

SOUTH AFRICAN YOUTH CONGRESS

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Freedom or death - Victory is certain

DRAFT DISCUSSION PAPER P

POSITION FOR A NEGOTIATED RESOLUTION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN QUESTION.

1:0. The liquidation of the apartheid system remains one of the major issues confronting the people of South Africa, the Frontline States, the rest of Africa & the International community as a whole.

2:0. The overwhelming majority of the peoples of the world recognise that apartheid constitutes a crime against humanity. They have without exception entered into struggle against the system.

3:0. Since the turn of the century the British colonial power & successive white minority regimes consistently excluded the majority of the people from the body of politics of our country. They resorted to violence aimed at defeating all efforts directed at achieving justice, freedom & peace for all the people of South Africa. Under the present apartheid regime which assumed power in 1948, rule by brute force reached its highest point. By the end of the 1950s, it became clear that for the majority of black oppressed, after almost half a century of non-violent struggles under the leadership of the ANC, there was no way forward without the inclusion of armed resistance to bring about a democratic society. All avenues for asserting the people's birthright by peaceful means were, one by one, being closed. The illegalisation of all black opposition was combined with measures to entrench even further all forms of racial domination by the white minority.

4:0. It is a matter of historical record that, even in the face of these realities, various attempts were made by the ANC-led liberation alliance to find an alternative way forward. These initiatives included the suggestion that the government of the day summon a national convention to negotiate a new constitution for South Africa. As recently as 1987 the ANC once more, in a formal document, stated its willingness to enter into negotiations to create a united, democratic & non-racial South Africa.

5:0. All these initiatives were treated with derision & contempt by the Pretoria regime. It is only because the regime finds itself in the midst of one of its most serious crises, brought about by the escalation of political & armed struggle combined with external pressures, that it is now compelled to talk about a political settlement.

6:0. Past experience has taught us to remain extremely skeptical about the willingness of the racists to engage in genuine dialogue with the people's representatives on an agenda involving an advance to a truly democratic SA. Successive premiers have in the past employed the rhetoric of change to fend off international pressure at moments of crisis. These have all come to nought & were invariably followed by intensified repression.

7:0. We believe that, in the last instance, only the escalation of internal struggle & external pressure will lead to the destruction of apartheid. Those in the international community who are genuinely interested in a peaceful solution in our country must recognise that the racist regime will only come to the negotiating table on a realistic agenda when it is compelled to do so by such internal struggle & external pressures.

8:0. We, for our part, reiterate our position that we will always be ready to explore real possibilities of a political settlement which recognises the fact the SA belongs to all who live in it, black & white.

9:0. Being concerned to save lives & to limit the destruction of property, while attaining the objectives of liberation, justice & equality, we of the ANC have continuously worked to bring all concerned together to agree to a political, economic & social arrangement that will meet the hopes & aspirations of all the citizens of our country.

10:0. Consistent with these positions, & as an expression of our confidence in the ultimate triumph of justice & peace, we hereby put forward proposals for a negotiated settlement of the SA question. We urge the racist regime to appreciate fully the pressing need to end the apartheid crime against humanity, with a minimum of conflict, confrontation & racial bitterness.

11:0. It is imperative that the people of SA get together to negotiate an end to the apartheid system & agree to all the measures that are necessary to transform our country into a united, democratic & non-racial state in which the rights of all individuals would be respected & protected by law, including the right of each person to their language, culture & religion. These would be the aims of the negotiations & not the amendment or reform of the apartheid system. Any negotiating mechanism constituted by bringing together institutions created under the apartheid system cannot have any legitimacy & would only serve to entrench precisely the system of state power which it would be the objective of negotiations to dismantle.

12:0. For these negotiations to begin, it is essential that the necessary climate be created. The responsibility for

the creation of such a climate rests entirely with the forces in power in South Africa. Accordingly the government should:

12:1. Release all political prisoners & detainees unconditionally & refrain from imposing any restrictions on them;

12:2. Lift all bans & restrictions on all proscribed & restricted organisations and persons;

12:3. Remove all troops from the townships;

12:4. End the state of emergency & repeal all legislation designed to circumscribe political activity, such as, & including the Internal Security Act;

12:5. Cease all political trials & political executions.

13:0. These measures are necessary both to demonstrate the bona fides of the ruling group & to produce the conditions in which free political discussion can take place - an essential condition to ensure that the people themselves participate in the process of remaking their country. The measures detailed above should therefore precede the negotiations.

14:0. The realisation of items 12:1 to 12:5 will open the way for the ANC & the South African regime to enter into discussions to achieve the suspension of hostilities on both sides by agreeing to a mutually binding ceasefire. As soon as this has been signed, exiles & combatants should be free to return to South Africa without any fear of arrest or prosecution.

15:0. At this stage negotiations should proceed for the implementation of the following steps:

15:1. The present government should be dissolved & replaced by an Interim Government (IG) which should be composed in such a manner that it enjoys the support of all sections of the people of South Africa.

15:2. This IG would remain in power until a new parliament has been elected & a new administration established on the basis of a new constitution.

15:3. The IG should, on assuming power, dissolve all existing parliaments & legislative assemblies & shall have the power to rule by decree.

15:4. The IG should abolish all discriminatory legislation & other apartheid laws.

15:5. The IG should organise the elections for a Constituent Assembly representative of all the people of South Africa on the basis of a universal, adult franchise.

15:6. No members of the IG would be eligible for election to the Constituent Assembly.

15:7. The IG should take control of all armed & other security forces & should take all steps necessary to exercise effective command over these forces. Such control & command shall be guaranteed, among other ways, by an international force.

16:0. The Constituent Assembly should sit for a period not exceeding twelve (12) months from its first session & meet to draw up a new constitution & agree on such transitional measures as may be necessary to effect a smooth progression from a racist to a democratic order. The IG would then dissolve the assembly as soon as it has completed its work.

17:0. After the adoption of a democratic constitution the ANC should commit itself to end its armed struggle. For its part, the international community would lift all existing sanctions that have been imposed against apartheid SA.

18:0. Immediately after the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, the IG would organise elections for a new parliament on the basis of the new constitution and would itself hand over power to the Government formed subsequent to these elections. The time-frame for this process should not exceed a period of six months.

19:0. Immediately after the formation of the IG, the international community, including the OAU, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth & the United Nations, should be free to send observer missions to South Africa to evaluate the situation for themselves & to monitor the entire process up to & including the assumption of power by the new democratic government.

19:1. This plan is put forward without in any way prejudicing or circumscribing the right of the people of South Africa, led by the ANC, to conduct their struggle for the elimination of the system of apartheid. This struggle must therefore continue until this system is ended. The international community itself has an obligation to increase pressure against racist SA until the common goal ending the apartheid system has been achieved. ends.