

Rise Mzansi



Founded:	2023
Leader:	Songezo Zibi
Political position:	Centre to Centre-Right
Ideology:	Social democratic constitutionalism

History

Rise Mzansi is another fledgling political party contesting elections for the first time in 2024. Its constitution describes a non-traditional political movement anchored in communities and based on the values of freedom, justice, equality, and integrity (42). Founded in 2023 with former journalist Songezo Zibi as its leader, the party endeavours to rally the people of South Africa to become active citizens and build stronger and more connected communities. Among its leadership are former DA federal leader and one-time party leadership candidate Makashule Gana as national organiser, entrepreneur, and business leader Vuyiswa Ramokgopa, and former government advisor Mandla Isaacs.

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Positions

(Source: Obtained through interview with party leader Songezo Zibi)

Economic growth and job creation

Rise Mzansi believes that economic growth and job creation begins and ends with competent and transparent governance. Accordingly, the party would aggressively clampdown on corruption and incompetence in the state to ensure the effective management of South Africa's resources. A Rise Mzansi government would ensure anybody appointed to the public

service or state institution is fit for purpose and able to deliver in their position. This would be combined with the pursuit of a well-regulated market economy with strategic state influence—not ownership—of assets within the economy.

Safety and security

Rise Mzansi would declare corruption as a threat to national security and enact reforms within the criminal justice system to deliver harsh prison sentences for anyone convicted of graft within the state. A Rise Mzansi government would purge the country's security apparatus—the intelligence service—of any party aligned individuals and vet all security personnel to guarantee allegiance to the constitution above anything else. The party would improve the capacity of the criminal justice system to arrest, prosecute, and convict more criminals. As part of its long-term approach to safety and security, Rise Mzansi would seek to address the root causes of crime rather than addressing the symptoms of crime.

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Foreign affairs

Rise Mzansi's foreign affairs policy is driven by the promotion of human rights on the African continent specifically, and the globe generally, alongside sustainable and meaningful trade relations. A Rise Mzansi government would diversify international relations and forge new trade partnerships so that South Africa does not find itself caught in the middle between the USA, the European Union, and China. Any response to a world crisis would be calibrated based on South Africa's means to play a meaningful role and obtain results.

Energy security

Rise Mzansi would urgently reduce South Africa's dependence on expensive diesel generators to keep the lights on during load shedding, pointing to its negative impact on inflation and harm caused to the environment. Instead, a Rise Mzansi government would drive South Africa's conversation to renewable energy through Small to Medium Enterprises (SME) while maintaining a stable base load for industry. The US\$ 6,5bn South Africa is set to receive for a just energy transition would be used to enact this renewable energy plan for households and SMEs as well as skills development in the sector. The party would promote private investment into transmission and distribution while conducting studies into Eskom's overall mandate to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

Education

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Rise Mzansi regards education and skills training as key to the economic stability and growth of South Africa. Accordingly, the party would reform the education system to include secondary school compulsory vocational and artisanal training alongside academic instruction. Rise Mzansi believes this will not only improve the employability of matriculants unable to progress to university, but also provide practical skills with which to start a business. This would be complemented with programmes to incubate entrepreneurs by providing fledgling enterprises with seed funding and marketing assistance. Furthermore, a Rise Mzansi government would focus on improving the quality of education by reducing the influence of trade unions on the sector focusing on improving throughput rates so that more learners who start school matriculate.

Mineral resources

Rise Mzansi believes the mining industry would be best served with a functional Eskom and Transnet and would overhaul these energy and logistics State Owned Enterprises (SOEs). A Rise Mzansi government would also review all mining regulations and legislations and remove any aspect that is not fit for purpose in growing the sector. The party would also invest heavily in the beneficiation of minerals used in the renewable energy sector.

Youth development

Rise Mzansi would focus on sustainably reducing South Africa's high level of youth unemployment by offering the youth sustainable training in practical skills needed in the economy. Pairing candidates with private companies offered tax breaks for employing first time workers. Moreover, a Rise Mzansi government would invest heavily in community sports and cultural infrastructure to offer the youth an alternative to the lure of shebeens and drug dens.

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Housing

Rise Mzansi centres their housing policy on the development of sustainable communities through effective spatial planning and land allocation. While providing the indigent with temporary and permanent housing based on a means test, a Rise Mzansi government will strive to equip South Africans with the means to build or buy their own homes. This would involve assisting first-time buyers to obtain loans for their first home and providing properly planned and allocated pieces of land for those that wish to build.

The environment and climate change

Rise Mzansi acknowledges climate change is a clear and present danger to the existence of humankind and regards it more as a safety issue than an environmental one. Accordingly, the party believes all government plans and actions must be integrated within a greater goal of environmental protection and sustainability. A Rise Mzansi government would also invest in biodiversity management to secure food production.

Tourism

Rise Mzansi regards tourism as an undeveloped sector promising massive growth and job creation under the correct management. A Rise Mzansi government would streamline tourist visas to make it as easy as possible for visitors to come to South Africa and spend foreign currency. Key to this would be ensuring the safety of tourists, which Rise Mzansi would direct the South African Police Service to provide greater resources specifically for this function. A Rise Mzansi government would expand access to the tourism market by aggressively investing in basic services and infrastructure in rural areas and townships. This would be complemented by demarcated tourism expansion areas which would enjoy tax incentives for private investment.

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Immigration and xenophobia

Rise Mzansi acknowledges uncontrolled immigration and resulting xenophobia as a threat to local and regional stability. To address this challenge, a Rise Mzansi government would urgently document all migrants in South Africa with a view to normalising their stay in South Africa. This exercise will be used to identify individuals with critical skills and accordingly deploy them in the economy. Foreign nationals that fail to normalise their stay or meet the criteria to become residents will be deported.

LGBTIQA+ rights

Rise Mzansi recognises the constitutional rights of all minority and vulnerable communities in South Africa, including the LGBTIQA+ community. A Rise Mzansi government would seek to reinforce existing statutory rights in the constitution and embark on community outreach programmes to challenge and reform homophobic attitudes. The party believes such an initiative should be approached with the same vigour as campaigns to end gender-based violence (GBV).

South Africa's twelve official languages

Rise Mzansi supports the constitutional protection of South Africa's twelve official languages and would seek to recover and make disappearing indigenous languages such as Khoisan, official.

Artificial intelligence

Rise Mzansi welcomes the rapid global development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the potential benefits it will bring to mankind, however, also acknowledges the potential risks. A Rise Mzansi government would enact legislation to regulate its use to prevent fraud, copyright infringement, and the weakening of democracy through misinformation.

Source:

(42) Rise Mzansi constitution - https://assets.website-files.com/6512abc58b1468c2e0784360/651e9f4c767b9c73703a5691_Our%20Constitution.pdf
