



CONCLUSION

When the ANC and the SACP created Umkhonto we Sizwe in 1961 to take up arms against the State for the attainment of basic political rights, few people could have imagined that the predictions made by the British Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, in Cape Town on 3 February 1960, would become a reality in less than thirty years. What he told Parliament and the world at large on that day was that "the wind of change" was blowing throughout the African continent and "whether we like it or not this growth of national consciousness is a political fact. We must all accept it as a fact and our national policies must take account of it."⁽¹⁾

To the leaders of the South African government and to most White South Africans at the time Macmillan was not seen as a visionary but rather as a British politician interfering in South Africa's internal affairs. For the government of Dr H.F. Verwoerd, with its strong belief in racial segregation and White domination, to accept the possibility of White Afrikaner nationalism capitulating to African nationalism was inconceivable. To Verwoerd, Black, but particularly African, political aspirations had no future in a South Africa under White rule. For anyone to suggest otherwise or to promote Black political rights, in a multi-racial democracy, particularly through extra-Parliamentary means, was to attack government policy and the right of Whites to rule. Thus any demand by Blacks for equal political rights, with Whites, in a unitary state, whether peaceful or not, was outrightly rejected by the South African government, who banned both the PAC and the ANC in 1960 when, it thought, these organizations had become too radical in their demands.

No longer able to voice their opposition to the government's racial policies through the medium of public debate and open meetings, the

1. The Cape Times (Cape Town), 1960.02.3 - 4.



ANC in association with the SACP, formed Umkhonto we Sizwe in 1961 to take up arms against the government which they felt would never change its policies unless it was threatened. To the government however, the political demands of the ANC-SACP alliance was not so much for Black rights and privileges as it was part of a wider conspiracy under the leadership of the SACP and the ANC to set up a communist form of government in South Africa. Thus the winds of change that were blowing throughout Africa to which Macmillan had referred, was regarded as not so much a struggle of African nationalism against colonialism, as it was part of the Soviet Union's Third World policy to gain effective control over strategic parts of the African continent. Black political rights in South Africa and the agitation for such rights were therefore regarded as something that had to be resisted with all the power available to the State. A good example of the latter's approach to such issues was the much publicised Treason Trial brought by the State against the leaders of the Congress of the People in the late 1950's. The fact that the State failed to prove that the accused were guilty of high treason or having indulged in treason by supporting communism only made it more determined to view all demands for Black political rights as part of a communist inspired conspiracy to overthrow the State and push for its eradication wherever it could be found.

With such a negative approach to Black political and economic demands and the latter's determination to resist it with everything in its power, even armed violence if necessary, a radicalisation of South African politics and society in the early 1960's was thus unavoidable. In short, for the South African government and the ANC-SACP alliance to have sat down to negotiations in the early 1960's following the Sharpeville riots, and the State's reaction to it, was unthinkable. Neither the State nor the ANC in its alliance with the SACP were prepared to accept each others' views. Both were bent on the destruction of the other. Both followed ideologies and policies that made a negotiated settlement impossible at the time. Yet a mere thirty years later, all this had changed. What was considered unthinkable in 1960 was all of a sudden the political fashion of the early 1990's. Even more remarkable was the fact that



the same hardline nationalist government that had rejected Black political rights in 1960 and had banned both the ANC and the PAC in that year for what it considered subversive anti-government activities, was now prepared to unban all extra-parliamentary political groups including the ANC, the SACP and Umkhonto we Sizwe and to begin talks with these organisations on the peaceful transition of power to a multi-racial democracy in South Africa. What has brought about this remarkable change in attitude both on the side of the South African government as well as the ANC-SACP alliance, but more important, what was the role of Umkhonto and the armed struggle in this development?

In the course of this study a number of significant factors and circumstances have been identified that systematically contributed to the changed conditions that marked South Africa's political and economic position by the end of the 1980's. Internally, perhaps the most significant factor that has influenced developments by the end of the 1980's, was the growing inability of the ANC-SACP alliance to escalate the armed struggle into a full-scale revolutionary guerrilla war, despite the favourable conditions that have been available to Umkhonto since the mid-1970's. One main reason for this had been the ability of the South African government to persistently prevent the ANC-SACP alliance from establishing a commanding presence inside the country. Since the start of the armed struggle in 1961, the South African government has successfully managed through the various security agencies available to it to counter almost every phase of the armed struggle. It has also successfully managed to infiltrate the ANC-SACP alliance and systematically destroyed whatever organisational structure the ANC-SACP alliance could muster inside the country for the infiltration of Umkhonto's cadres and the recruitment of new members. The latter was achieved through both military and diplomatic means, which have effectively contributed to a gradual political and military isolation of the ANC in Southern Africa since 1982. Perhaps one of the South African government's strongest weapons over the years has been its ability to adapt both politically and militarily to every new phase of the ANC's armed



struggle, while at the same time skillfully managing to retain, if not strengthen, its support among the country's White ruling minority despite increased international support for the ANC and their growing condemnation of the country's racial policies.

At the same time there has been a growing willingness among a rapidly expanding section of South Africans of all races, particularly among Whites who consider themselves part of the "democratic movement", to establish some form of dialogue with the leaders of the ANC-SACP alliance outside the country. These contacts, which began in earnestness in 1985 (the ANC has however indicated that talks were held between itself and people from South Africa before that date), substantially contributed to the atmosphere of negotiations and dialogue that marked the changes that took place in South Africa's political development by the end of the 1980's.

Externally, at least four major developments contributed to the decline of Umkhonto and the changed political climate of the late 1980's. The first and perhaps the most important has been the dramatic political changes that have been taking place in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe since Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in the Soviet Union in the mid-1980's. Since Gorbachev introduced his policies of glasnost and perestroika in 1985, Soviet and East European politics have undergone a transformation that few would have thought possible a decade ago. Although the changes introduced by Gorbachev were primarily designed to solve the Soviet Union's economic and political problems, it also had a major effect on Moscow's attitude towards the Cold War, international communism, regional conflict and the continued supply of arms of war to "liberation organisations" such as the ANC-SACP alliance and Umkhonto.

Faced with a rapidly deteriorating economic and political situation at home, particularly the problem of ethnic minorities, the Soviet government was increasingly forced to turn its attention from its foreign adventures towards its more pressing domestic problems. Correspondingly, it has become increasingly uneconomical for the



Soviet Union to maintain its economic and political support for governments and liberation organisations in the Third World, particularly those in Africa that showed little prospect of ever becoming anything more than a permanent recipient of Soviet military and financial aid. In its endeavours to rebuild its economy and to overhaul its political system, the Soviet Union could no longer afford such liabilities. It has become increasingly reluctant to continue pouring resources into organisations and governments that have little chance of bringing about the sort of political and economic changes that could be advantageous to Moscow and the cause of international communism.

In 1988 it was reported by political analysts in the United States that a subtle change had taken place in the Soviet Union's views towards South Africa and the ANC. The report pointed out that, while no one thinks that South Africa's conservative government would embrace Moscow or vice versa, there were strong indications that the Soviet Union was prepared to soften its stance on South Africa as part of a wider policy reassessment on Africa. It was further stated that it was becoming increasingly clear to Soviet policy makers that neither the ANC nor the SACP had the ability to bring about political change through revolutionary armed struggle in South Africa. As a result of this realization, it was stated, the Soviet Union's enthusiasm for the ANC and its armed struggle in South Africa has considerably declined by the end of the 1980's.⁽²⁾

This change in attitude by the Soviet Union towards South Africa and the armed struggle did not escape the ANC-SACP alliance which, in January 1990, declared its willingness to adapt itself to the reforms that have been taking place in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe under the leadership of Gorbachev. Thus after more than four decades of faithful support for the principles of orthodox communism and Stalinism, and after having initially shown strong opposition to the

2. The Daily News (Durban), 1988.03.08.



reform initiatives of Gorbachev, the SACP by the beginning of the 1990's had finally come to realise that unless it changed with the times and followed the course of history, it ran the real risk of being totally isolated by changes taking place in the Soviet Union and in South Africa, which increasingly favoured a political rather than a military solution to regional conflicts.⁽³⁾ These developments, particularly in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and the diplomatic successes that the South African government has had against the ANC-SACP alliance since the early 1980's and which culminated in the expulsion of the ANC and Umkhonto from Angola at the beginning of 1989, have all contributed to the changed political climate in South Africa.

A third and perhaps less recognised external factor that has contributed to the changed political climate in South Africa and which has prompted the South African government to seriously review its policies, has been the country's declining financial and economic position as a result of the ANC's sanctions campaign. Although the South African government has managed to weather the international sanctions and disinvestment campaign since the early 1980's it could not counter its effects as successfully as it did with the United Nations arms embargo introduced against the country in the late 1970's. Although South Africa managed to obtain most of the advanced technology it needed to keep the country's industries afloat and has managed to reroute most of its exports, the country's economic performance has been steadily declining since the mid-1980's, due to a growing lack in foreign capital; rapid disinvestment; a decline in new investments and a massive outflow of capital needed to settle the country's foreign debt commitment. Although South Africa has managed to convert and "roll over" some of its foreign debt - to the great annoyance of the ANC - a large portion remained that needed to be settled on an annual basis. With a persistently low gold price, an unacceptably high inflation rate, an economy that continued to under-perform and a high security and military expenditure, the South

3. The Daily News (Durban), 1990.01.25.



African government found it increasingly difficult towards the end of the 1980's to balance its books. Although it resorted to the printing of more money, this only fueled the country's already high inflation rate, which had a direct and detrimental effect on the value of the Rand and its exchange rate against the currencies of South Africa's major trading partners.

At the end of 1988 South Africa's total foreign debt stood at 21,2 billion dollars or 56,18 billion rands. Of this some 14,9 billion dollars (39,48 billion rands) were held by American, British, French, Japanese, West German and Swiss banking houses. The rest, some 6,21 billion dollars (16,69 billion rands) were held by foreign companies, institutions and individuals. In terms of the Third Interim Arrangement reached in mid-1989, South Africa had to repay some 1,5 billion dollars (3,84 billion rands) of the 8 billion dollars (20,48 billion rands) inside the "standstill net" agreed upon. This was to be done over a period of three years and six months, starting in December 1990. This figure, even at its quoted lower level of between 6 to 7 billion dollars (15 to 17 billion rands), will place an enormous strain on South Africa's future ability to generate new jobs and to show a positive economic growth rate in order to sustain its rapidly expanding Black population and to meet their social and economic needs.⁽⁴⁾

Although the ANC-SACP alliance has been credited with much of South Africa's economic and financial ills during the latter half of the 1980's, a fair proportion of this credit should also go to the South African government itself for having created part of its own predicament. Much of the country's economic problems began shortly after President P.W. Botha made his now famous "Rubicon Speech" in Durban in August 1985,⁽⁵⁾ in which he confirmed the government's

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4. V. Cramer, Debt Negotiations: A political triumph but economic hardship will follow, (South African Update I (7), 1989.10.15 - 31, p. 7).
 5. The Daily News (Durban), 1985.08.16. See also The Sunday Tribune (Durban), 1985.08.25.



commitment to political change in South Africa but failed to spell out what the parameters of this change would be and what steps the government would be prepared to take to bring it about. The speech, which came at the height of the 1985 township unrest, failed to satisfy the international community who were looking for positive signs of real reform from the South African government.

Disappointed by the South African government's lack of real commitment to political change in South Africa, and convinced that Botha's policies and defiant attitude towards the country's problems but in particular the world's demands for change was a sure recipe for racial disaster, the international community led by the major banking houses and other financial institutions began to demand the immediate repayment of all short and long-term loans made to South Africa before 1985. They also refused to grant any further loans to the country. Alarmed by the drastic action of the international banking community, many foreign investors also began to withdraw their investments from South Africa. Better to lose some, than to lose all, they argued. (*)

Financial sanctions, argued South African Update, (7) which had a more harmful effect on the economy than trade sanctions or disinvestment, were implemented not by concerned governments under sanctions pressures - although this pressure had its effect on international banks - but by international bankers and businessmen who were concerned mainly about their investments in a country fraught with political and other problems.

A further major contributing factor to South Africa's financial woes by the latter half of the 1980's was the country's high defence expenditure which was primarily brought about by the war against Swapo in Angola and the ever present need for a strong military force

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6. Cramer, Debt Negotiations, (South African Update 1 (7), 1989.10.15 - 31, p. 7).
 7. Cramer, Debt Negotiations, (South African Update 1 (7), 1989.10.15 - 31, p. 7).



to counter the insurrectionary activities of the ANC-SACP alliance and to meet the possibility of an all-out revolutionary guerrilla war. In 1987/1988 the defence budget was 6,7 billion rands. This was a 30 percent increase over the 1986/1987 budget figure of 5,1 billion rands. In terms of the total South African budget for the 1987/1988 financial year the defence budget represented 14,7 percent of it as compared to 13,7 percent for the 1986/1987 financial year.^(*) For the 1988/1989 period the defence budget was increased to 8,2 billion rands which was a 22 percent increase over the 1987/1988 amount of 6,7 billion rands. The 8,2 billion rands represented 15 percent of the total annual budget of South Africa. The following year, 1989, the defence budget was increased to the massive amount of 9,9 billion rands which represented a 21 percent increase over the 8,2 billion rands of the previous financial year.^(*)

Although the factors and conditions raised thus far all had a major influence on the changed political climate and developments of the late 1980's, the ANC-SACP alliance and Umkhonto too were to a large degree responsible for their own predicament and poor performance over the years. It was abundantly clear even before the signing of the New York Agreement in December 1988 that the liberation alliance and Umkhonto in particular was unable to accelerate the armed struggle or push it beyond the 200 or more armed attacks a year that the organisation had been able to maintain since 1986, many of which were limited attacks directed against minor targets. Although the ANC-SACP alliance has gone out of its way since the inception of Umkhonto and the armed struggle in 1961 to convince the international community of the justness of its actions and that it had the support of the Black masses in South Africa to wage armed struggle against the South African government, the truth of the situation was that Umkhonto was in reality the military wing of the SACP and not the ANC and that while many Blacks in South Africa supported the armed struggle very few, if not the majority, were not prepared to leave

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8. Cooper, Race Relations Survey, 1987/1988, p. 512.
 9. Cooper, Race Relations Survey, 1988/1989, p. 518.



South Africa and join the liberation alliance, especially Umkhonto. Those who left South Africa in the mid-1970's and again in the mid-1980's to join Umkhonto were largely representative of the radical element in South African Black politics which cannot be identified with the majority of the Black masses in the country, despite the apartheid policies of the government and the latter's growing isolation by the international community.⁽¹⁰⁾ Nor were the conditions for Black economic and social upliftment as poor in South Africa as the ANC wanted the world to believe. On the contrary, social and economic conditions in Zambia, where the ANC-SACP alliance and Umkhonto had their headquarters, were by the ANC's own admission a great deal worse than conditions in South Africa. It is generally accepted both locally as well as internationally that Blacks in South Africa in general had a much higher standard of living either through their involvement in industry and commerce or through their co-operation with the system of apartheid in their capacity as teachers, doctors, lawyers, civil servants, police officials and soldiers of the SADF than their counterparts in the rest of Africa.

Many of the ANC-SACP alliance and Umkhonto's problems with regards to the armed struggle were brought about by its own internal problems such as poor organisation, poor leadership, lack of security, the problems of exile leadership, excesses by its security organ(s), lack of control over its cadres particularly inside South Africa, factionalism, rank and file dissention of the role and alleged domination of the liberation alliance by the SACP, persistent dissatisfaction with conditions in Umkhonto's training camps, the quality of instruction, limited finances, poor food, and the use of foreign ideologies in favour of an ideology based on the realities of the South African situation, that would be more acceptable to the people of South Africa. If one adds to this the apparent willingness of a great many of Umkhonto's cadres to inform on the organisation and its leaders,

10. According to a survey conducted in 1987 it was estimated that the ANC at the time only enjoyed the support of some 25 percent of South Africa's Black population (The Daily News (Durban), 1987.11.10).



and the inability of Umkhonto to return the "thousands" of trained cadres it claimed to have to South Africa, not to mention the role of the SACP in its affairs, a relatively clear picture emerged as to why the armed struggle found itself in trouble by the end of 1988. Had the ANC and Umkhonto been as independent and as non-aligned as the liberation movement has claimed it to be and had Umkhonto received its political, ideological and military support from sources other than the communist world, developments in the Soviet Union might have had a less dramatic effect on the armed struggle than was the case by the end of the 1980's. With the ANC and Umkhonto being fiefs of the SACP the armed struggle's status was directly affected by the changes that were taking place in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe since the mid-1980's. The adoption of a new programme on policy by the SACP in January 1990 and the subsequent distribution of this policy programme among the members of the NEC of the ANC and the NHC of Umkhonto in which the SACP rejected its former orthodox Stalinist approach to communism in favour of the political reforms initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev in the Soviet Union since 1985, was clear confirmation of this.

All indications by the end of the 1980's were pointing towards a declining role and status for Umkhonto and the armed struggle and increased momentum for the forces of peaceful change and a political solution to South Africa's racial and political problems. Clearly, history and time had caught up with both the ANC-SACP alliance and Umkhonto as well as the South African government and its apartheid policies by the end of the 1980's.



POSTSCRIPT

Since the signing of the New York Accord in December 1988 and the collapse of Umkhonto's military presence in Angola a number of significant developments both locally and internationally have taken place that have further advanced the course of moderation and the search for a peaceful solution to South Africa's problems, and retarded the armed struggle and with it the position and future role of Umkhonto, despite claims by the latter that it was both determined and capable of continuing with the armed struggle.

Internationally these factors were:⁽¹⁾

- a) the further collapse of communism in its traditional and orthodox form and a growing desire among Eastern Bloc nations for greater democratic rights and complete freedom from communism;
- b) the ending of the Cold War and with it a marked decline in the incidents of regional conflict and terrorism that had formed such an important part of it;
- c) the desire of the Soviet Union, embattled by serious economic, political and ethnic problems, to reduce conflict with the West in regional disputes through political means;
- d) growing indications of a cooling down of relations between Moscow and the ANC, particularly with regard to the Soviet Union's support for armed conflict; and
- e) growing indications of a change among some European but particularly African leaders in their attitude towards the South African government.

Locally, factors that had an influence on the position of Umkhonto and the armed struggle after 1988 were:

1. South African Update 1 (1), 1989.07.15 - 31, pp. 1 - 8.



- a) a more conciliatory attitude from the South African government towards the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries in Europe,
- b) increased diplomatic and other activity between South Africa and the Soviet Union,
- c) a continuation of the pilgrimage of South Africans (academics, students, politicians, church leaders and other interest groups) to talk with the ANC,
- d) reports in the local press of a definite shift in Soviet thinking and attitude towards South Africa, the ANC and the armed struggle,
- e) repeated reports that Blacks were sick of protest and violence, particularly Black-on-Black violence,
- f) the unexpected meeting between State President, Botha and the imprisoned leader of the ANC, Nelson Mandela on 5 July 1989,
- g) the government's proclaimed willingness to negotiate with anyone including the ANC, the SACP and Umkhonto as long as they foreswore violence,
- h) a growing awareness among the supporters of both the ANC and the Mass Democratic Movement that the ANC and Umkhonto were no longer in a favourable position to escalate or intensify the armed struggle and thus bring about the destruction of White minority rule through armed violence,
- i) increased pressure from the White political opposition to the left of the government party to begin talks with the ANC while conditions were advantageous for it,⁽²⁾ and
- j) the resignation of President Botha in August 1989 and the election of a more enlightened government under President F.W. de Klerk to power in September 1989.

The latter development was perhaps the most significant development of 1989 in that it brought to power a new government whose declared

2. South African Update 1 (1), 1989.07.15 - 31; The Daily News (Durban), 1989.03.13; The Sunday Tribune (Durban), 1989.03.19.



policy it was to promote talks with the ANC, the SACP, Umkhonto and other extra-parliamentary groups and to create a new South Africa based on equality before the law and the protection of human rights. Every South African would have the right to participate in the decision-making process at all levels of government affecting his or her interests, but no individual or group would be allowed to dominate or be dominated. The new South Africa would be based on the principle of self-determination regarding own affairs, with joint decision-making on general affairs.⁽³⁾

At a pre-election meeting held in Cape Town in July 1989, De Klerk made it clear that the only obstacle in the way of talks between the government and the ANC was the latter's insistence on the continuation of its armed struggle. He openly challenged the ANC and its leaders to renounce armed violence as a political solution and to commit themselves (as Mandela and President Botha did on 5 July) to a peaceful settlement of South Africa's problems.⁽⁴⁾

The objective of the new South African government under De Klerk was clearly, to convince the international community of South Africa's willingness to move to a negotiated settlement in South Africa; to discredit the ANC-SACP's pro-communist stance at a time when the entire system of communism was collapsing all over Europe, and to move as rapidly as possible to solving South Africa's political and economic isolation.

To the ANC-SACP alliance, on the other hand, the changes that took place in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in 1989, and the loss of its operational facilities, bases and general sanctuary in Angola, as well as the changing attitude of African leaders such as President Kenneth Kaunda towards the ability of the ANC and Umkhonto to bring an end to apartheid and White minority rule in South Africa through

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3. Cooper, Race Relations Survey, 1988/1989, Overview, pp. xxiv, 501.
 4. South African Bureau of Information, Beleidoorsig. Die Gesprek met Mnr. Mandela, Jaargang 2 (8), Oktober 1989, pp. 39 - 47.



armed struggle, placed it at the cross-roads in 1989. The new South African government's growing willingness, highlighted by the meeting between Botha and Mandela in mid-1989, to meet and talk with the leaders of the ANC, had forced the ANC-SACP alliance to give serious reconsideration to its position on negotiations. It was clear that if it did not react to the South African government's reconciliatory attitude, it ran the risk of being presented as an unwilling partner in the search for a peaceful solution to South Africa's problems.

Although the ANC continued to deny that its ability to bring about an armed victory in South Africa had declined after December 1988, changes that were effected to the organisation's leadership in 1989, clearly indicated that the ANC was giving increasing consideration to a negotiated settlement as an alternative to armed struggle in South Africa. This apparent shift in emphasis was highlighted by the surprise appointment of Thabo Mbeki, the organisation's Chief of Information and Publicity, to head the influential International Department in mid-1989. Mbeki, who is the son of ANC and Umkhonto veteran, Govan Mbeki, was known to be a "moderate" communist and a strong supporter of a political settlement in South Africa.⁽⁵⁾

Since his appointment to the International Department, Mbeki has taken tentative steps to keep the ANC up to date on if not abreast of developments both in Europe and South Africa. There have been two significant developments in this direction. The first has been the strengthening of the Mbeki- and thus the pro-negotiations faction in the ANC-SACP alliance at the cost of military hardliners in the organisation such as Kasrils and Hani. The second has been a growing shift in the ANC's attention and contact from the East to the West. Since Mbeki became head of the ANC "foreign office" in 1989, the ANC has sought increased contact with the United States whom it sees as a natural ally in its search for a political settlement in South Africa. What the ANC and Umkhonto could no longer do through military

5. South Africa: The ANC's Diplomatic Offensive, (Africa Confidential 30 (13), 1989.06.03, pp. 3 - 4).



means after 1988, the United States was now expected to do through diplomatic and economic pressure after 1989. In search of America's support for its campaign against the South African government, the ANC under the direct influence of Thabo Mbeki, established an office in Washington in November 1989. The person appointed to this new office was Dr. Lindiwe Mabuza, the ANC's former chief representative to Stockholm, Sweden, and a personal friend of Thabo Mbeki. In fact it was Mbeki who engineered her transfer from Kenya to Washington in 1989. (6)

Up to 1989, the ANC, because of its strong ties with the SACP and the Soviet Union, has largely neglected the United States as an important ally in its struggle for democratic rights in South Africa. But with the dramatic shift that has taken place in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe since the latter part of the 1980's, and the rapid collapse of both orthodox communism and the Cold War, not to mention the changes that have taken place in the Soviet Union's attitude towards regional conflict, America's anti-apartheid stance and its insistence on sanctions have become of vital importance to the ANC in its diplomatic initiatives, in order to force the South African government to the negotiating table.

Since the beginning of 1989, the ANC has also increasingly called on the MDM inside South Africa to intensify its pressure on the South African government. It has also called for a major meeting with the MDM to discuss developments inside South Africa and to work out a joint strategy. Part of the reason for this latter development has been a growing fear in the ANC-SACP alliance that the exile leadership might become isolated by developments inside South Africa and lose the initiative to the leaders of the MDM who were in constant contact with events and developments inside the country. (7)

The meeting between the ANC and the MDM took place at Lusaka between

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6. South Africa: The ANC's Diplomatic Offensive, (Africa Confidential 30 (13), 1989.06.03, pp. 3 - 4).
 7. South African Update I (10), December 1989, p. 1.



6 and 7 June 1989, and involved the entire NEC of the ANC. At this meeting the ANC admitted that there were clear signs that the South African government was serious about a negotiated settlement in South Africa and that it believed that the government would take positive steps towards negotiations and towards meeting the pre-conditions laid down by the ANC in 1987.^(*) In August 1987, following a meeting between representatives of the ANC, the SACP and Umkhonto and a large delegation from South Africa in Dakar, Senegal, in July of the same year, the ANC announced five "minimal conditions" that had to be met by the South African government before talks about talks between the South African government and the ANC could begin. The five conditions were:

1. the release of all political prisoners, detainees, captured "freedom fighters" and prisoners of war;
2. the lifting of the state of emergency and the withdrawal of all South African Defence Force (SADF) personnel and police from the townships and other African residential areas;
3. the repeal of all "politically repressive laws, which included laws that empowered the regime to proscribe persons, political organisations and institutions and/or restrict freedom of assembly, the press and of speech";
4. the ending of the "bantustan system" and the reintegration of the "independent homelands" into South Africa; and
5. the allowing of the unconditional return of all exiles and political refugees to South Africa.^(*)

Consequently, at the Lusaka meeting with the MDM in June 1989 it was decided that the time had come for the

liberation movement to collectively review our position on negotiations. Our perspective in doing so is to find the appropriate response that fend off this initiative in a manner that:

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8. The Daily News (Durban), 1989.07.20. See also South African Update 1 (1), 1989.07.15 - 31, p. 5.
 9. Du Pisani, When Apartheid Goes: Dialogue with the ANC, p. 3; Cooper, Race Relations Survey, 1987/1988, p. 702.



- a) Does not create confusion or division in our ranks
- b) Does not result in the demobilisation of the masses;
- c) Does not result in any lessening of pressure from the international area; and
- d) Results in us maintaining the initiative against the regime. (10)

The meeting also examined the position of the ANC, its major allies and opponents on the question of negotiations and the South African government's diplomatic initiatives. It subsequently concluded that, while the West in general wanted dialogue and a negotiated settlement in South Africa, they differed in their interpretations of how this should come about. America, it pointed out, wanted to initiate a process of contact, dialogue and negotiations similar to that in South West Africa and Angola and which led to the expulsion of the ANC from the latter in 1988. Its role in this process, the meeting was told, was to maintain sufficient pressure on the South African government to come to the negotiating table. Britain on the other hand had a somewhat different approach. Unlike America, it believed that pressure should be applied to both the South African government as well as the liberation movement to force both to sit down to talks on a negotiated settlement. The meeting also concluded that the British government under Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher did not support far-reaching changes in South Africa, and was considering sending a new "contact group", similar to the Eminent Persons' Group (EPG) to South Africa. The EPG was formed in 1986 to act as go-between between the ANC and the South African government. The group, however, failed in its efforts when the South African government sanctioned a Defence Force raid on ANC-Umkhonto bases in Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe in May of that year.

The meeting further pointed out that there were also those in the British government who believed that a solution to South Africa's problems could be found without the ANC and the SACP and that as long

10. The Daily News (Durban), 1989.07.20.



as South Africa showed progress towards a negotiated settlement, the British government should refrain from supporting sanctions against the country.⁽¹¹⁾

As far as the "frontline states" were concerned, the meeting noted Zambia's "predisposition" towards negotiations, Mozambique's frequent contact with South Africa, and Eduardo dos Santos of Angola's view that "we may not have the time to develop that position of strength" in response to the MDM view that "we must be in a position of strength before we commence negotiations".⁽¹²⁾

The meeting also expressed its concern over the changing attitude of its international allies. "At a recent meeting between the Chinese and our comrades," it pointed out, "the Chinese made a distinction between the ending of apartheid and the ending of White rule. Their view was that we should be prepared to move slowly and accept [a] modification of the status quo as a starting point." It also referred to the role of the Soviet Union and pointed out that indications were that the latter was prepared to work side-by-side with the West for a peaceful settlement of the South African situation. The possibility of such a scenario in the immediate future was a great worry to the ANC and the MDM who felt that they might eventually be pushed into a negotiated settlement in which they would not be in a position to dictate the terms. What was particularly disturbing to the group (ANC, MDM) was the fact that the West, with the support of "our long-established friends", was pushing for "a modified/reformed capitalist society" to replace the current apartheid system in South Africa, a society quite different from what they have envisaged and fought for over the years.⁽¹³⁾

In view of these developments and the assessment of the international

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11. The Daily News (Durban), 1989.07.20.
 12. The Daily News (Durban), 1989.07.20; South African Update I (1) 1989.07.15 - 31, p. 5.
 13. The Daily News (Durban), 1989.07.21; South African Update I (1) 1989.07.15 - 31, p. 5.



community's approach towards South Africa in 1989, it was concluded that the ANC and the MDM must

dictate the terms of change. Nothing should start that we are opposed to. Our struggle is to take control of the process and ensure that negotiations, should they come about, are genuine and serious. For this reason it is important that we should all have the same agreed positions both inside and outside South Africa; we have a strategy to remain in control so those who intervene have to deal with our position ...

It was therefore considered absolutely essential that

We have to present proposals on this issue before the rest of the world comes up with something. The world must deal with our proposal rather than us having to deal with another initiative. This would place us at an advantage and give us the ability to control and direct the process.⁽¹⁴⁾

It was thus critical for the ANC and the MDM to produce an alternative proposal and to ensure that they retained the initiative. At the same time this should be done in such a way that there was no demobilisation of the masses nor the creation of a fake impression that the South African government was prepared to hold genuine negotiations. Since the South African government appeared to be willing to accept the ANC's pre-conditions, it was suggested that perhaps the stakes should be raised through the introduction of new pre-conditions, part of which may be that the negotiating process should lead to the establishment of a constituent assembly or an interim government, to chart a new constitution for South Africa. With the OAU's annual summit meeting only three weeks away at the time and the Commonwealth conference taking place in mid-October 1989, there was understandably an urgency among the ANC and the MDM's leadership to reach unity of action and to win the OAU's support for its pre-conditions on a negotiated settlement in South Africa.⁽¹⁵⁾

14. The Daily News (Durban), 1989.07.20.

15. The Daily News (Durban), 1989.07.20.

Unfortunately for the ANC and the MDM they were not quick enough. The South African government pre-empted their proposed pre-emption when Botha met with Mandela on 5 July. The ANC's official reaction to this development was that it was

a carefully orchestrated ploy by the regime to defuse the struggle inside our country by holding forth prospects of a just political settlement and a ploy of defusing the mounting campaign for sanctions by sending the bogus signals that Pretoria is ready to enter into serious negotiations with the real leaders of our people.⁽¹⁶⁾

1. THE HARARE DECLARATION OF 21 AUGUST 1989

Although the ANC-MDM's negotiating initiatives suffered a setback with the Botha-Mandela meeting in July 1989, the movement however managed to regain its balance in August of the same year with the adoption of the Harare Declaration in which the OAU's Special Committee on Southern Africa attached its approval to the ANC-SACP's settlement plan for South Africa at its Harare conference on 21 August. The Harare Declaration which was allegedly based on a letter that Mandela wrote to the ANC in Lusaka in early 1989 and which was apparently also presented to Botha at his meeting with Mandela in July, was largely an elaboration of the ANC's 1987 negotiating principles and the issues considered by the ANC and the MDM at their meeting in Lusaka in June. Only minor alterations were made by the OAU's Secretariat to the settlement plan of the ANC before it was presented to the organisation's Special Committee on Southern Africa for discussion and ratification.⁽¹⁷⁾

In essence, the OAU's Declaration consisted of two sections, namely a set of "Principles" to be followed in a negotiated settlement for a new constitutional order in South Africa, and a series of "Guide-

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16. Radio Freedom (Lusaka), 1989.07.11; South African Update 1 (1) 1989.07.15 - 31, p. 3.
17. The Weekly Mail (Johannesburg), 26 January - 1 February 1990, (The Inside Story of Mandela's Peace Plan). See also South African Update 1 (3), 1989.08.15 - 31, pp. 2 - 3.



lines" to serve as a "mechanism" for the drawing up of the new constitution. In the introduction to the "Principles" the declaration stated that it believed that a conjunction of circumstances exist which, if there is a demonstrable readiness on the part of the South African government to engage in serious negotiation, could create the possibility to end apartheid through negotiations. Such an eventuality, it stated, should be an expression of the long-standing preference of the majority of the people of South Africa to arrive at a political settlement.

We would therefore encourage the people of South Africa, as part of their overall struggle, to get together to negotiate an end to the apartheid system and agree on the measures that are necessary to transform their country into a non-racial democracy.

We support the position held by the majority of the people of South Africa that these objectives, and not the amendment or reform of the apartheid system, should be the aim of the negotiation.⁽¹⁸⁾

The declaration listed nine principles which were to serve as the basis for a new constitutional order that would be internationally acceptable. In addition to these principles the declaration also listed five basic pre-conditions that the South African government had to meet in order to create a climate for negotiations. These pre-conditions were similar to those raised in Dakar in July 1987 and listed by the ANC in its official statement released a short while afterwards in August.

The second part of the Declaration dealt with the various "Guidelines to the Process of Negotiations", and contained a nine point "Programme of Action" in which the OAU committed itself to do two things, namely, to gain the widest possible international support for its position on South Africa, and to step up the pressure on the South African government to abandon apartheid and to accept the ANC's negotiating principles.

18. South African Update 1 (3), 1989.08.15 - 31, p. 3.



Unlike previous ANC statements, the OAU's Declaration on Negotiations for the first time stressed the need for an interim government (as mentioned by the ANC and the MDM at their meeting in Lusaka in July) to draw up a new constitution and to effect the transition to a democratic order, including the holding of elections.⁽¹⁹⁾

Although the South African government dismissed the document as "an act of desperation by the ANC",⁽²⁰⁾ the organisation had nevertheless succeeded in having it adopted without any alterations by the 102 member Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) at its meeting in September, as well as in part by the United Nation's General Assembly at its meeting in December 1989. Although the adoption of the "nine principles" by the General Assembly had been described as "representing no less than the General Assembly's official, though qualified recognition of the ANC's 21 August Harare Declaration",⁽²¹⁾ the Western delegates' opposition to that part of the declaration which called for the establishment of an interim government to supervise the drafting of a new constitution and the administration of the transitional phase leading to its implementation, represented a clear vote of confidence in President de Klerk's reform initiatives since his election to the Presidency in September.

"In many ways, of the Harare Declaration's various clauses," wrote South African Update in its December 1981 issue,⁽²²⁾ "that proposing the interim government is the most significant, because it sets out the most important means by which the ends are to be negotiated. Thus, although the UN resolution accepts much of what would constitute the ANC's negotiating goals, the refusal to accept the means is a setback." It went on to state that, what this meant was that the UN, but especially the West, was showing increased willingness to give De Klerk's reform initiatives a chance and to recognise the South African government's need to retain some of the

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19. Cooper, Race Relations Survey, 1988/89, pp. 642 - 644.
 20. The Daily News (Durban), 1989.08.22.
 21. South African Update 1 (10), December 1989, p. 1.
 22. South African Update 1 (10), December 1989, p. 1.



negotiating initiative.⁽²³⁾

The South African government, however, refused to accept the United Nations' resolution. R.F. (Pik) Botha, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, rejected the document as "fundamentally flawed and unacceptable". In a letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Botha made it clear that as far as the South African government was concerned, the process of negotiating for constitutional changes in any sovereign state was the inalienable right of that State. Any attempt by international organisations to usurp this responsibility should be rejected. He, however, reaffirmed the South African government's "irrevocable commitment" to the creation of a new South Africa based on a free and equitable constitutional, social and economic system.⁽²⁴⁾

In addition to the United Nations General Assembly meeting on Southern Africa, two other important events on the question of negotiations and a negotiated settlement in South Africa took place towards the end of 1989. The first was the so-called "Paris Indaba" which took place in Paris (France) from 27 November to 2 December 1989 and was organised by Danielle Mitterand, the wife of the French President, and the Institute for Democratic Alternatives for South Africa (IDASA). The Indaba, which was a continuation of the meetings between groups and individuals from South Africa and the ANC which began in 1985, was given an exalted status by the French government. Attended by South African academics, politicians, trade unionists, newspapermen and other interested parties, the meeting was seen as a diplomatic triumph for the ANC. Although the question of negotiations received a fair amount of attention at the meeting, the event was not organised around the issue as such. During the course of the five days that the meeting lasted, a wide range of subjects ranging from recent political developments in South Africa, to the economy, sanctions, a new post-apartheid constitution as well as the need for a Bill of Rights were discussed.

23. South African Update 1 (10), December 1989, p. 1.

24. South African Update 1 (10), December 1989, p. 2.



According to political commentators and journalists who attended the Paris meeting, some leading anti-apartheid "activists" have criticized the meeting as little more than "an insignificant and purely academic exercise" arranged by the organisers "to presume to choose the peoples' leaders ...".⁽²⁵⁾ Although the identity of the activists who criticized the meeting was never revealed, it was argued by some sources⁽²⁶⁾ that the criticism probably came from some leading MDM figures who were in the process of organising the Conference for a Democratic Future (CDF), that was planned for Johannesburg on 9 and 10 December 1989.

According to Peter Sullivan,⁽²⁷⁾ a journalist who attended the Paris Indaba, the MDM felt that the Johannesburg meeting was of greater importance and significance than the Paris Indaba. In contrast to the Paris meeting, the Johannesburg CDF was attended by more than 4 462 delegates representing some 2 138 organisations and some 15 million people in South Africa.⁽²⁸⁾ While this did not necessarily mean that the MDM leadership in South Africa saw themselves as significantly more important than the ANC's exile leadership by the end of 1989, there were however those who argued that given the role that the MDM had played in the political developments in South Africa over the previous two to three years, and the fact that they were at the centre of the changes that were taking place inside the country, it was not unnatural for the MDM leadership inside South Africa to place themselves on an equal footing with the exile leadership of the ANC-SACP alliance. According to some observers, who attended the Paris meeting, the ideological dominance in the liberation movement appeared to have shifted "from the SACP and the exile ANC to the internal forces of Cosatu, the UDF and the MDM ..." because the "insiders" they argued, were closer to the reality of South Africa than the exile leadership.

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25. The Daily News (Durban), 1989.12.01. See also South African Update 1 (10), December 1989, p. 7.
 26. South African Update 1 (10), December 1989, p. 7.
 27. South African Update 1 (10), December 1989, p. 7.
 28. South African Update 1 (10), December 1989, p. 7.



They were more familiar with the terrain of apartheid and were more able to see tactical possibilities. In addition, they could act more independently and be more creative in their thinking than the exile leadership of the ANC-SACP alliance.

If the latter assessment of developments in the liberation movement is correct, it will go a long way towards explaining why the ANC had adopted an increasingly moderate stance on a negotiated settlement in South Africa towards the end of 1989. Although the new flexibility and pragmatic attitude of the ANC by 1989 could be ascribed to the influence and views of individuals and factions such as Thabo Mbeki in the ANC, there can be little doubt that the growing power and influence of the MDM inside South Africa and the rumours that Mandela would be released in early 1990, undoubtedly contributed to the growing concern in the exile leadership of the ANC-SACP alliance by the end of 1989, that unless they changed direction and were seen doing so, they might become isolated by the speed with which developments were taking place inside South Africa. This latter concern was clearly reflected by the release of the SACP document "Has Socialism Failed" in early 1990 in which the organisation while stating its continued commitment to the basic tenets of socialism committed itself and thus the ANC and Umkhonto to a "multi-party post-apartheid democracy" in South Africa.⁽²⁹⁾

What made this latter document and its contents even more significant was the fact that it came a mere six months or more after the SACP's Seventh Party Congress held in Havana, Cuba in June 1989. At this latter venue the SACP reaffirmed its total commitment to its old pro-Stalinist beliefs set out in its 1962 document on policy and programme entitled "Road to South African Freedom", allegedly authored by Joe Slovo and Joe Matthews.⁽³⁰⁾

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29. The Weekly Mail (Johannesburg), 1990.01.19 - 25. See also The Natal Mercury (Durban), 1990.01.19.
30. South Africa: The Party Faithful, (Africa Confidential 31 (1), 1990.01.12, p. 1. See also The Natal Mercury (Durban), 1990.01.19, and Cooper, Race Relations Survey, 1989/1990, p. 747.



2. THE UNBANNING OF THE ANC-SACP ALLIANCE AND UMKHONTO,
FEBRUARY 1990

Perhaps the most significant political development of 1990 was the announcement of President de Klerk in his opening address to the South African Parliament on 2 February 1990 that the government had lifted the ban on the ANC, the SACP, Umkhonto we Sizwe as well as 30 other extra-Parliamentary organisations opposed to its policies. Shortly afterwards on Sunday 7 February the government also released Nelson Mandela, the first commander of Umkhonto, from prison. Although the ANC and particularly Umkhonto's reaction to the events of February 1990 was to state that the armed struggle was to continue until the government acceded to the creation of a sovereign constituent assembly and an interim government, the general view among observers was that it was highly unlikely that the ANC and Umkhonto would be able to maintain this view for long or that Umkhonto was in any way in a position, considering the setbacks it had suffered in December 1988, to continue with the armed struggle in any meaningful way. While the militants in the ANC-SACP alliance might have demanded such a development, it would have been increasingly difficult to justify both internationally and to those it wished to draw into an ANC-led front. Any attempt to step up the armed struggle after 2 February would cost the ANC dearly in international support, especially financial support, something without which it could not effectively rebuild its presence inside South Africa. A new spate of bombings and destruction was thus not in the interest of the liberation alliance after February 1990, and any talk of armed struggle or the possibility of armed struggle was likely to remain just that - talk. Both sides had too much to lose to allow the hawks or militants to dominate the negotiating process. Umkhonto we Sizwe was a spent force and all indications are that it will be pushed increasingly into the background as the negotiations process gains momentum in the months and years ahead.



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13. OTHER SOURCES DEALING WITH THE ANC, SACP AND UMKHONTO WE SIZWE

For additional sources on the history of the ANC, the SACP and Umkhonto we Sizwe the reader may also turn to the following bibliographies:

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14. MISCELLANEOUS

Telephone conversation with Prof. M. Hough, University of Pretoria, 1991.06.03.



APPENDIX A

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE FORMATION OF UMKHONTO WE SIZWE. FLYER, RELEASED
ON 16 DECEMBER 1961

Units of Umkhonto we Sizwe today [December 16, 1961] carried out planned attacks against government installations, particularly those connected with the policy of apartheid and race discrimination.

Umkhonto we Sizwe is a new, independent body, formed by Africans. It includes in its ranks South Africans of all races. It is not connected in any way with a so-called Committee for National Liberation whose existence has been announced in the press. Umkhonto we Sizwe will carry on the struggle for freedom and democracy by new methods, which are necessary to complement the actions of the established national liberation organizations. Umkhonto we Sizwe fully supports the national liberation movement, and our members, jointly and individually, place themselves under the overall political guidance of that movement.

It is, however, well known that the main national liberation organisations in this country have consistently followed a policy of non-violence. They have conducted themselves peaceably at all times, regardless of government attacks and persecutions upon them and despite all government-inspired attempts to provoke them to violence. They have done so because the people prefer peaceful methods of change to achieve their aspirations without the suffering and bitterness of civil war. But the people's patience is not endless.

The time comes in the life of any nation when there remain only two choices: submit or fight. That time has now come to South Africa. We shall not submit, and we have no choice but to hit back by all means within our power in defence of our people, our future, and our freedom.



The government has interpreted the peacefulness of the movement as weakness; the people's non-violent policies have been taken as a green light for government violence. Refusal to resort to force has been interpreted by the government as an invitation to use armed force against the people without any fear of reprisals. The methods of Umkhonto we Sizwe mark a break with that past.

We are striking out along a new road for the liberation of the people of this country. The government policy of force, repression, and violence will no longer be met with nonviolent resistance only! The choice is not ours; it has been made by the Nationalist government which has rejected every peaceable demand by the people for rights and freedom and answered every such demand with force and yet more force! Twice in the past eighteen months, virtual martial law has been imposed in order to beat down peaceful, nonviolent strike action of the people in support of their rights. It is now preparing its forces - enlarging and rearming its armed forces and drawing white civilian population into commandos and pistol clubs - for full-scale military actions against the people. The Nationalist government has chosen the course of force and massacre, now deliberately, as it did at Sharpeville.

Umkhonto we Sizwe will be at the front line of the people's defence. It will be the fighting arm of the people against the government and its policies of race oppression. It will be the striking force of the people for liberty, for rights, and for their final liberation! Let the government, its supporters who put it into power, and those whose passive tolerance of reaction keeps it in power take note of where the Nationalist government is leading the country!

We of Umkhonto we Sizwe have always sought - as the liberation movement has sought - to achieve liberation, without bloodshed and civil clash. We do so still. We hope - even at this late hour - that our first actions will awaken everyone to a realization of the disastrous situation to which the Nationalist policy is leading. We hope that we will bring the government and its supporters to their senses before it is too late, so that both government and its



policies can be changed before matters reach the desperate stage of civil war. We believe our actions to be a blow against the Nationalist preparations for civil war and military rule.

In these actions, we are working in the best interests of all the people of this country - black, brown, and white - whose future happiness and well-being cannot be attained without the overthrow of the Nationalist government, the abolition of white supremacy, and the winning of liberty, democracy, and full national rights and equality for all the people of this country.

We appeal for the support and encouragement of all those South Africans who seek the happiness and freedom of the people of this country.

Afrika Mayibuye!

Issued by command of Umkhonto we Sizwe.⁽¹⁾

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1. S. Johns and R. Hunt Davis, (eds), Mandela, Tambo and the African National Congress. The Struggle Against Apartheid, 1948 - 1990. A Documentary Survey, pp. 138 - 139.



UMKHONTO WE SIZWE. ITS ROLE IN THE ANC'S ONSLAUGHT AGAINST WHITE
DOMINATION IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1961 - 1988

SUMMARY

The above study examines the history and role that Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) played in the armed struggle led by the African National Congress - South African Communist Party alliance between 1961 and the end of 1988. The two dates represent the formation of Umkhonto in November 1961 and the signing of the New York Accord in December 1988 respectively. The latter date is significant in that while it secured a peaceful transition of power in South West Africa Namibia it also helped to destroy the continued presence of Umkhonto and the ANC-SACP alliance in Angola. This latter development, together with other factors such as the changes that were taking place in the Soviet Union and elsewhere in the communist world, contributed to the decline of Umkhonto and thus the armed struggle by the end of the 1980's despite continued assurance by its leaders that this was not the case. By the beginning of the 1990's it had become abundantly clear that neither the ANC-SACP alliance nor Umkhonto were in a position to escalate the armed struggle into a full-scale people's war.

While this study deals primarily with the history and role of Umkhonto in the armed struggle, the fact that the organisation was the creation of the ANC-SACP alliance and that it stood under the full control of the latter, makes it also in a way a history of the ANC and the SACP and their role in the armed struggle. With its formation in November 1961 Umkhonto we Sizwe was presented to the world as a new and independent organisation formed by Africans in their struggle against racial discrimination in South Africa. The truth was that while Umkhonto was indeed a new organisation it was neither independent nor a creation of Africans alone. On the contrary, at the trial of the National High Command of Umkhonto in 1963 it was revealed that the organisation was almost exclusively a fief of the SACP.

Not only was it predominantly staffed with members of the SACP and its affiliated organisations such as SACTU, but it was both financed and controlled by the latter. Moreover, White leaders in the SACP



played an active, if not a leading role in the activities and decisions of Umkhonto we Sizwe. Although White members of the Communist Party could not become members of the ANC's National Executive Committee before 1985, this problem was overcome through their membership of Umkhonto and the fact that most, if not all African members of the SACP were also members of the ANC and Umkhonto and vice versa. In 1985 for instance it was decided at the ANC's Kabwe National Consultative Conference that in future all members of the Liberation alliance (i.e. the ANC, the SACP and SACTU) should undergo military training in Umkhonto's training camps in Angola and elsewhere. In fact, the overlapping in membership between Umkhonto, the ANC and the SACP was so extensive that for all practical purposes they belonged to one predominant organisation, namely the SACP. All three the organisations were supporters of the Freedom Charter and the Marxist-Leninist, Stalinist principles followed by the SACP which called for the total destruction of the South African government and its replacement with a "democratic" South Africa based on the socialist principles of Marx, Lenin and Stalin. These and other aspects of the special relationship between Umkhonto, the ANC and the SACP are dealt with in chapter six of the study. As for the remainder of the study chapters one to five deals with the development of the liberation struggle; the gradual drift to armed resistance between 1912 and the banning of the ANC in 1960; the decision to form Umkhonto in 1961 and the history of the armed struggle both inside and outside South Africa up to the end of 1988. In contrast, chapters seven to nine deals primarily with the organisation, leadership, funding, recruitment, training and arming of Umkhonto as well as the factors and conditions that helped to prohibit the organisation's armed activities and strategy since the early 1960's. The study ends with a short conclusion followed by a postscript in which the development of the armed struggle since December 1988 to the unbanning of Umkhonto, the ANC, the SACP and about thirty other anti-apartheid organisations in February 1990 is detailed.

C.J.B. le Roux

DURBAN

December 1991.

UMKHONTO WE SIZWE. ITS ROLE IN THE ANC'S ONSLAUGHT AGAINST WHITE
DOMINATION IN SOUTH AFRICA, 1961 - 1988

OPSOMMING

Bogenoemde verhandeling beskryf die geskiedenis en rol wat Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) in die gewapende stryd vir nasionale bevryding tussen 1961 en die einde van 1988 gespeel het. Die begin- en einddatums verteenwoordig onderskeidelik die stigting van die organisasie in November 1961 en die ondertekening van die New York Verdrag deur Suid-Afrika, Kuba en Angola op 22 Desember 1988. Deur laasgenoemde gebeurtenis is Umkhonto effektief gedwing om sy militêre teenwoordigheid in Angola te staak, sy strategie te wysig en sy bestaande basisse en ander fasiliteite honderde kilometers noord te verskuif. Na dié terugslag het die leiers van Umkhonto desperaat gepoog om die wêreld daarvan te oortuig dat dit weinig uitwerking op die organisasie se militêre stryd sal hê. Teen die einde van die 1980's was dit egter duidelik dat alhoewel Umkhonto nog aanvalle binne Suid-Afrika kon onderneem, die moontlikheid van 'n volskaalse guerrilla-oorlog verval het as gevolg van veranderde omstandighede buite sowel as binne Suid-Afrika.

Hoewel hierdie studie hoofsaaklik te make het met die geskiedenis van Umkhonto, sy organisasie, leierskap, en die finansiering en bewapening van sy kadres, is dit ook in 'n mate die geskiedenis en verloop van die African National Congress - Suid-Afrikaanse Kommuniste Party alliansie tussen 1961 en die einde van 1988. Met sy stigting teen die einde van 1961 was Umkhonto aan die wêreld voorgehou as 'n nuwe onafhanklike organisasie gestig deur Swartes, maar dit het egter gou duidelik geword dat alhoewel Umkhonto wel 'n nuwe organisasie was, dit beslis nie onafhanklik of deur Swartes alleen gestig was nie; intendeel, tydens die verhoor van die leiers van die Nasionale Opperbevel van Umkhonto in 1963/64 het dit baie duidelik aan die lig gekom dat die organisasie feitlik geheel en al met die finansiële en organisatoriese hulp van die verbode SAKP gestig en onderhou was. Dit het ook duidelik geblyk dat die Blanke leiers in die SAKP 'n leidende rol in die stigting en leierskap van Umkhonto gespeel het. In der waarheid was daar gevind dat die leiers van Umkhonto ook die leiers van die ANC en die SAKP, en vice versa,



was. Die mate van oorvleueling in die leierskap van Umkhonto, die ANC en die SAKP was so omvattend dat dit feitlik onmoontlik was om 'n duidelike onderskeid tussen die drie organisasies ten opsigte van hulle leierskap te maak. Dieselfde geld ook vir die ideologiese en politieke filosofieë wat deur die drie organisasies verkondig was - daarvolgens was dit duidelik dat Umkhonto, die ANC en die SAKP een en dieselfde organisasie was. Al drie was byvoorbeeld voorstanders van die Freedom Charter en die daarstelling van 'n demokratiese Suid-Afrika gebaseer op die sosialistiese beginsels van Marx, Lenin en Stalin.

Die geskiedenis van Umkhonto en die organisasie se verhouding tot die ANC-SAKP alliansie word dan ook in die grootste besonderheid behandel. Die studie ondersoek ook die redes en algemene omstandighede wat aanleiding gegee het tot die besluit in 1961 om tot geweld oor te gaan. Dié en ander gebeure wat aanleiding gegee het tot die stigting van Umkhonto in 1961 word in die eerste gedeelte van die verhandeling uiteengesit - hoofstukke een tot vyf behandel die algemene geskiedenis en verloop van die gewapende stryd vanaf die stigting van Umkhonto in 1961 tot en met die ondertekening van die New York Verdrag op 22 Desember 1988. Die tweede helfte van die studie - hoofstukke ses tot nege - ondersoek Umkhonto in 'n meer tematiese vorm. So byvoorbeeld, behandel hoofstuk ses die hoogs teenstrydige verhouding tussen Umkhonto, die ANC en die SAKP, terwyl hoofstukke sewe en agt Umkhonto, ten opsigte van sy organisatoriese struktuur, leierskap, finansiering, werwing en die bewapening van sy kadres tussen 1961 en 1988, ondersoek. Die laaste hoofstuk (hoofstuk nege), ondersoek die mislukking van Umkhonto se gewapende stryd en die moontlike redes en faktore wat daartoe aanleiding kon gegee het. Die verhandeling word afgesluit met 'n kort samevatting en 'n naskrif wat kortliks die verloop van die gewapende stryd vanaf Desember 1988 tot en met die ontbanning van Umkhonto, die ANC, die SAKP en ongeveer dertig ander anti-apartheidsorganisasies in Februarie 1990 ondersoek.

C. J. B. le Roux

DURBAN

Desember 1991.