

## **Southern Africa-Cuba Solidarity Conference Resolutions**

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### ***Preamble***

Gathered at the first Southern Africa-Cuba Solidarity Conference in Johannesburg South Africa, from the 6 - 8 October 1995, conference participants from Botswana, Ghana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe adopt the following resolutions:

### ***Resolution: One***

#### **BUILDING SOLIDARITY ORGANISATION AND LINKS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA**

*Conference through its deliberations notes that :*

- a) the US government has maintained the economic blockade against Cuba for over thirty years but more recently has attempted to intensify it through the Mack amendment, Torricelli Law and the current Helms Burton Bill with the explicit intent to bring down the Cuban government led by Fidel Castro;
- b) Friendship with Cuba in Southern Africa, in the face of this US hostility, has been embraced by governments, solidarity organisations, prominent individuals and a host of other civil society formations;
- c) in addition, these forces of solidarity in Southern Africa have developed unevenly and are uncoordinated in their efforts against the blockade;

*Thus affirming in this context:*

- That struggle in Southern Africa against the US blockade of Cuba can only be intensified and waged decisively through organisation which harnesses and mobilises popular support both within countries and the Southern African sub-region as a whole;

*Conference therefore resolves :*

1. All Southern African countries be encouraged to establish friendship associations with broad popular support;

2. Governments must be called upon, in Southern Africa, to extend the necessary material support to solidarity organisations and activities;
3. To establish itself, in the context of Africa, as a sub -regional network of Friends with Cuba.

### ***Resolution : Two***

#### **THE ROLE OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS AND FOREIGN POLICY AGAINST THE US BLOCKADE OF CUBA**

*Conference through its deliberations notes that :*

- a) Cuban internationalism has played a decisive role in leading to the end of colonialism in Southern Africa;
- b) the US blockade against Cuba is an act of aggression with the blatant intent to violate and undermine Cuba's right to self determination;
- c) Further, the laws that give effect to the blockade have an extra - territorial effect amounting to direct interference by the US government in the foreign affairs of other governments that want to have relations with Cuba;

*Thus affirming in this context:*

- The political irrationality and unacceptability of the blockade;
- The imperative for governments in Southern Africa to be informed by independent foreign policy motivations in their relations with Cuba;

*Conference therefore resolves :*

1. To respectfully request President Nelson Mandela together with the heads of other Southern African states to facilitate a 'Peace Meeting' between President Fidel Castro and President Bill Clinton.
2. The SADC be lobbied through governments to adopt a clear policy position in support of Cuba; and
3. Looks forward to President Castro visiting Southern Africa as part of an opinion building exercise against the blockade.



4. Members of Southern African Parliaments be urged to form parliamentary committees in support of Cuba and to develop links with their counterparts in Cuba, US Congress, European union and elsewhere to express both opposition and explicit rejection of the Helms - Burton Bill and the blockade as a whole.
5. Governments in SADC should call on the OAU to declare a day of solidarity with Cuba, in Africa.

### ***Resolution: Three***

## **SOUTHERN AFRICAN DECLARATION OF ACTION AGAINST THE US BLOCKADE OF CUBA**

*Conference deliberations taking note that :*

- a) Since the Cuban revolution the government in Cuba has given priority to meeting the basic needs of its people primarily through a peaceful development path;
- b) The US blockade is a strangle hold measure which has affected the well being and quality of life of Cuba's people and has also affected the citizens of the US from having normal relations with the people of Cuba;
- c) The demonising nature of the US blockade, is also an attempt to isolate Cuba from the world;

*Thus affirming in this context :*

- Cuba as a sovereign country has the right to determine its own social and economic system;
- The need to build a broad consensus against the US blockade in Southern Africa and the world.

*Conference therefore resolves :*

1. To urge governments in Southern Africa to trade with Cuba.
2. Direct private sector investment in Cuba should be encouraged and promoted.
3. Southern African Governments, Friendship Associations and Friends of Cuba generally must endeavour to make Cuba a tourist destination.

4. To foster links between Southern African unions, women's organisations, civics and other non - governmental organisations with their Cuban counterparts through some of the following ways:
  - 4.1 the organisation of various platforms for disseminating information about Cuba;
  - 4.2 the promotion of people - to - people exchanges, especially, the development of Southern Africa-Cuba brigades;
  - 4.3 the organisation of Friendshipment Caravans with all material aid so assembled to be shipped from Johannesburg.
5. To embark on protest and mass action campaigns like pickets, signature campaigns, letters to US religious bodies and the US President, vigils and so on.