

assurances that this pledge will be fulfilled, the Government continues to make massive arrests and clings to the most repressive provisions of all, detention without trial and restrictions on public meetings. The Committee stressed that due process of law and the freedoms of assembly and expression are universal human rights, and called on the Government to give effect to them without delay.

Support for Negotiations

7. The Committee gave close and extensive consideration to how the Commonwealth could best assist the reform process in all the current circumstances. At Abuja the Committee had affirmed that the Commonwealth stood ready to assist in facilitating the negotiating process and had in this context welcomed initiatives to provide assistance such as constitutional expertise and funding for research, conferences and seminars on issues and options for a post-apartheid South Africa. The Committee reaffirmed this commitment, and the continuing readiness of the Commonwealth to assist the process of negotiations in any other way that might be deemed appropriate by the parties concerned.

Sanctions

8. The purpose of sanctions is to end apartheid: Commonwealth leaders have repeatedly made it clear that their purpose is not punitive but to bring the South African Government to the negotiating table and to keep it there until fundamental and irreversible change had been secured. Sanctions have been crucial in bringing about the changes which have occurred to date, and will go on being crucial if the destruction of apartheid is to be ultimately assured. Ministers' firm view, accordingly, was that it was crucial to maintain sanctions pressure through all stages of that process, up to and including the adoption of a new constitution. They also emphasised the importance of the Commonwealth remaining united and purposeful in its application of sanctions, and continuing to play a catalytic role in shaping world opinions in respect of the unfolding events in South Africa.

9. In this context, Ministers agreed that, while it was not yet time to lift sanctions, the most effective way of securing these objectives in the crucial months ahead would be for sanctions pressure to be maintained by a programmed management approach, relating any change in the application of sanctions not to mere statements of intention but to the adoption of real and practical steps in the destruction of apartheid.

10. They agreed that the elements in this programme should be as follows:

- (a) All existing measures should be maintained in their present form until the obstacles to negotiation are