

## WORKING GROUP 2

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## THE BALANCE BETWEEN CENTRAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The question of the balance between the central, the regional and the local government cannot be divorced from the form of state which will be in place in this country.

The Venda Government, therefore, sees two options on the vertical form of state, viz. UNITARY STATE WITH REGIONALISM AND FEDERALISM.

Consequently we have decided for a Unitary State with Regionalism as a form of the state which we would like to see in South Africa.

This implies regional autonomy which will be granted to regions whilst the central government retains sovereignty.

We therefore favour devolution of powers in the true sense of the word under indirect central control. This simply means we favour a strong Central Government; a strong Regional Government and a strong Local Authority.

This balanced relationship will ensure and enable these autonomous local or regional governments to decide, through their elected representatives, on matters affecting their culture and other interests of the inhabitants.

However, we reject regionalism as a device for recognising and preserving Ethnic differences. Indeed, we are tired of racial discrimination in this country.

We therefore, recommend regionalism to be used simply as a technique in the administration of the country as it was the case since 1910, although the 1910 Constitution excluded the majority of our people. In short a three-tier government which has been in place since 1910, must continue, save that the new constitution must entrench powers devolved to regional and local governments. It must not be based on pure decentralisation of powers or delegation of powers to these elected bodies, because such powers may be recalled or revoked by the central government.

In other words, the central government must be denied the power to revoke these original powers conferred to local and regional governments. Thus we would be rectifying some of the fundamental flaws of 1910 Constitution.

We accordingly move that the proposed nine development regions be taken as a point of departure in this regard. According to the S.A. Law Commission, pp 61, certain criteria were taken into account when the country was divided up into these regions. These criteria carry our approval.

VENDA GOVERNMENT