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KWAZULU LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

STATEMENT BY THE CHIEF MINISTER

COMMENT ON AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S REPORT
"SOUTH AFRICA: STATE OF FEAR - SECURITY FORCE COMPLICITY IN
TORTURE AND POLITICAL KILLINGS, 1990 - 1992"

ULUNDI. 17TH JUNE 1992

Amnesty International have issued a report in which they finally conclude that responsibility for violence and killings in South Africa must be laid at the door of the South African Government and the KwaZulu Government. The argument is that the two governments control the Security Forces which, according to Amnesty International, could be used to eliminate violence.

I find it astonishing that they have come to this conclusion. I am astonished on two separate accounts. Firstly because Amnesty, which investigates violence and human rights violations across the length and breadth of the globe should know that there are many places in the world where violence is endemic despite the existence of armies and police forces.

They fail to see that violence in South Africa has roots in many different stratas of society. They fail to see that poverty produces violence everywhere in the world where communities and nations find that there is no relief from abject poverty. Poverty is a destroyer of democracy because it destroys mechanisms of social control.

South Africa's black communities suffer enormously because poverty destroys the normality of life. When communities do not have answers to family and individual problems, social disorders emerge

to make society dysfunctional. It is almost as though poverty produces states of social pathology. All social norms which perpetuate morality and hand down value systems from generation to generation become impaired. Poverty produces broken homes and single mothers with disastrous consequences for hungry children left on street corners to fend for themselves.

The simple statistic that more than half of all black mothers are unmarried tells its own story about family life in our townships.

Where people have no work, have no prospects of finding work and are faced with starvation, the survival action they resort to includes criminality. Poverty produces criminals. Wherever there is poverty and there are criminals there is also the emergence of a "take what you can when you can" mentality. Niceties are pushed aside as people grab whatever they can.

Amnesty International fails to see all this and it fails to see the terrible consequences revolutionary political propaganda has for the maintenance of stability in black society. The 'grab as you can' mentality is translated into 'kill as you can kill for political purposes' mentality.

The spirit of intolerance and the cult of violence which dominates in our black townships takes over and leaves the basic authorities of society inoperable.

For Amnesty International to assert that the violence that does exist could be eliminated by Government action, shows a naivety which is truly astonishing. As Minister of the KwaZulu Police I know of no accusation against any members of our Police Force which has not been investigated with every means at our disposal. As the

Minister concerned I will not tolerate any violations of our Police Code of Honour. Everywhere in the world the human factor leads to failure on occasions. Our Police Force is not perfect, but to accuse the Minister of Police and the KwaZulu Government of being soft on discipline and tolerating abuse of power by members of the Force, is totally unjustified.

One of the problems that we face in South Africa is the fact that understandable as it is, the communities most disrupted by violence and who most need security forces in their midst, most blame the police and army for the violence that occurs. On investigation we have found, for example, that where affidavits have been handed in alleging that police vehicles were seen following rioters and assisting them, the facts were that they took the numbers of these police vehicles as they were rushing towards a scene of violence to try to put an end to it.

We also face the fact that our courts are being used to perpetuate the blame laid on authorities for violence. Supreme Court injunctions have been sought time and again on circumstantial evidence. This puts a judge in the invidious position of having to grant a restraining order because that would be less damaging than not granting an order because he is not completely satisfied that it is warranted. If there is any doubt, he has to give the supplicant the benefit of that doubt.

So as I say, firstly I am astounded by the way in which the Amnesty Report lays blame on governments for violence, knowing as it does know, that poverty and the social pathology which results from poverty combines with criminality to create the circumstances in which, unfortunately, violence emerges as a very natural phenomena.

And secondly, I am astounded that Amnesty has come to its conclusions knowing full well that for a quarter of a century the ANC has been advocating violence, training people in the use of violence, and using organised violence for political purposes. When you add these factors to the poverty factor and the breakdown of society factor, violence must be seen as something which only a political settlement - finally leading to real economic development - could eliminate.

Amnesty International fails to see that the revolutionary option the ANC keeps open by the retention of its private army Umkhonto weSizwe, and the continued recruitment and training of new intakes to it, gives honour to that which is most despicable. The ANC's ever-readiness to create situations of tension in which violence is inevitable is terribly destructive. As I speak now I know that people are going to die in South Africa today as a direct result of the ANC's mass action programmes.

The ANC want to bring the South African Government to its knees and they want to force the State President to resign by the end of the year. They are not going to do this by playing marbles. They are going to attempt to produce the kind of stresses and strains in society which make South Africa ungovernable. What is more, and I say this with well chosen words, they will attempt to make South Africa ungovernable with no regard to the sanctity of life.

What is particularly deplorable to me here is that we have talked to Amnesty International representatives. We have laid before them a wide range of factors for them to consider. We have given detailed attention to every question they have asked of us. We have hidden nothing from them. It is truly lamentable that Amnesty International, which has done so much for mankind in so

many different parts of the world, turns to thrash me, the KwaZulu Government and the KwaZulu Police, for violence which no government in the world could end the way they say it could be ended.

They do not recognise that we have a National Peace Accord in operation, and that the National Peace Committee working hand in hand with the Goldstone Commission, will flush out any government which helps perpetuate violence.

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