

African National Congress

(SOUTH AFRICA)

Asian Mission

P. O. Box No. 758

F-68, Bhagat Singh Market

New Delhi - I

Representatives :

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M. Moolla

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A. Msimang

April 12, 1973.

Dear Friend,

Re: MESSAGES OF SOLIDARITY TO MR. MEWA RAMGOBIN

Beginning from April 19 and lasting for five days, Mr. Mewa Ramgobin shall be fasting as a protest and a means to highlight the plight of South Africans who have become victims of racist South Africa's many draconian and repressive measures.

Mr. Ramgobin, a South African of Indian origin, has been prominent in the anti-apartheid freedom struggle. He was the founder and former Chairman of the Committee for Clemency which sought amnesty for political prisoners in South Africa and also the Organising Secretary of the Phoenix Settlement Trust which was founded by Gandhiji. He is married to Gandhiji's grand-daughter. Placed under house-arrest and served with a second five-year banning order under the notorious Suppression of Communism Act which, inter alia, forbids him from attending any gathering of more than two persons or from taking part in the activities of a host of organisations - religious, cultural, education, sporting and political - he was also president-elect of the Natal Indian Congress. Through his fast Mr. Ramgobin aims to highlight the meaning and consequences of bannings, house-arrests, banishment and detention-without-trial, torture of political detainees and the ill-treatment of political prisoners many of whom are serving periods ranging from five years to life imprisonment in the country's gaols. Leading churchmen, academics, trade unionists, students organisations and prominent personalities have expressed their solidarity with the aims and objects of the fast.

In the context of a society where the rule of law has no meaning and opposition to inherently immoral, unjust and oppressive legislation is ruthlessly and brutally suppressed by a seemingly well-entrenched and well-organised Police State every expression and manifestation of dissent is to be welcomed. Mr. Ramgobin's fast should, therefore, be viewed against this background of intimidation,

fear and repression. His is an open act of defiance - a declaration of a man who refuses to submit to tyranny; a brave and courageous deed needing the support of all who oppose injustice, racism and human enslavement.

The ANC of S.A. calls upon friends and supporters in India and Asia to send cabled messages of solidarity to Mr. Ramgobin to strengthen his resolve and raise his morale during this trying period. As he cannot be quoted in South Africa in terms of the banning order imposed on him messages should please be addressed to:-

Mrs. Ela Ramgobin
Box 2875,
DURBAN, South Africa.

We would greatly appreciate receiving copies of messages forwarded.

With best wishes and fraternal greetings,

Yours for a free South Africa,

M. MOOLLA (Sgd.)
CHIEF REPRESENTATIVE
ANC of S. A. (Asian Mission)