



PATRICK MAGEBHULA HUNSLEY

1 NOVEMBER 1958 – 4 AUGUST 2014

Our lives are very short
so we cannot afford to
close them to others...
We need to open the
doors to our hearts,
minds and communities,
By doing this we will
learn from each other,
They will learn from
our heart failures,
We will live through
their heartbeats,
How will they know
if we don't let them in?

PATRICK'S POETRY

Excerpts from the poem "Let's let them into our lives"

THE LIFE OF

PATRICK
MAGEBHULA
HUNSLEY



LEFT TO RIGHT

Iris Namo, Patrick Magebhula Hunsley, Florence September in Victoria Mxenge Ufunduzufe 1995

Patrick speaks at a gathering of the South African Homeless People's Federation (SAHPF)

Durban ICC house model 2003

MEMOIR OF PATRICK'S LIFE

*This memoir is dedicated to Patrick's children
and family, known and loved by the SDI family.
It is a compilation of his own words and memories
and those of his friends and comrades.*

The portion of land I once called home still exists on a farm in the hills of Melmoth in the heart of Kwazulu. The three graves in the middle of the land are the very little evidence that a family once lived here. My great grandfather, I am told, was given this piece of land as compensation for his work in the British army deployed to South Africa at the time. He was an army general by the surname of Hunsley that settled on this land and married an African woman who is my great grandmother. His children, my grandfather, in turn also married an African woman and I believe were all traditional healers from different clans in Kwazulu. My father Charles Hunsley was the eldest son of Hedly Hunsley who was also the eldest of my grandfather's. I am also the eldest of my family.

If you follow the trend of intermarriage between white and African and coloured and African you are tempted to believe that by the time I was born in 1958, I was already diluted so much that I resembled my grandmothers and mother uMaria Khumalo who was born in Enkhandla... My mother's family KwaKhumalo believed I was theirs and named me Jabulani Khumalo and my father's family named me Patrick Hunsley. I was named Jabulani because I want to believe they were happy that a son was born and also my father had not paid or completed his lobola responsibilities, therefore I became a contested being...I became one of the herdboys but not for long as I then had to attend school. This is the time also when my mother became the mother, the domestic worker, and the slave of the family... She never ever had time for us...She really I think had a very painful life. I still feel this and I think this is how I also subconsciously chose the type of work or community work I do.

Patrick had a very hard life. His life and times encapsulate much of a quintessential life of a poor black South African born under apartheid and grown to adulthood during a time of turbulent, exciting and demoralising change. It all began generations before Patrick's birth, when an ancestor of his, a white farm-owner by the name of Hunsley had an illegitimate child with one of his black farm-workers. From that moment on the homestead in Melmoth, KZN had two Hunsley families - the white bosses and the black servants. Patrick's father, who was the third generation head of the black Hunsley kraal, died when Patrick was still in his teens. His idyllic rural life, that he carried nostalgically with him to his death, came to an abrupt end. His uncles conspired together to chase Patrick's mother and her three children from the farm. His mother, rootless and homeless found solace in dementia and Patrick drifted into the cities. He was cared for by his mother's extended family and sent to a catholic seminary. Rebelliousness and misconduct took him down a path of delinquency and after participating a botched robbery he was sent to reformatory.

I want it to be understood that we were not a poor family and our neighbours were also not poor. Abakwamajogi, Mdela, Dhladla, Ntombela and many more families had cattle to milk, had maize to eat and all the other vegetables that are organic and just grow without being planted...There was always something to eat besides the odd chicken that we would have to chase almost the whole day... At that time this was very exciting and we looked forward to these chicken chases. There was also a type of delicious wild berry that grew on these hills, slopes and valleys that was eaten whenever you felt like. It was crushed to make jam and juice. We as young boys would roast sweet potatoes and cane rats and we never ever slept hungry...

When my father passed away, it also came to an end. His family, my uncles, aunts, and my other grandfathers got involved in such a terrible power struggle for control of the family and resources that killed everything. The results of this power struggle are still felt today...My mother, uMaria Khumalo Hunsley, was evicted....She was not even allowed to wait for the holidays to leave with us. She was hounded out and when we got back she was gone and no one could explain where she had gone. The months, years that followed were the most painful in my life...

“There were times when my uncle would wake me up at night and we would go to nearby farms to steal sheep... All the survival tactics, antics, and strategies used to go through life and have something to put on the table, were interpreted as theft and crime and my Aunt Charlotte, who was my father’s sister, did not approve of this and soon alerted the state that she had a nephew who is a criminal or juvenile delinquent as we were called at that time. I was then sent to a place of safety for naughty children and later transferred to a reformatory in Cape Town. When I arrived at this reformatory called Ottery in the Western Cape I was sixteen and fit and well-built youngster who could take care of himself because I picked a lot of survival tricks in the boarding schools and in the rough world of the rural bushes... They already knew my name, my strengths, my weaknesses and my skills. You see I have always been a storyteller. They also knew that I could write letters and compositions. They knew I was a talented footballer and a protector of the underdog. The word was that this guy could fight, talk, and was an asset. I soon started my job of telling stories, half of them false fiction, some of them real life experiences, my survival on the streets and bushes, and I became a hit not only with the Durban boys but the Josters (Joburg boys) also enjoyed my company. I soon also started something I still do today: listen to other people’s pain and sorrow and extracting that and using it to heal myself and others.

After two unsuccessful escapes from Porter school and then Ottery in the Western Cape, Patrick resigned himself to seeing out his two-year term in the reformatory. He was eventually released into the turbulence of the 1976 rebellion. Patrick made his way back to Durban where the constraints of family supervision were too much for him and he took to the streets.

In the late 1970’s, as a young twenty year old, Patrick moved to Inanda where he made a living by running a mini-shebeen that he hid under the trestle table of his vegetable vending stand. This stand was located on the Ntuzuma road, next to a mushrooming informal settlement on the banks of a river called “Piesang” because of the banana trees that grew there.

The settlement that came to be known as Soweto Inanda fell under the control of an Inkatha warlord and Patrick, along with other young men, was press-ganged into an urban impi whose mission it was to kill ANC sympathisers. Not prepared to accept these controls, in spite of a strong rural Zulu bias, Patrick sought to run away. He was chased down and in the ensuing struggle he was stabbed in the chest, the cold steel, piercing his lung. This was to be an injury that bedevilled him for the rest of his life. Patrick holed up in a shack in Soweto, Inanda (also known by then as Piesang River) and not for the last time clung to life by a thread. He was eventually smuggled out to hospital, where he was in serious danger of being arrested by the apartheid police on suspicion of being an ANC supporter who had luckily escaped an IFP attack.

When he recovered he returned to Piesang River and started to launch a resistance to the warlord, that gained momentum from the uprisings of the time. After a fierce and turbulent struggle the warlord was dislodged and a democratic committee, with Patrick as Secretary came to organise the settlement. This was the origin of the Piesang River Civic Association, aligned to the United Democratic Front.

Patrick’s leadership and huge popularity ensured that Piesang River was an ideal focal area, when in the early 1990’s the progressive NGO called the Built Environment Support Group came to secure support from the Independent Development Trust, with the intention of triggering a participatory upgrading project.



LEFT TO RIGHT

Patrick & former KZN Premier Zweli Mkhize hand over a house to a FEDUP member
Mobilization of Meriting informal settlement CoJ

Patrick and housing minister Lindiwe Sisulu at FEDUP Pledge conference in 2006

ISN leadership meeting in Ekurhuleni

“When I arrived at Piesang River in 1982 I found myself amongst some of the very poor in our communities... I did not know this part of the city. I had lived in the bush at a younger age and then I was frightened by snakes, wild animals and hunger. Here I was in one of the most notorious settlements in Inanda and Durban. Because of the survival experiences I picked up at boarding school and reformatory, it was easy to adapt to this jungle... Because I had to survive, I started by trying to know the who's who of this area. I soon found out that the different residents of this area called Piesang River were actually people who were all trying to make a living... The place was a hive of activity. I quickly became known because I was someone who could talk almost every subject and besides being very convincing, I was an honest liar... I was in demand all over the settlement whether it was a party or feast or a simple indaba, the elders and people of the settlement always wanted me there. I also was a very respecting person. I could listen very attentively without blinking an eye because maybe I was bored fast asleep. I lived like this for some time until one day... I started thinking about doing something else.

Like a snake glides through the grass and flicks its tongue in anticipation, like a scorpion uses its sting to feel its way, I was in this forest of people and shacks looking for an exit from the fear and brutality...I had to steer this ship somewhere and this is how I have had to live my life...When meetings were called people spoke about poverty but the enemy was Apartheid and the cause was Apartheid. People spoke about crime, people spoke about sanitation and water. Now that I was the secretary I had to have reports and strategies of where this would come from. Most of the time there would be brainstorming sessions to discuss these issues but most of them would end up discussing individuals who were a threat to our new found power... I became powerful because I had dared to challenge the issue of necklacing, which was a death penalty by a car tyre and petrol put around your neck and burnt. I had also stopped the disciplining of people by sjambok where people would be sjamboked until they bled and sometimes fell unconscious...

It is these skills that I picked up at reformatory and during my young life that became my guidelines to knit this community and make it an institution for life skills. When it came to meetings that needed command and order I would be my father, I would be the prefect, and I would be the orator. When I was in the shack lands I would be the lion, I would be the dog, I would be the chameleon, and I would be the snake that glided into its hole unnoticed in times of trouble. During the day I would be the bee visiting the flowers getting ideas, cooling tempers, negotiating and getting consensus. At night I would be the owl watching and sleeping with my eyes wide open in case they decided to end my life.

What amazed and struck me is I never heard anyone speak of hunger and poverty. We were so obsessed with our daily lives and survival. At no time in my life had I seen people so committed in trying to perfect the new way of life e.g. belonging to a united community and trying to find a solution to solve the problems... It is also at this time that through our ANC structure a NGO by the name of BESG started visiting our community. It must have been 1990 or 1991 when I was asked to attend a meeting called by the old Durban Functional Region Committee (DFR), which was responsible for dispersing development funds. I had to present on Piesang River and suddenly the issues flooded my mind.

Because I was living in the conditions that were very bad at that time where shack fires, floods and crime were one of the worst in Durban I spoke about the conditions. I did not know at that time that this was poverty because I had never known poverty for these conditions were home to me because I had no home. In these conditions I lived and survived and I was welcome and had people look up to me, something I had never known...

“They came to me to discuss personal issues not realizing that I was weeping and bleeding internally because I had no home and was torn away from my family by tragedy. I had to organize ID documents, I had to write letters to courts, banks, social workers and sometimes I had to pretend to be a lawyer and this I did with success. This community needed an identity and we gave it. We got an address. We got water, which was sold for five cents to the community. We got the right to live here... Eventually we agreed to have the NGO BESG who was introduced to the community as the support organization.

After an initial period of close collaboration with BESG, the Piesang River Civic, under Patrick's direction, broke away from the NGO and linked up with an initiative called People's Dialogue, which had emerged from a shack dweller conference to which Patrick had been invited and where he met activists from every part of the country and from several countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Patrick's life experiences had driven him to want to start a movement of the urban poor, wishing to replicate the actions of the slum dweller leaders of a previous era who had started struggle movements in Kliptown, Soweto. Indeed in his early twenties Patrick had taken the name Magebhula - after one of the leaders of the Sofasonke and uMfelandawonye movements of the 1940s and 50s. Further inspiration came from an unlikely source.

When he went on an exchange to India in 1992, he met the leadership and members of a social movement by the name of the National Slum Dwellers Federation and decided he wanted to birth a similar movement in South Africa. Another man by the name of Magebhula was to become the father of South African shack dweller social movements.

In 1994 Patrick, in his usual persuasive way, got comrades from informal settlements in Durban, Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town and many secondary cities to form uMfelandawonye Wabantu BaseMojondolo - the South African Homeless People's Federation. In the decade that followed, under Patrick's leadership the Federation built over 4000 houses in Durban (including more than 1000 in Piesang River) and more than 10,000 countrywide. At the same time, through Patrick's inspiration a new strategy of militant negotiation began to take root in South Africa's settlements. While very few had his nous, his guile and his charm, informal settlement leaders throughout the country began to engage state institutions in tactical and strategic negotiations leading to many policy and delivery related achievements.

Patrick, more than any other, pushed the envelope and engineered many land invasions, not only in KZN but in the Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, North West and Free State. While many ended in demolitions, as land invasions often do, there are scores of settlements in South Africa, some upgraded into formal neighbourhoods that owe their origin to Patrick's obsession with securing land for the dispossessed. And all the time Patrick interacted directly with officials and politicians, winning many over, and opening the hearts and minds to the realities facing people they previously saw as good for nothing squatters until Patrick made them see them as fellow citizens and fellow human beings.

During these years the global movement of the urban poor, known as Shack Dwellers International spread across the developing South - especially Africa and Patrick played a crucial role in the birth of Federations in several countries from Namibia and Zimbabwe, to Brazil and Bolivia, from Kenya and Uganda to Thailand and Indonesia.

There are very few slum dwellers, in fact very few activists who can make such a claim.



LEFT TO RIGHT

Visiting Zimbabwe Federation, Patience Mudimu.

Patrick supervising construction in Inanda Durban.

Patrick & Joe Nene (Advisor to the Mayor of eThekweni Municipality) - SA Alliance march to eThekweni Municipality, March 2014

Patrick in Piesang River June 2000.

From Rose Molokoane

NATIONAL CO-ORDINATOR OF FEDUP

I have come to know Patrick both as a friend, as a brother, a confidante, a colleague, a co-worker as well as a sparring partner.

I met Patrick in March 1991 in Broederstroom, during the first Peoples Dialogue workshop. I can clearly remember him with his Snoop Dog look and an Arrow shirt and golden chains around his neck. He spoke with this wonderful English accent. For a while I was convinced he was one of those black Americans on tour to South Africa. However from listening to him I gathered that he had a political tongue and I thought he was part of government. Only to find he was a Skhotheni like myself. In that workshop, I was inspired by the speech by Jockin Arputham, which became a mirror to our South African scenario: in India forty years after electing their democratic government they expected to experience a flow of milk and honey on the street, only to find that 40 years later they found 800 people sharing one toilet. This prompted me to make a request to Jockin that I make a visit to India, and this was the beginning of the process of the Slum Dwellers movement. It was then agreed that an exchange program should take place between South Africa and India.

We met again in 1992, In Johannesburg at a finance workshop also facilitated by the People's Dialogue and a team from India attended. At this meeting we concretised the first exchange to India, which involved an eight-member team comprising of people from the poor communities in South Africa, of which Patrick and myself were part.

Patrick was a loving nuisance who could lift your spirits when you were down. He loved laughing so much that no matter how angry you were with him, you ended up laughing with him. His surname Maghebula was a synonym for 'Orlando Pirates', and I would have my turn to laugh every time Pirates was beaten by Kaizer Chiefs.

Patrick was so religiously punctual that when he was late for a flight he would phone me at 5am to ask what he should do because he was about to miss a flight. That to me was either having too much respect for flying objects, or he was just afraid to miss a ride like a little boy.

I certainly am going to miss the chocolates he used to buy for me. Always a shoulder to cry on, Patrick would not miss an opportunity to encourage me when I was down and out, and believe me in the type of business we are involved in, stress can hit you like a Tsunami.



Patrick & Rose Molokoane at World Urban Forum 7 in Medellin Colombia 2014.

Patrick could get very angry if things didn't go the way they were supposed to. Every trip we travelled together on, Patrick would talk about his children. He was a loving father to his children and held them in high esteem. With all the mistakes he made, and you were angry with him, he would just smile. You would never know whether he accepted responsibility or not.

From ALL the community leaders we started the organisation with, Patrick and I were the remaining two, and now, he's left me to this massive task of taking this movement forward. A big gap that cannot be filled. A man for all seasons that can never be replaced. Indeed a mighty tree has fallen. With the short summary I've made, I haven't even touched the ice-berg, but I can write a 2000 page book about our friendship. I've grown accustomed to this hero for over 24 years, and I don't want to even imagine what the next 24 years will be without him will be.

In conclusion - I've cried my last tear, I've said my last say. Farewell comrade, farewell brother, farewell mighty man.

Hamba kahle Qhawe. Lala kahle qhawe. You have paved the way and led by example. We can only live to honour your wish to continue with the struggle for the poor, the helpless and the homeless in our families, in our cities, in our Provinces, in our countries and in the world.

From Ma Mkhabela

ON BEHALF OF FEDUP, KWAZULU-NATAL

Uwile umthi omkhule waka Hunsley makhosikazi.
 Uwile umthi omkhulu wesikhukhukazi samantungwa
 Isithonga sawo sizwakele e Asia
 Isithonga sawo sizwakele e Africa
 Isithonga sawo sizwakele e Latin America
 Umuthi ozimpande zawo zinabele wonke umhlaba
 Ozithelo zawo zikumazwe onke omhlaba
 Liwile iqhawe lomzabalazo wentuthuko
 LIHAMBILE IQHAWWE ZISELE IZIBONGO !!!!!



From left to right. Patrick Matsemela, Patrick Magebhula Hunsley, Rose Molokoane, Ma Mkhabela, Benjamin Bradlow

From Ndodeni Dengo

ON BEHALF OF ISN, KWA ZULU NATAL

Sahlangana ngo 2001 - ngahlabeka umxhwele ngendlela owakwazi ngayo ukushintsha izimpilo zethu siwumphakathi wakwa Mathambo ngokuthi sizimele sizenzele singathembeli kakhulu ukuphiwa ngu Hulumeni ngokusihlanganisa no ISN sakwazi ukufunda ukusaver sisebenzisa izindlela ezilula zokubeka kancane kancane ukuze sigcine siphendule indawo esihlala kuyo kube indawo ehlanzekile, wangifundisa nokuba ngumholi oqotho ngama motivation owaye hlale njalo emotivator ngayo sonke isikhathi.

Ubuhlale njalo egqugquzela ukuthi uma ungumholi kufanele uzibonakalise ngokuhlala njalo uphethe I attendance register yomhlangano owubamba ne community yakho, ilayout, ama munite omhlangano lokho kwangenza ngaba ngumholi oqotho. Kumanje ngingumholi womphakathi wakwaMathambo informal settlement, ngingu co-ordinator ka ISN EKZN, ngikwi National leadership ka ISN. Ngibonga ngakhokonke angifundise khona nokuhlonipha abanye abantu. Ungenze ngangalilahla ithemba empilweni ngilokhu ngigqugquzeleka njalo empilweni ikakhulu uma sinemihlangano ubengenza ngibe nokuzethemba. Lala ngoxolo magebhula owagebhula umhlaba kamaspala, lala ngokuthula ushoke nalapho ukhona. Ngoba noma singakhala kodwa wena awushonanga uyolanda keibhantshi lakho elisha kubaba ezulwini, uzobuya usuligqokise omunye umagebhula.

From Lindiwe Ngubane

PIESANG RIVER YOUTH, KWAZULU-NATAL

Kufa awunamahloni wasithathela umongameli wethu. Ngiyakwesaba kufa sobuye sihlekiswe ubani, sobuye sisetshiswe ngubani? Ubani oyofana nawe? Sihlale phansi kophahla ngenxa yakho. Uyidlalile indima Emhlabeni wonke jikelele. Ngiyakuzonda kufa luphi udosi lwakho? Izinhliziyi zethu uzishaye ngenkamba. Ubani oyopholisa lezilonda na? Ubani oyosishiso iziqubulo zehlangano njengaye? Ezithi "Zonke izinto ezmandi! Ziyabulala" "isiphukuphuku sendododa sawudla uswidi unjalo".

From Rosina Mufamadi

ON BEHALF OF FEDUP, LIMPOPO

Maghebula he was a hero, a father & brother to us, no one can replace this space for him, a lovely kind man. We will always remember him for what he has done in this organisation and for us. May your soul rest in peace. Our deepest sympathies to Maghebula's family... May God keep you strong. In Venda we say 'Ro Xelelwa'.



Patrick with Gershwin Kohler, Bulelwa Mkgali & Mzwanele Zulu

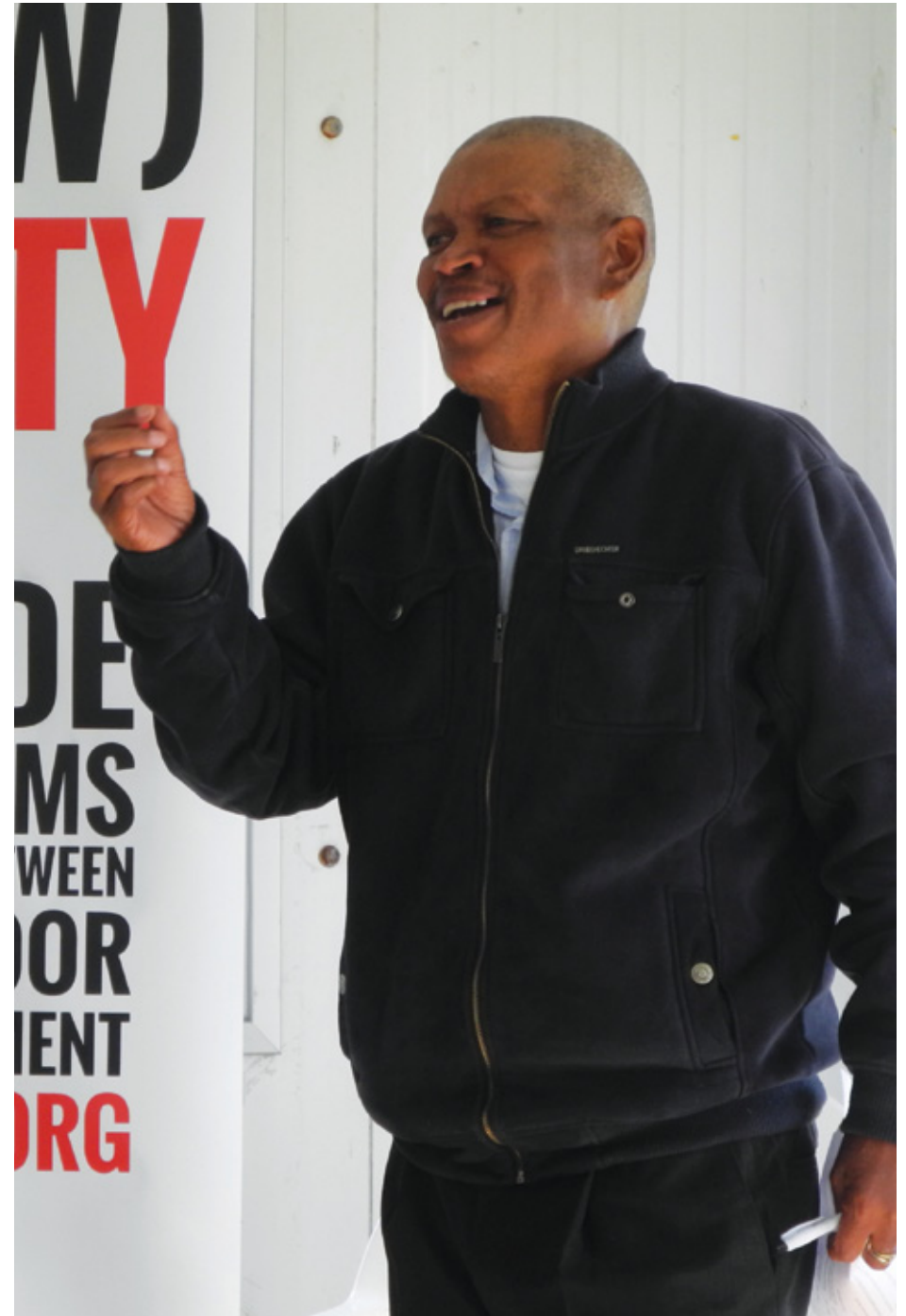
The Government and its People While the band played we danced out of step

Why were we out of step?
Why did we look clumsy?
Why were we so false?
Why could we not keep to the beat?
Why were we out of tune?

We were not used to the tune.
The tune was not our tune.
The band was ours but did not play our music.
We had rehearsed to dance the People's controlled and centred waltz.
Instead the band played the Top down cha-cha.

While the band played, we danced out of tune.
The band is ours, but the music is not ours.
We will dance to our music.
We must compose our own songs and ask the band to play them.
While they played, we danced out of step.

POEM BY PATRICK



Patrick Magebhula speaks in Khayelitsha, Cape Town



2006 Signing the FEDUP Pledge with the Department of Housing

From Nomvula Mahlangu

ON BEHALF OF FEDUP MPUMALANGA

Lala ngoxolo mfoka-Hunsley (Rest in peace Hunsley). You are a hero amongst heroes. You have planted a beautiful seed in our communities and we just pray that it bears fruit. For everything that we learnt from you, we say, thank you.

From Kenny Makobe

ON BEHALF OF FEDUP NORTH WEST

I will always remember him, by his slogans that were so meaningful. He always motivated people and was never afraid to touch on any aspect of life. Rest in peace.

From Alina Mofokeng

ON BEHALF OF FEDUP GAUTENG

Patrick was my role model. It is him that taught me how to mobilize and make communities understand the importance of empowering themselves. He had a smart way of getting through difficult government officials. I remember his creativity through songs, slogans and poems that he composed. May his soul rest in peace.

From Emily Mohohlo

ON BEHALF OF FEDUP FREE STATE

He was a people's person. Always wanted to see growth in the organization. He liked singing, making jokes and laughing all the time. I remember a time when he came to the Free State and said "You guys are always complaining that you have no NGO locally and you forget that the job you are doing without a local NGO is so fantastic." That was so encouraging. Whenever he got a chance to have a one-on-one chat with someone, he would ask about the individual's well-being as well as the family. Besides mobilization, he taught me how to respect other people regardless of who you are. We say to our father "Rest in peace". AMANDLA, YIMALI NOLWAZI!

From Rosy Mashimbye

ON BEHALF OF FEDUP GAUTENG

I loved Patrick's motivation. He always made jokes related to real life situations. I will miss his unique laughter. I would like to urge all leaders to take after him and take a stand in encouraging communities to take charge of their own development. Let his spirit live with us. Amen

Like Fledglings

At first I thought they were being threatened by a snake.
When I got nearer I realised they were hungry.

The mother was dangling a worm from above.
The government was dangling subsidies,
As she circulated not knowing which one to feed.
Yes, she hoped the weaker ones will soon be tired.
It was the survival of the fittest.

This touched my soul as they became wary.
Until only one had its beak opened.
She was fed while the others were now asleep.
Two of them had been trampled to death.
What a pity.

How many communities will receive the subsidy?
How many will survive to receive?
How many of them will die of frustration and despair?
Lets unite our resources and fight for our survival.

POEM BY PATRICK

Izwe Lakithi

Izwe Lakhiti
wemadoda seligcwele imijondolo,
Natal koloni, eminye se Natal, eminy'ise koloni
seligcwele imijondolo

Izwe Lakhiti
wemadoda seligcwele imijondolo,

Gauteng, Free Stata, eminye se Gauteng, eminye se Free Stata,
seligcwele imijondolo

Ama developa
Ama developa madoda asakela amatoileti

Sifunani ke tina
Sifuna izindlu sifuna izikolo asiwafuni amatoileti

Kubuhlungu ukuhlalemjondolo

(Our land is infested with toilets and shacks because we
don't control our own development - it's controlled by private
developers and NGO's - they build toilets and box houses.
They say we need toilets. We say we want proper houses.)

THIS SONG BY PATRICK HAS BECOME THE ANTHEM OF THE SA SDI ALLIANCE

From Sipho Vanga

ON BEHALF OF ISN GAUTENG

I remember Patrick as a radical man. When it came to partnerships with the government, he wanted us to do a project first on the ground to demonstrate what we want from the government before meeting the officials. He has shown us the way and it is now up to the communities and leaders to let his legacy live on by doing what he taught us.

From Evelyn Benekane

ON BEHALF OF FEDUP & ISN, EASTERN CAPE

I met Patrick in 1995 in Veeplaas. He is the one that made me understand the work of the federation and also gave me strength to commit myself. He was very passionate about land issues. He knew how to motivate people in whatever situation and he also had a great negotiating skill. He was a good advisor. In short, 'HE WAS A GREAT MAN'. We will always remember him.



Patrick with Jeff Thomas at Strategic Planning 2014

From Thozama Nomnga

ON BEHALF OF FEDUP, WESTERN CAPE

Bra Pat. What an amazing man with many talents, he was so gifted. I remember the first day I met him the WC FEDUP was in turmoil. He came with a delegation to support us to form teams and select leadership. I was chosen as a Lekgotla and I said to him "Bhuti I know nothing about being a Lekgotla". He said, "In this organization there is no one who is perfect. We will help you in any support you need in the WC so it can be the region I was proud of years back". He was our pillar of strength, the person with constructive jokes and lies. Wow there will be many more Patricks but there will be none like him.

From Nkokheli Ncambele

ON BEHALF OF ISN WESTERN CAPE

I met Patrick for the first time in 2009 at the Cape Town CORC offices. I met him soon after the establishment of ISN. He is the person that made me understand what the organization is all about. He was able to convince people and he had a good conflict resolution skill. We are going to keep his legacy alive. MAY HIS SOUL REST IN PEACE.



2014 Strategic Plan meeting in Simonstown

The future is unclear

I cannot see clearly ahead.
My eyes are full of unclear images.
My mind will respond to what I see.
I see only clouds that darken my future.

The sun shines for the chosen few.
The sun rises for the lucky ones.
The sun sets for the majority of the poor.
I end up counting the stars because
The future is bleak.

The future is unclear for the homeless.
The subsidies will be for those fortunate.
I will not get closer because I want to handle
my own future and resources.
I see rainy seasons ahead.
I see tears in the eyes of the needy.

The sun will rise for only those who have the courage
to reconstruct and redevelop their lives.
The sun will set for those who will wait for the hand-outs.
I wait patiently for the RDP.
The future seems unclear.

The road ahead is full of potholes.
The people's minds are filled with the dependency syndrome.
The professional's pockets are full of the poor people's money.
I cannot see clearly.
The future is unclear.

POEM BY PATRICK

From Mzwanele Zulu

Patrick Hunsely Magebhula, was everything to me, he was a brother, mentor and enthusiast. I met him a couple of years back. He was an elder, comrade, and colleague. It is very much complicated to describe his character/calibre. I wish him to rest peacefully and prepare to meet with us in the planet of death. People we must understand that when we arrive to this earth, it is then we are going to be enjoying happiness, laughter, sadness, pains, and troubles including death. Therefore, death be not proud.

From Anaclaudia

ON BEHALF OF THE BRAZILIAN ALLIANCE

Patrick was a very important for Brazil, starting the savings groups here, but also influencing powerful people and leaders on the importance of having balanced partnerships between people, in communities, government, and all kinds of organizations. What I liked in Patrick most was that he always spoke with his soul, having COMPASSION, putting himself in other people's situation, making room for understanding. Patrick, I can just thank you for showing me a different world, and to the support you always gave to Interação and the groups in Brazil helping them to achieve the unimaginable, not only houses, but the faith on themselves and their ability to drive the change. Thanks for fighting, for believing and for understanding.

From Siku Nkhoma

ON BEHALF THE MALAWI ALLIANCE

Umaghebhula is the song that epitomises Patrick. To me it's only going to be in song that I can remember him. The Federation mamas will sing this song, and every time my heart soared and I always looked forward to hear him speak. Every time he spoke I was carried away into imagination. His spirit lives on, and the seed he planted will outlive all of us. What a loss of a gifted Warrior. Lala ngoxolo.

From Sonia Fadriga

ON BEHALF OF THE PHILLIPINES FEDERATION

I will always remember his happy face and silly jokes every time we come together. A family man, community leader in a true sense of being a community leader. He made his journey towards community successes despite all the challenges. Rest in peace my dear friend. We know that you will be with us always...

From Muturi

ON BEHALF OF THE KENYAN ALLIANCE

Rest in peace Patrick, Teacher, Comrade, Mentor, Friend! Mungu akulaze mahali pema peponi!



House Opening in Philippi Western Cape in 2006



Patrick and Charlton Ziervogel, CORC Programme Manager

From Beth Chitekwe

ON BEHALF OF THE ZIMBABWE ALLIANCE

Patrick will be deeply missed. He just had his own way of reaching out to people that made them feel able. He did it with so much wit and panache. For us in Zimbabwe our memories of Patrick are forever ingrained with those early years when he came with a team to mobilise the first saving schemes that became the bedrock of what is now the Zim Federation. The enthusiasm of those days mirrored Patrick's way of finding joy in even harshest moments. Hambani kahle Buti

From Sheela Patel

ON BEHALF OF SPARC, INDIA

All of us in India have known and loved Patrick from the day he came with the group of South Africa township residents. His amazing capacity to tell stories, listen to others absorb and digest what he had heard and communicate that to others has been the corner stone of the leadership he has demonstrated and which so many leaders in our global alliance have been inspired by. He brought a lightness of joy and caring when he met a few or a 100s in a rally, he enchanted global leaders and local mamma all of who fell under the spell of his smile and caring ways. He refused to allow "systems" and rules to intimidate him, yet he was always negotiating to make them work for those who lived in poverty, and he inspired so many in South Africa and elsewhere to become champions for their community. Patrick has inspired us and he has demonstrated what is possible and we have to work hard to help younger men and women to explore the dreams we shared with Patrick because his spirit lives and blazes through our collective memories of our dear brother friend and poet Patrick Magebhula.

From Medie

ON BEHALF THE UGANDAN ALLIANCE

RIP Patrick! We shall miss you forever. He told me in Colombia that "it's you the young blood now in the SDI family to innovate the tools we the old men and women developed to transform the lives of slum dwellers". We will never forget you Patrick!

From Ahmed Vawda

ON BEHALF OF THE PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

I am deeply saddened at receiving your message. His life is one of the great lore's of struggle for dignity. Patrick and I became instant friends and comrades at our first meeting some 20 years ago. There was always a ray of hope with a lingering tinge of sadness about what could and should be done. I loved that it made me feel the South Africa-ness in him and my affinity. My deepest sympathies to his family, to all who worked with him in the struggle for dignity, and strength to you my comrade, for your belief in him and his project.

From Eldridge Jerry

CO-FOUNDER OF FEDERATION WITH PATRICK

It is with great sadness that I learned about the loss of our fellow brother and comrade. Thinking about the late comrade Patrick will always bring a smile to my face. That is how I met him and that is how I will remember. I met Patrick for the first time in 1991 at the People's dialogue on shelter gathering in Broederstroom. Since then we shared many moments of great laughter and incredible, sharp debates. I fondly remember those early days of us sharing late evenings with people such as sister Marie and aunty Maria of KZN. I have no idea if the two are still alive. May their souls rest in peace, if not. Patrick would crack jokes that made us crawl on the floor pleading to him to stop because of stomach cramps.

He was the best disorganized organizer in the business. I remember how we arrived in Durban during those early years and waited for hours for him to pick us up from the airport. He will arrivewith that broad smile followed by a chuckle. The fun part was that Magebhula would always turn up with a car that who knows where he got it from. Rose, Patricia and I would share quick glances at each other, wondering whether we would reach Piesang River. While he loaded our luggage my late brother would come with the strangest and funniest reasons why he was late.

A songwriter and poet of note: just as I thought I have heard it all. Patrick will come up with a new song. The song will always carry a strong message of the urban poorbut I think what we all looked forward to was the twist and turns in the song. The women sometimes looked at each other embarrassed before they joined in song. Patrick will explain to great laughter the meaning of his songs and the women will cry of laughter.

A sharp mind and brilliant peoples leader: he persuaded people to his views. If I'm allowed, sometimes we were even swindled into his belief. No one could challenge him even when we disagreed with him he will put his points so eloquently across, with that forever smile. He could convince Ministers and high-level government officials without compromising his principles.

Together with Patrick we built a mass social movement in the early to mid-nineteen nighties. Patrick was without doubt the glue. He was the main attraction. He was the kingmaker. I still find it hard to believe that he is no more. Your spirit shall never perish great son of the soil. Please pass my condolences to his beloved ones and the entire SDI family.



**Mawubuye umhlaba wethu wezindlu,
wonke gilikidi ngohlelo**

(Give all the land for houses directly to its rightful owners)

Instead of following the approach of RDP development, we want to talk to the government to give us the land directly so we can build the houses the way we want them.



Patrick with Evelyn Benekane (Eastern Cape Co-ordinator for ISN and FEDUP)



Joel Bolnick (SDI Secretariat), Jockin Arputham (SDI President, India) and Patrick Magebhula

TRIBUTES

From Joel Bolnick

ON BEHALF OF SDI

Patrick Magebhula Hunsley, my comrade, my brother and my very special friend died in hospital today.

Patrick has been dodging bullets all his life - literally and figuratively. He survived being stabbed in the lung. He survived vicious assaults. He survived stints in reformatory and in prison. He survived being gang-pressed into an Ihkatha Impi. He survived a prolonged fight in the shack lands of Inanda to bring a progressive civic organisation into being in his settlement. He survived wave after wave of attacks from forces of reaction and crime to unseat him. He survived being a poor man in the shack lands of South Africa.

Today he breathed his last. The accumulated batterings of poverty wore him down. It is a miracle that he lived for 56 years. It is impossible to imagine a future without him - without his marvellous sense of humour, his poetic soul, his fiery oratory, his capacity to find common ground with one and all, his deep compassion for his fellow human being. A flawed genius has passed on. My life will be immeasurably poorer as a result, and on a far grander scale so too will be a movement that shares his dream for a just and equitable world in which poverty and exclusion, oppression and intolerance are consigned to the past.

For the next few weeks there will be mourning for Patrick in hundreds of informal settlements, backyard shacks, pavement dwellings in dozens of countries. There will be mourning for him in places of power where his sparkle and his candour, his determination and his unwavering commitment earned him enemies but won over many, many more.

Senzeni na?
Sono sethu, ubumnyama?
Sono sethu yinyaniso?
Sibulawayo
Mayibuye i Africa.

Ufund'uzufe
(You learn until you die)

This slogan of Patrick's is also the name for our learning centres.

From Bunita Kohler

ON BEHALF OF SA SDI ALLIANCE & CORC

It is with deep sadness that we have to relay the news that our great leader and stalwart of the South African Federation, Patrick Magebhula Hunsley has passed away. He leaves us after a short illness. Although we are all deeply touched by his sudden passing we want to use this moment to reflect on the ideals and aspirations he stood for and commit ourselves to continue the struggle to ensure a better deal for the poorest of the poor in our country and internationally. We thank the Almighty for the 20 years and more that we had to learn from this great mentor. Hambe Kahle, my brother.



**Amandla iMali Nolwazi! Eish!
Ayilumi Mayihlafuna!**

(Power is money and knowledge! Eish! You can't bite while you are chewing!)

Patrick thought of this slogan to show that councilors often change when they are elected to power. This slogan has become the SA Alliance slogan and says that through power and knowledge we can do what the councilors are failing to do.

Let's let them into our lives

How are they expected to know?

How are they supposed to understand?

How are we going to gain if we do not allow them in?

This is a give and take world

We need one another

We have to open the doors to our lives

We have to share our knowledge to experience

These human moments - which are ourselves -

have to be explored and criticised

These human resources have to be revealed

Through this door they will learn from our mistakes

We will open our bodies for them to fiddle

with every part in it until they find a remedy

Through this exercise we will learn to be patient

and in the process gain from their victories

This will enable us to uplift ourselves.

We have to open up our hearts and minds to them.

This way we will observe how they learn from our experiences

We will gain from their success and thus come out of our poverty.

Our lives are very short so we cannot afford to close them to others

We cannot afford to shut our doors to them

We tend to be too selfish with knowledge

We close doors and opportunities to communities

By this we kill the very mechanics for people to survive

We need to open the doors to our hearts, minds and communities

By doing this we will learn from each other

They will learn from our heart failures

We will live through their heartbeats

How will they know if we don't let them in?



From Father Jorge Anzorena

FATHER OF SDI AND FEDUP

Thanks for sharing the sad news of the departure of Patrick. I know that he was a so important brother and a very important collaborator to you.

During the apartheid time in the first meeting organized by Caritas for 100 representatives of Southern African countries I remember the young and slender Patrick galvanizing the audience with his wit and resolution. He became one of the first leaders of the movement.

Later when the saving women's network was chosen as the most suitable model for Africa, he injected energy to the groups through poems, songs and conviction. He pushed us to support the first houses in his Piesang River settlement to show to the communities that change was possible.

However he did not own a house. He kept worrying for the most unfortunate companions who did not have a piece of land. He supported land invasions. He drew admiration of ministers and political leaders but he challenged them. He also challenged the same Federation when he saw that with only building few thousand houses, the problem of the millions of shacks dwellers would not be solved. He led the organization of the Informal Settlement Network. Shack communities began to have clear data of their numbers, needs and a resolution to urge and promote government support to their re-blocking and improving their infrastructure.

His dream is step by step becoming reality. Thanks Patrick.

**Zonk'izinto esimnadndi....
ziyabulala. Silima sendoda,
uswidi sawudlunjalo**

(Everything that is sweet and nice kills.

A foolish man will eat a sweet without the wrapping)



SHACK / SLUM DWELLERS INTERNATIONAL
[SDI]

SOUTH AFRICAN
SDI
ALLIANCE

