

REPORT ON ANC/UDF DELEGATIONS CONSULTATION
- HARARE 3-4 DECEMBER 1988

1. A separate consultation with UDF affiliates present in Harare took place at the request of affiliates who expressed concern over poor coordination and leadership by the Front.

2. Presentation was made by the SANSCO delegation, noting that the Front delegation to the present meeting did not consult beforehand nor was it briefed on the objective of the trip.

* Concern expressed over lack of coordination both at regional and national level on Front activity. In the last two years the majority of regions have not convened regional councils. Affiliates and regions are left out of policy and programme of action formulation. Membership learn of developments through the commercial press.

* Prior to the banning of the Anti-apartheid Conference, the Front leadership failed to initiate a process of consultation nor circulate its proposed position paper over the process of a broad front. Both the UDF and COSATU had different perspectives on the objective of the conference - a difference which emerged immediately after the 1987 UDF NWC Conference.

The national student leadership expressed concern that it is deliberately left out from KEY national decision making process. The Front and COSATU, especially influential leadership personalities, undertake major initiatives affecting policy of the general democratic movement on educational matters/organisation without consulting relevant constituencies.

3. White affiliates expressed concern over the failure of H/O to notify them when central national meetings are convened. The national political centre neglect guiding the work within the white areas. The task is left solely to white activists/organisations - the confusion over the October elections is partly blamed to this apathy.

4. The mass democratic movement lacks a profile resulting in the assumption that the Front is dead. Affiliates and sectors rely on "smart individuals" to keep contact with each other and COSATU. The process of broadening is left to individual interpretation. There is absolutely no contact between the white and black activists to exchange experiences.

5. A H/O representative acknowledged the communication and logistical problems. On the Anti-Apartheid Conference, he indicated that the draft position paper was dispatched to regions/affiliates. When no response was forthcoming, it was assumed that there are no objections. Later follow ups show that most regional contacts are either on the run while some REC members are in detention.

* Most regions do not maintain continuity in reps to NEC meetings. With arrests, it's a painstaking exercise to develop contacts with

newly co-opted persons.

* UDF NWC defined political centres as joint strategising fora for affiliates/sectors at national, regional and local levels. Its main aim is promoting common approach and reliance on own resources.

6. The meeting identified following problems as contributory to the state of affairs:

* Failure of the NEC/HO to address operational methods under the current situation. A recommendation made that the NEC composition be re-organised into a tight and more or less permanent structure and regular national councils be convened where reps from regions/affiliates can participate.

* Most of the UDF strategising is left to Head Office, and the NEC never reviews nor reflects over the implementation of NWC resolutions and decisions.

* High turnover of persons attending NEC meetings create an atmosphere of uncertainty and mistrust; thus stifling free and open deliberations because comrades have not been checked/screened.

* H/O is mystified in the eyes of regions and affiliates - membership in general regard it as a Johannesburg collective. A contributory factor is the absence of visits by its functionaries to regions unless invited.

* Most regions and affiliates are failing in adapting to SOE conditions. A recommendation made that the MOVEMENT, whenever possible, must impart organisational skills to the MDM in general, especially its key and leading cadres.

7. The meeting also briefly evaluated the result of the joint UDF/COSATU consultation. Observations noted:

* Consultation exposed deepseated political problems within both organisations;

* Certain quarters within COSATU are contesting the political leadership role of the UDF eg the question of the broad coalition, operation of civics, etc.

* The UDF needs to constantly provide leadership initiative and note the problems which had existed within COSATU affiliates prior to unity cannot disappear overnight.

* A deliberate campaign to be initiated to win the bantustan forces from the opposition and/or neutralise them.