

FIM/001/0004/23

FROM: ANC FINLAND, 100076,0131
TO: DIP, 100014,344
DATE: 29-Apr-93 at 10:27:24

SUBJECT: Support for elections from Trade Unions

Please fwd ff msg to Cde Terror Lekota of the Elections Commission.....

TO: CDE LEKOTA/ELECTIONS COMMISSION
FR: MOHAMED/C-REP, FINLAND
DT: 29/4/93

After the departure of the delegation I continued to meet other Unions with a view to broadening the effort to secure more support for our election campaign. I am, however running into some obstacles concerning the "We have to consult COSATU" refrain. You will recall in our meeting with the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions, this phrase also cropped up. My informants tell me that several officials within the Trade Union movement here are agitating that resources should be channeled to COSATU (a Trade Union federation) as has traditionally been the case and not the ANC (a political "party"). While all support to COSATU, which is part of the Alliance, is to be welcomed we must argue forcefully that it is the ANC which will be standing for elections and leading the electoral front.

Needless to say, these detractors are hiding their true motives behind the well-established policy framework of union-to-union solidarity as a priority in solidarity questions.

They appear to becoming bolder in their efforts because the Central Trade Union Federations of the other Nordic Countries (Sweden, Norway, and Denmark) and Holland, which together with Finland, have been strong backers of COSATU, appear to be moving in the direction of supporting only COSATU's efforts re the elections and not give anything directly to the ANC. I fear if the Finnish Central Organisation of Trade Unions moves in the same direction then most of its affiliates will do likewise and our plans to secure very large quantities of paper will come unstuck.

It is vital that the Elections Commission sits down with COSATU and work out a joint strategy as a matter of urgency on how Unions across the world are approached regarding the question of support for the elections. Unions here have direct and immediate contact with COSATU and its affiliates and I am led to believe that alternative projects (in line with the union-to-union solidarity imperative) are already being mooted. A clear and unambiguous signal from COSATU to Unions and Union Federations around the world that it is not standing for elections and that direct support to the ANC, in this special case, is vital and desirable. Such a message, as well as a more co-ordinated approach from the ANC and COSATU, will greatly assist our friends in the Unions here and elsewhere who are motivating for direct support to the ANC because they understand correctly the nature of the challenge facing us.

A high-level COSATU delegation is travelling to Geneva at the end of May for a meeting with Union Federations from around the world. All the Nordic federations will be there. The question of Union support for the elections and the issues I have raised above will be discussed. The meeting I am informed will be on the 31st of May.

I make a special plea that the Elections Commission meets COSATU beforehand and work out a common understanding on this question. Please communicate the results of your meeting to myself and other Missions.