

18/03/92

The Chairperson:

It gives us pleasure as delegates of the ^{country delegation} to have been afforded the singular privilege to present our inputs at this historical gathering.

This gathering marks the historic convergence of traditional leaders from all over Southern Africa to deliberate on matters of common interest. As guardians of our subjects, we always had the urge during the repressive apartheid era, to come together to find solutions to matters of common concern.

We of the ^{Qwaqwa} ^{delegation} view CODESA as the only appropriate platform at which the countries constitutional impose can be resolved. It is thanks to the State President de KLERK that he unbanned the liberation movement and released political prisoners. We have always championed the call for the unbannings and releases. Most heartily, we express our gratitude to our subjects, who have relentlessly fought and defended the negotiation process which was closed down with the bannings. Mr Chairperson, our traditional institutions have for long been used by the system to suppress the nation. But the moment of truth has finally arrived.

Participation of traditional leaders like ourselves at CODESA, derives imperative from the premise that; there are people in our areas who owe no allegiance to any political party or organisation. These are loyal subjects to the chiefdom which is heritage to every tribe. No chiefdom was embued with powers and claim to existence more than any other. The institution of chiefdom is in over view unique and yet must be accorded equality without emphasizing the supposed numbers of subjects under their domain.

Our subjects have borne the brunt of disposition, denial and oppression more than any one.

. It is with this background that we propose:

- that we should be afforded representation because we will articulate the demands of the overwhelming majority non-aligned to any political organisation. Secondly we would also wish to articulate the views of those of our subject aligned to political organisations, who however have particular demands and views about governance that resort squarely with the chiefdom. Such demands will necessarily

be of a cultural nature.

We harbour reservations about the purported self-determination of tribes along ethnic basis for our subjects are strewn by apartheid design and to a lesser extent choice all over the country. Any form of partition would bring untold suffering, again, through displacement and relocation. Tribes are mutually interdependent. By far a unitary form of government underscored by strong regional administrative regions working in conjunction with tribal or traditional institutions where they prevail, would ensure the continuation of our precious heritage of chiefdom.

In our view the traditional leaders have the divine responsibility of nation building. At all times their conduct must be beyond reproach by playing a mediatory role in society. Never must they be seen to be aligned to any of the warring factions in a dispute, save in instances where they have to defend and uphold a principles of justice and democracy. As such they must not be organs of the government of the day. As Sotho traditional leaders we have for centuries been guided by a saying that "Morena ke Morena ka Setjhaba" i.e To be a Chief one must have subjects. Therefore every Chief is representative of his subjects.

CODESA must recognise and acknowledge the traditional leaders, lest these fall prey to secessionist, racist and manipulative entities that seek to undermine the democratization of our country. Again, should CODESA accept our proposal for representation, we suggest that the envisaged mediatory/facilitatory committee between traditional leaders and CODESA be constituted of the former (traditional leaders). This will be a cost effective mechanism as the affected party will be consulting among itself and the bureaucratic procedure envisaged, tedious as it look, would be shortened. Matters would be greatly expediated.

Whilst the traditional leaders must not be organs of the state, the constitution must entrench the existence and duties of the traditional leaders within the parameters of democracy, bill of rights and justice.