

# Realism not Emotion

*We have to live in South Africa. We have to bear the brunt of the consequences of apartheid..."*

It is time the search for a solution to South Africa's problems was "coldly calculated and based on sound research and analysis" rather than emotions and pandering to political interest groups, says the Rev Stanley Mogoba, President-Elect of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and President of the South African Institute of Race Relations. At an address to a meeting of the Interaction Council in Harare, Zimbabwe, Rev Mogoba said that South Africans were the victims of political rhetoric, both from within the country and from foreign governments that ignored the truth. "It is time that foreign governments, as well as the South African government, and other political interest groups, stopped playing to the gallery and began to make reasoned statements based on well-researched facts," he said. On the question of sanctions Rev Mogoba said: "It can perhaps be argued that sanctions have been a good educational device for the whole world. Sanctions at least illustrated to a world that didn't seem to care too much about the lot of black people in South Africa... that apartheid was institutionalised racism at its worst... But the world, I regret to say, consists of nations which have illustrated a fickleness of not inconsiderable proportions when it comes to the development of a creative and meaningful policy on South Africa. To be blunt, it is easy for the nations of the world to make generalised statements castigating the South African government in the strongest terms. The world does not have to live in South Africa. We do. We have to bear the brunt of the consequences of apartheid. I believe that world bodies and governments would have been

far more creative in their strategies if they had tried to come up with detailed policy recommendations which offer some way out for both government and its opponents of the present impasse. In order for sanctions to succeed, a massive operation would have to be mounted by the major powers of the world... one is talking of nothing short of a blockade of all the trade routes to and from South Africa. My candid view is that the threat of sanctions in fact proved more creative in getting the government to move than the imposition of sanctions have done. Simply stated, what has the government to lose now that sanctions have been imposed? While the threat of sanctions hung over its head, the carrot and stick method could be used. The imposition of sanctions, however, particularly by the United States and other Western European countries, and the continuing actions by other countries in the world, have removed the carrot ingredient and have left only the big stick approach. One has only to recall the defiant and aggressive attitude of the South African government's representative at the United Nations to know what South Africa thinks of the big stick method. So while sanctions cannot be recalled by the governments that have imposed them without those governments losing considerable face, honesty demands that one should warn oneself against stretching one's luck too far.



***Negotiation... is the only viable option. It is an option that does not lend itself with ease, as do violence and sanctions, to the political rhetoric of those who prefer to be swayed by their emotions than by the facts with which they are confronted." - Rev Stanley Mogoba.***

*The Rev Stanley Mogoba, President-Elect of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and President of the South African Institute of Race Relations.*

South Africa is perfectly capable of calling the bluff of the world and has in fact done so, in the strident invitation by South Africa's ambassador to the UN to the rest of the world to "do your damndest." Rev Mogoba said the only viable option was negotiation. "This is, of course, the most uncomfortable of the options. For it is an option that does not lend itself with ease, as do violence and sanctions, to the political rhetoric of those who prefer to be swayed by their emotions than by the facts with which they are confronted." He added that people may continue to destroy each other for a long time. "But at a certain point they will have to sit down and talk. Now if one is going to have talks at some time, why postpone that? Why kill first?" Rev Mogoba called for impartial international mediation for South Africa.