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INTERNATIONAL NGO CONFERENCE FOR ACTION AGAINST APARTHEID

organised by

Special NGO Committee on Human Rights (Geneva)

Sub-Committee on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Apartheid and Decolonisation

in co-operation with

The United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid

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RULES OF PROCEDURE

I. AIMS OF THE CONFERENCE

In support of the goals of the International Anti-Apartheid Year, the conference aims to:

- (a) provide and exchange information on the present situation in South Africa and its implications to neighbouring countries.
- (b) elaborate recommendations for actions by NGOs in support of the struggle for the elimination of apartheid and the liberation of South Africa.
- (c) stimulate and facilitate co-operation among NGOs and with the governmental and inter-governmental bodies in aid of the victims of apartheid and against apartheid.

With these objectives, the conference will study and propose actions:

- for economic sanctions against the South African régime;
- against South Africa's military and nuclear build-up;
- against South Africa's dominance of and military threat to neighbouring countries;
- for assistance to victims of apartheid and to the neighbouring countries of South Africa, and for co-operation with the United Nations, its Specialized Agencies and with the Organisation of African Unity.

II. PARTICIPATION

The Sub-Committee on Racism, Racial Discrimination, Apartheid and Decolonisation (hereinafter referred to as the sub-committee) of the Special NGO Committee on Human Rights (Geneva), shall extend invitations to participate in the Conference to:

- NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC, and to international non-governmental organisations interested in the subject;
- National non-governmental organisations, institutions, universities;
- Liberation Movements recognised by the United Nations and the Organisation of African Unity;
- The Organisation of African Unity and other regional inter-governmental organisations;
- The United Nations and its Specialised Agencies;
- United Nations Member States;
- specially invited individuals.

III. STATUS OF PARTICIPANTS

The conference shall admit three categories of participants:

- Delegates, so designated by their organisations;
- Observers, so designated by their organisations, and specially invited individuals;
- Guests. The sub-committee shall invite inter-governmental organisations and governments to designate representatives who shall participate in the conference as guests.

IV. RIGHTS OF PARTICIPANTS

Delegates and guests shall have the right to attend all sessions of the deliberative bodies of the conference, namely the plenary sessions and those of the commissions, and to participate on equal terms in the discussions.

Observers shall have the right to attend all sessions in so far as the available accommodation allows and may, if time permits and with the consent of the presiding officer, be permitted to address the conference or its commissions.

V. ORGANISATION

The work of the conference shall be conducted in an opening and closing plenary and in working commissions.

Representatives of the press and other information media shall be admitted to the plenary sessions and commission meetings.

The official languages of the conference shall be English and French.

The functioning of the conference shall be co-ordinated by a steering committee.

VI. OFFICERS OF THE CONFERENCE

The sub-committee shall nominate the officers of the conference, namely, the president of the conference, the chairmen and rapporteurs of the commissions and the press officers.

Officers presiding over the various bodies of the conference shall declare the opening and closing of each session, direct discussions, ensure the observance of the Rules of Procedure and accord the right to speak.

VII. STEERING COMMITTEE

The steering committee shall be named by the sub-committee. It shall be responsible for the smooth running of the conference and shall co-ordinate the work of the secretariat and the press officers. It shall fulfil the functions assigned to it under section XI, "Final Resolution".

VIII. PLENARY SESSIONS

The opening plenary session shall deal with the opening of the conference, the introduction of the rules of procedure, the adoption of the conference agenda, the approval of the sub-committee's nominations for the conference officers, and hear statements by personalities who may be invited by the sub-committee.

The plenary session at the end of the conference shall receive the reports of the commissions, consider the final resolution submitted to it by the steering committee, and conduct the closing of the conference.

IX. THE COMMISSIONS

Commissions shall be set up to examine specific topics decided upon by the sub-committee in its preparatory meetings. The work shall permit a free dialogue between participants in a search for common action. The commissions shall conduct their business with a view to elaborating a plan of action for non-governmental organisations.

The officers of each commission shall be a chairman, a rapporteur and a drafting committee.

The chairmen and rapporteurs of the commissions shall be appointed by the sub-committee. Other officers of the commissions shall be elected by the commissions themselves. The drafting committee of each commission shall be presided over by the rapporteur and shall consist of up to four other members elected by the commission.

X. COMMISSION REPORTS

In preparing the report of each commission the drafting committee shall include majority and minority views, highlighting those points on which a general consensus (unanimity or majority support) has been expressed, but also indicating any reservations or dissenting opinions.

The drafting committee shall meet formally toward the end of the commissions' work to draft the final report of the commission. It may meet informally before this in order to prepare summaries as the discussion proceeds. The final report shall be generally acceptable to the commission as a whole.

The reports shall include recommendations for action.

XI. FINAL RESOLUTION

The final resolution of the conference shall be prepared by the steering committee in the light of the recommendations in the reports of the commissions and shall be submitted to the final plenary session for adoption.

The resolution shall be in the form of a programme for action for NGOs, identifying particular fields of discrimination and recommending solutions on a general basis rather than in relation to particular countries.

The text of the final resolution proposed for adoption by the conference shall be made available to all delegates prior to the final plenary session in at least one of the official languages of the conference. No report may be received and no resolution may be considered in plenary session unless this condition is fulfilled.

XII. VOTING

It shall be the objective of the conference to obtain unanimous or consensus views in the commissions and in the plenary sessions. Any opposing or dissident minority shall be free to express its views and to have its opposition recorded in the final report of the conference.

In the event of any matter having to be submitted to a vote, only delegates or organisations in consultative status with ECOSOC shall have the right to vote, in which case there shall be one vote for each organisations represented.

XIII. DOCUMENTATION AND SECRETARIAT

A conference documentation centre and secretariat shall be set up by the sub-committee. Materials submitted by participants shall be received by the secretariat.

XIV. REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE

The final report shall be prepared by the secretariat and will consist of:

- summaries of the opening speeches and other similar documents considered appropriate for inclusion by the steering committee;
- the final reports of the commissions;
- the text of the final resolution adopted by the conference;
- the list of officers and participants;
- a preface bearing the following proviso:

"Organisations participating in the conference shall not be bound by the resolution adopted by the conference until such document has been ratified by the appropriate constitutional authorities in accordance with each organisation's internal juridical procedures."