the *Tinkhundla* system of government and the Decree of 1973 began with the founding of PUDEMO in 1983. Evidence indicates that students, intellectuals and trade unionists were responsible for the formation of this organisation and it grew to be arguably the biggest and most radical political party in Swaziland. This chapter argues that King Sobhuza II left a power vacuum when he died in August 1982. The *Liqoqo* acted as an important factor in the formation of PUDEMO. Its (*Liqoqo*) attempt to fill the power vacuum left by the departed King created a fertile environment for the emergence of this political group. It was during the *Liqoqo* rule that underground political opposition intensified and PUDEMO was formed.

The chapter further describes how PUDEMO was formed with the overall aim of establishing constitutional multi-party democracy, a transparent and accountable government, an environment conducive to economic growth and empowerment, and the development of a culturally vibrant and tolerant society based on maximum participation and respect of the will of the Swazi people.

Chapter 5 seeks to discuss democratic change in Swaziland and the contribution of PUDEMO. It shows that PUDEMO has grown from humble beginnings to becoming a giant that has changed the course of Swazi history through its cadres' sacrifices and undying spirit. This chapter also shows that there was a strong intensification of the democratisation spirit beginning in the 1990s, led by PUDEMO. It gives an analysis of how PUDEMO criticised the *Tinkhundla* system of government for being undemocratic. This criticism compelled the ruling regime to take action. The early 1990s saw tokenistic reviews of the *Tinkhundla* system by King Mswati III in response to pressure from PUDEMO as King Mswati III ordered the electoral system's review. Even if the outcome was a mere cosmetic procedural reform, it was clear that PUDEMO was making headway.

PUDEMO's vision consists of rallying for the downfall of the *Tinkhundla* regime. This chapter shows that PUDEMO called for a democratic dispensation and a new constitution. This chapter proves that there have been several changes that have taken place as a result of the pressure applied by PUDEMO on the ruling regime. It is explained in this chapter that PUDEMO was a critical and leading movement in the struggle for democracy in Swaziland. This was the case because of the clarity, bravery, courage and outstanding sacrifices made by its leaders, cadres and activists over the years.

Chapter 6 examines militant push for democracy through the formation of the Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), PUDEMO's youth league/wing. The chapter shows that SWAYOCO was formed in 1991 mainly by students from the University of Swaziland and William Pitcher Training College. It shows that SWAYOCO was formed to unite and mobilise Swazi youth in the fight for multi-party democracy. This chapter describes SWAYOCO as a protest movement aligned to PUDEMO which came to spearhead the campaign for democracy. It shows that SWAYOCO was also linked to PUDEMO's strategy to sponsor organisations in society which would further PUDEMO's cause. Though considered PUDEMO's youth wing, SWAYOCO's structures are independent of PUDEMO. This chapter will show that socialism and armed struggle are embraced

widely by SWAYOCO's membership. This chapter also assesses the contribution made by Mphandlana Shongwe.

Chapter 7 critically analyses PUDEMO's use of violence to influence transition to democracy in Swaziland. This chapter describes how, from the mid-1990s, the struggle for democratic change in Swaziland has grown violent. It explains how the country witnessed numerous attacks on targets considered to be strategic to the *Tinkhundla* system of government. PUDEMO was in a way intensifying the struggle for democratic change.

The bombings were allegedly carried out by PUDEMO's militant sections. Such allegations persisted even when PUDEMO denied responsibility. The violent attacks on national establishments were disowned by moderate sections of PUDEMO and this has tended to create friction within the movement. It appears that some PUDEMO members had grown impatient with the monarchy's refusal to democratise. PUDEMO's more radical elements believed that the internal squabbles and what they saw as the democracy movement's relative lack of success and the international community's inaction justified their actions.

An analysis of the strategy of violence used by PUDEMO in its struggle for democracy explains how the spate of bombings was like a low-intensity war in Swaziland. It was clear that an increasing number of frustrated young people within PUDEMO's ranks saw violence as the only means through which they could drive the country toward a democratic dispensation. The country was seen as fast descending into the abyss of conflict that could have serious repercussions on the region's fight for stability and peace. It seemed all should have heeded the warnings as early as 1998 when a bomb exploded at the Deputy Prime Minister's office leading to the death of one person. Except for casual comments by researchers, this is a theme that has received very little scholarly attention.

Chapter 8 discusses the state's response to PUDEMO's drive for democracy. It reveals that the Kingdom of Swaziland is an authoritarian, absolute monarchy where the King

rules by decree over the people. Political parties are banned, harassed and intimidated. Serious political and human rights violations occur such as arbitrary arrests, torture, beatings and killings of PUDEMO activists by security forces. PUDEMO, an organisation born to fight against what it terms the *Tinkhundla* ‘oppression and exploitation’, has undergone bad experiences, harsh conditions and terror at the hands of the state. It has faced repressive attacks that seek to obliterate its existence into political extinction. The state responds to PUDEMO protests with brutal force and harsh rhetoric, using intimidation, heavy policing and military clampdown, detention and prosecution of PUDEMO figures. Numerous prominent and ordinary members of PUDEMO who have dared to speak out against the *Tinkhundla* regime’s injustice have been jailed, exiled or killed.

This chapter shows that PUDEMO members work at great risk to their own lives and welfare to address the extreme injustices of despotism and royal greed. This is important because it proves that the state’s repression impacts negatively on PUDEMO’s democratisation efforts. The chapter proves that PUDEMO leaders and activists are prohibited by law from operating a political party, against a backdrop where they are demanding political reforms to empower the Swazi people to directly participate in its own government formation through multi-party democratic elections. It will be argued in this chapter that there was no framework for the Swazi people to have a meaningful voice in the conduct of the nation’s affairs and that the country’s ordinary people have no peaceful means of challenging traditional authority; that being an official opposition in Parliament to challenge the status quo.

Chapter 9 seeks to make a critical assessment of PUDEMO’s contribution to democratisation in Swaziland. It shows how, in 2013, PUDEMO celebrated 30 years of existence. This was indeed a milestone achievement which was not reached without any difficulties, challenges and failures faced or experienced by the movement in its operations. In the critical assessment PUDEMO’s efforts in contributing to democratisation in Swaziland between 1983 and 2013, this chapter shows that the journey from 1983 to 2013 has been long and winding, and the movement has had several

knocks along the way, many of which it has been able to overcome. The movement has been able to press forward its aim of attaining multi-party democracy in the Kingdom of Swaziland. That, of course, did not mean that it was left unscathed by the troubles it faced, such as cadre ill-discipline of cadres, some members leaving the movement and forming their own political parties, etc. But through it all PUDEMO is still standing and going strong.

Chapter 10 is the general conclusion. It makes a reflection of what was established or learnt during the research. It discusses the central theme and makes a summary of the entire study. It also puts the research in context by making comments on significant issues in Swazi politics. It also reveals complexities of the political situation in the Kingdom of Swaziland and the work done by PUDEMO between 1983 and 2013. It analyses the role of PUDEMO as a democratising party in post-colonial Swaziland.

Limitations of the study

While carrying out this study, the researcher encountered several problems which he, however, was able to overcome. One of the major problems was that, attempting a study of this magnitude in the current political climate in the Kingdom of Swaziland has been challenging and indeed the scholar experienced a number of drawbacks. Largely, some interviewees were very suspicious not only of the scholar's identity but also of his intentions. Mostly, they suspected that he was a secret agent working either for the army or the police. They therefore could not trust that the information sought was to be used solely and simply for academic purposes and analysis. They were afraid that its use might land them in some kind of trouble with the Swazi state. In some cases, while they agreed to be interviewed, they were reluctant to divulge information due to the fact that PUDEMO is a proscribed entity in the country following the passing of the Suppression of Terrorism Act (STA) of 2008. Some were reticent and unwilling to respond in detail to some questions with which they felt uncomfortable, such as those concerning the armed struggle that PUDEMO was involved at some stage of its existence. To a certain extent, it was not possible to elicit sufficient information on such matters that the leaders felt they were reluctant to speak about them.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of the chapter is to provide a theoretical framework of the thesis. However, it needs to be realised that history as a subject does not neatly land itself to theorising because it is not concerned with comparison or generalisation, but the actual context of historical developments.¹ The chapter shows that PUDEMO is a democratising political party that strives for a democratic change in Swaziland. This is achieved through utilising democratisation theory which points out the main important functions of a democratising party in a non-democratic environment. The theoretical approach employed in this chapter underpins the point that a democratising party can influence democratic change even within the context of a very resilient political regime in power.

This chapter also provides a survey of books, scholarly articles, and other sources relevant to democracy, the democratisation theory and PUDEMO as a democratisation party. It provides a summary and a critical evaluation of these works in relation to the attempts by PUDEMO to democratise the Kingdom of Swaziland. In this way, it is demonstrated how this research fits within the existing body of literature.

Theoretical Framework

The thesis uses democratisation theory to analyse the actions of PUDEMO to bring about democratic change in Swaziland. Several theories have been developed seeking to

¹ For a further discussion of this point see, P. Chabal, *Africa: The Politics of Suffering and Smiling*, (London, Zed Books, 2009).

identify the conditions for the establishment of democracy. This thesis identifies the modernisation theory as an approach to the study of democratisation. One can argue that modernisation causes democracy.² Modernisation refers to a model of a progressive transition from a traditional to a modern society which, among other things, requires the reorganisation of political agenda. Modernisation theory draws from the observation that modern democracies have come to exist as a result of radical change for traditional societies.³

Democratisation theory is relevant to this thesis because of the fact that transition to democracy can occur for many reasons, not all of which are systematic. While there is no universal model for democratisation, both domestic social factors and external factors exert a strong influence on the transition to democracy. Internal factors could be strong pro-democracy opposition parties, civil society groups, economic crisis which could create a path for democratisation, etc. Also, education, urbanisation, and individual mobility could lead to demands for democracy.⁴ External factors could be economic sanctions, political pressures and contagion effect of democracy in the region.⁵ So, external or international factors could be more favourable to transition to democracy.

There are several principles under the democratisation theory for a society to be considered to be democratic. This may include the respect for human rights, democratic principles and the rule of law. Human rights are universal, indivisible and inter-dependent and must be respected and promoted in their entirety. Human rights are a subject of international and regional agreements and legal acts constituting an international legal framework. Democratic principles underpin the existence of a democratic system that enables human rights to flourish in a climate of respect by basing political power on the

² B. Geddes, "What causes Democratisation?" *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 2 (2006). pp. 317-339, p. 318.

³ K. Wolfgang, "Theories That Won't Pass Away: The Never-ending Story", in G. Delanty, and E. F. Isin, (eds.), *Handbook of Historical Sociology* (2003). pp. 96-107, p. 97.

⁴ J. Wucherpfennig and F. Deutsch, "Modernisation and Democracy: Theories and Evidence Revisited", *Living Reviews of Democracy*, Vol. 1 (2009). <http://www.livingreviews.org/lrd-2009-4>

⁵ Whatever democratic changes that happen in the region causes democraticness in a region.

will of the people.⁶ The holding of elections, for example, is a fundamental step on the way to democratisation. When it comes to the rule of law, this is a fundamental principle of any democratic system seeking to foster and promote political rights. This entails means of recourse enabling individual citizens to defend those rights.

While the democratisation theory is useful, it is also important not to omit the fact that it is not perfect. This is so because it assumes a straightforward developmental approach that derives from earlier models of modernisation. Also, it is based on a vision of liberal democracy that it sometimes seen as the only model for modern politics. The other weakness of this theory is that it is universalist, teleological and not very distinct from the notion of modernisation as a derivative of Westernisation.⁷

Theoretically, PUDEMO is a democratising party. As a democratising opposition movement, it has the following functions: “staying in existence, resisting integration into the regime, disputing the legitimacy of the ruling regime, raising the costs of non-democratic rule and creating a credible resistance.”⁸ In line with the explanation given above, one can reaffirm that PUDEMO is a democratising party.

Democratisation is a transition to a more democratic political regime or political changes moving in a democratic direction. According to C. Tilly, democratisation “... can be described as a movement toward broad citizenship, equal citizenship, building consultation of citizens and protection of citizens from arbitrary state action.”⁹ He argues that a country can be considered to be democratised if it operates along the principles contained in the above mentioned definition. The ideal result from democratisation is to

⁶ R. Inglehart and C. Wetzel, “How Development Leads to Democracy”, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 88, No. 2 (2009). pp. 33-48, p. 39.

⁷ S. Guo, “Democratic Transition: A Critical Review”, *Issues and Studies*, Vol. 35. No. 4 (July/August 1999). pp. 133-148.

⁸ A. Stepan, “Democratic Opposition and Democratisation Theory”, *Government and Opposition: International Journal of Comparative Politics*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (October 1997). pp. 657-678, p. 6.

⁹ C. Tilly, “Process and Mechanisms of Democratisation”, *Sociological Theory*, Vol. 18, No. 1 (March 2000). pp. 1-16, p. 2.

ensure that the people have the right to vote and have a voice in the preferred political system. C. Tilly also notes that democratisation does not allow for a single path, and is unlikely to have universally applicable or sufficient conditions.¹⁰

Democracy is a system of government in which the citizens exercise power directly or elect representatives from among themselves to form a governing body, such as parliament.¹¹ According to L. Morlino, democracy is “a polity that has at least the following features: universal suffrage, recurring free, fair and competitive periodic elections, with more than one political party and sources of information.”¹² Under the theoretical concept of this study, democracy is lacking in Swaziland hence the emergence of PUDEMO as a democratising party. Swaziland’s post-colonial regime metamorphosed, in 1973, into no-party authoritarianism. Democracy contrasts with forms of government where power is either held by an individual, as in an absolute monarchy as is the case in Swaziland. This thesis proves that PUDEMO is a democratising party which emerged under a non-democratic regime known as the *Tinkhundla* system of government. It is a system where political parties operated outside the electoral and parliamentary cycle. During its lifetime, PUDEMO existed mainly because of the quest for democracy in the country.

During times of political upheavals in the early 1980s, PUDEMO was formed and it declared itself a political party which was going to struggle for the liberation of the Swazi people from the grip of *Tinkhundla* rule. It came to occupy a special place in the sentiments of certain groups of people, especially workers and the youths in tertiary institutions, people who felt that they needed to fight for transition to democracy.

PUDEMO plays an important role as a mechanism and also a participant in the people’s struggle for transition to majority rule. Like many other democratising political parties in the market place of political ideas and opinions from different ideological perspectives,

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Oxford English Dictionary: *Democracy*.

¹² L. Morlino, “What is a Good Democracy?” *Democratisation*, Vol. 11, No. 5 (2004). pp. 10-32, p. 10.

this is important in the founding and consolidation of democratic systems of governance. Again, like many other democratising political parties, PUDEMO plays a role in setting up institutional frameworks and the competitive environment that makes the struggle for power more human and accessible to many (all).

This thesis shows that PUDEMO is for the promotion of democracy and good governance as a key element in strategies of majority rule focusing on highlighting the broad-ranging obligations of governments to their constituencies. PUDEMO also struggled to usher in a new debate on how best to design and ensure that the constitution of the country facilitated democratic governance, protected human rights and other rights that characterised Swaziland's post-colonial society before the move to no-party state in 1973.

The Kingdom of Swaziland practices a no-party state system. This is a type of a state in which a certain clique has the right to form the government, usually based on the existing constitution. According to L. Maseko:

This system distinguishes between political systems in which a single party enjoys the monopoly of power to the exclusion of all other parties by political or constitutional means and those that are characterised by a competitive struggle between a number of parties.¹³

In Swaziland, when political parties were outlawed, it was argued that the existence of separate parties ran counter to national unity. In that way, oppositional political parties such as PUDEMO are outlawed. As in most cases, no-party states are considered to be authoritarian, as is the case with Swaziland's *Tinkhundla* system of government.

PUDEMO is therefore advocating for a multi-party system. This is a system in which multiple political parties across the political spectrum run for national elections, and all have the capacity to gain control of government offices, separately or in a coalition. According to Maseko, "multipartyism is characterised by competition between more than

¹³ L. Maseko, "Political Parties in Africa's Democratisation Process", *Paper Presented at the 40th CPA Africa Region Conference*, River State, Nigeria, (July 2009).

two parties, thus reducing the chances of single party government and increasing the likelihood of coalitions.”¹⁴ The multi-party system is predominant in many African countries, including Nigeria, Zambia, Tanzania, Malawi and South Africa.

This chapter also looks at PUDEMO’s main functions as a democratising political party. It found that PUDEMO maintained itself as an organisation capable of contesting elections, maintaining their membership and supporting their Members of Parliament. This done in a way to ensure that, when it does become the governing party, PUDEMO’s political programmes and election promises could be acted upon and implemented.

PUDEMO is also involved in maintaining contact with an increasing number of party to party, regional to global networks, and working with special interest groups, such as young people, women, trade unions and civil society organisations. However, despite all its work, PUDEMO was still struggling to force Swazi leaders to open up the political space and allow multi-party elections to take place. Swaziland is a country long-known for political failure in terms of a transition to a democratic dispensation. PUDEMO and other domestic political parties, together with global trends appear to have failed into forcing the regime into allowing legal opposition parties and multi-party elections (competitive elections). Simply put, Swaziland does not hold any multi-party elections.

An observation that could be made is that, Swaziland is still a long way to go before a functional multi-party democracy is established in the country. Swaziland’s democracy is stalled and PUDEMO was doing all it could in order to move it forward. It is the view of this scholar that the difficulty in moving Swazi democracy forward could emanate from the fact that, as a democratising political party, PUDEMO’s ideologies and policies were not succinctly clear and therefore did not have a clear-cut alternative to present to the Swazi populace in order to win them over to their cause. Mostly, it could also mean that PUDEMO’s programmes were of lesser importance to the ordinary Swazi people. While the ruling *Tinkhundla* regime was able to reach down to the ordinary people on regular basis, PUDEMO was unable to do so because it was a banned political movement. Since

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

it also did not have the necessary organisation or resources, contact therefore became sporadic and ad-hoc. Among other things, conflicts within the party itself threatened both the stability and credibility of the party and the multi-party political system.

Literature review

There are several approaches of organising a literature review.¹⁵ The literature review here is organised into certain themes around the issue of democratisation. While it is important to review the literature that is specific on Swaziland, it is not possible to neglect the literature that has been produced at international and continental levels. This is the case because the subject of democratisation is universal in nature, notwithstanding the fact that the local context is paramount. The themes that have been chosen for this review are democracy and democratisation, the role of democratising parties, and democratisation in Swaziland.

Democracy and democratisation

S. P. Huntington¹⁶ argues that economic development makes democracy possible; political leadership makes it real. He says that for democracies to come into being, future political elites will have to believe, at a minimum, that democracy is the least bad form of government. He advises that they will also need the skills to bring about the transition to democracy while facing both radical opposition and authoritarian hardliners who inevitably will attempt to undermine their efforts. Democracy will spread to the extent that those who exercise power in the world and in individual countries want it to spread. While democracy is good, Huntington does not acknowledge, however, that democratic regimes may also be corrupt, prevent the smooth functioning of governments and its leaders get addicted to power to the extent of refusing to leave office.

¹⁵ V. Gasa, P. Mafora, and M. Maphalala, "The Literature Review", in C. Okeke, and M. van Wyk, (eds.), *Educational Research: An African Approach*, (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 2015).

¹⁶ S. P. Huntington, "Democracy's Third Wave", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1991). pp. 12-34.

C. Ake¹⁷ maintains that democratisation in Africa is far from a fad, a reaction to political liberalisation elsewhere or an expression of the contradictions of Westernisation. It is more too than the expression of a ‘second independence’ – from indigenous post-colonial leadership. The urge to implement democracy, he says, expresses a need for self-realisation so deep that it elicits arduous efforts and monumental risks. Democracy, Ake insists, should never be taken for granted and has to be defended in daily struggles. However, while the intention in a democracy is that any one elected by the public should govern, but it is important to recognise that there are also dynastic rules that come to existence in a democracy. These are cases where people of the same families are positioned for power thereby becoming the successors of the throne and be rude to the people. Thus the very basic idea of democracy is destroyed.

Ake¹⁸ further says that matters of democratisation and human rights are increasingly dominating the world’s interest in Africa, overcoming a legacy of indifference to the fate of democracy on the continent. He argues that this legacy has its roots in the colonial era, where political discourse excluded not only democracy but even the idea of good governance, and politics was reduced to the clash of one exclusive claim to power against another. He points out that the West’s changing attitude toward democracy in Africa draws additional impetus from Africa’s economic marginalisation. Africa’s marginalisation has given the West more latitude to conduct its relations with Africa in a principled way. However, Ake fails to recognise that democracy does not always lead to prosperity but can also lead to social conflict in the country.

J. A. Wiseman¹⁹ argues that representative democracy, in which the state is governed by the representatives of the people at large, is the only realistically applicable notion of democracy for modern Africa’s large-scale states. He argues that, in the selection of these representatives, the people must have a choice based on real competition between those

¹⁷ C. Ake, *The Feasibility of Democracy in Africa* (Dakar: CODESRIA Books, 2000).

¹⁸ C. Ake, “Rethinking African Democracy”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (1991). pp. 32-44.

¹⁹ J. A. Wiseman, *Democracy in Black Africa: Survival and Revival* (New York: Paragon House Publishers, 1990).

who seek political office. In practice, this choice is made manifest by the existence of competing political parties which will put forward their candidates and policies for the approval, or otherwise, of the electorate. The latter must include the state's entire adult population because universal franchise is of paramount importance if democracy is to exist something which was lacking in the Swazi situation. Political leaders in representative democracy however may try to play divide and rule games. They divide the people based on religion, caste, languages, etc. and try to gain votes to get power though they are not worthy to rule the state or country.

K. Matlosa²⁰ argues that the democratisation process in Africa as a whole and in Southern Africa in particular inspired hope and optimism that democratic governance is increasingly getting firmly rooted throughout the continent despite isolated incidences of reversal such as the recent military coup in the Central African Republic. He observes that the democratisation process in the continent had begun in earnest since 1990s as part of changes observed around the world marked by the collapse of the Cold War on a global scale and apartheid in South Africa. Although much progress had evidently been registered, he argues, the challenge that still confronted the process was precisely how to nurture and consolidate democracy. However, Matlosa's work does not point to the fact that if a person in authority is not fit to rule, he can be replaced by elections; that many politicians who were felt unfit to rule were changed in the next elections. And if they were fit, were given multiple chances to rule.

J. A. Wiseman²¹ says the struggle for democracy in Africa has been going on for a long time. Certainly, the African nationalist movements' struggle towards the end of the colonial period can be seen, at least in part, as constituting a struggle for democracy and an end to undemocratic colonial rule. He says that, as things turned out, this struggle

²⁰ K. Matlosa, "Electoral Systems and Multi-party Democracy in Southern Africa", *Southern African Political Economy Series*, (n. d.).

²¹ J. A. Wiseman, *The New Struggle for Democracy in Africa* (Brookfield: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1996).

appeared to be more successful in indigenising political control than in democratising it. He observes that democratic systems survived in a limited number of states.

J. A. Wiseman and most of the scholars working on democratisation and democratic movements are, by and large, interested in the proper functioning of democratic movements and democratic governments in different parts of Southern Africa and the rest of the African continent. However, none of the scholars did a critique of democracy, particularly liberal democracy. It is the view of this scholar that liberal democracy privileges political pluralism as a solution to African problems without a demonstrable appreciation of the variations of African contexts. In the democratic discourse, there is no room for appreciation of social plurality – particularly ethnicity and cultural diversity not as a problem but as a basis on which democracy could be anchored. With the rise of decolonial thought, there is increasing appreciation of the importance of context and history in an endeavour to decolonise forms of governance coming from outside Africa. This intervention must not be taken as justification of authoritarianism but as an appeal to more sophisticated studies of politics and history that do not easily succumb to the old civilising mission and uncritical adoption of Western models of governance as a solution to African problems. Decoloniality help us to think about new forms of governance that are better than pre-colonial and post-colonial forms. It emphasises utilisation of African genius to create and innovate rather than mimicry.

The role of democratising parties

There is a contribution made by democratising political parties to the process of democratic consolidation, meaning both political parties individually and the party system. Political parties are instruments of modern politics.

V. Randall and L. Svasand²² do an analysis of democratising political parties. They consider the contribution of democratising political parties in tropical Africa to the process of democratic consolidation. Given that that process is itself widely perceived to

²² V. Randall and L. Svasand, “Political Parties and Democratic Consolidation in Africa”, *Paper for ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops* (Grenoble, April 6-11, 2001).

be faltering, the analysis may seem to have been as much about what political parties individually, and party systems, have not contributed – in terms of providing mechanisms of representation, conflict resolution, accountability and opposition, and the institutionalisation of democratic behaviour and attitudes – and more fundamentally still, why. They conclude that political parties may only be a part of the story of democracy in Africa but analysing them tells us much about its prospects and hazards. However, their work does not discuss these hazards.

M. A. Mohamed Salih and P. Nordlund²³ observe that democratising political parties are instrumental organisations for modern politics. They discuss the socio-political and economic environment in which political parties function, how free or restricted these are in carrying out their political and electoral activities in the respective countries in which they operate, the legal provisions that regulate parties and they give an analysis of the parties' organisational structures and the way in which they actually function. While these scholars show that political parties are good, however, they do not discuss the fact that political parties can poison the political atmosphere of a country. This can happen when each political party carries a vigorous propaganda in its favour and against other political parties.

In the context of political and economic transformation, democratising political parties have a role to play also. In other words, democratising political parties must also be seen as part of social movements. This thesis focuses on PUDEMO in order to demonstrate the immense role it played in this regard. H. Melber²⁴ highlights processes of political and economic transformation, or the lack thereof, mainly but not exclusively under liberation movements which secured legitimate political power and came to occupy the state apparatus following independence. Some social movements in control of the political sphere, reorganised as parties, managed to consolidate their dominant positions and

²³ M. A. Mohamed Salih and P. Nordlund, *Political Parties in Africa: Challenges for Sustained Multiparty Democracy* (Stockholm: International IDEA, 2007).

²⁴ H. Melber, "Liberation and Democracy: Cases from Southern Africa", *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 21 (2003). pp. 1-5.

maintained control over the state apparatus by various means (though, as Zimbabwe's historical evolution suggests, not necessarily with an unlimited time frame). They have obtained the power of definition in the dominant political arena, and occupy and control public discourse within their societies. Accordingly, they tend to operate with and along rather strict concepts of inclusion/exclusion in terms of the nation-building process.

H. Melber does not discuss the fact that there tends to be dictatorship of the ruling party. Because the ruling party has a sufficient majority in the legislature and the opposition parties hold an insignificant minority, the ruling party will tend to act arbitrarily and it will not care for the opposition parties. It will give rise to the dictatorship of the ruling party. Therefore, it is said that for the success of democracy, effective opposition is essential.

L.M. Sachikonye²⁵ observes that democratising political parties have historically played a pivotal role in governance by aggregating diverse demands into political programmes that they translate into collective action through elections and legitimate control of political office. As key players during elections, democratising political parties advertise competing platforms and seek to convince potential voters that they are the most legible to govern the country. He observes that in the Zimbabwean context political parties have been central players in post-independence politics and governance.

In the study in the above paragraph, the author begins by analysing the historical background and contemporary programmes of five of the parties that exist in Zimbabwe. He then outlines distinct phases in the development of the party system in Zimbabwe, namely: an early variety of the competitive party system at independence, followed by a dominant party system in the 1990s that preceded a more competitive two-party system in 2000. The author goes on to describe the requirements for the formal nomination of party candidates for election, as well as the relationship between parties and election management bodies. This scholar, however, does not show that multiple political parties

²⁵ L. M. Sachikonye, "Political Parties and the Democratisation Process in Zimbabwe", *Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA)*, 2005.

can spread corruption. During elections, political parties can distribute money among the electorate and use many cheap tactics to secure votes. Even after winning elections, the ruling party sometimes offers high posts to their supporters, thereby spreading corruption in the whole society.

A. Nuvunga and J. Adalima²⁶ discuss the formation of the Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM) as a breakaway party from the former rebel movement, RENAMO. Their view is that the analyses of parties' breakaways in Southern Africa help us understand party system configuration and working in this region. They argue that, although breakaway groups tend to be seen as unhealthy phenomena in party systems and to democracy at large, they may provide fuel for the revival of the democratic multi-party dream. However, what they fail to stress that such developments can also lead to factionalism in the country. This happens when the break-away political party is always antagonistic to the party it broke away from. This agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies, false alarms, kindles the animosities of the former party against the break-away party, and foments occasionally riots and insurrection.

Democratisation in Swaziland

Levin's study²⁷ reveals how much of what happened in Swaziland in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries was little different from colonial capitalism processes elsewhere in the region. Attention is drawn to the familiar factors of land dispossession, forced removals, crippling taxation, reluctant labour migration and the tension within the local aristocracy between tendencies towards resistance and collaboration. Levin's study focuses on two factors. One, the power of myth and tradition, and two, the centrality of land, particularly control over its use and allocation, as a means of both repression and accumulation. With regard to the former, Levin masterfully shows how the late King Sobhuza II, whose reign stretched from 1921 to 1982, constantly invented and reinvented

²⁶ A. Nuvunga and J. Adalima, "Mozambique Democratic Movement (MDM): An Analysis of a New Opposition Party in Mozambique", *Studies on Political Parties and Democracy* (Maputo: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2011).

²⁷ Levin, *When the Sleeping Grass Awakens*.

myth and tradition in royalist hegemony's interests. While his study is important in understanding political developments in Swaziland, it does not cover the period after King Sobhuza II's reign and the political developments that happened under King Mswati III's reign.

R. Levin²⁸ examines the *Tinkhundla* system of government, which was formally legislated under the Establishment of Parliament Act of 1978 following the suspension of Parliament and the 1968 Constitution through King Sobhuza II's Proclamation of 12 April 1973. Levin argues that *Tinkhundla* are creations designed or reshaped by King Sobhuza II with the assistance of colonial and/or neo-colonial officials to secure royal hegemony. He points out that the King's ideological success which bound Swazi society was predicated upon the personality cult which King Sobhuza II was able to build around himself. However, his successor, King Mswati III, found it impossible to step into his father's shoes and, the Swazi people indicate mass support for democratic reform. Levin predicts that the prevailing mood in the country suggests that Swaziland's political future could be based on a constitutional monarchy with a multi-party electoral system. Levin's study failed to foresee a situation whereby political space continued not to be opened for the participation of everyone in the country's political process. As of 2013, Swazis were still barred of a certain degree of political justice and were relatively not politically free to exercise their (full) political rights. Political groups and dissenters were maimed, jailed and eventually their political freedoms (political justice) were grotesquely curtailed.

M. Mamba²⁹ studies the post-colonial history of Swaziland's political developments since 1978. He provides a critical examination and review of the complexities and dynamics of the *Tinkhundla* system of government as a used and tested multi-purpose tool for socio-economic and political development in Swaziland. He gives a background to the 1978 system. He goes on to discuss the efforts undertaken by King Mswati III since 1986 like, for example, the appointment of a number of consultative royal commissions since the

²⁸ R. Levin, "Swaziland's *Tinkhundla* and the Myth of Swaziland Tradition", *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (1991).

²⁹ M. Mamba, "*Tinkhundla*: A Study of the System". M. A. Thesis, University of Swaziland, 2006.

1990s. These commissions were tasked to investigate the best possible way to accommodate the people's socio-economic and political needs and expectations. Mamba argues that the King did this in order to review the existing administrative structures and further institute political reforms in line with attaining higher levels of democratisation in all governing institutions. However, Mamba fails to demonstrate that these commissions were appointed as a result of the pressure that was applied on the ruling regime, not as a result of monarchical benevolence.

J. B. Mzizi³⁰ provides a lot of insight and useful information on the specific combination of Swaziland, democratic movements and civil society. He illuminates the fact that although political parties have been banned in Swaziland since 1973, those who call for democratic reforms are advocating the existence of political parties. He concludes that the existence of underground political movements shows that even draconian laws, as they exist in Swaziland, will not wish away political parties. His study is very important in the showing that democratising political parties can influence democratic change even within the context of a very resilient political regime in power.

Mzizi³¹ talks about the abrogation of the 1968 Independence Constitution on 12 April 1973 when King Sobhuza II assumed all executive, legislative and judiciary powers. He describes it as a well-orchestrated parliamentary coup to ostensibly make King Sobhuza II an absolute monarch. He points out that the King's status has remained virtually the same since 1973. However, he observes that political change process is desired by many concerned Swazis. The Swazi monarch has recognised this fact, he argues, and thus has initiated various programmes with the aim of instituting meaningful change. The latest major step was the setting up of the Constitutional Review Commission, which after over four years of full-time consultation, came up with a disappointing Constitutional Review

³⁰ J. B. Mzizi, *Political Movements and the Challenges for Democracy in Swaziland*. (Johannesburg: Issue 3 of Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA) Research Report, 2005).

³¹ J. B. Mzizi, "Leadership, Civil Society and Democratisation in Swaziland", in A. Bujra and S. Buthelezi, (eds.), *Leadership, Civil Society and Democratisation in Africa: Case Studies from Southern Africa*. Vol. 9 (Addis Ababa: DPMF Policy Brief Series, 2002).

Commission Report. However, Mzizi fails to state that PUDEMO was the main proponent of this important constitutional development.

Mzizi³² argues that Swaziland's independence struggle contended with two important dynamics, namely, the African emerging party politics ideology largely patterned after the Westminster model of parliamentary democracy; and the ideology of traditionalism that centred all political power contestation on the monarchy. He observes that over the years the dominant framework in Swaziland has been that all constitutional initiatives should take due regard of the Swazi people's history, culture, traditions and way of life. While the need to harmonise traditional sensibilities with modern constitutional and international law principles is underscored, he argues that there is no political will to forge such harmony. Mzizi puts the monarchy at the centre of all constitutional developments taking place in the country without pointing to the fact that, while the monarchy was dominant, it was pushed to initiate these changes by democratising political parties like PUDEMO.

T. M. Debly³³ examines the role of protest songs and funerals as new sites of political dissidence within Swaziland. She argues that culture and tradition are used by the Swazi royal family to maintain its position of power. She observes that, over the past forty one years, however, various forms of resistance to this domination have emerged. In response to on-going protests against the regime and endless attempts to democratise Swaziland, therefore, the regime has introduced draconian laws that prohibit political parties, free speech and any form of opposition. Delby's study however does not demonstrate if there are any successes that have come about as a result of the use of protest songs and funerals as new sites of political dissidence to the democratisation process in the country.

³² J. B. Mzizi, "The Dominance of the Swazi Monarchy and the Moral Dynamics of Democratisation of the Swazi State", *Journal of African Election*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2004), pp. 94-119.

³³ T. M. Debly, "Culture and Tradition: Swaziland 1960-2011". M. A. Thesis, University of New Brunswick, 2011.

L. Dlamini³⁴ argues that Swaziland has been grappling with calls for democratic transformation in the context of balancing tradition and modernity. Despite such calls Swaziland's no-party system of governance has continued to be manifestly undemocratic and in need of transformation into a politically plural dispensation with the requisite policy, legal and institutional frameworks to promote and protect the practice of democracy and participation. She observes that the governing authorities have always been able to showcase the thousands of Swazis participating in national ceremonies as evidence that Swazis support the monarchy and its current position on the country's governance which, Dlamini says, is not correct. Her work is very critical and analytical on the stance of the ruling regime towards democratisation. However, it fails to acknowledge the efforts of those who oppose the ruling *Tinkhundla* system of government.

S. Pejstrup³⁵ argues that there is a challenge for civil society to play a role in the process of democratisation in Swaziland. Furthermore, she examines how civil society can contribute to this process. Her view is that, for democracy to be achieved in Swaziland the democratic institutions have to change and the power structure needs to be redefined. But, additionally and fundamentally, is the issue of national identity and democratic mindsets. The way to success for the democracy movement, she argues, is to balance between tradition and Swazi uniqueness. In her closer analysis of the challenges, she concludes that Swazis are optimistic, they hope to progress communication and education. Civil society will contribute to the process with its continued struggle and empowerment activities among the Swazi population. While her analyses may be correct, she neglects the influence of external factors in the struggle for democratic change in Swaziland.

³⁴ L. Dlamini, *Swaziland: Democracy and Political Participation* (Johannesburg: OSISA, 2013).

³⁵ S. Pejstrup, "Swaziland in Transition". MSc in Development Studies and International Relations Thesis, Aalborg University, 2010.

B. Karlsen³⁶ deals with democratisation and social movements in Africa, with a special focus on internal organisation. This study assesses the democracy movement in the ‘oppressive’ Kingdom of Swaziland. Though the study examines the African contention through the existing Western understandings of social movements, it concludes that the main concern of the democracy movement was a focus on creating ‘Mass Mobilisation’ and ‘Unity’. This has to do with a split in the democracy movement, where SUDF and FSEJ³⁷ is one wing, and three other organisations (SCCCO, SNAT and NNLC)³⁸ make up the other. By Mass Mobilisation is meant an ambition to mobilise both wings in the movement during demonstrations. By Unity is meant a close cooperation between the two wings. While the study focuses on broad movements, there is need to narrow it down to the role played by individual organisations or democratising political parties.

M. M. Mhlanga, in his research project³⁹ argues that it is obvious that there is reluctance on the part of the state apparatus to voluntarily democratise. He says it is evident that very little significant political change can come about given the prevailing conditions. He advises that those who are sincerely concerned with the country’s political situation, and who have taken it upon themselves to create the awareness of a need to reform or even alter this situation should first seek to enhance the politicisation level on a nationwide scale, educate the people on their political and civil rights, as well as on the need for equal participation of all eligible citizens in political decision-making. Mhlanga’s work is important but it does not discuss the role played by PUDEMO in dealing with Swaziland’s political situation.

³⁶ B. Karlsen, “Struggling to Achieve Mass Mobilisation and Unity - An Analysis of the Democracy Movement in Swaziland”. M. A. Thesis, Roskilde University, 2012.

³⁷ SUDF stands for Swaziland United Democratic Front and FSEJ stands for the Foundation for Socio-Economic Justice.

³⁸ SCCCCO stands for Swaziland Coalition of Concerned Civic Organisations, SNAT stands for Swaziland National Association of Teachers and NNLC stands for Ngwane National Liberatory Congress.

³⁹ M. M. Mhlanga, “Efforts of the Civil Society towards a Democratic Swaziland since 1973”. B. A. Social Science Research Project, University of Swaziland, 2002.

N. Hlatjwako,⁴⁰ writing from a legal perspective, says that Swaziland is unique in Africa's political landscape, for, while, until recently, most African countries were one-party states, Swaziland has been, at least officially, a non-party state. He observes that Swaziland's attitude is that political plurality in general and constitutional rule in particular are inhospitable to her political traditions. Thus, Swaziland deemed it appropriate to abrogate the framework inherited from the British government at independence because it embodied the two afore-mentioned traditions (political plurality and constitutional rule). In its place, he highlights, was erected a framework that is sympathetic to Swaziland's political traditions; and, of course, most accounts on Swaziland attribute recent developments to this pre-occupation. His work, however, does not say if there was anything being done, by democratising political parties like PUDEMO, in order to change the status quo.

A. M. Kanduza⁴¹ explains why it has become increasingly difficult for the aristocracy to contain growing criticism from the Swazi population about how they have been governed since the 1960s. He attempts to focus on why the Swazi middle class has brought about fundamental changes in the way the country is governed. He argues that it was the steady economic expansion in the 1970s and 1980s that provided opportunities for the development of a middle class. He points out that there has also been unequal distribution of economic development which has been viewed as a consequence of limited participation in governance. Kanduza then examines how the Swazi aristocracy viciously attacked liberal democracy but failed to come up with a political system based on popular participation. He concludes that the Swazi population, through organisations like PUDEMO, has therefore organised itself to put an end to aristocratic political monopoly. While Kanduza's study is important in highlighting the existence of PUDEMO as a democratising political party, it does not interrogate the role that PUDEMO has played in trying to bring about democratic change in Swaziland.

⁴⁰ N. Hlatjwako, "The Ideology of Traditionalism and its Implications for the Principles of Constitutionalism: The Case of Swaziland". LLM Thesis, University of York, 1993.

⁴¹ A. M. Kanduza, "The Political Economy of Democratisation in Swaziland", K. K. Prah and A. G. M. Ahmed (eds.), *Africa in Transformation*, No 2 (Cape Town: OSSREA, 2001).

A. M. Kanduza⁴² views intellectuals as leading and influential civil society actors and social movements seeking development, democratisation and regime stability. He explores and assesses the role of intellectuals in Swazi politics between 1947 and 2002. He also attempts to show why consolidation of democracy fails in Africa and why regimes which have succeeded one-party political systems have betrayed the democratic movement. In his work, Kanduza shows that since the late 1940s, Swazi intellectuals have been a weak instrument for democratisation in Swaziland. He also demonstrates that African continental and global trends towards democratisation are either still-born or embryonic in Swaziland. He concludes that the pro-democracy struggle in Swaziland has been long and it will have to continue in order to avoid an aborted democratisation process. This thesis is an important extension to Kanduza's work in trying to show the need for the struggle for democratisation in Swaziland by PUDEMO and therefore important.

H. S. Simelane⁴³ says that in both the colonial and post-colonial periods different segments of the Swazi population have expressed their political ideals. Throughout these periods Swazi politics has been characterised by the dominance of traditional political culture, but different groups have, from time to time, expressed political views opposed to the traditional perspective. He points out that this has been the case with those who received Western education and constitute the Swazi middle class. He argues that the middle class' political opposition is not based on principles fundamentally different from those of traditional politics, but is largely shaped by the ambitions of its advocates to accumulate wealth through the state pathway. This opposition has opted to align itself with the traditional political order for purposes of personal wealth accumulation. Therefore, the leading middle class politicians have conformed or pretended to conform to the traditional political system whenever opportunities of wealth accumulation through state apparatus have been perceived. However, he omits the role of political parties in

⁴² A. M. Kanduza, "Intellectuals in Swazi Politics", in S. T. Dupont-Mkhonza, J. N. Vilakati and L. J. S. Mundia (eds.), *Democracy, Transformation, Conflict and Public Policy in Swaziland* (OSSREA Swaziland Chapter, 2003).

⁴³ H. S. Simelane, "Conformers and Pretenders: The Case of Middle Class Political Opposition in Swaziland, 1962-2000," *Lwati: A Journal of Contemporary Research*, Vol. 3 (2003), pp. 235-251.

moving away from traditional politics (political order) and demanding for democratic change.

C. Simelane⁴⁴ traces the political developments from the 1960s pointing out that the major dominator in Swazi politics at this period was King Sobhuza II. He also discusses post-colonial developments: the 1973 Decree and the introduction of the *Tinkhundla* system of government in 1978. Simelane also discusses the 1982-1986 *Liqogo* period as a mirror to King Sobhuza II's personal rule. He also gives special attention to the Establishment of Parliament Order No. 1 of 1992 which reviewed the 1978 *Tinkhundla* system of government because of King Mswati III's inability to maintain the type of rule that his father installed. He argues that King Mswati III has been called upon by pro-democracy groups to implement political reforms which moved towards meeting the people's demand for multi-party democracy. Simelane's study does not identify PUDEMO as the main driver of these political developments.

B. Nyamane⁴⁵ documents the political career of Peter Mphandlana Shongwe, an activist who has played and continues to play an important role in the campaign for the restoration of multi-party democracy in Swaziland in the post-Sobhuza era. He charts Shongwe's educational background and the forces that shaped his political career between 1983 and 2010. He places emphasis upon his involvement in opposition politics spearheaded by the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), his political beliefs, his tribulations and challenges. Nyamane concludes that Shongwe has been a key figure in the movement to democratise the Kingdom of Swaziland and that he has been a victim of endless state repression. However, Nyamane's work focuses on the efforts of an individual, not PUDEMO as a democratising political party, which this study intends to do.

⁴⁴ C. Simelane, "Political Reforms in Post-Colonial Swaziland, 1973-1992". M. A. Thesis, University of Swaziland, 1999.

⁴⁵ B. Nyamane, "A Struggle for Multi-Party Democracy in Swaziland: The Political Career of Peter Mphandlana Shongwe, 1983-2010". History Research Project, University of Swaziland, 2011.

M. Ndlangamandla⁴⁶ analyses King Sobhuza II's entrenchment of his political control in Swaziland after independence and the manner in which such action led to the emergence and growth of political movements opposing the status quo. He gives a careful analysis of the post-Sobhuza era, the era of the *Liqoqo*. He shows how the *Liqoqo* acted as an important factor in the formation of political groupings such as the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO). He discusses its formation, what it stood for at its inception and how its objectives evolved. He also traces some of its activities and analyses government's attempts to respond to PUDEMO's calls for multi-party democracy. Ndlangamandla's work ends in the early 1990s and there has been no significant study carried out since to cover the period afterwards, hence this study.

The overview of the existing body of relevant literature given above has drawn out the lessons that can be learnt from historical and political evidence. Despite the attention that studies on democratisation have attracted in the Africa and the Southern African region, the democratisation theory has not been sufficiently used to study the stalled democracy in the Kingdom of Swaziland and PUDEMO's efforts to move it forward. Whilst repressive political conditions prevailed in the Kingdom of Swaziland, PUDEMO had existed with the simple intention of democratising the country. Within the broad literature on democratisation world-wide, there is not in fact any extensive body of writing that explicitly sought to use the democratisation theory in order to pin PUDEMO's contribution down. Because PUDEMO is viewed as a democratising party, this study will then employ or use empirical data to in order to satisfy that theoretical gap. Thus this study is an important contribution to the existing body of literature.

The study transcends the studies mentioned in this section in a number of ways. This study uses the democratisation theory in order to explain political developments in the Kingdom of Swaziland. The present research had to be undertaken to cover the existing theoretical gap regarding the Swazi democratic movement's historiography. Without a

⁴⁶ M. Ndlangamandla, "The Rule of Sobhuza II and the Political Developments after his Death 1968-1983; The Emergence of the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO)". History Research Project, University of Swaziland, 1994.

study like this one, the history of the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) risks remaining undocumented and the contribution made by this democratising political movement in shaping the political landscape of the Kingdom of Swaziland unknown.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the theoretical framework of this study. The democratisation theory has been used in order to explain the political developments in Swaziland and the role of PUDEMO in trying to move forward Swaziland's stalled democracy. This research views PUDEMO theoretically as a democratising party and situates it theoretically in the framework of democratising parties and their characteristics.

It also discussed the literature review. It looked at the current knowledge on democracy and democratisation including substantive findings as well as theoretical and methodological contributions to the subject of democratising parties, and Swazi politics in particular. It then situates the current study within the body of relevant/existing literature and show that no study has been done in a similar context to study PUDEMO's efforts to democratise Swaziland.

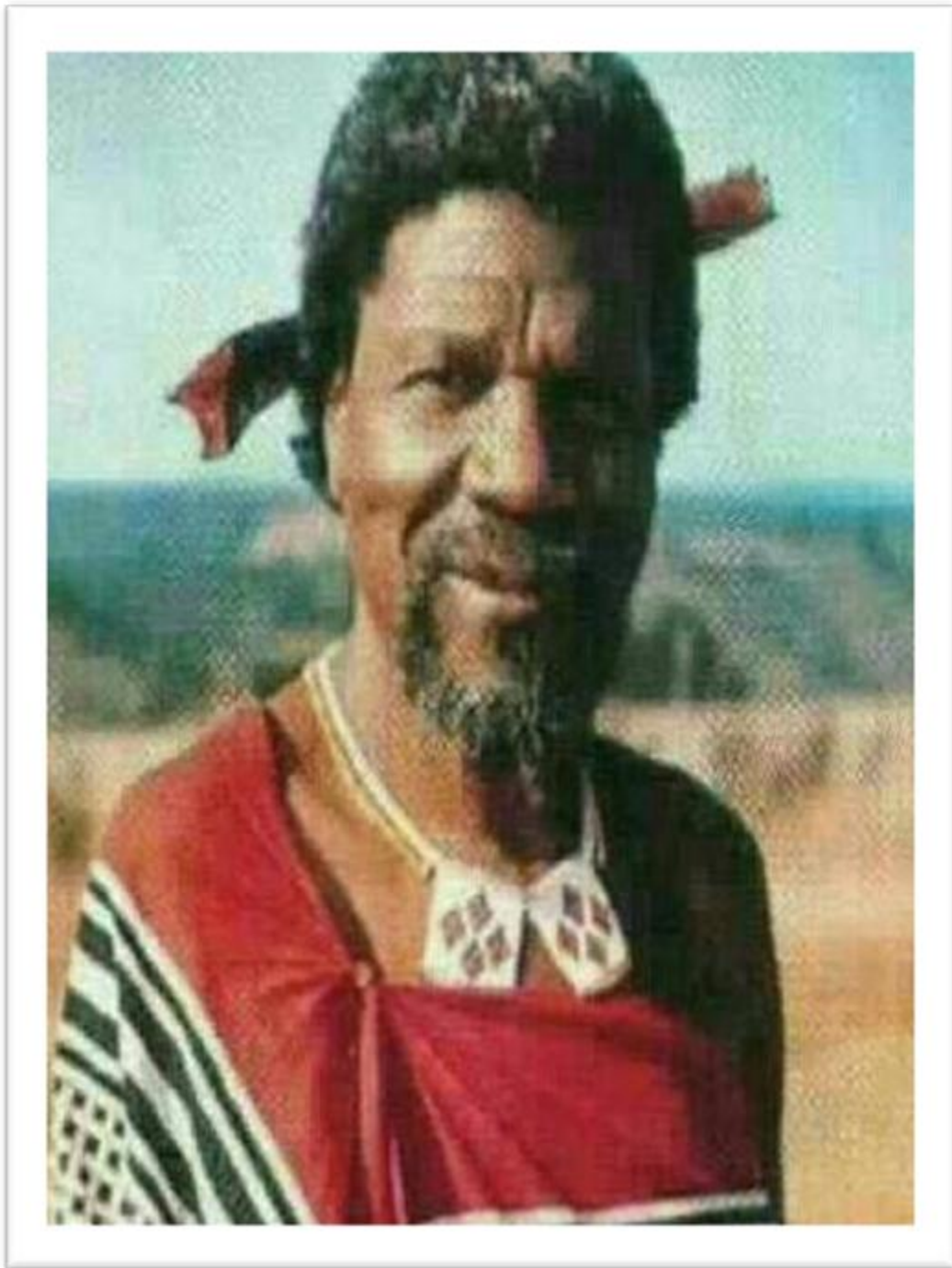
CHAPTER 3

POST-INDEPENDENCE SWAZI POLITICAL HISTORY: CREATING SPACE FOR POLITICAL DISSENT, 1968-1981

Introduction

This chapter discusses the Kingdom of Swaziland's political background from 1968 to 1981 and shows how it inadvertently prepared the ground for the formation of PUDEMO. On 6 September 1968, Swaziland was declared an independent country by Britain. At independence, the country saw the establishment of a parliamentary multi-party system. In reality, however, this system was dominated by the King's political party, the Imbokodvo National Movement (INM). In the 1967 elections, the INM won all seats. Swaziland remained a multi-party state for five years after independence until 12 April 1973. However, it is worth mentioning that, during this period, many traditionalists were not happy with the 1968 Independence Constitution because it was imposed by foreign powers.

This chapter further shows how the years after 1973 would see Swaziland move away from being a multi-party democratic state to being a non-party state by 1978. It shows how King Sobhuza II outmanoeuvred a relatively small group of modernists who sought to reduce his role to that of a constitutional monarch or figurehead. On 12 April 1973, King Sobhuza II issued a decree that changed Swazi politics and history. The decree suspended the 1968 Independence Constitution, dissolved Parliament, banned all political parties and effectively ended multi-party politics in the country. Opposition to the absolute monarch was banned and opposition parties went underground. Swaziland's political landscape was therefore changed from when the King issued the decree up to 1978, when a new political system was adopted. This was the *Tinkhundla* system of government under which Swaziland has continued to be governed. A new non-party

Photograph 1**The King of Swaziland, King Sobhuza II, 1921-1982**

Source: Swaziland Government's website – www.gov.sz

Parliament was partly appointed by the King and partly chosen in direct elections, was therefore formed in 1978. So this chapter will discuss the political developments that prepared the ground for PUDEMO's birth.

Preparatory Developments to PUDEMO's Birth

Swaziland had always been an absolute monarchy, with the exception of its colonial period and the first five years of the post-colonial era (1968-1978). Upon independence the country adopted a Westminster-type constitution. In 1968, the monarch's power and supremacy was somewhat curtailed because the 1968 Independence Constitution provided for political competition among political parties and systematic parliamentary elections. In this new order, the King was constitutionally reduced in importance to a largely ceremonial status. In reality, however, King Sobhuza II held control as the party of his creation, the Imbokodvo National Movement (INM), won all parliamentary seats in pre-independence elections. The King thus guaranteed that Parliament did nothing he did not commend.

The Constitution's structure consisted of three arms of Government – the legislative, the executive and the judiciary. All the provisions supporting the separation of powers and the Bill of Rights were encompassed in the 1968 Independence Constitution. This Constitution conferred most constitutional authority on the Swazi government, comprising of Parliament and Cabinet. The King, as the Head of State, was given authority to appoint sufficient members of Parliament as well as to handpick the Prime Minister. Such an arrangement made him more than just a symbolic figurehead. In reality, he controlled the whole political process.¹

The power to make laws was bequeathed to 'the King-in-Parliament'. This was problematic because giving legislative authority to the King's office hampers Parliament's ability to exercise oversight over the activities of the Executive, whose head is the King. In Swaziland, the King's pre-eminence was constitutionally enshrined within

¹ J. Daniel and J. Vilane, "Swaziland: Political Crisis, Regional Dilemma", in *Review of African Political Economy*, No 35 (May 1986), pp. 54-67, p. 56.

the overall set-up of a constitutional monarchy. The monarchy's control over the country's strategic resources such as land and mineral resources was also embedded in the Constitution.² Furthermore, the dominance of the political scene by the monarchist party, the INM, consolidated the King's political powers far beyond what was possibly envisioned under constitutional monarchy's dispensation.

The contempt of the Independence Constitution was caused by the fact that it established a constitutional order which provided for a constitutional monarchy where the King would exercise executive powers which were nonetheless restricted by the Constitution, Cabinet's advice and Parliament's powers. The pre-eminence of the Constitution as the Kingdom's basic and supreme law was emphasised in Section 2. It was submitted that the subjugation of all governmental authorities to the Constitution's ultimate authority and the rule of law encompassed the monarchy. Section 28 of the Constitution indicated that the King could "do all things that belong to his office in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution and all other for the time being in force."³ Traditional scholars suggest that the Constitution was forced upon Swazi people and did not represent the Swazi people's ambitions and desires.

It could therefore be asked why the Independence Constitution was suspended in 1973 and not earlier. One would argue that it was because accepting this Constitution was a pre-condition for the award of independence. Also, between 1968 and 1973 political developments were working in the King's favour. King Sobhuza II tolerated the Constitution at least until 1973 simply because at independence, every available parliamentary seat was won by the INM and King Sobhuza II nominated the remainder of Parliament's members. J. Baloro argues that some of the reasons King Sobhuza II actually detested a regime of multi-partysim was not only because he considered such a system 'unSwazi' but also because of the fear that a government controlled by political parties comprised the educated elite was unlikely to leave much room for the exercise of monarchical powers. But for now, he was prepared to accept the constitutional provisions

² *Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland*, s. 94.

³ *Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland*, s. 28 (2).

made under the 1968 Constitution. This was facilitated by the fact that both the 1964 and 1967 elections, the monarchist party, the Imbokodvo National Movement (INM) gained all the seats in Parliament and was in control of the government.⁴

The Independence Constitution and this parliamentary procedure was not to last long as the complete state of affairs changed in 1973. In the same year the Constitution was abnegated, Parliament disbanded and all political parties proscribed. It was a clear government's position not being accommodative of a multi-party dispensation.

Swaziland's first post-independence general elections were held in May 1972. The INM led government encountered a tough challenge from young educated Swazis during these elections. Many were in the civil service and were members of the Ngwane National Liberatory Congress (NNLC). This challenge in the 1972 parliamentary elections was a variation in the state of affairs to which the ruling INM was used.

J. B. Mzizi correctly observes that "the INM ruled without formal opposition for the first five years of independence, during which there was no talk of abolishing party politics. The 1972 election, however, ushered in the death of democracy."⁵ In 1972, the then opposition party called the NNLC received slightly more than 20% of the vote which gained the party three seats in Parliament from economically influential constituencies. These were sugar plantation constituencies where workers were dissatisfied with the government over working conditions. The NNLC's victory sent shock waves around the country, especially among Swaziland's traditionalist establishment.

The first post-colonial elections in 1972 leading to the election of these three Members in Parliament from an opposition party brought out strong dislike of political plurality among traditional rulers of the Kingdom of Swaziland. As soon as the opposition gained

⁴ J. Baloro, "The Development of Swaziland's Constitution: Monarchical Responses to Modern Challenges", *Journal of African Law*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (1994), p. 24.

⁵ J. B. Mzizi, *Political Movements and Challenges for Democracy in Swaziland* (Johannesburg: Issue 3 of Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA) Research Report, 2005), p. 2.

three seats in Parliament, this was perceived as a challenge to the King's power, esteem and legitimacy. One can argue that these seats in the legislature did not pose an instant political threat but King Sobhuza II was not at ease with such a development. The 1968 Independence Constitution, as a colonial imposition lacking legitimacy, then became an easy target as traditionalists sought to entrench themselves. J. B. Mzizi argues that "the INM refused to accept the prospect of an opposition in Parliament, and regarded this victory as an affront to the King's authority and image."⁶ It was obvious that King Sobhuza II did not want any challenge to his absolutist rule.

This development provoked and to a certain extent confirmed the traditionalists' worst fears and hostilities against the 1968 Independence Constitution which had not been quite recognised as a true national document by the monarchy and its followers. The unforeseen gain of three seats by the NNLC caused "royalist leadership not only to fear losing power, but view elections and freedom of political groupings as a nuisance. Consequently, the royal leadership tried to get rid of the system using the argument that it was imposed by a foreign colonial government."⁷

The monarchy's authority had been challenged and its response was not long in coming. This NNLC victory caused the ruling party, the INM, to challenge the right of a newly elected NNLC Member of Parliament, a Mr. Thomas Bhekindlela Ngwenya, to take his seat as it was purported that he was in fact not a Swazi national. Traditional rulers found Ngwenya's strong ties with South African and Zulu parentage a suitable excuse for nipping in the bud a nascent liberal democracy. His parents were known to be Zulu who had recently settled in Swaziland. It is important to note that there were three opposition MPs that had won seats into the legislature but the main focus was on Ngwenya. The position of the two was ignored because these were 'pure' Swazi and this suggests some form of xenophobic reactions. The INM members of Parliament determined to boycott Parliament, and with their vast majority, their absence meant that it was not possible to

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁷ S. Pejstrup, "Swaziland in Transition", Msc. in Development Studies and International Relations Thesis, Alborg University, 2010, p. 18.

form a quorum for a valid meeting at which Mr. Ngwenya could be sworn in as an elected member.

In the interim, Parliament adopted under a certificate of urgency on a bill modifying the Immigration Act, under which a five-member tribunal was established to decide Mr. Ngwenya's citizen status. According to this Act, appeals from the tribunal's decision lay with the Prime Minister whose decision was ultimate. The Act was intended to have retrospective effect and the Prime Minister's decision would render ineffective any court judgment.⁸

In reaction, Mr. Ngwenya applied to the High Court of Swaziland imploring that it declares the Immigration Amendment Act, 1972, *ultra vires* the Constitution and, to similar effect, the special Immigration Tribunal established under it. The High Court, however, maintained the Act's constitutional validity and the tribunal's formation. This paved the way for the tribunal⁹ to carry on sitting and reaching the verdict that: "Ngwenya is not a citizen of Swaziland. Although his ancestors may have been resident in Swaziland, he himself was born in South Africa and therefore is not a person who belongs to Swaziland in terms of the present law."¹⁰

However, the matter did not end there as Mr. Ngwenya appealed to the Court of Appeal of Swaziland which had replaced the British Privy Council. The Court of Appeal, comprising three leading South African judges, namely, Schreiner, J. P., Milne and Smit J.J.A., held that the Immigration Amendment Act was void as it was "beyond the power of Parliament to enact, save in accordance with section 134 of the Constitution".¹¹

⁸ H. Kuper, *Sobhuza II, King and Ngwenyama of Swaziland: The Story of an Hereditary Ruler and His Country* (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1978), p. 332; B. P. Wanda, "The Shaping of the Modern Constitution of Swaziland: A Review of Some Social and Historical Factors", *Lesotho Law Journal*, Vol. 6. No. 137 (1990), p. 167.

⁹ The members of the Tribunal were J. F. G. Troughton (Chairman), Prince Sifuba, Chief Mlimi Maziya, Frank Dlamini and Mhambi Mnisi.

¹⁰ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, p. 334.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

The response to the court's decision was swift and decisive. Parliament passed a resolution moved in the Senate by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Justice, in which it was declared that the 1968 Independence Constitution was 'unworkable' and called upon the King to resolve the crisis engulfing the nation. When passing the motion on 12 April 1973 calling on the King to devise ways and means of dealing with the crisis, the individual members of Parliament then effectively placed themselves at the disposal of the King-in-Council.¹²

They marched from the Houses of Parliament to Lozitha Palace, where the King, members of the Swazi National Council and a crowd of about 8000 people awaited them. This was done with the King's active participation. It was on this day, 12 April 1973, that King Sobhuza II issued a decree that repealed the 1968 Independence Constitution, dissolved Parliament, banned all political parties thereby ending multi-party politics in Swaziland. There after King Sobhuza II ruled by decree. He declared that the Constitution had failed, that it was the cause of "growing unrest" and had permitted "undesirable political practices." He said there was "no constitutional way" to amend the Constitution and so a new constitution needed to be "created by ourselves for ourselves in complete liberty."¹³This was the meaning of regaining independence.

Sections 11, 12 and 13 of the 1973 King's Decree were designed to outlaw political parties in Swaziland. They read as follows:

11. All political parties and similar bodies that cultivate and bring about disturbances and ill-feelings within the Nation are hereby dissolved and prohibited.

12. No meeting of a political nature and no procession or demonstration shall be held or take place in any public place unless with the prior written consent of the Commissioner of Police; and consent shall not be given if the Commissioner of Police has reason to believe such meeting, procession or demonstration, is directly or indirectly related to political movements or the riotous assemblies which may disturb the peace or otherwise disturb the maintenance of law and order.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 334-335.

¹³ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, p. 335.

13. Any person who forms or attempts or conspires to form a political party or who organises or participates in any way in any meeting, procession or demonstration in contravention of this decree shall be guilty of an offence and liable, on conviction, to imprisonment not exceeding six months.¹⁴

When the King repealed the Independence Constitution and declared a state of emergency, some of the explanations for these extraordinary measures were as follows:

- The Constitution has indeed failed to provide the machinery for good government and for the maintenance of peace and order;
- The Constitution is indeed the cause of growing unrest, insecurity, dissatisfaction with the state of affairs in our country and an impediment to free and progressive development in all spheres of life;
- The Constitution has permitted the importation into our country of highly undesirable political practices alien to, and incompatible with the way of life in our society, designed to disrupt and destroy our own peaceful and constructive and essentially democratic methods of political activity; increasingly, this element engenders hostility, bitterness and unrest in our peaceful society.¹⁵

After the Decree was put in place a number of restrictions were prescribed. Political parties were banned, assembly and freedom of expression rights denied, as well as the freedom of association rights. The right to assemble was left to churches, NGOs, the Red Cross and football clubs. Workers could only meet if and when they had the permit from the Commissioner of Police. In 2013, this provision which was still in force.

The Decree made it a criminal offence, punishable by a six-month term of imprisonment, for any person to form or attempt to form a political party, or organise or attend any meeting, procession or demonstration in contravention of the Proclamation. Together with the Prime Minister's powers to detain any person for a renewable period of 60 days, the Government of Swaziland had enough weapons in its weapon store to crush any form of political activity by the opposition. Following the Constitution's repeal, the King

¹⁴ *King's Proclamation of 12 April 1973, 1973*, s.11, 12 and 13.

¹⁵ *King's Proclamation of 12 April 1973, 1973*, s.2 (a), (b) and (c).

assumed supreme power, with all legislative, executive and judicial powers conferred in him and exercised it with the help of the Prime Minister and a Cabinet of Ministers all of whom were his appointees. According to John Baloro the end result of the proceedings of April 1973 was to permit the King to complete the full circle of changing himself from a formal constitutional king, with somewhat broad executive powers, into a complete executive ruler, unrestrained by the confines of any constitutional requirements.¹⁶

Scholars and activists have forwarded various reasons why King Sobhuza II did this. Scholar and activist J. B. Mzizi argues that “the repeal of the Independence Constitution was achieved on 12 April 1973 in what could be best described as a ‘royal coup of the Swazi Parliament’.”¹⁷ Mphandlana Shongwe believes that the 1973 King’s Decree was totally unnecessary. He argues that King Sobhuza II simply wanted no opposition to ever challenge his supremacy in politics. He continues to argue that the real reason for King Sobhuza II’s political party ban was that the INM did not win all the 1972 election seats as they had done in 1967.¹⁸ R. Levin argues that “the King . . . was not happy with the parliamentary procedure which placed obstacles in the way of absolutist rule. He disliked the way in which important matters were dealt with by Parliament without his knowledge.”¹⁹

S. Pejstrup argues that “political parties were also banned as a sign of total independence and nationalism and political parties were said to be un-African and disruptive to peace.”²⁰ This spelled the end of political freedom in the country. Traditional sentiments triumphed over modern political initiatives granted under a Parliamentary democratic constitutional arrangement. From 1973 to 1978, King Sobhuza II ruled without an elected Parliament, making laws by decree, when the *Tinkhundla* system of government was first

¹⁶ Baloro, “The Development of Swaziland’s Constitution”, p. 26.

¹⁷ Mzizi, *Political Movements and the Challenges for Democracy*, p. 2.

¹⁸ Interview, Mphandlana Shongwe, Freedom Square, Manzini, 8 December 2014. Mphandlana is the current 2nd Deputy Secretary General of PUDEMO.

¹⁹ Levin, *When the Sleeping Grass Awakens*, p. 199.

²⁰ Pejstrup, “Swaziland in Transition”, p. 18.

put in place as an experiment. R. Levin argues that “in the years which followed the suspension of the constitution, the state became increasingly centralised, while state power was personalised, centring on the King, who came to occupy a special place in the hearts and minds of the people of Swaziland.”²¹

Within a few years of independence, several African countries adopted one-party state systems. Countries such as Ghana, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Zambia, Tanzania and Mali, became single-party states where one man and one party gained a virtual monopoly of power. Multi-party politics was blamed for many coups in Africa. Many African leaders saw a system that allowed only one party as more stable and unifying than multi-party politics.

In Swaziland, the monarchy assumed the same role as the single party state when all political parties became illegal. This effectively transformed Swaziland into a non-party state. One can therefore argue that the institution of the monarchy had felt threatened by democracy and had never been friendly to (popular) people’s power. This means that it had always viewed the progressive movement with extreme skepticism. It is safe to assume that it had always been the monarchy’s intention to centralise power to itself. It obtained the opportunity to do so when King Sobhuza II removed the 1968 Constitution and took all power. His attitude was that political plurality, in general, and constitutional rule, in particular, was inhospitable to the Kingdom’s political traditions. Thus he deemed it appropriate to abrogate the framework inherited from the British government at independence and in its stead was erected a framework that was sympathetic to his political traditions and ambitions.

Conferring all executive authority in the monarchy made Swaziland unique. This was a state of affairs that was imposed by the monarchy itself; playing on the notion that Swazi tradition did not recognise power contests. There were many voices in the country after 12 April 1973 which called for the redefinition and reconceptualisation of kingship and

²¹ R. Levin, “Swaziland’s *Tinkhundla* and the Myth of Swaziland Tradition”, *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (1991), p. 5.

traditional authority. It seemed, however, that the monarchy was unwilling to accommodate such dissenting voices. Since the repeal of the Independence Constitution which banned all political parties and imposed a state of emergency, all political dissent has been kept under control.

Political opponents saw the “King’s coup”, also described as the “royal coup”, as one of King Sobhuza II’s many moves to strengthen the monarchy’s political dominance. The 1973 Decree lacked legitimacy for it repealed the Independence Constitution without using a referendum as was provided in the Constitution. This was not reflective of the majority’s will. It was a sectional law safeguarding the monarch and the traditional elites’ interests at the expense of the whole Swazi nation. Therefore, the 1973 Decree in effect set up a non-party state because it outlawed all political parties.

One can also argue that since the repeal of the Independence Constitution, Cabinet accountability, the rule of law and transparency were ‘thrown out of the window’. National policy formation was shrouded in mystery. Hence, the 1973 Decree enabled the King to fully transform himself from a formal constitutional monarch to one unbridled by constitutional limitations. Lastly, the will of the Swazi majority was overridden by the monarch and traditional elites’ institutionalised whims. The 1973 Decree further deprived the people of Swaziland of their opportunity and right to choose its government through periodic and genuine elections because no electoral law was put in place after the repeal of the Constitution.

The pro-democracy groupings were not at all pleased with the new arrangement. All of the political parties were driven underground. The system of government that was put in place did not allow for the political participation of the masses. One can argue that the ruling elite behaved very badly and their actions led to the formation of PUDEMO and other opposing political groupings. The monarchy suppressed the political movement. The monarchy continued with this suppression between 1973 and 1983 although it was clear to any sensible person that they could not go on like that forever. What was needed

was a group of people who would act exactly as PUDEMO did, in a situation of absence of democratic participation.

After the 1973 Decree, King Sobhuza II ruled the country in collaboration with *Libandla*'s²² traditional councils, the Prime Minister and his Cabinet. Since he had repealed the Independence Constitution, he insisted on the establishment and implementing of a system of government which would fit the interests, aspirations and values of the Swazi people. According to J. B. Mzizi, King Sobhuza II spoke about a “constitution created by ourselves for ourselves in complete liberty from foreign pressures ... and to derive its legitimacy from tradition.”²³ Sobhuza was speaking of creating a new constitution formed by the Swazi people and established a Royal Constitutional Commission that was to produce a constitutional document in one year. This Commission was to make recommendations on a constitutional system more acquiescent to Swaziland's traditional elite.

The Commission's findings were never published, but in 1977, as Parliament's term was about to expire, King Sobhuza II announced that the Kingdom of Swaziland would now be ruled through “traditional institutions”, and that in future Members of Parliament would be elected through an indirect system centering upon regional committees (*Tinkhundla*). In essence this system was designed to prevent the modernists and reformers gaining even the smallest foothold in the political arena. Despite the apparent reintroduction of constitutional institutions, Swaziland was now an absolute monarchy, in which unauthorised public meetings were prohibited and preventive detention was used to deter opponents.

Constitutional changes occurred in 1978. King Sobhuza II must have considered that the situation was sufficiently under control to introduce a new constitution – described as a mixture of Swazi tradition and Western democracy. Therefore, after extensive consultations with the Swazi National Council and on the basis of the report submitted by

²² The *Libandla* is the Swazi council comprised of chiefs, community leaders and all adult males.

²³ Mzizi, *Political Movements and Challenges for Democracy*, p. 12.

the Royal Constitutional Commission in 1975,²⁴ King Sobhuza II re-established Parliament in 1978²⁵ through a constitutional framework that became known as the *Tinkhundla* system of government.

This new constitutional structure contained a number of important institutions, being parliament, Cabinet, *Libandla*, *Liqoqo* and the monarchy. This order established a bicameral body, comprising a House of Assembly of 50 members and a Senate of 20 members, half of whom were to be elected by the House of Assembly and half nominated by the King. He was also empowered to nominate ten members to the House of Assembly.²⁶ Even though Parliament was reinstated in 1979, it had become a non-party Parliament with none of its members elected directly. It had very limited powers and its decisions could be overruled by the King at will.

The *Tinkhundla* system of government was a parliamentary government formed of representatives from constituencies across the country. It was an arrangement which had proven to be undemocratic since its origin because under this system, parliamentarians were elected outside the political party system. According to Mzizi:

The entrenchment of the *Tinkhundla* system was not made through a referendum or any method that the free world could recognise as free and democratic. On the contrary, the *Tinkhundla* system was imposed through the 1978 order and the 1981 proclamation in a climate best described as a state of emergency brought on by the events of 12 April 1973.²⁷

²⁴ The Royal Constitution Commission (RCC) was appointed to go to all corners of Swaziland, and to meet cross-sections of the community to take evidence as to what form of constitution they wanted. The appointment of members was announced by the King on 6 September 1973 during an address to the nation at Somhlolo National Stadium. The RCC toured the whole of Swaziland and also visited other countries to study their constitutions.

The RCC recommended, among other things, that there should be a Parliament comprising of two houses, namely, the Assembly and the Senate, and Swaziland should be a non-party state with the Swazi National Council as the only policy-making body.

²⁵ Establishment of the Parliament of Swaziland Order, *King's Order-in-Council No. 23 of 1978*, 1978.

²⁶ Establishment of the Parliament of Swaziland Order, *King's Order-in-Council No. 23 of 1978*, 1978.

²⁷ Mzizi, *Political Movements and the Challenges for Democracy*, p. 13.

It was a system whereby a constituency elected a member to represent them in a body called the electoral assembly. The electoral assembly then chose representatives from across the country who then became Members of Parliament. This meant that the Members of Parliament were not direct representatives from the constituencies (*Tinkhundla*) as they were chosen by those who were supposed to have been elected by the people or the constituencies.

Under this system, therefore, Parliament was elected through these traditional structures known as *Tinkhundla*. Furthermore, a Prime Minister and Cabinet were appointed by the King from amongst the Members of Parliament. Also one can argue that, under this system, Parliament and Cabinet were not centres of real political power. The Cabinet of Ministers was purely an administrative body which ran the civil service and supervised the operation of policies decided upon elsewhere. Furthermore, as a chosen body of traditionalists Parliament was intended to legitimate the decisions of the monarchy. Criticism in Parliament was intended to be directed only at administrative structures (Cabinet Ministers) rather than at the real policy-making institutions. Real power stayed in the hands of the monarchy.

The *Tinkhundla* system of government was grounded on the idea of centres for community development planned and implemented by the people residing in those centres under the leadership of their relevant chiefs. According to J. Baloro, “they are therefore centres for the mobilisation of ordinary people for community development projects.”²⁸ The *Tinkhundla* were first utilised for electoral purposes in 1964 when King Sobhuza II organised a referendum of the Swazi nation on the acceptability or otherwise of the 1964 Colonial Constitution which formed the basis for elections for a new legislative council in the country. The mandate and apparatus for conducting elections to the Electoral College and eventually to Parliament have been conferred in an Electoral Committee consisting of seven persons.²⁹

²⁸ Baloro, “The Development of Swaziland’s Constitution”, p. 27.

²⁹ Establishment of the Parliament of Swaziland Order, *King’s Order-in-Council No. 23 of 1978*, 1978, ss. 3-6.

The character and extent of the electoral committee's specific functions were detailed in Section 4 of the Establishment of the Parliament of Swaziland Order, 1978 as follows:

4. Without derogating from the generality of section 3 hereof, the Electoral Committee shall:
 - (a) Lay down guidelines and directives for the conduct of elections of the *Inkhundla* level and at the Electoral College;
 - (b) Be represented by at least two persons, not necessarily members of the Committee at each meeting of any *Inkhundla* convened as hereinafter provided for the purpose of electing two delegates to the Electoral College;
 - (c) Be present at the election by the Electoral College of members of Parliament or the majority of its members; and
 - (d) be responsible for the proper conduct of the elections at *Tinkhundla* or the Electoral College, as the case may be, having regard to the traditional practices at meetings and elections of the Swazi nation, save in so far as such practices may be inconsistent with the directives and guidelines laid down by the Electoral Committee.³⁰

The *Tinkhundla* system of government represents an ample rejection of party political activity. All political parties have remained banned since 1973 and it is unlawful for anyone to organise and campaign for political support under the banner of a political party. The 1978 constitutional arrangements establishing the *Tinkhundla* system of government served further to strengthen and entrench the monarchy's power in Swaziland. The King could appoint the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and all ministers at his discretion. He was no longer obliged to have regard to the political complexity of the House of Assembly since by definition there were no political parties or affiliations in the House.

Bongani Masuku describes the *Tinkhundla* system of government as:

A system based on royal greed, monopoly of power and abuse of the people in the name of Swazi culture and tradition. It is eating away at the very fibre of our rich heritage and pride as a nation and people, resulting in the increasing levels of corruption, suffering and total disregard for human dignity and the rights of the poor and marginalised.³¹

³⁰ *Ibid*, s. 4.

³¹ Interview, Bongani Masuku, SADTU Offices, Ermelo, 18 April 2015. Bongani is the COSATU International Secretary, a Swazi exile since 1998, a former President of SWAYOCO, a former Secretary

Supporters of the *Tinkhundla* system of government suggested that the aim of developing the *Tinkhundla* was devolution of state power or decentralising. Critics of the system felt that the effect here was the opposite. For example, Pejstrup argues that:

It is more accurate to see *Tinkhundla* as a network through which loyalty is recognised and rewarded with patronage, land and jobs. The rationale of decentralisation is without foundation because power and authority are concentrated in this structure. At the basis of *Tinkhundla* lies *kukhonta* - sworn allegiance to the monarchy through the chiefs.³²

Under the *Tinkhundla* system of government the King could simply choose to ignore Parliament in his rulings. It could be argued that under this system, power was still highly centralised, and, by extension, accumulation of wealth was still to a large degree dependent upon a person's state connections. This was probably one of the main reasons for the failure of democratisation in Swaziland, as it was in much of Africa. It was not in the interest of those in power to change the status quo. This is probably why PUDEMO, operating outside the *Tinkhundla* system, could be viewed as the only plausible means of changing and improving Swazi society.³³

King Sobhuza II believed the *Tinkhundla* system of government would be responsible for the wishes and aspirations of the people, whose life it was expected to regulate. Some commentators, however, observed that this system was meant to protect and entrench the King's power. King Sobhuza II viewed multi-partism as based on an alien or foreign political model that envisaged a government and an opposition. The essence of democracy is having many different political parties with different ideological orientations. That, to him, was contrary to the traditional African concept of governance which emphasised discussion, communication and consensus.³⁴ In January 1979, a new Parliament was convened, chosen partly through indirect elections and partly through direct appointment by the King.

General of the Swaziland Solidarity Network, a PUDEMO NEC Member and Head of the Political Strategy and Ideological Development Commission (PSIDC) of PUDEMO.

³² Pejstrup, "Swaziland in Transition", p. 21.

³³ Interview, Mphandlana Shongwe, 8 December 2014.

³⁴ Interview, Zodwa Mkhonta, Thembelihle, Mbabane, 22 November 2014.

The Members of Parliament in both houses were limited to debating government proposals and advising the King. No political parties were allowed to contest elections as had happened in 1967 and 1972. The candidates' names were not made public until the actual voting started. In 1978 the first *Tinkhundla* elections were held without an episode. The next elections to be conducted under the *Tinkhundla* system were due in 1983. King Sobhuza II died before these were held, but the form of elections did not change from that used in 1978.

Despite the myths disseminated, often in good faith, by the “conservative” camp, the Swazi Kingdom is neither very old in historical terms, nor have its institutions been cast in stone. Indeed, one of the fundamental reasons for King Sobhuza II's accomplishment as a leader was his ability not only to adapt and change Swazi tradition when occasion necessitated, but even to re-design it. Political stability during this epoch was due in no small part to King Sobhuza II's personal charisma and standing. This stability helped in that the institutions and practices he had backed came to be accepted by the mainstream of his subjects as principally “Swazi” and therefore unchallengeable. King Sobhuza II's presence and personal skills kept the *Tinkhundla* system of government functioning, but as he was very advanced in age, provision had to be prepared for his succession, never an easy development in Swazi history. Before the succession matters could be finalised, King Sobhuza II died unexpectedly, in August 1982.

Resistance to *Tinkhundla* system of government became profound in the mid-1980s. Strong opposition can be seen with the formation of an underground political movement in 1983. Opposition to the system then became or grew visible and widespread afterwards. The political disorder in the royal household following the passing away of King Sobhuza II in August 1982 and the political disorder within the royal household that followed, organised political opposition to the *Tinkhundla* system of government and the Decree of 1973 began with the founding of PUDEMO in July 1983.

Conclusion

This chapter examined how the Government of independent Swaziland experimented with governance institutions of colonial autonomy. The post-1968 government saw the introduction of the *Tinkhundla* system of government. It showed how Swaziland became independent in 1968 after the general elections of 1967, which the Imbokodvo National Movement (INM) won. The new government was running a democratic system of government for the first time in the history of the Swazi nation.

It also discussed how in 1973 the 1968 Independence Constitution was targeted as a colonial imposition lacking authority as a source of legitimate authority in the country. It was shown in this chapter that the Monarchy and Aristocracy saw the end of British colonial rule in September 1968 as marking a return to traditional Swazi politics. It was not an opportunity for liberal democracy which was seen as foreign and contradicting political independence. Despite the numerical insignificance of opposition representation in Parliament, that was seen as evil enough to justify abolition of the 1968 Independence Constitution in April 1973.

This chapter also studied the introduction of the *Tinkhundla* system of government in 1978, a parliamentary government formed of representatives from the constituencies across the country. The *Tinkhundla* system of government confirmed the King as an absolute monarch. This chapter showed that the emergence of PUDEMO should be seen as a sign of accumulated resentment successfully suppressed by King Sobhuza II through the abolition of representative institutions and the introduction of repressive measures. Therefore the years after 1973 marked the presence of discontent among the political opposition; hence the next chapter will show that King Sobhuza II's death and the regime's inability to rule the country in a similar fashion to that of King Sobhuza II led to the emergence of opposition parties.

CHAPTER 4

KING SOBHUZA II'S DEATH AND BIRTH OF PUDEMO, 1982-1986

Introduction

This chapter examines the historical circumstances surrounding the birth of PUDEMO. After King Sobhuza II's death in August 1982, and the political disorder that followed within royal household, organised political opposition to the *Tinkhundla* system of government and the Decree of 1973 began with the founding of PUDEMO in 1983. Evidence indicates that students, intellectuals and trade unionists were responsible for the formation of this organisation and its growth to arguably the biggest and most radical political party in the Kingdom of Swaziland. This chapter argues that King Sobhuza II left a power vacuum when he died in August 1982. The *Liqoqo* acted as an important factor in the formation of PUDEMO. The *Liqoqo*'s attempt to fill the power vacuum left by the departed King created a fertile environment for this political group to emerge. It was during *Liqoqo* rule that underground political opposition intensified and PUDEMO was formed.

The chapter further describes how PUDEMO, which claims to be the political representative of Swaziland's oppressed people, was formed with the overall aim of establishing a constitutional multi-party democracy, a transparent and accountable government, an environment conducive to economic growth, and economic empowerment and the development of a culturally vibrant and tolerant society based on maximum participation and respect of the country's people's will. According to its own manifesto, PUDEMO is "a political organisation formed by the people

of Swaziland ... to unite and mobilise the oppressed majority of the Swazi people against the minority oppressive and exploitative *Tinkhundla* rule”.¹

Political developments after King Sobhuza II’s death leading to PUDEMO’s birth

The cult surrounding King Sobhuza II and his powerful speech-making skills had to a certain degree legitimised his rule in the eyes of many Swazis. While he was still alive, his position was secure. His inner council and everyone who interacted with him considered his word as final. He was a father figure to the Swazi nation and commanded absolute respect and admiration. In some cases, he was almost seen as god-like. Many myths developed about his personality and his abilities. His speeches were full of parables and people interpreted them in different ways. But when he died on 21 August 1982, at the age of slightly over 83 years old, much of this legitimacy and the relative stability of Swazi society died with him.²

Major confrontations occurred within the royal power bloc, and it took until 1986 before a new King, the present King Mswati III, could be crowned. Following King Sobhuza II’s demise, internal clashes took place in the royal household and the corridors of power between 1984 and 1986. King Sobhuza II had been able to influence the traditional institutions and cement his power around the person of the *Ngwenyama*, the King. However, with his disappearance, also died his personal style of rule and the myth of political peace and political stability. Daniel and Vilane state that:

The 1980s have been traumatic years for the Swazi people. The death of King Sobhuza in 1982 ended 14 years of post-independence stability and initiated a prolonged period of factional strife within royalist circles which has brought into question the very legitimacy of the popular traditions and political institutions which Sobhuza strove so hard to preserve.³

¹ The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO). *The People’s Manifesto*. 6 July 1983, 1983.

² E. Magongo, “Kingship and Transition in Swaziland”, 1973-1988”. M. A. in History, University of South Africa, 2009, p. 56.

³ J. Daniel and J. Vilane, “Swaziland: Political Crisis, Regional Dilemma”, in *Review of African Political Economy*, No 35 (May 1986), pp. 54-67, p. 54.

As so often in Swazi history, the King's death ushered in a time of troubles, for the succession goes almost always to one of the late King's youngest sons. The Queen Mother, Dzeliwe, now assumed control as Queen Regent, pending the coming of age of the Crown Prince, whose identity was still a closely guarded secret (King Sobhuza II was survived by some 110 children, of whom 40 were sons). Queen Regent Dzeliwe soon found herself entangled in a power struggle with some of the Royal Council's senior princes, who feared she might encourage changes that could threaten their advantaged position. In August 1983 the princes struck, ousting the Queen Regent, and replacing her with Queen Ntfombi, the Crown Prince's mother. This dramatic development caused a severe crack within the royal family and led to unparalleled public protest, which subsided only in September 1985 with the Crown Prince's return from school in England.

The power struggle within the ruling elite continued, with imprisonments and arrests of prominent figures who risked oppose the new Royal Council. In October 1985 the surge turned, and early in 1986 the "usurpers" within the Council found themselves under attack and ultimately in prison. On 25 April Prince Makhosetive ascended the throne as King Mswati III. As an absolute monarch aged just 18 years, King Mswati III faced a daunting challenge in trying to re-establish the Dlamini's unity at the same time as he sought policies to fight the substantial economic and social problems confronting the Kingdom of Swaziland.

King Sobhuza II had ruled for longer than any other known King. When he died, power in the traditional arm of government was left in the hands of the Queen Mother, the Authorised Person⁴ and the Swazi National Council. In harmony with Swazi traditional law and custom Queen Regent Dzeliwe assumed Head of State duties and a formal installation ceremony was conducted before King Sobhuza II's burial.⁵ According to Levin:

⁴ Authorised Person was someone to perform the duties of a Regent if, for any reason, the Regent was unable to perform his/her duties. Such an appointment could be made at any time should the need arise. Prince Sozisa became the first Authorised Person, though he was believed to be illiterate and inexperienced in political and world matters.

⁵ J. S. M. Matsebula, *History of Swaziland, Third Edition* (Cape Town: Longman, 1988), p. 276.

The King's death ushered in a period of nervous apprehension, as his successors attempted to fill the vacuum created by his passing. Powerful political figures occupying top positions in the various structures and institutions of power created by the late King began to size one another up as factions started forming.⁶

Apart from the traditional structures, there was also the modern arm of government. It was led by the Prime Minister and his Cabinet. The Prime Minister at this point was Prince Mabandla, who had replaced the late Prince Maphevu, in 1979. It was Prince Mabandla who announced the King's death to Parliament. A national month of mourning was declared and many people started to focus on which of the King's many sons would succeed him. None of the sons of King Sobhuza II openly attempted to assume the throne.

King Sobhuza II's death substantially affected the political situation in Swaziland. However, the *Tinkhundla* system as the system of government with the monarchy at its apex remained intact. Indeed, a year before King Sobhuza II's death, he enacted a decree in which the *Tinkhundla* system was reaffirmed. In this respect, Section 8 of the King's Proclamation No. 1 of 1981 provides as follows: "The establishment of a National Government based on the *Tinkhundla* system of government under the King's Proclamation of the 12th April, 1973 are hereby affirmed."⁷

Another enactment was the King's Proclamation No. 1 of 1982. By virtue of Section 2(c) thereof, the King, or in his absence, the *Liqoqo*⁸ was authorised at any time to appoint in coherence with Swazi law and custom, a person "to perform on behalf of the Regent the functions of her office if the Regent is, for any reason, unable to perform those

⁶ R. Levin, "Hegemony and Crisis: Swazi Royal Power in Transition", PhD Thesis, University of Liverpool, 1985, p. 478.

⁷ Proclamation by His Majesty King Sobhuza II, *King's Proclamation No. 1 of 1981*, s. 8, 1981.

⁸ The *Liqoqo* was the inner circle of the King's advisors. In the post-1982 period following the death of King Sobhuza II, its function was mainly to assist Queen Regent Dzeliwe during the minority years of Crown Prince Makhosetive – announced in the Government Gazette that its name was the 'Supreme Council of State'.

functions”.⁹ Such a functionary would be known as the “Authorised Person”. Following King Sobhuza II’s death, Prince Sozisa Dlamini, a prominent member of the royal family, long-time close advisor to the King and senior Swazi Prince, was appointed to fill this position. Also, the definition of the *Liqoqo* as contained in Section 4 of the King’s Proclamation No. 1 of 1982 should be noted:

Liqoqo means the supreme council of state whose function is to advise the King on all matters of state and which shall consist of members appointed by the King to hold office at his pleasure in accordance with such terms and conditions (including emoluments and allowances) as he may determine. Provided that no person shall be qualified to be a member solely by virtue of his holding another office whether or not such office is established by law.¹⁰

It was this provision that laid the legal foundation for the emergence of a clique of powerful and ambitious traditionalists led by Prince Mfanasibili Dlamini after King Sobhuza II’s death. Starting by amending the Sedition and Subversive Activities Amendment Act, 1983, the *Liqoqo* ruled with terror, making new policies and even removing Queen Regent Dzeliwe who had grown to be suspicious of the *Liqoqo*’s objectives.

The new members of the *Liqoqo* were appointed by Queen Regent Dzeliwe. It comprised of Prince Makhungu, Prince Gabheni, Prince Sifuba, Prince Mfanasibili, Prince Mancibane, Prince Tsekwane, Prince Sifo, Prince Mavandlakazi, Prince Lusekwane, Chief Mlimi Maziya, Indvuna Masenjana Nsibande, Chief Mfanawenkhosi Maseko, Amos Kuseni Hlophe, George Msibi and Ndleleni Gwebu. So, in the period after the death of King Sobhuza II, three centres of power appeared which regularly clashed. There was the *Liqoqo* led by Prince Mfanasibili, Cabinet led by the Prime Minister, Prince Mabandla, and the monarchial regency of Queen Regent Dzeliwe assisted by the Authorised Person, Prince Sozisa.

⁹ Proclamation by His Majesty King Sobhuza II, *King’s Proclamation No. 1 of 1982*, s. 2(c), 1982.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, s. 4.

On the King's Proclamation No. 1 of 1982, Levin argues that it was "this decree that created for the conflict which surfaced after the King's death in August 1982."¹¹ Real power at this time was concentrated in the *Liqoqo*. This was a group of politicians, long-time government functionaries and associates of the King that exceeded the confines of the traditional advisory functions of the *Liqoqo*. They completely usurped and dominated the government, provoking opposition, intrigue and rivalry, eventually causing a series of events leading to the dismissal of the Prime Minister and the Authorised Person, the removal of the Queen Regent Dzeliwe and the installation of Queen Ntfombi as the Queen Regent.¹² Queen Ntfombi's only child, Prince Makhosetive, was named successor to the Swazi throne. Levin states:

It was officially announced that Prince Makhosetive is their heir to Sobhuza's throne. But this revealed a flagrant customary breach and demonstrated how tradition can be distorted in the interest of political power. By custom, Ntfombi, the *Nabontwana* (Mother of the Child) can only assume the role of *Indlovukati* after the new King is installed. According to the Swazi law, the future Queen Mother should spend three years following the death of a King in mourning for the most part in her hut.¹³

The *Liqoqo* therefore made a number of self-serving laws outside Parliament's mandate, literally undoing the leadership structure King Sobhuza II had left in place. According to J. S. M. Matsebula:

The action they took against Dzeliwe was to strip her off her office as *Ndlovukazi* and Queen Regent. They decided to inform the nation through Swaziland Radio that King Sobhuza II's heir and future King of Swaziland was Makhosetive, the only son of Queen Ntfombi. Makhosetive was then attending a school in Sherborne in the United Kingdom. Thereupon the elders prepared two more instruments – one authorising the Authorised Person, Prince Sozisa to sign in the place of the Queen Regent, the other one proclaiming the assumption of the

¹¹ Levin, "Swaziland's *Tinkhundla* and the Myth of Swaziland Tradition", *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (1991), p. 11.

¹² See Swaziland Government Gazette, *Regent's Decrees No. 1 and No. 2 of 1983*. See also R. H. Davies *et al.*, *The Kingdom of Swaziland: A Profile* (London, 1985), pp. 48-70.

¹³ Levin, "Hegemony and Crisis", p. 498.

office of Queen Regency by Queen Ntfombi, with immediate effect, while Queen Dzeliwe was to step down.¹⁴

Mzizi observes that “the country was reaping the fruits of Sobhuza II who had by example, weal and woe, taught that political power was sweetest in the absence of opposition.”¹⁵ One can suggest that the crisis observed during the *Liqoqo* era following King Sobhuza II’s death was a result power centralisation on the institution of the monarchy. This was problematic in the sense that the monarchy, as an institution, was not immune to abuse and manipulation by power mongers such as the *Liqoqo*.

In October 1985, Queen Regent Ntfombi demonstrated her power by dismissing the *Liqoqo*’s leading figures. Prince Makhosetive returned from school in England to ascend to the throne and helped end the continuing internal quarrels. He was enthroned as King Mswati III on 25 April 1986. Shortly afterwards he abolished the *Liqoqo*. Like his father before him, King Mswati III continued to rule the Kingdom of Swaziland by decree and upheld political party ban.

During the political disturbances caused by the *Liqoqo*, PUDEMO was formed in response to the disorder that followed King Sobhuza II’s death. The *Liqoqo* exercised violent power and its leadership style caused extreme national tension. The commotions associated with these power struggles created a fertile ground for the formation of PUDEMO. Levin states that “the period coincides with the founding of an underground democratic opposition organisation, PUDEMO.”¹⁶ PUDEMO became a serious challenger to the *Liqoqo* tactics, and at the same time called for the return of democracy in Swaziland. At the time of its formation, it called for unity amongst all groups opposed to the *Liqoqo* regime.

¹⁴ J. S. M. Matsebula, *History of Swaziland, Third Edition* (Cape Town: Longman, 1988), p. 304.

¹⁵ J. B. Mzizi, “Voices of the Voiceless: Toward a Theology of Liberation for Post-Colonial Swaziland”, PhD Dissertation, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, 1995, p. 185.

¹⁶ Levin, “Swaziland’s *Tinkhundla* and the Myth of Swaziland Tradition”, p. 12.

Photograph 2**Queen Regent of Swaziland, *Indlovukati* Dzeliwe Shongwe, 1982-1983**

Source: Times of Swaziland file picture – www.times.co.sz

Photograph 3**Queen Regent of Swaziland, 1983 to 1986 and Queen Mother of Swaziland, *Indlovukati* Ntfombi Tfwala, 1986 to present**

Source: Times of Swaziland file picture – www.times.co.sz

Many scholars and political activists argue that it was the *Liqoqo*'s incompetent blundering and its actions during the succession period that led to the formation of PUDEMO. Kanduza argues that:

This was a time when the Swazi intelligentsia and youth in and out of educational institutions rallied in support of Makhosetive, heir to Sobhuza II who had died in August 1982. A cabal of senior royal family members, chiefs, and other notables attempted to stop Makhosetive from succeeding his father as King Mswati III. PUDEMO was committed to 'democratisation of all institutions' by ensuring participation in governance by the majority of the population.¹⁷

The historical background to the formation of PUDEMO was indeed the development of factional squabbling in the Royal Palace. King Sobhuza II had just died the previous year and the country was still overwhelmed by the political power struggle created by the power vacuum. According to Mphandlana Shongwe, one of PUDEMO's founding members, as university and college students, they were "very unhappy with the removal or deposition of Queen Regent Gogo Dzeliwe by *Liqoqo*."¹⁸ So, for all intents and purposes, PUDEMO was trying to protect the monarchy. Even Levin observes, about the formation of PUDEMO, that "one of its first tasks was the provision of a home for all Swazis opposed to the undemocratic and authoritarian *Liqoqo* regime."¹⁹ In his autobiography, Shongwe argues that he and PUDEMO "stood up to protect the monarchy and to later on democratise the country."²⁰ Another political activist, Wilson Mdluli, in a letter to the editor, argues that "when PUDEMO was formed in 1983, the intention was not to overthrow the state but to improve the country's governance and to fight *Liqoqo*."²¹

¹⁷ A. M. Kanduza, "Intellectuals in Swazi Politics", in S. T. Dupont-Mkhonza, J. N. Vilakati and L. J. S. Mundia (eds.), *Democracy, Transformation, Conflict and Public Policy in Swaziland* (OSSREA Swaziland Chapter, 2003), p. 62.

¹⁸ Interview, Mphandlana Shongwe, 8 December 2014.

¹⁹ Levin, *When the Sleeping Grass Awakens*, p. 197.

²⁰ M. Shongwe, *The Last Mile: 30 years of unbroken struggle*, 2013, p. 23.

²¹ *Times of Swaziland*, 17 February 2015.

PUDEMO's formation was evolutionary in nature. The above statements indicate that PUDEMO was initially very royalist which made some commentators consider it as a kind of a 'palace group'. What this meant was that they were like palace boys who ensured that nothing went wrong in the palace. In the beginning, PUDEMO wanted to ensure that the *Liqoqo*'s actions did not disrupt the setup of royalty. In a letter to the editor, Zakhele Mabuza, PUDEMO's Information and Publicity Secretary, observes that:

The month of July is a significant period for it marks the birth of the Peoples United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) founded in 1983 - a few months after the death of King Sobhuza II.

This was followed by heightened repression in the country orchestrated by the Supreme Council of State, *Liqoqo*. There was infighting in the palace, xenophobia and collusion with apartheid South Africa that resulted in detention without trial and police brutality. It was against such a background that some patriotic Swazis, including university students and workers, resolved to form this organisation with the broad aim of challenging the oppression and iron rule meted by the *Liqoqo* on the people of this country.²²

Daniel and Vilane argue that:

Dissent assumed an organised form in the second half of 1984. The main site of opposition was the University of Swaziland which staged a series of boycotts, strikes and protest marches. . . . Simultaneously graffiti, slogans and secret pamphlets announced the existence of the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) and called for unity amongst groups opposed to the regime.²³

The removal of Queen Regent Dzeliwe seemed to be the major bone of contention during this period. Mphandlana Shongwe says:

The existence of the 1973 King's Proclamation played a major role by providing the fertile ground, while on the other side the tyranny of the *Liqoqo* regime provided a favorable and conducive climate to embark on the road to total emancipation. First to spark the seed was a traditional matter which the *Liqoqo* mishandled; the Dzeliwe issue.²⁴

²² *Times of Swaziland*, 11 July 2008.

²³ Daniel and Vilane, "Swaziland", p. 61.

²⁴ Shongwe, *The Last Mile*, p. 23.

It was only later that PUDEMO changed its position and wanted a change in the whole *Tinkhundla* system of governance. They started describing it as a system based on royal greed, monopoly of power and abuse of the people in the name of Swazi culture and tradition. This fact made PUDEMO appear to be an opportunistic organisation taking advantage of palace problems to push their own agenda, which was to bring about democratisation. One would argue that maybe PUDEMO never really cared about the removal of Queen Regent Dzeliwe in the first place. They just used the incident to further their own ‘selfish’ ambitions.

The removal of the Queen Regent Dzeliwe had never happened before in the Swazi nation’s history. The *Liqoqo*’s action was the first of such incidents to occur. Furthermore, the reasons advanced for the act was that the *Liqoqo* was paving the way for the young prince, Makhosetive, to take over Kingship. One wonders therefore if it really was the *Liqoqo*’s place to remove the Queen Regent, Dzeliwe Shongwe, and replace her with Queen Ntfombi Tfwala. It was for this reason that many observe that what the *Liqoqo* did was extremely wrong, especially since it was not the first time in Swazi history that a Queen Regent had ruled in a young Swazi King’s place. Matsebula clearly states that:

As Nkhotfotjeni, the heir to the throne was only a baby in arms, Labotsibeni (also popularly known as Gwamile) again became the Queen Regent, and she was assisted by her son Malunge. She held this office until 1921, when Nkhotfotjeni was installed as king and took the name Sobhuza II.²⁵

Queen Regent Labotsibeni had ruled as Regent for many years before handing over power to King Sobhuza II. It was in 22 December 1921 that “Labotsibeni handed over her duties to him and he was publicly installed as Ngwenyama Sobhuza II of Swaziland.”²⁶ King Sobhuza II ruled with his mother, Queen Mother Lomawa Ndwandwe, from the time of his installation as King. During Labotsibeni’s Regency, Nkhotfotjeni’s biological mother Lomawa Ndwandwe was there all along, waiting for her

²⁵ Matsebula, *History of Swaziland*, p. 172.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 203.

son to come of age, and only to assume her duties at the installation of her son Nkhotfotjeni, who then assumed the name of King Sobhuza II. So, Queen Regent Dzeliwe's removal was something that had not happened before in the history of the Swazi nation and therefore it was viewed by many as traditionally grossly unprocedural.

Daniel and Vilane agree with this view when they note that:

The widespread perception was that the ousting of Queen Dzeliwe was contrary to Swazi Tradition and custom and therefore illegitimate. Public feeling was that Queen Ntfombi, and those that had maneuvered to put her on the throne, were usurpers. Adding to this sense of illegitimacy was massive distaste for the manner by which the clique exercised power – their selective regard for custom, statutory law and due process; their frequent sackings and suspensions of senior civil servants and other perceived opponents; their constant threats and exhortations to the public to ‘spy’ on neighbors and turn-in so-called ‘subversives’ which created a chilling atmosphere of fear in the country; and the thinly disguised impression that power was being used to ‘feather nests’ and that the clique was beyond the reach of law.²⁷

So, the *Liqoqo* might have been wrong, as observed by many, hence the uproar over Queen Regent Dzeliwe's removal. Mphandlana Shongwe says that “while the country bowed down to the *Liqoqo* Supreme Council, the students refused.”²⁸ The *Liqoqo* regime's tyranny provided a favorable climate for PUDEMO to embark on the road to total emancipation. Zodwa Mkhonta says, as founding members of PUDEMO, they “were calling for the downfall of the *Liqoqo*, the return of the pre-1973 Constitution or the formulation of a new one and calling for a democratic dispensation.”²⁹ Kison Shongwe explains that “it was the events that culminated after the death of King Sobhuza II that led to the re-evaluation of the political minds of many Swazis. This was especially so with the educated elite (middle class) and some students in some of the educational institutions of the country.”³⁰ Summarily, the tension brought about by the unlawful

²⁷ Daniel and Vilane, “Swaziland”, p. 60.

²⁸ Shongwe, *The Last Mile*, p. 21.

²⁹ Interview, Zodwa Mkhonta, Thembelihle, Mbabane, 22 November 2014.

³⁰ Interview, Kison Shongwe, Nhlanguano, 23 May 2015. Kison Shongwe is a founding member of PUDEMO. He is also the former President of PUDEMO.

dismissal of Queen Regent Dzeliwe by the *Liqoqo* made the students protest her dethronement.

It can be argued that PUDEMO's short-term objective was to overthrow the *Liqoqo*. It was during PUDEMO's formative stage when it specifically campaigned for the *Liqoqo*'s overthrow. However, it should be made clear that the movement was not formed for the sole objective of fighting the *Liqoqo*. PUDEMO later evolved to be a movement that was to usher in democratisation of all socio-political institutions, a process in which it was still engaged by the year 2013.

On the real answer of why PUDEMO formed during this period, this scholar would like to differ slightly with explanations brought forward by several scholars and commentators. One would argue that PUDEMO's formation had a lot to do with King Sobhuza II's death. King Sobhuza II was the architect of the non-party state through the 1973 Decree and the *Tinkhundla* system of government which rejected political party activity. King Sobhuza II was now dead. So, it was an opportune moment, a '*kairos*' moment to form a political party because the man who had destroyed political party activity in the Kingdom of Swaziland was now gone. Furthermore, more than one political party was formed during this period. Other political parties were formed.³¹ This can therefore be seen as a clear indication that PUDEMO and the other parties formed during this period were taking the opportunity to do so because King Sobhuza II was dead.

The political consciousness of the students in the different institutions led to the sharing of ideas about the country's political situation with members of the broader Swazi society. Various pamphlets were distributed throughout the country by PUDEMO and various meetings were held with the commitment to establish a democratic government in Swaziland. According to Kislon Shongwe, "these students mostly from the University of

³¹ Among the political parties that formed during this period include the Swaziland Liberation Movement formed by an exiled politician, Prince Dumisa Dlamini, in London. It was formed to protect the royal family from abuse by the *Liqoqo*.

Swaziland began to draft pamphlets which had political ideas which they distributed within and outside the university.”³² This was not taking place at the University of Swaziland alone. Mphandlana Shongwe acknowledges that such ideas became prominent also at colleges like the William Pitcher Teacher Training College. Some of the students include Mandla Hlatshwayo, Professor Dlamini, Dominic Mngometulu, Ray Russon, Mphandlana Shongwe and others.³³

PUDEMO was formed on the 6th of July 1983. The siSwati name for PUDEMO is *Insika Yenkhluleko YeMaswati*³⁴ (the Swazi People’s Pillar of Freedom). Students (university, college and high school), intellectuals (intelligentsia) and workers (labour force) came together to form PUDEMO. Kison Shongwe explains that, as PUDEMO, its members “wanted a change in the manner in which the country was governed. [They] specifically wanted to exercise the freedom to form political parties that are able to participate in elections and provide policy alternatives from which the people can choose.”³⁵

PUDEMO was formally launched on 1 January 1985 on the banks of the Mbuluzi River, nearly 10 kilometers north of Mbabane. At that moment, it already had a ‘Working Constitution’, a ‘Programme of Action’ and a ‘People’s Manifesto’. In PUDEMO’s founding provisions, the organisation proclaims the following:

We, the people of Swaziland met on the 6th of July 1983 to form the People’s United Democratic Movement to represent fully the interests of the people of Swaziland and to unite them against undemocratic governance, oppression, exploitation, unfair discrimination, corruption, nepotism and favoritism. We declare to the world that Swaziland belongs to its entire people regardless of race, colour, sex, religion or social status and that PUDEMO is our true representative. We dedicate ourselves to struggling together in unity until final victory.³⁶

³² Interview, Kison Shongwe, 23 May 2015.

³³ Interview, Mphandlana Shongwe, 8 December 2014.

³⁴ *Insika* is the structural or architectural pillar within a domed traditional hut in Swaziland: The adoption of this term in PUDEMO’s name must be understood as the reclaiming of Swazi popular culture. This symbolic central pillar essentially supports an entire shelter large enough to include a multiple of approaches towards freedom (*Yenkhluleko YeMaswati*).

³⁵ Interview, Kison Shongwe, Nhlngano, 23 May 2015.

³⁶ The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO). *The People’s Manifesto. 6 July 1983*, 1983.

At the birth of PUDEMO, during the *Liqoqo*'s period in office, the movement was the only organised form of resistance that drummed up support throughout the country for the overthrow of the *Liqoqo*. It was during this year that a shift in the ideology of PUDEMO became observable. What became paramount in the pronouncements made by the organisation's leadership was opposition to the country's whole political system, as against simply the *Liqoqo*'s political machinations. According to PUDEMO's 30th anniversary brochure, "PUDEMO was formed on the 6th of July 1983 to unite, mobilise and fully represent the aspirations of all the people of Swaziland in their quest for a descent (sic) life, human dignity and a better future."³⁷

Some of PUDEMO's aims and objectives are listed in Article 2 of its 2001 Constitution as follows:

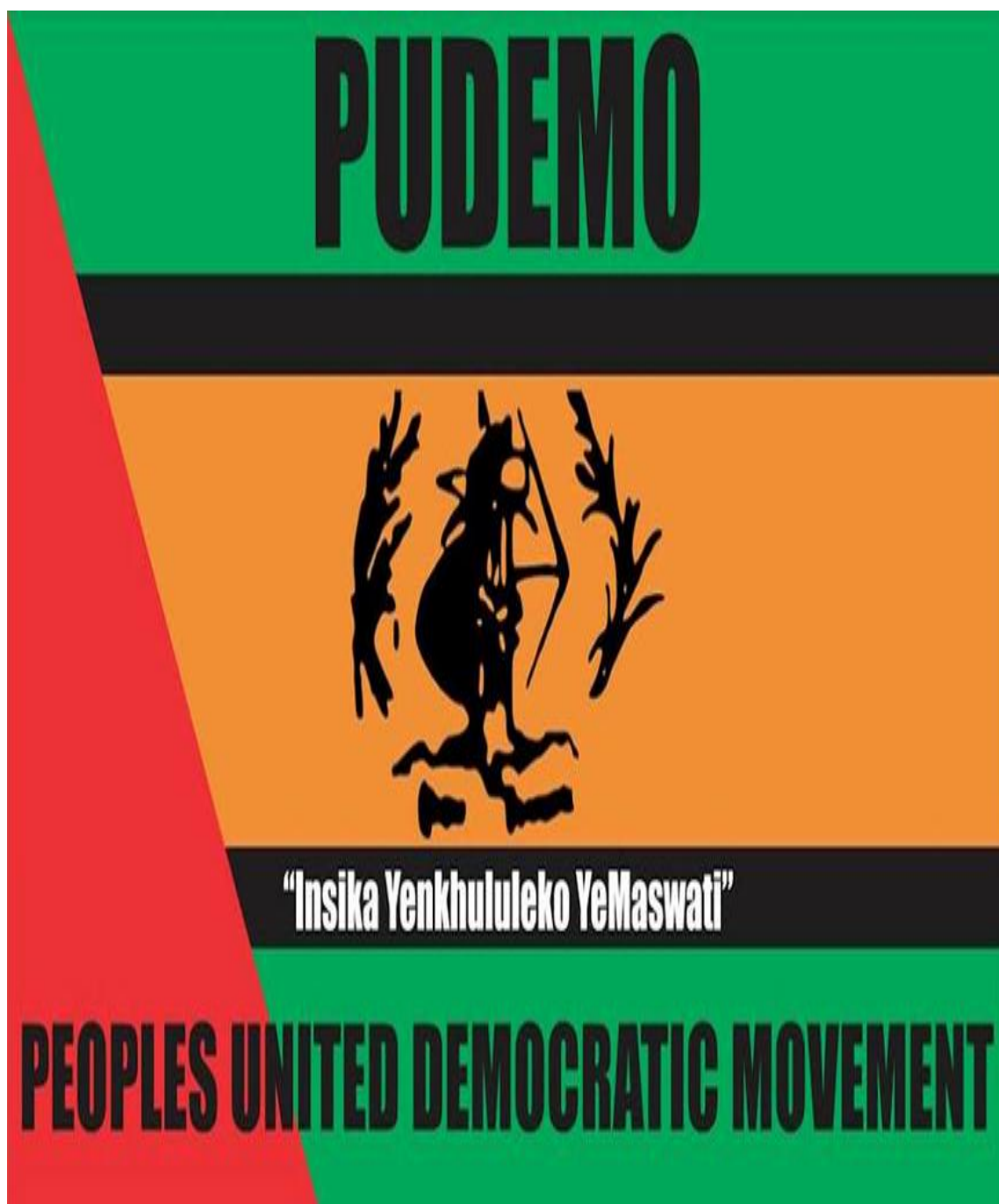
2.1 To unite all the people of Swaziland for the full liberation of the country from national, gender and class oppression and all forms of discrimination;

2.2. To destroy the *Tinkhundla* system in all forms and transform Swaziland as soon as possible into a united, non-racial, non-sexist and democratic country based on the principles of the People's Manifesto and the pursuit of a national democratic revolution;

2.3 To fight for social justice and to eliminate the huge inequalities created by the *Tinkhundla* and the whole system of national and social oppression.³⁸

³⁷ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO). *PUDEMO's 30th Anniversary Brochure*. 6 July 2013, 2013.

³⁸ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), 2001. *Draft Constitution*. Adopted by the 5th General Congress of PUDEMO, 5-6 September 2001.

Logo 1**PUDEMO logo**

Source: PUDEMO website – www.pudemo.org

The movement's founding members included men and women who were indigenous Swazis and Euro-Africans (people of mixed European and African lineage).³⁹ PUDEMO as a political party is therefore an essential voluntary and informal association of Swazi society, where people share commonly understood values, customs and attitudes to their role in politics.

PUDEMO's formation was announced by graffiti, slogans and secret pamphlets. The first National Executive Committee was elected during PUDEMO's launch in 1985. Mario Masuku was elected President, with Ray Russon as his Vice President and Dominic Mngometulu as Secretary General.⁴⁰ PUDEMO's Manifesto, written in 1985, was clearly opposing the regime when it stated that the movement was fully dedicated to creating a democratic Swaziland, that the country's wealth should be enjoyed by all citizens and shall be shared equally, that the land shall be given to all those who work it, that there should be free, compulsory, universal and equal [education] for all children and that human rights shall be observed and respected.⁴¹

The 6th of July 1983 has been described by PUDEMO's President, Mario Masuku, "as a day that changed, not just a chapter in the 'Swazi history monument', but the whole book itself. A new book came into being and PUDEMO qualitatively transformed every space in Swaziland into a site of struggle."⁴² Masuku continues to describe PUDEMO's formation as a product of history, an inevitable outcome of a people fed up with the rot of the royal system and eager for a decisive pursuit of alternatives to the crises they face while longing for real leadership to their struggle for human dignity.⁴³

³⁹ Interview, Kislon Shongwe, Nhlangano, 23 May 2015.

⁴⁰ Levin, *When the Sleeping Grass Awakens*, p. 196.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

⁴² The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO). *PUDEMO 30th Anniversary Oration: 6th July Message from the People's President Mario Masuku*, 6 July 2013, p. 2.

⁴³ PUDEMO, *PUDEMO 30th Anniversary Oration*, p. 2.

Since PUDEMO's formation Swaziland's history has never been the same. PUDEMO has changed many spheres of Swazi society and has been the main driver for popular resistance. The fall of the *Liqoqo* did not mean the end of the people's oppression and suppression because the objective condition which brought about the founding of the movement remained strong. The regime which succeeded *Liqoqo* inherited of the previous regime's methods and laws. The birth of PUDEMO and the new dynamic force it represents forced the *Tinkhundla* regime to declare it as its enemy number one and focus all its resources and energies and propaganda against the movement. The government of Swaziland knew too well that PUDEMO is a real threat and a force for change in the country. Dedicated channels, huge resources and infiltration fronts, have been devoted by the ruling regime, specifically to its cause of destroying PUDEMO.

All previous laws, including the King's Proclamation of 1973 and the 60-days detention-without-trial, were used to harass, silence and oppress the people. Kison Shongwe argues that it was for that reason that even after the fall of the *Liqoqo*, PUDEMO continued to exist and be relevant to the people.⁴⁴ The movement's main aim is to revive the country's political activities that were abolished by the 1973 Decree. However, it is worth mentioning that PUDEMO's activities were suppressed through the harsh clampdown on its members' activities by the state. The suppression of the organisation during these early stages forced several members to flee the country. The state introduced these repressive tendencies largely because of PUDEMO's opposition to the *Liqoqo* rather than to the general traditional political dispensation.

⁴⁴ Interview, Kison Shongwe, Nhlangano, 23 May 2015.

Photograph 4

President of The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), Mr. Mario Masuku



Source: Mario Masuku's family album.

The launch manifesto openly states PUDEMO's peaceful intentions as it notes its belief in "peaceful negotiations" and its intentions "to represent fully the interest of the people of Swaziland and to unite them against the present fascist regime."⁴⁵ The manifesto is obviously inspired by the ANC's Freedom Charter in both its choice of language and its social democratic, even socialist principles.

During its formation, PUDEMO declared that it would be steered by the principles of the People's Manifesto which is a set of goals it fixed for itself in carrying out its historic assignment of put an end to the foundation of the *Tinkhundla* and building a different and democratic society. About the *Tinkhundla* system of government, Kislon Shongwe says that, as PUDEMO members, they view "Swaziland's no-party system of governance as manifestly undemocratic and in need of transformation into a politically plural dispensation with the requisite policy, legal and institutional frameworks to promote and protect the practice of democracy and participation."⁴⁶

The People's Manifesto, which was again adopted at PUDEMO's 4th General Congress in 1996, emphasises PUDEMO's mission. It says that PUDEMO desires to form a multi-party democracy with an elected and answerable government. It also emphasises the advancement of economic growth, the development and the empowerment of the Swazi citizens through a mixed market economy. Land administration shall be placed in the hands of the state to ensure access to land and security of tenure and to avoid landlessness and squatting.⁴⁷


⁴⁵ Interview, Kislon Shongwe, Nhlangano, 23 May 2015.

⁴⁶ Interview, Kislon Shongwe, Nhlangano, 23 May 2015.

⁴⁷ Interview, Kislon Shongwe, Nhlangano, 23 May 2015.

Brochure 1

PUDEMO brochure about the unbanning of political parties in Swaziland



PUDEMO –

Insika Yenkhululeko Yemaswati

Unban Political Parties Now!

About 39 years ago, on the 12th April (1973), the Swazi monarchy banned political parties and all forms of political activity. He went on to declare that his "armed forces have been posted to all strategic places and have taken charge of all affairs in the country". This means, this year on the 12th April, we shall be commemorating 39 years of royal slavery and oppression in Swaziland. In essence, the whole generation of today, by and large, has never experienced anything than royal slavery in their own country and this cannot be allowed to continue forever.

This is why PUDEMO has declared that this year must mark a decisive difference in the way we commemorate and mark this historic day. We are proud to have been consistent in our work to raise national and international awareness around the meaning and significance of this day for years now.

The significance of 2012 and beyond

The significance of this year's event is punctuated by the fact that it shall be preceding the following events of next year (2013):

- PUDEMO shall be marking 30 years of revolutionary mass struggles and painful sacrifices.
- The 1973 king's proclamation that formally enslaved Swazis shall be turning 40 years.
- SWAYOCO, our Youth league, shall be marking 22 years of militant and popular youth struggles.
- The tinkhundla regime shall be holding their usual royal circus disguised as "elections".

This means, we must gear for an all-out offensive, with every Swazi actively participating in playing a key role to change our country's situation. This day is not a PUDEMO day, neither is it anybody else's day, but its a day of national mourning, where all Swazis display their anger on the streets and wherever they happen to be.

Source: PUDEMO website – www.pudemo.org

PUDEMO argues that the state should stimulate job creation and high levels of employment through partnerships with labour and capital. The People's Manifesto also demands universal obligatory education, respect for the right to life, primary health care that is free or subsidised by the state and tertiary education that is inexpensive, the provision of shelter for all and especially for the disadvantaged. It concludes by requiring the promotion and development of Swazi culture and the observance and protection of basic human rights and the end of state repression.⁴⁸

The objectives of PUDEMO, according to its constitution, are the restoration and preservation of constitutional multi-party democratic governance through concentrated participation and respect of popular will. It is to protect, pledge and ensure the observance of human rights through a Bill of Rights, which shall be enshrined in a people driven national constitution that is in accordance with the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the Africa Charter on Human and People's Rights and other relevant United Nations conventions.⁴⁹

PUDEMO is also committed to advance the social, economic and political interests of the people of Swaziland as enshrined in the People's Manifesto; to uphold the principle of separation of powers thus ensuring the independence of the judiciary and fair legal practice; represent the Swazi nation wherever and whenever required, and to promote friendship, co-operation and fraternal understanding based on the respect of sovereignty and independence and lastly to fight for the eradication of corruption, exploitation, nepotism, and all forms of unfair discrimination.⁵⁰

Since its formation in 1983, PUDEMO has always been guided by its historic document, The People's Manifesto. Through this document PUDEMO is fully committed to the restoration of a culture of respect for human dignity and the creation of a caring and prosperous society in order to rid Swaziland of poverty, crime, exploitation, inequalities,

⁴⁸ Interview, Kislon Shongwe, Nhlangano, 23 May 2015.

⁴⁹ Interview, Kislon Shongwe, Nhlangano, 23 May 2015.

⁵⁰ Interview, Kislon Shongwe, Nhlangano, 23 May 2015.

violence and all such related problems.⁵¹ The People's Manifesto has been described by the movement as its torch-bearer.

Asked how many members the organisation had by 2013, the Secretary General, Mlungisi Makhanya said it was difficult to give the exact figures because PUDEMO was a proscribed entity. It was proscribed by the Prime Minister of Swaziland, Dr Sibusiso Dlamini, based on the controversial Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008. Makhanya said thereafter the movement stopped registering members because it wanted to protect them from possible prosecution. He says:

I can tell you that we have thousands of members now but most of them are not registered. Before 2008, when I came into office, PUDEMO had just over 35 000 registered members. Many were not able to renew their membership because the entity became proscribed.⁵²

Conclusion

This chapter discussed how the confusion after King Sobhuza II's death led to the formation of PUDEMO. It argued that in 1983 PUDEMO was formed as a political party opposed to the status quo in the Kingdom of Swaziland, with the goal of restoring a multi-party democracy. Since its conception, PUDEMO has been operating as an illegal movement. Following King Sobhuza II's death in 1982, the country experienced a period of political instability in the interim government led by Queen Regent Dzeliwe and the *Liqoqo*, the King's former advisory council of traditional leaders. In April 1986, one of King Sobhuza II's sons was crowned King Mswati III.

The present chapter showed that PUDEMO is a revolutionary movement formed during the political upheavals caused by the *Liqoqo*. Swazi students in tertiary institutions, especially the University of Swaziland and William Pitcher Teacher Training College, played a leading role in forming PUDEMO. They got involved when they organised demonstrations against the *Liqoqo*. They demanded the re-instatement of Queen Regent

⁵¹ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO). *PUDEMO's 30th Anniversary Brochure. 6 July 2013*, 2013.

⁵² Interview, Mlungisi Makhanya, Mbabane, 16 November 2014.

Dzeliwe. The protest led to the development of a new political movement, PUDEMO. It pressed for multi-party elections and an end to the absolute monarchy system. This underground political organisation became the unofficial opposition to the *Tinkhundla* system of government, describing it as undemocratic and wanted Swaziland to become a constitutional monarchy. At first, PUDEMO's activities were centred on the grievances of tertiary students who protested against the removal of Queen Regent Dzeliwe. Eventually, they called for political reforms.

This chapter described PUDEMO as a movement born of ordinary people and committed to the creation of a free and democratic society. It was formed to unite, mobilise and fully represent the aspirations of all the people of Swaziland in their quest for a decent life, human dignity and a better future. PUDEMO has become the broadest base of all political parties. The People's Manifesto, which PUDEMO adopted first at its formation in 1983 and again in 1996, demands the creation of a constitutional, multi-party democracy with an elected and accountable government. Since its birth, it has been consistent and principled in fighting for democracy, people's power and justice for the people of the Swaziland.

CHAPTER 5

PUDEMO'S CONTRIBUTION TO DEMOCRATIC CHANGE IN SWAZILAND

Introduction

This chapter discusses PUDEMO's achievements in its efforts to bring about democratic change in the Kingdom of Swaziland. It shows that PUDEMO has grown from humble beginnings to a giant that changed the course of Swazi history through its cadres' sacrifices and undying spirit. This chapter also proves that there was a strong intensification of the democratisation spirit beginning in the 1990s, led by this organisation. PUDEMO and other political groupings criticised the *Tinkhundla* system of government for being undemocratic. This criticism forced the ruling regime to take action. As a result, the early 1990s saw tokenistic reviews of the *Tinkhundla* system by King Mswati III in response to pressure from PUDEMO and others. One such occasion was when King Mswati III ordered the review of the electoral system. Even if the result was a mere cosmetic procedural reform, PUDEMO was making headway.

PUDEMO's vision consisted of rallying for the downfall of the *Tinkhundla* regime. It also called for a democratic dispensation and a new Constitution. This chapter proves that there had been several changes that took place in Swaziland as a result of the pressure applied by PUDEMO on the ruling regime. Thus the constitutional reform process started in the 1990s culminated in the introduction of the current Swaziland Constitution in 2005. PUDEMO has been found in squatter camps defending people from landlessness, in communities organising the poor and unemployed, in workplaces defending the most exploited and abused as well as in many international forums exposing the *Tinkhundla* regime for what it was. It is also shown in this chapter that PUDEMO is a critical and leading detachment in the struggle for democracy in Swaziland. This was the case because of the clearness, courage, bravery and exceptional sacrifices made by its leaders,

cadres and activists over the years of difficult times.

Pressure for political reform of the *Tinkhundla* system

For over 30 years, PUDEMO has been barking up the same tree with mixed changes. They have been brutalised, ostracised and ultimately disowned by their own flesh and blood, with some critics even suggesting they are mistaken in what they are trying to achieve. The response of the *Tinkhundla* regime to PUDEMO's efforts to bring about democratisation has helped to arouse the people's awareness, both in and outside the country. The call for democratisation of Swaziland has been resonated in the Republic of South Africa, the United States of America, Canada, Denmark, the United Kingdom, the European Union, the Commonwealth, etc.

In the late 1980s, PUDEMO employed recruitment strategies and tactics aimed at democratisation. They started working clandestinely and distributed pamphlets that called for a return to multi-party democracy.¹ They worked consistently from the underground to build a mass movement for democracy until the regime rounded up the movement's leadership in the now famous Treason Trial of 1991. The trial followed that PUDEMO criticism of the King and his government in 1988 and 1989. PUDEMO was calling for 'democratic reforms'. Thereafter, the decade of the 1990s, following the collapse of the Soviet bloc and the end of the Cold War, saw the growing need for a new approach to democracy in the Kingdom of Swaziland. PUDEMO was therefore revitalised.

The neighbouring Republic of South Africa's apartheid regime, which had given the Swazi state its full backing, especially in the 1980s, was losing its control. The forces of democracy in South Africa were poised to triumph. L. Dlamini points out that "the 1990s brought a change to the southern African region's political landscape as repressive regimes fell and democratic transformation began to take root in many countries."²

¹ Levin, *When the Sleeping Grass Awakens*, p. 40.

² Dlamini, *Swaziland*, p. 4.

PUDEMO was stimulated by the political changes that had happened in the Republic of South Africa, the Southern Africa region, Africa and the rest of the world.³

PUDEMO's demands at that period in time were very clear: unbanning of political parties, unconditional return of all exiles and ending of political antagonisms, removal of all repressive laws and establishment of a democratically elected Constituent Assembly to draft a legitimate constitution for the country, which involves all the people of the Kingdom of Swaziland in their representative organs. Mario Masuku says that:

After 1990, PUDEMO was able to transform the political debate in Swaziland and put the issue of democracy on the agenda. PUDEMO was able to express clearly the grievances of large sections of the Swazi population coherently and to exploit skillfully the mistakes of the state in its attempt to charge PUDEMO leaders with high treason in 1990, and when this failed, the attempt to gag them using the 60-day detention method. The use of the weapon of the hunger strike was very effective in releasing international pressure, which in the then more liberal political conjuncture in Southern Africa, was successful in restricting the more repressive actions of the Swazi state.⁴

The status of the *Tinkhundla* system of government unlocked the 'Pandora's Box' of democratic struggle to the absolute monarchy with the intensification of labour strife in the public and private sectors coupled with student demonstrations. This culminated in PUDEMO's re-emergence into the public sphere in 1990. J. Baloro says that the manifestation of political discord originated from organisations such as the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) and the Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO). Originally, their political actions were secret in nature – the random circulation of pamphlets with a political flavour in the town areas and the campus of the University of Swaziland. In these documents, they called not for the elimination of the

³ Totalitarian policies were in place in the former Soviet Union before the 1990s. This changes were the democratisation of the political systems in the socialist states in favour of more democratic dispensations. The movements towards the democratisation of the Republic of Zambia and other Southern African States also played a role. Such events affected the Southern African region as more and more governments were changing their political and institutional systems. In the Southern Africa region, for example, Mozambique ended a civil war and introduced democracy in 1992, a military dictatorship changed to a democracy in Lesotho in 1993, in 1994 apartheid ended and democracy was introduced in the Republic of South Africa.

⁴ Interview, Mario Masuku, 14 August 2015.

monarchy but for the unbanning of all political organisations, return to a constitutional realm as under the 1968 Independence Constitution, the rescind of the state of emergency (in force since 1973) and the repeal of the greatly criticised 60-days detention order under which the Prime Minister could authorise the incarceration of any person for 60 days without trial.⁵

All this led to a predictable crackdown by the government and a sensational treason trial in 1991 of twenty pro-democracy activists, who were acquitted.⁶ This trial highlighted the absence of basic rights in the country and gave PUDEMO a shot in the arm. The historic treason trial against PUDEMO leadership dramatically changed the face of Swazi political life and forced the whole Swazi nation and the world to pay more serious attention to the situation in the Kingdom of Swaziland. PUDEMO stepped up its political campaign for transformations and an end to the corrupt system. In February 1992, PUDEMO ‘unbanned’ itself and declared itself a legal opposition party in direct breach of the Prohibition Order.⁷

In this regard, Kislon Shongwe says:

PUDEMO was calling for the replacement of the *Tinkhundla* system with a Western-style multi-party democratic system. Under this system, the King would either function only as a constitutional monarch, which means he would not be involved in politics, or he would form his own political party and contest in a democratic election. This would mean

⁵ Baloro, “The Development of Swaziland’s Constitution”, p. 31.

⁶ These consisted mainly of civil servants, trade unionists, professionals, academics and some University, College and High School students. Subsequently, ten of them were charged with High Treason for their alleged involvement in the organisation. A series of additional charges were also laid against them. These included: the distribution of seditious pamphlets, the convening and attendance of an illegal political meeting, the uttering of political statements in a meeting, and the formation of a political organisation. However, they were all acquitted on all charges except one, which was the attendance of an illegal gathering. Sentences ranging from one to two years were given to them and some received suspended sentences.

⁷ In a statement issued by PUDEMO in the *Times of Swaziland*, 24 February 1992, the organisation stated: “The people of Swaziland are sick and tired of the double standards played by the monarchy... Our government is illegal in that it violates our right to choose the people who are to lead us...we are therefore declaring ourselves as legal because we are fighting for a just cause...we view the banning of parties as illegal...(and) it is our right to organise and we are prepared to face any consequences thereafter.”

the King surrendering the total executive and legislative powers in favour of a legislative council and a more representative parliament. PUDEMO was also calling for the conducting of a national referendum to ascertain whether the Swazi citizens were satisfied with the present system of government or not. One of our demands was that the country was also to draw a new constitution which would cater for the present and future interest of her people.⁸

Due to the pressure applied by PUDEMO, the monarchy was, in August 1991, compelled to appoint a commission to review the country's political system. This was headed by Prince Masitsela. The Commission visited the various chiefdoms to lobby views on what political system was preferred.⁹ Most of the submissions made to the committee proved to be against the *Tinkhundla* system of government and in favour of liberal multi-party democracy.

In spite of the negative submissions made to the Commission, its report published that the majority of the population were in favour of the system. One of the statements issued by its Chairman, Prince Masitsela was as follows:

...the people of Swaziland are not for the opinion of throwing away what is theirs, unique and belong to the Swazi only. They have decided that the *Tinkhundla* System is the most suitable for the country and changing it would result in bloodshed.¹⁰

However, the contradiction was that such a statement was divergent to the submissions made to the Commission which were extensively published in the Swazi mass media. In reaction to the Commission's report, a press statement issued by PUDEMO's President stated that the Commission's "composition was highly questionable and it even lacked the smallest semblance of representation...it showed obvious biases and untruths."¹¹

⁸ Interview, Kislou Shongwe, 23 May 2015.

⁹ *Times of Swaziland*, 12 August 1991.

¹⁰ *Times of Swaziland*, 19 February 1992.

¹¹ *Times of Swaziland*, 22 February 1992.

Though the changes suggested by the *Vusela* (which means “greeting” in siSwati) committees in 1992 brought an obvious improvement to Swaziland’s *Tinkhundla* political arrangement, they still fell short of PUDEMO’s anticipations. This was largely because they rejected multi-partism. One can argue that it was undeniably a gentle balancing act that King Mswati III had to perform as he tried skillfully to change the antique customary political structures he inherited in 1986. The King’s reforms should, on the one hand, be all-inclusive, to satisfy PUDEMO’s demands but, on the other hand, they should be curtailed enough not to upset the extreme-traditional camp of royal hangers-on, linked to the King through blood and marriage.

It was as a result of the pressure applied by PUDEMO that the *Vusela* Committees were appointed. Bonginkhosi Ntshangase concurs that:

At the height of intense political upheavals, the country’s authorities commissioned two *Vuselas* in the early 1990s that solicited people’s views how best to improve the country’s political and economic landscape. It was PUDEMO that put pressure on the powers that got these commissions underway. When the banned political movement seemed to get off the boil, the labour movement, through the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU) took the banner and became the new face of the political struggle, until the late 90s to the new millennium when the labour organisation’s internal problems began to incapacitate it.¹²

Swaziland therefore had a challenge: guaranteeing that the *Tinkhundla* system adapted to modern democratic principles. PUDEMO and SWAYOCO mounted pressure for constitutional reform by demanding genuine democratic change. As a result of that pressure, King Mswati III appointed the *Tinkhundla* Review Commission (TRC) in 1992.¹³ This was owing to the fact that the *Tinkhundla* system of government was harshly criticised and people called for the introduction of multi-party democracy and a constitutional monarch.¹⁴

¹² Interview, Bonginkhosi Ntshangase, Manzini, 20 April 2015.

¹³ Established by Decree No. 1 of 1992.

¹⁴ Baloro, “The Development of Swaziland’s Constitution”, p. 51.

The TRC, however, did not make a progressive recommendation on the return of multi-party democracy in Swaziland, except to say that the idea should be tried in the near future.¹⁵ The TRC was answerable to the King and its reports were to be confidential. The TRC was openly shunned by the vocal and observable PUDEMO and its youth wing, SWAYOCO.

The TRC report gave rise to the Establishment of the Parliament of Swaziland Order of 1992.¹⁶ This law said that:

- The 1973 King's Proclamation to the Nation remained the supreme law of Swaziland;
- Political parties remained banned as per the provisions of Decrees 11, 12 and 13 of the 12 April 1973 Proclamation;
- The *Tinkhundla* system of government "under the Regional Councils Order, 1978 and the declaration of Swaziland as a non-party State under the King's Proclamation of the 12th April, 1973 are hereby re-affirmed."¹⁷

In short, the TRC suggested that the Kingdom of Swaziland was not yet ready for party politics, on the one hand. However, the concept should, according to the same TRC, be tried again in the near future. On the other hand, it has to be noted that the 1992 Order introduced the secret ballot mechanism at both primary and secondary elections. Campaigning was controlled and narrow. The Chief Electoral Officer permitted candidates to campaign under his observation. Candidates were supposed to base their campaigns on developmental necessities, not political goals. This was only a small victory for PUDEMO and other political groupings.¹⁸

¹⁵ Established by Decree No. 1 of 1992.

¹⁵ Baloro, *The Tinkhundla Review Commission Report*, Mbabane, 1992.

¹⁶ Swaziland Government, *King's Order-in-Council No. 1 of 1992*.

¹⁷ Proclamation by His Majesty King Sobhuza II, *King's Proclamation No. 1 of 1981*, paragraph 8.

¹⁸ After the launching of PUDEMO, numerous other organisations also declared themselves legal. These included amongst others, the Swaziland National Liberation Front and the Ngwane National Liberatory Congress.

Photograph 5
The King of Swaziland



Source: Swazi Government's website – www.gov.sz

Subsequently, as a result of the Establishment of the Parliament of Swaziland Order of 1992, King Mswati III endorsed a number of changes to the electoral system. This happened following the increase of political pressure from PUDEMO, and in mid-1993 the King was forced to reform the country's election system. Representatives of the various constituencies were to be directly elected into Parliament.¹⁹ However, half of the members of the lower House of Parliament, and the House of Senate and Cabinet were to be chosen by the King. The House of Assembly was extended to 65 members. Of these, 55 would be directly elected by secret ballot from candidates put forward by the *Tinkhundla* centres, the remaining ten would still be chosen by the King. The Senate membership was also increased from 24 to 30, the King appointing 20 members and the House of Assembly nominating the remainder from their number.²⁰ The King still held all the powers and the form of state and institutional structures remained the same.

In the 1993 national elections, voters were registered, and the elections were judged as free and fair. One could argue that, since then, the Swazi political system was not entirely undemocratic. One of PUDEMO's notable achievements were the periodic parliamentary elections that came out as a result of the pressure PUDEMO applied for constitutional reforms to take place. These periodic parliamentary elections provided an opportunity for the international community to engage with the Swazi government.²¹ However, it can be argued that one cannot simply accept that because elections occur in accordance with the Swazi system they are free and credible, without discussing the issue of organised partisan representation and freedom of association. This was an area that PUDEMO still had to tackle going forward.

Another of the notable achievements of PUDEMO, together with other political groupings, was the removal of the 60-Day Detention Without Trial Order. In 1992 the

¹⁹ *Times of Swaziland*, 12 July 1993.

²⁰ *Times of Swaziland*, 12 July 1993.

²¹ The Establishment of the Parliament of Swaziland Order of 1992 introduced the secret ballot mechanism at both primary and secondary elections. Campaigning is controlled and limited. The Chief Electoral Officer allowed candidates to campaign under his supervision. Candidates were supposed to base their campaign promises on developmental needs, not political ambitions.

King also abolished the infamous 60-day detention-without-trial legislation. This was a very interesting and important development and a victory for PUDEMO. However, the state of emergency persisted. PUDEMO declared its opposition to the electoral reforms and not seen as concerted efforts by the government to reform politically. Rather, PUDEMO insisted on the establishment of a national convention to discuss the country's constitutional future.

The change in the political climate of Swaziland

A lot of work has been done by PUDEMO, the civil society and the trade union movement in trying to bring about democratic change in Swaziland. This era is marked by a drastic change in the country's political climate. It was for the first time, since the banning of all political parties, that the country's newspapers and the public in general openly criticised the government.

The country was also subjected to intense pressure from different political groupings working with PUDEMO which were demanding for the opening up of discussion forums of the country's future political system. They also advocated for freedom of expression, which was to include press freedom, a move viewed by the press as providing it with some support. Even journalists therefore felt that the backing from the political formations would provide a palliative to the government initiated press controls.

Since PUDEMO's beginnings in 1983, various groupings had emerged and become stronger in putting forward their demands in line with the broad democracy agenda in the Kingdom of Swaziland. Key amongst them was the trade union movement, particularly the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU), the youth movement, which refers to SWAYOCO, and other progressive formations and organs of people's power. PUDEMO contributed directly and consciously to the formation of some of these movements. Kison Shongwe says that:

Political space was gradually won by PUDEMO to organise and critic the government in the independent press and, gradually, a number of civil society organisations were formed which had collectively come to

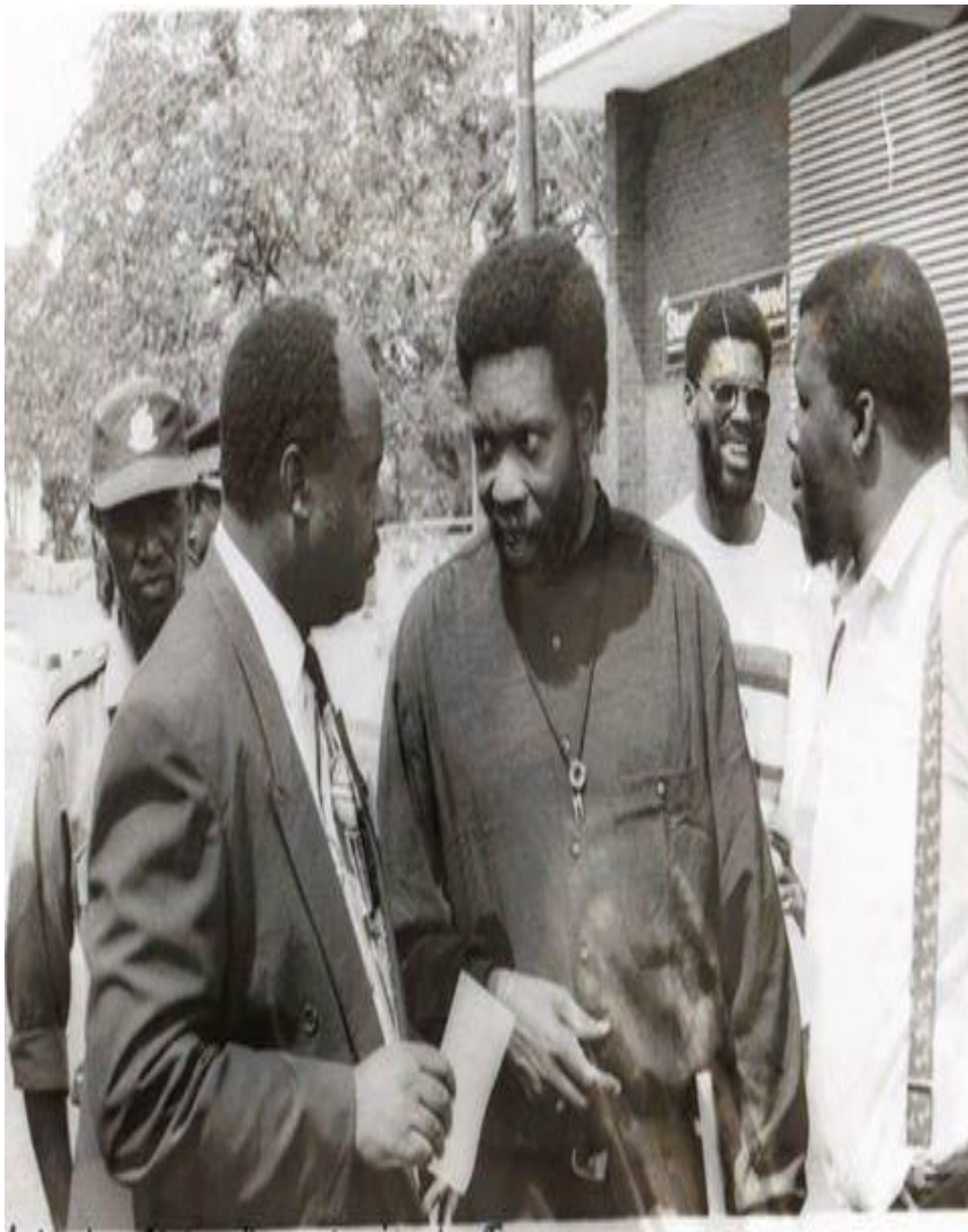
form an unofficial opposition. These had included the SWAYOCO and HUMARAS.²²

PUDEMO had begun as early as the late 1980s to establish identifiable underground structures. By the early to mid-1990s PUDEMO and SWAYOCO continued to make alliances with other “illegal” organisations such as the Human Rights Association of Swaziland (HUMARAS) to advance its objectives. Two further opposition groups – the Swaziland United Front (SUF) and the Swaziland National Front (SWANAFRO) – subsequently emerged. PUDEMO devised a strategy to infiltrate the trade union movement. Soon, the trade union movement became a vehicle for political opposition in addition to fighting for labour rights. The calls for general strikes in the 1990s included political demands, indicating trade union’s politicisation. PUDEMO and the Swazi trade union movement played a prominent role in the nation’s social and political spheres. This was due in part to political parties being banned. PUDEMO and the trade unions believed that multi-party democracy could co-exist alongside a monarchy that did not act above the law.

Therefore, PUDEMO infiltrated SFTU’s ranks.²³ This was demonstrated by the fact that SFTU soon adopted a political agenda. It obviously became a foremost voice for the unrepresented when it tabled ‘Twenty Seven Demands’ to the government. One of the ‘Twenty Seven Demands’ called for a new constitution. There was no evidence to suggest that SFTU was carrying out PUDEMO’s program, although individual members of PUDEMO made up a sizeable percentage of the SFTU’s ranks. Moreover, SFTU’s strategy of merging labour issues and political matters had popularised it both inside and outside Swaziland.

²² Interview, Kison Shongwe, 23 May 2015.

²³ The Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU) was the best organised and most progressive of the civil society groups. SFTU was a powerful advocate and activist for democracy and workers’ rights. It was the country’s largest labour union federation which played a meaningful role for the development of democracy (democratisation) in the country.

Photograph 6**PUDEMO President and allies during the 1996 Mass Stay Away**

Source: Times of Swaziland, 28 January 1996.

The 1996 strike, popularly known as '*Khukhulela Ngoco*' (Mass Stay Away) came about as a result of political pressure that had been building up in the country since 1993. This was as call for action to force the government to unban political parties and hold multi-party elections. SFTU was in an alliance of pro-democracy groups called Confederation for Full Democracy in Swaziland – made up of PUDEMO, which called for mass action in favour of democracy, PUDEMO's youth wing, SWAYOCO and HUMARAS. PUDEMO, which claimed to have many potential members working in the party's underground structures, had since 1994 maintained that it would make the country ungovernable until reforms were instituted. One could argue however that it lacked the necessary means to realise this goal, because Kingdom of Swaziland's political opposition was weak and divided. But, since its alliance with SFTU, it had become more militant. SFTU, on its part, was determined to pull its weight behind PUDEMO which was calling for the overthrow of King Mswati III's non-party *Tinkhundla* system of government.

SFTU called a two-day general strike on 13-14 March 1995 to press the government to act on the list of 27 demands which had been put forward in January 1994. Although these demands focused on labour issues, including the reinstatement of dismissed workers, it could be argued that the strike was part of PUDEMO's wider political struggle.

The Mass Stay Away of January 1996 which was led by SFTU brought the country to a standstill. It led to the detention of numerous civil society groups' leaders. The strike was condemned by royalists as an attempt by political radicals to stop King Mswati III from implementing the final stage of his own political reorganisation, aimed at democratising the non-party *Tinkhundla* system of government. The system's democratisation had begun in 1992. The final stage involved the drafting of a democratic constitution which would enshrine a hereditary monarchy, incorporate fundamental individual rights and which could ultimately perpetuate the banning of political activity. It seemed then that events had overtaken this issue as the King talked about reinstating the 1968 Independence Constitution.

Another role-player contributing to PUDEMO's attempts to bring about democratic reforms in the country was the Swaziland Federation of Labour (SFL). SFL was founded in 1994 when a section moved away from SFTU. SFL was organised mainly in the finance, retail and manufacturing sector. SFL focused on worker representation and provided a consistent national platform for its affiliates. Whilst viewed as more conservative than SFTU, SFL also supported the pro-democracy movement. SFL had entered into partnership with SFTU and other stand-alone unions for the Swaziland Labour Academy and the Swaziland United Democratic Front. SFTU and SFL demands were similar in terms of labour rights and multi-party democracy.

The work of PUDEMO, together with the civil society organisations mentioned above, led to the establishment of the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC) in 1996. What had happened was that PUDEMO's Department of Political and Ideological Affairs produced a document entitled *Political and Strategic Perspectives* in which PUDEMO mapped out how it would dismantle the *Tinkhundla* regime. In Section 4.1, the document recorded the removal of the 1973 Royal Decree and the unbanning of political activity. This could have led to the creation of political conditions enabling the pursuit of transfer of political power objectives to the people through negotiations.²⁴

In Sections 4.2.2 and 4.2.3 PUDEMO's document advances the idea of a National Constitutional Assembly which constituted one of the most pivotal developments in the process of revolutionary transformation of Swazi society. PUDEMO had to strive to ensure that the constitution reflected the movement's fundamental perspectives with regard to the nature of the state it sought and the institutions it required to address the objective of democracy, popular participation, national unity, accountability and transparency.²⁵

²⁴ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *Political and Strategic Perspectives*, s. 4. 1, 1992.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, s. 4.2.2 and 4.2.3.

It is very important to point out that the people, under PUDEMO's leadership were the ones who demanded a written constitution for the Kingdom of Swaziland, not the Monarchy or the *Tinkhundla* government. The goals of the People's Manifesto, as amended per resolution of the 4th General Congress of 1996, were:

1. To create a constitutional multi-party democracy. Swaziland shall be governed by a written constitution whose system of governance shall be based on the universal principles of multi-party democracy. The country's constitution shall be the supreme law of the land.²⁶

PUDEMO said again in 2005 that:

... PUDEMO has been the leading voice calling for an all-inclusive political process that would ensure the free participation of all sectors of our society in the constitution making process. Such representatives would have had a clear mandate of the people through their respective constituencies.

As mentioned above, the Royal Family consistently opposed the idea of a constitution as they said a constitution is a foreign idea. However, pressure from the people under the leadership of PUDEMO forced it to relent and hence the so called constitutional reforms were started.²⁷

PUDEMO stalwart, Zodwa Mkhonta, says the 2005 Swaziland Constitution came about after a call from PUDEMO.²⁸ L. Dlamini also concurs that "ceding to national and international pressure, Swaziland began a constitution-making process in 1996."²⁹ So, at the height of political unrest and instability after the crippling SFTU-led mass stay away in 1996, King Mswati III appointed the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC).³⁰ Its terms of reference were initially to draft a constitution for the Kingdom of Swaziland within two years. The period was extended for another two years in mid-1998. The

²⁶ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *The People's Manifesto, As Amended per Resolution of the 4th General Congress in 1996*, 1996.

²⁷ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *The 22nd Commemoration of the People's Movement's Unbroken Struggle for the Freedom of the People of Swaziland on 9 July 2005 in Manzini*, 2005.

²⁸ Interview, Zodwa Mkhonta, 22 November 2014.

²⁹ Dlamini, *Swaziland*, p. 4.

³⁰ Established by Decree No. 2 of 1996.

mandate was subsequently changed by Amendment Decree No. 1 of 2000 so that the CRC had to produce a report.

Group submissions were not permitted, and commissioners served only in their individual capacities. But the fact that the commissioners were handpicked by the King – notwithstanding from across-section of the Swazi society comprising progressives and conservatives – made the exercise look more like a royal project than a national assignment. For this reason, the few progressively minded commissioners pulled out, citing personal reasons. Others indicated boldly that they wanted to represent their constituencies' interests in the commission, but since that could not be assured, for them, there was no point in serving in it. One of the CRC members was Mandla Hlatshwayo. He was a founding member and leader of PUDEMO. He declined the appointment and therefore refused to partake in the Commission mentioning personal problems. He was prevented from participating by his political organisation, PUDEMO. It argued that, as an organisation, they had not authorised him to participate. PUDEMO criticised the work of the commission because group submissions were not allowed. The CRC was therefore boycotted by PUDEMO and its youth wing, SWAYOCO.

The CRC presented its report to the King in August 2001. It recommended that the King continued to appoint and dismiss Prime Ministers, and that fundamental rights and freedoms must not be incompatible with Swazi custom and traditions, the right to freedom to assemble, to form and join political parties continued to be constrained as political parties were to remain banned.³¹ In a nutshell, the CRC reported that the Swazi nation “recommended that political parties must remain banned in Swaziland.”³²

To take the drafting of the 2005 Swaziland Constitution forward, the Constitutional Drafting Committee (CDC) was appointed in 2002. The King handpicked the members of the Constitutional Drafting Committee (CDC). Its purpose was to draft a constitution for

³¹ CRC Final Report, 1992.

³² CRC Final Report, 1992.

the Kingdom of Swaziland, in consultation with the Attorney General and other experts.³³ The CDC was answerable to the King. As a result, PUDEMO criticised it for being undemocratically constituted. Again, PUDEMO's President Mario Masuku was appointed to the CDC by the King. The PUDEMO leader declined the appointment because he would not be permitted to represent the official views of his party. PUDEMO called for a more open and democratically elected, all-inclusive and with a broad-based structure.

The CDC produced its first draft constitution and presented it to the King on 31 May 2003. In his written presentation, the Chairperson, Prince David, informed the King and the whole world that they, as the CDC, had thought long and hard about a system that the Kingdom of Swaziland should follow, and they determined that the country should remain a no-party state. One could argue that it was apparent that it was not Swaziland's people who did not want democracy but those who were tasked to write the constitution for and on behalf of the people. It was therefore clear the constitution making process in Swaziland was not intended to produce a constitution that would give birth to a sincere democratic arrangement.

In its report on 4 October 2004, the CDC noted that more than 80% of the Swazis who had made submissions on the draft constitution were opposed to political parties. This opposition to political parties was seen in Section 80 of the 2004 Constitution of Swaziland Bill which contains the words:

The system of government for Swaziland is a democratic, participatory, *Tinkhundla*-based system which emphasises [both] devolution of state power from central government to *Tinkhundla* areas and individual merit as a basis for election or appointment to public office.³⁴

According to Mzizi, "this section consolidated the wishes of the ruling aristocracy and completes the ideological onslaught on political party activity in Swaziland."³⁵ PUDEMO

³³ King's Decree No. 1, 2002, S. 3.

³⁴ Swaziland Government, *2004 Constitution of Swaziland Bill*, S. 80

³⁵ Mzizi, "Political Movements", p. 34.

was displeased with this because “political parties remain banned to participate in the politics of the country. According to the draft constitution, political parties will not contest for elections, and hence cannot be part of the legislature, or executive, but status quo will prevail.”³⁶ In 2005, the country adopted a national constitution.

The 2005 Swaziland Constitution came about as a result of the pressure applied by PUDEMO on the ruling regime. PUDEMO NEC member, Vincent Dlamini says that PUDEMO worked very hard to criticise the *Tinkhundla* system of government and manage to get the establishment to yield to its constitutional demands. He says, however, the government of the day stole PUDEMO’s thunder and began to act as if the constitution was its own initiative.³⁷ It can be argued, however, that the drafting of the Constitution was neither meant to address any actual concerns, nor advance the quality of life for the collective good. The exercise has always been for purposes of window-dressing so that the international community, which had taken a real interest in both the political and labour movement, would think the powers that be were on top of the situation. That is precisely the reason why there was no real urgency in finishing the exercise, which finally took close to 10 years to complete.

While PUDEMO members are not happy with the Constitution in its present form, especially as it is silent whether or not political parties have been unbanned, they are satisfied with the role they played in forcing the establishment to embark on the exercise. Also, PUDEMO does not seem about to compromise its position apropos the acceptance of the Constitution, and demands that the process start afresh.³⁸

One other notable achievement of PUDEMO was the introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE). In the People’s Manifesto, PUDEMO says:

³⁶ The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *The 22nd Commemoration of the People’s Movement’s Unbroken Struggle for the Freedom of the People of Swaziland on 9 July 2005 in Manzini*, 2005.

³⁷ Interview, Vincent Dlamini, Mbabane, 30 April 2015.

³⁸ Interview, Vincent Dlamini, Mbabane, 30 April 2015.

6. To protect the right to education and promote the sustenance of high levels of relevant education. As a basic human right education shall be compulsory and universal. For all children in public schools primary education shall be free and / or subsidised. Education shall mean, amongst other things, teaching the young to love and respect their people, their culture, environment, liberty and international peace. Adult education shall promote through a countrywide scheme.³⁹

PUDEMO therefore increased, together with its education sector associates, the Free Education Campaign. PUDEMO did so because, according to the movement, the *Tinkhundla* government should take accountability for the totality of orphaned and destitute children, as well as the fact of retrenchments and unemployment of their parents, which was leaving most children out of the education system, thus put an end to their future.

Since independence in 1968, the country had struggled with the same challenges in delivering effective education services, including, but not limited to access to education, increasing failure and dropout rates, the lack of qualified teachers, the lack of curriculum modernisation; and slow-moving responses to education and training changes in regional and international fields. These responsibilities have thus discouraged the education sector's progress and innovativeness.

The 2005 Swaziland Constitution was adopted in 2006. It committed the government to providing Free Primary Education (FPE) three years after its acceptance. Therefore, Free Primary Education implementation was supposed to begin in 2009. Civil society organisations, led by PUDEMO, had to pressurise the government for transformation, and, eventually, a long-drawn-out court case between the Swaziland National Ex-Miners' Association (SNEMA) and the government led to a court order that obligated government to roll out FPE in 2010.

³⁹ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *The People's Manifesto*, 6 July 1983, 1983.

It was PUDEMO that advocated for free primary education for children in the Kingdom of Swaziland. With PUDEMO's alliance with SNEMA under the umbrella of FSEJ, Free Primary Education (FPE), as provided for in the Swazi Constitution of 2005, was attained through advocacy and legal action. Although this did not result in implementation of the constitutional provision in full, programs were put in place, effecting Education for All (EFA) incrementally, adding a grade each year after it. FPE has been implemented in a phased way, starting in Grades 1 and 2 in 2010 and then moving to Grade 3 in 2011, Grade 4 in 2012 and Grade 5 in 2013. Since then FPE and EFA have improved participation and provided children from the poor sections of society with prospects to access education.

PUDEMO has also been successful in preserving its role of unofficial opposition to the Kingdom of Swaziland's ruling regime. PUDEMO put a lot of work and vigour into developing alternative policies to the *Tinkhundla* system of government. Examples of alternative policies were seen especially in the area of education, land ownership and labour as shown in the People's Manifesto. TUCOSWA was a good example of an alternative labour policy. PUDEMO is unable to express itself on an official basis because it is a banned organisation. Still, it is actively involved in developing foundations for a new democratic Swaziland. PUDEMO has produced documents put forward as its guiding principles and visions. According to PUDEMO, these can be listed as the following:

- The People's Manifesto
- The Way Forward Towards a Constituent Assembly through a Negotiated Settlement
- Political and Strategic Perspectives, finally upgraded to become the Strategy and Tactics of PUDEMO
- Various policies, including Economic Policy Guidelines
- Roadmap to a New Democratic Swaziland
- Targeted Sanctions Against the *Tinkhundla* regime in Swaziland
- The Last Mile to Freedom, *Ulibambe Lingashoni* Programme
- PUDEMO Discussion Document on Social Transformation and Development
- Building a People's Movement Rooted in the Concrete Conditions of Swazi Society

- Our struggle against *Tinkhundla* oppression is at the same time a struggle for food, jobs and dignity for all
- Various Congress Declarations, Resolutions and Political Reports, as well as Organisational Reports on the balance of forces and the state of the organisation itself, from time to time.
- Various documents developed and adopted by our youth league, SWAYOCO over the years, such as the Youth Charter, *Umkhombandlela* (Strategic Route), Youth Development Strategy, Strategic Perspective on Negotiations, SWAYOCO 5-Year Strategic Plan, Towards the Year of the People's Manifesto and Affirming the Decade of Liberation Declaration, Cadre Development Strategy, SWAYOCO Guide to Internal Democracy, Strategic Rubicon and many others.⁴⁰

Even though these documents have not changed Swaziland's political scenery, they go a long way to show that, as a movement, PUDEMO is well prepared and ready for a new democratic Swaziland.

In this regard, one can argue that it was obvious that PUDEMO positioned itself as a defender and forerunner, not only in the practical struggles on the ground, but even in the field of thoughts and the development of alternate policies in the Kingdom of Swaziland. Mphandlana Shongwe says that, "PUDEMO has remained an alternative voice of the voiceless. It has achieved to keep the Swazi government on its toes by being the unofficial opposition."⁴¹ So, PUDEMO has always been able to call for transparency and accountability on the part of the government of Swaziland.

PUDEMO, together with other political formations, has also been able to create political awareness of the people of Swaziland. PUDEMO's greatest achievement has been the empowerment of the Swazi population to be less fearful of state power and to openly demand political change. Mass political awareness was PUDEMO's primary work. This is due to the fact that many Swazis are now politically aware since they are now able to discuss issues of a political nature, something which they could not do previously. This means therefore that PUDEMO was intensifying its work in this area because the primary

⁴⁰ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO). *PUDEMO's 30th Anniversary Brochure*. 6 July 2013, 2013.

⁴¹ Interview, Mphandlana Shongwe, 8 December 2014.

site of the struggle against the 'enemy' (*Tinkhundla* regime) was in the realm of ideas. PUDEMO ensured that Swazi people were free to discuss deep political issues which previously had been a 'no-go area' for the ordinary Swazi citizen. Such had been realized as a result of PUDEMO's efforts through communication with the Kingdom of Swaziland's people.

PUDEMO was the main advocate of a largely socialist and pro-poor political programme, and of the inclusion of the population at large in the political process. Through political awareness, the people were then able to demand that the government of the Kingdom of Swaziland become more transparent and answerable to the people. PUDEMO proved that all this was not possible short of necessary and systematic changes in the country's political system. PUDEMO argued that the *Tinkhundla* system of government should be removed and, in its place, a truly democratic system should be formed. PUDEMO strongly believes that this was the only permanent answer to the country's crisis.

PUDEMO also believes that no amount of frantic quick-fix answers would bring about the sought after stability and progress, and no amount of military might and adept strategy a real political solution, because the problem was political. It was only through genuine political dialogue rooted in popular participation could a lasting solution be found. This was only possible when the people had been conscientised about their political rights and liberties, and PUDEMO had taken great strides in improving in this area.

PUDEMO's Zodwa Mkhonta observes that the Swazi society has never been the same since the entry of PUDEMO into the political scene. She notes how Swazis have evolved from ignorance towards political consciousness as they are now discussing politics, which is one of the ways change can be measure. She adds that all that was lacking was for the Swazi people to stand up and intensify the call for the restoration of the country's multi-party democracy.⁴²

⁴² Interview, Zodwa Mkhonta, 22 November 2014.

It is PUDEMO's aim to roll back ideological poverty and political bankruptcy as one of the most common features of *Tinkhundla* rule. PUDEMO has been seen expanding the frontiers of advanced knowledge, revolutionary thinking and political depth which has been the cornerstone of the movement for the past 30 years (1983-2013). PUDEMO understands that the Kingdom of Swaziland's people can never be liberated until their consciousness had been transformed through effective propaganda and agitational methods, to fight against the ideas of *Tinkhundla* underdevelopment and royal supremacy. Therefore, central to PUDEMO's tasks is the strengthening of its communication system with the masses, as well as with its own members.

PUDEMO has also allied itself with the Trade Union Congress of Swaziland (TUCOSWA) in its attempt to bring about democratic change in Swaziland. Such is an achievement on the part of PUDEMO because creating an alliance with a movement with such organisational strength is useful in its struggle for democratic reforms. TUCOSWA is a Swazi trade union federation formed in 2012 and initially recognised and registered by the Swazi government. TUCOSWA brings together the two labour federations, SFTU and SFL, and SNAT, the Kingdom of Swaziland's largest union, focusing in particular on teachers, with over 9,000 members. The association of SNAT with TUCOSWA was significant due to SNAT's organisational strengths and history of success in getting its members to strike and publicly demonstrate.

At TUCOSWA's founding congress, a resolution was taken that 'the current system of Government in Swaziland is one that is undemocratic, repressive and dictatorial and that the Federation shall cause for a total boycott of the national elections in 2013 unless the elections are held under a multiparty system.'⁴³ This was an openly political pronouncement. This goes to show that this trade union federation is concerned with political struggle.

PUDEMO's struggle for the country's democratisation has, for a very long time, been seen as merging with the workers' struggle against exploitation. This started in the early

⁴³ *Times of Swaziland*, 12 March 2012.

1990s when PUDEMO worked hand in hand with the SFTU. TUCOSWA's members are a group of people who are continuously growing in strength and consciousness. TUCOSWA and PUDEMO's existence has therefore led to the merging of working class aspirations and democratic reform calls. As such, PUDEMO can be seen as providing an organisational structure for workers. The Swazi government has been reported by the alliance between PUDEMO and the Swazi labour unions to international organisations such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO). ILO has, from time to time, taken disciplinary measures against the Swazi government for whatever violations it might have engaged in. The Swazi government has been reported for the introduction of repressive legislation such as the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 and human rights abuses.

However, many in civil society, including the then SNAT President, Sibongile Mazibuko,⁴⁴ objected to what they viewed as undue influence from a political party, PUDEMO, in TUCOSWA leadership. They also objected to the TUCOSWA President's decision to associate TUCOSWA with the Swaziland United Democratic Front (SUDF), which they perceive as a PUDEMO affiliate. The then SNAT President, who said she adhered to the principle that labour unions should be independent of political parties, withdrew SNAT and its financial support from TUCOSWA.

In its further efforts to bring about democratic change to the Kingdom of Swaziland, PUDEMO has attracted international solidarity and made calls for international sanctions against the *Tinkhundla* regime. PUDEMO has tirelessly tried to draw the government into peace talks in an attempt to find amicable solutions to the crisis in the Kingdom of Swaziland. However, PUDEMO's peaceful effort has been undermined by the hostile reception of the Swazi government which regards violence as the only approach to dealing with PUDEMO's concerns. Until the year 2013, the government of Swaziland was stubbornly refusing to engage PUDEMO in any meaningful political talks.

⁴⁴ Sibongile Mazibuko, a retired teacher, is a self-confessed card carrying member of the NNLC.

Photograph 7

Former Minister of the Republic of South Africa and first COSATU Secretary General Jay Naidoo pictured here with TUCOSWA leaders Vincent Ncongwane and Vincent Dlamini during a workers' protest march.



Source: PUDEMO website – www.pudemo.org

It is PUDEMO's belief that political dialogue is perhaps, the most viable and important method of resolving the crisis peacefully and restoring democratic rule in the country. As demonstrated in various international experiences, a combined internal and external effort has great potential to yield substantial results in Swaziland. Central as they might be in the struggle for democracy, internal efforts acquired much strength from global unity.

History shows that no government, no matter how powerful and repressive, can survive combined international and internal ambitions for change. In essence, international solidarity is the hinge of local strength.

PUDEMO is able to mobilise international solidarity and engage international media to pay special consideration to the burning problems of Swaziland. The international solidarity initiative comes in to provide the impetus for a campaign intensification to cut links with the country's ruthless government. It is done to let all people in the different parts of the world pledge that they will stand no further postponement in the application of effective pressure against Swaziland in support of the suffering and struggling people of the country. Zodwa Mkhonta says that:

PUDEMO has attracted the attention of the international community and people throughout the world are aware and pressurising Swaziland to change. We have ambassadors coming into the country to talk to the King and government; we have seen others, such as the EU Ambassador, attending court cases of leaders of PUDEMO.⁴⁵

PUDEMO strongly believes that international sanctions are justifiable and necessary to:

- exert political pressure on the government to embrace democracy;
- protect life and human dignity;
- restore the conditions necessary for decent human existence; and
- secure basic human rights.⁴⁶

Inspired by their commitment to democracy and the international spirit of solidarity with oppressed people, PUDEMO called upon the people of the world to impose sanctions against the suppressive government of Swaziland. PUDEMO requests all people of conscience, countries with diplomatic relationship with the Kingdom of Swaziland and international corporations doing business in the country to use their political and economic influence to force the government to allow a return to democratic governance.

⁴⁵ Interview, Zodwa Mkhonta, 22 November 2014.

⁴⁶ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *Targeted Sanctions Against the Ruling Regime in Swaziland: As Adopted in 6th General Congress held at Matsulu Conference Centre, Mpumalanga Province, Republic of South Africa on the 20-24th December 2006*, 2006.

PUDEMO specifically calls for immediate action directed at the government and the royal family interests.⁴⁷

PUDEMO also believes fully in working together with allied progressive forces, particularly the progressive trade union movement and civil society. It is “proud to have been a forerunner of the growing and inspirational momentum inside Swaziland and the world over against the crime of *Tinkhundla* royal hegemony and oppression.”⁴⁸

PUDEMO believes that, as a result, there is no place in the world today which does not know about the suffering of the Swazi people which one can argue, could be seen as one of its greatest achievements. It believes that that this is so because of the enormous network built by PUDEMO and its partners over the years all over the world for the purposes of exposing the ills of the *Tinkhundla* system of government. Mphandlana Shongwe is also of the view that PUDEMO has done a lot of work in the area of international solidarity. In that way, PUDEMO has been able to market its struggle to the European Union, Denmark, Canada, the African Union, SADC, the UN and other states and entities.⁴⁹

PUDEMO has been successful in getting support from fellow liberal movements in the country, region and beyond. It is therefore in partnership with several groups. First, there was the Swaziland Democratic Alliance (SDA). It was formed in 1996 and made up of PUDEMO, SWAYOCO, civil society, church groups and other underground political movements. To be precise, these are:

The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), The Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), The Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU), The Swaziland Association of Students (SAS), The Swaziland National Ex-Miners Co-operative Union, Forward to the Future Forum (FFF), Institute of Democracy and

⁴⁷ PUDEMO, *Targeted Sanctions Against the Ruling Regime in Swaziland*, 2006.

⁴⁸ The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO). *PUDEMO’s 30th Anniversary Brochure*. 6 July 2013, 2013.

⁴⁹ Interview, Mphandlana Shongwe, 8 December 2014.

Photograph 8

A demonstration by activists in London calling for Democracy for Swaziland Now



Source: PUDEMO website - www.pudemo.org

Leadership (IDEAL), Human Rights Association of Swaziland (HUMARAS), Church Organisations, Indigenous Business, *Atibuye Emasweni* National Forum, *Butimba BemaSwati* and concerned citizens.⁵⁰

In a milestone pronouncement, this grouping, “motivated by the failure of the *Tinkhundla* system to be responsible to the needs of the people”⁵¹ It called upon the Swaziland’s Head of State, King Mswati III, to speed up the democratisation process. They articulated their desire to be involved in the constitution-making process on condition that the political arena was smooth, all political parties were unbanned and the 1973 state of emergency laws were rescinded.⁵²

PUDEMO is also in coalition with is the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA). OSISA is a Johannesburg-based foundation established in 1997 which works for democracy in the Kingdom of Swaziland and in several parts of the African continent. OSISA is a developing African establishment dedicated to developing democracy, defending human rights and improving good governance in the Southern Africa region. OSISA’s dream is to encourage open society principles, standards, institutions and practices with the goal of assisting to create energetic and tolerant democracies in Southern Africa.⁵³ OSISA supports promotion on Swaziland’s issues and assisted other organisations’ project initiatives through grants.

Also, ever since 1997 PUDEMO has been in unity with the Swaziland Solidarity Network (SSN). SSN was formed in 1997 by South Africans and Swazis. It organised several undertakings including pickets, marches and distribution of petitions to Swazi missions and international organisations.

⁵⁰ The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *The Kwaluseni Declaration*, Saturday, 2 March 1996, 1996.

⁵¹ PUDEMO, *Targeted sanctions against the ruling regime in Swaziland*.

⁵² PUDEMO, *Targeted sanctions against the ruling regime in Swaziland*.

⁵³ *The Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa* <http://www.osisa.org/formal/about-open-society-initiative-southern-africa-osisa> (accessed on 7 October 2015).

September 2003 saw the establishment of the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA). NCA's objectives are to advance a technique in which organised establishments could inform on the Constitution's content and to mobilise Swaziland's people to contribute to an alternative constitution. NCA is a alliance body of inclusive civil society organisations, including the Catholic Church Coalition group, the Community for Justice and Peace, SFTU, SFL, SNAT, NNLC, PUDEMO, a variety of NGOs small groups and associations.

When the draft constitution was released by Prince David Dlamini in 2003 NCA reacted accordingly and worked upon methods in which to sway this constitution. Although there was not anything in the constitution that prohibited organised groups from contributing to its construction, proposals and recommendations were regularly disregarded. NCA's ultimate demand was for a democratic constitution motivated by the people. Their grievances encompassed the fact that the draft was only produced in English and not in siSwati, immediately set against a large majority, predominantly the countryside populace. Furthermore it did not separate the powers of governance from the King and did not allow the people to choose a Prime Minister; it did not permit a multi-party arrangement of government and it did not guarantee respect for human rights.

PUDEMO is also a member of the Swaziland United Democratic Front (SUDF). SUDF was formed as a collective advocacy movement. It is a partnership of pro-democracy groups comprising political parties, unions and churches led by Wandile Dlodlu. According to Dlodlu:

The SUDF was formed on 2 February 2008 at the Tum's George Hotel in Manzini, Swaziland, attended by 120 persons from various organisations but mainly from the following: PUDEMO, NNLC, SFTU, SFL, SNAT, SNUS (Tertiary Institutions), SAS (Primary and High Schools), Swaziland National Ex-Miners Workers Association (SNEMA), and Coalition of Informal Economy Association of Swaziland. The numbers made up by the individual members of all these organisations was about 100 000.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Interview, Wandile Dlodlu, 2 April 2015.

SUDF's establishment (mission) is the result of an increasing belief that, in order to form a strong civil society that could work actively for democratisation and poverty extermination, there would have to be additional harmony and coordination among Swaziland's civil society organisations. According to Dlodlu:

The formation of the SUDF was a concerted attempt of these organisations to increase the space for democratic participation for and by the socio-economically and politically marginalised people of the Kingdom of Swaziland. The existing space for protest action was currently limited to the unions, who have secured themselves this space through the Industrial Act. Since the unions were member organisations of the SUDF, the SUDF was therefore in a strong position to expand the space for this type of action.⁵⁵

In 2009, 5000 SUDF members decided on the Manzini Declaration. The Manzini Declaration constituted a mission statement, which confirmed SUDF's commitment to human rights and set out its views on a sum of essential matters in relation to the basic rights of people in the Kingdom of Swaziland and the country's social and political growth. It was pushing for a democratic election system and the elimination of the *Tinkhundla* system of governance. SUDF founding wanted to make stronger civil society unison and management among civil society gatherings. It is the largest authority organisation for organisations pushing for democracy which comprises amongst others SFL, SFTU and the Coalition of Informal Economy Associations in Swaziland (CIEAS).

Its intention is to bring together diverse fragments of civil society comprising both major fundamental movements but also more traditional fragments inside political parties, unions, and churches. Their objective is to have a joint front in the fight for multi-party democracy in the Kingdom of Swaziland.⁵⁶ Progressively SUDF was seen by those who do not back PUDEMO as a PUDEMO partner, and this observation generated tensions in civil society some of which have advanced into unruly fissures.

⁵⁵ Interview, Wandile Dlodlu, 2 April 2015.

⁵⁶ *Swaziland United Democratic Front* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swaziland_United_Democratic_Front (accessed on 7 October 2015).

PUDEMO also established an auxiliary called the Foundation for Socio-Economic Justice (FSEJ). FSEJ was created in 2003 as an umbrella organisation with a main idea of commencing extensive civic education programmes to inspire democratic participation and increase consciousness on human and constitutional rights among Swaziland's rural inhabitants. FSEJ's key objective is to help shape a firm and integrated mass-based democratic force. FSEJ's Chairperson, Zodwa Mkhonta, notes that, "through the FSEJ, PUDEMO is involved in community self-help projects."⁵⁷

FSEJ is an affiliate of the Swaziland Council of NGOs and is active in a sum of civil society set-ups and organisations that concentrates on social, political and economic matters. FSEJ also works together with five strategic partners (community organisations): Lawyers for Human Rights, Swaziland National Union of Students, Swaziland Economic Justice Forum, Street Vendors Association, Swaziland Labour Academy, and Swaziland National Ex-Mine Workers. Its duty is to reinforce democracy consciousness in the rural population through its member affiliates by piloting civic training and networking. FSEJ works with CBOs and NGOs in the home-grown environment and was also part of numerous worldwide networks. In line with this and with a dream of building a democratic movement in the Kingdom of Swaziland, FSEJ similarly desires to reinforce the ability and relations between these organisations over and above its own links with the organisations.

The Foundation's general end is to form a mass-based democratic dynamism through a bottom-up approach that comprises partnership with, and capacity building of, marginalised, rural-based organisations. In a sense, the Foundation is therefore a corresponding organisation to the mainly urban-based political organisations such as SUDF, equally because it looks at the prerequisites for the processes that these organisations are trying to devise and because it is politically non-aligned and welcomes persons from all political influences and organisations.

⁵⁷ Interview, Zodwa Mkhonta, 22 November 2014.

As a consequence, FSEJ partook in a variety of NGO coordinating accomplishments, for example, in sustenance of SUDF. FSEJ has put up a robust supervision scheme of donor support ventures which SUDF could utilise. It collaborates with trade unions, teacher associations, the Swaziland Coalition of Concerned Civic Organisations, the Lutheran Development Centre, the Council of Swaziland Churches and the Coordinating Assembly of Non-Governmental Organisations (CANGO). FSEJ also cooperated with a regional network called the Southern African People's Network (SAPSN).⁵⁸

PUDEMO is similarly a participating affiliate of the Swaziland Democracy Campaign (SDC) which was formed in 2010. The Swaziland Democracy Campaign is an extensive federation of liberal organisations in Swaziland and in the Republic of South Africa, combined around the claim for multi-party democracy in the Kingdom of Swaziland. It is a crusade innate of the organised representatives of the struggling people of Swaziland, continuously acting in tandem with the drive in the country and steered by their political intentions.

SDC directs democratic forces' undertakings and not only act on behalf of the Swazi people, but in complete compliance with their commands and benefits as provided by their democratic organisations unified underneath the SUDF umbrella, which is their political guidance inside the Kingdom of Swaziland bringing together all liberal forces for transformation.⁵⁹ SDC is an international section of unions and other civil society players in Southern African countries working for democracy and human rights concerns. It states in its launch paper that it was aiming to concentrate international responsiveness on Swaziland. The South African Communist Party (SACP), the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the ANC Youth League (ANCYL) intensely support the struggles of Swazi campaigners to democratise their government and eliminate poverty.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ *Foundation for Socio-Economic Justice* [https://en.wikipedia.org/.../Foundation for Socio-Economic Justice](https://en.wikipedia.org/.../Foundation_for_Socio-Economic_Justice) (accessed on 7 October 2015).

⁵⁹ *Swaziland Democracy Campaign* www.sdccampaign.org (accessed on 7 October 2015).

⁶⁰ *Swaziland Democracy Campaign* www.sdccampaign.org (accessed on 7 October 2015).

SDC requests for action from the international community chiefly in the form of embargoes on Swaziland. In 2010 it propelled an internationally-focused crusade drawing responsiveness to the absence of development for democracy in the Kingdom of Swaziland, condemning foreign governments' recognition of King Mswati III as Swaziland's genuine leader. PUDEMO trusts this crusade was a step forward, as it involved the international community.

PUDEMO is also in partnership with the Swaziland Vigil UK. The Swaziland Vigil UK in London was made in 2010 by Swazi people in the United Kingdom and their followers. It purposes to elevate the Kingdom of Swaziland's profile in the UK and fight for democracy and respect for human rights. The Vigil meets weekly, on Saturdays, to demonstrate outside the Swaziland High Commission in London. This partnership has assisted PUDEMO achieve certain levels of democracy in the Kingdom of Swaziland. This is because PUDEMO and their partners' actions drew attention to the political plight of the Swazi people for the international community to take action.

PUDEMO moreover entered into an alliance with the Red-Green Alliance of Denmark. The Danish Red-Green Alliance was established in 1989 as a democratic coalition of numerous parties and movements on the Danish left wing. The party has 12 of 179 seats in the Danish Parliament. The objective of the Red-Green Alliance is a world founded on unity, egalitarianism for all, and where the person's free growth is the condition for the free development of all. Currently, the Red-Green Alliance's emphasis is on a political fight in contradiction of neo-liberal policies.

The Danish Red Green Alliance initiated a partnership with PUDEMO in March 2013. This alliance purposes to increase PUDEMO's ability to be a more observable and reliable political force inside and outside Swaziland. The general objective is, in the long run, to realize a democratic change of the Swazi society in which the populace can contribute in defining its future. The partnership between PUDEMO and the Danish Red Green alliance centres on especially three components, mainly:

Capacity building: Strengthen PUDEMOS internal capacity in order to improve organisation, administration and day to day functionality through training programmes and employment of skills.

Internal Policy Coherence: Develop research and policy capacity in order to strengthen strategies for democratic reform, and to build practical programmes of co-operation between activists, academics, policy analysts and others working on policy research and development. This will be achieved by reference group meetings, internal organisation meetings and workshops.

Civic Education and Mobilisation (internally & externally): Build public awareness at the national and local level of the extremes of poverty, the abuse of human rights and the positive impact of change in order to gain support for democratic reforms in Swaziland. Activities include identification of cadreship, training programme-workshop, materials development, establishment of information management system and field visits.⁶¹

PUDEMO clearly understands that the struggle for the liberation of the country's oppressed people is at the same time a struggle for the emancipation of all humanity around the globe. It therefore places the question of international solidarity at the centre of the struggle for democracy, liberation and human dignity. The African continent is important to PUDEMO's work and international commitment, given the common history and shared destiny between the Swazi people and the rest of the continent. The Swazi struggle is taking place within the context of developments within the Southern African region, the African continent and the whole world. It is part of the African people's struggle for democracy, human dignity and development for all.

The Africa's people share a familiar history which predates the colonial era. They have always regarded their struggles for independence and freedom as an inseparable part of the collective struggle against a common enemy. This defines the material basis of the shared sense of solidarity with PUDEMO and the people of Swaziland. In this sense, PUDEMO's (Swazi people's) struggle and destiny and those of the African people are deeply inter-connected. African peoples, just like the Swazi people, continue to suffer from underdevelopment, various forms of oppression and undemocratic regimes. These

⁶¹ *The Danish Red-Green Alliance* <http://dipd.dk/the-danish-red-green-alliance-and-swazilands-pudemo> (accessed on 7 October 2015).

regimes, in some cases, continue to plunder the natural resources, practicing poor leadership and policies, as well elitism that lacks vision and foregrounding amongst the people. These constitute the basis for continuing the struggles for democracy, economic emancipation and social justice. This scholar observes that in the conduct of its struggle, PUDEMO has always located its struggle in the context of the global forces committed to changing the world for the better. It believes that no struggle can be isolated in today's world and that its success is tied to the success of other progressive forces elsewhere. This is more compelling on the African continent and the Southern Africa region than elsewhere.

Mario Masuku believes that the international community has helped to further the cause to bring about democratisation in Swaziland. However, he believes that the Swazi people themselves have to be the ones to do it. They cannot fold their arms and look up to the international community to fight their battles for them. Masuku observed that efforts of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to put the country into a special paragraph,⁶² the European Union (EU) which continually made calls for the democratisation of the Kingdom of Swaziland, the United States of America (USA) who removed Swaziland from the list of countries to benefit from the African Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA), etc., were helpful. He concludes: “all of these efforts will help and/or will come about if you are saying something yourself. The struggle of the people of Swaziland is for the Swazis themselves.”⁶³

Bongani Masuku concurs with Mario Masuku when he says:

It is the Swazi people themselves who decide their own agenda, issues and concerns and PUDEMO translates these into a neatly weaved

⁶² Mentioning a country in a special paragraph of ILO documents means that a particular country has been put by the ILO under its close watch due to continued, systematic and mass violations of ILO Convention(s). Swaziland was put in a special paragraph for her non-compliance with ILO Conventions when, for example, the Government of Swaziland took a step to de-register the workers federation named the Trade Union Congress of Swaziland (TUCOSWA) thereby contravening ILO Convention 87 (Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise). In addition, a special paragraph negatively impacts a country's image by sending a message to other ILO Member-States to reconsider their relations with that particular country.

⁶³ Interview, Mario Masuku, 14 August 2015.

programme for social justice and people's power. PUDEMO has no interests than those of the people in whose name we are waging this noble struggle, hence our resolve is to serve, at all material times, the interests of the Swazi people, unflinchingly and passionately.⁶⁴

Kislon Shongwe says the PUDEMO had been the one democratic movement that remained consistent with its demand for multi-party democracy. Since the 1990s, it has never fallen apart, neglected the struggle for democratisation of Swaziland's political system and joined the status quo.⁶⁵ One thing Mphandlana Shongwe cannot dispute is that PUDEMO had not anticipated that 30 years after the formation of his organisation, Swaziland would still be miles away from a fully-fledged democracy. Shongwe will agree that it will take more than rallies to democratise the country.⁶⁶ PUDEMO's General Secretary Mlungisi Makhanya says that:

The changes and limited rights enjoyed by Swazis in the country did not 'fall from heaven' but came through sacrifices by many people, including PUDEMO. We know that PUDEMO has always been an integral part of that broader struggle for the changes in the country.⁶⁷

Conclusion

This chapter showed how the early 1990s saw pressure for constitutional reforms mounting as PUDEMO and its youth wing, SWAYOCO, demanded genuine democratic changes. This was due to the fact that the *Tinkhundla* system of government was severely criticised. PUDEMO called for the introduction of multi-party democracy and a constitutional monarch. Following growing public unrest, with several confrontations between trade unions and the government, the King eventually agreed to review the *Tinkhundla* system of government. He established an *Indaba* (popular parliament) coordinated by the *Vusela* committees to conduct a rolling forum to discuss and recommend improvements to the controversial system of indirect elections.

⁶⁴ Interview, Bongani Masuku, 18 April 2015.

⁶⁵ Interview, Kislon Shongwe, 23 May 2015.

⁶⁶ Interview, Mphandlana Shongwe, 8 December 2014.

⁶⁷ Interview, Mlungisi Makhanya, 16 November 2014.

This chapter discussed how as an underground movement against the Kingdom of Swaziland's absolute monarchy. PUDEMO became a political force to be reckoned with. It became a catalyst for opponents against the *Tinkhundla* regime. PUDEMO protested against the *Tinkhundla* system's stranglehold on the political process. It has also been proved in this chapter that King Mswati III, faced with increased social and political mobilisation from PUDEMO and SWAYOCO, formed a constitutional commission in 1996 to produce a new constitutional document that culminated in the Swaziland Constitution of 2005.

This chapter demonstrated other notable achievements of PUDEMO in its attempt to bring about democratisation in the Kingdom of Swaziland such as the abolition of the 60-days-without-trial detention, electoral reforms to the *Tinkhundla* elections, introduction of universal free primary education, drawing international attention to the political plight of the Swazi people, providing alternative policies to the *Tinkhundla* system of government, etc. Most notable was the emergence and rise of the international solidarity movement spearheaded by PUDEMO and its international allies, which raised the profile of the Swazi struggle beyond Swaziland's borders. It assisted in mobilising much needed resources for the struggle and introduced new energy to the whole momentum for democracy and political change in the country. In this regard, the most extraordinary contribution was that by its South African allies, especially COSATU and SSN.

It is the view of this scholar that PUDEMO correctly puts it when it says:

We are where we are because of the selfless sacrifice that the People of Swaziland under the leadership of PUDEMO made. This hard fact can never be taken away from our history as a nation, and we salute our comrades, both fallen and alive for their heroic struggle and selfless sacrifice for the people to be free from ... royal bondage.... The struggle for the emancipation of the Swazi people continues.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *The 22nd Commemoration of the People's United Democratic Movement's Unbroken Struggle for the Freedom of the People of Swaziland, 9 July 2005*, Manzini, 2005.

CHAPTER 6

THE MILITANT PUSH FOR DEMOCRACY: THE CASE OF SWAYOCO

Introduction

This chapter examines the history of the Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), PUDEMO's youth league. The chapter shows that SWAYOCO was formed in 1991 mainly by students from the University of Swaziland and William Pitcher Training College. It describes the reasons why SWAYOCO was formed, among others, to unite and mobilise the Kingdom of Swaziland's youth for its overall development guided by the ideals of democracy. This chapter also shows how SWAYOCO has assisted PUDEMO to achieve certain levels of democracy in the country. It will prove that SWAYOCO is a protest movement aligned to PUDEMO which came to spearhead the pro-democracy campaign. It will also demonstrate that SWAYOCO has played a very important role in PUDEMO's efforts to democratise Swaziland and that it is linked to PUDEMO's strategy to sponsor organisations in the Swazi society which could further PUDEMO's cause. This chapter also seeks to show the role played by long-serving SWAYOCO leader, Mphandlana Shongwe, in the fight for democracy in Swaziland

SWAYOCO's birth

In August 1991, PUDEMO formed SWAYOCO which was to operate as a youth organisation to mobilise the Swazi youth in order to bring democracy back to Swaziland. According to SWAYOCO's Political Report, it was when Mphandlana Shongwe and other political prisoners were subjected to the 60 days detention without trial and subsequent hunger strike (following the 1991 Treason Trial) that they resolved to establish SWAYOCO. The organisation's main objective is to mobilise the Swazi youth and convert them to PUDEMO's line of

thinking and philosophy. When PUDEMO formed SWAYOCO, the mother body assigned the youth wing two tasks. The first one was that of championing the interests of the youth in Swaziland and mobilising them around their own interests. The other task was rallying the country's youth behind PUDEMO's democratic ideals, for their effective participation in the broad struggle for national democracy.¹

When delivering a keynote address during the official opening of the 7th General Congress of SWAYOCO on the 19th of June, 2004 PUDEMO President, Mario Masuku said that:

When the leadership of the movement was detained in the now famous TREASON TRIAL of 1991, the urgency of forming a youth movement was brought to the fore, which resulted in the birth of SWAYOCO in 1991. This was informed by the need to “struggle....till final victory”, knowing well that a youth rooted in revolutionary consciousness, is the only guarantor of this declaration. It is the only generation that can both fight, as well as live in that new and democratic society, which inspires it to be impatient, therefore, militant. It is also a generation which has not yet accepted the poisonous virus of royal supremacy and is committed to its eradication for the creation of a just society. It is really encouraging to see how SWAYOCO has lived true to this mandate and has kept the fires burning under the most difficult times.²

SWAYOCO was officially launched in August 1992 at Salesian Catholic School in Manzini. Its constitution had already been drafted and it adopted PUDEMO's Manifesto. SWAYOCO's first President was Benedict Didiza Tsabedze³ and Mphandlana Shongwe was the Vice President. Tsabedze was a student at the University of Swaziland and Shongwe was a student at the William Pitcher Teacher Training College. Their

¹ Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), *SWAYOCO Political Report As presented to the 7th General Congress, 17-20 June, 2004*, Mpumalanga, Republic of South Africa, p. 9.

² The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *Keynote address by PUDEMO President – Cde Mario Masuku on the occasion of the official opening of the 7th General Congress of SWAYOCO on the 19th of June 2004*, 2004.

³ Benedict Didiza Tsabedze was the founding President of the Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO). He was also a former PUDEMO NEC member and former President of the Student Representative Council (SRC) of the University of Swaziland (UNISWA). He was a lawyer by profession. He sadly passed on in 1996 in a tragic car accident near the Lobamba Royal Residence, not far from his home.

Logo 2

SWAYOCO Logo



Source: PUDEMO website – www.pudemo.org

function, as leaders, was to recruit fellow tertiary education students into the youth league and to champion PUDEMO's ideology and cause.⁴

Since its birth, SWAYOCO has gone through three identifiable stages in its struggle for democratisation in Swaziland. The first stage could be best described as a period of mass groundbreaking activism based on elementary consciousness and characterised by popular campaigns. It was the result of weak organisational structures which could not sustain the momentum on the ground. During this period, clarity around what the struggle was about and what the tasks of the revolution were, were of less importance.

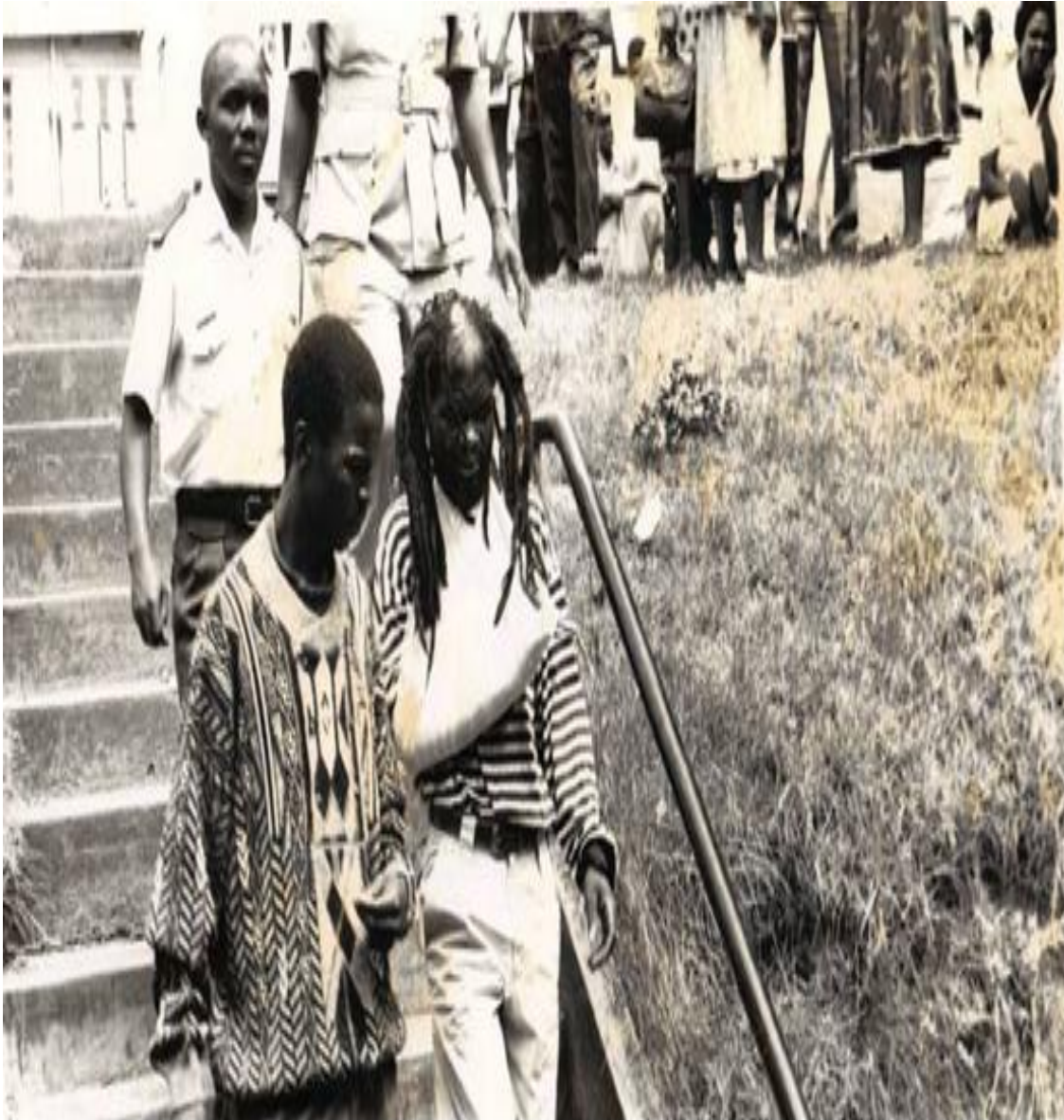
The second one was a period of political decay, during which the organisation experienced a leadership crisis, poor levels of activism and fragmented activities. As a result of this, the struggle for democratisation was in disarray. SWAYOCO therefore failed to execute its historical responsibilities as Swazi struggle leader. However, it is worth mentioning that individual cadres continued to raise high the movement's banner under the most challenging conditions of isolation, disillusionment and confusion.

Again, SWAYOCO underwent a period of political and organisational reconstruction. It was during this stage that a conscious process of cadreship development, organisational building and general political development was undertaken. This stage was characterised by the strategic deployment of cadres to various struggle sites and capacity building at all levels of the movement. This was done in order to ensure that SWAYOCO leads society in every sphere.

⁴ Interview, Mphandlana Shongwe, 8 December 2014.

Photograph 9

PUDEMO activist Professor Dlamini walking with the late SWAYOCO President Benedict 'Didiza' Tsabedze



Source: Mphandlana Shongwe's album.

SWAYOCO and its role in PUDEMO's democratisation efforts

SWAYOCO is a democratic organisation, controlled and run by its members. It is a youth organisation in pursuit of youth interests which also assists PUDEMO in its efforts to democratise the Kingdom of Swaziland. This required that it became an organisation of mass participation. In order for it to successfully carry out this task, it was realised that SWAYOCO should really promote and root a culture of democracy and mass participation in its own structures as the lifeblood of its own functioning and guarantee for democratic victory.⁵

SWAYOCO's organisational structure is meant to enhance democracy in the functioning of the organisation. What is more important than anything else, it is meant to ensure that SWAYOCO succeeded in organising the mass of the oppressed people of the Kingdom of Swaziland for its own liberation. This is something which SWAYOCO does with its mother body, PUDEMO. It is one of the main reasons why SWAYOCO was formed in the first place. Here lies the importance of why such structures as congresses, conferences, general and executive meetings, as well as General Councils are organised. This is done for purposes of ensuring maximum participation in the political life and debates within the organisation, regular assessment of progress and collective responsibility for the successes and failures of the organisation and the revolution as a whole.

SWAYOCO's organisational structure is premised on the principle of the centrality of democracy. This principle states that vigorous debates and differing opinions (and not personal differences) are essential to SWAYOCO's life. What is even more important is the fact that after a majority position has been taken, it becomes the organisation's official view and no one can choose to go against it in the name of democracy and freedom of expression.

⁵ Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), *SWAYOCO Guide to internal democracy and elections. A document of the National Executive Committee of SWAYOCO to assist the process of strengthening internal democracy and guide the process of elections, as adopted by SWAYOCO Congress, Matsulu, 2004.*

The relationship between SWAYOCO different levels (tiers) and structures is to be clearly understood by all members. For instance, the General Congress is the highest decision-making body on any matter. When it is not in session, it delegates its two major powers (policy-making and organisational work) to two separate bodies; the Annual National Conference (the policy arm) and the National Executive Committee, NEC (the organisational arm). This is practised in the true spirit of the separation of powers and ensuring effective checks and balances.

The General Councils are bodies responsible for monitoring programme and resolution implementation. They are also responsible for assessing on a regular basis the functioning of the entire organisation's components; NEC, RECs, BECs, departments and deployments to various struggle sites. This format is not only applicable to the national level, but also to all levels of the organisation, until the lowest, which is the branch or unit.

Monthly general meetings in all SWAYOCO branches are also compulsory. This is done in order to ensure the active and consistent participation of all SWAYOCO members in a particular community. This applies to all structures obliged by the organisation's constitution to meet at particular intervals. The constitution states that if they did not, they would be compromising the fundamental elements of internal democracy and political work.⁶

SWAYOCO's birth in 1991 changed the political face of the Swazi struggle for democratisation and introduced a more decisive impetus that consolidated a solid resistance force. Its birth was spearheaded by the youth and students in the whole country. It was anchored in the revolutionary tradition of the mother body, PUDEMO. SWAYOCO was intended to be PUDEMO's party organ of action. This created the impetus for unprecedented arrests, harassments and persecution of young people for their role and contribution to the liberation struggle that has characterised the whole struggle to date.

⁶ Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), *SWAYOCO Guide to internal democracy and elections*.

SWAYOCO is a preparatory school for PUDEMO, teaching theory and practical lessons to the youth. Its notable achievement is that it has been able to develop tried and tested cadres who served the movement and the people diligently in various sites of struggle and society as a whole. It is worth noting that these cadres were never actually trained but were forced by circumstances to join the movement. PUDEMO President Mario Masuku said: “we are proud to say that our cadres have served with distinction in the students’ movement, trade unions, academia, international relations, research spheres, sporting bodies, church leadership, NGOs and even in business itself.”⁷

SWAYOCO was formed because PUDEMO’s constitution provides for elaborate structures, including youth and women’s wings. The constitution states that “each league shall work to improve the general operations of the movement in line with its terms of reference and objectives as shall be approved by the General Congress from time to time in accordance with the People’s Manifesto.”⁸ PUDEMO, SWAYOCO and the Women’s League are an inseparable part of the whole movement. This means that there can be no PUDEMO without SWAYOCO and the Women’s League, and there can be no SWAYOCO without PUDEMO and the Women’s League.

Accordingly, no movement structure can exist in isolation. The process of building the movement’s components should be mutual and central to the work of all structures and leaders. According to PUDEMO’s conference resolutions, PUDEMO “ensures that PUDEMO-SWAYOCO-Women’s League structures meet regularly, in the form of a Leadership Forum or Summit quarterly. This is done in order to assess progress and co-ordinate work amongst these structures so as to build support and co-operation amongst them.”⁹

⁷ The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *PUDEMO 30th Anniversary Oration, 6th July Message from the People’s President Mario Masuku*, 2013.

⁸ The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *Constitution*, s. 5.2.

⁹ The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *PUDEMO Conference Resolutions. As Adopted at the Annual National Conference held on 25-27 April 2003, at Piet Retief in the Republic of South Africa*, 2003.

SWAYOCO is an organisation where skills, capacity, experience and knowledge for advanced clarity are developed. They then supply PUDEMO and the society as a whole with the most capable and proven cadres, equal to the tasks at hand.¹⁰ According to Percy Masuku:

SWAYOCO is a preparatory school for PUDEMO. It prepares the youth for leadership, training it to take part in PUDEMO structures. It is a youth organisation that was set up to champion the interests of the youth, burning issues that concerned the youth like HIV/AIDS, education, etc. SWAYOCO was also set up to advance and defend youth interests like resisting the *Tinkhundla* system of government. This is because the *Tinkhundla* system of government does not benefit the youth and therefore SWAYOCO believes that it (*Tinkhundla*) must go.¹¹

Kislon Shongwe says that “the support for PUDEMO came mainly from the youth and labour force.”¹² As a student protest movement or organisation, SWAYOCO became instrumental in campaigning for representative democracy in Swaziland. Practically, from time to time they stage protest marches, rallies and also join or support other political and civic organisations in their activities to achieve multi-party democracy. In this way, SWAYOCO complements PUDEMO’s efforts towards the democratisation of the Kingdom of Swaziland. As PUDEMO’s youth league, SWAYOCO has a moral and political obligation and responsibility to preserve and advance the values, integrity and all that PUDEMO stands for.¹³ For example, led by Mphandlana Shongwe, SWAYOCO staged a succession of peaceful marches in protest against the *Tinkhundla* electoral system in the early 1990s.

SWAYOCO views the *Tinkhundla* system of government as a symbol of the wider social and political ills in the Kingdom of Swaziland. Kislon Shongwe says that SWAYOCO,

¹⁰ The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO). *The Swazi Path to Freedom and Democracy: PUDEMO Strategy and Tactics. As Adopted by, and at the 8th General Congress of PUDEMO, 21-23rd February 2014*, 2014, p. 35.

¹¹ Interview, Percy Masuku, IRALE Offices, SNAT Co-ops Building, Manzini, 25 February 2015.

¹² Interview, Kislon Shongwe, 23 May 2015.

¹³ Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), *SITTING ON A TIME BOMB. SWAYOCO NEC statement on the arrest of PUDEMO President 19 November 2008*, 2008.

following the ideological line of its mother body PUDEMO, “perceives the present political system as undemocratic, nepotistic and oppressive.”¹⁴

In the 1990s SWAYOCO sought to enhance its image as a peaceful and popular organisation. It thus participated in campaigns to clean up slums. It also championed the rights of squatters and vendors in towns and in the countryside.¹⁵ In June 1996, for example, SWAYOCO, under the leadership of Mphandlana Shongwe, led a march from Manzini to Matsapha in support of street vendors. This demonstration was supported by the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU). During this march, a sum of nine hundred and thirty seven Emalangeni was raised in support of street vendors. The street vendors were protesting poor market buildings and argued that such was a let down to their entrepreneurial endeavors.¹⁶ Such a campaign is in line with SWAYOCO Cadre’s handbook.

SWAYOCO Cadre’s handbook teaches that:

Activists of SWAYOCO and PUDEMO must be mobilised in full force, especially in times of strikes, lockouts, retrenchments, land evictions, women and children abuse, struggles against price increases and economic crisis in general, in order to take part in the mass movement, particularly the workers movement.

The consciousness of the masses, workers in particular, can only be raised through active participation in their daily struggles, however small their demands. We must not ignore these struggles, but must broaden them and link them with the broader struggle for democracy and social change.¹⁷

¹⁴ Interview, Kislon Shongwe, 23 May 2015.

¹⁵ A. R. Booth, *Historical Dictionary of Swaziland* (London: The Scarecrow Press Inc., 2000), p. 311.

¹⁶ *Times of Swaziland*, Sunday 21 June 1996.

¹⁷ Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), *SWAYOCO Cadre’s Handbook*. The NEC of SWAYOCO issued this important document of the organisation as a basic guide to the daily work of SWAYOCO cadres on the ground. It also seeks to assist the process of new cadre induction, who should understand what the Swazi struggle was about and how they should behave in their mission to liberate the mass of the Kingdom of Swaziland’s oppressed and suffering people.

SWAYOCO describes a cadre as a professional revolutionary, a qualified graduate in the art of revolution, from the purifying school of practical and ideological battles in defence of the poor and oppressed masses.

PUDEMO's Strategy and Tactics clearly outline in their analysis what the Swazi struggle is about and in whose interests it is waged. It states that, "the people's consciousness is transformed through the struggle and therefore, the movement must be constantly involved in, and attempting to lead the daily struggles of the people."¹⁸ SWAYOCO is therefore an instrument of political contestation against the existing regime with all its political ills. SWAYOCO helps in bringing local issues to the centre-stage of wider national issues.

SWAYOCO is an active political force in young people's daily lives. It seeks to change and improve their living conditions through leading their day-to-day struggles and efforts in organising themselves. As a youth movement guided by the People's Manifesto, SWAYOCO is fully committed to the restoration of a culture of respect for human dignity and the creation of a caring and prosperous society. It does this in order to rid the Swazi society of poverty, crime, exploitation, violence and all other such evils. Such is helpful for the establishment of respect for and acceptance of the legitimacy of democratic societal structures through the attainment and sustenance of an improved quality of the Kingdom of Swaziland's people.

In carrying out its work, SWAYOCO strives to represent, at all times and in the first instance, the poorest of the poor and the most disadvantaged groups in society. These are the workers, disabled people, rural masses, women, students, the unemployed and children. In this regard, it is a broad youth movement at the center of a broad network of alliances and mass democratic organisations. Therefore, SWAYOCO is a political home for those who shared the vision of democracy, gender equity and social justice. As a prime representative of the oppressed and youth forces fighting for democratic change, it focuses its energy upon mobilising around the aspirations and transformation objectives of the historically dispossessed majority.

¹⁸ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO). *The Swazi Path to Freedom and Democracy: PUDEMO Strategy and Tactics. As Adopted by, and at the 8th General Congress of PUDEMO, 21-23 February 2014*, 2014.

SWAYOCO as a youth organisation, amongst other things, was set up to champion, advance and defend the interests of the youth. These include HIV/AIDS, education, etc. According to Kanduza, “SWAYOCO became widely known in the country for its projects on cleaning up urban areas of the country. This environment friendly approach was a good disguise but the political stance and toyi-toying left a clear political message.”¹⁹ Basically, one of SWAYOCO’s aims is to resist the *Tinkhundla* system of government because it does not benefit the youth of Swaziland. According to Justice Dlamini, former SWAYOCO Secretary General, “SWAYOCO draws a large number of its members from the workplace, schools, communities, rural areas, churches and all sectors of Swazi society.”²⁰

SWAYOCO’s strategic plan describes the youth movement’s fundamental task. It says:

The most urgent task facing us as the youth and as part of the oppressed majority is to use our organised strength both in our formations and among our communities, to put an end to all forms of exploitation and oppression suffered by our people for years. It is also to help bring about a truly democratic Swaziland, as broadly defined by the People’s Manifesto. This is to ensure that the victory is not hijacked by a new exploiting clique of whatever nature. It is also to ensure that the immediate and long-term interests of the poor, particularly the youth and women, are fully safeguarded in the post-*Tinkhundla* dispensation.²¹

SWAYOCO believes that the *Tinkhundla* system of government must go. When SWAYOCO adopted this straightforward programme in 2002, it declared its intentions to become a people’s movement. SWAYOCO’s concern is that if practical activism is

¹⁹ Kanduza, “The Political Economy of Democratisation,” p. 204.

²⁰ Interview, Justice Dlamini, Piggs Peak, 16 December 2014. A teacher by profession, Justice Dlamini is SWAYOCO’s former Secretary General. The current Secretary General is Maxwell Dlamini who, at the time of the interview, was incarcerated at Zakhele Remand Centre following his arrest on 2 May 2014. He was arrested together with PUDEMO President, Mario Masuku and charged (under the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008) for uttering seditious statements during a May Day Rally held at the Salesian Sports Ground on 1 May 2014. They had been both denied bail by the High Court on several occasions and they waited for their appearance in the High Court. They were finally both admitted to bail on Tuesday, 14 July 2015 by the Supreme Court of Appeal. SWAYOCO’s current President, Bheki Dlamini, is in exile in the Republic of South Africa.

²¹ Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), *Strategic Plan of SWAYOCO*, 2002.

lacking, and the mass membership remains passive, then the movement does not fulfill its commitment to lead the Swazi people to the land of democracy and freedom, as broadly articulated by the People's Manifesto.

The strategic plan's key objectives are:

- To position SWAYOCO correctly in the unfolding political situation inside and outside Swaziland, for it to effectively play its role as a dynamic and relevant youth movement.
- To build and sustain a self-sufficient organisation in terms of material capacity for it to effectively assert its autonomy and principled political positions.
- To organise and actively participate in a revolutionary movement, rooted in the concrete conditions of Swazi society, with its original and unique (specific) features.
- To harness and actively participate in international solidarity work for purposes of building an international solidarity movement for the cause of the people of Swaziland and everywhere.
- To be true to our historic mission of being a preparatory school for young activists, building and supplying all layers of our movement with the most advanced cadres.²²

In 2004, SWAYOCO took the position to declare the Kingdom of Swaziland ungovernable. They criticised the manner in which the country's King Mswati III rules the country by decree. King Mswati III was also increasingly criticised for his lavish lifestyle. His personal wealth is estimated at USD 200m, making him Africa's richest monarch.²³ Most of his subjects live in abject poverty. According to a UNDP report the poverty rate stands at 63%.²⁴ They have to grapple with HIV/Aids, food shortages and severe drought. Former SWAYOCO President, Kenneth Kunene said that "as a leadership of SWAYOCO, we had to lead a determined generation that was willing to take the risk of challenging the absolute monarchy,"²⁵ he said. "We knew that this would

²² SWAYOCO, *Strategic Plan of SWAYOCO*, 2002.

²³ H. S. Simelane, "The Colonial Experience, Indigenous Leaders and the Capitalisation of the Swazi Monarchy", *New Contree*, No. 72 (July 2015), pp. 21-42, p. 34.

²⁴ Swaziland Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2010, www.sz.undp.org/content/swaziland/en/home/library (accessed on 26 January 2016).

²⁵ Interview, Kenneth Kunene, 29 May 2015, Ermelo, South Africa. He is the former President and former Secretary General of the Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO) and a former member of the People's

not be an easy task but this was a responsibility the youth under SWAYOCO would take. State-perpetrated violence must be met with maximum force in order to have a democratic Swaziland²⁶, Kunene added.

The future belongs to young people and they are willing more than any other social group anywhere to make extraordinary sacrifices for a better future. Therefore the task of deepening young people's organisational capacity, ideological depth and political confidence to wage effective resistance and build a culture of militancy is crucial.

According to Bongani Masuku:

It is dangerous to have our youth lacking the necessary vibrancy, robustness and decisiveness characteristic of young people. SWAYOCO should be the most radical in both practice and ideology (depth and content, not just slogans). The youth must always be impatient with the slow progress and also demand far reaching changes because they stand to lose or gain from the results of the struggle in the long term, as the future heirs.

Once you have the youth movement less engaged with practical campaigns on the ground; in workplaces, communities, schools, institutions of learning, cultural and social centers, etc., then the movement has no future. The youth reflect what the future will look like and their depth in terms of ideological and political party, also given an insight into how that future might be like.²⁷

Young people's radical posture must not be equated with recklessness. It is sometimes inevitable in young people who are still learning and make mistakes in the process. This is where the role of the revolution's political leadership which is the mother body, PUDEMO, in this case, has to be stronger. PUDEMO should be advanced and should be ahead in order to exercise that responsibility effectively, and not just crudely and mechanically.

United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO). He is now a founding member of the Swaziland Communist Party (SCP) which was formed in 2012.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Interview, Bongani Masuku, 18 April 2015.

When concluding a congress SWAYOCO held in Nelspruit in 2004, it was declared that SWAYOCO's goal was very clear: to destroy the *Tinkhundla* system of royal supremacy and in its stead, establish a truly democratic society.²⁸ SWAYOCO therefore leads the generation on whose shoulders lies the task of liberating Swaziland's people and beginning the work of building a new and democratic country. In seeking to do so, SWAYOCO cannot succeed unless it rebels against the oppressive conditions Swaziland's youth face. For SWAYOCO, rebellion is the engine of development and social progress in any society. It is the only force capable of reversing the situation of poverty, backwardness, exploitation, underdevelopment, and oppression in general. It is therefore in the interest of young people to rise, defeat and bury these evils that threaten the future of Swaziland, through organised force.²⁹

SWAYOCO believes that the whole world knows that Swaziland is an undemocratic country. In SWAYOCO's view it is a country where citizens are treated as subjects, there is no freedom of association or freedom of speech, and police brutality is the order of the day.³⁰ It is for that reason that the country's youth has to rebel against the *Tinkhundla* system of government. Wandile Dlodlu observes that there is dignity in rebellion. He says:

The only way a dehumanised society can restore its dignity is through rebellion, hence, there is dignity in rebellion. A people unable to rebel cannot reclaim their lost dignity. A people unable to rebel cannot reclaim their stolen land. A people unable to rebel cannot reclaim their lost identity and sense of pride in their common hood and humanity.³¹

²⁸ Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), *Matsulu Declaration of SWAYOCO, As Adopted at the 7th General Congress of the Swaziland Youth Congress held at Matsulu Youth Centre, Nelspruit on the 17-20th June, 2004*, 2004.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), *SWAYOCO PRESS RELEASE, 27 February 2009*, 2009.

³¹ Interview, Wandile Dlodlu, Foundation for Socio-Economic Justice (FSEJ) Offices, SNAT Co-ops Building, Manzini, 2 April 2015. Wandile Dlodlu is the Coordinator of the Swaziland United Democratic Front (SUDF). He is also the former President of the Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO) and an active member of PUDEMO. Dlodlu is also the former President of the Student Representative Council (SRC) at the University of Swaziland.

Placard 1

A SWAYOCO placard bearing political prisoners



Source: PUDEMO website – www.pudemo.org

The Swazi youth is a group that is better placed to wage the struggle for multi-party democracy in the country. This is the case because the youth is relatively free from the ideological hostage of the ideas of the *Tinkhundla* system of government. SWAYOCO strongly believes that the Swazi people need freedom. They want to govern themselves and decide their own country's destiny. They have lost patience with the idea that their freedom could be postponed for any reason whatsoever. They measure life's purpose by no other standard than that it should be spent in the fight for their country's liberation. They have shed all fear of brutality, because the word to live has attained the same meaning as the word to be free, in their own understanding.³²

³² Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), *Matsulu Declaration of SWAYOCO. As Adopted at the 7th General Congress of the Swaziland Youth Congress held at Matsulu Youth Centre, Nelspruit on the 17-20th June 2004, 2004.*

SWAYOCO declared a liberation programme premised on the following basic fundamentals:

- Creation and strengthening of community resistance organs which organise the Swazi people around their most immediate demands.
- Improved public profile and visibility, popular mobilisation and militant action to inspire mass defiance, through effective propaganda, mass political education and strong organisation on the ground.
- Active participation in mass democratic organisations to build a revolutionary mass movement coordinating all forms of struggle into a national democratic force for political purposes.
- Building an international solidarity movement against *Tinkhundla* system of government and actively supporting the mass democratic movement led by PUDEMO.³³

SWAYOCO is committed to continuing the fight for democracy, social justice and a better life for all. SWAYOCO members pledged that as a youth organisation, they will fight with all at their disposal until victory is ascertained. In a press statement, SWAYOCO pledged “continuing the fight for democracy, social justice and a better life for all. We pledge that as a youth we will fight with all at our disposal till victory is ascertained.”³⁴ As the youth league of PUDEMO, SWAYOCO members remain committed to the cause of democracy and they will never be shaken by the brutality they are exposed to at the hands of the state army and police. In May 2010, SWAYOCO noted that the *Tinkhundla* regime was frustrated by the fact that SWAYOCO and PUDEMO were still alive despite the state-created hostile environment.

PUDEMO did introspection as an organisation as far as SWAYOCO’s position and posture was concerned. This was necessary if it had to unpack a strategy for mobilising young people and building their political and organisational strength. PUDEMO had to realise that SWAYOCO was seemingly unable to effectively organise young people into active campaigns and mass work around their issues. One questions posed during the introspection was around the issue of PUDEMO supporting SWAYOCO and young

³³ SWAYOCO, *Matsulu Declaration*, 2004.

³⁴ Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), *Swayoco’s statement on the arrest of comrade Thulani Maseko (Mario’s lawyer)*, 4 June 2009, 2009.

people in general with all the means necessary for them to make a decisive difference. According to Bongani Masuku, PUDEMO also had to ask itself what it had done to build and support the militancy of SWAYOCO members. It was also important for PUDEMO to examine if its youth league was well placed or capacitated to lead youth struggles and be the barometer of the future they are striving towards in the country. Finally, PUDEMO had to understand that it cannot claim to have developed a clear and profound understanding of the youth question Swaziland.³⁵

However, a critical analysis of SWAYOCO reveals that as PUDEMO's youth league, it has, at the most crucial moments been found wanting and inadequate to the tasks at hand. This can be attributed to the country's repressive political environment. However, this cannot be the only reason. It can also be due to the lack of strong cadre mentoring for the young members or comrades. Linked to this is also the seemingly weak link between SWAYOCO programmes, and the programmes of young people in the communities in which they live, the only exception here being the student movement. Even in the case of student activists, many lose their 'activist mode' when they get to their communities, mainly because there are no programmes to keep them engaged in youth work in their local communities. As a direct consequence to that, many of the student activists never get fully retained in SWAYOCO after their student years are over.

SWAYOCO and PUDEMO are in a similar situation. As is the case with PUDEMO, SWAYOCO was banned.³⁶ SWAYOCO was also, just like its mother body, proscribed as a terrorist entity in the year 2008.³⁷ According to the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 they are explicitly categorised as terrorist entities. The law states that any criticism of the King or government should be treated as an act of terrorism and punished accordingly. This legislation gave free reign for the Swazi security forces to intimidate

³⁵ Interview, Bongani Masuku, 18 April 2015.

³⁶ From 1973 to 8 February 2006 (when the new Constitution came into effect) political parties remained practically banned in Swaziland. Despite being banned for over 30 years, political parties like PUDEMO and its youth league SWAYOCO were formed and operated underground and illegally during this period.

PUDEMO's and its youth league SWAYOCO's activities. The security forces make arbitrary arrests at protests and use excessive force against PUDEMO and SWAYOCO activists with impunity.

Speaking on the occasion of the official opening of the 7th General Congress of SWAYOCO on the 19th of June 2004, PUDEMO President Mario Masuku said that SWAYOCO and PUDEMO cadres had been on the receiving end of the viciousness of Tinkhundla system of government. He argued that Swazi police and army records were the best witnesses of what he was referring to there. He said many of the delegates had been in and out of jail; some still had their cases pending and were out on bail. Amnesty International criticised the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 for undermining human rights.³⁸ SWAYOCO's leadership and members have been subjected to repeated arrests and police violence.³⁹

PUDEMO and SWAYOCO seek to be a uniting force at the centre of a broad range of organisations. For example, they work with the Swazi United Democratic Front and the Swaziland Democracy Campaign. Since PUDEMO and SWAYOCO are in a similar situation, both have sought alliances with other democratic forces such as those stated above. Since SWAYOCO's ban in Swaziland, a growing lobby for reform is gaining ground. SWAYOCO has an agenda that is embraced by a large proportion of the professional classes, trade unions and students. In fact, the ban on political parties has not deterred progressive forces such as the radical SWAYOCO and PUDEMO. United under a common front called the Swaziland Democratic Alliance (SDA) and the Swaziland United Democratic Front (SUDF), they have continually voiced criticism of the current *Tinkhundla* system of government and advanced the introduction of a constitutional monarchy.

³⁸ The Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 was signed into law on 7 August 2008.

³⁹ See for example, *Times of Swaziland*, Cops Crush SWAYOCO Rally at Msunduzi, 20 April 2013; *Times of Swaziland Sunday*, Comrade Shot by police, 6 August 2006; *IRN News*, SWAZILAND: Police crush pro-democracy rally, 20 March 2006.

Photograph 10**Former SWAYOCO leader, PUDEMO activist and leader, Mphandlana Shongwe**

Source: Photograph by author, 8 December 2014.

Mphandlana Shongwe's contributions

Peter Mphandlana Shongwe is a founding member of both PUDEMO and SWAYOCO. He is a supporter of democracy and human rights in the country. For his efforts, he has attracted contempt and mockery from those in power, yet, at the same time, motivated a generation into open resistance and disobedience. His name is one and the same with toyi-toying and slogans in Swazi politics. He is perhaps one of the most well-known and finest political activist the struggle has ever produced. He just loves political demonstrations and prides himself on having not attended only but one national protest since the establishment of PUDEMO in 1983 – even then he was in jail.⁴⁰

Shongwe is a teacher by profession and has a Secondary Teacher's Diploma, acquired after nine years of struggling to complete his training in 1992 at the William Pitcher Teacher Training College in Manzini. Mphandlana Shongwe encouraged not just a generation into political rebelliousness but he also grew to be the most exceptional expression of opposition in Swaziland.

Mphandlana Shongwe was first incarcerated for high treason in 1990 together with 11 other PUDEMO leaders and has over the years been arrested for one political transgression after the other. One of his many arrests was under a terrorism charge after he shouted 'Viva PUDEMO' at a *Sidla Inhloko*⁴¹ in 2009.⁴² Prior to that, he was arrested for sedition together with current SWAYOCO President Bheki Dlamini. He was also part of the 2006 High Treason accused. Those who were around in the 1980 and 1990s will recall him as the most verbal and popular activist the Kingdom has ever gotten, particularly when it comes to statements and demonstrations against the Constitutional

⁴⁰ Interview, Mphandlana Shongwe, 8 December 2014.

⁴¹ *Sidla Inhloko* or simply called 'The People's Convention' was an annual event organised by the Swaziland Coalition of Concerned Civic Organisations (SCCCO) and its donor partners. It was dubbed *Sidla Inhloko* in recognition of the widespread Swazi custom of eating cow heads in the process of discussing important issues in the community. It was a meeting to explore ways of working for a more democratic Swaziland and talk about issues that affected the majority of Swaziland's people. It was held on Saturday, 18 July 2009.

⁴² *Times of Swaziland*, Mphandlana arrested, charged with terrorism, 19 July 2009.

Review Commission. Those who were around at the turn of the 21st century will confirm to the host of activists he produced who went on to match him and regard him as a hero of Swaziland's democratisation struggle.

In spite of years of imprisonment, suffering and dehumanisation, Shongwe has not changed his mind a little. He still has no confidence in the *Tinkhundla* system of governance and believes that there should be change in the way the country is governed. Shongwe believes that the *Tinkhundla* system of government is a weapon of mass destruction. He also feels that the country's periodic parliamentary elections cannot be acknowledged as democratic as long as the country is ruled under no-party system. He quotes the notorious 1973 Decree as an example; as long as it is not abolished Swaziland can never be at liberty, according to him. Shongwe believes that in fact there have been no elections in the country ever since that date.⁴³

While he was a political prisoner at the Matsapha maximum prison, Shongwe had the opportunity to form Direct Action Against Abuse of Prisoners (DAAAP) and he was the organisation's Publicity Secretary.⁴⁴ Shongwe has a rich history as a leader and activist of PUDEMO, beginning as SWAYOCO's first Vice-President to becoming a PUDEMO regional leader in numerous capacities. He was also a founding leader of the Swaziland National Union of Students (SNUS)⁴⁵ and is the presently Deputy President of the Swaziland United Democratic Front (SUDF) and Second Deputy Secretary General of PUDEMO.

In addition, Shongwe also played a key role in founding the once popular *Vusela* Resistance Movement, otherwise known as VUREMO, and has been significant in many initiatives that wanted to open people's awareness about Swaziland's political problems.⁴⁶ Mphandlana taught many that to be rebellious is the most partisan thing to do

⁴³ Interview, Mphandlana Shongwe, 8 December 2014.

⁴⁴ Interview, Mphandlana Shongwe, 8 December 2014.

⁴⁵ Shongwe, *The Last Mile*, p. 21.

⁴⁶ Interview, Mphandlana Shongwe, 8 December 2014. See also Shongwe, *The Last Mile*, p. 62.

in a country governed by despotism. He motivated many activists to be principled, even when their own lives are in danger or when they are humiliated for refusing to be attracted by the economic advantages of abandoning the struggle for the country's democratisation.

Shongwe has been made the laughing stock and an epitome of all that is wrong within the progressive struggle; however he remains as humble and strong-willed as always. Mphandlana Shongwe remains a courageous fighter, a revolutionary *par excellence* and an inspiration to numerous activists about the perfection of PUDEMO's struggle for democratic change in Swaziland.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that SWAYOCO is PUDEMO's youth league and has played a very important role in PUDEMO's democratisation efforts. It has described how PUDEMO, which has had to operate as an illegal organisation since its formation in 1983, has been the most prominent opposition movement along with its youth league, SWAYOCO. Together they have led calls for a democratically elected parliament and an end to restrictions on all forms of political and social expression. It has also been shown in this chapter how SWAYOCO has assisted its mother body, PUDEMO, to achieve certain levels of democracy in Swaziland. The chapter also looked at the contribution made by long-serving SWAYOCO and PUDEMO leader, Mphandlana Shongwe, to the fight for democratic change in Swaziland.

CHAPTER 7

PUDEMO AND THE USE OF VIOLENCE TO INFLUENCE TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY

Introduction

From the mid-1990s, the struggle for democratic change in the Kingdom of Swaziland has grown violent. The country witnessed numerous attacks on targets considered to be strategic to the *Tinkhundla* system of government. Many buildings were bombed including the Deputy Prime Minister's offices, Parliament buildings, bridges and the homes of supporters of the *Tinkhundla* system of government. Even regional chiefs' homesteads were attacked as chiefs were considered to be cogs in the operation of the present system of government. The homes of Members of Parliament, as well as police stations were not spared.

The bombings were allegedly carried out by militant sections of PUDEMO. Such allegations persisted even when PUDEMO denied responsibility. The violent attacks on national establishments were disowned by moderate sections of PUDEMO and that tended to create friction within the movement. It appears that some PUDEMO members had grown impatient with the monarchy's refusal to democratise. PUDEMO's more radical elements believed that the internal squabbles and what they saw as the relative lack of success of the democracy movement as well as the international community's inaction justified their actions.

The spate of bombings was like a low-intensity war in the Kingdom of Swaziland. An increasing number of frustrated young people within PUDEMO saw violence as the only means to drive the country toward a democratic dispensation. The country was seen as

fast-discerning into the chasm of conflict that could have serious repercussions on the region's fight for stability and peace. It seemed all should have paid attention to the warnings as early as 1998 when a bomb exploded at the Deputy Prime Minister's office leading to the death of one person. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an analysis of the strategy of violence used by PUDEMO in its struggle for democracy. Except for casual comments by researchers such as R. Levin¹, this is a theme that has received very little scholarly attention.

Bombings of strategic installations: suspicions and denials

It was in the late 1990s that PUDEMO began to use violence in the country. For instance in October 1998 the Kingdom of Swaziland was rocked by bombings that blew away a gate and killed a security guard near the Deputy Prime Minister's office in Mbabane.² This was in spite of the fact that the Deputy Prime Minister's office is constantly guarded by State Police. Whilst most fingers pointed at PUDEMO, no group claimed responsibility for the bombings. This triggered an outcry and widespread condemnation from a myriad of forces both within and outside Swaziland. The supporters of the monarchy blamed the opposition for such action and portrayed it as the number one enemy of the state.

In November 1999, unknown people planted a powerful bomb that rocked the Mahlanya constituency offices, five kilometres from the traditional headquarters of the Ludzidzini Royal Residence. The blast, which coincided with the first anniversary of a similar explosion at the Deputy Prime Minister's office in Mbabane, was seen as a political message.³

Later in 2000, the Parliament building in Lobamba was partly damaged through a bomb attack. Unlike for the 1998 attack, a group that came to be known as *Mashekeshe*

¹ Levin, *When the Sleeping Grass Awakens*, 1997.

² IRIN, *Bomb Blast Kills Two* www.irinnews.org/news/2008/09/22 (accessed on 20 January 2016).

³ *Pan African News Agency*, Swaziland: Politics Seen To Be Behind Bomb Blast in Swaziland, 15 November 1999.

People's Army claimed responsibility.⁴ This *Mashekeshe*, which can be translated to mean ants, was a new entity on the Swazi political scene. No later act of violence can be attributed to it. Some have claimed that it was a group of concerned citizens who wanted to draw the monarch's attention to the urgent need for democratic transformation in the country. However, it is unlikely that an amorphous group of citizens organised themselves just for a single act of violence, and to subsequently die out. The most likely scenario is that this was the action of an established political grouping's wing, as was the case with the African National Congress' *Umkhonto Wesizwe* in South Africa. The attack by the 'army of ants', on Parliament buildings – the pillar of the traditional system of government – was not simply a once-off attack, but part of a new strategy in the struggle for democracy.

In 2003, PUDEMO announced more aggressive tactics to achieve political reform. PUDEMO spokesman Bonginkhosi Gama was quoted saying, "We have tried peaceful marches, but they have been dispersed brutally and violently by the state. No unreasonable person can blame us at this point in time if we engage means of preventing the aggressor from being aggressive."⁵ It was in July 2003 that riot police and army patrols converged on the Southern province's capital, Nhlngano, to prevent a PUDEMO rally marking the group's 20th anniversary. In essence, political rallies and demonstrations were still banned, and there was no way the Swazi police would have allowed the rally to go ahead. It is difficult to say police violate individual peoples' rights when those people were actually violating a standing legal principle.

PUDEMO President Mario Masuku told IRIN news that PUDEMO's intention was always to hold a peaceful demonstration. But political meetings of any kind were banned by Royal Decree. While confirming that PUDEMO would be taking a more aggressive stance for democracy in Swaziland, Masuku said the organisation did not condone

⁴ J. Mokoena, "The Symptoms of Civil War in the Kingdom of Swaziland is Peace at Last", *Paper Presented at the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (Idasa)*, Cape Town, 24 October 2005.

⁵ *IRIN*, Heightened Political Tensions over Monarchy's Rule, 16 September 2003.

terrorism. He repeated that PUDEMO activists had been beaten, arrested, harassed, and tortured in police custody. Whatever course of action they would follow would be in self-defence. However, he would not specify which specific actions were likely to be taken.⁶ Following this stand by PUDEMO, it became common to associate bombings with the organisation.

In August 2005 there was also an attack on government offices in Mbabane and in Nhlanguano. Again, in this incidence, it was clear that the targets were those state institutions supporting the traditional system of government. On the last Friday of September 2005, police vowed to find those responsible for the two firebomb attacks. The attacks were branded as acts of terrorism and linked to the banned opposition party, PUDEMO. Again in 2005, there was another petrol bomb attack that damaged a courthouse in Mbabane. The courthouse was damaged in the early hours on a Friday through a petrol bomb attack which followed another firebomb thrown at government spokesman Percy Simelane's home. No one was injured in the two attacks. Police condemned this and assured Swazi citizens that as police they would leave no stone unturned to find the culprits. Inspector Sabelo Dlamini, the then spokesman of the Royal Swaziland Police, said on state radio that this was an act of terrorism. As members of the police force they vowed that they would not allow such a thing to happen again.

A pamphlet bearing the logo of the banned PUDEMO was found at the site of the courthouse firebombing. The police spokesman said that the pamphlet found in one of the buildings would assist them to follow the leads in order to make arrests. PUDEMO President Mario Masuku denied that his group was responsible for the attacks, but he warned that patience was running out in the Kingdom of Swaziland over the monarchy's failure to reform. Masuku told AFP that:

As an organisation we want to set the record straight that we are not responsible for this and we would like to condemn it in its strongest terms. Our logo might have been abused so that police can link us to the spate of bombings; some pockets of Swazi society's patience are

⁶ Interview, Bonginkhosi Ntshangase, 20 April 2015.

running out as a result of the government's failure to engage those people who called for a national constitution.⁷

The government of Swaziland cried out and claimed this to be a terrorist act. While they blamed terrorists, they also linked the attacks to the banned opposition party, PUDEMO. The question that arose out of these developments was: What triggered these attacks? There were no known active domestic terrorist groups in the Kingdom of Swaziland nor were there international terrorists likely to harbour any intent to target the country. Opposition political parties and civil society groups denied engaging in terrorist activities. Up until now, the police have not presented conclusive evidence to substantiate their accusations that groups such as PUDEMO were responsible for these acts of terrorism.

On 23 January 2006 several petrol bombs exploded in two schools in the country in the continued attacks on government property. The attacks took place at dawn on a Monday, on the eve of the first day of school. No one was hurt in the attacks. Computers and laboratory equipment were damaged at Lubulini High School, in the eastern part of the country. Furniture and textbooks were destroyed, while sand and broken beer bottles littered the corridors at Swazi National High School, in the industrial centre in Matsapha.⁸ On the first day of the academic year, both Swazi National and Lubulini High Schools opened despite the attacks. Police blamed PUDEMO which denied involvement. PUDEMO labelled the wave of petrol bomb attacks as a police-orchestrated ruse as part of the King's renewed repression of political opposition and civil society.

In a public statement made in June 2010, the Swaziland Solidarity Network (SSN) said they had found the people responsible for the petrol bombings aimed at police and Members of Parliament in Swaziland in 2005. The SSN said that the Swaziland Royal Police, through their *Lukhozi* branch, had always been the culprits behind these petrol bombs. For example, there was another bomb attack allegedly carried out by the police,

⁷ *Economic News*, Swazi police vow to arrest fire bombers, 4 October 2005.

⁸ *SAPA*, Swazi schools targeted by firebombers, 24 January 2006; *News 24*, Bombs explode at Swazi schools, 24 January 2006.

according to SSN. Alex Langwenya, former SWAYOCO President and PUDEMO member, had his house petrol-bombed at around 11 p.m. on 8 June 2010. Less than ten minutes after the incident, the police unit known as *Lukhozi*⁹ descended on him and his family, and arrested them. No attempt was made to pursue any would-be suspects or to make preliminary investigations at the crime scene. The police's sole objective was to detain Langwenya. Never in the history of the country's policing, SSN argued, had the victim of a crime ended up being the one detained.¹⁰

All these acts of violence were linked to PUDEMO. The allegations became more pronounced when a Johannesburg weekend newspaper said PUDEMO had organised a guerrilla camp to train fighters to topple King Mswati III, whom it described as sub-Saharan Africa's last absolute monarch. These reports were declared to be false by PUDEMO.¹¹ PUDEMO rejected the fact that it was mounting guerrilla warfare to overthrow the country's monarch. PUDEMO President Mario Masuku denied any involvement, but said the explosions were a sign of frustration over the government's refusal to hold a referendum on the new Constitution. He pointed out the unhappiness of the Swazis about the way their country was governed and noted that "there will come a time when the bombings would become a day-to-day occurrence, like in Palestine."¹²

⁹ *Lukhozi* is a task team of police officers belonging to the Serious Crimes Unit of the Royal Swaziland Police (RSP).

¹⁰ Swaziland Solidarity Network (SSN), *Swaziland's Petrol Bombers Reveal Themselves*, 9 June 2010; Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), *COSATU PRESS STATEMENTS: COSATU condemns Swaziland petrol bomb atrocity*, 9 June 2010.

¹¹ *SABC News Online*, Swazi opposition rejects report of armed unit in SA, 29 November 2006.

¹² *Mail & Guardian*, Spate of petrol bombings hits Swaziland, 25 October 2005.

Photograph 11**The bombed house of PUDEMO member Alex Langwenya**

Source: Times of Swaziland, 09 June 2010.

The Prime Minister at the time, Themba Dlamini, labeled the spate of arson attacks as terrorism. The country's government said the reported guerrilla force appeared to be designed "to bring change through the route of maiming, terrorising the population into submission using the gun and other weapons of destruction".¹³ Police raided the homes of opposition leaders, trade unions and civil society groups as part of the Kingdom of Swaziland's counter-terrorism strategy.

Thandaza Silolo, a defecting member of Swaziland's banned opposition party, PUDEMO, confessed to a spree of petrol bomb attacks, which destroyed property, in 11 locations throughout the country. After three years on the run he surrendered and provided the perfect succor to a frustrated local police battling with growing attacks of this nature. Over a period of 10 years Swaziland witnessed acts of sabotage for which no one claimed responsibility. After his detailed confession Silolo was found guilty on all 11 charges and sentenced to 65 years in prison. He will serve only 20 years in prison as his sentences run concurrently.¹⁴

Thandaza Silolo joined PUDEMO in 2005 and he claimed that he was trained and assisted by PUDEMO's youth wing, SWAYOCO. He alleged that he was part of a group of Swazis trained in Mpumalanga for a military insurrection in the Kingdom of Swaziland.¹⁵ Intense frustration among SWAYOCO and PUDEMO, with the lack of progress to reform by the monarchy – and with the international community's view of Swaziland as a 'cultural museum' showcasing bare-breasted maidens – has seen calls for a more radical approach.¹⁶

¹³ *SABC News Online*, Swazi opposition rejects report of armed unit in SA, 29 November 2006.

¹⁴ *Mail & Guardian*, Will SADC let Swaziland descend into war? 25 June 2013; *Global Voices*, Former Activist for Banned Political Party in Swaziland Jailed for Bombings, 2 July 2013; *Times of Swaziland*, Silolo gets two life sentences, 30 June 2013; *Times of Swaziland*, Silolo spill the beans, 22 June 2013.

¹⁵ As a political dissident, he claimed that guerrillas had been holding training camps in several South African towns for a secret liberation army dedicated to the overthrow of Swaziland's absolute monarchy.

¹⁶ *Mail & Guardian*, Will SADC let Swaziland descend into war? 25 June 2013.

Thandaza Silolo, who claimed that he was risking being killed for breaking Swaziland Liberation's strict code of silence, swore that guerrilla training camps, mostly in the Nkomazi district of Mpumalanga – a rough square bordered by the Kruger National Park to the north, Mozambique to the east and Swaziland to the south – were run by 'commanders' armed with pistols and AK-47s.¹⁷

Some commanders were Swazis, he said, but others hailed from further afield, including Kenya, and several were from the Mozambican Resistance National Movement (RENAMO). Swaziland Liberation was, he said, organised on a highly mobile cellular basis, with groups of between four and six trainees, each under a commander, rotating frequently between several safe houses in the Nkomazi district. During his training, he was moved between four safe houses in the settlements of Driekoppies, Kamhlanga, Nanzi and an unknown location on a river in Limpopo.

Thandaza Silolo said Swaziland Liberation trainees were told that their objective, once trained as 'soldiers', was a total revolution, including the overthrow of King Mswati III and the establishment of a republic with Mario Masuku as president, though Masuku said the people themselves would have to decide whether they wanted to retain the monarch in a figurehead role. Still, Masuku said PUDEMO was "a revolutionary organisation, not a reformist organisation" and its aim was to "eradicate the *Tinkhundla* system and replace it with a democratic formation".¹⁸

PUDEMO distanced itself from Silolo's confession, posting the following statement on its Twitter page:

The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) would like to distance itself from the so called confession of comrade Thandaza Silolo who was yesterday sentenced to 65 years in prison for petrol bombing government structures. We would like to unequivocally state that we have never commissioned anyone to go on a spree of petrol

¹⁷ *Mail & Guardian*, Will SADC let Swaziland descend into war? 25 June 2013.

¹⁸ Interview, Mario Masuku, 14 August 2015.

Photograph 12

Former PUDEMO political activist, Thandaza Silolo



Source: PUDEMO website – www.pudemo.org

bombs nor do we have a policy advocating for the use of violence for political change. PUDEMO has since inception been an organisation committed to peaceful means of struggle and an unwavering commitment to dialogue as a means of solving political conflict.¹⁹

PUDEMO member, Sandile Phakathi, said he served in the Swaziland Youth Congress Regional and National Executive Committees for many years.²⁰ He did not know of any National Executive meeting that had sanctioned such action as guerrilla war fare. He also denied knowing of any PUDEMO Congress that had called for such action. He was, however, aware that the Swazi Royal police had in a number of instances, maimed, killed tortured and detained PUDEMO and SWAYOCO members. As PUDEMO members, they had never carried any weapons to marches, only petitions, and they had never viewed a piece of paper as a dangerous weapon. Phakathi confirmed that PUDEMO had held a number of protests at embassies and border posts and had never understood these to be a security threat.²¹

He added that this confession by the defecting member played in the hands of those who wanted to create the impression that PUDEMO and its youth league SWAYOCO were not only a security threat to the oppressive Swazi regime, but also to the people. Instead of PUDEMO and SWAYOCO being projected as freedom fighters, the regime wanted to justify its continued brutality to the civilians so that these are scared of fighting for freedom. He warned that, with or without armed struggle, the people cannot be won by lies. A lie, no matter how much repeated, will never be the truth, while the truth, even if not mentioned, no matter how suppressed it is, will never be a lie.²²

¹⁹ *The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), PUDEMO disavows Silolo's confession* <https://twitter.com/PUDEMO> (accessed on 20 February 2016).

²⁰ Interview, Sandile Phakathi, 16 January 2016. FSEJ Offices, SNAT Co-ops Building, Manzini. Sandile Phakathi is a former National Executive Committee member of SWAYOCO and a member of PUDEMO.

²¹ Interview, Sandile Phakathi, 16 January 2016.

²² Interview, Sandile Phakathi, 16 January 2016.

In this case, Phakathi continued to claim that the truth was that there was no PUDEMO or SWAYOCO army and that PUDEMO would liberate Swaziland and, in no time, would be governing the country. He says that:

The lie, however, is that this regime will stay unshaken for good. The lie is that Mswati and his sycophants enjoy popularity. The truth is that they rule through fear and intimidation and that is not sustainable. The people of Swaziland will rise under the leadership of PUDEMO and claim back what belongs to them; a different Swaziland from the one imposed to the by the royal family and its running dogs. If they come to the realisation that armed struggle is the only way out, such will not be inconsistent with the right to be free.²³

A Johannesburg weekend newspaper said that PUDEMO had organised a guerrilla camp to train fighters to topple King Mswati III.²⁴ PUDEMO strongly rejected the South African newspaper report that it was mounting a guerrilla force to overthrow the country's monarch. PUDEMO said in a statement, "This story must go down in history as one of the greatest fairy tale stories that have been told about the Swaziland liberation movement."²⁵ The South African report was reproduced by newspapers in the tiny Kingdom, in a move PUDEMO said could be part of a government strategy to amass evidence against PUDEMO members accused of a string of petrol bomb attacks.

Swaziland's government said the reported guerrilla force appeared to be designed "to bring change through the route of maiming, terrorising the population into submission using the gun and other weapons of destruction".²⁶ PUDEMO noted, once again, that the reports were false: "We again take this opportunity to reiterate that our policy is to peacefully bring about political change in Swaziland,"²⁷ the PUDEMO statement said. "For more than 20 years, the regime has worked tirelessly to draw our organisation into a

²³ Interview, Sandile Phakathi, 16 January 2016.

²⁴ *SABC News Online*, Swazi opposition rejects report of armed unit in SA, 29 November 2006.

²⁵ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *PUDEMO Press Statement on- A Secret Army or a Fairy Tale Story?* 28 November 2006.

²⁶ *Swazi Observer*, PUDEMO linked to Secret Army Group, 27 November 2006.

²⁷ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *PUDEMO Press Statement on- A Secret Army or a Fairy Tale Story?* 28 November 2006.

violent confrontation but we have maintained that we will not be drawn into such confrontation on the government's terms." PUDEMO says that it believes that political change in the Kingdom will only come through peace, not violence.²⁸

PUDEMO said it wanted to use a new tactic to break the current deadlocked balance of forces and hasten what it referred to as the death of the *Tinkhundla* system of government. But PUDEMO was continuously denying responsibility for the bombings and the existence of the Swaziland Liberation army. The obvious hint was thus that a force like Swaziland Liberation was operating fairly autonomously. PUDEMO's Mario said that "PUDEMO's chosen path is to destroy and bury *Tinkhundla* so that on its ashes we can build a truly democratic Swaziland."²⁹

The case of Thandaza Silolo followed a similar strong sentence meted out to a member of South African Communist Party, Amos Mbhedzi, who is serving an 85-year sentence for high treason and terrorism.³⁰ He was arrested, charged and sentenced following the attempted bombing of the Lozitha Bridge on the night of 20 September 2008. The bomb exploded prematurely at the bridge, which was located about a kilometre from one of King Mswati III's residences.³¹ He had been part of the *Umbane* (People's Liberation Army), a secret militant group linked to PUDEMO, which sought to undermine Swaziland's 2008 Parliamentary elections in order to force Swaziland's government to allow a multi-party vote. Also, PUDEMO's youth league President, Bheki Dlamini, and Zonke Dlamini were both arrested facing similar charges.

²⁸ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *PUDEMO Press Statement on- A Secret Army or a Fairy Tale Story?* 28 November 2006.

²⁹ Interview, Mario Masuku, 14 August 2015.

³⁰ *Sapa-AFP, ANC man gets 85 years for Mswati bomb, 18 September 2012* SowetanLIVE.html (accessed on 26 February 2016).

³¹ *Ibid.*

Photograph 13**Amos Mbhedzi in the accused dock at the High Court of Swaziland**

Source: Times of Swaziland, 17 September 2012.

An underground movement called *Umbane* (which means lightning in English) claimed responsibility for the failed Lozitha bombing, although its members were not known. *Umbane* is an underground military wing of PUDEMO. Even the country's authorities associated this group with PUDEMO and its youth movement, SWAYOCO, which at the time was led by Mphandlana Shongwe. One of Swaziland's newspapers, the Times of Swaziland also ran an article about a court witness who told of *Umbane* plots. He was a defecting SWAYOCO member named Sthembisio Shongwe. He claimed to have been part of the *Umbane* and said that:

He was trained and armed by PUDEMO for an operation that was to undermine the past (2008) elections. . . . He said he crossed the border to South Africa where he was trained by PUDEMO military wing, *Umbane*. He said *Umbane*'s main objectives were to engage in guerrilla warfare so that the government could be forced to the negotiating table and allow democracy in the Kingdom of Swaziland.

He said they had two operations; Operation Rush Hour 2008 and Operation *Vula Vala*. He said under Operation Rush Hour 2008, they were to enter the country with explosives and bomb the *Tinkhundla* centres as well as bridges that facilitated economic activity for the leaders of the country. He said under operation *Vula Vala*, they were to make the country ungovernable for SADC and the world to force the government into negotiations.³²

According to an extract of a document sent to the Times of Swaziland: Sunday by one J. J. Mavundla:

Umbane is an independent armed military wing of PUDEMO, united around its high command, organisational line up, arms, discipline, operational plans and combat operations. Being a revolutionary army, its mission, strategy, programme of action and all its activities are guided and informed by the Manifesto of the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), its fundamentals, policies and objectives, international conventions, on human and people's rights, NEPAD, The African Union and other organs whose principal aim is to promote sanctity of human life irrespective of race, boundary, affiliation, political persuasion, gender or any other form of discrimination.

³² *Times of Swaziland*, Witness tells of *Umbane* plots, 22 September 2009.

Whilst its mandate will always remain supreme and *Umbane* shall operate and maintain a separate and distinct existence from the movement, upholding the highest values for life, underground strategy and tactics, military discipline and national service. Even under extreme persuasion, *Umbane*'s cadres shall always uphold the highest moral values and discipline in all their actions in the spirit of "all and everything for the people and nothing against them."³³

According to the Times of Swaziland, when the bomb went off during the Lozitha bombing, a document was found on the scene of the bombing.³⁴ It said that Musa 'MJ' Dlamini was *Umbane*'s Chief of Staff. His responsibilities included, amongst others, organising *Umbane* structures, training *Umbane* soldiers, etc. It said that he was in charge of the Lozitha bombing when the bomb blew off untimely, killing two of his crew members instantly. These were Jack Govender and himself. Musa 'MJ' Dlamini was a member of PUDEMO.³⁵

State response to PUDEMO's strategy of violence

The Swazi state has dealt very harshly with PUDEMO members as a result of the violence strategy adopted by PUDEMO. Many PUDEMO members have been exiled, while others have become weary from frustration and brutality meted out by the Swazi government that has remained resolute in its conviction not to tolerate dissenting voices. PUDEMO activists have been labelled anything from un-Swazi to communists who lust after 'our sovereignty'.

The 2008 bombing which tragically took the lives of Musa 'MJ' Dlamini and Jack Govender and resulted in the 80 year jail sentence for Amos Mbhedzi led to the reinforcement of the government's repression.³⁶ This was evident from the introduction

³³ *Times of Swaziland*, *Umbane* getting help from Sudan, 1 February 2009, p. 3.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³⁶ On 21 September 2008, Musa Dlamini and Jack Govender were killed while allegedly trying to bomb the Lozitha Bridge in an attempt to assassinate the King. Although PUDEMO had called for a more militant approach to achieving democracy (it) denied any part in the bombing. However, at Musa Dlamini's funeral, PUDEMO President Mario Masuku was alleged to have verbally supported the bombings of government

of the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008. The Act criminalised and proscribed PUDEMO and its auxiliaries decisively. Civil liberties have been further curtailed since 2008 as King Mswati III and the Swazi government has sought to close all political space. PUDEMO's situation (and that of pro-democracy activists) became much more difficult in August 2008 when the King signed into law the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008.

When the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 was enacted, it stated that any criticism of the King or the government should be treated as an act of terrorism and punished accordingly. The legislation gave free reign for the public security forces to intimidate and interfere with the activities of civil society groups, make arbitrary arrests at protests and use excessive force with impunity against activists. Lomcebo Dlamini observes that:

This law was enacted ostensibly as part of Swaziland's commitment to contributing to the 'global war on terror' and the state was simply adhering to the agreements made by the international community and following in the footsteps of many other countries that were also enacting similar legislation.³⁷

According to the Swaziland Solidarity Network (SSN), Jack Govender and lawyer Musa 'MJ' Dlamini were freedom fighters and not terrorists. The Chairperson of the South African Chapter of the Swaziland Solidarity Network (SSN) and a member of the South African Communist Party (SACP), Solly Mapaila, said they died in a liberation war. He described the two as martyrs of Swaziland's freedom struggle. The Swaziland Solidarity Network (SSN) South African Chapter rejected the notion that they killed themselves as amongst them they had a lot of experience, totalling more than 40 years. This was not something they would have taken for granted as they were disciplined. He said that the regime was supposed to tell the real story of what had happened to them. As SSN members, they demanded answers and wished to be told the truth. They also indicated that they will leave no stone unturned to seek the truth behind their untimely deaths.³⁸

institutions. Mario Masuku spent 340 days in prison before he was acquitted and discharged at the High Court on 21 September 2009.

³⁷ Interview, Lomcebo Dlamini, Manzini, 15 January 2016.

³⁸ *Times of Swaziland*, SA Bomber will be buried on Saturday, 30 September 2008.

SWAYOCO was at the time led by Wandile Dlodlu, a former University of Swaziland student, who was also arrested and charged for allegedly planting some petrol bombs in government structures in 2005. Swaziland Solidarity Network was at the time led by Solly Mapaila, a member of the South African Communist Party. He was banned from coming to Swaziland in 1996 and since then he has not been allowed into the country. The Swaziland Liberation Army (*Umbane*) is faceless. No one has come out to claim to be a member of the organisation. The only indication of its existence is the pamphlets found at Mpaka's railway bridge after a failed bombing.³⁹

The Prime Minister, Dr Sibusiso Dlamini, listed four banned political movements as terrorist formations. The listed movements are the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), Swaziland Solidarity Network (SSN) and Swaziland Liberation Army (*Umbane*). In view of all the activities allegedly conducted by these four organisations in the country, the Prime Minister has taken the stance to ban them, despite the fact that they were already legally banned in 1973. He was quoted by the Times of Swaziland saying:

In exercise of the powers vested in me under and in virtue of Section 28 of the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 and being satisfied that there is material to support a recommendation under this section, I have today declared that each of the following entities namely PUDEMO, SWAYOCO, SSN and *Umbane*, have been banned in the country not now but forever.⁴⁰

The Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 gives the Prime Minister some powers to advise the Head of State on issues related to state security. It also gives him powers to make pronouncements whenever necessary. He was quoted saying:

In the past few months the state of security in the country has been compromised following the series of bombings that have taken place in the country. In some cases the bombs or rather explosives were discovered before they could detonate while in others they caused minimal damage.⁴¹

³⁹ *Times of Swaziland*, Political Parties are Terrorists - PM, 15 November 2008.

⁴⁰ *Times of Swaziland*, Political Parties are Terrorists - PM, 15 November 2008.

⁴¹ *Times of Swaziland*, Political Parties are Terrorists - PM, 15 November 2008.

The Prime Minister once told diplomats that there was no Swazi who has been named a terrorist. Dlamini told foreign diplomats based in and outside the country that not even a single Swazi was a terrorist, but what had happened was that there were organisations that have been banned from existing in the country because of their terrorism actions. He explained that the government stance was not targeted at individuals, but mainly meant to protect the country and its people. Speaking at a luncheon he had hosted for the diplomats at the Royal Swazi Sun, Dlamini explained that it was in the country's best interests to guard against terrorism. He said the nation had been afraid since the bombings dating back to 2005.

The Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini emphasised that the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 does not target critics of government policies and operations. He said that these critics must feel safe as long as they do not practise or condone terrorism. The Prime Minister said this exactly a week after banning the four anti-*Tinkhundla* government organisations for allegedly being involved in terrorist operations. He said the government would not tolerate any form of terrorism be it in the country or outside. The American Ambassador at the time, Maurice Parker, in a newspaper article, blasted the Dlamini-led government for banning the four political organisations. He said such action raised concerns about the government's commitment to good governance. The Prime Minister explained that the country's law enforcement agencies were on a high alert to show they combat any form of terror.

The Prime Minister, Dr. Sibusiso Dlamini, highlighted that the country's anti-terrorism Act was modelled around other international laws and it was similar to what obtains in other African states. The country came under the spotlight when the first victim of the biting Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 was imprisoned. That was PUDEMO President Mario Masuku who was charged for supporting terrorism because of utterances made at the memorial service for Musa 'MJ' Dlamini who was killed by a bomb that he had intended to plant at Lozitha Bridge.⁴²

⁴² *Times of Swaziland*, No terrorists in Swaziland, 22 November 2008.

Photograph 14

Swaziland's Prime Minister, His Excellency Dr Barnabas Sibusiso Dlamini. He served as Prime Minister from 1996 to 2003. He was re-appointed into office on 23 October 2008



Source: Swaziland Government's website – www.gov.sz

In addition, there was the arrest of 15 pro-democracy campaigners in the last weeks of 2005. The activists belong to the banned PUDEMO. They included the leading campaigner Mphandlana Shongwe. All 15 appeared in court in the second week of January 2006 on charges of high treason. They were accused of bombing two courthouses and the homes of three police officers, a lawmaker and a government spokesperson since September 2005. Police in the Kingdom of Swaziland were accused of torturing the PUDEMO detainees, along with a number of their spouses and relatives. The wife of Mduduzi Mamba, one of the accused, allegedly died in police custody under questionable circumstances after officials tried to force her to reveal information about Mamba's activities. However, the officials claim the woman, Fikile Fakudze, died of heart failure.⁴³

On 5 January 2006, a senior PUDEMO official was arrested for treason on charges related to the petrol-bomb attacks on Swazi government targets in 2005. Bonginkhosi 'IB' Dlamini, the PUDEMO Secretary-General at the time, was to be tried with 13 other party members in connection with nearly a dozen bombings in the latter half of 2005 that targeted the homes of police officers, government officials and government buildings. Damage was minimal and no injuries were sustained, and to date no one has claimed responsibility.

Bonginkhosi Dlamini was also charged with sedition for uttering anti-government statements. If convicted, he would face the death penalty. The former Secretary-General, reportedly in contact with Amnesty International regarding the arrest of the 13 PUDEMO members, was taken into custody when he returned to Swaziland from his South African workplace, the offices of the pro-democracy NGO, Swaziland Solidarity Network, in Johannesburg. Dlamini came to Swaziland to check on one of the arrested PUDEMO members, Mduduzi Mamba, whose wife, Fikile Fakudze, died after being interrogated by police, reportedly of heart failure.⁴⁴

⁴³ *Inter Press Service (IPS)*, SWAZILAND: Opposition Arrests a "Desperate Attempt by a Dying Regime", 13 January 2006.

⁴⁴ *Times of Swaziland*, No time to grieve for my wife, 2 April 2006.

A member of PUDEMO youth league, SWAYOCO, Bhekumusa Dlamini,⁴⁵ was alleged to be responsible for six of the spate of bombings. Dlamini was at the time a 27-year-old man who originated from Mpofu in the Hhohho region. He was charged with six counts of terrorism. He was alleged to have contravened section 5 (3c) of the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008. Dlamini was rounded up by police on a Thursday morning on 17 June 2010 while in his flat at Mhlaleni.⁴⁶ He was said to have planted petrol bombs in four police officers' houses as well as at the homes of two Members of Parliament. Dlamini's arrest was, according to the Swazi police, one of many in the breakthroughs in the spate of bombings that rocked the country. He was co-charged with 37-year old Zonke Thokozani Dlamini from Ekwendzeni. Bheki Dlamini was charged under the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 with planting petrol bombs in police officers' and Members of Parliament's houses, a charge that he, SWAYOCO and the democratic movement in Swaziland deny. He was in jail since June 2010 until his charges were dropped in 2013.

Zonke Dlamini faced two counts, while Bhekumusa Dlamini faced four others. Bhekumusa Dlamini was represented by Bhekisisa Zwane. Zonke Dlamini did not have legal representation and Sikhumbuzo Fakudze was the crown prosecutor in the cases. On the first count, they were alleged to have petrol bombed a house belonging to former Police Public Relations Officer Senior Superintendent Vusi Masuku on 25 May 2010. The incident is said to have happened at Masuku's home at Ebenezer in the Shiselweni region. They were also alleged to have contravened the Act when on 7 June 2010 at Kontshingila they planted a petrol bomb at former Mtsambama Member of Parliament Bheki Mkhonta's residence. They were said to have been acting together with common purpose with the intention to cause damage to property. They were also alleged to have had the intention to induce fear to Mkhonta's life and his children.

⁴⁵ Bhekumusa Dlamini is the President of Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO) and former Education and Mobilising Officer of the Foundation for Socio-Economic Justice (FSEJ).

⁴⁶ *Times of Swaziland*, SWAYOCO member slapped with six bombings charges, 19 June 2010.

On the same day, Bhekumusa Dlamini is alleged to have planted a petrol bomb in former Mayiwane Member of Parliament David ‘Lion’ Shongwe’s home at Mpopfu in the Hhohho region. He was also said to have placed another petrol bomb in police officer Mathokoza Dlamini’s home at Ebuhleni in the Hhohho region. It is claimed that the incident happened on 13 May 2010.

It is said that, on 26 May 2010, the accused, Bhekumusa Dlamini, an ex-University of Swaziland student, continued with his escapades and petrol-bombed a Dlamini homestead at Nkwalini. The home was said to belong to police officer Joshua Dlamini. An alternative charge of having the intention to induce fear of injury to Dlamini’s life and children as well as damage to property was stated. It also emerged that banned entity SWAYOCO member Bhekumusa Dlamini bombed another police officer’s house at Ezulwini area.

This was Dlamini’s sixth count. He was alleged to have placed a petrol bomb in police officer Roy Consalvez’s house on 22 May 2010. Dlamini was arrested by police while in his room at Mhlaleni on 17 June 2010. Below is a list of the charges preferred against them:

1. Accused one and two (Zonke and Bhekumusa Dlamini) are guilty of contravening section 5 (3c) of the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 in that upon May 25, 2010 at or near Ebenezer area in the Shiselweni region, they each or both, acting jointly in common purpose did wrongfully and unlawfully place a parcel, substance or thing to wit a petrol bomb in a house belonging to Vusi Masuku, a police officer with the intention of causing damage or injury.
2. Accused One and two (Zonke and Bhekumusa Dlamini) are guilty of contravening section 5 (3c) of the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 in that upon June 7, 2010 at or near Kontshingila area in the Shiselweni region, they each or both, acting jointly in common purpose did wrongfully and unlawfully place a parcel, substance or thing to wit a petrol bomb in a house belonging to Bheki Mkhonta, a Member of Parliament with the intention of causing damage or injury.
3. Bhekumusa Dlamini is guilty of contravening section 5 (3c) of the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 in that upon June 7, 2010 at or near Mpopfu area in the Hhohho region, did wrongfully and unlawfully

place a parcel, substance or thing to wit a petrol bomb in a house belonging to David 'Lion' Shongwe, a Member of Parliament with the intention of causing damage or injury.

4. Bhekumusa Dlamini is guilty of contravening section 5 (3c) of the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 in that upon May 13, 2010 at or near Ebuleni area in the Hhohho region, did wrongfully and unlawfully place a parcel, substance or thing to wit a petrol bomb in a house belonging to Mathokoza Dlamini, a police officer with the intention of causing damage or injury.

5. Bhekumusa Dlamini is guilty of contravening section 5 (3c) of the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 in that upon May 26, 2010 at or near Nkwalini area in the Hhohho region, did wrongfully and unlawfully place a parcel, substance or thing to wit a petrol bomb in a house belonging to Joshua Dlamini, a police officer with the intention of causing damage or injury.

6. Bhekumusa Dlamini is guilty of contravening section 5 (3c) of the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 in that upon May 22, 2010 at or near Ezulwini area in the Hhohho region, did wrongfully and unlawfully place a parcel, substance or thing to wit a petrol bomb in a house belonging to Roy Consalvez, a police officer with the intention of causing damage or injury.⁴⁷

During their trial, two separate reports emerged regarding allegations of torture of two alleged terrorist suspects in police custody. Both men were PUDEMO members. The reports were made on 29 July 2010, with both incidences taking place at KaPhunga police station. Bhekumusa Dlamini, who was accused of involvement in a spate of petrol bomb attacks in the country, said in a written statement to the High Court that he was arrested at his home and taken to KaPhunga Police Station where he was attacked by at least 12 police officers.

Zonke Dlamini, who was charged alongside Bhekumusa Dlamini, told the High Court in a statement that he was taken to KaPhunga Police Station and tortured in the same way as Bhekumusa Dlamini, but this time 18 police officers were involved. Both men said that the severity of their treatment caused them to admit the charges despite their innocence. Both men were refused bail at a hearing on 6 August 2010, based both on the

⁴⁷ *Times of Swaziland*, SWAYOCO member slapped with six bombings charges, 19 June 2010.

‘confessions’, and on the court’s responsibility to guarantee ‘public peace and safety’, which would have been compromised had the bail been granted.⁴⁸ The state also claimed that the trial would be swift, but the trial ended up taking more than three years, not least because of several postponements.

On 28 February 2014, political activist Zonke Dlamini was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment after being convicted by the High Court for contravening Section 5 (1) of the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008.⁴⁹ On 25 February 2014, Bhekumusa was acquitted and discharged on all counts of terrorism, alternatively arson.⁵⁰ Zonke Dlamini was convicted of petro-bombing and doing extensive damage to homesteads. Meanwhile, on the count of petrol-bombing of a homestead belonging to late Parliamentarian David ‘Lion’ Shongwe, they were both acquitted and discharged.⁵¹

The implementation of the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 led to arbitrary arrests, ill-treatment of detainees and the charging of political activists. PUDEMO argued that charges were preferred against their activists under provisions of law that were vague, sweeping and failing to meet international standards. It can be observed that the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 has an intimidating and silencing effect on political activists calling for democratic reforms and human rights defenders campaigning to address the country’s dire humanitarian situation. For example, this was the case when, in November 2008, the government declared four political organisations, including longstanding political organisations such as the People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) and the Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO) to be terrorist ‘entities’ under the provisions of the law.

⁴⁸ Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA), *Democracy and Rights in Swaziland – Update*, August 2010, p. 4.

⁴⁹ *Times of Swaziland*, Bomber gets 15 years for terrorism, 1 March 2014.

⁵⁰ *Africa Contact*, Youth league President acquitted of terrorist charges in absolute monarchy, 25 February 2014.

⁵¹ *Africa Contact*, Youth league President acquitted, 25 February 2014.

Many of the circumstances regarding the petrol bombings remain unclear. However, it is clear that they had been largely targeted against government institutions. There were no reports of loss of life (except for one) or injury but damage to property was caused. Many men were arrested and charged under the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 in connection with the incidents. Among those directly affected by the wave of repression were officials and members of trade unions, human rights defenders working with non-governmental organisations, leaders of new political coalitions including the Swaziland United Democratic Front (SUDF) and the Swaziland Democracy Campaign (SDC), and members or suspected members of PUDEMO and SWAYOCO.

Some of the political activists went into hiding out of fear of detention and ill-treatment. Many activists were forced into exile especially in the neighbouring Republic of South Africa, as police intensified their investigations. The Swazi government regarded the bombings as acts of terror, but in reality, it can be argued, these were acts of civil frustrations by citizens who were thirsty for freedom from an oppressive *Tinkhundla* system.

Impact of the violence strategy on PUDEMO

The journey had been long and winding, and the movement had had several knocks along the way, many of which it had been able to overcome while pressing forward in its aim of attaining multi-party democracy in the Kingdom of Swaziland. PUDEMO had, at times, been forced to retreat because of state repression. There was no denying that the *Tinkhundla* system of government or state had made PUDEMO its special project. Such had negatively affected the movement's mobile and strategic capacity to carry out its duties and responsibilities.

The violence strategy has therefore impacted PUDEMO in a negative way, even though PUDEMO employed this strategy with the aim of trying to force the *Tinkhundla* system of government to the negotiation table which has clearly not worked. Furthermore, this strategy has impacted negatively on Swazi views of PUDEMO. The bombings around the country angered the public and PUDEMO lost popularity. Many of its leaders and

members were arrested and charged with treason. The danger of PUDEMO's violence strategy or what one can label an armed struggle is that it could drive the Swazi people into the arms of the monarchy, which outlawed all political parties in 1973.

PUDEMO also risked harming its own cause by threatening to harm the Swazi people. If continued, PUDEMO risked losing the last support it had. While some might have analysed the bombing campaign and argue that it has raised the profile of PUDEMO, others may argue that the violence strategy scared off Swaziland's ordinary people who turned to the King's government for protection. In a way, it could be said that PUDEMO was going about this the wrong way. It was alienating itself from the people who were scared of the bombings and the PUDEMO's public support risked dwindling.

Bonginkhosi Ntshangase says that some unknown elements of PUDEMO perhaps became frustrated with the lack of acceptance.⁵² It was for that reason they wanted PUDEMO to raise its game and, if anything, to be noticed. However, PUDEMO was viewed as too militant in both language and deed, demonising the sovereign and, in the process, inadvertently attracting condemnation from the general public, which saw them as disturbing the attendant peace. It was seen as threatening the status quo. Ntshangase says that as a result PUDEMO was viewed by many as rubble-rousers, who were simply copy-cats of the situation in the Republic of South Africa that had made that country ungovernable.⁵³

Even though no individual or group in Swaziland has admitted responsibility for the bombings against government and opposition party targets, the actions created a sense of instability in the country. The bombings may have not caused any casualties, but they were so frequent and all over the place that ordinary Swazis were asking: What is happening in Swaziland? The question of who the perpetrators of the bombings were sharply divided Swazis; some insisted it was the work of political opposition groups,

⁵² Interview, Bonginkhosi Ntshangase, 20 April 2015.

⁵³ Interview, Bonginkhosi Ntshangase, 20 April 2015.

while others maintain the incidents were being coordinated by elements within the government to justify greater use of the anti-terrorism Act against pro-democracy activists.

PUDEMO had agreed in 2003 on a 'combat' strategy. At the time, this strategy was defined as PUDEMO's ability to defend the people's struggle in any form. PUDEMO did not expressly say there would be an armed struggle, but noted that any attacks on the organisation's structures should be met with resistance. It is the view of this scholar that an alleged 'combat' tendency existed within PUDEMO and its youth wing, SWAYOCO. This view was reached after extensive discussions with several members of the movement who, however, refused to be identified.

Furthermore, two PUDEMO members were killed by an explosion at the Lozitha Bridge in 2008. This incident made things turn from bad to worse for the organisation, in particular after police alleged that the three men involved - Musa 'MJ' Dlamini and a South African, Jack Govender, who were killed, as well as another South African, Amos Mbhedzi, who survived the blast – had planned to destroy the bridge. The Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 was enacted soon after the incident, and PUDEMO and SWAYOCO were, once again, banned as terrorist organisations. Several PUDEMO and SWAYOCO members were alleged to have carried out a bombing campaign and were therefore detained. It became clear to most Swazis that PUDEMO was viewed as a terrorist group, especially by the police.

The Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 was a reality which had a serious negative impact on PUDEMO's work. But the truth of the matter was that it was not the reason why PUDEMO was unable to pull masses to the streets. It can be argued that the reason for that is PUDEMO's inability to organise campaigns effectively. There are countries where conditions are much more repressive than the Kingdom of Swaziland, but due to effective organisation, masses were on the streets in high numbers.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the spate of bombings of government targets that took place in the Kingdom of Swaziland. It is discussed in order to show that PUDEMO had adopted a strategy of violence in order to influence transition to democracy. It showed PUDEMO's position on the limited violence against soft targets in the country. The role of the youth in democratisation struggles was well taken care of in this chapter including how the youth allied to PUDEMO even used violence as a strategy of putting pressure on the monarchy and as an expression of impatience and frustration. The targets included a police housing development in the capital, Mbabane, two Swazi High Schools, including the Swazi National High School, just outside the commercial hub of Manzini. An office at the Mbabane Magistrate's court was also struck.

The bombing campaign began in 1998; in the second half of 2005 a number of petrol bombs caused minor damage to public buildings and the houses of members of the police and public officials. The police arrested 16 suspects, all considered to be members of the banned political party PUDEMO or its youth organisation SWAYOCO. The government of the Kingdom of Swaziland was not sure who was behind the bombings, but it suspected the underground group, PUDEMO, that had been threatening to make the country ungovernable. The chapter demonstrated that the police blamed the attacks on opposition groups, including the banned PUDEMO.

The chapter also did an examination of constraints in PUDEMO and showed that the opposition accused the government of using the bombings as an excuse to crack down on pro-democracy groups. It has been shown in this chapter that the use of violence backfired as the monarchy justified its crackdown on opposition using the fact of violence. PUDEMO President Mario Masuku denied his party was involved in the wave of bombings but stopped short of condemning the use of violence and vowed to step up a campaign against King Mswati III's rule. Masuku said, "The King will try to silence the opposition, to try and tighten the knot around us but we will continue to make things very

difficult for the state.” He also observed that a lot of people in Swaziland were angry. If the King does not open up the debate then people may resort to this kind of violence.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Interview, Mario Masuku, 14 August 2015.

CHAPTER 8

STATE RESPONSE TO PUDEMO'S DRIVE FOR DEMOCRACY

Introduction

The Kingdom of Swaziland is an authoritarian, absolute monarchy where the King rules by decree over the people. Political parties are banned, harassed and intimidated. Serious political and human rights violations such as arbitrary arrests, torture, beatings and killings of PUDEMO activists by security forces occur on a regular basis. PUDEMO, an organisation born to fight against what it terms *Tinkhundla* 'oppression and exploitation', has undergone bad experiences, harsh conditions and terror in the hands of the state. It has faced repressive attacks that seek to obliterate its existence into political extinction. The state responds to PUDEMO protests with brutal force and harsh rhetoric, using intimidation, heavy policing and military clampdown, detention and prosecution of PUDEMO members. Numerous prominent and ordinary PUDEMO members who dared to speak out against the *Tinkhundla* regime's injustice have been jailed, exiled or killed.

This chapter will show that PUDEMO members work at great risk to their own lives and welfare to address the extreme injustices of despotism and royal greed. This is important because it proves that the state's repression impacts negatively on PUDEMO's democratisation efforts. The chapter will demonstrate that PUDEMO leaders and activists are prohibited by law from operating a political party, against the backdrop of their demands for political reforms to empower the Swazi people to directly participate in the formation of their own government through multi-party democratic elections. It will be argued in this chapter that there is no framework for the Swazi people to have a meaningful voice in the conduct of the nation's affairs and that the country's ordinary people have no peaceful means of challenging traditional authority. This chapter talks about an official opposition in Parliament to challenge the status quo.

Difficulties faced by PUDEMO in the struggle for democratisation

The Kingdom of Swaziland is governed under a monarchical system. A constitutional monarchy is a form of monarchy in which the monarch executes their authorities in accordance with a set constitution which can include political and constitutional conventions (is legally bounded or restricted by a constitution). An executive monarchy is a form of monarchy in which the monarch holds unrestricted absolute power among the state and its people. The suspension of the 1968 Independence Constitution and banning of all political parties in 1973 transformed the constitutional monarchy into an executive monarchy. When King Sobhuza II unconstitutionally repealed the independence constitution, outlawed political parties and criticism against the state, he destroyed the platform on which alternative political voices could be expressed. The ban on political parties means that there is no competitive democratic space in which the people of Swaziland can participate in organised politics.

From the time of its formation in 1983, PUDEMO has been an illegal entity in terms of the country's laws. In February 1992, PUDEMO became the first opposition political organisation to unban itself in spite of the 1973 decree. The 'unbanning' of PUDEMO was followed by the emergence of other opposition political groups which also unbanned themselves. PUDEMO's status (and that of political parties in general) in the country is confusing due to inconsistencies in laws and government pronouncements. It is also confused by the distortion of language intended to delude outsiders into believing that Swaziland is a democratic country.

As stated earlier, political parties were banned by King Sobhuza II's 1973 Proclamation. This Proclamation has not been repealed since then. As indicated in Chapter two, Sections 11, 12 and 13 of the 1973 King's Decree were designed to outlaw political parties in the country. In a nutshell, the Proclamation prohibited all meetings of a political nature except with the prior consent of the Commissioner of Police. This provision is still in force. Also, the Proclamation made it a criminal offence, punishable by a six-month imprisonment term, for any person to form or attempt to form a political party, or organise or attend any meeting, procession or demonstration in contravention of the

Proclamation.¹ This Proclamation put in place a number of restrictions to PUDEMO's operations. Its right of assembly is denied, its right to freedom of expression is denied, as well as the right to freedom of association. This means that PUDEMO members do not enjoy constitutional rights to assemble and protest freely. They do not have permission to gather for meetings and organise marches.

The 1973 decree gave the King and the Prime Minister, amongst other powers, the power to detain without charge or trial, for a renewable sixty days, any person deemed to be a threat to public peace. Many PUDEMO members were arrested and detained under these 60-days detention orders in the early 1990s. Following intense domestic and international pressure, in 1991, ten PUDEMO members were eventually charged with treason, sedition or alternatively subversion and the unlawful organisation and attendance of a meeting of a political nature.²

According to Baloro, a significant aspect of the charge of treason was that the defendant colluded to form a political party (PUDEMO) with the purpose of illegally dethroning King Mswati III and his regime. The accused were also suspected to have held meetings at quite a lot of places to organise trade unions, students and others to support them in their strategies to take-over the government. They were charged under sections 4(a) (i) and 5(c) of the Seditious and Subversive Activities Act of 1938 (as amended) and also section 12 of the King's Proclamation to the Nation of 1973.³

After the end of what came to be known as the 1991 Treason Trial, what soon followed was re-arrest and imprisonment without trial of five of the Treason Trialists.⁴ This was an indication that the emergency measures enacted in 1973 continued to be employed to repress the opposition. These had, indeed, been strengthened by, in 2008, the enactment

¹ Proclamation by His Majesty King Sobhuza II, *King's Proclamation of 12 April 1973*, s. 11, 12 and 13.

² *The King v. Dominic Mngometulu and 9 others*, Criminal Case No. 93/90.

³ Baloro, "The Development of Swaziland's Constitution", p. 31.

⁴ These were: Mphandlana Shongwe, Boy Magagula, Dominic Mngometulu, Ray Russon and Sabelo Dlamini.

of Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 with the objective to suppress all forms of opposition to the state and the King.

The revoking of the Independence Constitution led to the introduction of the *Tinkhundla* system of government in 1978. It was the 1978 Establishment of Parliament Order that established the *Tinkhundla* system of government. Through an additional proclamation in 1981, King Sobhuza II pronounced that Swaziland's political landscape would be centred on the *Tinkhundla* system of government and that the country would carry on to be a non-party state. Just as it had been done in 1973, the *Tinkhundla* system of government signified a comprehensive denunciation of party political activity. As a result, all political parties (as well as PUDEMO) had stayed proscribed since 1973 and it was unlawful for anybody to organise and drum up support for political backing under the banner of a political party.⁵

Mzizi observes that:

The entrenchment of the *Tinkhundla* system was not made through a referendum or any method that the free world would recognise as free and democratic. On the contrary, the *Tinkhundla* system was imposed through the 1978 Order and the 1981 Proclamation in a climate best described as a state of emergency brought on by the events of 1973.⁶

PUDEMO has incessantly rejected to be ruled under the *Tinkhundla* system of government. As an 'oppositional' political organisation, PUDEMO argues that the *Tinkhundla* system of government is not at all in the interest of democracy and progress. It says that the system is an impediment to human progress and a liability to the people of the Kingdom of Swaziland themselves. PUDEMO describes the *Tinkhundla* system of government as a:

System of organised royal rule and oppression which sustained itself through a series of structures, values and institutions developed and reproduced to entrench the power of the royal minority. In other words,

⁵ Baloro, "The Development of Swaziland's Constitution", p. 28.

⁶ Mzizi, "Political movements and challenges for democracy", p. 13.

it is a means to guarantee and perpetuate royal hegemony and control of power in all spheres of our society.⁷

The *Tinkhundla* system of government is heavily criticised by PUDEMO and the institution of the monarchy is not spared. PUDEMO continues to say:

Tinkhundla is a form of royal apartheid, fostering discrimination based not on race, but royal hegemony. It does this by creating bitter divisions between the royalty, who are the first grade citizens and their unlimited sense of entitlement and the rest of the people, who are mere subjects or fourth grade citizens and perpetual beggars in their own country. In this sense, it is a royal dream for the ruling elite and a national nightmare for the people.⁸

One can argue that the criticism levelled at the *Tinkhundla* system of government is due to the fact that it is viewed as forming a strong bastion of resistance to democratic change by appealing to sensibilities which wish to protect the institution of the monarchy. In this way, the monarchy's institution cannot bring about changes towards multi-party democracy in the country. It can be safely argued also that the monarchy has used the system to both perpetuate its political power and ward off any elements calling for the country's return to multi-party democracy.

When looking at the situation on the ground in the Kingdom of Swaziland, one realises that those who oppose *Tinkhundla* authorities are deliberately frustrated and demonised before the people. This is done to guarantee only royal fundamentalists and defenders of the system win the *Tinkhundla* elections. It is also done in order to keep out of Parliament and government the meaningful criticism of the *Tinkhundla* system of government.

The *Tinkhundla* government responds to PUDEMO protests with ruthless force and harsh rhetoric. It also uses extortion, heavy policing and military crackdown, imprisonments and the harassment of PUDEMO leaders and activists. PUDEMO complains that:

⁷ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *The Swazi Path to Freedom and Democracy: PUDEMO Strategy and Tactics, As Adopted by, and at the 8th General Congress of PUDEMO 21-23rd February, 2014*, 2014, p. 27.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

The deep-rooted crisis and conflict in Swaziland cannot be resolved within the confines of the *Tinkhundla* oppressive system. The basic aim of the monarchy and his oppressive system revolve around maintaining the essence of the system of repression, and monopoly control over wealth of Swaziland. Therefore, our struggle, is not, and cannot merely for change of faces within the framework of the existing system. The system is rooted in the capitalist exploitation and royal oppression of the majority of the Swazi people and the denial of their most basic rights.⁹

Because political meetings and parties were banned in 1973, *Tinkhundla* is the sole avenue for engaging in politics. With the ban on political parties, all Members of Parliament (MPs) are ‘independent’ members, but the controlled candidate nomination process makes certain that the majority of the elected representatives are monarchist sympathisers. The selection is tilted towards the monarchy. PUDEMO members are excluded from the election process. The non-participation of political parties in the electoral race does not allow voters the necessary space to make informed choices. Rather, it makes voters choose between individuals, and not policies and organised vision about the country and its people’s needs.

No election on party lines has been held since 1972. Candidates are required to stand for parliamentary elections in an individual capacity. Under the *Tinkhundla* system, local chiefs reporting to the monarch, vet House of Assembly candidates. These are nominated by a show of hands, requiring the support of ten people.¹⁰ Nominated candidates then stand for popular selection at the chiefdom level but are banned from campaigning. The winners from the primaries can then openly campaign and compete against other chiefdom-level winners for House of Assembly seats.

Primary elections are held at the chief’s residences. This is not conducive for free and effective participation of all people. People who win at various *Tinkhundla* centres are

⁹ The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *Operation 2003: Campaign against Tinkhundla elections for People’s Power*, 2003.

¹⁰ In the Kingdom of Swaziland, the King appoints chiefs; they have a strong political and social control function with respect to residents’/subjects’ within the chieftaincy.

largely determined by the size of the chiefdom and not by their capacity to deliver to the people. Such promotes regionalism rather than national cohesion when it comes to achieving the country's national development agenda. It also promotes fragmented plans of action of particular localities rather than a coherent plan which links the local problem to the broader national problems so as to address them as a whole.

In addition to the ban on political parties, the unduly prominent role of chiefs is problematic. Chiefs are all appointed by the King. Their first loyalty is, thus, to the monarch, not to their own subjects. The heavily restricted electoral process produces a pliable Parliament unwilling and unable to change. A rotation of power seems impossible within the current system. This leads one to conclude that the Kingdom of Swaziland is not an electoral democracy. It is an absolute monarchy, with the King holding complete authority over all branches of government.

In addition, the rewards are tangible only for those who join the *Tinkhundla* system. Patronage and nepotism are the means through which the rewards emanate from the monarchy. They can be in the form of financial allowances, land or royal appointments. For example, King Mswati III is responsible for appointing all regional chiefs and Regional Administrators (RAs), twenty of the thirty Senators, the members of the King's Council (*Liqoqo*), Prime Minister and Cabinet,¹¹ as well as the members on the Board of *Tibiyo TakaNgwane* and *Tisuka TakaNgwane*,¹² etc. It is worth mentioning, however that this is not peculiar to the Kingdom of Swaziland.

Life is not easy for PUDEMO members who insist upon being citizens rather than "loyal subjects". They experience the violence that accompanies state ruthlessness. As an

¹¹ See *2006 Swaziland Constitution*, Sections 14, 54, 65, 67, 68, 69, 75, 77, 79, 80, 84, 91, 95, 96, 98, 137, 138, 154, 160, 161 and 163.

¹² *Tibiyo TakaNgwane* (is literally translated as the "Wealth of the Swazi Nation") and *Tisuka TakaNgwane* (is literally translated as the "Foundation of the Nation") are royal investment trust funds for the nation that are controlled by the monarchy rather than Parliament and Senate. Both King Sobhuza II and King Mswati III have claimed that *Tibiyo's* and *Tisuka's* resources are held in trust for the entire nation's benefit. These institutions form the basis of the monarchy's power and control, while partially masking that power in cultural claims. The King appoints the governing boards that oversee these entire funds.

organisation that believes in party politics, PUDEMO, its members and its youth wing, SWAYOCO, have often been the recipients of this state violence. Often during protests, PUDEMO leaders are questioned, or transported and left in remote areas of the country. SWAYOCO members have a long reported history of being arrested, but not charged and suffering various forms of torture. Suffocation with water, with a plastic tube (“tubing”), and beatings have been reported by Amnesty International. Since 1973, the Swazi state has, like many other states, tried to uphold its monopoly claim on the legitimate use of physical force to enforce order. As its army and police force grew over the years, the state has intensified its repressive methods. PUDEMO’s unbroken struggles for democracy in the Kingdom of Swaziland have resulted in the brutal arrests, persecution, exiling and even killing of PUDEMO activists.¹³

On 4 May 2010, 35 year old Siphon Jele, a PUDEMO member and prominent trade unionist arrested with other activists at a rally days earlier, died in police custody. Police claimed that he was found hanging in a bathroom, but his family and colleagues alleged that the police were responsible.¹⁴ In March 2011 the coroner’s report said that Jele hanged himself.¹⁵ But doubt about the cause of his death remains.

¹³ Siphon Jele was a former worker at Usuthu Pulp. He was among the 2006 awaiting treason trialists. He was a PUDEMO member of its youth league, SWAYOCO, Bhunya Branch as well as an SFTU activist. On 5 May 2010 it was reported in local newspapers that Siphon Jele died in the hands of the police. Siphon was detained on 1 May 2010 for wearing a PUDEMO t-shirt in Manzini. Subsequently, the police took him to his home in Ncabaneni, looking for his membership card and then put him in custody. On the following day, the police officers returned to his home to report to his grandmother that he had died by committing suicide while in custody. The police ordered his grandmother to bury him on the same day. PUDEMO argues this was not correct; PUDEMO claims that he was hanged and murdered by the state police for wearing a PUDEMO t-shirt on Workers Day. PUDEMO argues that a lot of people in the Kingdom of Swaziland have died in the hands of the police and fictitious stories were fabricated.

¹⁴ *PUDEMO member murdered by Swazi police* <http://stiffkitten.wordpress.com/2010/05/05/pudemo-member-murdered-by-swazi-police> (accessed on 25 July 2015); *Killed in Swaziland for wearing a t-shirt* <http://www.afrika.dk/killed-swaziland-wearing-t-shirt> (accessed on 25 July 2015); *Times of Swaziland*, PUDEMO man found hanging in toilet, 6 May 2010; *Danish report on activist killing, Swazi Media Commentary* <http://swazimediablogspot.com/2010/05/danish-report-on-activist-killing.html> (accessed on 25 July 2015); *Swazi regime under pressure in case of Siphon Jele* <http://stiffkitten.wordpress.com/2010/05/11/swazi-regime-under-pressure-in-case-of-siphon-jele> (accessed on 25 July 2015).

¹⁵ *Bheki Makhubu, “Bizarre death at Sidwashini prison,” Nation* <http://theswazination.com/Focus-on-the-coroners%20report-into-the-death-of-Siphon-Jele-5.html> (accessed on 25 July 2015).

Prison wardens claimed that they had unravelled the details of Siphó's death through his cellmates who confirmed he had hanged himself. However, an inquest revealed that no such questioning of cellmates took place. All cellmates denied being interviewed by the prison wardens. An independent pathologist's report confirmed that his death was not suicide. It said Jele's body was found hanging in his cell, in which there was nothing to stand on from which to hang himself. Furthermore, his body did not show any signs of a suicide attempt. However, the pathologist, from South Africa, found signs of strangulation. This situation, reminiscent of the Republic of South Africa during the apartheid era, was intended to terrorise all political activists. Two years earlier, King Mswati III had said those with diverging views would be strangled (*abakhanywe* - strangle them) so Siphó Jele's political murder, if found to be a murder, fulfilled the October 2008 threat.

Siphó Jele's funeral was disrupted by around 500 heavily armed police and had to be postponed until 22 May 2010. The police destroyed several pictures of Jele, removed a PUDEMO flag from the coffin, and then arrested and detained several of the mourners (who were PUDEMO members). After the second funeral on 22 May 2010, Mario Masuku was arrested at a road block for supporting terrorism by allegedly shouting, "Viva PUDEMO, Viva SWAYOCO". He was allowed to leave the police station later that day, but was told he would be summoned to court and charged under the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008.

There have never been reports of police officers held accountable of detainee mistreatment, torture or death of PUDEMO leaders and activists in police cells in the country. Nor were there any reports of effective or successful redress actions on the part of PUDEMO leaders and activists whose rights had been violated by state agents such as the police. PUDEMO leaders and activists have been subjected to extended pre-trial delays by the Kingdom of Swaziland's judicial system. For example, 16 defendants charged with treason in 2006 never stood trial for a period of over five years. They remained out of custody on bail during all that period. There have been many cases where PUDEMO leaders and activists have been arrested, charged and released on bail (in most

instances after lengthy delays), and then not brought to trial. The cases are constantly postponed and it appears that such has become a method employed by the Swazi authorities to limit PUDEMO leaders and activists' political activities. Their crime seems to be that they are supposedly hostile to the existing political order or status quo.

Delays were clear in the case of South African Amos Mbhedzi, who was arrested in September 2008. The arrest came after a car in which he was a passenger exploded close to one of the King's royal palaces. This was a PUDEMO case in the sense that Mbhedzi supported PUDEMO in practical terms when carrying out the bombing. After a year in detention, Mbhedzi was charged with attempted sabotage and appeared in court late 2009. His trial was then postponed to March 2010 and then again to June 2010, when the original charge was amended to include two murder charges relating to the deaths of Jack Govender and Musa 'MJ' Dlamini. The trial with the new charges took place in February 2011 and the final verdict was a sentence of 85 years in jail.

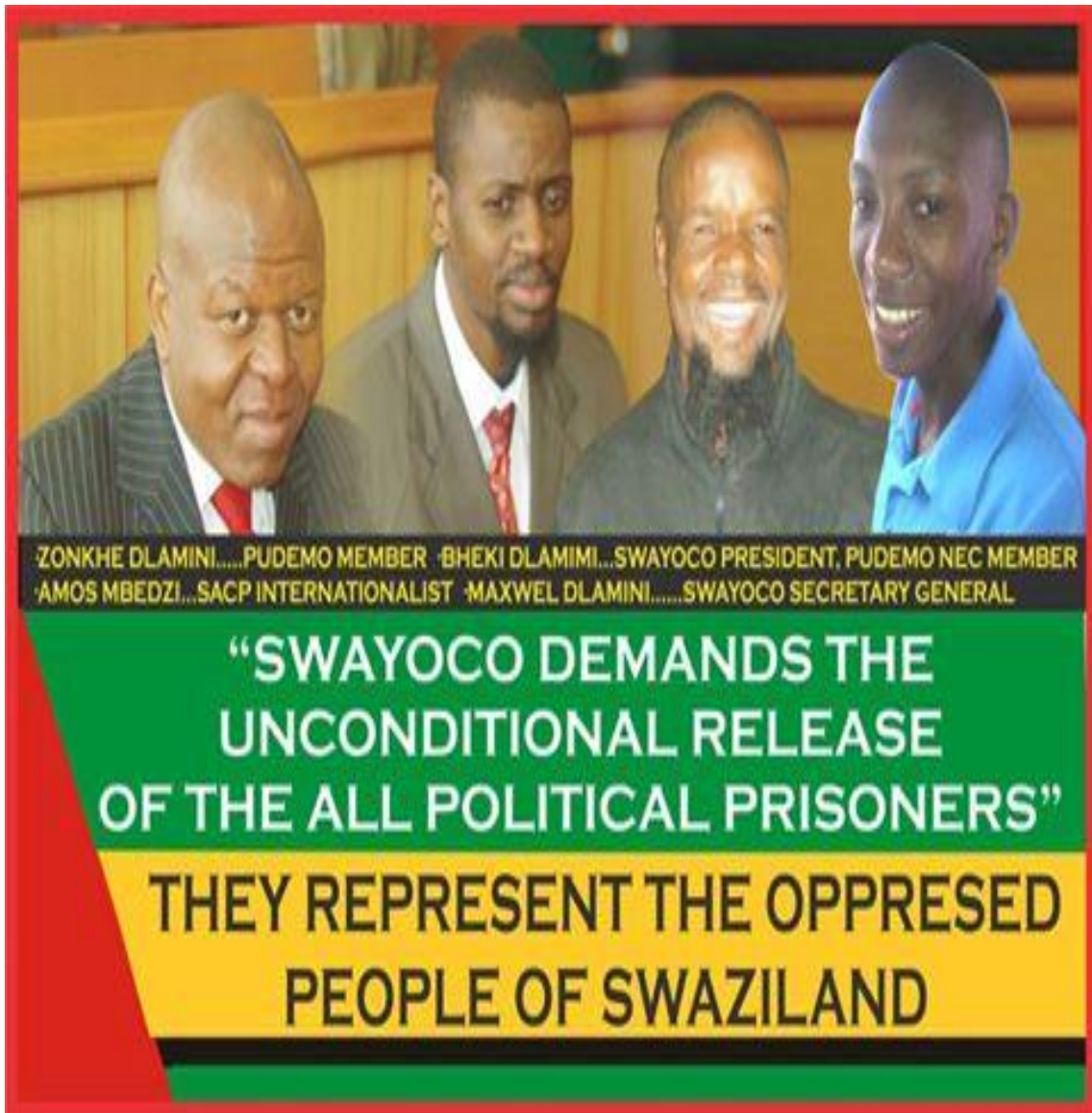
PUDEMO has, it has been highlighted above, over the years, witnessed the arrest and detention of its leaders and activists. This signaled the intensification of the organisation's persecution. According to Mario Masuku, "some members of PUDEMO fled Swaziland during the *Liqoqo* era and still reside in Europe, Australia and South Africa."¹⁶ Masuku noted that PUDEMO members such as Jabulani Matsebula, Dumezweni Dlamini, Gavin McFadden, Gabriel Mkhumane¹⁷, Lucky Mthembu, David

¹⁶ Interview, Mario Masuku, 14 August 2015.

¹⁷ Dr Gabriel Mkhumane died as PUDEMO's Deputy President in 2008 in Nelspruit. He was a Swazi activist who had lived in exile for 24 years. He fled to Mozambique in 1984 and then to Cuba. As Cuban trained medical doctor he joined Themba Hospital in KaBokweni near Nelspruit, in the Republic of South Africa, as a paediatrician in 2000, to be closer to the Kingdom of Swaziland. He held this position until his untimely death. He was also the PUDEMO Special Representative for Africa and the Caribbean. It was alleged by PUDEMO that he was assassinated by Swazi state agents in 2008. According to the Swazi regime, Dr. Mkhumane was killed by criminals.

Placard 2

A SWAYOCO Placard demanding the unconditional release of all political prisoners



Source: PUDEMO website – www.pudemo.org

Vilakati and others were forced to flee the country at the time of *Liqoqo*.¹⁸ Opponents of the Swazi dictatorship are frequently intimidated and arrested. This is the case particularly with its long-time President, Mario Masuku.

Mario Masuku has become synonymous with political prison because of the frequent and targeted arrests over the years. He even says, in jest: “I have always said that I have three homes; the first one is my family home, the second one is prison and the third one is in heaven.”¹⁹ Even his family has felt the suffering caused by his repeated arrests for his political beliefs.²⁰ In his biography, he wrote, “As a freedom fighter, leader and family man, there are moments when you find yourself alone, lonely and helpless. You simply feel conditions around you are in collusion with the state enemy and ask yourself – which way now?”²¹ One can even suggest that Mario Masuku has become the most well-known prisoner on Swazi soil. In his *Briefing to diplomats*, Mario Masuku said: “I can testify to the unbearable conditions in Swazi jails, certainly because I have been a regular visitor myself.”²²

Since the famous 1991 PUDEMO member’s Treason Trial, Mario Masuku has come to symbolise Swazi people’s resistance and determination to stand brave against state terror. He is the figurehead of the ever-growing resistance and defiance movement in the Kingdom of Swaziland, which has been the hallmark of PUDEMO, SWAYOCO and their allies together with the whole progressive civil society family. Following a protest in October 2000, Mario Masuku was arrested and charged with sedition and subversion. He was granted bail a month later, however under stringent conditions. As there was no progress towards a trial, Masuku decided to defy the bail conditions in September 2001,

¹⁸ Interview, Mario Masuku, 14 August 2015.

¹⁹ Interview, Mario Masuku, 14 August 2015.

²⁰ *Times of Swaziland*, Police, and Prison haunt Mario Masuku’s son, 31 March 2015.

²¹ *Times of Swaziland*, Mario’s biography: a story of a man no stranger to controversy, 24 May 2009.

²² The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *Towards a new and democratic Swaziland: President Mario Masuku’s briefing to diplomats*, n. d.

Photograph 15

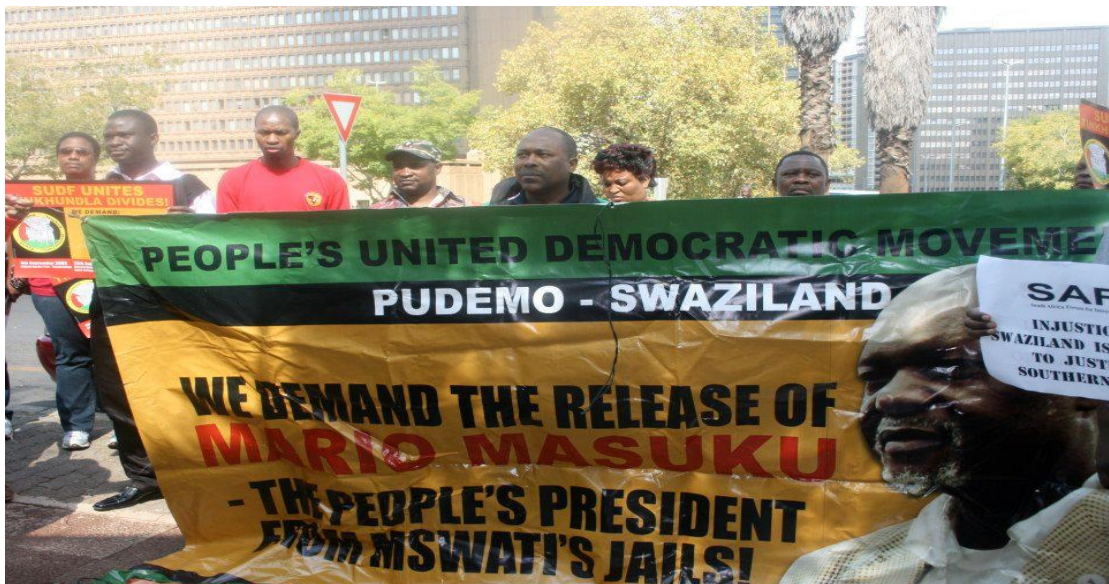
Mario Masuku and Maxwell Dlamini during a court appearance



Source: Photograph by author, 16 November 2014.

Photograph 16

PUDEMO banner displayed during a picket at the Swazi consulate in Johannesburg on 30 September 2012



Source: Bongani Masuku's personal album.

upon which he was re-arrested and put in solitary confinement at Matsapha High Security Prison. He remained in custody until August 2002 when his trial began and he was acquitted of all charges.

In November 2008, one day after the government declared PUDEMO a terrorist organisation under the STA and raided the organisation's offices, Mario Masuku was arrested again. Police claimed to have found literature on weapon-making on the premises, but could not present any evidence. Knowing from experience that bail was likely to delay his trial even more, Mario Masuku decided to remain in custody and was moved to Matsapha High Security Prison. The imprisonment drew wide national and international attention; nevertheless, the judiciary took until September 2009 to begin his trial. He was acquitted of all charges on his first day of trial as the prosecution had presented no evidence. Mario Masuku's case was a prominent example of many PUDEMO leaders and activists' plight. The law was twisted and charges often fabricated, while arrestees remained under legal restrictions for months and legal proceedings did not progress.

Since the beginning of 1991, especially after the Treason Trial against PUDEMO leadership, state violence, terror and torture have increased. PUDEMO members, who are opposed to (or opponents of) the Swazi government enjoyed no protection from physical abuse. The torture of PUDEMO detainees became very common and attacks on PUDEMO protesters were routine. Arrests and detentions have been the weapon of choice used by the police to clamp down on members of PUDEMO. Many PUDEMO and SWAYOCO members remain in out-of-prison detention under strict bail conditions. Some are facing various sentences and some are already serving them, ranging from 15 to 20 and even 85 years in prison.

The 1998 bombings of the Deputy Prime Minister's offices and other key government installations, coupled with the vicious state response to the PUDEMO Operation "*Ulibambe Lingashoni*" (Don't Let the Sun Go Down) resulted in the exiling of SWAYOCO leaders. It also marked the birth of the 1998 Administrative Order Act. This

Act made it possible for chiefs to discourage and suppress opposition towards the King. The 1998 Administrative Order Act consolidated all powers to carry out unlimited judicial responsibilities and gave it to the chiefs. The rural poor are required to provide free labour to the traditional institutions and chiefs. Fines and threats of evictions from agricultural land are frequently used by the chiefs as deterrents against dissent. Such reinforces the effective repression of local communities and stabilises the *Tinkhundla* base.

PUDEMO was ‘declared’ the Swazi state’s enemy number one. This was shown by the unprecedented massive arrests of SWAYOCO and PUDEMO leaders and activists alike.

According to Mario Masuku:

PUDEMO has travelled a journey through the valley of jailing, torture, exiling and even murder of its own activists and leaders. We have been exposed to levels of state terror no force on Swazi soil has or can measure up to. Is it not by accident that our name and that of our auxiliary structures and allies are mentioned directly in the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 in Swaziland?²³

Mario Masuku decries the ill treatment he and his political organisation receive from the Swazi state agents. In his *Briefing to diplomats*, he said:

The *Tinkhundla* regime is on a warpath against the democracy loving people of Swaziland. The Swazi regime continues to inflict legislative and political terror upon the people as the political atmosphere in the country has become even grimmer and threatening reflecting the growing insecurity of the regime....

The several attempts on individual comrades’ lives is one example of the numerous assaults, tortures, arbitrary arrests and all forms of persecution on men and women who refuse to bow down to the tyranny of the *Tinkhundla*. Families of political activists are daily terrorised by the regime in its desperate attempt to crush, through force of arms, the democratic movement and instil fear amongst the oppressed and struggling masses.

In the recent past we have seen the following indicators of the worsening crisis:

²³ The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *PUDEMO’s 30th Anniversary Oration: 6th July 2013 Message from the People’s President Mario Masuku*, 2013, p. 4.

- The intensified arrests of PUDEMO and SWAYOCO activists for holding peaceful demonstrations and spreading the message of liberation throughout all corners of the country.²⁴

The Kingdom of Swaziland's government argues that the Swazi people are happy and satisfied with things as they are. The majority of the Swazi people are saying the *Tinkhundla* system of government must stay. This argument is based on the notion that it is 'unSwazi' to complain about anything or to challenge the King. PUDEMO's demands for political rights such as freedom of assembly and speech are frequently criticised on national radio as foreign ideologies in conflict with Swazi culture. The 'myth' further suggests that the 2005 Swaziland Constitution was drafted after consultation with and was adopted by the people. PUDEMO is of the view that such was not true.

One would agree with L. Dlamini's observation below which says:

The competing narratives on political parties in Swaziland in the public domain have been based on three issues. Firstly, there has been an assertion by the governing authorities that the Swazi people are not ready and do not want political parties because they are divisive, threaten the unity and way of life of the Swazi people and the peace of the country. On the other hand, proponents of multi-party democracy have continued to insist that this assertion is false and that it is the governing authorities that are against political parties because these would allow political diversity and threaten their hold on power. The third issue has been that in reality there is general ignorance about what political parties are, how they operate and what their role is in politics, democracy and good governance. This is linked to the deliberate depoliticisation of the populace since the 1973 Decree, which resulted in the people's exclusive exposure to the monarchy and current system. They therefore lack basic knowledge and understanding of what other alternatives exist.²⁵

One can suggest that the political order, and disorder, in Swaziland is based upon a locally contextualised brand of "unique democracy". It is rooted in relative culture, which holds that there are no universal standards by which to measure cultures. As much as the

²⁴ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *Towards a new and democratic Swaziland: President Mario Masuku's briefing to diplomats*, undated.

²⁵ Dlamini, *Swaziland: Democracy and Political Participation*, p. 8.

view in the latter sentence is true, a certain elite maintains that democracy is a foreign concept and consequently should be modified for the country. It can be argued that this elite attempts to employ legitimate domination through tradition. In fact, it can be said, to a certain extent, the state resembles pre-industrial feudalist states, with institutions and bureaucracy that created a paper-thin veneer of democratic modern state. The state's version of tradition cannot incorporate a modern opposition's demands. The political debate at one level is fundamentally on rational traditional grounds for legitimating state authority. Because authority and legitimacy are lacking, coercion and violence become necessary for the monarchy to maintain its grip on power.

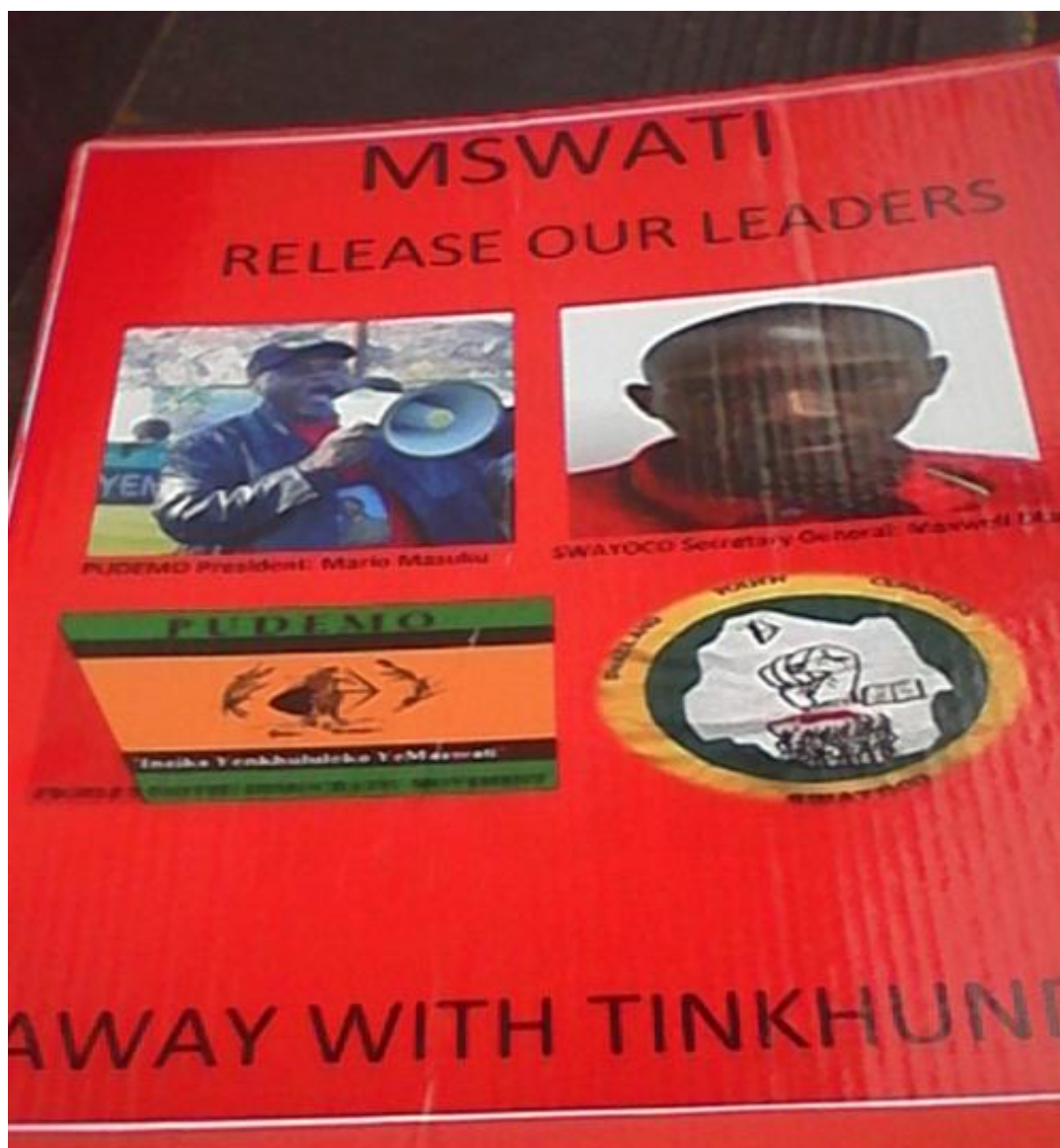
Despite the introduction of the new Constitution in the Kingdom of Swaziland in 2005, multi-party democracy is still outlawed. What one observes is the fact that there is a strong commitment to the *Tinkhundla* system of government due to the lack of transition to a more democratic system of governance. The 2005 Swazi Constitution merely formalised the monarch's absolute powers and subordinated all institutions of government under his direct rule. The Prime Minister and his Cabinet are appointed by the King. They are appointed from a majority of elected Members of Parliament. It is worth mentioning that, in any case, this is not peculiar to the Kingdom of Swaziland. What is peculiar, however, is the fact that Members of Parliament are elected through a process which is controlled by the King and which does not allow political party participations. The 2005 Swazi Constitution allows Swazis to participate in elections only as individuals.

The *Tinkhundla* system of government remains intact in the new Constitution. Section 80 of the 2005 Swaziland Constitution speaks of a "democratic, participatory" system within what appears to be a bicameral Parliament. In reality the bicameral Parliament is a veneer that covers up the real governance processes by which the monarchy micro-manages all decisions in the country. Rather than decentralise power, as Section 80 of the Constitution suggests, the *Tinkhundla* concentrates the power in *Ngwenyama*, the King, and maintains the royal family's political dominance.²⁶

²⁶ 2005 Swaziland Constitution, S. 80.

Photograph 17

A Photograph of a PUDEMO and SWAYOCO placard calling for the release of PUDEMO President, Mario Masuku and SWAYOCO Secretary General, Maxwell Dlamini



Source: Photograph by author, 17 April 2015.

In her biography of King Sobhuza II, anthropologist Hilda Kuper similarly suggests that:

District Commissioners, all of whom were still white, were effective enough as ‘chiefs of office’ administering ... but with changing circumstances ... there was a need to develop a Swazi system of regional government.... In 1953...Sobhuza came forward with a suggestion to decentralise Swazi administration through the formation of *Tinkhundla*.²⁷

Both Kuper and the 2005 Swaziland Constitution suggest that the aim of developing the *Tinkhundla* was devolution of state power, or a decentralising of administration. While there has been a lot of decentralisation under the *Tinkhundla* system which is recognisable, it is also more accurate to see *Tinkhundla* as a network through which loyalty is recognised and rewarded with patronage, land and jobs. Power and authority are concentrated in this structure. At the basis of *Tinkhundla* lies sworn loyalty to the monarchy through the chiefs. The fact that political parties, including PUDEMO, remain banned under King Mswati III despite the introduction of the new Constitution in 2005 reflects two things. First, it reflects that King Mswati III is unreceptive towards political parties. Secondly, it reflects that the monarchy is unwilling to concede to the democratic principle that the Swazi people have a right to organise themselves politically. King Mswati III does not tolerate any questioning of his absolute authority to govern as he sees fit.

PUDEMO has misgivings about the 2005 Swaziland Constitution. Dlamini points out that, “the Constitution remains conceptually skewed in favour of the 1973 Decree.”²⁸ PUDEMO argues that the current Constitution has its shortcomings. This is the case because “political parties remained banned to participate in the politics of the country. According to the constitution, it said that political parties will not contest for elections, and hence cannot be part of the legislature, executive, but status quo will prevail.”²⁹

²⁷ Kuper, *Sobhuza II*, p. 185.

²⁸ Dlamini, *Swaziland: Democracy and Political Participation*, p. 2.

²⁹ The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *The 22nd Commemoration of the People’s Movement Unbroken Struggle for the Freedom of the People of Swaziland on 9 July 2005 in Manzini*, 7 July 2005.

During the 22nd anniversary celebration of PUDEMO's formation in 2005, PUDEMO commented on the draft document saying: "It is clear that the final document will not reflect the aspirations of our people."³⁰ Long-time serving PUDEMO stalwart Zodwa Mkhonta states clearly that:

PUDEMO believes the people of Swaziland want a change in the manner in which the country is governed. They specifically want to exercise the freedom to form political parties that are able to participate in elections and provide policy alternatives from which the people can choose. By not allowing political-party candidates to participate in elections as representatives of political parties and confining them to individually based participation, the whole reason behind the existence and operation of political parties is undermined and the political parties are rendered useless in their quest for the power to govern.

Further reinforcing this position is government's refusal to enact legislation that recognises political parties and enables them to register and operate. The government's actions in this regard give credence to the assertions that there was never any political will by those in authority to actually implement the 2005 Constitution.³¹

Furthermore, PUDEMO members do not enjoy constitutional rights to assemble and protest freely. When they do protest and assemble, it is illegal in terms of the country's laws. Police routinely refuse permission for PUDEMO and SWAYOCO members to gather, and meetings and marches are routinely forcibly attacked and broken up when they occur. These instances have been numerous. One in case was on 12 April 2011, when a coalition of student and political groups called a "day of rage" to coincide with the 38th anniversary of the abrogation of the Kingdom of Swaziland's Independence Constitution, which guaranteed multi-party democracy. The only time when SWAYOCO (effectively) PUDEMO was allowed to march from Manzini to Mbabane was during the time when Mr Obed Dlamini was Prime Minister in the early 1990s.

³⁰ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *The 22nd Commemoration of the People's Movement Unbroken Struggle for the Freedom of the People of Swaziland on 9 July 2005 in Manzini*, 7 July 2005.

³¹ Interview, Zodwa Mkhonta, 22 November 2014.

This protest was merely a pro-democracy demonstration. However, it was met with violence and arrests. The protest was announced correctly and well in advance, and conducted in a peaceful way to support legitimate demands for more democratic rights for the Kingdom of Swaziland's citizens. It was suppressed by heavily armed police and military. The police and army occupied the cities of Mbabane and Manzini as well as other important centres with ostentatious display of power. They used teargas against protesters, arrested hundreds of people and reportedly even fired live ammunition.

The Swazi regime branded the protest an illegal one. It is for that reason that the security forces detained hundreds of alleged political activists at road blocks and forcibly broke up demonstrations in Mbabane and Manzini. Many dozens of protesters were injured and some hospitalised, but there were no fatalities.³² Some of the detainees were charged under the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008. A number of known political activists were placed under house arrest in the days leading up to the protest, including PUDEMO President Mario Masuku.

Further restriction of civil freedoms was seen with the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008. It was consented to by the Head of State, King Mswati III, on 7 August 2008, after a speedy passage through Parliament. The Suppression of Terrorism Act Bill was tabled in Parliament with a certificate of urgency. Therefore, the Bill was not subjected to the routine technique of publication in the Government Gazette for 30 days to allow for public comment.³³

³² *Swazi Newsletter*, 22 April 2011 SAK-swazinewsletter@yahoo.co.uk (accessed on 25 July 2015).

³³ *Swazi Observer*, MPs want to consult on Terrorism Bill, 13 May 2008; *Times of Swaziland*, Ex-PM's broken promise, 19 November 2008; *Times of Swaziland*, Just Thinking: A.T.'s Law, 21 November 2008.

Photograph 18**Members of Swazi security forces beating up a protestor during a protest march**

Source: PUDEMO website – www.pudemo.org

On 14 November 2008 the Prime Minister of Swaziland, Dr Sibusiso Barnabas Dlamini, using his powers, proclaimed that four organisations: the Peoples United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), the Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), the South African-based Swaziland Solidarity Network (SSN), and the Swaziland People's Liberation Army (*Umbane*), "have been declared specified entities", under Section 28 of the STA. This followed, in September 2008, at a traditional meeting at *Sibaya*, the public commendation by King Mswati III of suffocating dissenters and denying them all possibilities of earning a living.³⁴ He pressed the police to "deal with terrorist elements and their sympathisers resolutely and effectively".³⁵

Jabulane Matsebula, PUDEMO representative in Australia, analysed the scenario thus:

Rejected as a yesterday man and a hopeless actor in the global political theatre, King Mswati III returned to home ground to vent his anger and frustration on Swazi citizens. Shortly after the United Nations General Assembly, he summoned the nation to his royal residence for what local and international media widely described as a historical event in which the ruling monarch declared war on Swazi and South African citizens. He accused Swazis and South Africans of engaging in acts of terrorism against Swaziland. The rage in his tone and use of sadistic words such as *abakhanywe* (strangle them) generated a deep sense of fear and anxiety in many people. It caused significant concern that a new wave of political repression will soon follow.³⁶

The Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 does not clearly describe the meaning of 'terrorist act' and therefore poses a continuous danger to PUDEMO and a broad range of

³⁴ The King's call was especially significant for rural dwellers because the King, through local chiefs, controls the allocation of family home sites and agricultural land, the distribution of food relief and the award of scholarships without which large numbers of Swazi children and youth cannot attend primary and high schools or university. The King allows chiefs, all of whom owe their jobs to him, to make up their own by-laws and to use the full might of the state to ensure compliance. Swazis who speak out against royal and chiefly authority risk losing their homes and farm plots. These ever present threats make most rural Swazis be very cautious of what they do and say.

³⁵ *Swazi Observer*, We'll smoke out terrorists' sympathisers, 15 November 2008; *Swazi Observer*, King Declares War on Terror, 17 October 2008; *Times of Swaziland*, His Majesty declares war on terrorists, 17 October 2008.

³⁶ *People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO)*, "Strangling the King's opponents: Swaziland's war on terrorism." <http://swazilandsolidaritynetworkcanada.wikispaces.com/Strangling-the-King's-opponents:Swaziland's-war-on-terrorism,Nov-24-2008> (accessed on 25 July 2015).

normal civil society activities. Attorney General, Majahenkhaba Dlamini noted that those at risk of ramifications included members of proscribed organisations and any formation or group in the country which carried out activities in partnership with those organisations.

Such admonitions, combined with the far-reaching and vague wording of some key provisions in the law along with heavy consequences for any breach, have contributed to an atmosphere of insecurity and coercion amongst a wide range of civil society and political organisations. This was apparent in the decision taken by church and other civil society leaders on 28 November 2008 to cancel a planned meeting with members of the diplomatic community after the police insisted on being present during the meeting.³⁷ The Prime Minister was reported also to have directed diplomats not to be seen ‘shaking hands with terrorists’ or sympathisers.³⁸ On 3 December 2008 police arrived at a privately organised workshop comprising media workers and demanded admission to sit in and observe the proceedings. The members of the police force were persuaded to withdraw, but the episode caused considerable uneasiness amongst the participants.

By December 2008 one person had been arrested and charged with flouting a provision of the STA. Up until 2013, many followed. PUDEMO President Mario Masuku, was remanded in custody after being charged with contravening Section 11 (1) (b) by “unlawfully and knowingly” giving “support to the commission of a terrorist act” by making certain statements on 27 September 2008 at the funeral of one of the men, Swazi lawyer Musa ‘MJ’ Dlamini, who died in the Lozitha Bridge bombing incident.³⁹

³⁷ Swaziland Coalition of Concerned Civic Organisations (SCCCO), *Media Release: Police force abandonment of meeting between diplomats and the Swazi civil society*, 28 November 2008; *Swazi Observer*, Cops stopped meeting with diplomats - Musa Hlophe, 1 December 2008; *Times of Swaziland*, Police officers stop ‘Nov 28’ meeting, 1 December 2008.

³⁸ *Swazi Observer*, PM warns diplomats against befriending terrorists, 5 December 2008.

³⁹ Charge sheet In the matter of: *The King and Mario Masuku*, in the High Court, Mbabane, Case No. 348/08.

Bongani Masuku says that concerns around the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 related to the fact that the description of terrorism was not reasonable. He argues that:

The passing of the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 was an attempt to stain the legitimate activities of the progressive movement. PUDEMO, together with its youth wing, SWAYOCO, have been the main victims in the past of this label, for obvious reasons. In this regard, the regime is still looking for ways to legitimise its illegitimate attack on the activities of the progressive movement, which have become understood by every democracy-loving person all over the world.

The *Tinkhundla* regime was trying to secure a space in the global atmosphere characterised by insecurity, as a partner in the search for peace, but in the process it is also seeking to use that space to crush the democratic movement. It has used such acts for years, such as the definition of political activities as criminal activities or outlawed/illegal activities. These are the crude methods it has used to maintain itself in power, hence the obvious fact that this is not meant to target some terrorist somewhere, but the “terrorist”, as defined by the royal regime.⁴⁰

Mario Masuku also added his voice on the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008. He says that:

The most important highlight of this persecution by the *Tinkhundla* regime was the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008. Its definitions of ‘terrorist act’, ‘terrorist group’ and ‘terrorist individual’ were so vague that any individual or organisation critical of the King and government ran the risk of being persecuted as ‘terrorist’. Courts of law had limited capacity to review these government decisions and it was the defendants’ task to prove that they were not terrorists.

Punishments were severe for the ‘terrorist groups’ and their affiliates and ‘giving support’ to these groups also became a criminal offence. The Act gave security forces vast powers to intimidate and interfere with the activities of PUDEMO, making arbitrary arrests at protests and using excessive force against PUDEMO activists with impunity.⁴¹

Amnesty International has criticised the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008, arguing that it undermines human rights. Amnesty International has condemned it as violating

⁴⁰ Interview, Bongani Masuku, 18 April 2015.

⁴¹ Interview, Mario Masuku, 14 August 2015.

Swazis' freedom of expression, association and assembly.⁴² It pressed the government of Swaziland to reverse or immediately revise the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008, and to fully protect and uphold human rights in its responses to any act of violence, including suspected acts of terrorism. Amnesty International has also suggested that the authorities take actions to improve the criminal justice system's capacities. This should be done in order to bring to justice suspected committers of all acts of violence, within a basis of respect for human rights. If there remains a proven need for precise counter-terrorism law, the government must guarantee that a modified law includes only processes essential and comparable to that specific need and which are consistent with the Kingdom of Swaziland's human rights commitments. These laws should be legislated only after wider public consultation and discussion.⁴³

By 2013, PUDEMO, SWAYOCO, the lesser known Swaziland People's Liberation Army (*Umbane*) and SSN continue to be proscribed. But PUDEMO leaders including its President Mario Masuku continue to go about their party business openly inside the country. However, the government disallows large PUDEMO meetings. One result of the ambiguous legality of PUDEMO (and other political parties) is the absence of legislation in the Kingdom of Swaziland governing facets of political life such as registration, regulation, funding and financial control. PUDEMO does not enjoy constitutional rights to gather and protest freely. Police consistently refuse authorisation for PUDEMO to gather, and meetings and marches are habitually and forcibly attacked and broken up by state agents when they happen.

In a nutshell, the history of the Kingdom of Swaziland is littered with numerous examples of PUDEMO's political persecution especially between 1991 and 2013. It all started following the birth of PUDEMO in 1983. Since then there have been extrajudicial killings by security forces, the use of torture by the police, beatings and the use of

⁴² *Swazi party leader killed in jail* <http://www.news24.com/Africa/News/Swazi-party-leader-killed-in-jail-20100506> (accessed on 25 July 2015).

⁴³ Amnesty International, *Press statement by Amnesty International: Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 undermines human rights report*, 9 January 2009.

extreme force on detainees. There have also been pre-trial detentions, restrictions on freedoms of assembly, association and movement, prohibitions of political activity and harassment of political activists. As a result, PUDEMO has, at times, been forced to retreat because of state repression. There is no denying that the *Tinkhundla* system of government has made PUDEMO its special project. Such has adversely affected the movement's mobility and strategic ability to carry out its duties and responsibilities.

The media in Swaziland is, to a certain extent, still monopolised by the *Tinkhundla* regime and serves to misinform the public about the democratic movement's activities, particularly those of PUDEMO and SWAYOCO. There is a widespread systematic propaganda which demonises multi-party democracy as evil, foreign and divisive. This is done in order to instil a sense of loyalty to the *Tinkhundla* system. This is made possible by the *Tinkhundla* regime's limitless access to the media which become the key instruments of character assassination against PUDEMO which enjoys no media access. There is no media access for PUDEMO in the country. Since 2008, press freedom has deteriorated in the country. Independent media and individual reporters and editors have been subjected to harassment and intimidation, and have been made to work in a generally hostile environment. The result has been the noticeable cowing of the independent press outlets, mainly the Times of Swaziland and The Nation magazine which are privately owned.

The Swazi state has strong control over the media even though this control is not complete. The state controls all radio stations except for an American evangelical broadcaster known as the Voice of the Church (VOC). It is only the private daily paper, the Times of Swaziland, and The Nation magazine which occasionally engage in minimal criticism of the King. They do so on few occasions only, largely out of fear and self-censorship.⁴⁴ But they do report on cases relating to the country's political situation and can be sometimes viewed as vocal.

⁴⁴ BBC, *Swaziland country profile* http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1069035.stm (accessed on 25 July 2015).

The constitutional rights to free expression of the press and other media are severely restricted in practice, as a result, especially with respect to dissemination of information around political issues. The King has the power to revoke constitutional guarantees to freedom of expression and press freedom at his discretion. Publishing criticism of the royal family is banned and self-censorship in the media is widespread, as journalists are routinely subjected to threats and attacks by the state. There have also been reports that the government monitored phone calls of political activists with the help of MTN, the only mobile phone network in the country, which has been accused of collaborating with the government.⁴⁵

On 31 August 2013, Swaziland's Head of State, King Mswati III, announced that a lightning bolt from a cloudless sky had brought him a command from God to introduce 'monarchical democracy' as a replacement for the present electoral system. Under this 'new form', political parties, including PUDEMO, remain banned from taking part in elections and the Swazi people continue to vote only for a small number of the power structure's handpicked candidates for the House of Assembly. The King still chooses the Prime Minister and other government officials and therefore all branches of the government are still subservient to the King. In reality, only the name of the *Tinkhundla* system of government changed, everything else is still the same.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the hostile attitude of government towards PUDEMO. PUDEMO has continually campaigned for the unbanning of political parties, particularly PUDEMO's own decriminalisation. This chapter showed that PUDEMO is currently the only proscribed political organisation, together with its auxiliaries in Swaziland. While political parties in general remain banned in the Kingdom Swaziland, only PUDEMO is legally proscribed and its activities criminalised by the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008. A number of provisions in this Act are sweeping and imprecise. In conjunction

⁴⁵ S. Phiri, *The problem with Swaziland. Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA)* <http://www.osisa.org/resources/doc/PDFs/Openspace-Sep2007/1-6-p57-60-SamPhiri.pdf> (accessed on 24 January 2016).

with government warnings of heavy penalties for “associating” with certain groups, declared on 14 November to be terrorist “entities” under the law. The provisions of the Act are contributing to an atmosphere of uncertainty and of intimidation amongst a wide range of civil society organisations. This Act forms the legal basis for the consistent, targeted and ruthless crackdown on PUDEMO leaders and activists.

This chapter demonstrated that PUDEMO is a proscribed entity. PUDEMO’s illegality, which originally derived from its banning by the 1973 Decree, was overridden by the 2005 Swaziland Constitution, which allowed the existence of political parties (but prevented them from contesting elections). This chapter also showed that PUDEMO has been on the receiving end of aggression of the highest magnitude which includes harassment by state agents, malicious arrests and brutal beatings of peaceful demonstrators.

It has been shown that PUDEMO is the movement that bore the bulk of *Tinkhundla* state terror. PUDEMO’s crime is that it is the “consistent defender of the people’s cause and [advances] the most fundamental principles of the struggle for democracy in the Kingdom of Swaziland.”⁴⁶ This chapter noted that PUDEMO members have been arrested, tortured and subjected to all forms of persecution, hence the exile of so many of them. Despite being an outlawed political party, PUDEMO continues to speak out against the lack of democracy and equality in the country, calling for the government of Swaziland to begin the democratisation process.

⁴⁶ The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *Global Campaign to Free Mario Masuku and all Prisoners of Conscience in Swaziland Now*, 2015.

CHAPTER 9

A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF PUDEMO'S CONTRIBUTION TO DEMOCRATISATION IN SWAZILAND

Introduction

This chapter notes that, in the year 2013, PUDEMO celebrated 30 years of existence. This was indeed a landmark accomplishment which was not reached without difficulties, challenges and failures faced or experienced by the movement in its operations. This chapter seeks to critically assess PUDEMO's work and its contribution to democratisation in Swaziland since its formation in 1983 up until 2013. The chapter shows that the journey from 1983 to 2013 has been a long and winding one. The movement has had several knocks along the way, many of which it has been able to overcome while pressing forward in its aim of attaining multi-party democracy in the Kingdom of Swaziland. That, of course, does not mean that it was left unscathed by the troubles it faced, such as the ill-discipline of cadres, some members leaving the movement to form their own political parties, etc. But through it all, the chapter seeks to show, PUDEMO is still standing and going strong in 2013.

PUDEMO's Internal Weaknesses and Failures

PUDEMO has experienced internal weakness and failures. Some of these were blunders that exacerbated its situation such that it needed to work on changing them. Some of these weaknesses include a serious absence of continuous cadre improvement and political investment in its personnel. This had led to weak capability of its very enthusiastic members. These are activists who are not adequately equipped with the indispensable expertise and knowledge to advance the revolution. PUDEMO's Secretary

Brochure 2

PUDEMO's 30th anniversary brochure



After decades of plundering the economy and stealing from the poor, Mswati tells the people that the answer is prayer and the Bible.



People's United Democratic Movement - PUDEMO

We reject the blackmail, that when we demand our freedoms, we are fighting the king. If truth be told, a king who oppresses and starve a nation to death is fighting God himself. So, in this case Mswati is the one guilty of crimes. While AIDS continues to ravage the nation, there are no anti-retroviral drugs in hospitals, yet every time he has a flue, he goes overseas for world class health care. While there are no bursaries for university students, he continues to buy new weapons, recruits more police and soldiers and is preparing for war. The question is, a war with whom? This is a war against the people. Instead of allowing democratic rule and allowing PUDEMO the space to implement its democratic policies to revive the economy, he tells the nation to pray. This is a man who knows his crimes and fears that he may be held to account once democracy has been won.

PUDEMO has continuously maintained that what happens to the king will be determined by the people of Swaziland. We cannot prescribe for them what to do with him, but that will also depend on how long he wants to keep the nation in oppression and risk being overthrown altogether. We cannot stop the people overthrowing the king if they feel he is the cause of their suffering. We still believe that we are correct and we also do believe that the king can still repent from his sins. Until that happens;

- Boycott Tinkhundla elections and a waste of time and public funds. Those who argue that they can change the system from within are driven by ambition to join the corruption crusade. They are driven by greed because all who have done so before them have been rewarded by the system. Expose the lie that fighting crocodiles in the river has ever worked.
- Demand a multi-party democratic government
- release political prisoners
- Fight for adequate health care, free education, decent hospitals
- Join PUDEMO where you live
- Build strong trade Unions and fight for "one country one federation" – demand the unbanning of TUCOSWA.

JOIN PUDEMO AND FIGHT FOR A FREE SWAZILAND



PUDEMO President – People's Liberator

Liberate Swaziland Now!

The year 2013, marks a significant period in the history and life of the Swazi people. It has been exactly 40 years of oppression since 12 April 1973 when the late King Sobhuzall dissolved a democratically elected government, banned political organisations and suspended the constitution. Since then, the people of Swaziland have lived like slaves in a land of their birth, with no basic freedoms like forming and belonging to political organisations of their choice. We call on all the people of Swaziland to fight for their freedom on this day, every year.

The year 2013, also marks 30 years of unbroken struggle since the formation of PUDEMO on the 6th of April 1983. PUDEMO has continued to lead a fierce struggle for the total liberation of the people of Swaziland through raising awareness about the extent of the royal oppression and being the bearer of the aspirations of the people of Swaziland who so desperately want to be free from this autocratic rule by the king and his family.

PUDEMO represents an alternative country; a free one in which it is the will of the people that rules, not that of kings and army generals. We represent a society where the people vote for a government of their own not one which is meant to serve a few members of the royal family, in which the right to exist is not dependent on the mercy of individuals but is defended and protected by the law. PUDEMO stands for an environment where there is accountability and transparency in the way in which the country is governed, not a situation where raising your opinion is treated as challenging the king. In fact, PUDEMO stands for a Swaziland where the king's role will never cross paths with a democratically elected government which governs as per the will of the people. We invite all the people of Swaziland to join PUDEMO in celebrating such a rich history of struggle and in fighting for a free and democratic Swaziland.

Source: PUDEMO website – www.pudemo.org

General Sandile Makhanya believes that such is not in the best interest of the movement, the democratisation struggle and Swaziland's oppressed people.¹

The foremost undertaking of organisation building is cadreship (membership) development. PUDEMO needs members that seek out to continually advance their capacity to assist the people and win their confidence in their day-to-day work through practical and continuous involvement with their daily struggles. It would bode well with PUDEMO if their members were to be leaders of communities and sectors in which they operate. When concluding its Congress in Durban between 16 and 18 January 2009, PUDEMO said in a statement:

We have come a long way, with difficulties, challenges, advances and setbacks. Certain tendencies in the very recent past point to the need for intensified induction of members, political education and cadreship development as part of an established culture in the movement. There is also a need for strengthening of a culture of discipline and high moral standards in our society through the exemplary conduct of PUDEMO cadres in the struggle.²

PUDEMO has also failed to support performing, determined and hardworking members. This resulted in such members being soft targets of opportunists and commentators within and outside PUDEMO's ranks. Makhanya agrees that such has been widely observed on social networks and sometimes in newspaper articles. He insists that commentators make these comments for their own personal and material gains.³

There was also a lack of commitment to building a rock-hard, stable and well-capacitated organisational infrastructure and institutions. In a wide-ranging interview, Bongani Masuku agreed with this.⁴ Had such been in place, PUDEMO would have been able to drive all its programmes through effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of

¹ Interview, Sandile Makhanya, 16 November 2014.

² The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *Durban Declaration Extraordinary Congress of PUDEMO held 16-18 January 2009*, 2009.

³ Interview, Sandile Makhanya, 16 November 2014.

⁴ Interview, Bongani Masuku, 18 April 2015.

every member's performance within the organisation. This would have been very helpful in ensuring that results of PUDEMO's actions and programmes were realised easily and promptly.

PUDEMO members lacked effective management skills. The availability of such could help to effectively ensure that all projects and programmes were able to deliver on time and in accordance with the quality required of them. Bongani Masuku agrees that it appears that, within PUDEMO, "there is a general acceptance of low standards and dissatisfying performance. It is my view that PUDEMO will not succeed without giving honest feedback about the need to deliver the required quality of services and input to get good results."⁵ In other words, the centre needs to hold before all things fall into line. This is very important because nothing happens by accident in a revolution or a struggle. Things happen because they are the result of a good plan and an effective drive by the centre towards a deliberate destination.

PUDEMO has been characterised by very weak disciplinary mechanisms and structures. These resulted in the widespread and tacitly accepted rampant ill-discipline within its structures, starting with lack of Congress mandates implementation by leaders. It must be noted that, at some point, disciplinary processes were non-existent to the point that the organisation was a nest for hooliganism. However, in recent years steps, however small and slow, were undertaken to change that. These have been able to take PUDEMO forward in the right direction. However, PUDEMO needs to act more decisively when leaders fail to lead by example, because they are supposed to be the source of inspiration and compass for all its members.

PUDEMO also lacks effective planning, firm implementation and monitoring, as well as programme evaluation at all levels. All this is perhaps the result of the lack of an overarching strategic plan to concretely assert how PUDEMO will be able to do what, when and with what resources. The strategic plan could also have assisted in the development

⁵ Interview, Bongani Masuku, 18 April 2015.

of means to determine how PUDEMO planned its roadmap, way forward, policies and other key documents of the movement. For instance, there was no department in the NEC with a calendar or budget of its own which could be used to measure what the department was to achieve, when and how.⁶ If this was the case, how could we then expect any other sub-structure or lower structure of the movement to be organised and to have a plan.

PUDEMO's campaigning and organising capacity was very low since 2008. Mario Masuku argues that "this was partly due to the introduction of the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008."⁷ The Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 had a serious negative impact on PUDEMO's work. But the truth of the matter is that, as observed by this scholar, it was not the reason why PUDEMO was unable to bring the masses to the streets. The reason for that was PUDEMO's inability to organise campaigns effectively. There are countries where conditions are several times more repressive than the Kingdom of Swaziland, but due to effective organising ability, masses were on the streets.

It is true that under the repressive conditions mobilisation and organisation is difficult for PUDEMO. The movement has been denied the right to organise, demonstrations are banned, there are detentions and police brutality. But PUDEMO's key mobilisation and organisation task remains necessary if it is to deepen its roots among the people of Swaziland. It must employ any method which allows for contact, communication and consultation with the people. This could prove helpful in promoting PUDEMO's message to the people for whom they claim to be fighting.

PUDEMO also lacks effective communication infrastructures. This applies to the movement's internal structures and with the wider public and world in general. This is a serious weakness in that PUDEMO has allowed itself to be viewed in light of the (false) image created by the *Tinkhundla* system of government. This has resulted in general public being unable to know what PUDEMO is and for what it stands. Bonginkhosi

⁶ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *PUDEMO's Organisational Renewal Plan – 2012, As Adopted at the PUDEMO National Policy Conference, Nelspruit, October, 2013, 2013.*

⁷ Interview, Mario Masuku, 14 August 2015.

Ntshangase agrees with this view and thinks that the movement needs to come up with methods which will be helpful in knowing the people's real thoughts and feelings. He says that "PUDEMO needs to build worker units, distribute pamphlets, make house to house visits, organise street meetings, form resident associations and community forums, etc."⁸

There are other factors contributing to PUDEMOs low campaigning and organising capacity. It could have resulted also from lack of a clearly determined plan to develop and train organisers, build a capable team, support its lower structures and set targets. These were to be implemented under the NEC's supervision. Such a structure was to be regularly on the ground demanding quality reports from all PUDEMO structures, validating those reports and intervening before any crisis reached un-manageable levels. This could have helped to improve the democratisation process because campaigning and organising is about building people's consciousness levels. It is also about the people's active involvement in the struggle for democracy and in the issues of daily concern to them.

If PUDEMO was to become a more popular and militant movement than it currently is, it would require that its activists take up issues closer to the hearts and minds of the people of Swaziland. Bongani Masuku says that "PUDEMO's agenda must penetrate the social, economic, political and cultural spheres of the Swazi society."⁹ The approach to organisation means that PUDEMO must always be at the level of the people. It must be able to gauge the feelings of the majority, their moods and understand the issues that are critical to them.

According to PUDEMO's 10 year Programme of Mass Action, Organisational Renewal and Capacity Building for People's Power,

⁸ Interview, Bonginkhosi Ntshangase, 20 April 2015.

⁹ Interview, Bongani Masuku, 18 April 2015.

The most outstanding factor contributing to organisational weakness, dismal performance and failure to adhere to deadlines for tasks have been identified to be the following in our ranks over the years:

- Lack of consequences for non-performance and disregard of organisational tasks.
- Lack of consistent, honest and principled criticism of poor performance which has become a growing culture.
- Silence even when things go wrong, thus choosing friendship, collegial relations and personal convenience over organisational tasks and principle.
- Lack of hardworking ethics, timeous reporting and general accountability for allocated tasks.
- Abuse of organisational resources and structures for personal and other interests.
- Demanding less than the required standards, thus promoting mediocrity and poor quality of delivery.
- Diversion from mandate or acting outside agreed and established organisational processes and norms.
- The need for an effective induction programme and structured probation to deepen the internalisation of PUDEMO traditions, revolutionary principles and the ethics of hard work.
- Taking the organisation for granted by being late, poorly performing, being dishonest in reporting and not respecting the supremacy of the organisation and its guiding documents.
- Publicly embarrassing the image and status of the movement without regard for its public standing.
- Disregard for political and ideological growth and lack of self-motivation for overall development. This includes low level of political consciousness and inability to perform tasks to the required levels and not do anything about it.
- Unwillingness to sacrifice and go out of the way for the work of PUDEMO.¹⁰

As a result, this has made PUDEMO to degenerate and fail to implement most of its programmes. Mario Masuku points out that “PUDEMO has to turn things around, not to be in a denial mode about these problems but deal with them directly and cleanse ourselves and the whole progressive movement of these ills.”¹¹

¹⁰ The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *PUDEMO’s 10 year Programme of Mass Action, Organisational Renewal and Capacity Building for People’s Power, As Adopted by the 8th General Congress of PUDEMO, 21-23 February 2014*, p. 8.

¹¹ Interview, Mario Masuku, 14 August 2015.

PUDEMO's strengths and successes, as discussed earlier in this study, have not come without any shortcomings/weaknesses and failures. It is the view of this scholar that these shortcomings should have been unapologetically addressed for the movement to move ahead, with the required speed, towards the Kingdom of Swaziland's people's liberation. As early as 2006, PUDEMO already admitted that it faced problems. This was conveyed to the membership during the party's 6th National Congress held in South Africa from 21 to 24 December 2006. In the *Times of Swaziland*, the national executive was quoted saying:

The luxury of causality is not in the interest of the movement and the suffering masses; hence urgency must be the driving force behind this plan and the whole effort to renew PUDEMO. As leaders at all levels, including regions, branches and leagues, we must not be defensive, but upfront about our weaknesses and failures, so that we can begin the process of correcting them and improving our work. We must allow for honest debates and reflection among ourselves, our allies and general structures of our society.¹²

While many organisations bury their heads in the sand when faced with problems, PUDEMO leadership stated that the situation at the time had reached a crisis point. Such is commendable coming from the leadership to the membership. A political movement requires several qualities in order for it to be organised into a superior political force. One of these qualities is the willingness on the part of leaders and members to admit that all is not well within the movement.

PUDEMO, as a movement, has been consistent in the way it has pursued the struggle but member retention has consistently been a challenge. Several factors can be attributed to this fact. Some of these are lack of consistent political education. Another factor can be attributed to Swaziland's repressive political environment. This environment requires its members to tone down or find other ways to access employment, means of survival and economic opportunities. Other factors are career development and even promotions at places of work, a stable family and personal pressures. One can also argue that some members are simply greedy opportunists. It is important to recognise the fact that failure

¹² *Times of Swaziland*, PUDEMO has reached a crisis point-executive, 26 December 2006.

can also lead to discontent, hence members decide to abandon the struggle for democratic change in Swaziland and leave the movement. This has brought about internal inconsistencies, resulting in the loss of critical members at different times of its existence.

One of PUDEMO's challenges was that its youth league, SWAYOCO, failed to reach the youth in the communities. SWAYOCO has, at the most crucial moments, been found wanting and inadequate to the tasks at hand. This can be attributed, partly, to the country's repressive political environment. However, this cannot be the only reason. It can also be due to the lack of strong cadre mentoring for the young members or comrades. Linked to this was also the seemingly weak link between SWAYOCO programmes and the programmes of young people in the communities in which they live. Here, the only exception being the student movement. Even in cases of student activists, many lose their 'activists mode' when they got to their communities. This is so because there are no programmes to keep them engaged in youth work in their local communities. As a direct consequence to that, many of the student activists never get retained in SWAYOCO fully after their student years are over.

One of the reasons PUDEMO has failed to lead the country to full democracy is because it lacks, to a certain extent, the capacity to withstand state repression. It is an important fact that PUDEMO has at times been forced to retreat because of state repression. There is also no denying that the *Tinkhundla* system of government has made PUDEMO its special project. Such has negatively affected the movement's mobile and strategic capacity to carry out its duties and responsibilities. There have consistently been worrying levels of comfort within the regime, particularly after 2011. The regime's lack of strictness was a cause for concern because this meant that the regime knows all that PUDEMO was always planning to do. This should have been a cause for concern for the movement.

The weak personal traits of individual members, such as laziness and lack of commitment, energy and sacrifice of time, were also a cause for concern. This is to say, there are members of PUDEMO are entrusted with performing certain tasks but do not

deliver as required by their mandate. This is also coupled with the lack of resources to carry out the task at hand. These are also the most problematic attributes in some of PUDEMO's leading structures. These structures range from the Central Executive Committee (CEC) and National Executive Committee (NEC) to the lowest structures. This has tended to create a PUDEMO for a few (those willing to sacrifice their time, resources and energy) and as such it fails to build proper organisational cohesion.

Also, there are many docile comrades in PUDEMO who are not willing to do simple tasks because they think someone else should do them. This can indicate a serious lack of cadreship development, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, and the basic capacity in leadership development. The question will therefore be how such people could be entrusted to lead the whole society or assume major responsibilities in society if their record within the movement itself was so dismal and disappointing.

PUDEMO has always viewed itself as an all-embracing family. As such it has, for the last three decades, never taken any serious measures towards a strong disciplinary culture, save for the underground days. This was clearly demonstrated in the quality of members or cadres PUDEMO produced in its latter years. Most of these never worked amongst the masses but surprisingly they have a lot to say about the movement. This is done largely on social media (Facebook and Whatsapp) and other centres of public communication (newspapers and magazines).¹³ Up until 2013 this has proven to be destructive to PUDEMO because some members have taken advantage of this 'loophole'. They have transgressed known PUDEMO codes of conduct with the full knowledge that they would not be touched. This can be called the 'holy cow theory'.

It has been observed that there were elements who went as far as to attack PUDEMO's constitutional gatherings and legitimate processes. And yet these members survive and cause disturbances in subsequent meetings, again knowing fully well that there would be

¹³ See for example, *Swazi News*, Something wrong with PUDEMO, 19 May 2012; *Times of Swaziland*, Letter to the Editor: The real farce that is PUDEMO, 1 August 2009.

no consequences for their actions.¹⁴ Surely, this has to change if PUDEMO is to effectively lead the people of Swaziland to liberation. It is true that PUDEMO is a revolutionary movement, guided by principles of democratic centralism, which states clearly that everyone has the right to raise a view and differ with anyone or even challenge leadership. But, an underlying principle throughout organisations all over the world is that once a decision is democratically and collectively arrived at, it is binding on everyone. Members then have a duty to defend it with all their might and without equivocation. It is this scholar's view that PUDEMO needs to set a decisively ruthless example in order to stop the petty games played by its membership, the personal grandstanding, postures and self-serving agendas that make the organisation look weak.

PUDEMO also needs to position itself, in both theory and practice, as the centre and place for hard work and political development. It needs to be a hub of enriching and insightful ideas, focused attitude and discipline. It has to emphasise loyalty to the organisation and the masses as opposed to personality cults and individuals within the movement. In all this, one thing should be made clear and that is: according to its Manifesto, PUDEMO comes first and PUDEMO is a collective responsibility.¹⁵

PUDEMO has been fighting for Swaziland's democratisation since its formation in 1983. Up to 2013, PUDEMO had not managed to achieve full democracy in all aspects of Swazi life. The immediate interests of the overwhelming majority of the Swazi people lie in carrying out real and decisive change, a national democratic struggle which will overthrow the *Tinkhundla* system of government and establish, in its place, a united, non-sexist and truly democratic Swaziland. The main content of which should be the liberation of the rural poor and working masses, youth and women in particular. Unfortunately, PUDEMO seems to have failed to search for the best possible means to

¹⁴ See for example, *Times of Swaziland*, PUDEMO condemns its own, 14 March 2010; *Times of Swaziland*, Power, obsession divide PUDEMO external region, 9 August 2009.

¹⁵ The People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), *PUDEMO's Organisational Renewal Plan*, 2013.

mobilise the Swazi people, wage their struggle and defeat the *Tinkhundla* system of government in order to build the new and democratic Swaziland.

PUDEMO has not been able to change the status quo into a multi-party democracy. The government of Swaziland has refused to remove laws and conditions that ban political activities. The removal of the latter would have constituted a strategic victory for the movement. Such a victory would have led to the creation of political conditions in which the objectives of political power transfer to the people, could perhaps be pursued, through a negotiated settlement. PUDEMO is a movement whose purpose is to transfer all power to the people but up to this far it has failed to achieve that.

Another challenge faced by PUDEMO, like many similar organisations, is the ‘cult of the individual.’ This is not to say there are personality cults in PUDEMO but there are certainly members with special abilities that make them more useful than others. This is problematic because it instills in the general membership or even Swaziland’s popular masses the erroneous idea that the tasks confronting the ordinary working people can be performed by someone else. It also highlights the fact that somebody else’s abilities and merits are such that the others could rely on a ‘great man’ and passively follow the leader’s plans and directions. In this way, the leader is supposed to know and foresee everything, thus freeing the rank-and-file members of the movement from the duty of thinking, of showing initiative, of creating and actively influencing the course of events. Opposition political parties tend to have a poor democratic record such as not changing leaders of the movement. PUDEMO’s leader, Mario Masuku, is a classic example. Such a view weakens the sense of responsibility of every working man and woman towards the movement’s fate and success. It also weakens that invaluable feeling of the masses of being their own liberators.

PUDEMO has also failed miserably to win the hearts and minds of the ordinary Swazis. None of PUDEMO’s activities allow us to conclude that there is a real mass movement calling for multi-party democracy. Not all protesters are committed to the pro-democracy slogans pushed by the organisers. Most people joined the protests because they were

concerned about specific issues, like wage disputes and poor service delivery. Many of them openly criticised the King and his politics, but, at the same time, remained skeptical of multi-party democracy.

When other pro-democracy movements are concerned, the diversity of viewpoints was seldom argued along ideological lines and there was rarely full agreement on any single point.¹⁶ Some argue that multi-party democracy has not brought benefits to their neighbors. A few confidently claim that in the absence of political parties conflict was low and political violence rare. They claim that the people can have a say on issues of local and national development through the *Tinkhundla* system of government - hence political organisations were not needed.

The challenges facing democratic states in Southern Africa are all too apparent to make Swazis wish for a radical overhaul of their *Tinkhundla* system of government. The generally peaceful conduct of the periodic parliamentary elections is a further proof that Swaziland's political atmosphere is far from the tensions and conflicts in Zimbabwe, or even Kenya. During the country's periodic parliamentary elections, polling stations are not heavily policed. The military is for the most part absent which is indicative of a peaceful process. It could be argued, however, that there are also positive developments in countries like Botswana, Zambia, Mozambique, Malawi and Namibia.

Multi-party democracy might sound like an appealing concept in the global mainstream, but does it actually put food on the table? Most Swazis seem to think it does not. As such, this might be the greatest challenge PUDEMO faces in its efforts to win the general populace to their side and cause. The monarchy has made an interesting assertion in relation to PUDEMO's failure to win the 'masses'. According to L. Dlamini, "there has been an assertion by the governing authorities that the Swazi people are not

¹⁶ Pro-democracy and other civil society groups needed to adopt a common stance and present a united cause. Trades unions, political parties and other organisations have no shared vision over how to seek reform in the Kingdom of Swaziland, and achieving a common platform remained a challenge owing to their different strategies and opinions, as well as personality clashes.

ready and do not want political parties because they are divisive, threaten the Swazi people's unity and way of life as well as peace in the country.”¹⁷

For an organisation like PUDEMO that has been fighting for the restoration of multi-party democracy in the Kingdom of Swaziland for the past 30 years without fully achieving it, a way forward is needed. PUDEMO need to seriously ask and scrutinise why its efforts have not yielded their desired results. One can argue that a frontal attack against the regime is also unlikely to succeed in the short term. One can suggest that PUDEMO needs, amongst other things, the trade unions and other progressive parties to channel the wide discontent among the workers, whose livelihoods are constantly undermined by exploitative capitalism.

At the same time, PUDEMO has failed to realise that in Swaziland workers are not fully urbanised and are not fully rural. They move back and forth between these two economies. Therefore, PUDEMO needs to understand that the protective function of the customary system cannot be easily dismissed as a ‘backward’ attachment to a static and meaningless tradition. It is vital for the existence of many a Swazi. PUDEMO is therefore poised, rightly or wrongly, to bring forth a threat to such a type of existence and the majority of the Swazi people are not willing to take the ‘risk’, so to say, hence their refusal to follow the bandwagon of the calls by PUDEMO for democratic reforms.

One political observer said:

The country is heavily rural, and most rural people depend on land and therefore their livelihoods on chiefs who are answerable to the King. The society is a deeply traditional one, and throughout history people have venerated their monarchs as rulers ordained by God, fathers and protectors of the nation and custodians of culture. Swazi royalists have played on this, to the extent that clergy who support them have condemned democracy as anti-Christian.¹⁸

¹⁷ Dlamini, *Swaziland*, p. 6.

¹⁸ *Times of Swaziland*, Swaziland through a foreign eye, 25 August 2008.

If PUDEMO is to be successful in its attempt to bring about full democratisation in the Kingdom of Swaziland, it needs to do more than make repeated calls for such to happen. PUDEMO and the pro-democracy movement as a whole perhaps need to come up with a concrete plan for transition. Another question they need to answer is: what will happen to customary tenure and the chiefs who administer it? It is the view of this scholar that this is a very serious question that PUDEMO needs to answer. How will the challenges of the dual economy be addressed in the new dispensation? So far PUDEMO has not provided reasonable responses to these questions. Devoid of tangible responses for these questions, PUDEMO will continue to fail in its overall objectives.

Furthermore, PUDEMO has failed to come up with proposals for a different form of democracy that did not instinctively follow the Western model. King Mswati III has been able to do so. If such suggestions had been brought forward by PUDEMO, maybe it would have been taken seriously. ‘Democracies’ in the plural existed in a variation of systems around the world; liberal democracy, as projected by PUDEMO, was not the only way forward.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the work done by PUDEMO in trying to pressurise the government of the Kingdom of Swaziland to transform to multi-party democracy. The chapter showed that, while doing so, PUDEMO exhibited internal weaknesses, challenges, failures and difficulties in its struggle for democratisation. It therefore critically assessed PUDEMO’s contribution in its efforts to bringing about democratic change in Swaziland.

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

This thesis examined the contribution of the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) to democratic change in Swaziland. It has basically shown the developments in Swaziland's politics and the work done by PUDEMO. The importance of undertaking this thesis lay in covering the existing knowledge gap in the historiography of the Swazi democratic movement. The thesis documented PUDEMO's contribution to the shaping of the country's political landscape. Without this study, PUDEMO's history would have continued to remain relatively unknown. It argues that, while Swaziland has a huge democratic deficit, there is evidence indicating that cosmetic changes with some democratic attributes have taken place over the years since PUDEMO's inception in 1983. This thesis proves that PUDEMO was the main driver of these changes through the pressure it put on Swazi leaders.

The thesis began by analysing the political background of the Kingdom of Swaziland. It showed how Swaziland became independent in 1968 after the 1967 general elections, won by the Imbokodvo National Movement (INM). Between 1968 and 1972, the new government practised a democratic, multi-party system of government for the first time in the Swazi nation's history. A multi-party government is one that involves opposition political parties and allows these to contest elections.

The thesis went on to discuss how events from 1973 to 1981 prepared the ground for the formation of PUDEMO. In 1973, the 1968 Independence Constitution was targeted as a colonial imposition lacking legitimate authority in the country. This was a time when the government also came in conflict with the courts over the citizenship of Bhekindlela Ngwenya, one of the victorious contestants of the 1972 elections. In this context, King

Sobhuza II took the advice of the Swazi National Council to issue the 1973 Decree, which effectively banned all party politics in the country. This was a systematic attack on the opposition, hence it created a fertile ground for the germination of new opposition forms, PUDEMO being an example.

The state of affairs discussed in the above paragraph was followed by the introduction of the *Tinkhundla* system of government in 1978. This was a parliamentary government formed of representatives from constituencies across the country. The *Tinkhundla* system of government also confirmed the King as an absolute monarchy. The introduction of the *Tinkhundla* system of government in 1978 was an attempt at political environment indigenisation and an attack on the universal principles of democracy. It is the view of this scholar that the *Tinkhundla* should be seen as a process of fusion or hybridisation so that it looks like liberal democracy. As such it provoked the struggle for democracy and became the rallying point for PUDEMO's formation in 1983.

This thesis discussed the above-mentioned historical developments in order to show that PUDEMO's emergence should be seen as a sign of accumulated resentment. This resentment was successfully suppressed by King Sobhuza II through the abolition of representative institutions and the introduction of repressive measures. While other scholars may argue that representative institutions were present, it is important to note that, after 1978, they existed under a new arrangement. Therefore, the years after 1973 marked the presence of feelings of resentment within the country's political opposition. This resentment was over the closure of political engagement avenues beyond traditional ideological constructions. The thesis then showed that King Sobhuza II's death in 1982 and the regime's inability to rule the country in a similar fashion to that of King Sobhuza II led to the emergence of opposition parties.

A critical analysis of the political confusion after the death of King Sobhuza II and how it led to the formation of PUDEMO was made. It is shown in the thesis that PUDEMO was formed in 1983 as a political party opposed to the status quo in the Kingdom of Swaziland. Its goal was – and still is – to fight for the restoration of multi-party

democracy in the country. The thesis stated that, following King Sobhuza II's death in 1982, the country experienced a period of political shuffling in the interim government led by Queen Regent Dzeliwe and the *Liqoqo*, the King's former advisory council of traditional leaders. It was not until April 1986 when one of King Sobhuza II's sons was crowned King Mswati III that calm was restored. King Sobhuza II's death and the ensuing political situation was therefore a springboard for PUDEMO's formation.

During the political disturbances accredited to the *Liqoqo* rule, students at institutions of higher learning, particularly the University of Swaziland and William Pitcher Training College, were involved in the organisation of anti-*Liqoqo* protests. They called for the reinstatement of Queen Regent Dzeliwe. These protests led to the development of PUDEMO. What should be noted is the fact that at the time of its formation, PUDEMO contained both elements of radicalism and conservatism. This is so because at first, PUDEMO's activities were centred around the complaints of tertiary education students protesting against the removal of Queen Regent Dzeliwe. Eventually, they called for political reforms. PUDEMO pressed for multi-party elections and an end to absolute monarchy. As a political organisation, PUDEMO became one of the unofficial opposition parties to the *Tinkhundla* system of government. It labelled Swaziland as undemocratic and sought it to become a constitutional monarchy.

In this thesis, PUDEMO is described as a movement born out of ordinary people and committed to the creation of a free and democratic society. It was formed to unite, mobilise and fully represent the aspirations of all the people of Swaziland in their quest for a decent life, human dignity and a better future. It demanded the creation of a constitutional, multi-party democracy with an elected and accountable government. Since its birth, PUDEMO has been consistent and principled in fighting for democracy, power and justice for the people of the Swaziland.

In the late 1980s PUDEMO attacked the political and governmental system as one in need of radical change. It was PUDEMO's view that King Sobhuza II's experiment to with a system premised in Swazi tradition had failed to meet the expectations people had

of it. This thesis showed how, by the end of the 1980s, coherent opposition to the status quo, led by PUDEMO, was emerging from the ranks of organised labour and college and university students.

PUDEMO was prepared to disregard law that named almost all criticism contrary to the status quo as insurrectionary. The early 1990s saw pressure for constitutional transformation escalating as PUDEMO and its youth wing, SWAYOCO, demanded sincere democratic modifications, in the form of multi-party democracy and a constitutional monarch. The *Tinkhundla* system of government was harshly criticised by PUDEMO. After growing public discontent, with numerous hostilities between trade unions and the government, the King ultimately decided to review the *Tinkhundla* system. King Mswati III was pushed towards change by the force applied by PUDEMO. This pressure drew stronger interest in Swazi matters among foreign aid donors, also following historical events in South Africa.

To PUDEMO, the 1990s were a turning point in the fight for the country's democratisation. PUDEMO and SWAYOCO were influential in the constitutional reforms introduced during this period. In 1991, King Mswati III established an *indaba* (popular parliament) coordinated by the *Vusela* (siSwati word for 'greeting') committees. These committees were to conduct a rolling forum to deliberate and endorse improvements to the controversial indirect elections system. The *Vusela* committees were a product of PUDEMO's efforts. The first consultative commission, known as *Vusela I* was established, to canvass Swazi opinion on constitutional matters. However, the commission was dominated by conservatives, and proved a disaster, simply heightening political tensions. Its successor, *Vusela II*, was a little more progressive, and recommended a fairly substantial reform of the system, though it stopped short of calling for the re-introduction of party politics. However, it can be argued that *Vusela I* and *II* were tactics to delay democratic change.

The activists, led by PUDEMO, led a political struggle that then progressed to focus on the issue of the unsatisfactory work done by the *Vusela* committees. The thesis showed

that PUDEMO was drawing inspiration from the democratic revolution in the Republic of South Africa. Strikes, political violence and arson elevated the stakes in the political field, and the conservatives and traditionalists found themselves under growing pressure to disassemble the system that guaranteed them of their place in society.

The 1990s was a time when PUDEMO saw nothing positive in Swazi politics. In contrast, however, the average Swazi was enjoying a flourishing economy, as Mozambique and South Africa were going through a bad patch politically and did not benefit from conventional international trade. Swaziland then offered an attractive destination for foreign direct investment in southern Africa. So, at a time when the average Swazi had a stable income from a well-paying occupation that offered sufficient benefits after retirement, there came PUDEMO, suggesting everything was wrong with the way in which the country was being governed and promising a better world. People looked across the border at Mozambique and South Africa, and felt anything that threatened to change the established order of things was not welcome. It can be argued that such was an impediment for PUDEMO's efforts to fully democratise all aspects of Swazi life, especially in the 1990s.

For its part, the thesis showed that PUDEMO had enough vision to know what many did not know at the time: that the relevant stability had no staying power without a system of governance that allowed multi-party democracy. It can be deduced that, perhaps, PUDEMO was a child who arrived ahead of its time, spoke a foreign language, and, ultimately, was not fully owned by all of Swaziland's people. They were like a prophet warned of starvation lying in wait in the future during a time of plenty. Not everyone listened to these 'prophets' at the time.

But PUDEMO proved a tough nut to crack, and just kept pressing on with its demands for reform, notwithstanding the slight progress they were making in gaining popularity among the multitudes. At the pinnacle of strong political mayhems, the ruling authorities appointed the two *Vuselas* in the early 1990s that solicited people's views on how best to improve the country's political and economic landscape. These *Vusela* committees

brought electoral reforms to the *Tinkhundla* elections. PUDEMO had put pressure on the country's governing structures to get these commissions underway. When the banned political movement seemed to become less militant, the labour movement, through the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU) took the banner and became the new expression of the political struggle, from the late 1990s to the new millennium when the labour organisation's internal problems began to incapacitate it and it was replaced by the Trade Union Congress of Swaziland (TUCOSWA).

PUDEMO was correct to view Swazi politics as it did. It was a movement with enough vision to know what the struggle was about, and what threat they were posing to the status quo. However, PUDEMO had adversaries who added to the public observation of PUDEMO as a political party of rubble-rousers. These traditionalists depicted PUDEMO as a group that was influenced by the political state of affairs in South Africa that had made that country unmanageable. These people or groups labelled the people behind the new voice as unSwazi, and were hell-bent on overthrowing the King. For a people that takes pride in its culture and traditions at the apex of which has always been the King, whom the Swazis love above anything else, anybody who threatened the monarchy's continuous existence was an enemy. Unfazed, PUDEMO persisted to use hate speech against the establishment, not realising that they were playing into the hands of their detractors, who later took advantage of the chance to form *Sive Siyinqaba, Sibahle Sinje* in the late 1990s.

As a proscribed movement, PUDEMO continued its fight against the absolute monarchy in Swaziland. PUDEMO became a political force to be reckoned with. PUDEMO was a leading catalyst for opponents against the *Tinkhundla* regime. It protested against the stranglehold that the *Tinkhundla* system had on all political processes. It has been shown in this thesis that PUDEMO was and continues to be critical also of the government's political mistakes and demands for democratic change. As a result, various cabinet reshuffles have been seized upon as marks either of imminent transformation or of a toughening of the political arteries. More often than not, however, it appears that these were mere attempts at stalling by the ruling regime.

King Mswati III, faced with PUDEMO's and SWAYOCO's increased social and political mobilisation, formed a constitutional commission in 1996. It was to produce a new constitutional document, which culminated in the Swaziland Constitution of 2005. The deliberations of the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC), which was appointed in 1996, were ponderous. Constitutional law specialists were not engaged to help the CRC in put into words a draft. The draft's completion date was deferred several times. PUDEMO, other pro-democracy and human rights organisations in the Kingdom are however not content with the ultimate result.

This thesis showed that the making of the constitution is one of PUDEMO's most notable achievements. PUDEMO worked hard to denounce the status quo and in the long run managed to get the monarchy to yield to PUDEMO's constitutional demands. Interestingly, the government of the day upstaged PUDEMO and began to act as if the constitution was its own initiative. But it can be argued that the making of the constitution was neither meant to address any real issues, nor improve the quality of life for the common good of the Swazi people. The constitution making exercise has always been for purposes of window-dressing. One view could be that such was done so that the international community would think the powers that be were in good control of the country's political situation. At one point in time, the international community had taken real interest in both the political and labour movement, as workers' representatives, working with PUDEMO, denounced government's intolerance to democratic change at International Labour Organisation (ILO) meetings.

The thesis also demonstrated that PUDEMO was successful in drawing international attention to the political plight of the Swazi people. This has led to the emergence and rise of the international solidarity movement spearheaded by PUDEMO and its international allies all over the world. Such was very helpful because it assisted to raise the profile of PUDEMO's struggle for democratisation beyond Swaziland's borders. It further assisted in mobilising much needed resources for the struggle and introduced new energy to the whole momentum for democracy and political change in the country. In this

regard, the most extraordinary contribution has been that by PUDEMO's South African allies.

There have been many other monumental achievements in PUDEMO's attempt to bring about democratisation in Swaziland. One of these achievements was the abolition of the 60-days-without-trial detention. This thesis also indicated that, through its alliance with Swaziland National Ex-Miners Association, under the umbrella of Foundation of Socio-Economic Justice, PUDEMO was successful in making the Swazi government introduce universal free primary education. Free Primary Education, as provided for in the 2005 Constitution of Swaziland, was achieved through PUDEMO's advocacy and pressure. PUDEMO was also instrumental in providing alternative policies to the *Tinkhundla* system of government. Even though PUDEMO was not able to find full expression because it remained a banned organisation, it was actively involved in developing foundations for a new democratic Swaziland.

The thesis also showed how SWAYOCO, as the PUDEMO's youth league, played a very important role in PUDEMO's democratisation efforts. SWAYOCO was successful in leading the calls for a democratically elected parliament and an end to restrictions on all forms of political and social expression. The thesis critically analysed SWAYOCO's efforts in assisting its mother body, PUDEMO, to achieve certain levels of democracy in the Kingdom of Swaziland. Also, Mphandlana Shongwe's contribution and the role he played in the struggle for democratic change in the country were discussed in the present study. Shongwe was a student leader and one of PUDEMO's and SWAYOCO's founding members. He is shown in the thesis as a prominent political activist in both SWAYOCO and PUDEMO.

The thesis analysed a period in Swazi history, beginning in 1998, when PUDEMO raised its game in order to be noticed. This occurred when it began to implement the strategy of violence to bring about democracy in Swaziland as a result of frustration with the lack of acceptance of its struggle for multi-party democracy in Swaziland. PUDEMO became too militant in both language and deed in its aim at demonising the *Tinkhundla* system of

government. The strategy of violence employed by PUDEMO was that of using bombings to influence transition to democracy in Swaziland. In the process, PUDEMO unintentionally enticed disapproval from the general public, which saw it as disturbing the attendant peacetime. The thesis discussed the spate of bombings of government targets that took place in the country. The bombing campaign began in 1998 with an attack on the offices of the Deputy Prime Minister; in the second half of 2005 a number of petrol bombs caused minor damage to public buildings, bridges and the homes of supporters of the *Tinkhundla* system of government.

The government of Swaziland is today still not sure who was behind the bombings. It generally suspects the banned movement, PUDEMO, which had been threatening to make the country ungovernable. The police arrested many suspects, all considered to be members of the banned political party, PUDEMO, or its youth organisation SWAYOCO. It was obvious that the government and the police blamed the attacks on opposition groups, especially PUDEMO. PUDEMO, on its part, accused the government of using the bombings as an excuse to crack down on pro-democracy groups. PUDEMO denies that it was involved in the wave of bombings but has stopped short of condemning the use of violence and has vowed to step up a campaign against King Mswati III's rule. PUDEMO is of the view that many people in Swaziland are angry; PUDEMO says that if the King does not open up the debate for democracy, then people may be forced to resort to this kind of violence.

The thesis also discussed the state response to PUDEMO's drive for democracy. It proved the government's hostile attitude towards PUDEMO. This attitude emanates from PUDEMO's continued drive for democracy and campaign for the unbanning of political parties, particularly PUDEMO's decriminalisation. As such, PUDEMO is currently the country's only proscribed political organisation. This is discussed in order to show that the achievements by PUDEMO were not realised without considerable opposition and sacrifice. The thesis showed that, while political parties in general remain banned in Swaziland, only PUDEMO is legally proscribed and its activities criminalised by the Suppression of Terrorism Act (STA) of 2008. This Act plays a very important role in

contributing to an atmosphere of uncertainty and of intimidation amongst PUDEMO members. It is also proven that the STA forms the legal basis for the consistent, targeted and ruthless crackdown on PUDEMO leaders and activists. The study also noted that PUDEMO's illegality status was originally derived from its banning by the 1973 Decree. Since then, PUDEMO has been on the receiving end of heightened aggression which includes harassment by state agents, malicious arrests and brutal beatings of peaceful demonstrators.

It has been proven in the thesis that PUDEMO is the movement that bore the bulk of *Tinkhundla* state repression. PUDEMO members have been arrested, tortured and subjected to all forms of persecution, hence the exile of so many of them. Despite being an outlawed political party, PUDEMO continues to speak out against the lack of democracy and equality in the country, calling for Swaziland to begin the process of democratisation. As a result, PUDEMO's voice and call for multi-party democracy restoration continues to be heard inside and outside Swaziland

A critical assessment of PUDEMO and its contribution to democratisation in the country also features in the thesis which showed that PUDEMO today looks haggard from the years of struggle that yielded little in terms of achieving one of its main aims: that of fully democratising all aspects of Swazi life. There is no doubt, the thesis noted, that PUDEMO's members are now wiser and more patient. During several interviews, many members reflected on PUDEMO's accomplishments, suggesting that more people in the country were now aware of their political rights, courtesy of PUDEMO's efforts. This was the case because PUDEMO and its allies put up a brave fight for the re-introduction of multi-party democracy in the country.

It cannot be disputed that PUDEMO did not anticipate that more than 30 years since its formation, the Kingdom of Swaziland would still be miles away from a fully-fledged democracy. This situation makes it apparent that it will take more than demonstrations to democratise the country. It is very fascinating how the *Tinkhundla* system of government still succeeded to outwit PUDEMO. Interestingly too, it has also outsmarted other

formations, such as PUDEMO's youth wing, the Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO), the Ngwane National Liberatory Congress (NNLC), the Swaziland Democratic Party (SWADEPA) and many other political groups calling for democratic change in Swaziland.

Understanding the intricacy of Swaziland's political and social mayhem is difficult. This situation complexes the problem of finding a way forward for Swaziland's political future. For over 30 years, PUDEMO's call has been for the *Tinkhundla* system of government to undergo a systematic change into a modern democratic system. This has been challenging because such would encompass a radical change on the whole mystery of Swazi kingship and its religious and magical significance in the social fabric of many in Swazi society. The demands for democratic modernisation from PUDEMO have received little consideration from traditional and rural Swazi people, as PUDEMO members are considered to be young town-dwellers, university students and those from organised labour in Swaziland. They are therefore seen as rubble-rousers by the rural population.

Swaziland is still a long way to go before a functional multi-party democracy is established in the country. Swaziland's democracy is stalled and PUDEMO was doing all it could in order to move it forward. It is the view of this scholar that the difficulty in moving Swazi democracy forward could emanate from the fact that, as a democratising political party, PUDEMO's ideologies and policies were not succinctly clear and therefore did not have a clear-cut alternative to present to the Swazi populace in order to win them over to their cause. Mostly, it could also mean that PUDEMO's programmes were of lesser importance to the ordinary Swazi people. While the ruling *Tinkhundla* regime was able to reach down to the ordinary people on regular basis, PUDEMO was unable to do so because it was a banned political movement. Since it also did not have the necessary organisation or resources, contact therefore became sporadic and ad-hoc. Among other things, conflicts within the party itself threatened both the stability and credibility of the party and the multi-party political system.

The thesis also showed that King Mswati III's late father, King Sobhuza II, dealt with political crises using a mixture of charm, political intellect or astuteness. It is open to uncertainty whether King Mswati III has inherited or yet developed these flairs. Even an outright clampdown of PUDEMO by the ruling government will be difficult because PUDEMO's call for the reinstatement of multi-party democracy has been received and acknowledged outside Swaziland's borders and across the world. For that reason, it seems likely that King Mswati III's rule will be put to a test in the coming years.

Neighboring South Africa has remained mostly silent about governance in Swaziland. But the United States of America and the European Union are calling for and are expecting political changes in Swaziland. However, there is one question that continues to be of concern. This question centres on what PUDEMO and other members of the opposition and pro-democracy movement must do to prove that they have tangible widespread support authorising them to carry on their challenge to King Mswati III's rule. One view could be that a clear show of numbers through protests or rallies to be mounted against the ruling establishment as was the case with the Arab Spring.

Periodic parliamentary elections continue to be held, but PUDEMO is not impressed with these because, during these elections, candidates are unaligned with a political party. The electoral candidates contest for 55 seats in local constituencies, called *Tinkhundla*. Because they have no political party platform to follow, these contestants carry on to entice voters with promises of infrastructural (clinics, roads, etc.) and employment-generating projects. It can be argued that Members of Parliament are not in a position to provide these. Cabinet Ministers are all appointed by the King in consultation with the Prime Minister. They are the ones that regulate the course and promptness these development projects can take. Parliament does not even set national policy or write law. This is the privilege of King Mswati III and is carried out by Cabinet. Members of Parliament themselves have protested from time to time that they have been reduced to rubber stamps, and that Cabinet Ministers disregard them, even in an consultative capacity.

Equally, it can be asked what must Swaziland's ruler, King Mswati III, do to demonstrate to a world hesitant of the validity of non-democratic countries that the status quo should carry on in a non-contested fashion. PUDEMO believes that at least a survey, should be held to resolve this problem. This thesis showed that PUDEMO has done its part to bring about change in this country. For example, PUDEMO's toyi toying and banding of slogans made the country finally concede and bring into being consultations that culminated into the drafting of the 2005 Swaziland Constitution. This thesis demonstrates that for the historical period of 1983 and 2013, PUDEMO has been a force to reckon with. A critical analysis and assessment of what it gained over 30 years of struggle suggests that PUDEMO's struggle for democratic change in Swaziland has been worth it.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. How does Swaziland's political background between 1968 and 1982 lead to the birth of PUDEMO?
2. What role did the 1973 Decree play in the formation of the movement and was there anything wrong with the King's Decree?
3. What was the reaction of the Swazi people (especially people in the progressive movement) to the introduction of the 1973 Decree?
4. What role did the introduction of the *Tinkhundla* system of government in 1978 play?
5. What is it that people in the progressive movement did not like about the *Tinkhundla* system?
6. Were there any other factors responsible for the formation of PUDEMO in the period under consideration?
7. Why was PUDEMO not formed during this period?
8. PUDEMO was formed in 1983, immediately after the death of King Sobhuza II. What is the connection between the death of the King and the formation of PUDEMO?
9. How is the *Liqoqo* a factor in the formation of PUDEMO?
10. What was wrong with the actions of *Liqoqo*?
11. Who were the people responsible for the formation of PUDEMO?
12. Why and how did they form the movement?

13. What did PUDEMO stand for at the time of its formation? Does it still stand for the same up to this day?
14. What were the policies did it adopt and why?
15. What was the reaction of the state to the formation and the activities of the organisation?
16. PUDEMO has a youth league, SWAYOCO. Can you describe what SWAYOCO is and what it stands for?
17. When was it formed?
18. Who was responsible for its formation?
19. Why was it formed?
20. What were the objectives of SWAYOCO at the time of its formation? Are they still the same?
21. What was the state's reaction to its formation and its activities?
22. How has SWAYOCO contributed to PUDEMO's democratisation efforts?
23. The 1973 Decree and the *Tinkhundla* system of government are both a rejection of political party activity. How has PUDEMO been doing under the circumstances?
24. What are the challenges PUDEMO has or has faced in the struggle to bring about democratic change in Swaziland?
25. How far has the anti-democratic laws, arbitrary arrests and repeated detentions made the work of PUDEMO difficult?
26. Police brutality has been one of the problems facing PUDEMO especially during rallies and planned demonstrations. How has it affected the work of the movement?
27. What are there so many arrests and detentions of political activists in Swaziland?
28. What is the position of government on police brutality and deaths in police cells?
29. There is a controversy surrounding the permission of political parties to exist in the country. What is the correct position or interpretation of the country's constitution with regards to the formation/existence of political formations?
30. What is the position of the 1973 King's Decree in the new constitutional dispensation?

31. From the mid-1990s, the struggle for democratisation in Swaziland turned violent. Was PUDEMO responsible for such acts?
32. Did PUDEMO find it necessary to follow 'armed struggle'?
33. What actually necessitated the formation of the Swaziland Liberation Army or *Umbane*?
34. Many PUDEMO members have been arrested and charged for the spate of bombings around the country. This makes one suspect that that PUDEMO is involved. Why does PUDEMO follow this policy?
35. What necessitated the promulgation of the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008?
36. There is a notion that the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 was targeted at PUDEMO but the government insists that it targets terrorist entities as they exist in the country. What is your position?
37. What is the position of government on political exiles in foreign countries and political prisoners in Swazi jails/prisons?
38. Has the violence strategy been helpful in assisting PUDEMO achieve democratisation in the country?
39. How has the violence strategy impacted on PUDEMO's activities?
40. PUDEMO was formed in 1983 which means that it is over 30 years old. Has it achieved its objectives? If yes, what has it achieved? If no, why is that?
41. Commentators have posited the fact that the *Vusela* committees that were formed in the early 1990s were the result of the pressure applied by PUDEMO. Is that true? Explain please?
42. What successes came with the *Vusela* committees?
43. What are the achievements PUDEMO has had since its formation in 1983?
44. Is there any co-operation with other political groupings and civil society groups?
45. PUDEMO adopted a policy of boycotting the country's parliamentary elections. Why do PUDEMO follow this policy and has following this policy helped or hindered the policy of democratisation in Swaziland?
46. PUDEMO also never participated in the constitution making process. The constitution was made without the involvement of PUDEMO. How useful was boycotting this process?

47. What are the areas you feel PUDEMO could have done better in their efforts to bring about democracy in Swaziland?
48. Why did PUDEMO decide to rope in the international community or attract foreign sympathy in dealing with the domestic affairs of the Kingdom of Swaziland? Shouldn't the democratisation of Swaziland be an internal affair?
49. To what extent has the lack of understanding of the local situation by the international community hindered the democratisation process in Swaziland?
50. What has been the contribution of the international community to the democratisation process in Swaziland?
51. What are the names of these international bodies that assist PUDEMO in the democratic process?
52. What kind of assistance is being given by the international community and is it sufficient to see democracy ushered into Swaziland?
53. News reports by foreign media houses are sometimes deemed inaccurate while Swazi political activists are many times cited as informants. What is the feeling of PUDEMO about the accuracy or lack thereof of such news reports?
54. The repeated incarceration of PUDEMO leaders has so far been encouraged by PUDEMO and used as a tool to draw attention to the democratic cause. How far has such an undertaking been useful?
55. What is the future political structure for Swaziland that PUDEMO envisage, i.e. a constitutional monarchy or a republic?
56. Why does government disallow group participation in national activities like the constitution making process and the periodic parliamentary elections?
57. Is there any willingness on the part of government to democratise Swaziland?

APPENDIX 2

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PROCLAMATION BY HIS MAJESTY KING SOBHUZA II

For purposes of general information the full text of the King's Proclamation made before the Nation on the 12th April, 1973 is hereby published.

D. COHEN
Attorney-General.

Mbabane,
16th April, 1973.

PROCLAMATION

TO ALL MY SUBJECTS — CITIZENS OF SWAZILAND

1. WHEREAS the House of Assembly and the Senate have passed the resolutions which have just been read to us.
2. AND WHEREAS I have given grave consideration to the extremely serious situation which has now arisen in our country and have come to the following conclusions:
 - (a) that the Constitution has indeed failed to provide the machinery for good government and for the maintenance of peace and order;
 - (b) that the Constitution is indeed the cause of growing unrest, insecurity, dissatisfaction with the state of affairs in our country and an impediment to free and progressive development in all spheres of life;
 - (c) that the Constitution has permitted the importation into our country of highly undesirable political practices alien to, and incompatible with the way of life in our society and designed to disrupt and destroy our own peaceful and constructive and essentially democratic methods of political activity; increasingly this element engenders hostility, bitterness and unrest in our peaceful society;
 - (d) that there is no constitutional way of effecting the necessary amendments to the Constitution; the method prescribed by the constitution itself is wholly impracticable and will bring about that disorder which any constitution is meant to inhibit;
 - (e) that I and all my people heartily desire at long last, after a long constitutional struggle, to achieve full freedom and independence under a constitution

- (b) The words "to the provisions of this Constitution and "shall be deleted from Section 94(1);
7. Parts 1 and 2 of Chapter IX and Sections 138, 139, 140 and 141 of Chapter XIII of the repealed Constitution shall again operate with full force and effect and shall be construed with such modifications, adaptations, qualifications and exceptions as may be necessary to bring them into conformity with this and ensuing decrees. The Judicial Service Commission is abolished and parts 1 and 2 of the said Chapter IX shall be construed as if there is no reference in them to the Judicial Service Commission;
 8. Chapter XI of the repealed Constitution shall again come into force and shall be construed with such modifications, adaptations, qualifications and exceptions as may be necessary to bring it into conformity with this and ensuing decrees. In particular any reference to the House of Assembly or both chambers or the procedures for enacting financial legislation shall be interpreted as references to the King-in-Council and/or decrees issued by the King as the context requires.
 9. Until further notice, all persons who have lost office as a result of the repeal of the Constitution, including all members of the Senate and the House of Assembly, shall be entitled to receive the emoluments which they would have received but for the repeal of the Constitution.
 10. Section 135 of the repealed Constitution shall again come into force subject, however, to the deletion of the introductory words "save as otherwise provided in this Constitution";
 11. All political parties and similar bodies that cultivate and bring about disturbances and ill-feelings within the Nations are hereby dissolved and prohibited.
 12. No meetings of a political nature and no processions or demonstrations shall be held or take place in any public place unless with the prior written consent of the Commissioner of Police; and consent shall not be given if the Commissioner of Police has reason to believe that such meeting, procession or demonstration, is directly or indirectly related to political movements or other riotous assemblies which may disturb the peace or otherwise disturb the maintenance of law and order.
 13. Any person who forms or attempts or conspires to form a political party or who organises or participates in any way in any meeting, procession or demonstration in contravention of this decree shall be guilty of an offence and liable, on conviction, to imprisonment not exceeding six months.

Thus done and signed at Lobamba, this 12th day of April, 1973.

SOBHUZA II
King of Swaziland.

The Government Printer, Mbabane.

APPENDIX 3

Members of the First Parliament under the *Tinkhundla* System of Government

1	Princess Phetfwayini
2	Mphithi Luka Dlamini
3	Mabonjwana S. Nkhambule
4	Peter Shovela Munro
5	Robert Makhanyambeni Dlamini
6	Walter William Mordaunt
7	Malaveni Mgwagwanana Ginindza
8	Dr. Sishayi S. Nxumalo
9	Joseph Nduna Mamba
10	Ben Gregory Bennet
11	Samson Msunduzeni Dlamini
12	Paulos Mfanawendlela Ginindza
13	Chief Mlimi Nicholas Maziya
14	Chief Madzanga Ndabenkulu Ndwandwe
15	Bhizeni Wilson Dlamini
16	Ephraim Nyambezi Dlamini
17	Chief Malamlela Magagula
18	Mshefane Daniel Shongwe
19	Mhlanganyelwa Mbonani Michael Shongwe
20	Ernest Phenyane Mamba
21	Chief Sibengwane Magomba Ndzimandze
22	Magwece Jeremiah Mkhathshwa
23	Chief Mnikwa William Dlamini

24	Austin Sangoma Vandla Dlamini
25	Gawulela Jeremiah Zwane
26	Naphtali Mlungeli Mahlalela
27	Makhalane Paul Dlamini
28	Prince Maquba
29	Prince Mekiseni Enoch
30	Mengameli Amon Matsebula
31	MafaPheleon Sibandze
32	Sylvester Saustin Sankwenteya Mokgokong
33	Malinda Bhembe
34	Ndawombili Fred Dlamini
35	Precious Shungube

Source: Official Report of the First Meeting of the First Session of the Third Parliament of the Kingdom of Swaziland, 16th and 19th January, 1979.

APPENDIX 4

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW: KING'S ORDER-IN-COUNCIL 22/1978
ss.1-4

THE REGIONAL COUNCILS ORDER, 1978

Date of commencement: 12th October, 1978.

Date of Assent: 9th October, 1978.

A King's Order-in-Council to provide for the establishment of four Regional Councils in Swaziland and to prescribe their functions.

Short title.

- I. This King's Order-in-Council may be cited as The Regional Councils Order, 1978.

Interpretation.

2. Unless the context otherwise requires —

“Administrator” means the Regional Administrator appointed under section 8;

“Districts” means the districts as set out in Schedule 1 to the General Administration Act, No. 11 of 1905, as amended from time to time under the provisions of section 6 of such Act;

“Electoral College” (Repealed K.O-I-C. 1/1992.)

“Inkhundla” means an Inkhundla established by and under an Order of the King;

“Minister” means the Minister determined by the King;

“Regional Council” means a Regional Council established under section 3.

Establishment of Regional Councils.

3. There is hereby established four Regional Councils, being one Regional Council in respect of each District.

Composition of Regional Councils.

4. (1) (Repealed K.O-I-C. 1/1992.)
(2) (Repealed K.O-I-C. 1/1992.)

(3) In the event of a vacancy in a Regional Council caused by death, ill-health, resignation, or by any other reason, the Inkhundla concerned shall appoint a person to serve in his place.

(ISSUE 2)

(4) There shall be appointed to each Regional Council such officers and staff as the Minister may in consultation with each Regional Administrator decide upon, and such officers and staff shall be officers in the public service.

Function of Regional Councils.

5. (1) The duties and functions of Regional Councils shall be to —
- (a) co-ordinate national and economic activities at District level;
 - (b) implement national and government policies and projects at District and Tinkhundla level;
 - (c) through the Indvuna Yetinkhundla liaise with the Swazi National Council in all matters of policy affecting Swazi law and custom;
 - (d) report through the Indvuna Yetinkhundla to the Government and the Swazi National Council on all decisions arrived at by the Tinkhundla in their Districts;
 - (e) through the Indvuna Yetinkhundla keep the Government and the Swazi National Council informed of all major economic or political activities taking place within their Districts;
 - (f) initiate and identify priority projects and the needs of the people residing in their Districts in accordance with National developments plans;
 - (g) maintain close contact with the Indvuna Yetinkhundla, and to seek his advice on all matters affecting their District; and
 - (h) generally, do all such things as they may deem fit to uplift the economic, health and educational standards of the residents of their Districts and act so that peace and harmony might prevail throughout Swaziland.
- (2) The duties and functions of Regional Councils may be augmented from time to time by the Cabinet.

Rules governing Regional Councils.

6. The Minister shall in consultation with the Regional Administrators formulate such rules for the conduct of the affairs and meetings of Regional Councils as may be agreed upon by them:

Provided that it shall be the responsibility of each Regional Administrator to convene the first meeting of the Regional Council in his District by such means as may be agreed upon with the Minister.

Remuneration of members of Regional Council.

7. The remuneration of members of the Regional Councils and any allowances payable to them shall be separately appropriated as a charge on the Consolidated Fund.

Regional Administrator.

8. (1) The King, acting in consultation with the Prime Minister, shall appoint a Regional Administrator in respect of each Regional Council who shall have the same rights and privileges as any Deputy Minister but who shall operate under a Ministry to be determined by the King.

(2) The King may at any time remove an Administrator and appoint anyone else in his place.

(3) The Administrator shall preside at all meetings of the Regional Council to which he has been appointed and shall have a casting as well as a deliberative vote:

Provided that if the Administrator is unable to preside at any meeting of the Regional Council the Minister may appoint a member of the Regional Council to preside at such meeting.

APPENDIX 5

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW: KING'S PROCLAMATION 1/1981

KING'S PROCLAMATION NO. 1 OF 1981

WHEREAS the Establishment of the Parliament of Swaziland Order, 1978 empowers the King, *inter alia* to amend the Proclamation to the Nation of the 12th April, 1973:

AND WHEREAS the King in exercise of the powers vested in Him has deemed it necessary to amend the said Proclamation in order to give effect to the Tinkhundla system of government introduced by the Establishment of the Parliament of Swaziland Order, 1978 and the Regional Councils Order, 1978 and to make provision for other matters:

NOW THEREFORE, the King issues the following DECREE:

1. The executive authority of Swaziland shall continue to vest in the King as provided for in section 69 of the Establishment of the Parliament of Swaziland Order, 1978 and in all other laws.
2. The power to appoint the following and other persons shall continue to be exercised, and the tenure of office and other matters relating to such offices shall be, in accordance with the law and practice applicable thereto:
 - (a) The Prime Minister;
 - (b) Cabinet Ministers;
 - (c) Deputy Ministers, Assistant Ministers and Ministers of State;
 - (d) the Secretary to Cabinet and Principal Secretaries;
 - (e) the Commander of the Umbutfo Swaziland Defence Force;
 - (f) the Commissioner of Police;
 - (g) the Commissioner of Prisons;
 - (h) the Chairman and other members of the Civil Service Board or other similar body;
 - (i) Judges of the Court of Appeal and of the High Court;
 - (j) the Attorney-General and Deputy Attorney-General;
 - (k) the Director of Public Prosecutions;
 - (l) Ambassadors, High Commissioners or principal representatives of Swaziland in other countries or on international organizations.
3. The King, as Commander-in-Chief, with the assistance of the Commander of the Umbutfo Swaziland Defence Force, shall control and direct the Defence Force at all times and in accordance with law.
4. All land vested in the King by virtue of paragraph 6 of the Decree contained in the King's Proclamation to the Nation of the 12th April, 1973 shall continue to be so vested in accordance with that paragraph.
5. The King may, by Proclamation in the Gazette, declare a state of emergency in Swaziland and such state of emergency shall continue until the declaration thereof is revoked by the King.

(ISSUE 2)

STATUTES OF SWAZILAND

6. (1) All matters regulated by Swazi law and custom which are set out in Schedule 3 to the repealed Constitution shall continue to be so regulated.

(2) The Swazi National Council, which shall consist of the Nggwenyama, the Ndlovukazi, Bantfwabekhosi, Chiefs and all adult citizens, shall continue to exercise its functions of advising the Nggwenyama on all matters regulated by Swazi law and custom and shall exercise such functions either in Libandla or in Liqoqo, as the case may be, in accordance with Swazi law and custom.

7. Section 135 of the repealed Constitution (which makes provision for the Swazi National Council) shall continue to be of full force and effect as amended by the King's Proclamation of 12th April, 1973 or by any other law.

8. The establishment of a National Government based on the Tinkhundla system of government under the Regional Councils Order, 1978 and the declaration of Swaziland as a no-party State under the King's Proclamation of the 12th April, 1973 are hereby reaffirmed. The provisions of sections 11 and 12 of the King's Proclamation of the 12th April, 1973, shall not be applicable to the Tinkhundla which are hereby declared and recognised as centres for meetings of the nation.

9. (1) The Department of Establishments shall continue to be under the Prime Minister's Office and shall be responsible for the personnel management of the whole Civil Service and all similar functions relating to the Civil Service.

(2) The Principal Secretary of the Department of Establishments shall be the head of the Civil Service and shall also be the Director of Personnel Management.

10. (1) There shall continue in existence an independent Civil Service Board or similar body established by law and which shall be responsible for the recruitment and appointment to, and promotion and discipline of persons in, the civil service.

(2) The Board or such other body shall liaise with all the Ministers in respect of recruitment policy but will be completely independent of and not subject to any ministerial or political influence in the selection of persons for appointment or promotion or in respect of its disciplinary functions.

11. General Orders and any other regulations governing the entire Civil Service shall be revised, updated and brought into conformity with prevailing circumstances in the Kingdom as soon as possible.

12. This Decree shall be read and construed as one with the King's Proclamation to the Nation of the 12th April, 1973 and shall be deemed to have come into force on the 19th January, 1979. Insofar as there may be any conflict or difference between this Decree and the said King's Proclamation to the Nation, the provisions of this Decree shall prevail.

DONE UNDER MY HAND AT LOZITHEHLEZI THIS 9th DAY OF DECEMBER, 1981.

SOBHUZA II
King of Swaziland

APPENDIX 6

PART B

SI



KING'S DECREE NO. 1 OF 1982

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PARLIAMENT OF SWAZILAND ORDER,
1978

(Order No. 23 of 1978)

THE KING'S PROCLAMATION (AMENDMENT) DECREE, 1982

(Under Section 80)

In exercise of the powers conferred upon me by section 80 of the Establishment of the Parliament of Swaziland Order, 1978, I, SOBHUZA II, KING OF SWAZILAND, hereby make the following Decree:—

Short title.

1. This Decree may be cited as the King's Proclamation (Amendment) Decree, 1982 and shall be read as one with the King's Proclamation to the Nation of the 12th April, 1973 (hereinafter referred to as "the Proclamation").

Amendment of paragraph 3 of Decree.

2. Paragraph 3 of the Decree contained in the Proclamation is replaced with the following—

"3. Chapter IV of the repealed Constitution, with the exception of section 36, shall continue to have force subject to the following—

(a) Subsection (2) of section 28 shall be replaced with the following—

"(2) The King may do all things that belong to his office in accordance with Swazi law and custom and any other law".

(b) Section 28 of the repealed Constitution as amended in subsection (2) by this Decree and section 31 of the said Constitution shall be deemed to have remained in force with effect from the 12th April, 1973.

(c) Section 30 of the repealed Constitution is amended by replacing subsection (2) with the following—

"(2) The King or, in the absence of a King, the Likoqo may, at any time appoint, in accordance with Swazi law and custom, a person (hereinafter referred to as "an authorised person") to perform on behalf of the Regent the functions of her office if the Regent is, for any reason, unable to perform those functions."

Amendment of paragraph 7 of Decree.

3. (1) Paragraph 7 of the Decree contained in the Proclamation is amended—

S3

- “14. (1). This Proclamation is the supreme law of Swaziland and if any other law is inconsistent with this Proclamation, that other law shall, to the extent of the inconsistency, be null and void.
- (2). The King may, by Decree published in the Gazette, amend or repeal this Proclamation.
- (3). Sub-paragraph (1) shall be deemed to have come into force on the 12th April, 1973”.

DONE AT LOZITHEHLEZI THIS 18TH DAY OF JUNE 1982.

SOBHUZA II
KING OF SWAZILAND

APPENDIX 7

CONSTITUTIONAL LAW: DECREE 1/1987

THE KING'S PROCLAMATION (AMENDMENT) DECREE, 1987

(Decree No. 1 of 1987)

In the exercise of the powers vested in me, I, MSWATI III, KING OF SWAZILAND, DESIRE TO BRING CERTAIN aspects of the King's Proclamation to the Nation of the 12th April, 1973 (as amended) in line with Swazi Law and Custom; and

Whereas certain previous amendments of the said Proclamation have been decreed *inter alia* to Defeat the ends of Justice and/or to obstruct the cause of Justice, and are contrary to Swazi Law and Custom; and

Whereas paragraph 14 of the said Proclamation Empowers Me, *Inter Alia*, to amend the said Proclamation; and

Whereas I, in the exercise of the powers vested in me, have Deemed it necessary to amend the said Proclamation;

Now therefore I hereby Issue the following Decree:

1. I hereby reaffirm that in terms of Swazi Law and Custom, the King Holds the Supreme power in the Kingdom of Swaziland and as such all Executive, Legislative and Judicial powers vest in the King who may from time to time by Decree Delegate certain powers and functions as he may deem fit.
2. It is furthermore hereby reaffirmed that the King being Commander-in-Chief of the Umbutfo Swaziland Defence Force, is the Supreme Commander of the Umbutfo Swaziland Defence Force and all Armed Forces in the Kingdom of Swaziland.
3. It is furthermore hereby reaffirmed that the King's Proclamation to the Nation dated 12th April, 1973 (as amended from time to time) is the supreme Law of Swaziland and if any other Law is inconsistent with the said Proclamation, that other Law shall to the extent of the inconsistency be null and void.
4. It is furthermore hereby reaffirmed that the King may by Decree published in the Gazette, amend or repeal the said Proclamation.
5. Paragraph 10(2)(b) of the Decree contained in the Proclamation to the Nation of 12th April, 1973 is amended by replacing the definition of "Liqoqo" with the following;

"Liqoqo" means the King's Advisory Council which shall consist of Members appointed by the King to hold Office at his pleasure in accordance with such terms and conditions, (including emoluments and allowances) as he may determine and whose function it is, to advise the King on all matters of State when requested to do so by the King:

Provided that no person shall be qualified to be member of Liqoqo solely by virtue of his holding another office whether or not such office is established by Law:"

(ISSUE 2)

STATUTES OF SWAZILAND

6. Paragraph 3 of the Decree contained in the Proclamation is amended by replacing subsection (2) of Section 30 of the Repealed Constitution with the following subsection:

“(2) In the event of the Regent, by reason of critical ill-health, being unable to perform the functions of her Office, the King or, in the absence of a King, the Liqoqo may in accordance with Swazi Law and Custom appoint a person (hereinafter referred to as the “Authorized Person”) to perform on behalf of the Regent the functions of her Office for the duration of her illness as aforesaid.

For purposes of this sub-section the Regent will only be regarded as being unable to perform the functions of her Office due to critical ill-health after this incapacity has been certified as such by three independent specialist medical Doctors.”

7. Paragraph 14 of the Decree is amended by adding to sub-paragraph (2) the following—

“And he may, notwithstanding section 60 of the Establishment of the Parliament of Swaziland Order, 1978 or any other Law, by Decree make, amend or repeal any Law.”

8. The Regent’s Decree No. 1 of 1983 is hereby declared to be null and void *ab initio* and shall be deemed not to have come into operation and consequently shall be deemed to be of no force and effect.

9. Paragraphs 16, 17 and 18 of the King’s Proclamation to the Nation of the 12th April, 1973 are hereby repealed.

10. This Decree may be cited as the King’s Proclamation (Amendment) Decree, 1987 and shall be read and construed as one with the King’s Proclamation to the Nation of 12th April, 1973.

DONE AT LUDZIDZINI THIS 15TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 1987.

MSWATI III
King of Swaziland

APPENDIX 8

PEOPLE’S UNITED DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (PUDEMO)

“Insika Yenkhluleko YeMaswati”

THE PEOPLES MANIFESTO

(Amended as per resolutions of the 4th General Congress, 1996)

Preamble

We the people of Swaziland met on the 6th day of July 1983 to form the People’s United Democratic Movement, to represent fully the people of Swaziland and to unite them against undemocratic governance, oppression, exploitation, unfair discrimination, corruption, nepotism, and favoritism.

We declare to the world that Swaziland belongs to all its citizens regardless of race, colour, sex, religion or social status and that the People’s United Democratic Movement is our true representative. We dedicate ourselves to struggling together in unity until final victory.

MISSION

We are a political Movement committed to the creation, protection and promotion of a constitutional multi-party democracy, a transparent and accountable government, an environment conducive to economic growth, and economic empowerment and to the development of a culturally vibrant and tolerant society based on maximum participation and the respect of the will of the people.

GOALS

1. To create a constitutional multi-party democracy.

Swaziland shall be governed by a written constitution whose system of governance shall be based on the universal principles of multi-party democracy.

The country's constitution shall be the supreme law of the land.

2. To create a government based on majority will.

There shall be an elected and accountable government based on the will of the majority. All eligible citizens shall have the right to vote or stand for elections as candidates without regard to race, colour, sex, religion or social status.

The people shall through their representative organs influence and enjoy effective participation in the running of the country.

3. To promote economic growth, development and the empowerment of citizens

The country's production relations shall be based on the principles of a mixed market economy. There shall be a healthy environment for economic growth and development.

Effective interventions shall be implemented to promote the economic empowerment of the people and uproot the evils of poverty and backwardness.

The national wealth and natural resources shall be utilised for the benefit of all the people.

4. To promote and protect access to land and security of tenure.

Land, as an important asset for development shall be used for the benefit of all. It shall fall under the direct administration of the central government.

Access to available land and security of tenure shall be promoted and protected to avoid landlessness and squatting.

There shall be no arbitrary removal of people from the land.

5. To promote job creation and high levels of employment

Effective measures shall be implemented to promote job creation and high levels of employment.

Government shall at all times promote the development and maintenance of sound and equitable tripartite relations between the state, labour and capital.

Men and women shall receive equal pay for equal work of equal value.

There shall be an end to the use of child labour.

All workers shall enjoy the freedom of association, expression and bargaining.

A Workers' development fund shall be established to promote the economic empowerment of workers and provide for their social security needs.

6. To protect the right to education and promote the sustenance of high levels of relevant education.

As a basic human right, education shall be compulsory and universal.

For all children in public schools primary education shall be free and / or subsidised.

Education shall mean, amongst other things, teaching the young to love and respect their people, their culture, environment, liberty and international peace.

Adult education shall promote through a countrywide scheme.

7. To promote the right to life.

Every person shall have the right to life.

8. To promote good public health and improve the quality of life for all.

To promote the ideals of a healthy and productive nation, primary health care shall be free or subsidised by the state.

Every person shall have access to affordable tertiary health care at public hospitals and health centres.

The right to shelter shall be respected and housing needs for all shall be given top priority.

Effective measures will be taken to cater for the disadvantaged, the youth, aged, orphaned and disabled with regard to social and economic upliftment, welfare benefits, housing and security.

9. To promote and develop the rich heritage of Swazi culture.

Cultural institutions shall be open to all and there shall be a free exchange of literature and ideas.

Swazi law and custom shall be codified and published for the general information of the public.

Customs and practices that are contrary to basic human rights shall be prohibited

10. To promote the observance and protection of basic Human Rights.

All Human Rights as enshrined in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the All Africa Charter on Human and People Rights and other international conventions shall be respected and protected by law.

There shall be equality between men and women in all respects of social, economic and political life.

The right to worship, organise and assemble shall be protected by law.

There shall be an end to detention and deportation without trial in a court of law.

The law, police and army shall serve and protect the people. They shall cease to be used as instruments of repression.

Prisons shall not be used as institutions of revenge but for re-education and rehabilitation.

VALUES

We discharge our responsibilities and duties to our fellow members, the people of Swaziland and Society with honesty and integrity.

To the international community we declare that;

We shall work towards maintaining peace in our region, in Africa and the world at large and that we believe in the settlement of both domestic and international disputes by peaceful negotiations.

We identify ourselves with all democratic forces in the world which are struggling against oppression of all forms,

We recognise and support the right of all peoples of the world to independence, sovereignty and self-determination,

We shall subscribe to the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity, the Southern African Development Community (SADC),

We strongly condemn the degradation of the environmental, the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the arming of space and we call upon all the democratic forces of the world to unite against all such threats to human existence.

“OUR UNITY IN DIVERSITY IS OUR STRENGTH”
EMBILI NE-NSIKA YENKHULULEKO YEMASWATI!

APPENDIX 9

Swazi police throttling PUDEMO activist, George Hleta, during a demonstration in Mbabane.



Source: Times of Swaziland, 18 March 2013.

APPENDIX 10**Comrades from the UK during the Global Week of Action for Democracy in Swaziland**

Source: PUDEMO website – www.pudemo.org

APPENDIX 11

Former SWAYOCO President and SUDF Coordinator, Wandile Dlodlu, being dragged by heavily armed police officers for attending a peaceful march in Mbabane



Source: Times of Swaziland, 18 March 2013.

APPENDIX 12

A PUDEMO brochure on the release of all political prisoners



PUDEMO PRESIDENT MARIO MASUKU
**RELEASE PUDEMO PRESIDENT
 MARIO MASUKU AND ALL
 POLITICAL PRISONERS NOW!!**

In 1973 Sobhuza II banned political parties in Swaziland and established an absolute Monarchy through a proclamation that continues to be enforced through laws like the Suppression of Terrorism Act that is used as a tool to quash dissent. Due to this draconian proclamation many honourable innocent Swazis and a South African languish in Mswati's jails today - PUDEMO demands the unconditional release of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience

POLITICAL PRISONERS/PRISONERS OF CONCIENCE!!



Thulani Maseko



Amos Mbedzi



Maxwell Dlamini



Bheki Makhubu



Ronald Rudd



Zonke Dlamini

APPENDIX 13

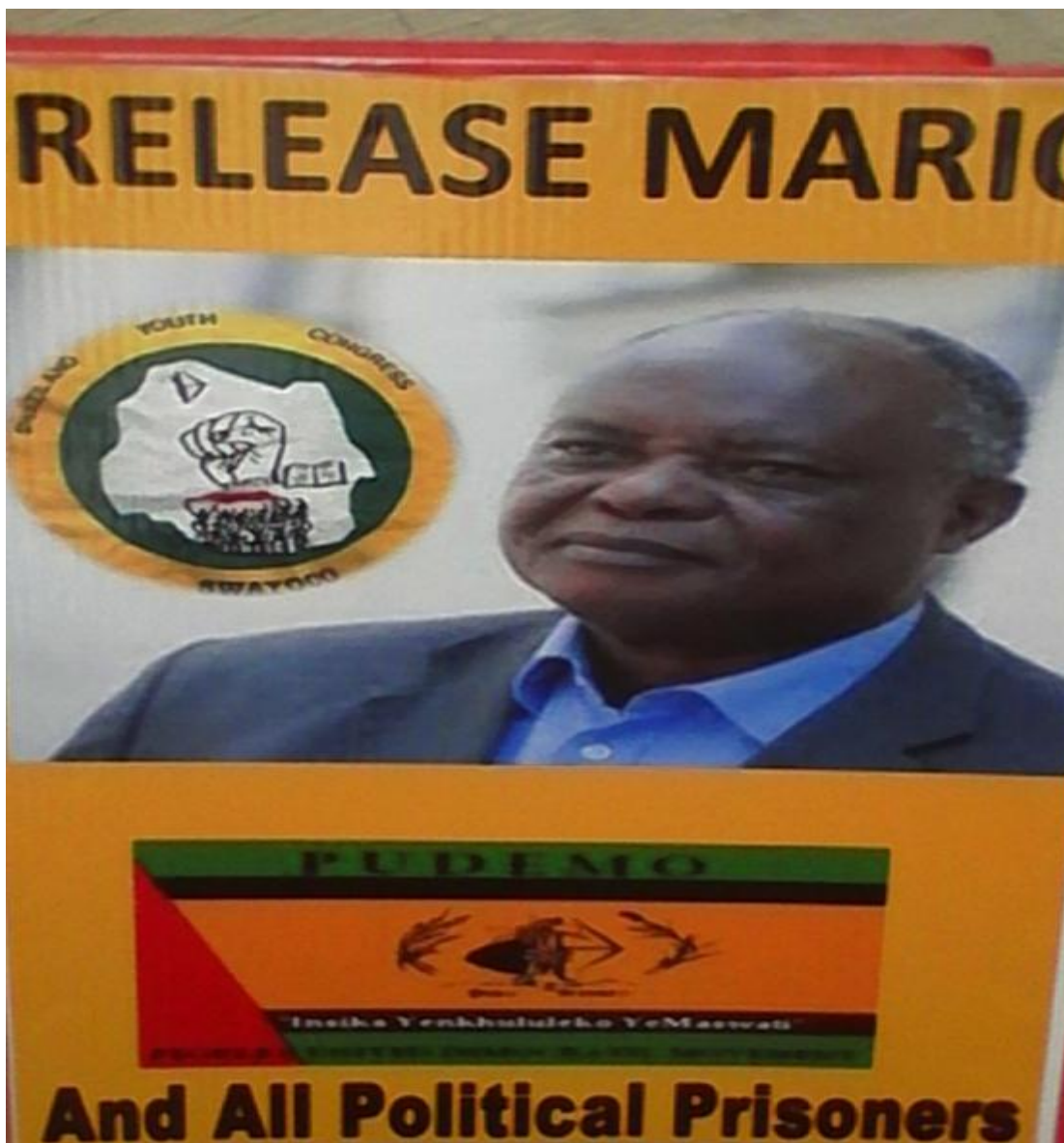
Former PUDEMO Secretary General Sikhumbuzo Phakathi delivering a speech at a May Day rally on behalf of PUDEMO in 2008



Source: Times of Swaziland, 02 May 2008.

APPENDIX 14

**A Photograph of a PUDEMO placard about the release of PUDEMO President
Mario Masuku and other political prisoners**



Source: Photograph by author, 17 April 2015.

APPENDIX 15

**Bonginkhosi ‘Commander’ Ntshangase, PUDEMO Manzini Regional Branch
Secretary, member of the Political Strategy and Ideological Development
Commission (PSIDC) and PUDEMO NEC member**



Source: Ntshangase's Family Album.

APPENDIX 16

Times of Swaziland article about how Mario Masuku's continued incarceration affected his family

NEWS Times of Swaziland Tuesday, March 31, 2015

POLICE, PRISON HAUNT MARIO MASUKU'S SON

BY BONISILE MAKHUBU

MBABANE - 'Police and prison' are two features that best describe the life of Mzwandile, the son of incarcerated Mario Masuku.

Mario, the President of the proscribed People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), is facing charges of terrorism, a crime he allegedly committed in May 2014. His son, an attorney by profession, described his childhood as a traumatic one that was marked with

'barking police dogs at 4 o'clock in the morning, armed police raiding his family house while he ate breakfast and trips made visiting his father, Mario, in prison. For the past 10 months he has had to visit his father in prison yet again', reads part of an article where Mzwandile was quoted. He confirmed granting an interview to Peter Kentworthy, a Danish journalist working for Afrika Kontakt (Africa Contact).

Mario has been charged with terrorism and sedition several times before, and has spent so much time in prison that he refers to it as his 'second home'.

His son said: "At one instance when our house was raided, my father asked the police to produce a search warrant but the superintendent told us that they didn't need one because they had authority bestowed on them."

As Mzwandile grew up, the police raids at the family house stopped intimidating him as he got used to the frequent visits by the police. But one thing that he would never quite get used to, he said, was seeing his father in court and visiting him in prison even though he has himself become an admitted attorney and part of his father's legal defence team.

"The very old and overcrowded prison buildings intimidate all who visit. When I visit my father we are restricted to a 'caged' visiting area or a dark, damp cell where he is kept. And there are many other restrictions... such as hours of waiting and having all visits supervised by three or more Correctional officers," Mzwandile said.

Mario catches pneumonia

MBABANE - Mario Masuku has contracted pneumonia in jail.

The diabetic Masuku, according to an interview that was given by his son, Mzwandile, to a Danish journalist, has lost weight and is suffering from poor eyesight.

"He has lost a lot of weight, has contracted pneumonia, is suffering from poor eyesight and has a serious infection in his right foot. I went to see my father recently and he informed me that his feet are so painful that he wakes up at night, and that this is one of the complications of his diabetes."

Mzwandile said their support has come from the most unlikely sources, such as from families in rural Swaziland, Desmond Tutu, Amnesty International and friends abroad.

Securing his father's release, as well as that of the many other political prisoners in Swaziland, is obviously a big priority for Mzwandile, reads the article in part.

INFORMATION BOX:

- Mario Masuku grew up in Nhlanguano, the sixth child of a mineworker and cattle guard father, who was involved in party politics, and a housewife mother.
- When he was young he had the dual responsibilities of looking after the family cattle and attending school when there was enough money.
- In 1966 he was one of the first black students to attend a 'whites only' school in what was then a British colony.
- In 1971 he was employed by Barclays Bank in Mbabane, but was later fired due to his many arrests in the 80s and 90s.
- Masuku and his wife, Thembi, raised their family in the Mbabane suburb of Eveni.
- He was one of the founding members of the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) in 1983, and has been elected the party's president several times.
- He has travelled the world including to South Africa, Holland, Germany and Denmark, where PUDEMO has a project partnership with political party the Red-Green Alliance that is funded by the Danish Government.
- In Denmark, he also received a democracy award in the Danish Parliament in 2010 from Danish Speaker of the House, former Foreign minister, and the next president of the UN General Assembly, Mogens Lykkeskov, who has met Mario Masuku on several occasions.

Source: Times of Swaziland, 31 March 2015.

APPENDIX 17

Front page of the Times of Swaziland about the release of 15 PUDEMO bomb suspects

SWAZI NEWS
SATURDAY March 11, 2006 A COMPLETE READ E2.20

**15 BOMB SUSPECTS
FREED!**

ON A COLLECTIVE E75 000 BAIL
ADVOCATES OFFER FREE LEGAL SERVICES
JUDGE QUOTES BIBLE VERSE FOR SUSPECTS
PM ORDERED TO SET UP PROBE ON BEATINGS

**APOSTOLIC ASSEMBLIES
MOVEMENT**
WE PREACH CHRIST AND HIM CRUCIFIED
Sunday Worship
10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
• Are you tired of sinning?
• Are you tired of being a sinner?
Do you want
to be filled
with power?
Newspaper Near To The Market Opposite
Post Office, Cell: 824 8114 / 824 8224

Source: Times of Swaziland, 11 March 2009.

APPENDIX 18

Times of Swaziland article about the launch of the “Free Mario Masuku” campaign

‘MARIO THE FACE OF FREEDOM’
 BY MDUDUZI MAGAGULA

● Campaign to release PUDEMO President launched without police interference

MANZINI – The People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO) has officially launched a ‘Free Mario Masuku’ campaign in Swaziland.

The event was hosted by PUDEMO in the Caritas Centre, Manzini on Friday, January 30, 2015.

About 100 PUDEMO members attended the occasion.

The event was peaceful, free and was not disturbed by the police, as is usually the norm with similar events.

Mlungisi Makhanya, Secretary General for PUDEMO, who, himself, is out on bail, after having been charged with terrorism for having worn a PUDEMO T-shirt, said the main aim of the campaign was not necessarily to secure the physical release of Masuku.

Makhanya said it was a campaign meant to demand freedom in the country, under the beliefs and ideals of Masuku.

“Masuku is the face of a campaign meant to demand freedom for the Swazi people,” he said.

Masuku, President of PUDEMO was arrested on May 1, 2014 following charges under the Suppression of Terrorism Act (STA) of 2008.

He is in jail at the Zakehele Remand Centre in Manzini awaiting trial, together with Maxwell Dlamini, Secretary General of the Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO).

SWAYOCO is the youth wing of PUDEMO, a political party formed in 1983, shortly after the demise of King Sobhuza II.

The party was banned in 2008 by Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini’s government.

Makhanya said the campaign was not new as it was initiated last year by Denmark organisations, the Red Green Alliance and Danish solidarity organization Africa Contact among others.

“We aim to continue officially launching the campaign in all countries that are in solidarity with us, in our quest to attain freedom in Swaziland,” Makhanya said.

He identified some of these countries as Denmark, South Africa and Canada, among others.

He said last week’s activity in Manzini was also meant to promote the on-line signing of a petition for the release of Masuku.

He shared the link, where the petition is found: (<http://afrika.dk/indhold/free-mario-masuku-and-maxwell-dlamini>).

The petition demands the unconditional release of Swaziland’s political prisoners, including the duo of Masuku and Dlamini.

Makhanya said the petition had proven to be very popular because a lot of people, both from within the country and outside, had signed it.

“Hundreds of unions, parties, politicians and individuals from all over the world have signed the petition. These include the International Trade Union Confederation, British Trade Union Federation UNISON and South Africa’s African National Congress.”

The secretary general recalled that the ANC even went to the extent of issuing a statement, calling for the release of Masuku and all other political prisoners in Swaziland.

He said once the petition garnered enough signatures, it would be submitted to the country authorities to act on it. He also said on the day of the launch, there was promotional material on the campaign which is given out to people who attended the event in return for a donated fee.

He said this was meant to raise funds that would go towards the campaign and further echo the demand of the Release of Masuku and Dlamini.

“Even though the support warms Masuku’s heart, he still has had to sleep on a cold prison floor at the Zakehele Remand Centre in Manzini. He is charged under the Suppression of Terrorism Act, an Act that Amnesty International has called ‘inherently repressive’.”

If convicted he could serve 15 years in prison. He also said Masuku was 63 years old and suffered from arthritis and diabetes. He said Masuku had developed a life-threatening infection on his left foot, which needed an operation.

Recently, when Masuku was visited by the organisation Lawyers for Human Rights, he complained that the conditions in jail were not conducive for his health.

He applied for bail on two occasions to be able to seek treatment for his ailments in neighbouring South Africa.

Both applications for bail were turned down. Masuku had previous brushes with the same Act resulting in his imprisonment for 340 days.

This happened in 2009 when he was charged and awaited trial on similar charges of terrorism.

He was later released when he was eventually brought before a judge.

His last court appearance on the present matter was on Thursday February 5, 2015. He returns to court in March 2015.

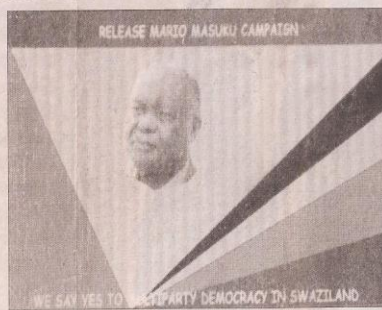
Assistant Superintendent Khulani Mamba, Police Information and Communication Officer, said Mario Masuku would only be released after a court process.

He said Masuku could not be released anyhow on wishes of individuals or groups and only the courts had the power to release him.

Mamba said the campaign to have Masuku released was misplaced because just like all people charged with an offence or offences it was only the courts that decide their fate.

He also said the police, through their intelligence, were aware of the PUDEMO meeting last week.

“We were monitoring it through our surveillance. We know all their moves and they know that,” he said.



Some of the cards that were sold during the event to raise funds for the campaign.

Source: Times of Swaziland, 08 February 2015.

APPENDIX 19

Times of Swaziland article about the UN General Assembly President calling for the release of Mario Masuku and Maxwell Dlamini

UN MAN WANTS MARIO, MAXWELL FREED

BY MIFANUKHONA NKAMBULE

MBABANE – The universal ‘chorus’ for the unconditional release of Mario Masuku and Maxwell Dlamini from prison is now being sung by the president-elect of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly.

This is Mogens Lykketoft. A president of the UN General Assembly is like a Speaker of Parliament as he calls kings, queens and presidents to order during sessions of the United Nations.

The veteran politician to take up this influential position is

The UN president-elect signed a petition that was circulating around the world and calling for the release of the two political activists. He signed the appeal towards the end of January 2015.

“I support the appeal for the immediate release of Mario Masuku and his colleague (student leader Maxwell Dlamini). I have met with Mario Masuku in Copenhagen as President of the Danish Parliament.

“He is fighting for democracy and human rights in Swaziland. I urge Denmark and the EU (European Union), together with South Africa, to ensure their immediate release so that they can resume their political work,” Lykketoft said in a statement issued in January 2015.

Petition

Other organisations that have signed the petition are the African National Congress (ANC), the International Trade Union Confederation and Britain’s largest trade union UNISON, the second largest trade union in the United Kingdom with almost 1.3 million members.

Masuku is president of the People’s United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO), a political party proscribed by Prime Minister Sibusiso Dlamini as a terrorist entity while Dlamini (Maxwell) is the Secretary General of the party’s youth wing called Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO).

SWAYOCO, the Swaziland Solidarity Network (SSN) and the Swaziland People’s Liberation Army (UMBANE-Lightning) were also banned by government.

PUDEMO President Mario Masuku waves as he leaves with Maxwell Dlamini after their case was postponed at the High Court. (File pic)

Mogens Lykketoft, the current Speaker of the Danish Parliament.

Before taking up this position in September 2015, President Lykketoft had a special message to Swaziland: “Release Mario Masuku and Maxwell Dlamini from Zakhele Remand Centre.”

UN General Assembly President Mogens Lykketoft.



Source: Times of Swaziland, 01 March 2015

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Dlamini Justice, Interview, Piggs Peak, 16 December 2014.

He is a teacher by profession and an NEC member of the Swaziland National Association of Teachers (SNAT). Dlamini is the former Secretary General of PUDEMO's youth wing, the Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO) and a member of PUDEMO.

Dlamini Lomcebo, Interview, Swaziland Coalition of Concerned Civic Organisation (SCCCO) Offices in Manzini, 15 January 2016.

Lomcebo is a human rights activist, a former Director of Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA), Swaziland Chapter, and a former Administrator of the Swaziland Coalition of Concerned Civic Organisation (SCCCO).

Dlamini Vincent, Interview, Swaziland Government Offices in Mbabane, 30 April 2015.

Vincent is a former trade unionist, a former founding President of the Trade Union Congress of Swaziland (TUCOSWA). Dlamini is also an NEC member of PUDEMO and the Chief Roads Engineer at the Ministry of Public Works and Transport.

Dludlu Wandile, Interview, Foundation for Socio-Economic Justice (FSEJ) Offices, SNAT Co-ops Building in Manzini, 2 April 2015.

Dludlu is the Coordinator of the Swaziland United Democratic Front (SUDF). He is also the former President of the Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO) and an active member of PUDEMO. Wandile is also the former President of the Student Representative Council (SRC) at the University of Swaziland.

Kunene Kenneth, Interview, Wimpy Restaurant in Ermelo, South Africa, 29 May 2015.

He is the former President and former Secretary General of the Swaziland Youth Congress (SWAYOCO) and a former member of the People's United Democratic Movement (PUDEMO). He is now a founding member of the recently formed Swaziland Communist Party.

Makhanya Mlungisi, Interview, Magistrates Courts in Mbabane, on 16 November 2014.

Makhanya is the current Secretary General of PUDEMO. He is former Treasurer of PUDEMO Gauteng Branch. He came into office of Secretary General of PUDEMO in 2008. He was once arrested under the Suppression of Terrorism Act of 2008 for wearing a PUDEMO t-shirt.

Masuku Bongani, Interview, South African Democratic Teacher's Union (SADTU) Offices in Ermelo, South Africa, 18 April 2015.

Bongani is the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) International Secretary, a Swazi exile since 1998, a former President of SWAYOCO, a former Secretary General of the Swaziland Solidarity Network, Chairperson of PUDEMO Gauteng Branch, a PUDEMO NEC Member and Head of the Political Strategy and Ideological Development Commission (PSIDC) of PUDEMO.

Masuku Mario, Interview, Foundation for Socio-Economic Justice (FSEJ) Offices, SNAT Co-ops Building in Manzini, 14 August 2015.

Masuku is the long-serving President of PUDEMO.

Masuku Percy, Interview, International Research Academy for Labour and Education (IRALE) Offices, SNAT Co-ops Building in Manzini, 25 February 2014.

He is the former Chief Political Commissar of SWAYOCO (2004-2006) and a member of PUDEMO. He works full-time for IRALE, a PUDEMO auxiliary.

Mkhonta Zodwa, Interview, Thembelihle in Mbabane, 22 November 2014.

She is a former treason trialist and trade unionist. She is a retired former senior Manager at Swaziland Electricity Company. She is one of PUDEMO's stalwarts who has never abandoned struggle and is still active as chairperson of various progressive NGO's. Mkhonta is the former Deputy President of the Swaziland Federation of Trade Unions (SFTU), former Deputy President of PUDEMO, former Treasurer of PUDEMO and Chairperson of the Women's League of PUDEMO. She is a long-time member of PUDEMO, a Chairperson of Swaziland Rural Women's Assembly (SRWA), a PUDEMO auxiliary and a Committee Member of the Foundation for Socio-Economic Justice (FSEJ), another PUDEMO auxiliary.

Ntshangase Bonginkhosi, Interview, Ngwane Park in Manzini, 20 April 2015.

Ntshangase is a teacher by profession. He is the PUDEMO Manzini Regional Branch Secretary, a member of the Political Strategy and Ideological Development Commission (PSIDC) and PUDEMO NEC member.

Phakathi Sandile, Interview, Foundation for Socio-Economic Justice (FSEJ) Offices, SNAT Co-ops Building in Manzini, 16 January 2016.

Sandile Phakathi is a former President, former NEC member of SWAYOCO, a former Secretary General, Deputy President, Secretary of PUDEMO Gauteng Branch and PUDEMO NEC member.

Shongwe Kison, Interview, Nhlangano, 23 May 2015.

Shongwe is a founding member and has served in several portfolios of PUDEMO. He is also the former President, Vice-President, former Deputy Secretary General and former NEC member of PUDEMO.

Shongwe Mphandlana, Interview, Freedom Square in Manzini, 8 December 2014.

Mphandlana is the current 2nd Deputy Secretary General of PUDEMO. He is a teacher by profession who took 10 years to complete a 3-year Secondary Teacher's Diploma at William Teacher Training College due to political harassment, arrests and detentions. He is also a former treason trialist, first arrested for student politics and later charged for high treason in 1990, and placed under the notorious 60 days detention without trial. He was again charged for treason and sedition in 2006 and for sedition again in 2009. He taught only for six months in 1995 which was followed by a suspension after getting arrested during the infamous SFTU 'Khukhulela Ngoco' strike of 1996. He was sentenced for five years, with the whole sentence suspended, yet indefinitely suspended from work. He has never been employed since and survives on handouts only. He also volunteers full-time for PUDEMO.

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