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BRIEFING FROM ITALY TO OSLO CONFERENCE

March 1989.

March 1985 I arrived in Rome and took charge of Mission from comrade Thamie Sindelo as Chief Representative. At that time until presently the ANC had no personnel in its office other than the Chief Representative.

The ANC has no offices of its own in Italy and have always conducted our operations from a facility available to us within the rented offices of MOLISV. All operational expenses are met by MOLISV, ie office rent, telephone, telex, telefax, lights and water.

The ANC Chief Representative in Italy has no definite source of funding; the only regularly income we have is reflected in the photocopies enclosed herewith of 1987 monthly budget. The CGIL mainly communist trade union, has since increased its monthly contribution by two hundred thousand lire per month. This little difference in the CGIL contribution has slightly improved the shortfall of my monthly income. The contributions of the enclosed photocopies are still valid today and there is a strong possibility of the situation becoming worse because the problem of apartheid no longer receives in the local media the publicity it once enjoyed.

We have approached Partito Socialista, Partito Democrazia Cristiana, Partito Democrazia Proletaria to explain our plight and regretably have come out empty handed except for meaningless declarations of how close our just struggle is to their hearts and beyond that nothing concrete. Reggio Emilia, with whom we have a twelve years old "Pact of Solidarity", used to contribute towards my apartments monthly rent payment, but since have since stopped during the last quarter of 1986, when judicial investigations against comrade Soncini commenced. Up to the present time the various attempts made to resuscitate this much needed contribution have proved fruitless.

At government level we have been unable to obtain financial assistance. Explanation given is that there is no law empowering them to make financial contributions from public funds to our mission. The catholic church has not given us a blue penny. The Protestant Federation gave us five hundred thousand lire in 1987, and we used that amount to pay our bills, for central heating and so on.

FUND RAISING

The National Anti Apartheid Coordinating Committee of Italy has no funds of its own. It relies mainly on funds given from time to time by the Province of Lazio (Rome) for financing a specific project.

This Committee has been in existence for over five years but has hitherto failed to attract to its ranks personalities of national political and social standing. In our opinion having at the head of a fund raising drive personalities of high social or political esteem, could improve chances of success in soliciting funds.

As is the case in the U.K. and elsewhere, currently in Italy there is a nationwide campaign for the release of our children in detention. This campaign aims at conscientising the public and also at receiving financial support from all sections of the community. Some municipalities and political groups have and continue to contribute financially towards this campaign. The secretariat of this campaign is Centro I.E.S. (the NGO working on block 5 at SOMAFECO); all contributions received are sent directly to CIES, the ANC has no access to them. Among contributions we know of was thirteen million lire raised at a concert in Milan January 6 and five million lire from a concert in Vercelli. We contribute towards the success of this campaign by addressing meetings, conferences, concerts and so on organized to popularise the campaign. The possibility of CIES giving a certain percentage after expenses direct to the ANC is under consideration; a response is expected shortly.

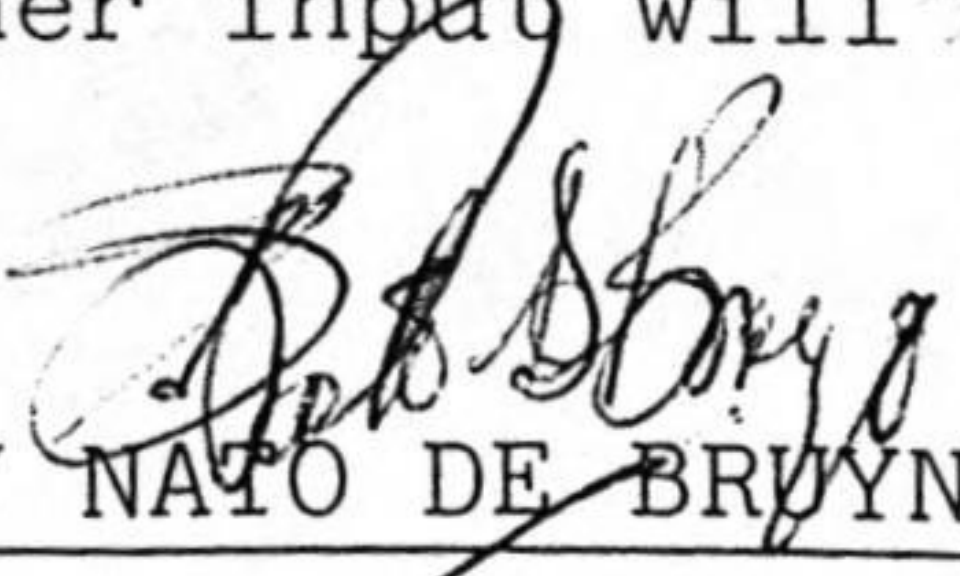
A few solidarity groups within the National Antiapartheid Committee have produced for sale to the public some T-shirts, stickers etc., and use income from such sales to finance further antiapartheid initiatives. Other sources for raising funds could have been NGO's but in Italy such groups seem to be interested mainly in the area of development projects. We have presently four NGO's who are ready to undertake development projects with us: all we need do is say what and where.

As from March 22-25 the Cape Town Group called SEBENZA is expected to stage concerts in four cities of Italy. The tour organizers have promised a donation to ANC after paying expenses. Negotiations are also underway for a concert tour by the AMAPONDO.

Successful fundraising possibilities in Italy do exist, but because society in this country has had a long history of misappropriation of funds by government leaders, judges, mayors gangsterism etc., it is difficult to embark on fundraising activities. BDAF, COSAWR from U.K. have been here among others to explore possibilities of fundraising, but they found their efforts futile.

Presently our Mission is campaigning for food supplies, medicine, sports outfits and equipment for Dakawa/Mazimbu. Response has so far been promising however, there is some hesitation on the part of some municipalities who recall what happened to the council of Reggio Emilia after its solidarity goods were discovered on sale in the streets of Maputo. In the meantime we continue to sell the idea of organising a ship of solidarity from the people of Italy to the African National Congress.

Further input will be made at conference.


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Chief Representative to Italy.