

# **Anti-Apartheid Movement**

## **Statement on Sanctions**

**24 September 1993**

**T**he Anti-Apartheid Movement fully supports the call by the African National Congress for the lifting of economic sanctions against South Africa. Key legislation has now been enacted by the South African parliament, including measures to establish a Transitional Executive Council, an Independent Elections Commission and Independent Media Commission which will pave the way towards the transition of South Africa from an apartheid state to a non-racial democracy.

Together with the announcement that South Africa's first ever non-racial elections will take place on 27 April 1994 this means that there is now real hope for a new democratic future for South Africa.

This breakthrough in the negotiating process represents a most significant achievement for the ANC and the wider democratic movement. It is also a victory for the millions of people across the world who struggled and made sacrifices in order to isolate and boycott apartheid South Africa. Indeed it is likely that progress at the negotiations would have been much more rapid if economic pressures had not been relaxed prematurely by Britain, the US, the EC and many of South Africa's other major trading partners in the period since the release of Nelson Mandela and the unbanning of the ANC, PAC and other political organisations in February 1990.

Now a new economic environment is required for democracy and non-racialism to flourish in South Africa. New trade and investment relations need to be encouraged and promoted to stimulate economic growth. Thus the stage has now been reached when sanctions and other economic boycotts should be lifted. The lifting of sanctions – and the economic benefits which it is envisaged will flow from such action – should also serve as a powerful incentive to all South Africans to ensure that the elections take place as scheduled, that they are free and fair, and that the results are respected by all parties.

However, precisely because sanctions are being lifted in order to support the process of democratic change, it is essential that any official agreements which are now entered into at an international level (such as those involving the IMF, the World Bank and the European Community as well as any relating to the rescheduling of South Africa's debt) are made with the multi-party Transitional Executive Council and not with the white minority regime.

South Africa, however, continues to be a society which is structured on the basis of massive racial inequalities in the distribution of wealth and in the levels of income. The same moral imperatives which compelled millions of people into action to isolate apartheid South Africa, must now ensure that new aid, trade, and investment relations do not simply reinforce existing social imbalances. Instead they must make a positive contribution to overcoming the legacies of apartheid and the poverty and misery that continues to be the reality of life for millions of South Africans.

The Anti-Apartheid Movement, which was founded in June 1959 as the Boycott Movement to spearhead a campaign to isolate apartheid South Africa, is therefore drawing up proposals for presentation to its AGM in November which will seek to identify the most effective means by which it can help to ensure that as new trade and investment relations are established, they contribute towards a genuine end to apartheid and all its legacies and help promote equitable development for the whole Southern African region.

Moreover, there are some key areas where it is essential that South Africa continues to be isolated by the international community. For example the admission/readmission of South Africa to international organisations such as the UN, the OAU and the Commonwealth are matters which can only be resolved by a government with a democratic mandate.

There is also the full range of strategic sanctions, including the UN mandatory arms embargo, associated military sanctions and the bans on nuclear co-operation. These must continue to be strictly observed and enforced by the international community until a democratic government has been installed and is in effective control of the country. However at the request of the TEC, the UN should be prepared to make arrangements so that such bans do not prevent international support for initiatives designed to minimise violence such as the joint control of the security forces, the establishment of a peace keeping force and programmes for the integration and democratisation of the police and security forces.

For the Anti-Apartheid Movement its major priority now will be the campaign to ensure that next April's elections take place, that they are genuinely free and fair, and that they result in a decisive majority committed to a new democratic future for South Africa. The Anti-Apartheid Movement will also continue to be vigilant and campaign actively to ensure the strict implementation of all strategic sanctions until a democratic government is installed.

*(This Statement supersedes the Policy Statement entitled 'The Role of Sanctions in Promoting Democratic Change', published by the AAM in April 1993)*