

UNITED DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT

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By email: minhaj@myvotecounts.org.za

Dear Mr Jeenah

UDM's approach to coalition government after the 2026 local government elections

Thank you for your letter of 28 September 2026. Voters deserve to know how parties intend to use their mandate where no party wins a council majority. Our responses to your four questions follow.

1. What specific principles and values will your party use to determine whether another party is an unacceptable coalition partner?

The UDM believes that coalition governments must reflect the wishes of voters and serve the interests of residents.

Our approach to potential coalition partners is guided by respect for the Constitution and the rule of law, ethical governance, financial discipline, political stability, accountability and a commitment to reliable basic services.

We would seek agreement on a common programme of action with measurable service-delivery objectives, clearly defined responsibilities, procedures for resolving disputes and mechanisms for monitoring performance.

Coalitions must not become arrangements for distributing political positions or gaining access to municipal resources. We would assess potential partners according to their willingness to uphold these principles and their ability to implement an agreed programme.

2. Which of your party's policies or manifesto commitments will be non-negotiable in any coalition agreement?

The principles of service delivery, ethical governance, financial discipline, stability and the rule of law, as reflected in the UDM's 2026 manifesto, are not new. They have been central to our values and political commitments since the party's establishment in 1997.

Our position is that coalition arrangements must not compromise constitutional governance, the protection of public resources, clean financial management or professional municipal administration.

We would insist on written agreements that clearly define responsibilities, establish measurable service-delivery outcomes, incorporate financial discipline and enable residents to monitor performance.

Our manifesto also provides competent municipal appointments, infrastructure maintenance, fair enforcement of municipal by-laws, meaningful community participation and accountable leadership.

The specific priorities and methods of implementation would be negotiated according to each municipality's circumstances, subject to the UDM's established principles and public commitments.

3. Which political parties, if any, has your party ruled out as coalition partners after the 2026 local government elections?

The UDM has historically worked with different political parties in coalition arrangements, guided by the will of the people and the circumstances prevailing at the time. We have not adopted a blanket policy of excluding particular political parties from consideration.

Our approach is to assess potential coalition partners according to their commitment to constitutional governance, ethical leadership, financial discipline and service delivery, as well as the circumstances prevailing in each municipality.

Any coalition arrangement must be based on a credible programme consistent with our principles and manifesto commitments, with the interests of residents taking precedence over political considerations.

As stated in our 2026 manifesto, where coalition partners undermine service delivery, ethical governance, financial discipline or the rule of law, the UDM reserves the right to withdraw its support.

4. Will your party commit to publishing every coalition agreement it enters, including any amendment, side agreement or confidence-and-supply agreements, within seven days of signature?

The UDM has consistently supported the public disclosure of coalition agreements.

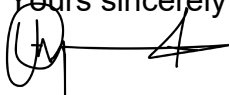
Our 2024 manifesto called for coalition partners to publish their agreements so that voters could understand how their coalition governments would operate and have clear standards against which to measure performance.

Our 2026 manifesto reaffirms this position and expressly requires that coalition agreements be written, publicly disclosed, based on measurable service-delivery outcomes, clear on responsibilities, linked to financial discipline and capable of being monitored by residents.

We therefore support the publication of coalition agreements and their subsequent amendments and supplementary arrangements, consistent with these principles.

Our published positions include the [UDM's core values](#), the [2026 Local Government Elections manifesto](#) and [President Bantu Holomisa's address launching the manifesto](#). The address identifies responsible coalitions as a manifesto pillar and sets out the party's principles for local government.

Yours sincerely



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