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ZISA background paper on the ANC meeting with SA rugby officials

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THERE has been a/lot of confusion about the motives and 1 T
integrity of the African National Congress in meeting th

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bosses of %i;;; SOuth African rugby in Harare %#\$%\$%ggt#\$gi%hth .3

Some of this confusion stems from misinformed reporting and
comment. _

On the other hand the Pretoria regime would be delighted if the
'ANC, the initiator' of the international cultural and sports
1 boycotts of South Africa, lost support in theSe and other areas.
.The go-between for the talks was Tommy Bedford, a majorlforcetih
the movement for non-racial sport in South Africa at all levels
including schools, facilities and coaching.

The first meeting, between Transvaal rugby administrator Louis
qut inftiiiiiwfitand the ANC (Craven was ill) was in Frankfurt
a-ie&iggiths-ago. There were full discussions, and Luyt said his
SA Rugby Board accepted that rugby had to be freed of apartheid.
Also accepted was an ANC stipulation that the SARB and the
non- racial SA Rugby Union should merge uh 3er a new national,
non- racial rugby administration. omunk 9%,qud Jo

The SARU also met the ANC, in Lusaka, W/both bodies s-e-n-tghdi?
delegates to the joint meeting in Harare with the ANC.

Agreed at that meeting was the following:

1 The two boards will merge under one national, non-racial
rugby body.

2 They shall set up an implementing/co-ordinating committee to
achieve non-racial rugby at all levels, including schools. This
will involve making the far superior facilities of the SARB
available to all rugby players at all levels throughout the
country.

3 IThe SARB will use its considerable influence (rugby is a
second religion for Afrikaners)'to bring the agreement into force.

4 The next full SARB board meeting, involving the adminis-
trators of all the provinces, will be On November 11. Some
conservatives may break away but Craven is confident the majority
will join himself, Luyt, and the SARU under Ebrahim Patel in
the merger. . I '3

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6 All people of goodwill should support the merger process. The ANC acted as a mediator at the Harare meeting, but at the same time it was very much an interested party. Non-racial rugby up to national level is politically important. It will further undermine the regime if the white rugby community turns against apartheid. And, by implication, the white rugby bosses will be joining the broad democratic movement in South Africa. But even if all the goals agreed in 1983 Harare are achieved, South African rugby will not see itself back in international rugby the following day. The SARB must be seen to have played its part in achieving non-racial rugby at all levels, including the sharing with all of its generously-subsidised facilities. Sports Minister F.W. de Klerk's threat to withdraw SARB subsidies for meeting the ANC underlines two things:

- 1 The control the government has over white sport, and
- 2 The fact that non-racial sport receives no state subsidies.

The ANC's Chief Representative in Harare, Cde Stan Mabizela, says the new rugby body (Cosatu commitment to non-racialism, and he points out Cosatu was recently welcomed in Tanzania. Cde Mabizela recalled that white rugby began its cosmetic moves to include blacks at national level only after the ANC-initiated sports boycott started biting. Whites now begin to fight for what is right, they need to be encouraged, " he says. "The huge turnout of white South Africans at the recent human rights concert in Harare was attributable largely to the cultural boycott we began - they are starved of entertainment. Many came only because of the star line-up; Cde Mabizela also said the ANC is surprised that some quarters the ANC has been lectured, as though it does not what it is doing politically. I v "The rugby issue is part of the broad-political work of whittling away white support for the regime. We mobilise only around concrete issues, and this is one of them. , "We are surprised that those who may not understand the South African situation as well as we do are telling us what to do. "It should be remembered that our people in South Africa are black and white. We are at war with the regime, but we are not at war with our own people;"

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