

Talk by Sisulu salutes nation

FRIENDS, Comrades, and the people of South Africa. I extend warm fraternal greetings to you from all of us who have been released recently, from Comrade Mandela and from the hundreds of our comrades in arms who still languish in apartheid jails.

We salute you, the people of South Africa, for the courage, determination and sacrifices you have made under the most difficult and repressive conditions to ensure that the flag of our struggle is held high. You also demonstrated a constant source of inspiration during our long years in prison.

We salute, in particular, the rank and file membership and the leadership of the African National Congress for carrying our organisation the mantle of leader of the South African struggle. Let all gathered here send a special Greeting message to our President, Comrade Oliver Tambo.

We salute the United Democratic Front and the mass organisations of the youth, women, students and divas. You have played a decisive role in propagating the mass apartheid-free today. In particular, we salute the young lions organised under the banner of SAYCO for taking the struggle to new heights.

We salute the Congress of South African Trade Unions for organising workers on a scale unparalleled in the entire history of our struggle. Your economic resistance symbolises the centrality of the

working class in our struggle. We salute the students of our country whose heroic deeds were commemorated in the 1976 uprising.

We pay special tribute to the high quality of those and other mass organisations and the tremendous skill of the new leadership that has emerged.

Today we also remember those of our comrades who are in death row. We commit ourselves to giving no effort in order to save them from the gallows.

We pay tribute to our combatants and the thousands of unarmed protesters, the real heroes of our struggle, who have paid the ultimate price in that struggle. I ask you to rise in a momentary silence in remembrance of our fallen comrades.

We congratulate our sports persons and cultural workers for their role in our struggle against apartheid.

We pay tribute to our religious organisations. You have demonstrated the powerful force of the good Christian, the good Muslim, the good Hindu and the good Jew in the struggle against evil.

Today we also salute the international community for the contribution of the international labour movement and the World Council of Churches.

We salute the role played by the anti-apartheid movement in the United States and Europe in our struggle.

We salute the role played by the Frontline States and in particular the socialist Zambia who made, under the leadership of President Kenneth Kaunda, an honouring our headquarters and thousands of our people.

We salute the role that great African leaders such as Comrade Samora Machel, President Dos Santos, President Mugabe, President Chavuma and President Masiseka have played in the unfolding liberation of our people. We salute President Fidel Castro and the people of Cuba for the heroic role they have played in the fight against colonialism in his region.

Today we see the apartheid regime facing a deep and intractable crisis. All its political strategies of reforming apartheid have failed miserably. Corruption and scandals plague the ruling class. The financial system is in a state of total instability. The financial system is in a state of total instability. The financial system is in a state of total instability.

The disastrous politics of the various Nationalist Party governments has resulted in economic chaos. Spinning inflation is the order of the day. The crisis has been accelerated by the resurgence by the international community of apartheid as a crime against



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Flags fly welcome

VIVA ANC, VIVA! A cheering, excited crowd of 85 000 people greeted the released ANC leaders at a giant "Welcome Back" rally at Soccer City, near Soweto, on 29 October. It was the biggest political rally ever seen in South Africa.

Old and young sang, danced and waved black, green and gold flags to welcome back the seven released leaders.

Others carried the red flag of the South African Communist Party or banners to show their



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Rally speech calls on all to unite in

our struggle against apartheid.

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humanity. Sanctions, boycotts and disinvestment have isolated apartheid South Africa on the world stage.

The Labour Relations Act and other anti-worker measures have spawned the existence of the working class. Great battles have been fought by the trade unions to defend the rights of workers. Let us not forget that there is more that makes workers then divides them. We call for the unity of all oppressed workers under the banner of our country, our federation.

Friends of the apartheid government argue that sanctions

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would result in black workers losing their jobs. We say that it is the absolute minimum in this country which produces such results. For us, the central issue is what is the most effective strategy to reverse suffering? We are in no doubt that sanctions are to a very large extent responsible for making the government responsive to the demands of our people. We call on the world to intensify the sanctions campaign.

As the international apartheid intensifies, the ruling class is becoming more and more frag-

mented. They no longer have a vision of the future. Today the ANC has captured the consciousness of political life in South Africa.

More and more people, black and white, are being inspired by the ideals of the ANC. The vision of a new racial, democratic and united South Africa is shared by all sections of South African society. These ideas are permeating every corner through the very organs of repression.

More and more white youth are rejecting military conscription. We embrace the objectives of the patriots. In the police force, Government Backmen and others have begun to show the way. We call on policemen to re-examine their role against the people. They should become part of the people.

In recent months millions of our people have united in massive action under the banner of the United Democratic Movement. The sight of hundreds of thousands of peaceful protesters using the streets of our cities and townships as battle arenas should be an inspiration for us to intensify the struggle for total liberation.

We call on our people to join the mass organisations under COSATU and the UDF.

The building of disciplined and accountable organisations of our people must remain one of our principal tasks. We salute the great efforts being made by our people, women so that they may occupy their rightful place in the struggle.

While we carry trade union strikes, the campaign against our people in Natal is a crime on our

high at rally to back leaders

organisation, or arms.

Just before 1pm a guard of honour dressed in khaki escorted the leaders around the outside of the pitch to allow the crowd to greet them.

Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, Elias Mosekoti, Wilson Mkhewane, Andrew Mlangeni, Elias Mosekoti and Oscar Mphahlele carried the pitch. They were joined by ANC former national chairman Gwasa Mbeki whose restriction order were lifted to allow him to attend the rally last night to speak.

The eight leaders took their places on the stage beneath a large banner reading "ANC lives, ANC leads" flanked by the ANC and SACP flags. Their wives, and Mrs Nkabinana Letsoho and Mrs Winnie Mandela were also seated on the stage.

NUM general secretary Comrade Cyril Radebe spoke and Johannesburg chief magistrate had been concerned the rally would be used to propagate ANC ideas.

He said the National Reception Committee had explained: "The ANC does not have to have its ideas propagated, they are alive in the hearts and minds of the people."

A message from the ANC welcoming back the leaders was read by Comrade Marjory Madoke of the UDF.

"Your return is not only a tribute to the resilience and historic campaign to secure your immediate and unconditional release. It is also, in no small measure, due to your steadfast refusal to be coerced by the rigours of the apartheid regime."

The message from ANC President Oliver Tambo said if the Pretoria regime seeks the path to a genuine political settlement of the struggle the way forward had been clearly spelled out in the Harare Declaration on negotiations.

In a post-rally message the

ending apartheid and building a new South Africa

public struggle for liberation. It is the will of the apartheid that is behind the violence in Natal. Reports of police collisions in the killings should be called a "national Convention".

The allies tell us that you are the future, the Spirit of the Nation. To defend our people and to fight for our freedom.

We stand for peace in 1912 when we were banned, we stand for peace in 1948 when we were banned, we stand for peace in 1963 when we were banned, we stand for peace in 1976 when we were banned, we stand for peace in 1984 when we were banned, we stand for peace in 1989 when we were banned.

In spirit of constant battle we

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impression of the long-standing preference of the majority of the people of South Africa to arrive at a political settlement.

Together with the rest of the world, we believe that it is unrealistic to expect negotiations to take place, that the necessary dialogue for negotiations be reached.

We call on the people to continue to fight for our freedom. We call on the people to continue to fight for our freedom. We call on the people to continue to fight for our freedom.

To date, we see no clear indication that the government is serious about negotiations. All their utterances are vague. Now the government talks about the ethnic elections to choose the leaders of the black people. This is unacceptable to us. We are looking forward to the decision of a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of universal adult franchise. This is where the mass representatives of the people will discuss the future. If the government is serious about the process and leading



Many members of the 80 000 strong crowd wore 'Welcome Back' t-shirts

Gwasa Mbeki was barred by state restrictions from addressing the huge crowd. COSATU assistant general secretary Sydney Mafeni spoke on what Mbeki would have said.

Mbeki would have said, according to Mafeni, that many people had sought to see divisions between the ANC and the SACP.

The "alliance which was referred to by the ANC and SACP is going to continue until the struggle for apartheid is totally eliminated, he said.

Comrade Raymond Mkhabela outlined the history of the ANC which was formed in 1912 to

among other things, 'advocate on behalf of the black masses equal rights and justice'.

The formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe was not because the ANC was blood-thirsty, Mkhabela said, but because of oppressive laws.

Comrade Ahmed Kathrada said after spending 27 years in jail they had returned to find the fundamental characteristics of apartheid still firmly in place.

He said the oppressed people were still waiting for the National Party to "acknowledge their mistakes and show genuine remorse for 48 years of Nationalist apartheid."

solidarity, they will agree to the logical step.

In the meantime, our duty is to intensify the struggle and we will do so until we have achieved the total abolition of the apartheid in South Africa. At this stage we cannot relax on the basis of mass statements.

We must concentrate on building mass organisations and making class leadership in our struggle for freedom.

We must create an action with the broadest possible range of apartheid-free organisations and other differences to stand in the path of our enemy against apartheid.

Education is a vital part of our struggle against apartheid. Parents, students and teachers are objective partners in education. We call on you to work together in promoting the interests of our youth which is inseparable from our liberation struggle.

The Defence Campaign must continue. We cannot wait until the government to make changes at its own pace.

We call on traditional leaders to join us in our struggle. You must continue to resist apartheid in the moral traditions of Comrades and Nkabinana and Mphahlele.

We call on those people who are in government created structures to side the moment and join the great struggle for freedom.

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We call on our white brothers and sisters to join us in the struggle for democracy so that we may shape the future together.

Let all of us who have this country engage in the task of building a new South Africa, one which would be truly democratic, in which a new People's Cultural Revolution will develop the human potential of our people, in which justice to People's Health will be a right and not a privilege and in which our environment will be protected for the generations which come after us.

The vision of the ANC has been shaped by the struggles of all those of our people against apartheid. The struggle against apartheid is a struggle of humanity. At the same time we recognise the interdependence between nations and the people of the world.

We share the ideals of peace, loving people of the world over. We are interested in the new plans of political openness and growth that is unfolding all over the world. By eradicating apartheid we will be contributing to peace in Africa and to world peace. We dedicate our lives to this end.

In conclusion, we reiterate that the stage we have reached in the struggle is irreversible. Hence the need for unity, consolidation and discipline in order to intensify the struggle for liberation.

STANLEY D. PHILIP, AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (ANC) LEADER, AND LINDA M. GIBSON, SOUTHERN AFRICAN COMRADE PARTY (SACP) LEADER, WHO WERE AT THE RALLY.



Symbols of power were everywhere