

## THE HARARE DOCUMENT AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

**The OAU Harare Document (printed in full in the October issue of *Sechaba*) will soon be considered by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Comrade Thabo Mbeki discussed the background to this document when he addressed anti-apartheid activists in Switzerland in September 1989. Here is part of that address.**<sup>(1)</sup>

It became clear that it was necessary to address the issue of negotiations. Everybody is talking about it. Peace in Angola is being negotiated; peace in Mozambique is being negotiated; the international community is calling for the resolution of regional conflicts. What about South Africa?

It seemed to us it was necessary to avoid a situation like the Namibian situation, where principally the major Western powers got together and put together Resolution 435 and all its elements. That was a Western plan, and among its consequences are the problems we are facing now. We thought it was important that, since the issue of negotiations is being put on the agenda, certainly in terms of people talking about it, a negotiating position should be put forward, not by some Western powers, but by the people of South Africa.

A process of consultation took place with the democratic movement, a lot of discussion at home among UDF, the trade unions, the church, among all sorts of other circles, who are saying, "Let us discuss together, to see if we can elaborate a common position on this issue. If negotiations were to come about, what should these negotiations be, what should be their aim, how should they proceed?" A discussion took place, and of course the ANC was part of this discussion. In the end a document was produced, which we then put to the OAU for its support. The OAU agreed, adopted the document as its own. The OAU took it to the Non-Aligned Summit in Belgrade, and the Non-Aligned Summit also adopted it, and will be putting this proposal to the General Assembly of the United Nations later this year.

### **Who defines negotiating positions?**

We thought it was important to do that to avoid a situation where certain forces can intervene and put on the table their own concept of negotiations, and we find ourselves in ~ situation, if and when that moment of negotiation arises, where we are locked into somebody else's plan, somebody else's thinking. I should emphasise that we did not do this because we thought that De Klerk was ready to enter into negotiations. We thought it was necessary to do it because clearly the matter was being put on the agenda by somebody.

If, for instance, you take the British government, Margaret Thatcher announced quite openly that, now P W Botha is gone, now is the time to look at the question of a negotiated solution to the South African question. And what does she do? She invites the South African ministers one by one. Invites Pik Botha and sits with him and strategises. Then next calls the Minister of Finance, Du Plessis, strategises with him. Next calls De Klerk and strategises with him.

It's clear that from her own perspective Margaret Thatcher wanted the South African regime to elaborate such a negotiating position, together with her, and that she and De Klerk would come and say to the rest of the world, "This is how we should proceed."

Our struggle has never been a struggle for negotiations. It has always been, and continues to be, a struggle to end apartheid. So, whatever De Klerk is saying, we need to continuously address this question: "What do we do to intensify the pressures, not in order to achieve negotiations but in order to end apartheid?" If, in the course of this process, De Klerk decides genuinely that he wants to sit down and negotiate, we say, "OK, let's resolve the matter in that way."

The international campaign for the isolation of the regime should continue and be intensified.

1. From *Sechaba*, December 1989