

19 March 1984

Circular Letter No.

At their meeting in New Delhi last November, Heads of Government endorsed the proposal of the Commonwealth Committee on Southern Africa to launch a Distance Education Programme for South African Exiles ' (paragraph 20 of the New Delhi Communique refers). Initially, the Programme will provide distance learning opportunities for South African exiles in Tanzania; subsequently, as resources and circumstances permit, similar provision will be made for South African exiles in other Front-Line States.

Following the Heads of Government meeting, the Secretariat held further discussions with officials of the Tanzanian Government, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the two South African nationalist movements (namely, ANC and PAC) on arrangements for setting up 'a South African Extension Unit (SARI) to administer the Programme. In addition, a consultant from the Cambridge-based International Extension College spent three weeks in Tanzania in January 1984, on a CFTC assignment to assess the educational levels and requirements of the groups of refugee students who will be assisted initially, and to make recommendations on the practical modalities of running the Programme. A summary of his main findings and recommendations, . . . together with provisional budget estimates, are attached as Appendix I and Appendix II, respectively.

The report of the consultant provides the information which was requested by some members of the Commonwealth Committee on Southern Africa at its meeting on 27 October 1983 and reinforces the Committee's view, endorsed" by Heads of Government, that the Programme will meet a very real need and ' will provide valuable educational opportunities to significant numbers of South African exiles, at comparatively modest cost. It is also clear that the Programme continues to have the enthusiastic support of the Government of Tanzania and of all the other parties concerned.

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Accordingly, I am now appealing to Commonwealth Governments for the funds required to launch the Programme. The CFTC is prepared to meet the cost of an expert and international consultancy services for the project (see section 3 of the budget estimates in Appendix 2), but is not in a position to provide additional support. In these circumstances, funds of the order of \$108,000 in 1984-85 and \$125,000 in 1985-86 will be required; from sources other than the CFTC if the SAEU is to commence its work later this year, as scheduled. As stated in the agreed project proposal, a Commonwealth South Africa Education Fund has been established for the convenience of those Governments which wish to make their contributions to the Programme through the Secretariat. Other Governments may decide to support the Programme direct through the Board of Trustees in Dar es Salaam, which it is anticipated will be established in the near future.

I shall be grateful if you will ensure that this request receives the urgent attention of your Government and look forward to receiving contributions at an early date in order to ensure that this important new initiative to assist the victims of apartheid becomes a reality in 1984.

Shridath S. Ramphal