

about our own constitution as speedily as possible in the interest of all the people of our country.

We are convinced that as part of this process in South Africa there will have to be elected a constituent assembly to draw the new constitution as happened in Namibia. This will ensure that we use democratic means in our search for a democratic result. It will also create the situation whereby the result of the negotiations enjoy legitimacy in the eyes of the people, to the extent that they would have chosen the representatives to whom the task of drawing up the basic law of the country would be entrusted. We are also determined that the political freedom of which we have spoken should go side by side with freedom from hunger, want, and suffering.

• (1150)

It is therefore of vital importance that we restructure the South African economy so that its wealth is shared by all our people, black and white, to ensure that everybody enjoys a decent and rising standard of living.

We do not seek to impoverish anybody or to redistribute such poverty, but the new democratic society will obviously have to address the issue of the impoverishment of millions of our people as a matter of urgency.

It is also clear that the issues can only be properly tackled in a situation in which the economy is growing and producing more wealth at a rate higher than the growth of the population. In this respect we should make the important point that once the democratic transformation has taken place we will need your assistance to achieve these economic results.

We believe that we can and should build on the bonds of friendship and solidarity that we have built up in the course of the continuing struggle against apartheid to build a partnership for the reconstruction of both our country and our region which have been devastated by the apartheid system.

Southern Africa has the human and material resources which will combine to give millions of our people a bright future and which will make it profitable and worth while for the rest of the world to enter into a mutually beneficial system of co-operation.

For many decades the ANC sought a peaceful resolution of the problems facing our country. In the period since 1986 we redoubled our efforts to persuade the South African government to enter into negotiations with us. We consider it a victory for all South Africans that a meeting between ourselves and the government took place in Cape Town at the beginning of last month. As you know, we agreed to remove the obstacles to negotiations which the ANC had identified. We are determined to ensure that this agreement is implemented and believe that the government is of the same view as well.

It is only fair that we indicate to this august assembly that we see President de Klerk and his colleagues in the leadership of the National Party as men and women of integrity. We believe that they are honestly committed to participate in a peaceful process which should result in the fundamental political transformation of our country.

The effect of our agreement to remove the obstacles to negotiations has thus also served as a demonstration of the bona fides of the de Klerk leadership. Yet the progress achieved, including the unbanning of the ANC and other organizations, the release of some political prisoners, and the lifting of the state of emergency over the greater part of our country, should not lead us to conclude that the apartheid system is ended. It should not lead us to believe that fundamental and irreversible change has taken place leading to the emancipation of our people.

The fact of the matter is that the apartheid system is still in place. The state's instruments of repression, in particular the police, continue to kill and maim the opponents of this system. In defence of an apartheid law and order, many among our white compatriots are armed and are forming themselves into commando groups with the stated aim of physically liquidating the leaders and members of the ANC. They are joined by similarly armed black vigilante groups which are ready and willing to serve their white paymasters.

Therefore we still have a struggle ahead of us. The situation requires that both you and ourselves should not relax our vigilance. As a result of continuing struggle, we must ensure that the movement forward toward the final abolition of the apartheid system is not interrupted. It is in this context that we have raised and emphasized the importance of maintaining sanctions.