



Anti-Apartheid Movement

13 Mandela Street London NW1 ODW Tel 01-387 7966

President

Most Revd Trevor Huddleston CR

Vice Presidents

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Rt Hon David Steel MP

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*The Anti-Apartheid Movement
is in Consultative Status with
the Economic and Social Council
(ECOSOC) of the United Nations*

24 October 1987

The Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP,
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing on behalf of the thousands of people who have gathered in London today to participate in the Anti-Apartheid Movement's 'Sanctions Now' demonstration. We wish to register our total opposition to the policies which you are pursuing towards Southern Africa which can in no way contribute to bringing peace and freedom to the peoples of the region.

As we meet today, thousands of people are being held in detention in South Africa and Namibia, including young children whilst millions more suffer directly from the consequences of the apartheid regime's policies and actions.

Today's demonstration takes place three days before the 21st anniversary of the decision of the United Nations to terminate South Africa's mandate to rule Namibia. Nothing epitomises more the failure of British policy than the fact that, a whole decade after the establishment of the 'Western Contact Group', Namibia remains enslaved under South Africa's illegal occupation. There is an urgent need for the British Government to act in unison with the rest of the Commonwealth and the wider international community to secure South Africa's agreement to the implementation of the UN Plan for the Independence of Namibia. We trust that you will honour the undertaking which you made in Vancouver that if South Africa continues to obstruct the implementation of UN SCR 435 then the UN Security Council would have to consider the adoption of appropriate measures against South Africa under the UN Charter.

We equally wish to register our opposition to your policy towards South Africa itself. Britain committed itself in Nassau to taking measures to ensure the release of Nelson Mandela, the lifting of the ban on the ANC and other key steps. These objectives have not been secured; indeed the situation has deteriorated dramatically since Nassau. But now you are reneging on the undertaking you gave in Nassau two years ago to consider further effective measures unless there had been "adequate progress." Moreover the views which you expressed regarding the ANC in Vancouver can do nothing but undermine the prospects of securing change in South Africa with the minimum of violence.

Britain is in a unique position to influence events in Southern Africa because of its stake in the apartheid economy. Instead of acting to contribute towards securing fundamental change, Britain is failing to implement the limited measures which it has agreed to; undermining the measures adopted by other countries; and blocking the adoption of collective action by the Commonwealth, EEC and the UN. Britain will therefore go down in history as the one country which stood by apartheid South Africa to the very end.

We are convinced of the need for a fundamental change in British policy and are united in our conviction that Britain must end its isolation from the rest of the Commonwealth and the international community as a whole and pursue a policy of effective sanctions against apartheid South Africa. We call in particular therefore, for Her Majesty's Government to adopt the following measures in order to contribute towards securing independence for Namibia and a non-racial and democratic South Africa:

- 1) to seek the adoption by the UN Security Council of comprehensive and mandatory sanctions
- 2) to immediately implement the measures agreed by the London Commonwealth Review Meeting in August 1986 including a ban on the importing of coal and uranium and to seek the implementation of these measures by the EEC and the UN
- 3) to implement legislative and other controls to ensure the rigorous enforcement of the measures to which Britain has formally subscribed in particular the arms embargo and that measures applied against South Africa are extended to include Namibia.

Yours sincerely,

Archbishop Trevor Huddleston CR
President