

DRAFT

STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS,
OLIVER TAMBO, AT THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UN GENERAL
ASSEMBLY SUMMONED TO CONFER UN AWARDS TO DISTINGUISHED
REPRESENTATIVES OF THE WORLD ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT:

NOVEMBER 5, 1982.

Mr President,
Your Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Comrades, friends, ladies and gentlemen:

330 years ago, the process began to integrate South Africa within the world political, economic and military system. Today, South Africa is linked to the rest of the world by a thousand threads which truly encircle the globe.

Our people were dragged into this vortex of international relations against their will. It was with bodies bleeding from bullet wounds and lacerated with whips, with the hobnailed boot of our colonial oppressor and exploiter propelling us from behind that, so to speak, we became citizens of the world.

To this day, South Africa's international relations continue to serve the interests of those who created them through force, the oppressors and the exploiters. Those who seek to perpetuate and strengthen these relations can only do so because they themselves benefit thereby.

By adopting its historic resolution of November 6th, 1962, the General Assembly recognised the fact that the international community could not both seek the destruction of the apartheid system and continue a political, economic and military partnership with racist South Africa. Hence the call made in that resolution for the all-round isolation of apartheid South Africa.

Two decades after the adoption of that resolution, we meet here to pay homage to men, women and organisations who have during these decades and even before, stood in the forefront of the struggle to ensure the practical realisation of the intentions of the world community as stated in the 1962 resolution and many others since then.

This an inspiring moment for us, as members of the African National Congress and representatives of the millions of South Africans who are laying down their lives in the struggle to ensure that there is born a new South Africa which will respect and implement the provisions of the U.N. Charter.

It is an inspiring moment because by this act of conferring awards on His Grace Archbishop Trevor Huddleston,, and the world community recognises these as the authentic representatives of the spirit of 1945 which gave birth to this organisation.

We, for our part, know them as outstanding champions of the cause of freedom from colonial and racist domination, of freedom from exploitation and war. We know them as resolute campaigners for meaningful international action to do away with the criminal apartheid system. They are to us, friends, comrades and allies who have dared to confront together with us and from the same trench, the accumulated and congealed weight of three centuries of gross injustice not for any profit to themselves but to help us to become members of the international community as free men and women, and by so doing extend the frontiers of liberty.

We are moved by this act which the united Chumanity is carrying out today because we take it that it is meant to encourage those who are receiving these awards to persist in the path they have chosen. We take it that by participating in this ceremony, we are all of us saying that we would like to see a million more Huddleston's engaged in the struggle to which he has devoted his life.

We are inspired because this ceremony surely constitutes a pledge by the world community to work even more vigorous for the imposition of mandatory and comprehensive sanctions against apartheid South Africa. We ourselves shall come out of this gathering immeasurably strengthened in our resolve to continue in struggle until victory is achieved.

On behalf of the African National Congress and the struggling people of South Africa we extend our sincere congratulations to our comrades-in-arms who are today holders of the high United Nations Award.

Together with you and in our lifetime, we shall be the midwives of a democratic South Africa, a South Africa that will be constructively engaged with the rest of mankind in building a humane world, free of racism and war.

Thank you Mr President.