

SUBJECT  
CC MASTER  
OPS



PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL No. T104187

Tuynhuys  
Cape Town  
25 May 1987

Dear Prime Minister

It is reported that South Africa will be a subject of discussion at the Summit Meeting of the Seven Heads of Government in Venice in June 1987. You will recall that I addressed a letter to you and other Heads of Government prior to the Tokyo Summit in 1986. I submit that the suggestions which I made in that letter are as relevant today as they were in 1986.

Regrettably, revolutionary forces and in particular the communist dominated leadership of the African National Congress, have had little reason over the past twelve months to reassess their commitment to violence as a means of achieving their political objectives in South Africa. They have been given an attentive ear in world capitals while their cadres have continued to conduct the most reprehensible forms of terrorism and intimidation in Black townships in South Africa.

At the same time my Government, committed to reform and renewal in the constitutional, economic and social fields through a process of peaceful negotiation, has continued to be subjected to increased pressure and economic sanctions.

In the General Election held in South Africa on 6 May 1987 the White electorate expressed itself clearly in giving my Government a mandate and a directive;

- to continue with economic, social and constitutional reform and renewal in a determined, yet evolutionary manner, and
- to ensure that security, order and stability for all the communities in South Africa remains a precondition for reform and to require the proponents of radicalism, be it from the left or the right, to renounce violence before they may participate in constitutional processes.

I would like to assure you that taking the reality that South Africa is a multi-cultural country of minorities into account, my Government will energetically carry out the mandate it has been given. In any country constitutional change is a serious issue. In view of the demands and challenges determined by the realities of our country, this is even more so in South Africa. Constitutional development and change has to take place in a constitutional and controlled manner.

Constitutional development cannot take place in isolation: It presupposes economic and social development with a view to creating the conditions in which renewal may be continued on the basis of security and better living conditions for all our people. We are engaged in a major programme of development in the social sphere through education and training, improvement of the social environment and development of the infrastructure and living conditions of all our communities. General administrative and legislative measures will be taken during the present parliamentary session

in this regard including, for example, the provision of land and housing for the purpose of dramatically increasing home ownership. This is regarded as a major pillar of socio-economic advancement and a cornerstone of stable local communities in South Africa.

As far as political and constitutional development is concerned, I would like to emphasize that black participation at all levels of government is an objective which enjoys the highest priority of my Government.

The implementation of a new Constitution in South Africa in 1984 was a major step forward which created structures for self-determination and joint responsibility for the White, Coloured and Indian communities at the central tier of government. This important development expanded democracy significantly in South Africa.

Now it is the constitutional position of our various Black communities in particular that requires further attention.

In our search for the correct approach, it would be wrong to assume that the constitutional development of the Black communities is either hanging in the air or taking place in a vacuum. It must take place against the background of our demographic realities; 300 years of constitutional history; the evolution of established rights; and a broad spectrum of structures which have already been established on every level of government and which are in the process of planning and implementation.

In respect of territories which do not accept independence, the Government acknowledges that every region and community within its boundaries is part of the South African state with the right of participation by those political entities

in the processes and institutions of government jointly agreed upon.

We feel that there is little or no recognition abroad of the process of political and constitutional development in South Africa.

In January this year, I stated that further clarity on constitutional structures would be possible only if representative leaders of every group and community which rejects violence as a political instrument, came together in a national institution of recognised status and in which real accountability was possible. Constitutional change should result from consultation and negotiation among the leaders of relevant groups and parties genuinely believing in freedom and democracy.

We have to seek and find the guidelines for continued reform in the realities of our multi-cultural society ensuring the prevention of domination of any one group by another.

Against this background the Government of South Africa will proceed with negotiations with a view to instituting a National Council in respect of which a Bill was published last year and which will be tabled during the present Session of Parliament. In the National Council joint deliberations will be possible on various constitutional proposals, including the possibility of constituting a Council of State, and the composition and task of such a Council. I envisage that constitutionally as State President I shall in future be more directly involved in negotiations with Black leaders.

I am determined to bring to fruition in reasonable time the

goals which my Government and I have set ourselves. But, we need the understanding of the major democracies: if they could assist in efforts to break the cycle of violence and promote dialogue we should welcome it; if they could assist in promoting the concept of a genuine democracy based on the participation in government of all our communities, on the protection of minority rights and taking into account the diversity of our society, we should welcome it; if they could endorse the principle that it is for South Africans alone to define the provisions of the new South African Constitution, we should welcome it also.

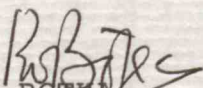
It would be constructive if a clear message could be sent from Venice to the perpetrators of violence to the effect that their reprehensible deeds will not be countenanced by the civilised world. The ending of the cycle of violence is the key to future progress in South Africa.

In the broader context of Southern Africa, my Government has repeatedly declared its willingness to enter into arrangements or agreements to safeguard regional security. Notwithstanding frequent warnings to certain neighbouring states about the presence in their territories of terrorists operating against South Africa, such as the most recent motor car bombs which exploded in Johannesburg on 20 May 1987, effective action has not been taken to address this intolerable threat to South Africa's national security.

It is quite unjustified to accuse South Africa of destabilisation when the evidence demonstrates that we are the victim of the unwillingness of certain neighbouring states to take effective action against the perpetrators of terrorism in South Africa.

I declare my readiness, yet again, to enter into discussion with those leaders in Southern Africa who recognise that the stability, and progress of our sub-continent depend on our ability to resolve our differences around a conference table.

Yours sincerely

  
P W BOTHA  
STATE PRESIDENT OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

The Right Honourable Margaret Thatcher, MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
LONDON SW1

S. Africa

Relations

PTU