

NORDIC REPORT

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Present Nordic Policy towards South Africa

The present Nordic governments' policy is based on the 1988 Nordic Programme of Action against Apartheid which calls for pressure on the SA regime. The cornerstone of this pressure policy is the law that forbids loans to, investments in and trade with South Africa. This policy was re-affirmed at the Nordic Foreign Minister's meeting in Norway in September 1990.

However the Nordic countries have softened on visa regulations following the September 1990 meeting. The new ruling makes it easy for South Africans to attend conferences, cultural arrangements and sports events in the Nordic countries.

Political Climate

Since February there has been a noticeable shift in the debate concerning the policies of the Nordic countries to South Africa in the media and in the public statements of prominent politicians. Call for easing of pressure on the South African government are gaining momentum as encouragement for further reforms.

Changes in Eastern Europe and the increasing contact between South Africa and those countries are also contributing in the abovementioned tendency towards easing of pressure on South Africa. For example in Denmark what was previously called an Antiâ\200\224Apartheid Fund is now a â\200\230democracy' fund out of which the Eastern Europe countries will also benefit. Further Denmark has recently established full diplomatic relations with South Africa.

In Sweden though there are no immediate plans to upgrade the present diplomatic relations, government officials have started to visit South Africa and automatically contact the South African government officials. In Finland and Denmark member of parliaments and government officials have already visited South Africa.

status of the ANC

With the unbanning of the ANC leading questions are being asked as to whether ANC is still a liberation movement or has become a political party, one of several contesting the political terrain. This formulation, if accepted as policy, could result in:

- the reduction of funding for the ANC by governments and NGOs
- increased contact between the Nordic governments and NGOs on the one hand, and on the other hand with other forces like Democratic Party, PAC, Inkatha etc.
- weakening of our international stature, influence and pressure campaigns as more weight will be accorded to adversaries which oppose our foreign policy.

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Anti-Apartheid Movement

The AAM in the Nordic countries have varied in strength from country to country. However, in each country the AAM has supported ANC campaigns and activities. The recent developments about some uncertainties regarding sanctions, isolation of South Africa, status of ANC as the liberation movement etc.

Some of the conflicting statements by the leadership on issues such as sanctions have exacerbated these uncertainties. Poor and at most times belated briefing by DIA worsens this situation.

Information and Publicity

The lack of timely and in-depth information for the Nordic missions has greatly hampered our tasks in informing the Nordic public of our point of view. It is embarrassing to continually meet journalists, politicians, and government officials who are better informed. The propaganda machinery of the regime is becoming increasingly effective. We too need to raise our style of information work to a much more sophisticated and effective level. To this end, the Nordic missions have extensive speech-making activities in their respective regions as well as distribution of available material from the ANC. There is however, a need for the missions to circulate widely position papers on issues such crucial as the need for an Interim Government and the Constitutional Assembly. These have to mobilise the public to show sympathy for our negotiating position. It is in this light that the missions are let down by little and belated information and guidance by DIA in particular and HQ in general.

Economic Sanctions

With the erosion of economic sanctions around the world it is questionable whether the ANC will be able to maintain its present level of sanctions for very long - particularly in view of the general apathy of the public, our principal means of applying pressure. The conference must come out with a definite position on this issue.

Boycotts

Likewise, the movement must make its position clear on the issues of academic, cultural and sports boycotts so as to guide the AAM internationally.