

Joint Communiqué of the Meeting of the African National Congress and the National Union of South African Students

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Delegations of the National Union of South African Students and the African National Congress met in Harare from the 30th March to the 1st of April, '86. The delegations were composed of the president of Nusas and representatives of the Universities of Cape Town, Natal (Durban and Pietermaritzburg), Rhodes, Stellenbosch and Witwatersrand, and a representative of the South African Students' Press Union on the one hand, and two members of the National Executive Committee of the ANC, representatives of ANC Youth and Students on the other.

The meeting took place at the request of Nusas acting on the mandate of students at each of the university campuses, on the basis that there would be no solution to South Africa's problems without the participation of the ANC which is recognised by the majority of the South African people as their genuine representative.

The ANC appreciated the significance of, and the democratic manner in which, the decision to meet the ANC was taken. The meeting discussed a whole range of issues pertinent to the solution of the crisis in our country. The discussions were in the main guided by the questions and concerns posed and expressed by students at the campuses represented. The delegations agreed that apartheid is the central cause of conflict in our country and that the Pretoria government is incapable of resolving South Africa's problems. Apartheid cannot be reformed. As such, the creation of a united non-racial and democratic South Africa on the basis of one person, one vote lies in the hands of the democratic forces of our country.

The delegations reviewed the educational crisis and came to the conclusion that this crisis can only be resolved through establishment of a non-racial, non-militaristic and democratic educational

system which will be realised through struggle. This forms part of the efforts to secure a peaceful and prosperous future for all South Africans, black and white.

The meeting expressed concern at the ongoing militarisation of our society, the use of brute force in a vain attempt to quell popular resistance, the continued occupation of Namibia and destabilisation of neighbouring countries by the apartheid state. In this respect, the call by Nusas and other democratic organisations for the withdrawal of troops from the townships and for an end to conscription was seen as an important contribution to the overall efforts of the democratic movement for a peaceful future.

Both organisations agreed that one of the major objectives of the moment is to secure the unconditional release of all political prisoners and detainees including Nelson Mandela.

The ANC outlined its strategy and tactics and explained the central role of armed struggle as a means of defending the people and advancing the struggle for the seizure of power by the democratic majority. The ANC further emphasised the need to mobilise all the people of South Africa for united mass political action against the apartheid regime.

The delegations agreed that the real interests of the majority of white South Africans do not lie in the system of racial domination and national oppression. Both were at one that white South Africans have an important role to play now in the endeavour to achieve a non-racial and democratic society. In this respect Nusas has an important contribution to make within its constituency and as part of the national democratic movement.

The meeting was held in a cordial atmosphere, with a positive and productive interchange of ideas.