



## **SOUTH AFRICAN COMMUNIST PARTY - SPEECH OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY, COMRADE CHRIS HANI, TO CODESA 2.**

**15 MAY 1992**

CODESA has deadlocked. Without a satisfactory agreement in WG2 on the central issue of democratic constitution making there can be no effective implementation of all the other measures as proposed by other working groups.

The blame for this deadlock must be laid firmly at the door of the principal deaulocker - the South African Government.

The real issue is not about percentages. The critical issue revolves around the Government, together with a minority of Parties, doing everything they can to undermine the democratisation of our country.

Over the last five months the SA Government has tabled a host of different proposals at CODESA.

One by one each of these proposals has been rejected resoundingly by the respective working groups. But a sinister thread has run through all their proposals. They were all designed to entrench minority power and privilege.

In the past few weeks the SA government has been compelled by an overwhelming consensus here at CODESA to accept in broad terms the eminently reasonable and democratic scenario originally tabled by the ANC led alliance. They have accepted its framework, but they have never accepted its democratic spirit.

This scenario has at its heart an elected constitution making body.

Our proposal has been that this constitution making body should draw up a new constitution, working on the basis of a two thirds majority. This was the exact formula which the SA Government agreed to in Namibia. Today the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pik Botha, claimed that the SACP wanted to impose "a Marxist-Leninist Constitution" on South Africa. We can only assume that Mr. Botha believes that more than two thirds of South Africa's people want such a constitution. We are flattered. But this is not at all our intention. We want a constitution which is broadly acceptable to the overwhelming majority of our people. We want a South African Constitution not a party political constitution.

In the past three weeks the SACP and its allies have done everything to facilitate an agreement. Within the context of our broad scenario we have considered various detailed formulations and compromises with a view to facilitating a breakthrough. The SA government has decided to spurn all of these. The SA government remains stuck in its dreams of perpetuating, through the back door, white minority rule. This is completely unacceptable.

Are we disappointed at the deadlock? Yes we are, deeply so.

Are we surprised by this deadlock? Sadly we have to say no.  
The government continues to lack the will to negotiate seriously. What they fear above all

else is democracy.

Does this mean there is no future for negotiations? We like to believe that CODESA can and must establish a framework for the rapid democratisation of our country. But whether it does so, and whether there is an effective implementation of all transitional mechanisms agreed on at CODESA will not be determined only here at the World Trade Centre.

CODESA must hear the voice of our mobilised, vigilant and critical population out there, under whose mandate we are participating in CODESA. Popular involvement is the essence of democracy. It is not CODESA that will deliver, but the mobilised masses of our people. Only they can ensure that those who still cling to their fading and corrupt white minority power will finally shift. Only the mobilised people of our country can ensure that there is rapid and effective implementation of transitional measures to level the political playing field.

Let me highlight just one of these measures, which deeply concerns the SACP, and the broad liberation movement. It is absolutely unacceptable that as we meet here at CODESA 2, there are still hundreds of political prisoners being held hostage in South African jails. For too long we have been given vague assurances about pending progress. While notorious criminals like the kwa Zulu policeman Shange and other security force killers are set free, more than 400 political prisoners remain incarcerated.

In particular I would like to single out Mzondeleli Nondula, Mthetheli Mncube and Robert McBride.

It has become fashionable in the highest government circles to disown those carrying out your own policies. I have no intention of falling in with this fashion. Nondula, Mncube, McBride and others were soldiers in a struggle and we, their commanders at the time, stand unequivocally by them now. They must be released immediately.

As we meet here today the Government of the day has been enveloped in a wave of scandals. These include evidence of rampant corruption and their central involvement in the war against our people.

#### **This government has stumbled**

- **from the Trust Feed Massacre to the Development Aid scandal**
- **from the Shange release to the brutal assassination of Matthew Goniwe.**
- **from Infogate to Inkathagate**

So many "Gates"! Now is the time for the **EXIT GATE**.

Any government in the civilised world implicated in so many scandals would have been thrown out of office by now. They must go!

What is the way ahead from here?

The SACP will be returning to its working class and mass constituency. We will be consulting with them and seeking a renewed mandate.

Let it be very clear that we cannot allow the negotiations process to be indefinitely prolonged. Out of our consultation we shall embark on a course of action which we are convinced will lead to a rapid breakthrough.

We join with the great majority of the people of South Africa in saying: **FREEDOM NOW!**