

# JUNE 2026 YOUTH DAY



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# YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE OF SOUTH AFRICA (UFASIMBA)

SOCIALISM IN OUR LIFETIME

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## YOUTH DAY 2026

### STATEMENT OF THE YCLSA ON THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1976 SOWETO UPRISING AND NATIONAL YOUTH DAY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, 16 June 2026

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The Young Communist League of South Africa (YCLSA-Ufasimba) commemorates the 50th anniversary of the 16 June 1976 Soweto Uprising and joins the nation in marking National Youth Day. The league remembers the thousands of students who took to the streets of Soweto to oppose the racist Bantu Education system and the imposition of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction. Their actions remain a decisive moment in the struggle for liberation and a lasting example of youth courage.

The YCLSA honours the memory of Hector Pieterse, Hastings Ndlovu, Tsietshi Mashinini and the many young people who lost their lives in the fight against apartheid. Their contribution to the national liberation movement advanced the cause of a free, democratic and non-racial South Africa. The league reaffirms that their sacrifice must be measured by the continued defence of the interests of young people, workers and the poor.

Fifty years after the uprising, the conditions facing the youth of South Africa demand renewed attention. The league remains deeply concerned by the high levels of youth unemployment, the financial exclusion of working-class students from higher education, and the limited absorption of graduates into the economy. The rising cost of living, the weakening of public services and the deepening of austerity continue to place the burden of the crisis on young people.

The YCLSA welcomes the national commemoration of 16 June and the focus on youth during the month of June. However, the league rejects the reduction of this anniversary to ceremonial events and political speeches that do not address the material conditions of young people. The generation of 1976 taught the country that youth struggle is a force for change, not a subject for symbolism.

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### STATEMENT CONTINUES

The league calls for urgent and practical action to advance youth development. Government and the private sector must invest in sustainable job creation, strengthen access to quality public education and remove the financial barriers that keep working-class students out of colleges and universities.

The YCLSA reiterates its support for a permanent Universal Basic Income Grant, the full implementation of National Health Insurance and the expansion of social protection. These measures must be pursued as part of a broader programme of social justice, economic transformation and democratic development.

The league draws lessons from the generation of 1976. The students of Soweto organised, mobilised and confronted the apartheid regime with discipline and courage. The YCLSA commits to building on that tradition through sustained political and organisational work in communities, campuses, workplaces and townships.

The YCLSA calls on youth organisations, students, workers, women, community organisations and the working class to unite in disciplined, programme-based action for a more equal, democratic and socialist South Africa. The struggle that began in 1976 continues in the fight for quality education, decent work, dignity and social justice.

### Forward to socialism.

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