

The National Council

The President of Inkatha also informed delegates of why he had taken his "very firm stand" not to become involved in the State President's National Council unless certain conditions were met.

Dr Buthelezi said the first and obvious condition was that the National Council would have to be a recognised mechanism for dismantling the tricameral parliament.

"If the National Council is not mandated to work for a new South African constitution then the State President must count me out," he said.

"... I would start negotiating with the State President tomorrow if he was serious about addressing the fundamental issues of black constitutional rights in our country. If he wants to go it alone in the National Council then he is welcome to try with whomever is prepared to sit with him on it.

"I must warn, however, in the clearest possible way that the wrong representatives on it will table the wrong agenda and there will be even yet more to dismantle than there now already is to dismantle.

"The mounting up of one *fait accomplis* after another is treacherous for a non-violent political settlement to our country's problems.

"It is now that black and

white must get together. It is now that we must produce an agenda which both black and white accept."

"When we talk about the very constitutional future of South Africa we are talking about things which demand the unshackling of black democracy. We can begin negotiating at the local level about local things or at the regional level about regional things.

"But when we come to negotiate about the very destiny of our country, black democratic forces must be as free as white democratic forces are. Unless Dr Nelson Mandela, Mr Zeph Mothopeng and other political prisoners are released from jail, I cannot see how any black leader could agree to negotiate in the National Council about the future of the country."

In a resolution, the conference of Inkatha resolved to call on the State President *not* to proceed with the National Council unless it had both the agenda to bring about real changes to the SA constitution and if it had in it "blacks politically important as the President of Inkatha."

The conference also exhorted the State President to recognise that the President of Inkatha spoke as a "national patriot" when he called for the release of Dr Nelson Mandela, Mr Zeph Mothopeng and other political prisoners and the unshackling of black democracy as a prerequisite for the commencement of real negotiations about the constitutional future of SA.



"To me it is totally irrelevant whether Dr Nelson Mandela agrees or disagrees with those who use his name and his martyrdom to further internecine black-on-black confrontation.

"The only relevant factor to me is that while Dr Mandela is incarcerated in jail any political idiot can make any use of his name.

"I have always been very careful not to make any predictions about what Dr Mandela will or will not do when he is released from jail. He himself must decide that at the time of his release.

"I will neither say that he will or will not reject the National Council.

"I say release him and let us see. He is our brother. He is not some ogre from a far off planet. Black democracy is not afraid of Dr Mandela. It is his prerogative to endorse himself into black democracy or out of it . . ."

— Dr M G Buthelezi