

Albertina Sisulu

Known as "Ma Sisulu", Albertina Sisulu has been a stalwart of the liberation struggle for over 40 years. She was first arrested in 1958 for taking part in an ANC Women's League demonstration. In jail she was separated from her 10 month old daughter and in 1963 her husband Walter was imprisoned for life. Since then she has been either "banned" or imprisoned, for some time in solitary confinement and most recently whilst on trial with other members of the United Democratic Front of which she is co-president.

Harry Gwala

At the age of 66, veteran ANC and trade union activist Harry Gwala was recently released after serving 12 years of a life sentence. He has the terminal illness Motor Neurone Disease. Harry dismissed claims that his release was on humanitarian grounds, saying "I do not believe that the government suddenly had a so-called change of heart, it is because it realised peoples' pressure was intensifying".

Johnny Mashiane

Young Johnny Mashiane was tortured for two weeks while in detention with beatings

and electric shocks. As a result he now has brain damage and his speech is

slurred and indistinct.

SOUTH AFRICA - AN IMPRISONED SOCIETY

In South Africa
during the past
four years over

32,000 people have
been detained in
police custody.
Many of these
have been impris-
oned for over two
years without
being brought to
trial. Detainees are
tortured in various
ways, for example
by beatings, the
application of
electric shocks all
over the body
(including the
genitals), whip-
pings, sexual
assaults and rape
as well as
extensive mental
torture. Torture is
carried out on
children and
adults alike. Preg-
nant women are
detained and
tortured and have
had to give birth
under appalling
prison conditions.

South African laws
that allow the
police to hold
people in custody
without trial apply
to children as well
as adults. At least

15,000 children
have been detained
without trial since
the State of
Emergency was
imposed in 1985.
Children have died
in detention, some

have become so depressed they have committed suicide and children who have spoken publicly about their experiences have been sought out by the apartheid regime and murdered. In the 26 years of detention without trial there have been 68 deaths in detention. The apartheid regime

refuses to accept the Geneva Protocols and give captured combatants of the liberation movement prisoner-of-war status, whereas the ANC is a signatory to the Protocols of the Geneva Convention.

Currently at least 60 people await execution on death row. The unjust concept of "common purpose" is used by the regime to convict an individual by claiming that they shared the "purpose" of a group of people who committed a "crime", even without evidence of that individual

having been at the scene of the incident. The regime has kidnapped people and brought them to

trial, an example is the case of Ebrahim Ismail Ebrahim who was kidnapped from Swaziland. South African law can "ban" people, restricting them to their house or close neighbourhood and prohibits them from meeting with more than two people at a time. Banned people cannot be quoted in newspapers and people can be banished to a remote area.

This is South Africa - an imprisoned society.

David Bruce

In July 1988, 24 year old David Bruce was sentenced to six years imprisonment for refusing to serve in the South African army. He says he is an "ordinary guy" who despite having known the privileges enjoyed by white South Africans, felt he had to set himself against a system which relegates others "to the status of second class citizens and which denies them their own humanity".

Rivonia

Leading figures of the liberation movement were sentenced to life imprisonment at the Rivonia Trial in 1964. Those still incarcerated are Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Raymond Mhlaba, Andrew Mlangeni, Elias Motsoaledi and Ahmed Kathrada. ANC President Oliver Tambo says, of them: "I am convinced that the world-wide protests during the Rivonia Trial saved the accused from a death sentence....the sentences they serve are a searing reminder that such men must not be wasted behind bars".

A personal message from Mendi Msimang, ANC Chief Representative, UK and Ireland.

"We who are outside the imprisoned society that is South Africa have a special responsibility to help prise open the prison doors. We can ensure that those locked away by the cruel system of apartheid are not alone and we can shine some light on the horrific practices that are taking place behind the bars.

Will you work with us to gain freedom for all our people? Together we can alert the world to the dreadful circumstances of the prisoners, and with your help they will know that when the prison door slams behind them they are not alone and not forgotten.

What can you do to help the prisoners, to relieve them of their suffering? On behalf of our people I ask you to help them now by taking action today to "Break the Bars of Apartheid".

-Write to the South African State President at Union Buildings, Pretoria 0001, South Africa. Demand from him the unconditional release of all detainees and political prisoners.

- Write to the Minister for Foreign Affairs the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London SW1A 2AH, urging the British government to intervene in South Africa, to help stop the despicable acts perpetrated by the apartheid regime and for the dismantling of apartheid.

- Write to your own MP and MEP, asking them to bring attention to the terrible situation that exists for those incarcerated in South Africa's prisons.

- Alert your friends, family and colleagues to the "Break the Bars" Campaign. Please fill in the enclosed card so that we can be sure of keeping them informed of developments.

- Put your "Break the Bars" sticker somewhere where others will see it, to draw their attention to the desperate plight of political prisoners and detainees.

- Support a prisoner, detainee or banned person. Write to us and we will put you in touch with a prisoner or their family who would really like to hear from you.

Send a donation today to "Break the Bars", ANC, P.O.Box 38,28, Penton

Street,
London N1 9PB.

Let us show all those who are unjustly imprisoned in South Africa that they are not alone".

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