

Peace accord 'will lead to political negotiation'

Political Correspondent
APE TOWN. — Multi-party talks to get negotiations on a new constitution under way are expected soon after this weekend's Peace Convention in Sandton, at which the major negotiation partners will be represented.

There is speculation in political circles that the subject may be raised at a convention, where all the main political parties will sign a national peace accord — although the conservative party still remains outside the accord. Among all participants, on the National Party, the ANC, and including the main parties in parliament, the success of the accord is seen as an important breakthrough in the negotiation process, setting a pattern for the future.

Dr Gerrit Viljoen, Minister of Constitutional Development, said there had already been a series of talks between the government and the other parties. In these discussions, a

substantial measure of consensus had been reached on an agenda, procedures, the chairmanship and participants in a multi-party convention, which was expected to establish a formal forum for constitutional talks.

Dr Viljoen said the government plans a series of bilateral talks with the other major negotiation partners immediately after the signing of the peace accord, to seek finality on when and how the multi-party convention may begin.

Political sources outside the government said the peace talks had brought the leading negotiators of the political parties together.

They had learned to understand one another, in spite of differences of style and approach, and this knowledge and experience would be invaluable in the future talks.

Mr Dave Dalling, who will head the Democratic party delegates on Saturday, confirmed that sufficient agreement had been

reached by the partners to the peace accord for it to be signed at the one-day meeting in Sandton.

A draft document has been submitted to all the parties, although a number of amendments are due to be considered before a final accord is signed.

The draft document contains a statement of intent and codes of conduct for the security forces and for political parties.

The code relating to the security forces will be backed up by the establishment of the permanent Commission on Violence, to which all allegations about provocation or the promotion of violence may be referred.

The State President, Mr F W de Klerk, is expected to consult widely with the peace accord signatories on the membership of the Commission.

The code of conduct relating to political parties and to politicians specifically commits them not to use language that may promote violence.

Venda's leader sets up forum to consider reincorporation

VENDA military leader Gabriel Ramushwana has set up a forum to advise him on reincorporating his homeland into SA.

Ramushwana told a news conference in Tlohozyandou yesterday that Venda did not seek reincorporation with "the present apartheid SA, but with the envisaged new, non-racial, democratic SA".

Ramushwana, chairman of the Venda Council of National Unity, came to power in April last year after deposing president Frank Ravele, who succeeded Patrick Mphahlele in April 1988. Mphahlele had been president since independence in 1979.

Ramushwana said while SA was being rewarded internationally for moving away from apartheid, the TBVC states "either found themselves left behind in their lonely existence or remained, in international opinion, as living evidence of the apartheid grand design".

Ramushwana said pressure from opponents of homeland policy, coupled with SA's preparedness to abolish apartheid, influenced Venda — which had become aware of losing a sponsor — to demand reincorporation.

Saying he was aware of the enormous task facing Venda representatives at the negotiation table, and

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considering the diversity of matters to be discussed, Ramushwana said: "I and the Council of National Unity have decided to pass legislation providing for the establishment of a Reincorporation Forum to advise me in my capacity as chairman of the council."

In terms of Section 10 of the Venda Reincorporation Forum Proclamation, 1991, the forum would advise him on any matter concerning the process of reincorporation.

The forum "will not be politically dominated... but will concentrate on discussing issues relevant to the destiny of the citizens of Venda in the future dispensation".

The forum will be made up of 28 traditional leaders, 56 members elected by the 28 territorial councils, two from the Venda Chamber of Commerce, two from the churches in Venda and 10 members with "special knowledge, qualifications or wide experience" to be appointed by Ramushwana.

"It is not a negotiation body in itself, but may facilitate the process leading to negotiation," Ramushwana said.

12 PAC leaders to return from exile

TIM COHEN

TWELVE PAC national executive committee members still in exile would return to SA soon, using the mechanisms to be set up in terms of the agreement between government and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, PAC spokesman Barney Desai said yesterday.

Although the PAC did not endorse the agreement, PAC members in exile would return to SA in terms of the agreement, Desai said.

The PAC did not endorse the agreement because it allowed government to object to the return of an exile.

That, in the PAC's view, constituted something less than a full general amnesty for political exiles.

The PAC, therefore, was adopting a non-committal attitude. It would not encourage exiles to return but would assist those wishing to do so.

The PAC would comply with the provisions of the agreement, said Desai. There were positive aspects to the agreement, such as that it would facilitate funding for the return of exiles.

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The Commonwealth, a 50-nation group of Britain and its former colonies and territories, said a special committee on South Africa would meet on Friday and Saturday.

The Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa, as it is formally known, decided in February that sanctions imposed on South Africa because of its apartheid system should be gradually lifted as concrete reforms were made.

Commonwealth Secretary-General Sec-tary-General Chief Linaka Anyaku said last week that it would be inappropriate to remove all international pressure on Pretoria until South Africa's black majority had full voting and constitutional rights. — Sapa-Reuters.

C'wealth Ministers to reconsider sanctions

LONDON. — Foreign Ministers from nine Commonwealth countries will meet in New Delhi this week to review developments in South Africa and discuss whether some sanctions should be lifted, the organisation said yesterday.

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Parties urge action to save peace convention

SATURDAY's peace convention was now even more vital than before, the ANC, Inkatha and government said yesterday.

Recommitting themselves to signing the peace accord, they said the latest spate of violence on the Reef should not be allowed to derail the peace process.

The accord the three parties are due to sign includes codes of conduct for security forces and political parties; regional and local dispute and violence-monitoring mechanisms; and a commission of inquiry to investigate all acts of violence and intimidation.

The full spectrum of political and church groups, and business and trade union leaders, condemned the violence in which at least 65 people were killed, and urged parties to push towards peace.

Provocation

Inkatha media spokesman Suzanne Vos, who has been party to drafting the accord, said: "This insidious violence must stop. This is all the more reason why the peace initiative must get off the ground."

ANC president Nelson Mandela said the ANC condemned the attack on Inkatha members on Sunday, and reiterated his organisation's intention to sign the accord.

"It is clear that the people launching the attack were not part of any organisation, but (were) those attempting to derail the peace convention. It is a deliberate attempt at provocation," he said.

A government member involved in drafting the accord also said it was now

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vital that the accord be signed so that the monitoring and dispute-settling mechanisms could be started.

Mandela said a multilateral accord would be more effective than bilateral agreements because if one party did not uphold the terms, there would be pressure on it from the other parties. He said all the parties would also be involved in monitoring the situation and this would help ensure the agreement did not collapse.

The issue of cultural weapons was still a sensitive one, but the accord was designed to prevent all parties from carrying lethal weapons to rallies, he said.

SACC general-secretary the Rev Frank Chikane called on government to take strong action immediately so speculation that security force members were involved in the slayings could be dispelled.

ANC national executive committee member Gill Marcus said the commission of inquiry, with its wide powers of investigation, was probably the most important and powerful mechanism in the accord.

The US has urged the SA government to investigate the weekend violence, Sapa-Reuters reports from Washington.

State Department spokesman Richard Boucher called on the leaders of the ANC and Inkatha to work "together and with government to ensure that the violence can finally be brought to a halt".

He said the weekend's events should not upset plans to finalise the peace accord.

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Mangope to rule on prisoners' fate

PATRICK BULGER

BOPHUTHATSWANA President Lucas Mangope is expected to make a major announcement later this week on the fate of the homeland's political prisoners.

His cabinet met yesterday to discuss the 144 prisoners held since an abortive coup attempt in 1988. A government source said the cabinet was also considering the release of eight other prisoners, members of the opposition People's Progressive Party.

Mangope will address the media at a special briefing on Thursday. This has raised speculation that he is going to release the prisoners.

Said the Bophuthatswana source: "There's a good chance he will free them, but there is as good a chance that he will provide solid reasons for their continued incarceration."

The Bophuthatswana government is facing intense pressure to free the prisoners who qualify as political prisoners in terms of a US definition.

The US administration lifted its sanctions in July on the understanding that the men would be freed. The prisoners are also an issue cited by the Danish government for its veto of the lifting of EC sanctions on trade in iron, steel and Krugerrands.

Yesterday a high-level church delegation, including SA Council of Churches general secretary the Rev Frank Chikane, met Foreign Minister Pik Botha to discuss the fate of the prisoners.

Still 'too soon' for talks

ANC president Nelson Mandela yesterday cooled speculation that multi-party negotiations could start as early as next month.

He told a news conference that Constitutional Minister Gerrit Viljoen was being optimistic when he said talks were imminent.

"He (Viljoen) is basing his optimism on informal talks government had with the ANC prior to our suspending constitutional talks in April," Mandela said.

He said government had not met all the ANC's demands set out in its ultimatum.

"The only compliance so far has been the removal of Ministers (Magnus) Malan and (Adriaan) Vlok from their respective portfolios (Defence and Law and Order)."

Stopping township violence was the main issue, he said.

"Constitutional talks are still suspended for the time being," he said, denying reports that secret talks were going on between government and the ANC.

Sapa reports that ANC secretary-general Cyril Ramaphosa told the

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news conference Winnie Mandela had been reinstated as head of the ANC's welfare department.

More than a month ago it was announced that Mandela had been replaced by senior ANC and SA Communist Party member Cheryl Carolus.

Ramaphosa said yesterday Mandela was again heading the welfare department, while Carolus had now been appointed head of the departments of human resources and health.

Treasurer-general Thomas Nkobi would "assume ultimate responsibility" for the organisation's national working committee for welfare work. "But that department on its own will continue being headed by Comrade Winnie Mandela."

Asked why a number of non-committee members, including Mandela, had been appointed department heads, Ramaphosa said: "We do not have enough national working committee members to head each one. This is just a case... of convenience."

Patriotic front parties meet

TIM COHEN

The meeting would be attended by about 10 leaders from each of the three main political groups, he said. His organisation would be pushing for equal representation for the main groups, while the other organisations would each have about a quarter the voting strength of one of the three. Moodley said Azapo and the PAC had agreed on a set of criteria for attendance, which included a stipulation that the organisations involved should be "organisations of the oppressed", have a national character and support a constituent assembly. They were therefore against the inclusion of the DP, since it did not comply with the first and last criteria.

PAC spokesman Barney Desai said yesterday he expected the meeting to reach finality on all the main issues.

HIGH-level delegations from the ANC, PAC and Azapo meet in Johannesburg today to finalise arrangements for the much-postponed patriotic front conference, expected to take place early next month.

The conference, which will probably draw about 500 delegates from 40 organisations, was due to take place last week.

The repeated postponements have drawn criticism from government, which has accused the groups of trying to stall negotiations by delaying the conference.

At a news conference yesterday, Nelson Mandela said the ANC was not dragging its heels. It was not essential that the patriotic front conference take place before multi-party talks could be held.

Azapo spokesman Sirini Moodley said today's meeting would decide when the conference would be held, who would attend and what the agenda would be.

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