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AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICA (ANC)



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11th September 1989

Iris Varto
VLTL

Dear Iris,

Thank you for the opportunity to meet you and your colleagues recently at VLTL. It was both inspiring and an eye-opener to learn more of VLTL's project in support of our clinic at Dakawa.

The on-going process of building our Development Centre at Dakawa is an integral part of our liberation struggle, for as we seek to destroy apartheid so must we build and prepare for the future.

The ANC believes that all our people who have fled South Africa because of apartheid must be given a chance to develop themselves and participate in the creation of a new South Africa. It is our desire to make Dakawa a place where such dreams can be transformed into reality.

On behalf of the ANC and our community at Dakawa, allow me to express our profound gratitude to the leaders and members of VLTL for their sympathy and concrete solidarity. The donation of an ambulance to the clinic is eloquent testimony of their concern and commitment.

Rest assured that your efforts are of great value and benefit to our people. We sincerely hope that your work will continue in the future and that the project will develop in ways that are mutually rewarding for all of us.

I, and I trust Dr. Mokoena has done the same on his return, have communicated to our headquarters in Lusaka information about VLTL's support and the tasks to be done for future cooperation. In the meantime, I enclose the article on Dakawa as promised.

Yours sincerely,

Mohamed Hussein
ANC Representative to Finland.

The ANC Development Centre - Dakawa

In 1982, on approximately 10000 acres of virgin land granted by the Tanzanian Government, the ANC started to build a Development Centre.

The aim of this centre is to provide an environment where people who have fled South Africa because of apartheid can acquire vocational, technical, and managerial skills through the organisation and running of various types of production activities - opportunities denied to them in their own country because they are black.

It is envisaged that the centre, which already has about 2000 people of all ages, will eventually accomodate a community of 5000. People will be housed in villages built around the various production units already operational and being planned. A central inter-village complex will house medical, cultural, educational, and administrative facilities. Naturally, agriculture aimed at feeding the population will be a major productive activity.

Some of the progress that has been achieved thus far:

- o Approximately 60% of the population is already housed in shelters which offer reasonable comfort. Construction is rapidly proceeding to provide decent housing for all.
- o The entire complex is now electrified with power being supplied by the Tanzanian grid.
- o A system of roads, some tarred, sewage disposal and water supplies are in place thanks to the financial and technical assistance of the Norwegian Government.
- o A Student Orientation Centre, where students are prepared for further study at SOMAFSCO (the ANC's educational complex which is 50 km from Dakawa), is complete. It was funded by Swedish, Danish and Norwegian secondary school students.
- o A nurse school for the under-fives is functional. Older children are at present bussed to SOMAFSCO's primary school. A primary school for Dakawa is being planned.
- o A Vocational Training Centre has been built and is now functional. Finnida has provided much of the resources for building and equipping it. Some of the instructors were trained in Finland.

- o A small leather and a small garment factory is operational under the guidance and training of three Finnish volunteers. This project is being funded by proceeds from Taksvärkki 85. Other small-scale production units are being planned. It is hoped to eventually sell excess production on the local market so that we can buy products we are not able to make ourselves.
- o The Finnish Library Association has sent down a Finnish Librarian to help in providing library services using resources that are based at SOMAFSCO. This project is also funded by Finnida. Plans are already underway to build a proper library at Dakawa.
- o A textile printing workshop is fully operational under the guidance of a Swedish textile artist. This workshop is the first unit of a larger cultural complex already designed but still to be constructed.
- o A clinic, with a resident ANC doctor, serves the health needs of the community. The ambulance donated by VLTL of Finland has greatly assisted the work of the medical team there, especially when patients have to be ferried to hospitals in cases of severe illness.

The Development Centre at Dakawa is clearly of a more sophisticated level than the "normal" refugee camp and the question is often posed to the ANC: Why build such a centre, especially in view of the fact that the inhabitants will eventually all return to South Africa after apartheid? The answer is that South Africa has a highly developed industrial economy and our people will need skills commensurate with this.

The Centre is also seen as a development project for Tanzania, quite a number of its citizens actually being involved in its construction. Eventually Tanzania will inherit a developed complex that will contribute towards its own economic development.

Like its sister project, SOMAFSCO, the Development Centre also has an important political task in galvanising the international community in the struggle against apartheid. Through the active process of assistance many people around the world become better acquainted with the effects of a system which the United Nations has described as a "crime against humanity and a threat to world peace"