



MCHA91-114-3-9

* EMBARGO: 23 MARCH 1992 / 19:00 *

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT AND REGIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

BOPHUTHATSWANA, WESTERN TRANSVAAL, ORANGE FREE STATE,
NORTH WESTERN TRANSVAAL AND NORTHERN CAPE

PRESENTATION BY THE STATE PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF BOPHUTHATSWANA

KGOSI DR L M MANGOPE

ON

23 MARCH 1992

Mr MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Our Honourable Hosts from the University of Potchefstroom and University of Bophuthatswana, Prof C Reynecke and Prof M R Malope

Ministers

The Honourable Judges of the Supreme Court, present here tonight

Ambassadors

Governors

Dikgosi

All Honoured Guests from the Republic of South Africa

Mayors and Councillors from Town Councils

Chairmen and Members of Regional Development Advisory Committees

Representatives from Regional Service Councils

Representatives from Organised Agriculture

Representatives from Organised Businesses, Industry and Mining

Representatives from Regional Development Societies

Ladies and Gentlemen

REGIONAL GOVERNMENT AND REGIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

While great strides have been made to reach a greater degree of political understanding and accommodation in Southern Africa, the continuing levels of violence, threats and intimidation is wholly and totally unacceptable.

How could those who espouse democracy and who aspire to be part of -- or be -- the next government of South Africa, continue to use violence as a political tool?

Do they not realise that it is cause for great concern and doubt as to future stability, law and order and fundamental democracy?

I make a sincere, and impassioned plea to all, for the very sake of democracy; -- of stability; -- of investment confidence in the future of this subcontinent; -- to stop this senseless violence, killing and intimidation. Two hundred and seventy deaths within two weeks, building up to last week's referendum, cannot be tolerated any further.

It is time for action, not talking. Those who say that they seek peaceful and democratic solutions must now commit themselves, not only in words, but prove it in their deeds.

2. POSITION ON A NEW SOUTH AFRICA

I have repeatedly warned that clear heads and cool hearts should be the motto in the months to come, and that we should be prepared for the challenges ahead.

My government has embarked on an extensive programme to investigate the options available to us and prepare ourselves for the likely outcome of various scenarios and options for the future.

It became evident during our investigations that, contrary to the position in Ciskei, Venda and Transkei, Bophuthatswana over the years improved its position relative to South Africa and the rest of the world considerably and is looking forward to an exciting and prosperous future if circumstances continue as at present.

There has been a regrettable trend to generalise in lumping all the TBVC-States together as if they were a homogenous group or single entity.

Let us be clear. We deem ourselves to be different. Different because of our history, because of our development, our economy, our achievements and apart from many other reasons, because we are a democracy.

We are not a product of apartheid. In 1977, we regained the independence which the British so treacherously took from us at the turn of the last century.

In the present political climate of change in Southern Africa, every responsible leader and every group of people have to look at all the possible alternatives facing them. We, in Bophuthatswana have stated it clearly that there is no uncertainty concerning our constitutional position: We are an independent nation.

Our preference in order of priority are the following:

- A sovereign independent Bophuthatswana with the existing bilateral arrangements and agreements with the Government of South Africa, maintained and extended, as our first choice.
- An independent Bophuthatswana in a confederal arrangement with the Republic of South Africa.
- If we were to consider it, in our long term interest to join a new South Africa, it will have to be on a basis which offers the best hope for peace, prosperity and at least be as good or better than than the quality of life enjoyed by my people now.

The one scenario which we regard as an open invitation to further conflict and turmoil, is the idea of one unitary state based on an one man one vote situation and the winner takes all.

The population composition of Southern Africa is far too complex to accommodate such a simplistic solution.

My government believes that the most logical solution, the solution which offers the best hope for peaceful co-existence, can be found in the devolution of power to regional governments. These to include the entrenchment of legislative, executive, fiscal and judicial powers.

Such regions should be formed by groups of people who share the same basic values, norms and beliefs.

Ek is daarvan oortuig dat die Afrikaner en die Batswana in vele opsigte dieselfde waardes, geloof en norme handhaaf:

- Ons geloof is gegrondves in Christelike beginsels en alles wat dit impliseer.
- Ons glo in vreedsame naasbestaan.

- Ons onderskryf die beginsels van die vrye mark stelsel.
- Beide ons volke heg veel waarde aan ons tradisies, ons taal en ons geskiedenis.

In hierdie moeilike tye waarin ons leef, kom 'n ou Tswana spreekwoord dikwels tot my gedagte:

"Fifing go tshwaranwa ka dikobo".

Letterlik vertaal beteken hierdie spreekwoord dat wanneer dit donker is moet ons aan mekaar se komberse of klere vashou. Breër vertaal sou dit kon beteken dat, in tye van nood en gevaar, moet ons mekaar se hande vat en saam die toekoms aandurf. Ek glo, dat nou, meer as ooit tevore, die tyd aangebreek het dat die Afrikaner en die Batswana in die Westelike gebiede van Suider Afrika mekaar se hande moet vat en met moed en geloof aan 'n nuwe toekoms werk.

3. REGIONAL INITIATIVES SINCE 1991

My government, more than a year ago, came to the conclusion that the future of this country does not

depend solely on the initiatives taken by President F W de Klerk, but that we ourselves should initiate investigations and actions on the future of Bophuthatswana and neighbouring South African regions.

Most of you will recall the initiative taken last year on 15 March to extend a hand of friendship across political borders and invite your support and expertise in investigating for ourselves, different political options and scenarios.

Resulting from the positive reactions received, several actions were launched jointly and separately by my government which I consider worthwhile mentioning.

- The first action was the various working groups that were established comprising Bophuthatswana and South African representatives to investigate issues that need clarification. From the initial feedback received, it appears that there is substantial agreement on most issues. I am told that agriculture, tourism, mining, business and entrepreneurial development, education, health and social welfare, and even urban and rural development on both sides of the borders, received specific attention. It is hoped that my presentation tonight as well as the conference tomorrow will finalise most outstanding matters to the satisfaction of all.

This region needs the full co-operation of all if we want to grow and prosper as people living here.

- Resulting from this, I am happy to announce that my government accepted the proposal that this regional co-operation initiative established across political boundaries should continue under the guidance of a South Africa-Bophuthatswana Steering Committee to be known in future as the Satswa Forum.

I honestly believe economic co-operation should continue whatever the future holds and irrespective of the success or otherwise of our joint efforts.

Let us continue without fear with initiatives and responsibilities in support of this noble task.

- In my own country we initiated in-depth investigations regarding future constitutional options and an assessment of what is required inside and outside the country to meet different challenges. These Think Tanks between Cabinet and Senior Government officials, proved to be invaluable for future deliberations. Various political scenarios and their likely outcome over a wide spectrum of disciplines were investigated. Our statements and viewpoints since then, reflect the conclusions reached at these forums.

I am confident that they are based on sound principles and that they represent the best interests of my people.

- Getting our own house in order to be equipped and prepared to face the challenges of the future and benefit optimally from whatever dispensation is decided upon in South Africa, is one of the great challenges facing us.

In this exercise we did not only rely on our progress and achievements of the past to carry us through. We also began a total re-think and restructuring of our daily operations within a coherent and comprehensive planning framework for the whole country. We honestly believe that a regular review and re-evaluation of our objectives, and progress achieved, is the only way to ensure new initiatives and enthusiasm to do even better the next time round. I am confident that all of you will gain from this innovation in the days and years to come. Bophuthatswana is ready and eager to continue with contributions towards greater welfare and an improved quality of life to our people and our neighbours.

4. POSITION ON REGIONAL GOVERNMENT

From the above, I would like to repeat for the sake of absolute clarity, that at this point in time, the possibility of participating in a regional government is no more than one of the possible options albeit a feasible one, being considered by us.

A final decision by my government should neither be a stumbling block nor a precondition for the discussions tonight and tomorrow. In fact, it should be viewed as an effort to obtain guidance and contribute towards clarity on how my government will approach a decision for regional government and/or regional co-operation.

All of this will ultimately help to shape my mind and yours on what is desirable and feasible for the future. Once this has been determined, we can jointly work towards reaching our target of a better future and a "win-win" scenario for all of us.

5. THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY IN A FUTURE REGIONAL DISPENSATION

The ruling party in Bophuthatswana is known as the Christian Democratic Party. Because this party has up till now, limited its operations exclusively to the

people of Bophuthatswana and the problems and challenges experienced by my country, this party is not known very well outside our borders.

Contrary to some political organisations in South Africa who operate illegally in our country, we have not extended our activities to our neighbouring states. Should we however, decide to share our future with that of South Africa, this position will change drastically.

Tonight you must know that this party, with one exception, is the longest ruling party in Southern Africa. In Bophuthatswana we have established a long and proud history. The party operates on democratic principles and its membership is not restricted to any specific race, colour or creed. We would like to bring together that which belong together in shared values and principles.

The principles and values that this party believe in, are embodied in the Bophuthatswana Constitution and its Declaration of Fundamental Human Rights.

In my address last year I dwelled extensively on this subject. These principles are based on Christian norms and recognise the rights and freedoms of individuals and groups.

Provision is made for full democracy and an economy based on free market principles. The independence of the judiciary and the supremacy of the courts, are further guarantees that the individual is protected against discriminatory and unconstitutional acts and procedures. The Ombudsman function which has been in operation for more than ten years now, is a further protective mechanism against injustice and unfairness.

Today, the average resident in Bophuthatswana enjoys a quality of life and standard of living which is above that in the most of Africa. We are performing better than even South Africa in various important fields.

The unrest in schools and the results achieved in South Africa is causing an influx of pupils to our schools which we cannot all accommodate -- irrespective of the heartache and tragedy caused by refusing them entry. Our matriculation results of approximately 63% pass rate achieved in 1991, is more than 100% higher than those achieved by the South African Department of Education and Training.

This high level of development and economic growth stands in sharp contrast with the degeneration elsewhere in Africa and Southern Africa, if measured over a period of time. Need I say anything more than only to refer to the enormous debts by these governments?

Hierdie party verteenwoordig natuurlik ook in die derde plek my mense op wie ek baie trots is. Ons is nie 'n aggressiewe en bloeddorstige volk nie.

Inteendeel, ons Batswana is bekend vir ons vriendelikheid, sagmoedigheid en verdraagsaamheid teenoor mekaar en teenoor ander mense.

Uit die geskiedenis blyk dit dat ons reeds in die sewentiende eeu 'n teenwoordigheid en beskawing in die gebied Suid en Wes van die Zambesie gevestig het. Saam met Griekwa en Voortrekker moes ons veg teen vyandige boorlinge en impis wat ons Christelike geloof en beskawingspeil bedreig het. U kan gerus weer hierdie geskiedenis lees om opnuut onder die indruk te kom van die noue bande wat daar in die verlede tussen Afrikaner en Tswana bestaan het.

Hierdie mense van my verteenwoordig dus daardie simboliese vreemdeling met wie opnuut vriende gemaak kan word en met wie 'n lang pad saam geloop kan word.

Indien hierdie party en sy manifes van beginsels en beleidsriglyne die Suid-Afrikaanse politieke toneel sou betree, kan ek u verseker dat daar nie van die gebaande weë van die verlede afgewyk sal word nie. As politieke party sal ons poog om die belange en verwagtinge van die kieserskorps ten beste op alle vlakke te verteenwoordig.

Soos reeds telkens bewys, sal ons nie terugdeins om ons standpunte hard en duidelik uit te dra nie.

Dit is egter op die gebied van **streeksregering** wat die aandag vanaand toegespits is. Die vraag is in hoe 'n mate u vanaand die versekering sal kry dat indien so 'n streek tot stand sou kom, hierdie party ook u belange en verwagtinge ten beste sal uitdra en beskerm.

Indien ons oor hierdie sake eenstemmigheid sou bereik is daar geen rede waarom die Christelike Demokratiese Party nie ook u party kan word indien daar 'n toekomstige streeksregering sou wees nie. So nie kan moontlike alliansievorme met bestaande partye in Suid-Afrika oorweeg word. Ek is oortuig daarvan dat alle gematigde groeperings wat dieselfde voel, hulle kleinere verskille opsy moet skuif ter wille van 'n kragtige en stabiele regeringstelsel vir die streek. "Eendrag maak Mag" is die slagspreuk waarmee die Unie en latere Republiek van Suid-Afrika gevorm is. Dit is, in wese, ook Bophuthatswana se leuse.

6. VRESE EN BEDENKINGE BY ONS MENSE

Vanweë moontlike twyfel, oningeligtheid of bedenking, is dit miskien nodig om sekere beleidsake duidelik te stel.

6.1 THE ECONOMY

We believe in the working of the market to direct the production and allocation of goods and services. This includes private ownership and freedom to identify, have access to, and utilise available opportunities.

Compensation and recognition according to actual performances and merit is the ultimate consideration under such a system.

Whenever government interferes in the economy it will be on the basis of free market principles in those areas where market imperfections are experienced. Examples are the traditional functions of social welfare and maintaining law and order and caring for the very poor. My Government is subject to public scrutiny to ensure that these principles are upheld.

6.2 REGIONAL DEMARCATION

Our primary concern is the identification of the biggest possible geographical area that provides a feasible and realistic economic alternative, -- that is manageable and logical in terms of

functional and climatic conditions; -- that shares common values and principles; -- and that gives due recognition to historical and present day realities of land use and people compositions. Let us bring together those who belong together. Our struggle is for the **maximum** devolution of powers and authority to such a regional government, because we believe that our capability and expertise to govern have already been proven beyond doubt.

As a minimum, these powers and functions should be cross-guaranteed and entrenched in the constitution. We will also insist on fiscal autonomy to control our own revenue sources and utilise it for the benefit of our own region and in the best interest of the people living in the region. We are not in favour of mining revenue leaving the region.

Mining is a wasted asset and should be supplemented with viable economic development in industry, agriculture and tourism to ensure further growth in the region.

6.3 NATIONAL PRIORITIES

The government will play a facilitating role in identifying national priorities and designing support mechanisms. We are no Central Planners, but believe in co-ordination and monitoring of development to ensure its movement in the desired direction. It is our firm commitment that the entrepreneur, farmer, businessman, community and tribal innovator should be identified and assisted to gain from available opportunities.

6.4 GRONDBESIT EN GEBRUIK

Omdat dit so 'n emosionele en sensitiewe saak is, wil ek dit weer duidelik en onomwonde stel dat individuele besit en gebruiksreg van grond erken word, en nie anders as deur die mark, volgens die beginsel van 'n gewillige koper en vrywillige verkoper, vervreem sal word nie. Hierdie streek het jong, dinamiese en voltydse boere nodig om te oorleef en van voedsel te voorsien. Ons wil seker maak dat hulle die geleentheid en ruimte gegun sal word om op meriete hul kant te bring, en sal dus voortgaan om hulle, binne vermoë, groter toegang tot die ekonomie te bied.

Ons eie vermoë, die vrye werking van die mark, en ons vryheid van keuse om te koop of te verkoop, is die hoekstene van ons toekoms op landbougrond en alle ander eiendom. Peuter met hierdie hoekstene, en die hele ekonomiese kaartehuis stort in duie. My Regering is nie van plan om hier 'n struikelblok te wees nie.

6.5 OPLEIDING

Ek is bewus daarvan dat min dinge soveel emosies by die Afrikaner veroorsaak as juis die reg en vryheid op eie skole, eie gemeenskappe en eie kerke.

Ek wil u in hierdie verband verwys na Mafikeng se insluiting as 'n gevallestudie van my regering se benadering tot die saak. My party het geen rasse voorkeure of vooroordele nie, trouens, dit is teen ons Grondwet. Tog is ons nie blind vir die realiteite van Suider Afrika nie. 'n Positiewe akkommodering van hierdie realiteite is veel meer werd as enige vorm van dwang en oorreding.

Ek wil dus ook in hierdie geval u reg op 'n eie vrye keuse bevestig. Tot tyd en wyl u self tot ander insigte kom wat die waarde betref van u bydrae en interaksies met ander gemeenskappe, kan ons u nie tot die teendeel dwing nie.

7. CONCLUSION

If ultimately, the option of a regional government does not present a feasible alternative for my people, you can rest assured that you will have a willing and friendly partner across the border. Depending on the attitude and approach by the new South African Government, I see no reason why the existing cordial and constructive relationship across borders cannot continue and even be strengthened. We are working on structures and procedures to promote these relations further in the future.

I have put my cards on the table and I am awaiting your reaction with great interest. It is now time to build a region that can compete with the best. I am ready for this challenge. Are you?

Let us make this region what we, not outsiders, want it to be.