



Cautious Optimism greets change of Leadership

Muslims are rallying around newly elected President Cyril Ramaphosa and are to meet in Durban to work out a plan on how best to contribute to the newfound change sweeping through the country this week.

Chairman of the South African Muslim Network, Dr Faizel Suleman said that as "patriotic South Africans, we are positive." He called on all section of the community to turn up and make their contributions in what he said, "we must make sure that what happened in our country, must never happen again."

Dr Suleman said the meeting will take place at the Mariam Bee Women's Culture Group Centre in Kenilworth Road on Wednesday 21 February 2018 at 7.30pm and is open to the public.

"We abandoned our spirit of activism and volunteerism. We need to return. We need to make politicians accountable and we have to be vigilant. I urge our young people to set up section 21 companies to boost the economy. We have to become active again," he said.

Industrialist, Ismail Kala said that the country would be structured and more organized under the new President who was a man who is a visionary. "I am very positive about the future. I will play a role in the development and creating of jobs. Yes, I will attend the job creation summit, which President Ramaphosa has spoken about and I would want to play a role. He said that jobs were a priority and that if people were able to get work, the crime rate would drop," said Mr Kala. EThekweni Deputy Mayor, Mrs Fawzia Peer said that President Cyril Ramaphosa has committed himself as a servant of the people. "He is committed to growing the economy for all South Africans. He



is concerned about corruption and youth unemployment. Towards this end he has suggested some decisive strategies. In true servant leaders hip style he has suggested an inclusive economy. He is of the firm opinion that public servants are there to serve the people not vice versa. He has literally begged all South Africans to work towards a common South Africa where we can all be proud as citizens. He seems to have hit all the right notes that people of all colours and hues and political dispensation wanted or hear. He has appealed to lend a hand. It is time for all of us to say, "Send Me" – quoting Hugh Masekela." Working class Muslims were just as enthusiastic as their counterparts on the other end of the economic scale and believe that they are inspired to empower themselves, their families and the country.

Property developer and businessman, Mr S H Mia said that the country was now moving in the right direction and that the Government must take each step to its logical conclusion. "The momentum is going to gather speed and the demand for young professionals are going to be in great demand. Free tertiary education for poor students creates an avenue, which will make dreams of many more people come true. Young Muslims must also develop their skills and especially women who have de-grees but who are sitting at home. They must use their skills to break into the job market, establish themselves and make a positive contribution," said Mr Mia. He added that the Rand was growing firmer against the major currencies in the world since President Ramaphosa took office. Mr Mia said that there was a new found confidence among investors from abroad and that the country was likely to be lifted from "Junk Status" to a level which will see foreign capital flowing into South Africa.

Cape Accord seeks to stamp out hate speech

A concerted move is being made to square up with hate speech and to promote tolerance and moderation right across the South African Nation by the newly formed, Cape Accord. Two meetings by concerned Muslims have been held in Cape Town to initiate this Accord. Now a conference featuring scholars, personalities and activists from various parts of the world are due to meet to launch the Cape Accord, according to Working Committee Convenor, Mr Sataar Parker. He said the national conference would take place soon after Ramadan and would give further impetus to the Accord in Cape Town – a movement to promote tolerance and moderation, not only among Muslims but also with other communities. "We are also very keen to get the youth involved to subscribe to the values of the Cape Accord and to reach out to individuals and organisations within the House of Islam and outside," said Mr Parker.

Among the organisations who have already subscribed: Islamia College, Islamic Peace College of South Africa, Medina Institute, JAM'EYYATUL QURRA', Gatesville Mosque and Centre, Claremont Main Road Mosque, Al-Ansaar Radio, Al Ansaar Foundation, Al Ghazali Mosque and Centre. A host of groupings are expected to join the Cape Accord, especially since officials have made it clear that they would take decisive action against those who spread hate speech.

Presently there appears to be a spate of hate speech and incitement among certain people which has caused discord in the public open space with "seditious comments" in the social media, public platforms and newspapers.



The founding statement of the Accord declared "our firm resolve to dissuade and/or engage and/ or take appropriate legal action within the framework of the South African Constitution and the Chapter 9 Provisions against any individual or group who abuses the higher ethical principles of Islam as the basis for a deliberate and unwarranted attack on the dignity of a fellow South African citizen or group or entity with malicious intent, publicity and incitement to harm.

Presently approaches are being made to organisations throughout the country and individuals to be part of the conference and to be involved in programmes of action to promote social cohesion on an unprecedented level.

Faranah Osman - Read a book - it will change your life

President Cyril Ramaphosa revealed in his State of the Nation Address that one million internships would be created over the next three years. In response, Civil Society activist and Entrepreneur, Faranah Osman urged young Muslims to take advantage of the opportunities that will be on offer in a wide ranging interview with Farook Khan on Radio Al-Ansar's talk show, 90 Minutes. She said that this was the single greatest job creation effort since the inception of democracy. "This is not just an opportunity, it is a gift and that the best young minds in the country will get those internships and it will be a gateway into their respective careers which could change their lives forever. The future is going to demand the best minds and the best bodies for jobs which will place them among the top achievers in the world. The first step is for every parent to ensure that his or her children get a tertiary education. This is the first step into the internships. I have no doubt in my mind that within two years, there will be a growing demand for trained, experienced and talented people,"

She went on to point out that basic education must start at homes and that parents must take it upon themselves to teach their children to read even before they go to pre-school. "In my home, both my parents were avid readers and they insisted on my siblings and I to be members of the local library and to read as many books as possible. It turned out to be such a uniting force for us as a family. It kept us together and grew the bonds among us. Just one book can change not just the life of a child, but of the entire family. We must ingrain in ourselves the culture of reading. Being average will no longer be enough. We have to rise above the best in the world."

One of the most worrying and terrifying aspects community life was bullying whether it is in schools to tertiary institution or in the work place. Urgent education was needed to eradicate this evil which disrupts and even destroys lives.

"This unacceptable behavior right across society must be stamped out and that at every level, parents, teachers, lecturers and company executives must get involved to get at those people who are causing great hardships and denting our economy. This is one of her objects," added Mrs Osman.

She pointed out that she looked upon her major role is to teach people, to be in a position to better their lives and to empower them in such a way that they take control of their wellbeing and that of their families. Wealth creation was not her goal, even though she was schooled in the best tradition of sound business to acquire economic gains, for whatever reason. She did not see this as being the most important aspect of her contribution to society. She urged parents to be very close to their children and to win their confidence to such an extent that they confide in them and must feel free to report bullying whether at school, colleges, universities or the work place.

Mrs Osman said that as a child she believed that she would have a full schooling life and when she had matriculated, she would go to university. But it did not happen to her, because her father, Mr Mohamed Moosa Jooma insisted that all his children get into the business. "He took it upon himself to teach us business. How to market our merchandise, reaching out to people. To be able to accumulate wealth and an attitude on how to manage it. It was business, business and more business. I did not want to get into the world of commerce and industry. But the influence was just too much. I started off as a marketing project and from this humble beginning, it grew. I am in the spice industry and as such my products are manufactured in India and shipped into South Africa. I had to develop my brand, which took time and there were great hardships. However growth was slow, but then I was consistent and business picked up and the momentum gathered speed. We are now on the shelves of leading national



supermarkets. I am not there yet, but I believe that we are making progress."

Recalling her family's involvement in business, she said that her grand father arrived in South Africa to start cooking oil from peanuts business, which proved extremely successful. "It was the first of its kind among Indians, but some years later, he changed course and got involved in the hardware industry. All his children were encouraged to be self-employed. My father was on his own when he started buying and selling merchandise right across the commercial markets. He then opened a store, which was on the edge of KwaMashu and Phoenix. It was not a good place to be, the political violence, criminal elements and the poverty simply sapped my energy."

Married top Rashaad Osman, of the Osman's Taj Mahal Spice Empire, they have four children Layyah, Zahrah, Rayhan and Ilanah.

Speaking about the future she said that the best way is what every individual can do with his or her life. Start is to read a book - any book. "It will change your life"

Farook Khan - Radio Al-Ansar, "90 Minutes" Friday 16 February 2018.

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