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LUNCHEON WITH THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, ITALY
THE HON. MR. IVO BUTINI AND AMBASSADOR MARCO MARESCA,
HEAD: BUREAU OF AFRICAN AFFAIRS

- Statement by Mangosuthu Buthelezi
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Mr. Deputy Minister, Ambassador Marco Maresca, ladies and gentlemen. You will all probably be aware that Rome has been here for quite some time! We have the commonly used English expression: "All roads lead to Rome." I am very pleased that my road has led to Rome. It is to me gratifying that at this exciting juncture of South African history; I can talk about what is happening to create

a new democracy and a new South Africa to people in this ancient -

city which goes back to mankind's first real experiences of putting together all the ingredients out of which modern democracy and civilisation are fashioned. :F

South Africa is virtually on the verge of epoch-making breakthroughs in social, economic and political developments. We are doing more than just putting our South African house in order. We are breaking away from patterns of human behaviour which so many in the world have regarded as immutably fixed.

We are going to show that an oppressed majority can put: a new

society together under a new democratic government, without rancour -

and without demanding revenge. In terms of past international experience, we could justify Nuremberg-type political trials after apartheid has been eradicated. There will be no such trials.. There will only be the laying of blame on apartheid and there will only be an invitation for all to show how wrong apartheid was by living together as one people, in one land-who share but one destiny. : j

Apartheid has been awesomely hideous for a very long time and there were those who were so enraged by it and so angered by the monolithic powers which successive National Party governments built around themselves that they wanted to kill and destroy. The more people objected to apartheid, the worse it got until in the end South African Governments amassed around themselves batteries of Draconian laws which made apartheid the most hideous systematic form of oppression ever known : ;

Then also in the end there was a great divide among the oppressed between those like me and my followers who looked at the world and saw that those who lived by the sword in opposition to oppression turn to rule by the sword after oppression has been banished. There are those like me who looked at the Third World and saw that political victories which ended up dividing society and left nations without the national will to make democracy work were not worth having. There were those like me who saw that political victories in the Third World which were won at the expense of economic development led to spreading mass poverty becoming a mortal enemy of democracy.

That is on one side of the divide. On this side we sought to bring about change by bridging the chasms that apartheid produced to divide society and to constitutionally compartmentalise human beings into race groups. On this side of the divide, we insisted on using non-violent means of achieving political ends and we insisted on constituency politics with a market-place idiom. We saw economics and politics as two sides of the same human progress coin which would be useless with either side defaced.

On the other side of the great divide there were the revolutionaries and all those who were pushed beyond the pale of human endurance who wanted to lash out and kill. On this side of

the divide, there were all kinds of rationalisations about the need -

to kill for political purposes. There were claims that non-violent tactics and strategies would never succeed. There was the claim that the South African White leopard would never change his spots and that White minority racist governments never ever dismantle their political support systems voluntarily. There was, they said,

a just war to be fought. % B

A great attack was made on apartheid by both these sides. An armed struggle was mounted. Internal democratic opposition to apartheid was pursued. And there was a veritable race to see who would get to victory first. : : :

That race has now been run and won and against all expectations of people around the world and international governments, a white State President in South Africa has begun to dismantle the support systems that past white racist governments built around themselves. Reform is taking place in South Africa and it is taking place with a South African Government participating in it:

The State President's address to Parliament last year set in motion a vast train of political events, but they were events which continued to take place with the great divide still there in Black politics. Revolutionaries wanted to do what revolutionaries always have done throughout history - fight until they became the undisputed power in a country and took over government. The world over, revolutionaries have never fought for the right of others to form governments in a multi-Party democracy

That could well now be happening in South Africa. The African National Congress has always dominated on the one side of the great divide in black politics and Inkatha Freedom Party--"has always dominated on the other side. They were the two great adversaries in a South African struggle to define what kind of a society we are going to end up developing and what kind of a social and economic - system we would have.

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Revolutionaries attacked, attacked and attacked again and spread the idiom of violence in p0llthS as far:and as wide as they could. In the terrible clashes that took place, more than 8 000 people have died since 1984. Those are the kind of casualty figures one would normally *alk about in.situations of full-scale war.

Now we are beginning to put together the final South African act which again is going to lead to the unexpected. Inkatha Freedom Party and the African National Congress came together in a long and . gruelling all-day debate on the 29th January this year.

We ended up strikihg accords and agreements. That meeting â\200\230between the two black political Parties-which dominate in politics, was as

historic as Mr. de Klerkâ\200\231s February 2 address last year which set -

the whole South African democratic ball rolling.

There are historically new things taking place in South Africa. We are breaking new ground in this era in which vast global changes are taking place. There is something in the air of mankind which we and East Europe are pulling down to earth. There lis a new spirit abroad in the whole of Southern Africa in which we are participating.

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Namibia is free and it is not a freedom won through the barrel of a - gun. South Africa will be free and it will not be freedom won through the barrel of a gun. In Mocambique and Angola the freedom that was won through the barrel of a gun led to political disputes. about who should govern and how governments should govern which have been pursued through the barrel of a gun.

This must not happen- in South Africa. Revolutionaries and peace-loving democrats must now come together and they must stay together. This is in fact -what. is beginning to happen. Revolutionaries are .talking to government and are talking to Inkatha Freedom Party The Inkatha Freedom Party in turn is talking - to government and to revolutionaries. The Government in turn makes this a three-way process. e

The real issues now revolve around what kind of a democratic constitution < we are going to have. There are two different approaches to this. Again, there is the great divide around this question that there was between the acceptance and rejection of the armed struggle.

Erstwhile revolutionaries who are now prepared to lay down their arms are demanding a constitution in which the democratic struggle is a struggle to become the winner who takes all. The Harare Declaration can be made out to be many things. What it is in cold political reality is a formulation for: all-or-nothing politics. The ANC wants all-or-nothing politics in which it will have the greatest possible chance of dominating politically. In fact it intends, if possible, to avenge around itself if it became the government the kind of support which will put it where it will only be one step away from a one-Party State that it has actually sought to establish for the past 25 years. The Deputy President of the ANC, interviewed last week by Donald Woods for the BBC, stated that the ANC is not a political party but a Government-in-waiting. This . Just about sums up their real position and intentions in relation to seizing power.

The ANC wants to establish a Constituent Assembly as a forerunner to an interim government and for them the prime purpose of politics is the generation of the circumstances in which the South African - Government actually abdicates in favour of a political system which the ANC controls. ,

I, Inkatha Freedom Party and a great many others say No to this. We are, in fact, not saying No to the prospects of the ANC forming a government. On that question I always say the people will in the end decide who will govern them and I will rest with what the people say.

My objection to a Constituent Assembly and an interim government runs much deeper than any Party political issue could run. I say .- we must develop the will to form a democracy and to maintain it. And . thereafter we must end up with the will to make democracy meaningful to the people by bending every national source and making every national effort to generate the amounts of wealth that any government of the future will need to effectively reduce the vast backlogs that there are in housing, education, health and welfare and everything essential to Black individual, family and community life, "

We must bridge the racial gaps to establish this national will and we must ensure that races are reconciled while we are busy finally dismembering apartheid and throwing its pieces away. We must deal with the fear factor in White society. There is a growing White backlash to the reform politics of the South African State President. Some of the right-wing political Parties have already taken on a militarist form o -

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To pursue the kind of victories that majorities in fact can win simply because they can force the victories, would leave South Africa with a terrible aftermath of violence and destruction. : 3 say that South Africa is different to Mocambique, Angola and other African countries. Its Whites are African. They are entrenched in very strategic places. White society is highly militarised. - Whites have mobility and have communication systems which Renamo and UNITA could only dream of in Mocambique and Angola.

A South African White right-wing backlash bent upon destroying a Black government at any cost could do awesome damage. They would make the worst that has happened in Mocambique and Angola look like child's play. \ .

It is success at the negotiating table and evidence of real compromises being made that will pull the rug from beneath the right-wing feet. = We say that we should negotiate a new constitution into being and make the change after we know what kind of constitution we are going to have. The ANC wants to make the change now before South Africans even know what kind of constitution the ANC has in mind for them. :

What amounts to political pious statements now do not amount to very much at all. Whites will give up racial privilege and they will make the transition to a democracy if we can do it in an orderly manner and make the kind of compromises from all sides which will be evidence of a Black majority not intending to be brutal in its power. - :

We need real international support for the democratic process in which we can achieve the reconciliation we are going to so. desperately need in time to come. The world can rest assured that

apartheid is totally doomed and it can back the politics of -

reconciliation because we now do not have to take -the most desperate measures possible in democracy to ensure that a fair and just society emerges. We need to strip the Central Government of even a great many of the powers of government that are found in Europe and North America. We need the devolution of power and we need checks and balances which will not be found in all- or nothing politics.