

UNITED PEOPLE'S FRONT'S SUBMISSION TO CODESA (WORKING GROUP 2)

ACCOMMODATION OF THE DIVERSITY OF LANGUAGES, CULTURES AND RELIGIONS

In South Africa we have beyond dispute, a multilingual and multicultural society. Unfortunately the architects of Apartheid, instead of appreciating the diversity and dynamism of our society and extracting the richness of this diversity for the benefit of the country, they took advantage of these external differences in colour, culture, language and religion for the infernal purpose of breeding hatred, alienation, discrimination and suspicion.

We believe that the diversity of our society can be used positively for the benefit of all the citizens of this country in this common fatherland. Man is the same everywhere, though different in colour, culture, language or religion. Men of different languages and cultures can live together in a united unfragmented country. The values, cultures, languages and religions of the South African people should therefore be accommodated in the new constitution as follows :

A. LANGUAGES

There are more than fifteen languages spoken in South Africa. Surprisingly the powers which ruined and ravaged this country through the Apartheid policy for decades, did all they could and have actually succeeded in undermining, suppressing, repressing and annihilating all the other languages and rendering them useless or inferior while elevating only two of the languages spoken by less than a quarter of the population to the status of official languages. One of these languages is so unpopular and lacking in international status, that it was virtually forced through the people's throats. In 1976 thousands of black students were massacred when they protested against the use of this : "Baas se taal", (Afrikaans) as a medium of instruction. This language has been always associated with oppression. It was by radical means that it was recognised as an official language despite its unpopularity.

Although the other official language (English) is more acceptable locally and internationally there is no reason why only these two languages were given a higher

status.

In the new constitution, it will be a hideous injustice to continue with the status quo. These two languages shall not remain the only official languages. Other languages should also be considered.

Without being under pressure of animosity or bitterness about the past, the unpopularity of Afrikaans has been proved beyond any iota of doubt and is as such, reason enough to have it omitted as an official language. English, though associated with Colonialism and Imperialism, is rather accepted as a lingua franca in this country. It should therefore remain an official language. It should be used broadly in all official matters, in parliament, in court and in schools generally.

Concerning the other languages, Afrikaans included, they shall be considered as official languages in the regions or districts where they are widely used. However, even in those regions English shall also rank as a official language.

However, no individual in any region or district shall be prejudiced merely for being unable to express himself in any of the languages widely used in that district. Every citizen shall have the right to use the language in which he can express himself best. he shall have the right to have the proceedings interpreted to him by a competent interpreter.

It shall be a punishable offence to denigrate another person's language and no person shall be discriminated against, in any situation on the basis of language.

B. **CULTURES**

The diversity of cultures in our country give a desirable complexion to our society and should be accepted and accommodated as such. It is a tragedy that since colonial days right through the wicked Apartheid period, Western Culture was regarded as the only "civilised" culture worthy of adoration and protection.

In the new South Africa, all cultures shall be

accommodated and protected, however "uncivilised" they may be. There shall be no discrimination on the basis of one's culture or background.

C. **RELIGIONS**

Although South Africa is largely a Christian country, there are other religions existing, which need to be accommodated. No person shall be discriminated against on the basis of his religious practices or beliefs. Every person shall have the right to worship his God, god or gods at his own convenient time and at a place of his choice. There shall be freedom of choosing own religion. No person shall be advantaged or disadvantaged merely because he is a adherent of a particular religion.

There shall be freedom to change one's religion and to preach in order to win membership of one's religion.

UNITED PEOPLE'S FRONT SUBMISSION TO CODESA GROUP TWO

ECONOMIC FREEDOM. GOVERNMENTAL INTERVENTION AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

WHEREAS CODESA's main task is to endeavour to reach a political settlement through negotiation.

and

WHEREAS the economic system of any country is determined by its de facto or de jure government;

NOW THEREFORE, the UPF proposes that the democratically constituted government of South Africa, be imbued with the necessary powers to formulate a viable economic policy consistent with the improvement of the quality of life of the people of South Africa. The best system is in our view, a mixed economy as it promotes economic growth, freedom and development.

The right to own and dispose private property shall be preserved. The economy must allow for the systematic upliftment of the disadvantaged people through affirmative action.

The government shall ensure that the economy serves the interests and well-being of all sections of the population. Both the private and the public sectors shall have close co-operation for the purpose of linking up resources to nurture the economy of the country.

Economic freedom shall be entrenched. However, this shall not detract from the government's inherent and inalienable right to intervene where necessary in order to redress the economic imbalances flowing from the historical injustices created by the apartheid past.

UNITED PEOPLE'S FRONT:

SUBMISSION TO CODESA WORKING GROUP TWO MARCH 09-1992.
THE MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION OF POLITICAL MINORITIES.

MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION OF POLITICAL MINORITIES:

We, in the UPF acknowledge and appreciate that there are minorities in South Africa. These minority groups have, within the South African Context, been allowed to freely engage in various activities promoting their linguistic, religious and cultural pursuits.

We believe that such activities have to be encouraged and protected as they reflect South Africa's rich cultural mosaic. We further believe therefore that minority participation in the new South Africa is a sine qua non for a viable, democratic and just government. While in the past the diversity of the South African Society has been used negatively to the detriment of the country through divisions and racial schisms, this horrendous mistake should not be repeated. The diversity and dynamism of the people of South Africa should rather be used positively for the benefit of the country.

However, the UPF, whilst acknowledging the existence of minorities, is of the belief that such minorities should not be given special treatment in the political sphere so as to thwart all the wishes of the majority. Neither should the minority be clothed with a veto right under the guise of meaningful participation. We believe that the governmental power in the three tiers of government will ensure a representation of the various minorities in the legislative, executive and judiciary.

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The UPF also believes that a non-racial, democratic and non-sexist society in which political affiliation is not based on one's race, colour, or creed shall have addressed the question of minorities. Moreover, the proportional system of voting is geared towards giving the minority the opportunity of participating in any of the three tiers of government.

The UPF is of the view that for democracy to thrive, political parties shall have to be encouraged and those who feel that they are the vanguards of political minorities should be allowed to form such parties.

It is the UPF's belief that in the new constitutional dispensation, some parties' participation shall be more active at the regional and local levels than in the national level government.

The UPF believes that to encourage political minorities to remain as minorities forever is inconsistent with the spirit and effort of nation building and reconciliation and a sure recipe for conflict and political instability as one minority group may feel being more left out than the others.

Whereas the UPF is also of the opinion that measures necessary for nation-building should be adopted, it is also of the belief that all South Africans should develop a common loyalty and common patriotism.

UNITED PEOPLE'S FRONT SUBMISSION TO CODESA (GROUP 2)

SELF-DETERMINATION

Self-determination is an internationally accepted principle. According to International Law, self-determination is always used in the context of nations of the world in different countries. It is proper and necessary that each country determine its own future and policy. There should be no foreign interference in the affairs of any country. The United Nations Organisation accepts and encourages self-determination of nations world-wide.

South Africa is also enjoying its self-determination although it has subjected its black citizens to such a harsh policy of Apartheid for a long time. However, self-determination has nothing to do with racialism, tribalism or discrimination

We vehemently reject with utter contempt self-determination as demanded and interpreted by certain white minorities in South Africa. South Africa is one country with one nation. This nation shall have its own self-determination and its territorial integrity shall be respected as such. There is no "white nation" and "Black nation" in South Africa. Although we have people of different races, cultures and languages, we are one nation. No tribe can claim any right to self-determination as this will be tantamount to the perpetuation of Apartheid.

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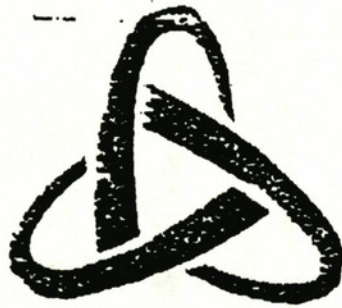
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NUMBER OF PAGES (INCL. COVER SHEET) : 9.

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