

**PRESS STATEMENT BY INKOSI M. NONKONYANA FOR AND BEHALF OF  
CAPE TRADITIONAL LEADERS AT THE 2ND  
MULTI-PARTY NEGOTIATING FORUM HELD AT  
THE WORLD TRADE CENTRE,  
KEMPTON PARK ON FRIDAY 2 JULY 1993**

**INTRODUCTION**

Mr. Chairperson, Honourable members of the Forum, Distinguished Guests, Members of the International Community, Members of the Diplomatic Corp, Members of the Media, Ladies and Gentlemen.

First and foremost Chairperson allow me to convey a word of gratitude from all Traditional Leaders and Entailing Masses of the people from the entire Cape Province. We and the people fully understand the difficult task facing this Forum - A task of not only trying to address the prejudices of the past, but a task of addressing the fears of those who enjoyed and benefited from the system. A task of assuring those who monopolised the fruits of the land of our forefathers and those who were and still are angered due to the fact that they were regarded as strangers in the land of their birth.

We would like to re-iterate that when the Colonialist took over the land from our fore-fathers this country was democratically administered by our forebears jointly with the people as Councillors. We need to state that in our view a Traditional Leader is a Leader -in -Council which means that whatever he articulates, it is the will of the people and it is for this reason that whatever is being said by the leader is regarded as law. In other words in a pure traditional sense there is no room for autocratic rule - democracy is firmly entrenched. We are of the view therefore that traditional rule or administration is not undemocratic as perceived by some people.

We would like us to be understood that when we are calling for recognition of Traditional Leadership and the People's tradition, culture and customs, we would like to take a meaningful role in restoring the pride and dignity of the people. We believe that if the peoples culture is recognised and promoted, the masses of this country will feel proud to be recognised as a people amongst all the people of the civilised world. We need further to state that we understand that the culture as well as the people is not static.

The people and the culture should be allowed to develop like all other cultures of the civilised world. We firmly believe that in our own culture there are practises that are so fundamental and so valuable to the people such that it would be a grave mistake if such cultures are thrown overboard. Similarly we know that in Western Civilised World there are practises that we have accepted and are equally so valuable that if we reject them we will deny our culture valuable ingredients to enrich it. We therefore believe in what we term for a better expression "culture borrowing". We cannot however impose this Western culture to the people - the people themselves should accept the culture and as custodians of the people's culture we will jealously protect the people's culture until the people inform us otherwise.

We are indeed indebted to all the members of the Council for having accepted as one the Constitutional Principles, the protection and the promotion of the people's culture as well as people's institution of Traditional leadership. We are indeed grateful to all women and men and in particular all members of various Technical Committees for having recognised for the first time after conquest that indigenous law will be recognised in the future constitution. We are convinced that from the time a future constitution is drawn and adopted, women in Traditional communities as well as in towns, townships and shacks, who are married according to customary union will be recognised as having been lawfully married and given the same status as those women who are married according to civil rights. Our law will once new constitution is adopted, also be given a status equivalent to Roman - Dutch Law ( SA Common Law). We are accordingly of the view that from that day onwards, our ancestors ie. Kings like Sabata Dalindyabo, Faku, Victor Poto, Langalibalele, Cetywayo, Sekukuni and all martyrs of the people's struggle in this part of the world will support and maintain the democratic process. Their spirits will enrich and enhance the process of reconstruction and promotion of peace and prosperity for all who live in this part of the world the so called Black or White. We are therefore having no hesitation in expressing the Royal support for the election of a Constituent Assembly on the 27 March 1994 to draw up the Constitution. In accordance with this we will do all in our power to create a climate in our areas that is conducive to a free and fair election. We trust that by doing this all the people of South Africa, "Black and White" will recognise as their Traditional Leaders and not follow the example of Colonialists who after we gave them a place to stay they reduced our Kings to the status of the so called Paramount Chiefs, other Traditional Leaders as so-called chiefs etc.

We trust that our tradition and values will not be declared as contrary to fundamental human rights as some Christian declared our custom as heathen after having accepted them in this country. In a nutshell our only hope of survival is a democratic and accountable government for all in this country. Judging from what we have achieved so far, we trust that our and the people's expectation will go beyond offering of bread and butter during this pre-election phase.

We thank you very much.