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Article Contributed by Hirano Kazunori and Victor Makhosini who travelled from Japan to follow Amandla visit to South East Asia.

AMANDLA was invited by the Singapore government to take part at the prestigious Singapore Art Festival from May 26 to June 6. The response was overwhelming and the troupe was followed all over where they went. AMANDLA then went to Malaysia, at the invitation of the government to perform in two cities as part of "Visit Malaysia 1990" programme.

The Prime Minister of Malaysia was invited by the ANC Chief Representative to Japan and East Asia to attend the Premier. Overwhelmed by the terrific AMANDLA performance, at interval the Prime Minister called mass media present and announce the creation of "ANC Trust Fund" with personal contribution of \$50,000 and appealed to the nation for massive support.

This was the first major visit to South East Asian countries by an African professional troupe in living memory. Thousands of Malay people recalled that their grand fathers and mothers were forcefully shipped as slaves by Dutch Colonisers centuries ago to South Africa.

They discussed with AMANDLA members about the socio-political situation of these their blood whom they understand are called Cape Malay. Equally, the Indian and Chinese communities of these multi-cultured country recalled their kin that were taken by the British as indentured labours to work in sugar cane plantation and gold mines respectively in the last century. AMANDLA performance, dances poetry, and theatre brought back these memories to life. Tears fell, hands clapped, people jumped into jubilation at the end of the show.

These mixed emotional outbursts have characterized audience reactions. Malaysian Prime Minister recalled this past history in his short conversation with the Troupe. "You have linked our people again. Take our greetings and felling back to our people, your people. This bond must never break", remarked a senior official in the Malaysian Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Mr. N. Kamalakaran, who helped to facilitate the visit, remarked,



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"AHANDLA has promoted people to people contact, this visit will stay in the mind of our people for many years to come. Next, we will want to see Indian and Malay culture infused into AMANDLA art ensemble performance".

In order to complete preparation for the AMANDLA Tour of Japan, later in the year, the AHANDLA Japan Tour Project organisers send a delegation of 31 members; local organisers, journalists, technicians led by the Tour Manager, Mr. Takanori Sugino.

AMANDLA TOUR PROJECT has been formed by Japan Asia Africa and Latin America solidarity Committee (JAALA) and Hirai Co.Ltd.

AMANDLA Japan Tour has been supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Cultural Agency, Parliamentary Anti-Apartheid League, and all the major newspapers, television networks.

AHANDLA will visit 25 cities to stage 33 shows all over Japan, literally travelling from the northern to southern islands of Hokkaido to Okinawa crisscrossing the mainland Japan from their arrival on Sep.28th until their departure on Nov.15th. Local committees have also organized rallies, marches and receptions across Japan. The Japan tour is built to be the most extensive in the 12 years of AMANDLA globe trotting.

Autumn is cultural season in Japan. This autumn will be the epoch of cultural scene in Japanese history if we realize the spirit of the agreement between PROJECT and AMANDLA. The agreement says in part:

"AMANDLA and PROJECT have confirmed to make an effort to realize AMANDLA Japan Tour successful in order to further expand the anti-apartheid activities, articulate the prospects of the black oppressed people for a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist South Africa and further shares its rich cultural heritage with the people of Japan."

And further, the agreement states:

"Profits from AMANDLA Japan Tour shall be contributed to the ANC for its activities and a fund of establishing cultural center in South Africa for the black oppressed."

Already 2 million fliers, 150,000 posters have been distributed throughout



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major cities in Japan. Posters will soon appear in Tokyo ten subway network that has led to establishment of underground shipping complex in this city of about 12 million people.

Artists of all schools of thoughts predicts that AMANDLA tour of Japan might be the biggest ever tour by a foreign troupe, let alone from Africa. In addition to the support from two Japanese government departments, Parliamentarian and hundreds of local citizens group, call mass media both local and national, majors and local assembly-members, the 26 strong African Ambassadors accredited to Japan have thrown their weight behind the tour.

On the poster of the AMANDLA Japan Tour, it says:

AMANDLA is an energetic culture ensemble which has impressed the world. The poems, the singings and dances depict the protest against oppression and reflect the aspiration of the people for freedom. How the songs and dances encourage the South African people, who fight in front against the guns! AMANDLA, here presents bona fide music, the rich and diverse culture of South African people.

There is a great possibility that AMANDLA Art Ensemble might revisit some of the South East Asian countries they toured in June due to governments and public demands there.

"Put pressure on Pretoria regime. Tighten screws. Add more sanctions.

Japan join the rest of the world in earnest efforts to dismantle apartheid". AMANDLA will also have to raise funds for: rebuilding ANC structure internally, help to transport itself back into the country and to realize their dream establishing a multi-purpose cultural center that will be available to all our people. This AMANDLA believes will be its greatest contribution to our artist and our people, now, towards and in post-apartheid South Africa.

Indeed, the message from Comrade Nelson Mandela to the Japanese people for support of the forthcoming AMANDLA tour, echoes AMANDLA'S central message, they carried across thus far to 32 countries almost all continents of the world. (Mandela's message below)

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African National Congress

Office of the President

P.O. Box 31791, Lusaka, Zambia. Telephone 219656/7 Telex 45390

Our Ref: 11 April, 1990

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Hr. Teshio Akiniwa

Director General

Japan AALA , ;;

T O K Y O "l

Dear Hr. Akiniwa,

On behalf of the ANC and the people of South Africa, I would like to extend our warmest greetings to the large number of Japanese people who have stood with us in the struggle for the total abolition of the criminal system of apartheid. Your support and solidarity continue to be a great source of inspiration as we progress towards the transformation of South Africa into a united, democratic and non-racial country.

The Japanese tour of our Cultural Ensemble 'AMANDLA', which is scheduled for October and November this year, should serve to strengthen the relations between our respective peoples and convey to as many people as possible our historic message that: 'South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white...'

I am pleased to urge as many people as possible to attend the performances that 'AMANDLA' will give, as part of our common effort to ensure the speedy end of the apartheid system and the transformation of our country into a non-racial democracy. I am certain that the Amandla Japan Tour 1990 will be an outstanding success.

I look forward to seeing you in Japan soon.

Yours in the common struggle,

Wed 3/3/90

NELSON R.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT, ANC