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## *SANAM association / Standing Committee of NGOs*

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to: AWEPA Mr. Pieter Sluiter  
AAM's Mr. Fons Geerlings  
NGDO/EC Liaison Cie. Mr. Stan  
Bartholomeussen  
Kairos Mr. Eric vd Bergh  
fr: secretariat Standing Committee  
dd: December 12th, 1990  
re: up-date on EC policy review on SA;

### for urgent attention:

In the run up to the Summit of EC Heads of Government on December 14, 15 and 16, 1990, in Rome, the situation on the review of EC policies in relation to SA appears to be the following:

- 1) Mr. Nelson Mandela send a letter to all EC Heads of Government on December 6th, in which he writes: "My humble request to you, Prime Minister, and to the summit meeting, is that you postpone any decision on this matter (sanctions) until early in the new year. The summit meeting could perhaps find it within its power to direct a later meeting of Foreign Ministers in February or March to consider this issue and take decisions." He concludes his letter by writing: "We trust that you and the rest of your colleagues within the European Community will find it possible to accede to our request and postpone consideration of the issue of sanctions against apartheid South Africa, until we initiate discussion with you on this issue. We believe that it will then be possible to take the necessary decisions which will, among other things, help to encourage and reinforce the peace process within our country rather than complicate it." (Copy of letter available from secretariat upon request.)
- 2) At about the same time, Mr. Thabo Mbeki, briefed the EC ambassadors at the UN, about the ANC position, and mentioned that all obstacles to negotiations need to be cleared before a relaxation of sanctions can be considered. He mentioned specifically the repeal of the Group Areas Act, the Land Act, the Internal Security Act and the release of all political prisoners. President De Klerk has undertaken that these Act will be repealed when the South African parliament convenes at the beginning of February 1991. The EC ambassadors interpreted this information to mean that the ANC would agree with the lifting of sanctions from February.
- 3) The EC members states are divided in three camps on the issue of lifting sanctions:  
position 1: no change in the present position.  
Denmark and Ireland.  
position 2: in favor of an immediate relaxation of sanctions, in particular the sanctions introduced in 1986 (leaving the 1985 sanctions in place for the time being). These sanctions are:



- ban on new investment in South Africa;
- a ban on iron and steel imports into the EC from SA;
- a ban on the importation of gold coins from SA.

Countries which support this position are:

UK, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece.

position 3: in favor to announce relaxation of sanctions conditioned to the removal of the outstanding obstacles for negotiations. This position is supported by France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg.

- 4) The subject of the EC opening a technical office for 'on the spot' co-ordination of the Special Programme has been referred to to the Summit, and has in political terms been fully blown out of proportions. It has become part of the review of the EC policy. One of the issues at the table in Rome is the opening of an EC delegation following the clearance of the obstacles for negotiations. It appears that the EC does not want to wait with the opening of a delegation until a democratic government has been elected in South Africa. The meeting in Rome itself may give the go ahead for setting up a technical office as proposed by DG VIII, but the intention will be to upgrade such an office soon to a formal Delegation, and it is still possible that Vice-President Andriessen would want to attach a political representative to the technical office from the beginning.
- 5) Following a recent visit of an EC official to South Africa, there appears to have been a back-lash on the issue of the involvement of the EC ambassadors in the Special Programme. However, whether their role is to increase will depend very much on the decision-making on the subject in paragraph 4.
- 6) During their recent visit to Brussels, our South African partners have strongly appealed to the EC not to review its policy by taking the views of only one party in the peace process into account. This would destabilize the peace process. The EC was requested to postpone decision-making until both parties involved in the peace process give a clear signal, which is to be expected early next year. At the same time, the South African partners welcomed the opening of a technical office to provide professional developmental support, but opposed any diplomatic status to be attached to such an office, since it will be regarded as a 'backdoor' recognition of the apartheid government.
- 7) Although the division among the EC members states, and the full agenda's in Rome, may prevent a substantial policy change, there is reason for concern given the number of countries opting for position 2 (although Spain may still swing over the position 3) and the fact that opening an EC Delegation is back on the agenda. The Standing Committee of NGO's has requested the agencies in their network to lobby their Heads of Government not to review the EC policy towards South Africa until a clear signal from both parties in the peace process has been received. And secondly, to ask for endorsement of the opening of an EC technical office for development purposes without any diplomatic status attached.

secretariat Standing Committee,  
Brussels, December 12th, 1990.