

M CR/013/2024/1

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF DELEGATIONS FROM ANC  
MAPUTO OFFICE AND AFRIKANER STUDENTS FROM SOUTH

AFRICA.

DATE: 8 and 11 September, 1988

PLACE: Maputo.

INTRODUCTION:

The students had come to Mozambique at the request of the Mozambican govt. The meeting was held at the request of the students with the view of obtaining first hand information about the organisation as well as exchange ideas on broad issues affecting our country, on an informal basis. Two meetings were held, the first was on the 8-9-88 and the second on the 11-9-88. We would like to point out that at the end of the first meeting, the students request that we close the meeting by singing our national anthem as is customary within the ranks of the movement.

COMPOSITION OF ANC DELEGATION:

1. Chief Rep Kingsley Xuma
2. Nathaniel Thunyiswa
3. Richmond Ramotse
4. Rob Davies
5. Thomas Ndhlela

AFRIKANER STUDENTS:

1. Mark Behr, LEADER OF THE DELEGATION, a student of political science Stellenbosch.
2. Reid Nel, a student of Journalism and SRC member at Stellenbosch University.
3. Loretta Feris, an LLB student and member of the Black Student Org at Stellenbosch University.
4. Barrie Tereblanche, editor of a NUSAS Newspaper at Stellenbosch campus.
5. Lucius Botes, a lecturer in sociology at the University of the Orange Free State.
6. Darrelle Van Greunen, a student at Port Elizabeth University doing Diploma in Teaching. Her subjects includes Xhosa and Sesotho.
7. Hermann Reuter, a Conscientious Objector doing medicine at Stellenbosch University.
8. Leslee Durr, SRC member and student at Stellenbosch.



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9. Tanja Hichert, studying Journalism at Stellenbosch.
10. Hennie Serfontein, not studying but a freelance Journalist with Weekly Mail newspaper.
11. Laurie Ackermann, a student at Stellenbosch.
12. Danile Malan, a BA student in English and political philosophy at Stellenbosch and also vice chairperson of NUSAS.
13. Pierre De Vos, a student and Journalist at Stellenbosch and editor of a campus newspaper, Die Mattie.
14. Steven Celliers, also from Stellenbosch University.

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The meeting was chaired by the Chief Representative who welcomed the students and expressed gratitude for taking the initiative to ask for a meeting with the ANC. The students spoke about their invitation to visit Mozambique and that before they left South Africa they had decided to look forward to meeting the ANC. They said that they did not seek permission from the govt to see us because the whole visit would have been a risk of being prohibited. They also informed us that they would like to make a statement on arrival in South Africa about this meeting. The Agenda of the meeting was not predetermined, but the students had a list of questions on matters of interest to them about the ANC, its policies and perspectives for the future. Their questions ranged from the ANC's constitutional Guidelines, the issue about who is who among the ANC leadership to questions of policy of renunciation of violence and soft targets.

GUIDELINES: We pointed out that these arise from the need to complete the general perspectives for a free democratic South Africa, and not an amendment or substitute for the Freedom Charter or to win more recognition abroad as the question on this subject was raised. We also emphasised the unity of the ANC's leadership that there is no leadership crisis, thus correcting the enemy's false propaganda that the ANC is not ready to see comrade Nelson Mandela released from prison allegedly for fear of a power struggle. The group was told that attacks on soft targets were? In terms of ANC policy a violation and that in cases where ANC cadres do such attacks constitutes acts of indiscipline but as a reaction to the enemy's deliberate and brutal violence



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against black civilians, which is a matter of policy on the part of the pretoria regime. Also our contention was that in the arduous task of training and arming our people for their self-defence against apartheid, which is the source of all violence in the country, perfection is difficult to achieve in producing like mindedness and matured cadres politically and militarily because training for large numbers of our people takes place inside the country. As far as RENUNCIATION OF VIOLENCE is concerned, we pointed out that it is the regime that is violent, and that the demand on us to renounce violence creates an impression that the ANC is the source of violence and not apartheid.

We said that in any case the regime demands of the ANC more than renunciation of violence, but its emasculation eg. that it should dissociate itself from its allies and supporters the SACP and the Soviet Union, which gives us support. Most of the students expressed support for our armed struggle. However they thought that a violent take over is not likely in fifteen to twenty years or more. They base their hopes on international diplomacy, and especially on winning to our side a considerable section of the Afrikaner community, which they say continues to provide substantial support for the national Party. The lecturer at the university of the Orange Free State even went as far as proposing that we would win conservative white supporters and avoid a violent backlash by the ultra-right by toning down our armed struggle. This position was not popular among the students and they were vocal in their opposition to it. Basically most of the group is agreed on the question of identifying apartheid as the source of violence. Furthermore, while discussing violence we touched on Cuitocuanavale and the students said that the regime maintained an information blackout and that the people are not aware of the magnitude of events and the extent of defeat suffered by the South African Defence Force. They said that University students who had been to battles for Cuitocuanavale before the rout have been vocal and say thanks they were not there when the defeat happened. Contributions on Cuitocuanavale were made to highlight the fact that the SADF is not invincible as the whites in South Africa are made to believe. Actually the opposition was emphasised, namely that the regime's weakness in its fear for losses in battles of large numbers of white



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soldiers.

Other matters of interest for the group included the question of NATIONALISATION, CULTURAL IDENTITY, and whether the ANC has camps for punishing dissenting cadres. One could get an impression that these issues were raised as a matter of concern with interest to get assurances. We pointed out that nationalisation is not envisaged to be whole-sale or indiscriminate in accordance with ANC policy; that rather we would go for monopoly industries and give room for mixed economy. On this question the group wanted to know with equal interest as to how big is a group within the ANC which advocates socialist policies and seeks to impose whole-sale nationalisation. Our answer to this went as far as indicating that the ANC is not dominated by any particular tendency or group within its ranks, and that it is as we say an all embracing vanguard in which the guide and harmony is provided by its policies based on the freedom charter.

ON CULTURE: We said there would be room for South Africa's diversity and that we would like to see each preserved as a heritage for all South Africans as one nation. Our delegation told the students that there are no punishment camps in the ANC and we emphasised rehabilitation for for sometimes even serious offenders against the revolution, aimed at reforming genuine cases. However in cases of enemy spies and agents we demanded to know what treatment should be expected for criminal who after years of political education, and sometimes strenuous persuasion fail to make a person confess voluntarily so that pardon should be granted. It is important to note that some of the students were direct in requesting clarification about people like Odile Harrington and others who are white agents of the Pretoria regime and were exposed and apprehended recently.

There was discussion about the October municipal elections both sides debated the issue and reached consensus on the ANC support for the boycott strategy. Some arguments against political non-participation could sometimes be counter-productive.

We also discussed regional political problems brought about by the S.A. regime acts of destabilisation, the accords South Africa has



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dishonoured with Mozambique and Angola. The recent talks around the implementation of resolution 435 on the Namibian question, the withdrawal of the SADF from Angola and the Cuito Cuanavale morale-braker for the SADF. On this point the students informed us how the public is kept ignorant about the effects and the human losses the regime has suffered in Angola. Pierre de Vos said that some of the youth who had gone to Angola said they are relieved that this 'mess' has finally come to an end, they said the SADF morale had completely collapsed.

At the end of the meeting, Mark Behr,, leader of the student delegation on behalf of his delegation that they were very happy to have met their fellow brothers who are outside and that the meetings have been very fruitful and educative. Further they have come to understand the struggle clearly, on their return they will issue a statement expressing their solidarity and commitment to the struggle, of course taking into account the divergent school of thoughts that exists in the ANC is the leading force in the struggle for peace and justice. He said meetings of this nature between fellow brothers should be encouraged.



### The Organisations to which they belong

During our meeting with the group we asked them to give us a briefing about the organisations to which they belong, their size and influence, strategies and the problems they face.

One of the members of the group was from the Stellenbosch **Black Students' Organisation**. This was formed informally in 1985 and was accorded recognition by the SRC in 1987. There are 500 black students at Stellenbosch, but only about 20 are activists. The reason for this is that many of the black students who enroll at Stellenbosch do so because they want a "quiet" atmosphere where they can get on with their studies. Several are thus deliberately trying to avoid politicised campuses such as UWC. In addition, as the authorities recently admitted, black students applying to enroll at Stellenbosch are screened politically before admission. The constituency is thus rather conservative and this limits the capacity of the Black Students' Organisation to mobilise them.

Most of the group were linked to **NUSAS** on Stellenbosch campus. NUSAS is now officially recognised by the SRC and some of its members, including several in the group, have been elected to the SRC. NUSAS has organised a number of campaigns on Stellenbosch - on issues such as a living wage, militarisation, state strategy and alternative culture. It also runs discussion groups. The editor of the NUSAS paper was among the group and several others work or worked on the official SRC newspaper, **Die Matie**. This has a circulation of 9,000 and was described as a "bit left". The importance of national coordination and NUSAS's links with the democratic movement (through the UDF) was stressed. This enables NUSAS branches to take up national issues and provides resources for them to do so. It also provides a degree of protection. For example, NUSAS was banned by the authorities at Stellenbosch in 1987. This, however, led to a national outcry and the authorities relented, lifting the ban after only one day. Regular liaison is maintained with NUSAS at UCT. The group told us that they are able to use their position as Afrikaner youth to "get away with things" on occasions e.g. they have held a few meetings in contravention of Emergency Regulations with no repercussions. The strength of NUSAS on Stellenbosch is hard to measure with precision. A recent study indicated that 22% of Stellenbosch students supported ideas "left" of the regime i.e. everything from Worrall to the democratic movement. They said, however, that NUSAS had succeeded in establishing itself as the opposition at Stellenbosch. Often the Worrallites, NP and KP lined up together against NUSAS in debates. Most students on campus were apathetic. Some agreed with a SWAPO speaker that this represented progress from previous positions of providing positive support for the regime. Others disagreed saying the apathy concealed a high degree of continuing support. They expressed the view that the break of a number of lecturers from the NP last year was deeper than a party political break. A number had moved further in the period since mid-1987.

Other organisations on Stellenbosch campus included:



**Objectors' Forum.** This meets to mobilise around the conscription issue. One of the group was among the 143 who recently refused their SADF call up and is active in this forum. It organises discussions of various options - jail, emigration etc - and tries to deepen understanding of the politics of militarisation. This is an issue the group considered to be of major importance. They indicated that discussions were underway to find ways of filling the gap created by the banning of the ECC, in which several were active. The ECC was however banned on the campus shortly before a proposed launch last year. Some members of the group also have contacts with the **Stellenbosch Youth Congress (Stevco)** formed on June 16 this year. We were told too that workers on the campus had joined a COSATU union which had organised a protest march on the administration on August 31 calling for wage increases and the scrapping of the labour bills - the first such action at Stellenbosch. Finally, one was linked to the **Lawyers for Human Rights** which tries to promote discussion of ways lawyers can relate to the struggle for democracy and offers legal advice.

After an attempt in 1987 to launch NUSAS at the University of Pretoria had failed, those behind it organised another group called **Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)**. NUSAS was rejected by the SRC as being "contrary to the Afrikaner character". SDS is, however, effectively NUSAS in everything but name. It has adopted the NUSAS constitution and liaises with the NUSAS regional coordinator. Again the importance of national links was stressed. SDS operates in a very apathetic and hostile environment. Only 1,000 out of a total of 22,000 students participate in any kind of SRC society at all. The Conservative group, with 400 supporters, is the biggest and best organised political group, but the NP still controls the SRC through the **Ruiterwag**. SDS faces a number of difficulties: apathy, ignorance, a shortage of people with any organisational skills and a desire on the part of several of the small number of potential sympathisers to become directly involved in community work and not bother with student politics. SDS does, however, have links with the Mamelodi Youth Organisation and Mamelodi civics. Its members have also worked together with unions on the anti-labour bill campaign.

At the University of Port Elizabeth a rule banning "politics" from campus means that no organisation can operate officially through the SRC. In May 1987, a group called **Concerned Students** was formed off campus. It also works closely with NUSAS but it is considered tactically unwise to form a NUSAS branch as such. Apathy was again stressed as a major factor. Although there are 80 full time and 200-400 black students at UPE, there is no black students' organisation there.

The member of the group from the University of the Orange Free State said that the university was the most conservative in the country. A survey showed that 50% of the university supported the NP, 30% the far right and 20% groups "to the left" of the government (mainly Worrallites and PFP). 12 of the 17 members of the SRC, nevertheless, belonged to the 20% minority. There were



no democratically inclined organisations on campus. Lecturers had established a forum to discuss politics. This met monthly but was largely involved in trying to convert conservative elements to less reactionary positions.

A member of the group told one of our delegation after the meeting that the group had been tremendously impressed and influenced by their meetings with us. 10 of the 14 members of the group were in favour of making a public statement on their return declaring support both for the goals and the strategy of the ANC. However, this would have split the group and they will probably look for a formula to say the same thing less directly and in a way which maintains their unity.