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**FAX TO: MR MURPHY MOROBE,
ADMINISTRATOR, CODESA,
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FROM : J H JORDAAN, FAX NR. (02231) 76964

Dear Sir

POPULATION GROWTH

Dr Nthato Motlana recently made the following statement:

"Curbing South Africa's runaway population growth is an urgent matter which can no longer be delayed. Along with the social injustices of the past, our high population growth is one of the major obstacles towards nation building in the new South Africa."

Prof. Peter de Lange, chairman of the Population Board, also on record saying:

"It will be the biggest irony in South Africa's history if we succeed in finding a constitutional settlement but fail to improve the quality of life of our citizens because of a failure to curb our runaway population growth"

Over the past 10 years South Africa's economic growth rate averaged about 1% as opposed to a population growth rate of roughly 2,5%. This is among others a major factor causing increasing poverty, malnutrition, unemployment, crime and violence and growing backlogs in housing, schooling and medical services as well as a deterioration of the environment. It also leads to a constant drop in per capita living standards.

Any future political or economic dispensation is doomed to fail unless a drastic programme is devised to halt the runaway population growth in South Africa. It is no use waiting for a new government to make a start, because the country's rapid population growth is already at a critical stage and further delay could only make future attempts to resolve this highly sensitive issue more difficult.

The urgently needed demographic transition i.e. the lowering of the average number of children per woman from the current 5 to only 2, the replacement rate, cannot be created by a focus on socio-economic upliftment alone. This will be far too slow and South Africa simply does not have the means to turn around the vicious circle of unemployment, escalating poverty and high birth rates.

South Africa currently faces the following demographic realities:

- more than 40% of black people are younger than 15 and more than 60% are younger than 20;
- more than 60% of blacks have less than 6 years' schooling and are functionally illiterate;
- more than 50% of blacks are impoverished and living below the breadline;
- approximately half the blacks live in rural areas, mainly in traditional circumstances

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- vastly expanded sexuality education especially at school level;
 - provision of a high quality contraception and counselling service available to everybody in the country;
 - a quality voluntary sterilisation service expanded to all hospitals country wide;
 - legalised abortion as a back-up last resort where other measures failed (the right to a free choice of the individual should be respected.)
 - the potential of monetary incentives should also be investigated.

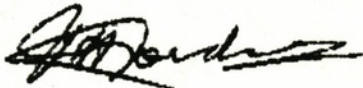
It has been very clear from the for a book POPULATION GROWTH: OUR TIME BOMB I recently authored in collaboration with Dr Mandla Tshabalala and Ms Zanele Mfono, that the population growth has so far been a very sensitive and politicised issue in South Africa. This is probably the main reason why it was neglected so much and why political leaders have been hesitant to take a public stand on the issue. According to dr Mandla Tshabalala the legacy of apartheid and the top down approach which have been followed aggravated the credibility of the current programme.

It is very clear though that any future government is going to have to deal with the consequences of South Africa's over-population problem. To try and solve it at this late stage, drastic measures are needed and the longer we wait the more drastic and unacceptable they will become.

It would therefore serve the purpose best if a well-balanced, well-represented commission of enquiry or task group comprising of an equal number of men and women from various different political, economic and social backgrounds can be appointed. Such a commission can then investigate the problem and present a report with a population programme which will have the necessary credibility and contain measures that will guarantee success. As the matter is urgent, and because it will take time for such a commission to investigate the problem properly and to present their recommendations, it should commence activities as soon as possible.

I will be in the Transvaal from 3 to 13 March and will gladly provide any further information which may be needed.

Yours faithfully



J H JORDAAN

P.S. I attach a section from my book dealing with the population situation in Jamaica as described by Lord Caradon who was governor there. We have a got a lot to learn from this experience.

the primary cause of the problem - namely birth figures that are too high.

They would make a more meaningful contribution towards reducing poverty if they were also to promote family planning and try to change the attitudes of individuals and community leaders in favour of smaller families. By helping the needy, they could even give preference to those who cooperate through family planning and limit the size of their families.

There are other bridge-building organisations - Women for Peace, Contact and the Women's Bureau of South Africa - which concentrate on communication, cooperation and the promotion of goodwill between various divergent groups and their leaders. They could make an important contribution towards removing the distrust and suspicion of some Black groups and their leaders about the motives of the government and other organisations involved in family planning.

Considerable progress has been made in involving the business sector more closely in family planning. Organisations such as Iscor and Transnet already do a great deal to promote family planning activities among their employees.

CONCLUSION

When one looks at the current statistics on population growth in South Africa and considers what lies ahead for us in the immediate future, it becomes very clear that far too little is being done to combat the problem.

Dr N.J. van Rensburg states that one of the greatest problems faced by most family planning programmes throughout the world is that governments hesitate to intervene in good time in what is in fact the greatest threat to their people - the population explosion. Because there is little political benefit in it for them, most governments generally only begin to take action when it is almost too late.

This quotation from Lord Caradon's address in Tokyo in 1970 is also significant:

"First I take the issue of political responsibility. My experience as a politician is that you have to speak loudly to political leaders if you are to attract their attention.

"Any politician who claims to give leadership but who does not face up to the population problem, who does not take up a strong and definite position on it and who does not state an effective policy for its solution, is an impostor.

"I ask myself why we in Jamaica, where I was governor, were

for so long so blind to the danger that rapid population growth would sweep away all our efforts to achieve economic development. Population control was an awkward, controversial and unpopular subject. We took the line of least resistance. To invest, build and plant, those were our obsessions. We went fast, faster, thinking we were going ahead - but we were, in fact, running away from the real problem.

"The monster was not only gaining upon us; it caught up. No sooner had we built a new school than it was too small. It was not mainly a matter of how many children could be crowded in, but how many had to be shut out. No sooner had we built a new hospital than there were 24 people waiting for every bed. Every agricultural project we started increased the clamour for more land settlement. New industries paying higher wages showed up the gulf between the favoured few and the discontented rest.

"Then the dreadful drift to the slums of our cities began where thousands of men, women and children lived in conditions of urban squalor, gained momentum.

"We see something like this going on in almost every developing country in the world.

"It finally dawned on us that if dealing with the problem of population was left too late, then all our economic and political achievements would be swept away like sand castles before the advancing tide."

Can South African political leaders also learn a clear lesson from this experience?