

ATM



Founded:	2018
Leader:	Vuyolwethu Zungula
Political position:	Centre right
Ideology:	African Christian socialism

History

The African Transformation Movement (ATM) was formed in 2018 on a founding principle of “African Humanism” recognising there is “only one God and only one race: the human race” (35). The party’s constitution describes the ATM seeking to create and develop a decolonised, modern, democratic, fair, and prosperous society based on the values of Ubuntu, servant leadership, and accountability (36).

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The ATM was formed with the backing of the South African Council of Messianic Churches in Christ and the party draws most of its support from the Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal, Gauteng, and Limpopo.

The ATM has only fought the 2019 general elections and the 2021 local government elections, earning two seats in the national assembly and 53 seats in local councils. The party forms part of several municipal government coalitions across the country and holds the mayoral chains in Mogale City.

Electoral record (37)

- 2019: 0.44%

Positions

(Source: Email correspondence with party spokesperson Zama Ntshona)

Economic growth and job creation

The ATM would incorporate small to medium enterprises in all procurement plans of the government to grow small businesses and create jobs. The party believes South Africa's economy and employment situation can be easily addressed by providing seed funding and advisory and material support to small business owners to start up and flourish.

Safety and security

The ATM believes South Africa's porous borders and lax enforcement of immigration laws are the root causes of security instability in the country. Accordingly, the party would aggressively crackdown on illegal immigration and enforce strict border controls. The ATM would also intervene in the informal cash economy to prevent the funding of terrorist and criminal groups, from South African soil. An ATM-led government would also amend the constitution to bring back the death penalty.

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Foreign affairs

The ATM would deepen South Africa's international ties on the African continent and Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS). The party rejects any international relationship it believes does not respect the sovereignty of South Africa, accelerate the South Africa's industrialisation, or materially benefit the country's citizens. The ATM would also urgently implement an Africa Free Trade Agreement to build a stronger Africa for the continent's people.

Energy Policy

The ATM advocates for a multifaceted approach to energy policy. They propose maintaining existing coal mines to ensure energy security and economic stability. Simultaneously, the party emphasizes investing in clean technology to mitigate the environmental impact of coal-based energy production. Additionally, the ATM supports substantial investments in nuclear energy as a reliable and efficient power source. To diversify the energy mix and enhance sustainability, the party calls for the establishment of domestic renewable energy sources. Furthermore, the ATM envisions providing free energy to indigent South Africans believing this approach will not only address poverty but also contribute to curbing illegal connections.

Education

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The ATM would refocus the education system to prepare learners for careers in the agriculture and mineral resources sectors. The party believes these sectors are untapped resources that could easily address unemployment. The ATM would also ensure the education system is value driven, supports the attraction and retention of quality teachers, and most critically provides digital-based learning.

Mineral resources

The ATM has a non-negotiable approach to beneficiation in that any mineral extracted in South Africa must be processed in the country before it is exported. The party would also ensure that if any mineral rights are granted in a specific area, the local community must benefit through concessions and employment.

Youth development

The ATM's plans for youth development are parallel to their plans for education in that they will ensure the country's youth are upskilled in jobs required in industry sectors they believe offer the greatest potential of economic growth and job creation. The party would launch cooperatives in different communities nationwide as a practical solution to youth unemployment.

Housing

The ATM would accelerate the government's current Reconstruction and Development programme (RDP), since it believes housing is dignity. However, the party would crackdown on corruption in the provision of state housing to ensure more settlements are built faster and within budget.

The environment and climate change

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The ATM believes in climate change and recognises the need for drastic action to protect the longevity of life on earth. The party, however, demands that any initiative undertaken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions must be phased in gradually and done in a manner that will not destabilise any sector of the economy.

Tourism

The ATM believes tourism must primarily benefit black South Africans and be driven by investment in small businesses within the sector. The party would focus urgent infrastructure investment in underdeveloped tourism destinations, like Port St Johns, QwaQwa, and Kimberly to boost economic activities and attract visitors. The ATM would also direct municipal support of tourism by providing licenses and support

to fledgling tourism operations, like craft artisans and small-scale hospitality and accommodation.

Immigration and xenophobia

While the ATM rejects xenophobia, the party does not tolerate illegal migration in South Africa. The party will ensure that any foreign national—tourist or migrant—must be in the country legally. Practically, this would mean accurate border control at all international ports of entry in line with all immigration laws.

LGBTIQA+ rights

The ATM's philosophy on queer rights echoes Robert Mangaliso Sobukwe's creed "there is only one race, the human race". The party would deepen rights to sexual preference enshrined in the constitution and ensure all South Africans are protected from prejudice and persecution.

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South Africa's twelve official languages

The ATM regards language as a point of identity and culture and as such, would always protect and preserve language rights to ensure that linguistic histories and identities are protected. To ensure no language is superior to any other, the party would prioritise mother tongue education in all twelve of South Africa's languages.

Artificial intelligence

The ATM recognises the challenges Artificial Intelligence (AI) presents in an economy like South Africa, with high levels of unemployment. An ATM-led government would enact legislation to ensure AI's fair use in South Africa and to prevent job shedding.

Sources:

- (35) African Transformation Movement: About Us <http://www.atm-sa.co.za/about-us/>
 - (36) African Transformation Movement constitution - <http://www.atm-sa.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/CONSTITUTION-OF-THE-AFRICAN-TRANSFORMATION-STUDENT-MOVEMENT.pdf>
 - (37) Independent Electoral Council 2019 National & Provincial elections - <https://results.elections.org.za/dashboards/npe/app/dashboard.html>
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