

Janet Cherry released: wins international Human Rights Award

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Janet's colleagues in the Eastern Cape office of IDASA were ecstatic when she was released from detention on Wednesday, 16 November 1988. She had been detained without trial since 23 September 1988, a total of 54 days. Their euphoria was, however, tempered by the severe restrictions which have been placed upon Janet.

These restrictions are:

- a) She shall not take part in any manner whatsoever in any of the activities or acts of the following organisations, viz —
 - End Conscription Campaign
 - Port Elizabeth Crisis Centre
 - East Cape Adult Learning Project
 - Crisis in Education Committee;
- b) She shall not be outside the boundaries of the magisterial district of Port Elizabeth at any time;
- c) She shall not be outside the boundaries of the premises of her residential address between the hours of 18h00 and 05h00;
- d) She shall not attend or stay present at any meeting consisting of ten or more persons (including herself), convened or otherwise brought about for the purpose of discussing some or other matter;
- e) She shall not contribute, prepare, compile or transmit in any manner whatsoever any matter for publication in any publication as defined in the Media Emergency Regulations, 1988, as amended, or assist in any manner whatsoever in the preparation, compilation or transmission of any matter for publication;
- f) She shall not take part in any interview with any journalist, news reporter, news commentator or news correspondent;
- g) She shall not attend any gathering which has been convened, advertised or is otherwise brought about —
 - to attack, criticise or protest against any acts or policies or proposed acts or policies of the Government of the Republic of South Africa;

- to attack, criticise or protest against the system of local government as applied in the Republic of South Africa, or against some or other local authority belonging to some or other category of local authorities;

- h) She shall report daily to the officer in charge of the Charge Office at the Louis Le Grange Police Station, between 06h00 and 18h00.

Although IDASA is relieved that Janet will be able to resume her responsibilities at IDASA's Port Elizabeth office, the restrictions imposed on her will severely hamper the very effective role Janet was playing in facilitating peace-promoting communication between South Africans of all races. The restrictions appear punitive and vindictive and will prove a serious intrusion into Janet's private life, even preventing her from travelling to see her family who all reside elsewhere in South Africa.

No information was ever given to IDASA as to the reason for her detention and Janet herself was never questioned while in detention, so

why, we must ask, was her detention in the first instance necessary?

We are pleased to report that Janet's unwavering commitment in the fight against apartheid has been rewarded by the decision of Reebok International to award their first Human Rights Award for Young Activists to her. This prize honours exceptional individuals in the world under the age of 30, who have made major contributions to the advancement of human rights. Her restrictions will, however, prevent her from personally accepting the award in New York City on 7 December 1988. An application by her lawyers for permission to make the trip was refused. It is now likely that her mother will go on her behalf.

We congratulate Janet on being awarded this prize, which she richly deserves. We also wish her strength in facing up to the Draconian restrictions which have been imposed on her. In the words of Joseph La Bonte, worldwide President of Reebok International, Janet's candidacy was "outstanding, warranting recognition, and deserving of emulation by young people around the world."

