



STATEMENT OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS ON THE RESIGNATION OF PW BOTHA

Lusaka, Zambia — 15th August, 1989

Yesterday, one of the principal architects of the apartheid system, PW Botha, almost exactly four years after his infamous Rubicon speech of 1985, crashed out of the political life of our country, a failed and embittered politician of racism.

An official of the National Party since the 1930s, he was among the group that was elected into the white parliament in 1948. He has held various posts in the apartheid regime, including those of Minister of Defence, the Premiership and the Executive Presidency.

Steeped in the ideology and policies of racism and racial domination, he dedicated his life to the construction of the apartheid system and its defence at all costs. In pursuit of these goals, he has brought death and destruction to millions of people in South Africa and the rest of the region of Southern Africa, through a systematic campaign of brutal repression, aggression and state terrorism.

He deliberately prepared for this campaign, aimed at ensuring the survival of the apartheid system, by building the racist South African army and training it to be an instrument of murder and pillage. He elevated this war machine into the highest executive echelons of the apartheid state to enable it to carry out its campaign of terror without let or hindrance.

The bitter fruits of those preparations are the countless graves of innocent men, women and children that cover the face of Southern Africa, including South Africa, Namibia, Mozambique, Angola, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Zambia and the Seychelles. These will remain forever as monuments to the apartheid crime against humanity in the same way that Buchenwald and other concentration camps continue to remind the world of the Nazi crime against humanity.

These will become monuments because apartheid has no future. This is the meaning of the rise and fall of PW Botha. He has tumbled out of political life a defeated man, defeated within South Africa, in Angola and Namibia and in the rest of the world. It is the millions that he sought to oppress, exploit and terrorise that have brought him down.

The courageous mass political struggle, the heroic armed offensive and the unbreakable spirit of resistance of our people, the actions of the peoples of our region, all of these supported by the international community through the sanctions campaign, among others, have brought about the open crisis of the apartheid system which has resulted in the recent bitter confrontation among the captains of apartheid and the ignominious downfall of PW Botha.

We are certain that FW de Klerk, who remains committed to the apartheid notion of group rights and opposed to democratic majority rule, will be the last of the illegitimate apartheid rulers of our country. As a result of the further and militant intensification of our struggle in all its forms, South Africa will be transformed into a united, democratic and non-racial country, within the foreseeable future.

The current situation, brought about through struggle, demands that we escalate that struggle on all fronts, in this Year of Mass Action for People's Power. Therefore we call on the millions of our people to take their campaign of defiance and resistance to even higher levels. At the same time, the armed struggle must also be escalated to deliver telling blows against the murderous apartheid regime.

We look forward to the Harare meeting of the OAU Ad-Hoc Committee on Southern Africa on 21 August, and the Belgrade Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement at the beginning of September, to take the necessary decisions further to step up the world campaign for mandatory and comprehensive sanctions against racist South Africa and to extend maximum assistance to the ANC and the struggling people of our country.

The fall of Botha must, as a result of unrelenting struggle, signify the beginning of the end of the criminal system of apartheid and an uninterrupted advance towards a non-racial democracy in South Africa.

Alfred Nzo
Secretary General

INTENSIFY THE STRUGGLE ON ALL FRONTS!