

THE NEW YORK DECLARATION

of the

CONFERENCE IN SOLIDARITY WITH THE LIBERATION STRUGGLES  
OF THE PEOPLES OF SOUTHERN AFRICA  
Riverside Church, New York City  
October 9-11, 1981

We, the participants in the Conference in Solidarity with the Liberation Struggles of the Peoples of Southern Africa, have come together in New York for three purposes: 1) to expose the increasing collaboration of the U.S. government and corporations with the South African apartheid regime and its continued illegal occupation of Namibia, 2) to mobilize the people of the U.S. to compel our government and corporations to end their collaboration with racism, colonialism and military aggression in Southern Africa, and 3) to organize mass support in the U.S. for the liberation movements of Southern Africa, led by the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa and the South West Peoples Organization (SWAPO) of Namibia.

We express our appreciation to the ANC and SWAPO--who co-sponsored this conference, and to the International Committee Against Apartheid, Racism and Colonialism in Southern Africa (ICSA), who initiated this first in a worldwide series of conferences.

We who have come together in New York from throughout the United States are of diverse backgrounds and interests: local and national political figures, labor and religious leaders, representatives of grassroots, student, professional, community, youth, women's, workers' and international organizations, all united as concerned human beings, as members of the global community, in a common concern for peace, justice and the well-being of all the peoples of the world.

For three days, October 9-11, 1981, the conference heard testimony and examined documents on the current political, economic, military and cultural situation in Southern Africa, the nature of the South African apartheid regime and its illegal occupation of Namibia, the liberation movements of South Africa and Namibia, and the world-wide movement in support of the anti-apartheid struggle.

In a series of action-oriented workshops, we analyzed and examined U.S. foreign policy towards South Africa and Namibia, the status of the boycott against South Africa in all its forms, the role of labor in the anti-apartheid struggle, the roles of women and youth, support for political prisoners, ways and means

to aid ANC and SWAPO, and many other aspects of the global struggle against the most anti-human system of oppression in the world today. In each of these discussions we charted plans and proposals and made specific suggestions for what people in the U.S. can do to contribute to this all-important fight.

We have come to Riverside Church strongly motivated, for several important reasons.

We are seriously concerned by the hostility flowing from Washington against all aspirations for human rights, dignity, social and economic justice, and peace--both here and abroad.

We are shocked and alarmed not only by what we know to be the nature of apartheid--condemned by the United Nations as a crime against humanity--but also by its stepped-up repression in Namibia and South Africa and its intensifying acts of military aggression and destabilization against the independent states of Africa. The contempt for human life and liberty shown by the South African government toward the majority people it directly oppresses is matched by its murderous, scorched-earth military raids into neighboring independent nations.

The truth about South Africa is often suppressed in this country. Despite this, we are aware that the apartheid system rejects and violates every principle we respect, every human value we hold dear, every innate feeling of the equality and unity of the peoples of the world.

We are inspired by the example of the men and women of SWAPO and the ANC, who, having exhausted all peaceful means, have been compelled to take up arms to free Namibia from illegal South African control, and to free the people of South Africa from the racist dictatorship that has made it an outcast among nations. These two struggles have rallied the peoples of South Africa and Namibia, and are supported by freedom-loving people of every continent and country, including our own.

It is therefore with anger and deep concern that we witness our own government forging a deepening alliance with the criminal apartheid regime, embracing Pretoria's cold war arguments, cooperating with its secret plans, backing it in the United Nations, promoting closer military ties and a dangerous South Atlantic military alliance, building closer links with its racist cultural and sports institutions, justifying its military invasions of neighboring countries; in short, collaborating on every level with a regime and system that have been declared international outlaws by the people of the world.

The Reagan administration has accelerated this alliance, but we are not so shortsighted as to believe that the current

administration initiated this international crisis. Since the end of World War II, our successive governments have shown a frightening eagerness to embrace military adventures at the expense of peaceful cooperation. Traditional principles of justice, equality and self-determination have been sacrificed to pursue Cold War ends, of which the terrible war against Vietnam that left our people divided and demoralized, is only one example.

A foreign policy of intervention, military adventure and "world policeman" harms us at home as well. This foreign policy has caused the deaths of tens of thousands of Americans, resulted in a step up in the racism that has plagued our country since its birth, brought about a militarized economy, and increasingly isolated us from the majority of humanity in the rest of the world.

Our government's intervention in the Middle East, our alliances with some of the bloodiest dictatorships in the world, especially in Latin America, the involvement of our intelligence agencies in plots to assassinate foreign leaders and subvert their countries, our government's refusal to use its power in support of people struggling for liberation, have left the people of the United States out in the cold, unable to join hands with the people of Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe.

In its effort to defeat the liberation movements in Southern Africa, the Reagan administration is trying to throw up a smoke-screen of myths about cold war confrontations with the Soviet Union and an alleged threat from "terrorism." This distorts the true nature of the struggle for freedom, independence and self-determination and tries to discredit the just armed struggle being waged by ANC and SWAPO. Support for the liberation struggle must be premised on the recognition that the true confrontation in the region is with apartheid and colonialism.

The fundamental facts about South Africa are alarmingly simple, bare and stark.

The "miracle" of South Africa, the standard of living it provides its white population, and its strategic importance to the United States and NATO, are all founded on the ruthless exploitation of the black majority. Blacks, 84% of the population, take home just over one-fourth of all personal income in the country, making them among the world's most poverty-stricken people. Deprived of political rights, denied the simplest forms of organization (such as we take for granted in the United States), prohibited from living where they wish, herded into barren bantustans, denied citizenship and made foreigners in the land of their birth, terrorized by an effective police state, the black majority produces the wealth that has made South Africa

one of the leading "Western" industrial nations.

The growth of this super-exploitative economic system has been vitally aided by the inpouring of foreign capital, particularly dollars from the United States. In 1960, the U.S. share of all foreign investments in South Africa was 11%. Today, it is over 20%. The total of all dollars in direct investment or loans in apartheid today exceeds \$6 billion.

Hundreds of American corporations draw profits directly from apartheid, with only 10-15 U.S. corporations accounting for some 75% of all direct U.S. investment there. These include Ford Motors, Mobil Oil, General Motors, IBM, Goodyear, Fluor, Union Carbide, Kennecott, Phelps Dodge and others. The United States has passed Great Britain and West Germany to become South Africa's most important trading partner, selling some \$2.4 billion in machinery, chemicals, industrial and military technology, etc., to South Africa in 1980 and buying over \$3.3 billion from them.

The extraordinary profits that draw U.S. corporations to South Africa--and away from investing in the United States--are based on the slave-labor conditions that apartheid enforces.

Were there no protests at all, this would still be a shameful relationship. But this partnership in crime is carried on against the expressed desires, needs, urgings and demands of the South African people, the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the Movement of Non-Aligned Nations, the World Council of Churches and thousands of concerned organizations around the world.

We demand the immediate and unconditional recognition of the Peoples Republic of Angola, the retention and strengthening of the Clark Amendment which prohibits U.S. military intervention in Angola, and the cessation of efforts to destabilize the other Frontline States.

We urge the people of the United States to join the peoples of the world in giving urgently needed humanitarian and material aid for the victims of the continuing South African aggression against Angola.

Our government is not deaf, nor is it ignorant. It knows that in no other area of international affairs have the nations, peoples and organizations of the world joined hands and united as they have on the issue of opposition to South African apartheid, aggression and illegal occupation. Our government has chosen to defy and attack this consensus, to scorn the opinion of the world and the opinion of the people of this country.

As the recent apartheid rugby tour proved, the Reagan administration is determined to remove the "outlaw status" that has been justly thrust upon the apartheid regime by the international community. We urge the people of the United States to join the people of the world in demanding that the struggle be carried to a new level--the comprehensive and mandatory economic, military, diplomatic and cultural sanction of South Africa, including an effective oil embargo.

We have a special role to play and are charged with a unique responsibility. It is our government that keeps apartheid alive, feeds it, oils it, and arms it. The heroic people of the ANC and SWAPO are destroying apartheid from within, but only we can end our government's pact with racism, which if not obliterated, will destroy us all. This conference proudly takes up this fight and joins the peoples of the world.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Released by:*

*Conference in Solidarity with the Liberation Struggles  
of the Peoples of Southern Africa*

*Hon. Ronald V. Dellums, President of the Preparatory Committee  
Lennox S. Hinds, Esq., Chair of the Preparatory Committee Sec-  
retariat; Carl Bloice, Conference Coordinator*

---

*In co-sponsorship with the African National Congress of South  
Africa (ANC) and the South West Africa People's Organization  
(SWAPO); in cooperation with the International Committee Against  
Apartheid, Racism and Colonialism in Southern Africa (ICSA)*

---

*Hosts: The Southern Africa Team/Outreach Ministry, Riverside  
Church; Dr. Carl Fields, Leader, and The Rev. George Thomas,  
Minister of Outreach, Riverside Church.*