

MEMORANDUM FOR PRESENTATION TO PRESIDENT
HOSNI MABURAK, PRESIDENT OF THE ARAB
REPUBLIC OF EGYPT AND CHAIRMAN OF THE OAU

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CAIRO : NOVEMBER 6, 1993

Mr President, I feel very honoured that you have invited me to Egypt and that you have set aside time for you and I to sit down together to talk about South Africa in the context of Southern Africa and Africa beyond. You, Sir, have been elected to the elevated position of President of the Organisation of African Unity at a very critical time, certainly in the evolution of the whole of Southern

Africa, but also at a time that is crucial to the whole of Africa.

My perception of Africa is that now is the time for statesmen to put our confidence together and to act on a vision in two halves - one half being a

vision of Africa coming to terms with what Africa must do to deal with

poverty, ignorance and disease and what Africa must do to establish continental security based on democracy in the continent. The other half of the vision is a vision of Africa transcending the difficulties that colonialism has thrust on it and stirring it out of its Third World status to claim global eminence as a continent.

Mr President, we start with enormous difficulties, but whenever I visit Western capitals I become intensely aware of the fact that in Europe and North America political parties fight their opponents, while in Africa political parties fight both their opponents and the devil himself.

There is a moral content in the struggle for democracy and economic development in Africa. This moral content will yet place Africa in global history in which great historic periods such as the Medieval Period, Age of Enlightenment, the Renaissance and the Industrial Revolution are mentioned in the same breath as the emergence of Africa as the pride of democracy and humanism, and the shaping of a world order in which all the people of the world can live together as equals in peace and harmony.

I have my own vision of a great commonwealth of Central and Southern African states which will cluster around the mineral backbone of Africa which

runs from Zaire in the north, through Zambia and through Zimbabwe and

Botswana, right through South Africa down to the Cape.

I have a vision of the great assets of South Africa seen in its developed and sophisticated financial control of banking systems, its technological development, its mining and industrial bases and its vast network of rail linkages, electricity supply grids and its highly developed modern harbours,

being thrown into sub-continental social and economic development schemes.

South Africa has to face a dual challenge to put itself in a position to play the role that I have for it in this vision. In the first place it will have to finally bury apartheid, which is now being done, and go on to establish a democracy. That is the first half of the challenge. The second half of the challenge is to overcome, not only the legacies of apartheid written in the hearts and minds of the country's privileged, but the legacies of hatred and violence written in the hearts and minds of the victims of apartheid.

There is no question about it - apartheid is dead. It is finished and there will never again be white minority racist domination. But, Mr President, Africa

abounds with examples of victory against colonialism and racism being no more than first phase victories in the longer, the more arduous struggle against poverty, ignorance and disease.

Africa has been witness to the newness of emancipated societies being mauled and tarnished by the lack of proper democratic organisation of societies after liberation. In all my political career I have never been judgemental about despots, and military dictators and the prevalence of one party states in Africa.

The OAU has championed the ANC as an internationally accredited organisation, and sees in it and in its leadership the same factors that they saw in UNIP with Dr Kaunda leading, in TANU with Dr Julius Nyerere leading, in MPLA with Dr Agostino Neto leading, in Frelimo with President Samora

Machel leading.

They also see the African National Congress to be what it proclaims itself to be - a government returning home from exile to take up the responsibility of doing what it wants to do to bring about change.

South Africa's industrialised base and the very high rate of present urbanisation is providing a backdrop to this perception of the pre-eminence of a liberation movement which is contained in the liberation model being applied to South Africa. And in this backdrop, from Western perception, there is the existence of COSATU and the dominance of ANC representation in Black trade unionism. There is in this perception a great proneness to believe ANC

propaganda.

Mr President, we are talking about Africa and its future, and we are talking about the role South Africa can play to help bring about that future. We dare not be wrong in perceptions -there is just too much at stake.

I ask you, Mr President, to listen to me with an open mind and consider the consequences of blundering now in South Africa. I ask this because I can not get people to think about the consequences of blundering - they do not think that there is blundering. At least, Mr President, they should be prepared to look at "what if" statements about the future of South Africa.

I am saying very categorically that the proposals that the South African Government and the ANC are making to the international community about an elected Constituent Assembly to become the Constitution Making Body, and about the role of the Transitional Executive Council in the transition from apartheid to democracy, are proposals that something like half of the future voters will reject.

In essence, Mr President, these proposals, so readily accepted by the international community, are proposals which will turn constitution writing into the booty or political prize that will accrue to the party that wins the election

under the constitution now being proposed. Whoever wins will face the reality that those who lost will reject the constitution the winning party writes.

We desperately need recognition for the fact that only a constitution adopted by consensus which leads to the people being governed in a way they are prepared to be governed, will bring democracy and stability to South Africa.

The present constitutional proposals will do no more than so polarise society in the present circumstances of violence that civil war will move from being a possibility to become a probability.

The present constitutional proposals, Mr President, aim to bring about what really will be a unitary state in which there is a degree of regionalism. The planned regionalism however will be no more than the regionalism that we had under the 1910 conceived provincial system. South Africa is a heterogenous society. The history of the USSR and Eastern Europe has shown that plural societies can not be forced into unitarian moulds. South Africa will never be stable under a unitary state constitution written by a victorious political party. Before the present round of negotiations began at the World Trade Centre, I made urgent appeals for the form of state issue to be tabled as the very first

item on the agenda. We needed to know, I argued, whether we are setting about writing a constitution for a unitary state or a federal state.

To this day there has not been a debate in the Negotiating Council about the kind of state that would best suit our circumstances. The negotiating process that did take place was, on the contrary, specifically designed to avoid that question. The strait-jacket into which negotiations were thrust were fashioned by the South African Government and the ANC outside of the negotiating chamber.

Understanding signed by Mr Mandela and Mr de Klerk on the 26th of April last year was a document which reflected only ANC and Government decisions. Between them they decided there should be a two-phase process, that there should be an election for a Constituent Assembly which will become the Constitution Making Body, that there would be a government of National Unity in which they would share in the executive responsibilities of government, and that there would be Deadlock Breaking Mechanisms in the constitution-making process.

These are the essential points of agreement now being fleshed out in the Negotiating Council. The whole negotiating process was no more than a process of endorsing these fundamental agreements between the Government and the ANC, and then fleshing out in negotiations to give them the appearance of multi-party legitimacy. We said no to this endorsement of bilateral decisions made outside of the negotiating process. We withheld our approval for the setting of an election before we reached any kind of finality of the drafting of a constitution, and we said an emphatic no to the whole process of confining negotiations to endorsing and fleshing out private ANC and South African

Government agreements.

The process however was so manipulated that our counter- proposals for a federal state were never even debated. We had to walk out, Mr President, to seek remedies for the maladies in the process from without. We walked out to intensify our negotiations in bilateral meetings in order to more effectively challenge what was going on.

The Negotiating Council then had the option of pausing to make sure that there would finally be a constitution adopted by multi-party consensus, or going on to keep the ANC/South African Government bilateralism the commanding factor in the negotiating process. The Government and the ANC chose to go on

without us, and they have now reached the final phase of their negotiation process which will have to be adopted by a Negotiating Council which is insufficiently representative to have the legitimacy to do so.

Mr President, during this whole process of negotiations, first through the CODESA experience, and then through the World Trade Centre experience, there has been a great re-alignment of South African politics taking place. That re-alignment was inevitable. In the unbanning of revolutionary organisations and the release of political leaders from jail, not only did a whole battery of hitherto precluded leaders enter the negotiating arena, but the parties already in

the arena had to make fundamental adjustments. It was, in fact, only the IFP in centre stage politics which did not have to make any major adjustments in policy options and in strategic options. The ruling National Party had to abandon apartheid and race discrimination, and the ANC had to abandon the armed struggle.

Both found themselves thrust into a virtual metamorphosis of their party structures as people in them took sides on issues. In the process that followed the now famous February 2 1990 address by the State President to Parliament, the State President has lost virtually his whole party political support base.

From being a party that had won every election for forty years, the National Party must now look forward to something like less than 10% of the future vote. At the very best the National Party can hope to win something less than one half of all the White votes, which together can only amount to 15% of the total votes. Blacks are not going to vote for the National Party, period.

What the split of votes will be between the ANC and the IFP will still have to be demonstrated. One thing is quite sure however, and that is that after the next elections, if they are held under a complete constitution, whoever wins, it will only be the IFP and the ANC who will dominate in subsequent elections.

They are the only parties who have deep roots on black society which will make up approximately 80% of the electorate. The responsibility will rest on the IFP and the ANC's shoulders to make democracy work. And yet the IFP is being regarded as being irrelevant in the process of achieving consensus about the future constitution. Not only is the IFP going to have to be drawn into implementing the new constitution, and not only is it essential that the IFP is involved in the new democracy to give it legitimacy, but the IFP has the

greatest cross sectional support any party has ever had in South Africa.

Mr President, I am not only vehemently opposed to a two-phase transitional process to democracy which will give a ruling party the opportunity to write the constitution that it most wants because it will most serve its own party political power advantages, but I vehemently oppose what is going on because I can see so clearly that the ANC/SAG proposals are going to solicit a very formidable White right wing backlash.

South Africa is highly militarised. There are, in white society, over 180 000 trained militia men with their own arms, transport facilities and communication facilities which will make the best elements in UNITA and RENAMO rank

Right from the beginning of CODESA I argued that we could not succeed if we continued to exclude parties from the right wing and the left wing of the political spectrum. It was the IFP which finally brought the Conservative Party to the Negotiating Council. After we left the Negotiating Council we went into bilateral negotiations with the Government and the ANC. When the CP broke away from those negotiations it was again the IFP which brought them back

into negotiations by their inclusion in the Freedom Alliance.

The reality of the matter is that with the metamorphosis of political parties, and the political re-alignment that has been taking place in the country, there are

now three major blocs or camps in South African politics - the ANC led Patriotic Front, the Freedom Alliance, and the South African Government and

National Party and the cluster of parties around them.

The official count is that there are 27 parties in the negotiating process - 26 parties in the Negotiating Council, and the Afrikaner Volksfront which was

recently formed. In fact these parties cluster in about three political camps.

The political reality is that all of these three fronts will be needed to implement any new constitution whoever writes it. All these three camps will be needed

to make democracy work after the constitution is implemented.

I will withhold my support from all constitutional proposals which do not gain the solid support of all these three camps. It is time now that the international community re-assessed the South African situation. As I said earlier, Mr President, I now ask the "what if" questions and request that answers to them

be examined with great care and diligence.

What will happen if the Government and the ANC have so painted themselves into a corner and have made such political investments in constitutional

proposals that will not work, that they can not get out of them?

What will happen if parties representing something like half of the future voting public say no to the constitution being drafted at the World Trade Centre and

refuse to have anything to do with its implementation?

What will happen if we defy the Transitional Executive Council and meet the

might of the state backing it, with civil disobedience?

What will happen if ANC mass action and labour action is met with mass action to counter it, which will include action to switch off the country's electricity, block all aviation control procedures and seriously disrupt the country's transportation systems?

What will happen if, God forbid, far right wingers who already have specialist military training, which will make the Israeli capacity to undertake an Entebbe Raid look very amateurish, mount serial attacks against ANC targets?

These are the horror questions I wish to banish from the South African political scene. That is why I am fighting for democracy. That is why I demand now a Leaders meeting which will put together a South African National Constitutional Convention which will make assessments of what there is around us today. We need to charter a course away from the danger zones in which "what if" questions just have to be asked because we need to think about the kind of blundering which is now on the cards.

Mr President, I believe Africa needs now to recognise that the ANC did not win any liberation war and that the time has come for the OAU to end the

privileged observer status of the ANC.

The OAU needs now, Sir, to understand that the IFP and other parties are just as essential for the transition to democracy as is the ANC. I would greatly value the opportunity to address the OAU as a matter of great urgency, before

the ANC and the South African Government so blunder that it will take decades

to recover sufficiently to again have the historic opportunities we now have of putting a democracy together that can work.

