

Mrs Thatcher gets enthusiastic reception in Ulundi

Negotiations the only way forward, says former British Premier

Dr MG Buthelezi with former British Premier Margaret Thatcher in Ulundi... twin commitment to negotiated solutions.



More than 20 000 people turned out at Ulundi airport recently to greet former British Prime Minister, Mrs Margaret Thatcher, who addressed a banquet in her honour in the KwaZulu capital. Mrs Thatcher praised IFP leader, Dr MG Buthelezi, for his commitment to a multi-party democracy and re-iterated her own belief in the negotiation process...

Mrs Thatcher warned that investment would flow back into South Africa only once a genuinely democratic constitution was put in place – backed by a free market economy and sensible economic policies.

But the former British Premier, who was accompanied by her husband, Sir Denis, said violence remained a major stumbling block to progress and was a "discredit" to Black society.

Mrs Thatcher pointed out that the numbers killed last year in political unrest in South Africa equalled those who died in the battle of Isandhlwana. Earlier, she laid a wreath at the site of the war memorial in Ulundi.

From her discussions with President FW

de Klerk, Mrs Thatcher said, she had no doubt he wanted to end the carnage.

Emphasising that there was "no way out, except through negotiations", Mrs Thatcher said all leaders had to shoulder the responsibility. "They must give a lead to their supporters. A concerted effort by the Black political leaders also is required at every level, and in the townships themselves, to set the example of peace – to bring home to everyone that fighting can only weaken their country and to show them that co-operation will make their country strong."

Mrs Thatcher praised IFP leader, Dr Mangosuthu Buthelezi, for his resistance to "sham" independence for KwaZulu over the years and for his commitment to non-racial, multi-party democracy. "You and your colleagues have made an extraordinary contribution, not only in your resistance to apartheid, but also in the way you have refused to adopt that left-wing demagogic rhetoric which wins cheers and loses investment."

Thanking Mrs Thatcher in reply, Dr Buthelezi said the IFP had pledged itself to the eradication of apartheid and the establishment of a fair and just society through non-violence and reconciliation.