

* free political activity in all parts of the country, including KwaZulu, Ciskei, Bophuthatswana, QwaQwa and right-wing controlled towns;

* socio-economic problems including soaring food prices, housing and workers' rights.

Detailed announcements on the programme will be made in due course.

The NEC emphasised that the objectives advanced by the ANC on peace and democracy enjoy the support of the overwhelming majority of South Africans, black and white. Millions of South Africans, across the board, view with deep concern the NP regime's refusal to take urgent and practical steps to deal with the violence and create the necessary conditions for the unfolding of a democratic constitution-making process. We call on all these forces, regardless of political affiliation, to exert as much pressure as possible on the NP regime to take the necessary steps to facilitate the transition to democracy.

The meeting reviewed the recent recommendations of the United Nations Secretary General as well as the resolutions of the UN Security Council. We welcome these recommendations and decisions as important achievements for the people of our country. We hope that practical implementation will begin in the near future. The NEC also welcomes recent announcements by the National Peace Committee and the Goldstone Commission aimed at strengthening these structures and ensuring their effectiveness in combatting violence.

The National Executive Committee considered and adopted for discussion by our membership, allies and the public at large a Transition to Democracy Act which would serve as a constitutional framework for the transitional period, pending the adoption of a new constitution by a Constituent Assembly.

The meeting received a report from the ANC Secretary General on his contact with the regime's Minister of Constitutional Development. The NEC agreed unanimously that the responses of the regime to the ANC's demands are unsatisfactory on the key issues of violence and the release of

political prisoners. The NP government still lacks the political will to take visible steps to stop the violence. Indeed, even while the NEC was in session, this violence continued to claim more black lives, including the assassinations in Southern Natal of two ANC branch chairpersons.

The NEC agreed that the regime must take immediate and visible steps to end the violence and to release all political prisoners. In particular, the NEC highlighted measures to prevent notorious hostels being used as bases for attacks against communities; the need for a complete, countrywide banning on the display of weapons in public; and the confinement to barracks of special forces. The National Working Committee of the ANC was mandated to monitor the situation and the still incomplete discussions with the regime, using the channel of communication that has been in operation.

The NEC also noted that, in its communications, the regime has now gone a long way towards accepting the idea of a democratic Constituent Assembly. It has now indicated its support for the following elements with regard to a Constituent Assembly, namely that it must:

- * be democratically elected;
- * draft and adopt the new constitution (implying that it should sit as a single chamber);
- * be bound only by general constitutional principles;
- * have a time frame;
- * have adequate deadlock-breaking mechanisms;
- * function democratically i.e. arrive at its decisions democratically with certain agreed majorities;
- * be elected within an agreed predetermined time period.

The NEC agreed that acceptance of these elements by the government - though still provisional - is an important achievement attained through the struggles of the people of our country.

However, without meaningful steps on the part of the government to deal with the violence and by way of releasing political prisoners, it would be pointless to resume negotiations.

We have come too far in the negotiations process for the people of our country to be lulled by continued government delay and double-speak.

We simply cannot accept their vague assurances that measures to be taken to curb the violence are "receiving further attention". We have learnt the hard way that such assurances from the De Klerk regime mean very little. The point is: visible and concrete steps must be taken immediately.

The ANC reiterates its commitment to the process of a negotiated settlement of our country's problems. We believe that the speedy resolution of these issues is in the true interest of our country and its people. The onus for making this possible rests with the regime.

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