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AN ACCEPTANCE ADDRESS OF THE
AMILCAR CABRAL PRIZE DURING THE
20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS AT
DAKAR IN SENEGAL ON 29 NOVEMBER -
3 DECEMBER 1993
BY GOVAN MBEKI
CHAIRPERSON, YOUR EXCELLENCY THE
PRESIDENT OF SENEGAL, PRESIDENT OF
CODESRIA, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN
WHEN I RECEIVED A FAX FROM THE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY , MR THANDIKA
MKANDAWIRE INFORMING ME THAT
CODESRIA WAS GIVING ME THE AMILCAR
CABRAL PRIZE I COULD HARDLY BELIEVE
IT. THE NAMETHANDIKA IS SO SIMILAR TO
THANDEKAIIN MY OWN LANGUAGE - A
WOMAN'S NAME - THAT I THOUGHT WHAT
A KIND WOMAN THANDIKA WAS TO BRING
ME NEWS OF SUCH GREAT IMPORTANCE.
IN THESE DAYS THE GENDER QUESTION IS

SO HIGH ON THE LIST OF CURRENT ISSUES FOR DEBATE THAT THE TITLES OF LADIES OR GENTLEMEN ARE FAST BEING REPLACED BY THE COMMON NOUN - PERSON.

IT IS WITH A SENSE OF HUMILITY THAT I STAND HERE TO ACCEPT THE HIGH HONOUR THAT CODESRIA IS BESTOWING ON ME. THE PRIZE IS NAMED AFTER ONE OF THE GREATEST REVOLUTIONARIES THAT THIS CONTINENT HAD PRODUCED. COMRADE AMILCAR CABRAL LED THE STRUGGLE FOR LIBERATION IN HIS COUNTRY AGAINST ONE OF THE MOST REPRESSIVE COLONIAL ADMINISTRATIONS UNDER THE PORTUGUESE DICTATORSHIP OF SALARZA. THAT STRUGGLE HAS BEEN WON IN ALMOST THE WHOLE OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT EXCEPT IN SOUTH AFRICA WHERE THE PROGRESSIVE DEMOCRATIC FORCES ARE ENGAGED IN THE FINAL BATTLES TO OVERTHROW ONE

OF THE MOST INSIDIOUS FORMS OF
REPRESSION - APARTHEID OR VIRULENT
RACISM - TO REPLACE IT WITH
DEMOCRACY.

THE PURPOSE OF RESEARCH IS TO FIND
WAYS TO IMPROVE THE LOT OF MANKIND.
TREMENDOUS STRIDES IN RESEARCH-
BREATH-TAKING IN THEIR WIDE SWEEP -
HAVE BEEN MADE IN THE FIELD OF
MEDICINE AND THE NATURAL SCIENCES.
THE RESULT IN THOSE AREAS HAS BEEN
THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGH
TECHNOLOGY WHICH IS BEING MADE
AVAILABLE FOR THE SERVICE OF MAN.
WE SHOULD HOWEVER AGREE THAT IN
OUR FIELD OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES
RESEARCH HAS NOT BEEN DEVELOPED TO
THE SAME EXTENT AS IN THE NATURAL
SCIENCES. YET IT IS IN THE FIELD OF THE
SOCIAL SCIENCES WHICH SHOULD DEAL
WITH THE MULTIPLICITY OF PROBLEMS
WHICH AFFECT THE DAILY RUNNING OF

THE AFFAIRS OF MAN. THE SOCIAL SCIENTISTS ARE CALLED UPON TO MAKE GOVERNMENTS, BUSINESS AND ALL OTHERS ENGAGED IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN ACTIVITY TO ACCEPT THE FACT THAT RESEARCH INSTITUTES AND ORGANISATIONS ARE THERE TO ENABLE THEM DEVISE WAYS TO ADVANCE AND PROMOTE THE CAUSE OF MANKIND. CODESRIA CAME INTO BEING AT AN OPPORTUNE TIME TO DO RESEARCH WORK FOR THE FLEDGING STATES AS THEY WERE EMERGING FROM COLONIAL RULE. AS THE REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TO THE 7TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF CODESRIA POINTS OUT, THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF CODESRIAaLLES IN RESEARCH AND IT IS IN THAT FIELD THAT CODESRIA "CAN MOST EFFECTIVELY CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROCESS OF DEMOCRATISATION". AFTER IDENTIFYING A WIDE RANGE OF ISSUES AND PROBLEMS WHICH LIBERATION

MOVEMENTS ARE CALLED UPON TO ADDRESS DURING THE STRUGGLES FOR DEMOCRACY AND THE PERIOD OF TRANSITION TO MAJORITY RULE, THE STATEMENT ACKNOWLEDGES THE ROLE WHICH . RESEARCH ' IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES CAN PLAY. "IT CAN BRING TO THESE NATIONAL EXPERIENCES COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE AND CAN PLACE NATIONALIST ENDEAVOURS WITHIN A BROADER AND LONG TERM PERSPECTIVES".

IT WOULD APPEAR TO ME THAT THE NATURE OF THE RESEARCH WORK WE REQUIRE TO CONDUCT IN THE POST COLONIAL PERIOD HAS MORE TO DO WITH DEVELOPMENTAL PROBLEMS, THE TRANSFORMATION OF LIBERATORY MOVEMENTS TO GEAR THEMSELVES FOR THE PROMOTION OF DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE. THE SUCCESS OF CODESRIA WILL BE MEASURED BY THE EXTENT IT BUILDS THE CULTURE OF

RESEARCH AT THE INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING ON THIS CONTINENT . WHILE A MEASURE OF SUCCESS WILL HAVE BEEN MADE, I PRESUME, IN THE GREATER PART OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT TO DEVELOP RESEARCH AT UNIVERSITIES IN THE FIELD OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES, THERE ARE OTHER AREAS LIKE SOUTH AFRICA WHERE IN THE HISTORICALLY BLACK UNIVERSITIES THE CULTURE OF RESEARCH HAD BEEN DISCOURAGED, WHILE AT UNIVERSITIES THAT SUPPORTED APARTHEID SOCIAL RESEARCH WAS TARGETED AT MAKING APARTHEID ACCEPTABLE, WHILE THE LIBERAL UNIVERSITIES HAVE BEEN FORCED TO COMPLY.

IT WOULD APPEAR THEREFORE THAT IN THE GREATER PART OF AFRICA RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANISATIONS HAVE ABOVE ALL TO CONCENTRATE ON RESEARCH AIMED AT INSPIRING THE GOVERNMENTS, POLITICAL PARTIES, THE

MILITARY AND THE PEOPLE WITH A DESIRE TO WORK TOWARDS THE PROMOTION OF A RULE OF THE PEOPLE. WE NEED TO CREATE A CLIMATE IN WHICH THERE IS A STABLE GOVERNMENT, PEACE AND DEMOCRACY, IF THE INTERESTS OF THE PEOPLE ARE TO BE SERVED. FOR WHAT KIND OF FREEDOM IS IT, IF IT DOES NOT ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF DEMOCRACY, IF IT DOES NOT CREATE THE CLIMATE IN WHICH THE PEOPLE CAN GET ON WITH THEIR DAILY BUSINESS TO CREATE WEALTH AND HAPPINESS FOR BOTH INDIVIDUALS AND THE COMMON GOOD? FOR ALL? CODESRIA IS SEEKING TO CO-ORDINATE THE ACTIVITIES OF ALL THOSE ENGAGED IN RESEARCH IN THE FIELD OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES. WE SHOULD HOWEVER BE ACUTELY AWARE OF THE FACT THAT THERE IS YET AN IMPORTANT PART OF THIS CONTINENT - THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA - WHICH IS STILL IN THE THROES OF A STRUGGLE

TO GAIN FREEDOM FOR ALL ITS PEOPLES -
40 MILLION OF THEM. IT IS A STRUGGLE IN
THAT AREA THAT HAS BEEN WAGING FOR
A LONGER PERIOD OF TIME THAN WAS THE
STRUGGLE AGAINST COLONIAL RULE. IN
THAT AREA RESEARCH ACTIVITIES WERE
ALSO CONDUCTED ON THE ONE HAND TO
IMPROVE THE MACHINERY OF
OPPRESSION WHILE ON THE OTHER TO
DEVISE METHODS OF DESTROYING THE
MACHINERY AND INSTRUMENTS OF
OPPRESSION.

BUT EVEN HERE THE STRUGGLE OF THE
PEOPLE FOR LIBERATION BACKED UP BY
THE SOLIDARITY SUPPORT OF THE
PEOPLES OF THIS CONTINENT THROUGH
THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN UNITY, AS
WELL AS BY THE REST OF THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY OF
FREEDOM-LOVING PEOPLE IN THEIR ANTI-
APARTHEID ORGANISATIONS, THE
STRUGGLE HAS REACHED A STAGE
WHERE HOPEFULLY NON-RACIAL

ELECTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE FIVE MONTHS FROM NOW. WE HAVE BEEN ENGAGED IN THAT AREA IN RESEARCH ACTIVITY TO FIND OUT THE TYPE OF SOCIETY THAT SHOULD REPLACE APARTHEID. THOSE EFFORTS WHICH WERE INSPIRED BY THE COLLECTIVE ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA AS EXPRESSED IN THE HISTORIC DOCUMENT - THE FREEDOM CHARTER - WHICH SETTS OUT THE BASIC POLICIES OF THE LEADING LIBERATORY ORGANISATION - THE ANC - HAVE NOW BEEN SUMMED UP. BUT OF IMMEDIATE CONCERN NOW IS THE NEED TO DO RESEARCH ON THE PROBLEM OF LAND, LAND REDISTRIBUTION AND LAND TENURE; ON THE PROBLEM OF HOUSING BECAUSE MORE THAN EIGHT MILLION PEOPLE LIVE IN SHACKS; ON THE PROBLEM OF THE CRISIS IN EDUCATION; AND ON THE PROBLEM OF IMPROVING HEALTH FACILITIES. A GOVERNMENT THAT

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IS GOING TO TAKE OFFICE AFTER ELECTIONS ON APRIL 27 NEXT YEAR HAS TO GIVE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION TO THESE ISSUES. IT IS THE DUTY OF RESEARCHERS TO ASSIST THE GOVERNMENT TO FIND AN ANSWER TO THESE PROBLEMS.

THE FREEDOM-LOVING PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA ARE DETERMINED TO ESTABLISH A UNITED, NON-RACIAL, NON-SEXIST DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA.

THERE IS NOTHING THE PEOPLES OF SOUTH AFRICA WOULD DESIRE MORE THAN TO HAVE A LONG PERIOD OF TIME IN WHICH THERE WAS PEACE AND STABILITY - AND THEY HAVE EXPERIENCED THE VIOLENCE OF APARTHEID. SUCH PEACE, SUCH STABILITY, CAN ONLY BE ATTAINED IN CONDITIONS OF DEMOCRACY WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE GOVERNED BY A PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT OF THEIR OWN CHOICE. IT IS ONLY AFTER FREEDOM WILL HAVE

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BEEN ACHIEVED THAT THE SOCIAL
SCIENCES IN THIS PART OF THE
CONTINENT WILL BE ABLE TO POOL THE
EFFORTS OF ALL THOSE ENGAGED IN
RESEARCH IN THE FIELD OF THE SOCIAL
SCIENCES; IT IS ONLY THEN IT WOULD BE
ABLE TO WORK TOWARDS A COMMON
GOAL TO BUILD DEMOCRACY AND
DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS.

THE AMILCAR CABRAL PRIZE WHICH
CODESRIA IS GIVING TO ME TODAY IS AN
ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE ROLE WHICH
THE STRUGGLE OF THE MASSES OF THE
OPPRESSED PEOPLE ON THIS CONTINENT
AND ELSEWHERE HAVE PLAYED, AND ARE
GOING TO CONTINUE TO PLAY TO ENSURE
THAT DEMOCRACY IS HELD HIGH
I THANK YOU ON THEIR BEHALF

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