

Welcome to the 23rd Winter School from the Khanya College Coordinator

By Maria Van Driel

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Dear Comrades

On behalf of Khanya College, we wish you a very warm welcome to the 23rd Annual Khanya College Winter School, a school for activists. Thank you for accepting our invitation to strengthen movement building. While we meet in very difficult times, we are happy for the opportunity to meet physically, even as we observe all protocols against the Covid 19 pandemic.

This year the theme of the Winter School, Organise to Remake the World, is a clarion call to the working class to respond to the urgent tasks facing working class organisations and activists in South Africa. Ten years after the Marikana Massacre (2012) the crisis has deepened, the ruling class, the ruling party and their allies cannot deracialise capitalism and make meaningful social and economic changes to improve the lives of working people.

Since the 1990s neoliberalism has brought devastation. Decay and degeneration are widespread, affecting all social classes. For the working class especially, disintegration is pervasive while women bear the burden of social reproduction. The recent deaths at Inyobeni tavern highlight the plight of youth. The Covid 19 pandemic has worsened existing conditions, just as the recent war in Ukraine. Yet, in South Africa (and internationally), black and white elites have become wealthier.

The working class is realising that the ruling elites are unable (and unwilling) to resolve the crisis and the social disintegration gripping the country. While the working class is the only class that can bring about sustainable social change for everyone, there are many challenges. How will the working class in its present state 'remake the world'? How will it overcome its internal divisions, organise and build sustainable organisations? How will the working class overcome its problems of corruption, greed, alcoholism, violence against women and the lack of skills and political education? These and many other questions will be discussed at the school.

Comrades, this is the first School without our beloved coordinator, cde Oupa Lehulere. While we are saddened by this loss, Oupa lived an exemplary life. He inspired the first Khanya School in 1999 to bring together activists to analyse and remake the world. Insightful and strategic, he infused us with his vitality, commitment and love for the working class. A brilliant intellect, Oupa chose to dedicate his life to 'remake the world' and emancipate the working class, and humanity. He always believed that the working class will rise and redeem humanity. He enriched our lives with his love and laughter and left us a legacy of struggle. We encourage you to read his work, to read widely, and to choose the path of the emancipation of the working class in South Africa and internationally. Aluta continua! Arm yourself with knowledge, and organise to remake the world.

In solidarity
Maria van Driel
College Coordinator

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