

MCA 91-68-6-13

Durban Corpn. TC. 1

3110D/57/2I

The City of



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DURBAN

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MISS CHRISTIANSEN

1992-02-05

Convention for a Democratic South Africa  
P O Box 307  
Isando  
1600  
TRANSVAAL

Dear Sir

## CODESA AND LOCAL AND METROPOLITAN GOVERNMENT

On 1992-02-03 the Durban City Council gave consideration to the future of local and metropolitan government in South Africa and in particular to the way in which CODESA appears to be handling the issue. As a result of that discussion, I have been asked to approach you with a view to expressing the Council's concern and also making certain suggestions in that regard.

It would appear that CODESA intends to consider local and metropolitan government as part of the overall constitutional recommendations i.e. through the "constitutional" and "transitional" working groups and the concern here is that there is only a small proportion of local government expertise and experience in the structure of CODESA .

Bearing in mind that the future working of South Africa will depend heavily on the effective day to day management of cities it is considered that this situation could have extremely serious consequences both for the future of local government in South Africa and for the country as a whole. A lack of practical experience, knowledge or understanding of the role and functioning of local government could result in theoretical rather than practical solutions.

As "on the ground" problems vary from one metropolitan area to another, the imposition of a detailed system on a national basis could be disastrous. Although it is essential that all local governments operate within an overall common democratic and equitable framework which has been agreed at national level, nevertheless there is a need for each city and metropolitan area to be free to negotiate the appropriate application of that framework to local conditions.

3110D/58/ZI

- 2 -

In the circumstances, the City Council on 1992-02-03 adopted the following resolution:-

- "1. That the Durban City Council:-
  - 1.1 expresses concern at the apparent failure of CODESA's structure to seriously address the future of local and metropolitan government;
  - 1.2 urges CODESA to establish a separate working group on the future of local and metropolitan government;
  - 1.3 urges that such a working group comprise (in addition to political parties) representatives of the major cities, municipal associations, civic organisations and forums and other bodies representing local government constituencies;
  - 1.4 urges that such a working group be given the task of formulating a national local government framework that is both democratic and equitable and within which negotiations in local areas can devise local and metropolitan government structures appropriate for their specific areas; and
  - 1.5 urges, as a first step towards 1.4 above, that representatives of bodies mentioned in 1.3 above be invited to make submissions to CODESA's Working Group 2 (on constitutional principles and constitution-making bodies) and Working Group 3 (on transitional arrangements/interim government/transitional authority).
2. That in view of the urgency and importance of this matter, the concerns expressed in 1. above be submitted to CODESA and at the same time to the Natal Municipal Association, United Municipal Executive and Major Cities Organisation with the request that a concerted effort be made to address the apparent deficiency as a matter of extreme urgency."

The Natal Municipal Association, United Municipal Executive and Major Cities Organisation have also been advised of the above resolution.

Yours faithfully



do ASSOCIATE TOWN CLERK

cc. Natal Municipal Association  
United Municipal Executive  
Major Cities