

# Tributes to Chris Matlhako

Chris Matlhako left us on Thursday morning, 20 April 2023. He served as mascot to the entire liberation movement till he breathed his last, as well as the working-class across the world. His exit is major loss to the anti-imperialist movement worldwide, in which he played a most laudable role.

At the time of his passing, Chris Matlhako served the South African Communist Party as a full-time Central Committee Member as elected by the SACP 15<sup>th</sup> National Congress held 13 – 16 July 2022.

Chris Matlhako gained his baptism in the South Africa liberation struggle as a student, actively participating in the student movement to confront the barbaric the apartheid system. He later joined the South African Communist Party (SACP) and never flinched from the socialist course.

An intellectual fully dedicated to the socialist cause Chris dipped ink, producing many articles for various publications, local and international, unfolding diverse spheres, concerning the revolution. A collection of his articles published in various publications over the years was made available and serialised in the magazine *Thinking Che*, with the first volume appearing in 2019.

Chris Matlhako did not restrict his periphery to serving the South African working-class, however. He also trotted many areas across the globe, escalating the international struggle against imperialism and assiduously delivering the SACP's message to various parts of the world. As part of his internationalist work, Comrade Chris served as the General-Secretary of the Friends of Cuba Society – South Africa (FOCUS-SA) and was also a member of the South African Peace Initiative, among other responsibilities. He also represented the Party in the Working Group of the International Communist and Workers Parties, shimmering or fluttering the socialist banner in every corner of the globe.

While in Kimberley – his birthplace – Matlhako was detained without trial on numerous occasions for his role in the then Galeshewe Students' Organisation (Gasos).

He also served as the provincial secretary of the SACP in the Northern Cape and later took national leadership positions in the same organisation including Friends of Cuba Society of SA (Focus SA) where he served as its general secretary until his death.