

  
CODESA II

INPUTS BY DR T K MOPELI, LEADER OF THE DIKWANKWETLA  
PARTY

Mr Chairman

Today is a day of hope for everyone in this country. A day of hope because we are here together as responsible people working towards a new constitution and a new South Africa. The mere fact that we are gathered here is cause for hope for a better future for each and every one of us. South Africa can never be the same after Codesa II.

We have for the past five months been gathering here as parties and organisations with diverse constituencies and most of the time with conflicting policies and interests. What has hitherto been achieved to-day is a great miracle and a clear message to the people of South Africa and the international community that we are all deeply committed to the finding of a mutually acceptable dispensation a constitutional and political dispensation that will enable our country to occupy a pride of place in the row of nations. The negotiations that have been conducted here have thrown up solutions that no one ever thought of. Break-throughs that have been achieved, have been achieved owing to the spirit of give and take that prevailed in the corridors of this Centre. South Africa must ultimately become a "rechtstaat", a constitutional state, in which the  
constitution.../2

constitution of the country must become the supreme law for the country, a constitution that will embody our dreams and aspirations as well as protect our group and individual interests without reverting to the yester-year apartheid structures. It has become common knowledge that in South Africa's overheated political climate, it has become very difficult to conduct a rational discussion on matters that are being regarded as sound principles of government in the Western World. An advocacy, for an example, for a system of government underpinned by a set of strong regional governments/federal states is usually and even immediately greeted with suspicion and even with unbridled condemnation that subtle attempts are being made to re-introduce white privilege and the hitherto much condemned homeland system. In a country with a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural character such as ours regionalism makes eminently good sense. It is just unfortunate that apartheid has given a bad reputation to certain constitutional concepts such as the right of self-determination, the protection of minorities etc. You need only refer to the constitution of Belgium and other countries to understand what I mean. A hastily cobbled constitution can only bring untold harm and misery for this country. A much slower and more measured pace to enable the participants to consult with their principals and constitutional experts

has become.../3

has become a pressing necessity for the sake of the people outside this Centre on whose behalf we are here to take decisions that may have far-reaching implications for their daily lives.

It is now time to create a democratic climate for everyone. It is time to teach our people the value of political tolerance and the value of a multi-party democracy for our country. But a climate for free political participation is an essential element of the transitional South Africa. All participants in the political process should be free to participate peacefully and equally with the other participants. A culture of violence should under no circumstances be allowed to develop - that will bring all our efforts to nought.

Die onmiddellike instelling van 'n oorgangsregering kan help om ons lewensstandaard te verbeter, maar kan daar ooit 'n vrye en regverdige verkiesing plaasvind solank geweld en insidente van intimidasie so voortwoed? Geen waarde kan aan so'n verkiesingsuitslag geheg word nie. Dit is nie onredelik om te vrees dat die demokrasie waarna ons smag, in die proses verlore kan gaan nie.

Leiers van alle politieke groeperinge moet hulle onverbiddelik daartoe verbind om geweldpleging en voorvalle van intimidasie in die sterkste taal af te keur en hulle volgelingen tot kalmte te roep.

Mr Chairman.../4

Mr Chairman, this I say not just because of fear of lives: I say this because it is only when we have rebuilt a peaceful and purposeful socio-economic climate that we can hope for foreign investment and the lifting of all sanctions. We need a prosperous South Africa. There is no point in having the vote but no bread to eat.

If we cast our minds back just three years ago, the general acceptance of these principles by all concerned is indeed cause for hope. We all know that there are still issues to be decided: economic freedom; government intervention and economic systems; accommodation of the diversity of languages, cultures and religions; affirmative action and the Bill of Rights; self-determination; the role of traditional leaders; and definition of the body that will oversee the period leading up to elections.

However, these issues cannot now stand in the way of progress to a fully democratic society in our country. We have come too far, we have already jumped too many hurdles. We cannot hope to have each and every answer ready by the time we close our proceedings here. Nation- and state-building is an ongoing process. That is why I express hope: hope for the future, but also hope that we will realise the enormity of the task that rests on our shoulders. We do not one day want to face the wrath of

our children.../5

our children and grandchildren because we have not acted responsibly enough.

This country of ours and its peoples deserve the best. It is up to us to make that happen.

Thank you.