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ISSUED BY AZASO

For any organisation to be capable of effectively communicating with its membership, a newsletter is important. This newsletter comes at a time when the pace and form of our struggle has taken a new swing hence it becomes necessary for Azaso to communicate to its membership about the State of the Nation.

Ever since 1981 when Azaso firmly placed itself in the van of the progressive movement our organisation has grown not only in terms of successes it made but also through its ability to lessen the past mistakes. Today we have a presence in more than 50 campuses this we believe is remarkable indeed. Students in tertiary institutions have rallied around the banner of Azaso to fight for their demands. High on the list are the 1982 Sebe Demonstration in Fort Hare where students demonstrated their rejection of the homeland system; the role Azaso played in uniting students of Ngoye University following the killing of our fellow students by Gatsha impis in 1983 and the struggles for a democratic representation in places such as Mabopane Technikon and Soweto College. In some campuses such as Tu rffloop Azaso is the students and students are Azaso.

The NEC takes this opportunity to express its gratitude to all the people and organisations who have shaped Azaso into becoming what it is today. We appreciate the hardwork of our activists in all parts of the country who have been taxed to the maximum to guide the mass of students in these difficult times.

We are indeed at one of the crucial stages of our liberation struggle where essential conditions have to be met for the success of Azaso. The duty call upon all the membership in the country is to heighten the political consciousness of the role of students in the National Democratic Struggle; to work tirelessly to merge with democratic forces standing in the van of our struggle and produce a correct leadership capable not only of keeping our mass of students informed but also to guide it as to this or that necessary action to be taken.

The white minority regime has declared the state of emergency with the sole purpose of attempting to crush the growing tide of liberation in SA. Azaso has also been affected. Some of our activists at Turf, Wits and Soweto College have been detained. We have no reason to despair. We have lost liberation heroes such as Goniwe, Calata, Mxenge and others in mysterious circumstances. In this climate the chief task of the day is to close our ranks; consolidate our struggles and membership.

The road ahead is indeed going to be difficult, simply because there is NO EASY WALK TO FREEDOM. This will require vigilance, determination and iron cast discipline on the part of our membership. With the Exclusion Act passed campus authorities will try their level best to victimise our activists. We must not allow them to succeed! This is the call of the day.

Our commitment to the Freedom Charter must be

unwavering and we have every reason to popularise this  
People's Document amongst the students. At the same  
time let every student be part of the Education Charter  
Campaign.

## STATE OF EMERGENCY

The government of Botha and Malan has decided to declare the state emergency by giving the police and the army unlimited, arbitrary powers of arresting and detention of any person suspected of promoting the so-called unrests. Our view of this state of emergency is that it legalises terrorism that our people have been suffering at the hands of the police and the army. We have repeatedly said that the presence of SADF in our townships is the cause of many deaths and therefore SADF must get out.

More than 500 people have been killed so far in our townships.

This state of emergency, no doubt, is going to increase the level of continuous deaths, disappearances and bombing of our people's homes.

Our activists in the Eastern Cape and Durban have been victims of naked acts of terrorism. Goniwe, Mkhonto, Mhlawuli and Calata all members of an organisation affiliated to UDF were murdered in mysterious circumstances.

Azaso has clearly said that it holds the apartheid regime of Botha responsible for the murder, disappearance and the bombings of our people's homes. It is because of Apartheid that there is no peace and friendship in our SA.

The killing and disappearance of people is a cause for concern for all the freedom-loving South Africans. The white minority regime has been using the excuse of the purported clash between the UDF and Azapo as the reason for the killing, bombings and disappearances of our people. Now the government has run out of tricks: It can no longer use this trick. In Duduza residents have evidence to show that police were involved in the bombings and killings. Colonel Mellet denied this evidence as true holding it to be 'as calculated lie which is irresponsible, upsetting and devoid of truth'.

Black women in our country suffer not only national oppression but also exploitation as workers and are often victims of sexist attitudes. This situation has a great effect on the women.

We often hear many people saying that the woman's place is in the kitchen because women are incapable of assuming responsible tasks. This often leads to a situation whereby women refrain from participating in the struggle. As members of Azaso it is our responsibility to educate our branches, and the people generally, about why such views are held in our society. The weight of traditionalism means that women do not see themselves as being capable of participating in political struggle.

Our struggle can never be successful while women are oppressed nationally, sexually and as workers. We need to develop the political consciousness of our women

around the problems that affect them and explain to them why such things occur. This we can encourage by organising workshops, seminars and conferences â\200\224 these being used as forums for the exchange of ideas on the question of the oppression of women. This duty is - not only of women but of men as well.

WE CAN NEVER BE FREE WHILE OUR WOMEN ARE

Residents in Duduza told the world that police wear balaclavas when they go on their mission. The police denied this. Later they admitted that they do wear them but only to protect themselves against cold weather. Why did they deny this in the first place? What was the motive? If the police can deny and later accept factual evidence, what reason do we have that they are in our townships to maintain the celebrated â\200\230law and orderâ\200\231 when in their presence hundreds of people die?

The state of emergency which gives the police and the army extraordinary powers must be seen for what it is- an act calculated to legalise further the indefensible vicious Apartheid.

We reiterate our call that there can be NO PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP AS LONG AS APARTHEID EXISTS. !

This state of emergency is the second in 25 years â\200\224 the last was when our peacefully protesting people were massacred in Sharpeville in 1960. ANC and PAC were banned thereafter. By doing this the white minority regime hoped to crush the tide of change in SA. No doubt exists that it has failed to achieve this simply because apartheid is morally, politically, socially and economically indefensible.

As students we must take the Botha action as a challenge to us. We must quite understand that THERE IS NO EASY WALK TO FREEDOM.

Our task remains principally to organise ourselves against this onslaught, understanding very clearly that there is no reason to be intimidated by this emergency. We have a task to organise every student and challenge apartheid.

Let us heed the call:  
Organise! Organise! Please Organise!

KEPT IN CHAINS!

It is important that the programme should appeal to women. In other words, we have to mobilise our women-folk around the day to day issues that affect them. Through these issues we must at the same time not lose sight of the broader issues. This entails the task of politically educating women to a point where they clearly see their role in the struggle.

Firstly, women have to fight alongside their men for an end to exploitation and national oppression. Secondly, and importantly, every woman must convince herself that she can be a liberated woman able to do all the things that men do in social and political life. Lastly, our women must understand that the fundamental problem is not the contradiction between men and women but the socio-political system in which we are living.

In our Azaso branches we do not only have to explain these things but we must put them into practice. We must not for a single moment doubt to elect our women to leadership positions if they can enhance our struggle.

We must from our ranks produce women of the calibre of Winnie Mandela, Dorothy Nyembe, Ma Sisulu and others who have significantly contributed to our struggle. 2

## The Organisation

Azaso is a Black Student Organisation that was formed in December 1979. Since then it has made great strides in creating student unity and has been at the forefront of the student struggles at a tertiary level of education, ie at colleges, technikons and universities. As a national student organisation Azaso has presence in more than 50 campuses, colleges, and varsities and technikons.

ONGOYE

FORT HARE ~

INDUMISO

VISTAS (PE and Soweto)

## Academic Terrorism Act

The racist triracial parliament has passed an Act which gives the university and technikon's councils a right to expel students who are regarded as 'troublemakers'. These councils have been empowered to exclude students without giving them a right of hearing. AZASO has resolved to fight tooth and nail this Act which will academically and politically terrorise students from challenging wrongs which are deliberately created by these authorities. It is necessary for every student of AZASO to educate other students about the implications of this Act so that necessary action can be taken.

## 2. Democratic student representation

SA is an undemocratic country; Blacks suffer from both national oppression and exploitation. One of the most important realisations of AZASO is that a democratic education free of Bantu Education and that instills within students the fact that they are members of the society before they are students CANNOT be achieved unless SA is totally transformed.

But for a student organisation it is important that it should always fight to ensure that democratically elected representative bodies (SRC'S and AZASO branches) exist at all campuses. The demand for

democratic SRCâ\200\231sâ\200\231, as Comrade Lulu Johnson (Cosas President) says, â\200\230is part of the process of preparing ourselves and building a future SA where representation will be genuine and democratic.â\200\231

#### Progran

At present the focus is on Fort Hare and Mabopane Technikon where students have been demanding SRCâ\200\231s for many years. In Mabopane our Comrade Nkuna was shot and killed by police when students were boycotting classes in demand of a SRC.

AZASO believes that democracy is relevant only if students participate in decision making of bodies such as SRCâ\200\231s. We urge students to support any struggle for democratic representation, and where a branch or SRC exist to participate actively towards building and strengthen-ing student unity.

#### Education Charter

Struggles against a gutter ratist education in SA have a long history. Since 1952 demands and grievances of the people for a democratic education have not been met.

Azaso and Cosas are spearheading an Education Charter Campaign whose aim is to collect the education demands of the people. â\200\230This EdCC is importantâ\200\231, as the past president of Azaso, Simphiwe Mgoduso, said, â\200\230it gives direction â\200\224 where we are moving to, what our short- and long-term demands are.â\200\231

Through the EdJCC we must be able to build a lasting relationship with out parents and forge close alliances with other democratic organisations.

We urge students to participate in this campaign and popularise and collect demands from a broad section of our population.



MEDUNSA

UNIVE

Billy Ramakgopa - PRESIDENT OF AZASO

MANGOSUTHU  
SETLOGELO TECH.

B  
e of Action  
. June 16.  
) Our programme also includes commemorating im-

portant days of our struggling people. Sharpeville, June  
16, Freedom Day, Heroes Day are important to link us

with the masses.

a paid public holiday for the workers.

General

| this significant move by students.

â\200\231 The Botha-Malan white minority regime has declared a  
state of emergency with the sole purpose of attempting  
to stop the tide of change in SA. Many people have been  
detained and Azaso has been affected. Our students in  
colleges such as Soweto College have also been

| detained. It is important to take this step by Botha as a  
challenge to us.

it is important for us as students to think seriously  
whether the time has not come for us to demand that  
: June 16 be made a public holiday as a tribute to gallant  
! students who fell in 1976 and as a recognition of the  
â\200\2305 contribution of the students in the liberation struggle.  
Our trade unions have demanded that June 16 be made

Students are often victims of academic terrorism  
i whereby they are failed by certain lecturers. Students  
" have taken this challenge and presently this struggle is

! spearheaded by students at Universities of Venda,  
! Medunsa, Turfloop and Soweto College. Azaso supports

As a national organisation Azaso has a duty to respond to  
various issues. Consultation and the need for co- |  
ordination makes it necessary for various forums to be

enacted. The Annual Congress, the General Student  
Council, National Regional and Branch meetings meet  
this need.

Azaso also provides the necessary skills which can be  
used to develop democratic movement in the country.

( FREEDOM CHARTER

The People, shall govern  
Equal Rights to all

National groups

All the people shall share  
the country's wealth

The land shared among all  
the people

Equality for all before the law  
Equal Human Rights for all  
Work and security for all

Free compulsory equal  
education for all

Adequate food, clothing and  
housing for all

Peace and friendship among all  
the people of South Africa

The only road fo freedom

Get to know Azaso!

Azaso is a national student organisation representing all Black students at colleges, technikons and universities, It was formed in December 1979.

Before we can discuss the importance of Azaso let us begin by asking: Why is Azaso a national student organisation?

You might have heard of SRC's or Black Student Society. These organisations have been formed because students have recognised that they have many common problems. These problems include housing, food, victimisation by lecturers, transport, etc. It is better for these problems to be tackled under one organisation instead of each individual struggling on his/her own. That is why we have SRC's and BSS's.

Similarly there are some problems that are COMMON to all students in SA. To handle these problems effectively we need to have a forum which we can use to share ideas and experiences, and to develop an approach to these problems. Azaso as a national student organisation acts as such a forum.

Azaso has thus been created to:

- provide a forum for students from all parts of SA where ideas and experiences can be exchanged;
- unite all black students in SA;
- co-ordinate the struggles of students for a democratic education system;
- be the voice of students both nationally and internationally;
- link students with the broader struggles for democracy.

Our policy is non-racialism and democracy. To us non-racialism means that we will work with any person or organisation whose aim and approach does not clash with Azaso's policy. But why is Azaso an organisation for Black students only? Well, people form organisations to fight problems that are common to them. As black

students we face problems that are specific to us only and we are the people who understand how we can solve these problems. By a democratic approach we mean that Azaso takes into account the views of all students. This means that all students are capable of contributing to the direction and advancement of Azaso.

What has Azaso done?

As noted Azaso was formed at Pietermaritzburg in 1979. When the boycotts of 1980 began Azaso was still very young and had not spread to many campuses.

The first president of Azaso was Tom Nkoane who was succeeded by Joe Phaahla in 1981. Under the leadership of Joe Phaahla Azaso began a qualitative process of becoming a student organisation.

In the pre-1981 period the students organisations COSAS and AZASO were largely involved in community issue and as a result within schools and campuses they

were not strong. In 1982 Azaso decided to focus increasingly on the education issues and the theme "Education Towards Democracy" was adopted. This theme clearly confirmed students' belief that education should prepare us for a non-racial, non-exploitative democratic SA. The present education system is racist and undemocratic.

1982 saw Azaso asserting itself as a national student organisation. This became clear during the Anti-Sebe Demonstration in May 1982. Students at Fort Hare demonstrated against the presence of Sebe in the campus. Students believed that Sebe as a Bantustan leader of Ciskei was promoting the division of Blacks and therefore of apartheid itself. Bantustan leaders are in fact puppets of the white minority regime. Several students were shot during the demonstration and many were arrested. Azaso called for a national day of solidarity for 11 May. The response was widespread with some campuses holding protest meetings while others boycotted lectures for that day.

At its 3rd Annual Congress in 1982 Joe Phaahla was re-elected the president. Also important in this congress was the decision by Azaso to embark on a campaign for an Education Charter. This campaign has served as the necessary impetus which provided Azaso with an access not only to students but also to form links with the community. In December 1982, COSAS, at its congress also adopted the Education Charter Campaign. Although this campaign has not been folded demands

from both the students and community have been

forthcoming. It is important that the Education Charter must contain the demands of the majority of the people  
RSN

By the end of 1982 Azaso had been able to establish itself in all major SA universities where Blacks are students, and progressive development was beginning to be made with regard to colleges "beginning with Cape College of Education and Mabopane Technikon.

The development of progressive organisations was taking a new turn in SA. More and more organisations saw the necessity of the importance of grass-root support. Many youth and civic organisations emerged. In the same years Congress held in Cape Town in July 1983 Azaso adopted the Freedom Charter as its programme of action. It was the confirmation of our belief that national oppression and exploitation Blacks suffer daily from are socio-economic problems that result from an unjust political system. It was further a realisation on our part that although the focus of students struggles are on education, education itself forms part of the system and can only be democratic if SA is totally transformed.

Unity and struggle are the pre-conditions for victory

Azaso answered this demand for unity in action with

other organisations by becoming the first organisation to affiliate to UDF. The launching of the UDF was



historically a qualitative mark in the liberation struggle in SA - it seriously affected the balance of forces in favour of the people. The division which the National Party government sought to create between Africans, Coloureds and Indians had to be challenged - hence UDEF.

#### Ngoye Massacre

By the end of 1983 Azaso was firmly established. In the same year following the murdering of students by Gatsha's impi at Ngoye our organisation played an important role on educating the people what Gatsha is and what he stands for.

in the same year Azaso had begun to consolidate itself in Ngoye. More and more students were participating in Azaso lectures, meetings and activities. Political education about the nature of SA and the role of puppets such as Gatsha Buthelezi occupied the centre of our branch at Ngoye.

All these things became asong at Ngoye; students began to clearly understand Gatsha!

Seeing the erosion of support Gatsha organised a tribal function at Ngoye for October under the pretext that it was Cetshwayo's Celebration. Students opposed this and requested the Ngoye not to permit this. The plea of students was ignored. On the 19 October Inkatha invaded the campus with 1000's of impi. Five students were killed and many wounded. But this did not kill Azaso in the campus.

Because of the correctness of our approach the ranks of Azaso swelled and the majority of students seriously began to question Gatsha. For a puppet like Gatsha this was serious indeed.

Gatsha Buthelezi had opposed the release of Mandela in 1980 and had sent Inkatha's impi to terrorise students at Kwa-Mashu who were peacefully protesting against Bantu Education in 1980. In the same year he had also opposed the strike of Ladysmith community against the increase of bus fares. Above all, Gatsha was a state witness in the trial of Dorothy Nyembe who was subsequently sentenced to 15 years.

In 1984 Azaso had firmly established itself as one of the forces standing in the van of the liberation in SA. Azaso and Cosas in August launched 'No Poll Campaigns' against tri-cameral parliament and called on the students to boycott classes on the 22 and 28 August these days being election days. :

These are some contributions that Azaso has made since its formation. This year is 1985 and the call we have to answer is to 'Organise for a People's Education' by working tirelessly for the completion of the EdCC; challenge the Exclusion Bill that is designed to academically terrorise students, demand democratic SRC's and the expulsion of racist lecturers.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

Turf and Medunsa have been leading in a campaign for the expulsion of racist lecturers who academically terrorise students by failing them. To consolidate their demands students in both these campuses have been boycotting classes.

In Turfloop already Prof Van Warmelo who was a lecturer in Roman Law has been withdrawn from classes.

Meanwhile some of the demands of students at Turf have not been met and the University has arrogantly threatened to close the university should the students boycott lectures when the University reopens on the 5th August.

Students of Turf also sent telexes to the Minister of Law and Order, Le Grange, demanding that the police should not come into the campus as this is annoying, and is not conducive to peace.

At the University of Venda, Western Cape and Soweto College of Education students have been boycotting classes with demands for the expulsion of racist lecturers.

At the University of Venda, hostels have been closed following demonstrations on campus.

### Soweto College of Education

In a demonstrative step students on this college are boycotting classes until the Interim SRC Committee members have been released from detention. For years the students in this college have demanded a democratic SRC. Recently the students incorporated the demand that certain white lecturers who are victimising students should be expelled.

### Fort Hare

After a month-long boycott of lectures students here have tactically retreated back to classes pending the redress of their demands that the Chief Security Campus Controller, Geyer, who shot a student, be expelled. Students here are still fighting for democratic representation.

### Cape College of Education ,

Victimisation of students at the college is the order of the day. Some student leaders were excluded from college early this year, and as a result students staged a solidarity boycott. The college authorities decided to expel more than 150 students. Recently the victimised students say they have been approached by DET officials who promised them that they will be taken back on condition that, inter alia, they stop being members of Azaso and the SRC. Many students have refused this offer as being tantamount to selling out. 7



## Forward to Education Charter

It is of note that the progress of the Education Charter Campaign is not impressive. Out of the reports given at Congress, it was clear that not all Azaso branches had done enough on the campaign. This has tended to pose many problems in terms of uniformity. The region of the Western Cape for instance has not even launched the campaign; and whilst regions like the Transvaal and Eastern Cape are affected by the State of Emergency. The Emergency means that we have to reassess our priorities and objectives in terms of our Organisation and the campaign itself. It is also clear on the other hand that we see the EACC as our major campaign for the year and therefore our commitment needs to be doubled whether an emergency exists or not. Obviously, we will need to be very careful in the manner we handle the campus situation at these difficult times.

It is also of importance and very encouraging to say that the Education Charter has finally taken root in the OFS. The campaign was launched in Bloemfontein, Mangaung on the 27 July 1985 after hard work by Cosas, Azaso, Mangaung Parents Action Committee, Mangaung Youth Congress, SAAWU, CCAWUSA and RAWU. 1

We need to remember also that the National Education Charter Campaign Co-ordinating Committee has decided that the collection of demands must commence as soon as possible depending on the conditions at various places. As Azaso, we need to intensify our program to educate our members and the students in general about the Education Charter Campaign at local, regional and other levels.

## Regional Councils

As our organisation grows in many campuses and spreads to other colleges it is important that a forum be created that will facilitate communication between various branches. This is necessary if Azaso is to be able to consult and co-ordinate its activities. Regional Councils become important in this respect.

We urge our various Regional Councils to strengthen themselves and facilitate the growth of Azaso to other colleges.

## Annual Congress

In a recent Annual Congress of Azaso held at Alan Taylor

in July a new National Executive Committee was elected. The NEG consist of Billy Ramakgopa (President, UNB), Bongani More (Vice-President, Rhodes), Chris Ngcobo (Secretary, Wits), Mcebisi Jonas (Additional Member Vista, PE), Moeti Mpuru (Corresponding Secretary, Turf), Pascal Moloi (Minutes Secretary, Vista, Soweto) and Sipho Cele (Treasurer, UDW). Many resolutions were passed. A resolution was passed rejecting and demanding that the Exclusion Bill be withdrawn, and

. another which condemned SADF destabilization of

Southern Africa.

AZASO Newsletter is edited by Chris Ngcobo and produced by Black Students Society each of 1 Jan Smuts Avenue, Johannesburg.

The views and opinions expressed do not purport to be those of the Council or the Students Representative Council of the

What should be done? |

• Form local committees of the EACC if they do not exist.

• Strengthen those that exist and continue the work on the campaign by popularising the campaign, and linking it with our demands.

• Start collecting demands wherever the conditions allow. ==

• Form area committees with progressive organisations around your campus and initiate area activities.

• Involve as many people as possible in your campus teachers, students, etc.

All demands must be collected by the end of October and mid November.

We must take the challenge therefore, to campaign vigorously for the realisation of the Education Charter. No more theorising will bring us closer to the demands of our people. '

Women in Azaso

• In our Azaso conference it was resolved that more attention should be given to the participation of women within Azaso and that the NEC urges all our branches to look seriously at this question in order to develop a greater understanding of the role of women in the NDS.

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. NEWS INBRIEF

Azaso Trial

An Azaso Trial was postponed to a later date by the Magistrate. This trial follows the Demonstration held in American Consulate office in Johannesburg against constructive engagement of Reagan on May 1st. Azaso sees the constructive engagement of Reagan Adminis-

tration as only wanting apartheid, which the world has declared against humanity, for the Botha regime.  
-Investment in our view is for apartheid.

UDW (Durban Westville)

After the SRC and Azaso was banned in 1983 in this campus elections for SRC were held this year. All the people on the SRC are Azaso members.

Halt the Death Squads!

Azaso branches in UDW, UNB, and Howard College staged a demonstration in Durban streets against the state of emergency and the brutal assassination of Mrs Mxenge. Her husband was also assassinated in 1981. The latest assassination follows the mysterious murdering of Goniwe, Mhlowuli, Calata and Mkhonto in Cradock. UDF has correctly summed up of these assassinations as

â\200\230a cold calculated assassinationâ\200\235 aimed at crippling the UDF.

University of the Witwatersrand