

AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICA  
PROVISIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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Circular To All Our Units

5th April, 1973.

REPORT SUBMITTED BY ALEX LA GUMA  
ON THE PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE  
WORLD CONGRESS OF PEACE FORCES  
HELD IN MOSCOW FROM MARCH 16-18, 1973

About 200 delegates representing approximately 100 organisations attended this meeting. It must be said that the conference was a hardworking one, the sessions lasting up to almost midnight each day. The main purpose of the conference was to set the guidelines for the forthcoming congress and to discuss ways and means of ensuring the widest possible participation.

The general approach of the World Congress can be judged from the Communique and the Appeal. The date of the World Congress was set at 2-7 October.

A conspicuous gap in the conference was revealed by the poor representation from Black Africa. Delegates attended from Mali, Guinea and Somalia, and the liberation movements were represented by ANC, ZAPU and PAIGC. The result was that the Commission on Africa, chaired by the delegate from Madagascar, only six people could be present, the result being that African affairs could not be adequately discussed. It was reported that a meeting of African representatives had been planned to take place in Madagascar to discuss the problems of the continent, but this has had to be postponed until some time later this year.

During the course of the conference I had a talk with members of the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee who urged that the ANC representation at the World Congress in October should be a strong one, as should be those of the other liberation movements, so that problems pertaining to our struggle should be properly covered. If the delegations from Africa and Asia were not well representative, the result might be that the congress would pay more attention to the questions affecting the metropolitan countries.

The following documents were adopted at the conclusion of the meeting at which I had the honour to preside over the Commission on National Independence, Colonialism, Racism, Apartheid and Development :-



REPORT OF THE COMMISSION  
ON NATIONAL INDEPENDENCE, COLONIALISM,  
RACIALISM, APARTHEID AND DEVELOPMENT

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"The Commission consisting of more than 40 participants representing international and national organisations and peace movements from all continents met to discuss in depth aspects which should draw the attention of the forthcoming World Congress on Peace, Security and Development.

"While the Commission found that the topic can be discussed in general, the problems which arise in specific areas demand that the Congress treat the question in greater detail. On the wider scale the Commission noted that while the people of Vietnam and world progressive forces have gained a mighty victory over imperialism, the power of imperialism still remains a threat to the world. Likewise it was pointed out that the question of genuine national independence must involve the fundamental consideration of economic independence and complete freedom from the burden of imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism.

"However, colonialism and neo-colonialism, national oppression and discrimination attack the peoples in various ways. Our Commission heard of serious problems for example, the question of Quebec; the illegal regime in Zimbabwe; poverty and racism in the USA; apartheid in South Africa, among other things.

"For these reasons it was strongly felt that in order to activate the people on a grass-roots level to involve the widest possible participation in the World Congress, the question of National Independence, Colonialism and Racism should be connected with the real problems of the people in their daily lives. On this basis can the people be drawn into the world-wide struggle for national independence, freedom and peace.

"The Commission therefore recommends that under the subject of National Independence, Colonialism and Racism the World Congress go into the matter on the basis of as many ramifications as possible. The Commission recommends that the subject be dealt with as follows:-

- "- The struggle for genuine independence of peoples including the question of development programs in relation to achieving political and economic independence and the right of self-determination of nations as a guarantee of lasting peace in the world.
- "- The influence of colonialism and neo-colonialism and their effects on subject peoples; the necessity of exposing and combating this influence and the role of the national liberation movements in the struggle for peace.



- "- Racism and apartheid and the necessity to achieve unconditional democratic rights as a prerequisite to the end of all forms of discrimination.
- "- To this end we recommend that this international consultative meeting of peace forces call on all participants to take up these issues in their respective areas in relation to the real-life problems of their people, with the view of encouraging greater participation in their own struggle for liberation and for participation in the World Congress and the creation of a lasting movement for peace. The Commission suggests the setting up of a committee or working group to co-ordinate, through the organisers of the World Congress, activities and exchanges of experiences in order to ensure the widest participation in the World Congress and a continued struggle for peace."

A P P E A L  
FOR THE CONVOCAATION OF A WORLD CONGRESS OF PEACE  
FORCES

"An International Consultative Meeting for the preparation of a World Congress of Peace Forces for international security and disarmament, national independence and peace was held in Moscow on 16-18 March, 1973. On the invitation of the World Peace Council the Meeting was attended by representatives of 40 international and 18 national organisations of 60 countries.

"The participants address an urgent appeal to all those who wish to contribute to the preparation and work of this Congress which will be held in Moscow in October 1973.

"The World Congress will give expression to the powerful movement which today awakens the peoples and brings them together and, at the same time, will be a starting point of a new and more powerful upsurge of this movement in the face of a serious danger which continues to menace peace in the world.

"The forces of peace have already won genuine successes. The achievement of Peace in Vietnam, the victory of the heroic Vietnamese people against imperialism is also a result of untiring efforts of the peoples cherishing justice and peace. A significant success in the relaxation of tensions has been gained in Europe. The struggle for national liberation and economic independence is growing. Certain dangerous hotbeds of war have been eliminated. A number of states with different social systems have come to mutually favour peaceful coexistence. The question of establishing a system of security has been raised in specific terms in some regions of the world, while the problem of disarmament is now being tackled.



However, are these positive developments adequate, if a lasting peace is to be secured?

"The answer is negative. The danger of a nuclear conflict persists, as well as hotbeds of war, particularly in the Middle East, which is a consequence of Israel occupation of the Arab territories and failure to implement resolutions of the United Nations; peaceful settlement in Indochina on the basis of the Paris agreements is not completed; and the armaments race continues, while the remnants of colonialism, racial discrimination and neo-colonialism remain a sad reality.

"We are convinced that despite all the differences in outlook and ideological approach, an open dialogue on these questions will be extremely useful for the cause of peace and international detente, and will reinforce the confidence and cooperation among the peoples.

"In the spirit of respect for the equality of all, the World Congress will determine the first-priority tasks of our common struggle and map out the path of a more active participation of the public.

"We express a hope that other organisations, movements, parties and personalities will respond to our appeal.

"Peace is a matter of concern for each and everyone."

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#### C O M M U N I Q U E

"Representatives of diverse peace forces attended an International Consultative Meeting in Moscow on 16-18 March, 1973 responding to the idea of the World Peace Council. The Meeting was attended by representatives of 40 international and 81 national organisations of 60 countries, while some political, trade union, youth, women's and other notables representing also other public movements for peace and national independence as well as MPs, workers in culture, scholars, scientists and clergymen attended the Meeting also in their personal capacity. Present at the meeting were representatives of the United Nations Organisation, its specialised Committees, the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development and the League of Arab States, etc.

"The Meeting noted that thanks to the actions and the consistent struggle of all peace forces, thanks to the mounting support of the world public important positive international developments have taken place recently. The Meeting also stressed that there were still burning problems of profound concern for the international public which demanded insistently their earliest solution.



"The Meeting stressed the independent approach of the represented organisations to these problems and agreed that it was high time to undertake a constructive joint exploration of the relevant decisions in the spirit of sincerity and loyalty, that there appeared an opportunity of concerted action for the benefit of all peoples."

"Thus motivated the participants in the Meeting favoured convening in Moscow, tentatively from October 2-7, 1973, on the broadest basis the World Congress of Peace Forces for International Security and Disarmament, for National Independence, Cooperation and Peace. They approved an appropriate Appeal."

"The participants had a useful and constructive discussion on the objectives, content, ways of preparing and organising the Congress. They resolved to hold at an appropriate time another preparatory meeting which could establish a preparatory body for the Congress, open for all wishing to engage in its work. The Meeting regards it possible to commence on this basis practical preparations for the Congress in every individual country having in mind extensive freedom of actions of the national organisations concerned to take account of any new demonstration of support to the Congress."

"The World Congress of Peace Forces is opened on a equal basis, to the representative of diverse political and public organisations and movements, the workers, and the peasants, trade union, cooperative, specifically, and also for public and political personalities and statesmen, scholars, inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations are invited to participate in preparations for the Congress."

"The Consultative Meeting holds that the following vital problems should be given the greatest emphasis during the preparation of the Congress; international security including disarmament; the means of securing and reserving national independence; the eradication of the vestiges and the aftermath of colonialism; contraction of imperialist intervention; the promotion of comprehensive equal and mutually advantageous cooperation among peoples and states; the broadening of understanding and contacts among peace-loving socio-political elements."

"It is understood by the participants that the possibility of submitting any constructive suggestions regarding the content and form of Congress work and of their joint consideration remains open during the preparation of the Congress."

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