

C O D E S A - 15/16 MAY 1992

Ladies and Gentlemen

Dames en Here

I have the pleasure of welcoming you at this, the second plenary session of Codesa.

Dit is vir my aangenaam om u by hierdie geleentheid, die tweede voltallige sitting van Kodesa, te verwelkom.

Die ontslaglike vordering binne Kodesa ter bereiking van sy oogmerke sal aanstons aan die lig kom. Daaruit sal sekerlik blyk dat Suid-Afrika tot op die drumpel van sy toekomstige bestemming beweeg het. Onafwendbaar sal daardie bestemming in wesenlike opsigte h algehele breek met die verlede en h ingrypende nuwe begin behels. Dit is die werklikheid van ons hede en daarin lê die uitdaging van ons toekoms. Die sukses waarmee dié uitdaging aanvaar word, sal bepaal word deur die graad van geloof, hoop en liefde waarmee die inwoners van hierdie land gesamentlik die skouer aan die wiel sal sit.

In Codesa much water has flowed under the bridge since December when last we were assembled in this hall.

Indeed, it has not been easy for those who have not been involved in the day to day activities in Codesa, amongst whom I must count my

esteemed colleague and myself, to keep abreast of the bewildering array of developments - and to distinguish between fact and fiction, truth and rumour in regard thereto.

Undoubtedly, the nation so deeply affected by all these things would welcome this opportunity to be brought into the arena again to see and hear what has been accomplished by diligent and tireless effort and what remains to be done to establish a democratic South Africa.

Naturally, the democratic South Africa envisaged by this convention and by us all, is one that would bear the hallmarks of a truly civilised state. In addition to creating a just political order, it would enshrine the supremacy of the law and establish conditions conducive to optimum peace, liberty, solidarity, stability, progress and prosperity in this region. This should not be beyond our reach.

Where, after all, could the brilliance be emulated of the many faceted diamond, which is the South African nation, with its diversity of cultures and gifts.

As the leaders of political parties and institutions and organisations, you have come together again, in these large numbers, to do what must be done at this time - unavoidably, must be done, that is, to put your minds and hearts together to work out a future of this kind for the people of this country.

Of course, ladies and gentlemen, this is easier said than done. It is a mammoth task that you have been expected to assume and which you have undertaken - but one, the attainment of which would bring untold relief for this land - and provide inspiration far and wide, to seek rational and peaceful solutions, consonant with good conscience, in situations vexed with equally daunting ethnic and other difficulties. Surely, if South Africa's problems can be resolved reasonably satisfactorily by negotiation, there must be hope for the world.

The task is great, but the challenge irresistible and the opportunity unique. As before, your efforts are being observed with trepidation, but undoubtedly also with great expectation and profound goodwill from within and without the borders of South Africa.

We shall endeavour to assist you to succeed in your purpose.

A. J. Chhabra
14.5.92