



The following is part of the Message the ANC presented to the Muslim Youth Conference that was held in Lusaka, in August 1988.

The African National Congress has always regarded the religious community in our country as an important component of our struggling people. We recognise the important role played by Muslim youth in our struggle for national independence, their close relationship with the democratic youth movement and the entire mass democratic movement in our country. A relationship based on the realisation that their future in a non-racial and democratic South Africa can only be assured if they participate in struggle and are part of the broader alliance which is committed to the eradication of apartheid from our land.

Our movement has not been a stranger throughout its years of struggle to our people in the Muslim faith. It is part of our history that we have had amongst our members comrades who came from the Muslim faith and some of them rose to leading positions, like the late Cde Dr Yusuf Dadoo. He was a member of the National Executive Committee of the ANC and the Chairman of the South African Communist Party. It is also history that many more Muslim individuals, leaders, and particularly youth have been involved and sacrificed their lives for the liberation of our country and continue to do so.

Since 1983, there has been a ground-

MUSLIMS URGED TO UNITE AGAINST APARTHEID

swell of Muslim involvement in the struggle against apartheid, especially in the Cape Province where we have a concentration of Muslims in our country. Democratic Muslim organisations have been formed, like the Call of Islam, which is affiliated to the United Democratic Front.

Our movement has always called for a unity of action by our people against the common enemy, which is the apartheid regime. The churches and other religious communities have responded positively to this call. We have seen Christians and Muslims being together in action ... in marches, and denouncing in one voice the draconian laws imposed by the evil and heretical apartheid regime on our people. This is the kind of development the ANC encourages.

We are often questioned as to our perception of the role of churches and other religious communities in our national liberation struggle. Questions such as, is the future of Islam assured in a free non-racial South Africa? Will there be a freedom of religious worship when the struggle is won? are often asked.

Our simple answer to such questions has always been that the future of Islam or any other religion will depend very much on the position they take during the struggle for justice, freedom and peace in our country. So that, when people of Islamic faith and their leaders choose to be on the side of the poor and oppressed and combat that which brings about these conditions, questions like these will not arise. When the revolution has been won, Muslims in our country will know and understand the new tasks presented by victory and how to accomplish them.

We appreciate the concern and the reason why some of the questions are being asked. It is in part a realisation by religious institutions that victory is in sight and that therefore there is a genuine

desire to know and understand what the future holds in store, a future in which the ANC is going to play an important part. We have also to realise that sometimes the questions are raised not in request for answers but as excuses for an unwillingness to take action against the apartheid system.

Since 1983 the regime has attempted with its so-called tricameral parliament to co-opt some of the people from the oppressed to be partners in apartheid, but it failed. It has failed to this day to create the National Council because it has been rejected by the majority of our people. Instead, all the regime's schemes have drawn thousands and thousands of our people into struggle for the final onslaught against it...

Internationally, the regime is being isolated and the ANC is being seen as an important factor in the resolution of the problems of our country. In many ways the regime is on the retreat and is incapable of extricating itself from the political and economic crisis which is of its own making.

We are asking you to support our struggle for national liberation and the establishment of a non-racial democratic South Africa, which will be based on the Freedom Charter, our programme. We urge Muslim leaders in the region to support the leaders and governments of the Frontline States in their endeavour to resist the pressures coming from Pretoria. To support them in their efforts to build their economies and reduce dependence on trade with South Africa. In conclusion, we ask you also to support the call by the international community and our people for the implementation of mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa. We all need to sacrifice in order to end the crime against humanity which apartheid is. Let this serve as an important catalyst for commitment by the Muslim youth and Muslim leaders in our region and the world over to end apartheid.