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SOMAFCO PRESENTATION AT THE SEMINAR ON 'YEAR OF PEACE FOR THE SAKE OF LIFE. FINLAND. JUNE 8 - 14, ~~1988~~ 1986.

Human dignity and human rights as content of peace.

During May of this year, the world was horrified to learn of three attacks by the South African racist regime against the capitals of other southern African countries. On the same day South African helicopter gunships and commandos machinegunned a house on the outskirts of Gaborone in Botswana; South African saboteurs blew up an office and a residential house in Harare ~~and~~ in Zimbabwe; South African jet aircraft bombed a residential complex in Lusaka in Zambia. The whole world condemned these attacks, yet the South African racists are merely following the example of their mentors from the United States and Israel. It is true that the British Foreign Secretary condemned the raids, but the British Prime Minister could still say that she saw no necessity to apply sanctions against South Africa.

These South African attacks against neighbouring states are not isolated, unique incidents. In the past the South African racists have launched full-scale attacks on Maseru in Lesotho, Maputo in Mozambique, Gaborone in Botswana, Lusaka in Zambia. Activists of the African National Congress have been assassinated by the racists in Maputo, Gaborone, Lusaka and Lubango in Angola. Despite treaty obligations accepted by the South African regime with the signing of the Nkomati Accord, the South African regime continues to give support to the bandits of the MNR who are destabilising the legitimate government of Mozambique. Similarly the UNITA bandits in Angola continue to receive large scale South African support. The opportunistic gangster, Savimbi, who heads UNITA, has been hailed by the United States president as a 'freedom fighter' and is now receiving massive US aid and modern weapons. In fact, since Angolan independence in 1975, there has been no time when there have not been South African troops on Angolan soil. At various times, the South African racists have been involved in full-scale invasion of Angola.

South Africa, with the support of its western allies, runs its southern African foreign affairs in a manner reminiscent of a Mafia boss involved in a protection racket. Force and threats are the instruments of South African foreign policy in southern Africa, not negotiation and accommodation. The people of southern Africa as a whole have no doubt of who are the terrorists in the area.

Great as has been the effect of South African aggression and destabilisation in neighbouring <sup>countries</sup>, the disruption caused in the lives of ordinary people within South Africa has been even greater. The South African government has the unique and despicable distinction of being the only government in the world where racism and discrimination is institutionalised by means of far-reaching and all-pervading legislation. There is no area of the lives of South African Blacks which is not circumscribed by discriminatory legislation. The daily experience of our people inside South Africa is of forced removals, police harassment, official obfuscation and discrimination. The cosmetic reforms introduced by Botha and hailed by his allies have not convinced the people of South Africa that they are no longer discriminated against. Changing the names of the means of oppression does not alter the nature of oppression. In this regard it is interesting to note that the passlaws, whose name Botha has recently promised to abolish so that they can continue to be applied under a different designation, are administered at present under legislation known as the Abolition of Passes Act. In South African double-speak, Blacks have not carried passes for years: they are however forced to carry reference books.



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There are few countries in the world today where there is ~~less~~ as little regard for human dignity and human rights as there is in South Africa.

At this stage of our history, the people of South Africa, acting through their democratic institutions under the umbrella of the United Democratic Front, have given indication that they will no longer accept the continuation of degradation and oppression; that they will no longer accept the apartheid system in any way. Our peaceful marches are met with teargas. Our grief at funerals is disrupted by the presence of armed men sent by the South African state to spray us with gas, taunt us and shoot down our young people. Increasingly armed right wing fanatics, often actively supported by the police and the army, terrorise our townships. South Africa is at war : a war declared by the racist regime against the people of South Africa.

Yet the people of South Africa, with great courage and dedication, continue to resist. Not only will the resistance of our people achieve victory, but it will also bring about justice. We are engaged in a just war - the state of confession of the progressive theologians. In the same way, almost fifty years ago, freedom loving people all over the world united in armed anger against the Nazi scourge.

The Freedom Charter, the basic document of the African National Congress, accepted as the basis of our new South Africa not only by the ANC but also by all democratic organisations inside South Africa, offers an alternative to a system of organised state violence and degradation for the mass of our people. Let me remind you of the headings of five of the Freedom Charter's headings.

THE PEOPLE SHALL GOVERN.  
ALL NATIONAL GROUPS SHALL HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS.  
ALL SHALL BE EQUAL BEFORE THE LAW.  
ALL SHALL ENJOY EQUAL HUMAN RIGHTS.  
THERE SHALL BE PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP.

This is the promise of our future. Friends, we take these promises very seriously indeed. We are busy enculcating these values in our emerging education system at SOMAFCO.

Let me show you a drawing , done spontaneously and not as part of a project, by one of our Primary School pupils.

SHOW PICTURE.

Perhaps it is significant that our children spell friendship better than they spell 'Grade!'

Let there be peace and friendship. Let us destroy the system of apartheid to ensure this future for our country and our children.