

FCO PRESS CONFERENCE : FRIDAY 27 SEPTEMBER 1985

SOUTH AFRICA : DETENTIONS

Spokesman issued the following statement: "Acting on instructions the British Ambassador in Pretoria, Mr Patrick Moberly, today called on the South African Foreign Minister to convey the British Government's deep concern at recent events in South Africa. In particular he urged that opposition leaders in detention should be charged or released without delay. The Ambassador made special reference to the case of Mr Oscar Mpetha, the veteran trade unionist re-arrested recently.

"The Ambassador made clear that the British Government welcomes certain positive recent developments in South Africa, such as the State President's decision to grant South African citizenship to blacks whose homelands have claimed independence; the recent announcement that the communities of KwaNgema and Driefontein will not now be moved; and the recommendation of the President's Council that the pass laws should be abolished.

"Such developments, however, can help establish peace and stability only if they presage the total abandonment of the concept of separate development; the dismantling of apartheid; and early progress, through negotiation with the real leaders of all communities, to a non-racial democratic South Africa."