

**Opening speech at the Democratic Alliance Federal Congress 2023, by
Dr Ivan Meyer, Federal Chairperson, Democratic Alliance, on Saturday,
1 April 2023, at Gallagher Estate in Johannesburg, South Africa**

1. Good morning South Africa, and delegates at the Democratic Alliance Federal Congress 2023.
2. Our Congress theme: A strong DA to create a better future speaks to the zeitgeist – the spirit of the time.
3. For many of our people life under the ANC is miserable caused by a failed state, a corrupt state, a mafia state, and a criminal state. Under the ANC South Africa is permanently in a state of crisis. In politics you don't waste a good crisis.
4. Delegates, this is also a state of opportunity to lead and to serve.
5. But we are here today, at this Congress, to say, "it is still possible to save and rebuild South Africa".

6. We have at this Congress **policy resolutions** to take South Africa out of this gridlock and **rebuild our towns**, cities and the whole of South Africa. We love this country, and we will save and rebuild South Africa.
7. Mothers across South Africa are rightfully worried about their children and their future. Parents want a better future for their children. We want a better future for all South Africans.
8. **The suffering must end in South Africa.** People no longer believe in the national government's rhetoric. They want to see action. They want to see results.
9. South Africa will go to the polls next year **to end the ANC rule in South Africa.**
10. This Congress **now serves notice** to the ANC – pack up and go or face an electoral defeat in 2024.
11. This Congress is **thus giving notice** that the ANC is the outgoing government in South Africa.

12. This Congress further gives notice that the DA will lead a new coalition government in the **Union Buildings in 2024.**
13. This Congress will showcase what the DA is already doing to solve the electricity crisis where the DA is governing.
14. This **historic Congress** is the beginning of a better future for South Africa.
15. In this Congress, **we will table practical solutions to rebuild South Africa.** These solutions are products of data, science, research , evidence and common sense. Evidence-based and data-led governance will enter the Union Buildings in 2024 and rewire public governance in South Africa.
16. DA Mayors and other DA leaders will showcase what we have achieved to create a better future for their communities.
17. Today, I call on you to become part of a stronger DA.

18. Wherever you are across South Africa, make that choice today, join us to change the direction of our beautiful country, South Africa. **Join us today and press the reset button of South Africa.**

19. Delegates, there is serious business before us at this federal congress. So, let's get on **with the business of rebuilding South Africa.**

20. We need peace in our land.

21. Let me quote from the song of praise, "This is my song, oh God of all the nations. A song of peace for lands afar and mine. **This is my home, the country where my heart is;** here are my hopes, my dreams, my holy shrine".

22. Delegates this is your country, this is your congress. This is where your heart lies. **Let us unite and rebuild South Africa.**

23. By the powers invested in me through the DA's Federal Constitution, and the DA's Federal Council, I now formally declare and confirm the DA's Federal Congress 2023 officially open.

Thank you, Dankie, Siyabonga, Kealeboga