



ZAMBIA

P.O. BOX 36812 LUSAKA ZAMBIA

Tel: 223721/223703 Fax: 225234

Telex: ZA44560

September 4th, 1990.

**BACKGROUND PAPER TO A CONSULTATION  
ON THE FUTURE OF CUSO VIS A SOUTH AFRICA**

Dear Comrades and Colleagues.

In the history of CUSO's support to the South African struggle we have been guided by the principle and the commitment to consultation with the African National Congress and the South African Congress of Trade Unions. It is in the spirit and practice of that method of operation that we welcome members of the Movement today. We wish to engage your experience and guidance on the future role of CUSO in this very changed political terrain. And to the participants from Kagiso Trust, Community Arts Project and the Labour and Economic Research Centre, we extend our gratitude for your willingness to contribute to the discussions.

For CUSO's part, we have three main objectives that we would like to achieve:

- 1/ to ascertain whether or not there is agreement on the need for a full CUSO programme and presence in South Africa.
- 2/ to garner feedback on recommended areas of programme focus.
- 3/ to reach understanding on guidelines and principles for working internally.

As a corollary objective, I would add that we wish to provide sufficient information on CUSO to all participants so that you have an adequate basis on which to draw your conclusions.

I will attempt to be brief in this paper, that is intended to be background

Zam/036/0014/2

09/09/90  
2.18.1



for consuming a full day of your time. In this I would like to cover:

- 1/CUSO's history with the ANC
- 2/Our Current Work
- 3/The Transition
- 4/Assumptions about Opening a Programme in South Africa
- 5/Recommended Areas of Work
- 6/Concluding Notes

I will leave it to my colleagues, John Van Mossel and Murray McCartney, respectively, to present greater detail on Canadian solidarity work and the current shape of our relatively small "pilot" programme inside South Africa.

#### 1/HISTORY

From its origins in the liberal development model of the early 1960s, CUSO was increasingly (but unevenly) politicized by its late '60s presence and experience of the Vietnamese War, the rise of Black Power in the Carribean, the emergence of Liberation Theology in Latin America and, for our purposes, the decolonization struggles in southern Africa.

Toward the end of the decade CUSO began to make small contributions to the MPLA, FRELIMO, ZANU, ZAPU, SWAPO and the ANC. Parallel to the support in the Region was a commitment to political education of the Canadian public and support for challenging our Government's policies vis a vis the liberation movements and the de jure regimes. Without going into the detail, suffice it to say that the former included production of resource material, solidarity tours, representations to Parliament and Government, etc. and the latter embraced largely humanitarian assistance in training, education and production.

With the successive liberation of all of the countries that now comprise the Front Line States, the concentration of the Special Programmes Office (outside of our Angola work) has been on the ANC. And it has become a CUSO policy position that we, as a development agency in the Region, cannot speak of genuine development in southern Africa unless we address ourselves to the liberation of South Africa."



## 2/ CURRENT WORK

I would date our current work to a point of departure in 1985. Emboldened, primarily, by the vibrancy of the forces of resistance, CUSO became considerably more explicit in its political programme of pressurizing the Canadian Government to match rhetoric with deeds in relation to opposition to the regime. To decry the evils of apartheid but to ultimately defend the status quo by leaving the prerogative for change within the minority power bloc was, to our organization (and I dare say, to a wide array of groups) a framework of analysis and perspective that served to perpetuate the system.

In our attempts to shift the terms of the debate within our own society from one of "anti-apartheidism" to alligning Canada to the forces for liberation, we embarked on a programme of direct support to the infrastructure and programmes of various Departments. The challenge that we laid out to our government was that in order to manifest its stated repugnance of racist rule, it must begin to provide resources (and hence at least tacit recognition) to the principal Liberation Movement.

In the past several years we have continued a dual path of programming, primarily in Lusaka. That is, we undertook a number of projects with the ANC that we consistently put to the Canadian Government for prospective funding, while we negotiated and settled on the actual support from a variety of Canadian and other Western NGOs, churches, unions, anti-apartheid groups.

Our main areas of support have been to the Departments of Economics and Planning,, Projects, Arts and Culture, Research, Youth, Women, Public Administrators Body, Political Education, the Popular Education Working Group, the Video Unit, SACTU and, less formally, to a range of other structures.

The nature of the support has been largely raising funds, contributing our own small finances, providing trainers, some proposal writing and evaluations, budget disbursement, procurement and a large measure of administrative and logistical support, arranging itineraries for some Western donors/solidarity visitors, facilitating communications, etc



### 3/THE TRANSITION

The *raison d'être* of the Special Programmes of CUSO in Lusaka (aside from the Angola portion of the job) has been to work with the ANC and SACTU. However, with events unfolding after February 2nd, it seems reasonably certain that the vast majority of both will have returned to South Africa by December.

This logically presents the question of whether CUSO should permanently close its operations in this sphere or open some form of expanded programme inside South Africa. I will present the assumptions about the latter below, but at this point, it may be helpful to set out some areas of concern about the actual transition.

Uppermost on my mind is concluding the wind-down of operations in Lusaka, for the purposes of explaining to donors their transfer of funds, and projecting the incorporation of those various projects within the country.

But, perhaps even more pressing for CUSO is how the Special Programmes Office projects its potential future. We are currently engaged in the final portion of preparation for our organization-wide 3 Year Plans from '91-94. Whereas my colleagues in Central America, the Caribbean, Asia, the Pacific, West Africa and indeed, the rest of my colleagues in southern Africa have some certainty about the context in which they are planning, the Special Programmes Office has to make some speculative leaps in terms of place and space in order to even consider a potential future.

There is also the matter of cooperants and their prospective role in any possible CUSO programme in South Africa. I am speaking of people such as David Beer who is currently working with the Professional Administrators' Body, a South African-Canadian who is working with the magazine "Africa South", a Canadian woman who is working with Popular History Trust in Harare and the prospect of several others who would work in the areas of popular education, administrative training, information/political education channels back to Canada, etc.

I do not foresee us resolving the above in our short time together, but I would like your guidance in terms of principles and guidelines.



#### 4/ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT OPENING A PROGRAMME IN SOUTH AFRICA

In the draft agenda, this item is referred to as "Rationale for Opening a Programme". In hindsight that seems too confident an assertion on our part as we are, after all, seeking to consult on the very principle of such an action. But, let me rather set out some of my assumptions about why we would do so:

- i. our rationale for offices in each of the countries/programmes that we work in is twofold:
  - the only way to actually know the context of the people/groups that we work with is to at least live in their society.
  - the most realistic basis on which to provide information/education/resources to a Canadian constituency is through a physical presence in any given country.
- ii. CUSO has enjoyed a long and productive relationship with the ANC and it has been based, on our part, on the goals of the Movement achieving a national democratic victory and the development of a new and liberated South Africa. If we were to close the office in Lusaka permanently (and not re-open in SA) we would be part of the forces that appear to be collapsing at a crucial period of time.
- iii. the political terrain of struggle appears much more complex than it has ever been. For a Canadian public and the anti-apartheid groupings within, there is the potential that Western mainstream media interpretations will be highly distorted. CUSO would like to continue to support the several information projects that it currently funds and be a channel for information.
- iv. we should continue to foster links between progressive Canadian struggles and their counter-parts in south Africa.
- v. we should continue to mobilize resources for political mobilization and development.

#### 5. RECOMMENDED AREAS OF WORK

Broadly, our rationale for the following areas of work is that they would be engagement in and with the forces for a new South Africa. They can be broken into three general areas :

##### 1/Continuity:

- The current framing of our work is in 4 thematic areas that I would seek to continue to support on some level:



Current:

Recommended

(a) Institution Building

Professional Admin. Body  
Projects Dept.

Admin. Training Project  
Projects Dept.

(b) Pop Edtn/Pop Research

Agrarian Question Project  
Popular Edtn. Working Group  
Wknq.Gp  
Dept. of Economics & Planning  
Dept. of Political Education

Natl Land Commission  
Popular Education

Dept. of Economic Plnng  
Dept. of Political Edtn.

(c) Information/Advocacy

Video Unit

Video Unit

(d) Culture

Dept. of Arts and Culture

Dept. of Arts and Culture

2/the Development Imperative

- provide funding to community organizations and ANC-linked projects
- to use our experience in gaining access to funding
- to empower people to participate in the political process
- to abide by CUSO's planning priorities.

3/Speciality of Training, Resettlement and Rehabilitation

- to focus on a particular grouping of people who could benefit from CUSO's experience in Zimbabwe, ie. combatants/ex-combatants and non-deployed people who require skills training and organization of productive employment.
- to combine a three phase programme that seeks:
  - a/to deliver a multi-purpose educational programme to combatants
  - b/to conduct a feasibility study for the long-term training and employment needs of the returnees.
  - c/to implement a training and production programme in South Africa.

6/CONCLUDING NOTES



I have attempted to set out some of the areas of concerns, some projections and some direction for CUSO in the future. This has not been definitive but I do hope that it will at least provide some scope and space for discussion.

Again, many thanks for taking the time with us.

In solidarity.

Joan Anne Nolan  
Director  
CUSO-Special Programmes.

P.S. For all of you who know the excellent Zambian staff who have worked in the Special Programme Office, I think you will join me in extending warm appreciation for work and dedication that surpassed all of the necessary bounds.