



Institute of Personnel Management (SOUTHERN AFRICA)

Instituut vir Personeelbestuur

(SUIDER-AFRIKA)



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Mr Previn Gordon  
Chairman  
CODESA  
P O Box 307  
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Dear Mr Gordon

There are two matters which the Institute of Personnel Management feel should be brought to the attention of the appropriate CODESA working group. Naturally, we are also more than willing to involve ourselves on both of these issues as we believe they are of vital importance to the future of our nation.

The first matter is the whole question of affirmative action. We have no doubt that the matter requires the urgent attention of all in positions of authority in South Africa, of CODESA and of any future government in this country.

There are fundamental issues which require attention immediately if we are to go any way towards meeting the expectations of the lost generation and the many unemployed in this country. The most important issue here is the whole question of affirmative action within education. The current dispensation militates against a speedy resolution to the whole question of an under educated and largely illiterate working population. We cannot wait for constitutional changes in order to change the educational bureaucracy, nor can we wait for new syllabi to be created to begin to correct the imbalances in the economically active population. As I am sure you are aware, any take off in the economy will see major skills shortages in the technical, professional and managerial ranks and still a major oversupply of unskilled workers. The whole question, therefore, of education, training and development requires urgent and immediate attention.



In addition to paying attention to the fundamentals underlying our skills imbalance, some form of affirmative action in terms of appointing people to key positions is required. There are a number of ways in which this matter can be addressed. We have seen both reasonably good and extraordinarily bad taking place on the African Continent. Of course, the speediest, but not necessarily the most effective manner in ensuring that affirmative action occurs, is to impose quotas on organisations. We, however, feel that the down-side and long term negative effect of this approach militates strongly against it. However, action is required. The Institute of Personnel Management has for some time had one of its divisions devoting attention, time and effort to this vexed issue, and we believe that we have a contribution to make in this regard. There is no doubt that we can learn from others, and there is also no doubt that we, in South Africa, can approach the whole issue in a creative and yet effective fashion. This will, however, require the input, contribution and commitment of all of the stakeholders. We would value the opportunity of addressing the appropriate working party on this very important issue.

The second matter in which the IPM believes it has a role to play is the question of the determination and commitment to a national human resources strategic plan. No such plan currently exists, and this may be partially because of the serious skills and other imbalances in our economically active population.

The Institute has devoted considerable time and other resource to the research into appropriate structures, models and approaches for South Africa. In this connection, we have had our researcher travel the world and discuss these issues with prominent experts. We are now at the point where we have some recommendations and proposals to make to the major role players in South Africa. Indeed, we have already made presentations to some of them. However, this issue is so important that we believe that the debate should be in the public domain and that those responsible for determining the course of a new South Africa should also bear the management of the human resource in the new South Africa in mind when making plans for this country's future. We would therefore, value the opportunity of presenting our proposals to the appropriate working party in order that we may gain the benefit of their comments on our proposals and that CODESA itself may take into account some extremely important issues which we believe the new South Africa should address in one way or another.

I trust that these suggestions merit further discussion, and I would be more than willing to meet with you to debate the logistics of taking these matters further.

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

*Tony Frost*  
~~A J FROST~~  
PRESIDENT