

committed itself to "the creation of a free and democratic political system" in which

- all the people of South Africa "shall participate fully at all levels of Government, on the basis of universal adult franchise";
- government shall "at all times be based upon the consent of the governed";
- "all people shall be equal before the law and shall enjoy equal rights regardless of race, colour, sex or creed"; and
- "all discrimination between groups of people or between individuals shall be eliminated and discriminatory legislation shall be repealed".

4. The Committee welcomed these latest pronouncements and commitments. They agreed that these developments were a substantial progress on the situation since their last meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, in May 1990 and that when implemented in full, and taken together with the measures introduced by the Government in February 1990, would constitute a major advance towards the ending of apartheid.

Commonwealth Response

5. In considering an appropriate response to these developments, the Committee recalled the objective of Commonwealth policy towards South Africa over the years, viz eradication of apartheid and the establishment of majority rule on the basis of free and fair exercise of universal adult suffrage by all the people in a united and non-fragmented South Africa. The Commonwealth had also consistently maintained that the forms of political settlement in South Africa were for the people of that country - all the people - to determine. In this connection the Committee noted that the Groota Schuur Meeting of May 1990 and the Pretoria Meeting the following August between the Government and the African National Congress (ANC) had led to a number of important agreements, relating to the removal of preliminary obstacles to negotiations, which agreements have now been confirmed by the announcement on 15 February of the adoption of the recommendations of the South African Government/ANC Working Group relating to the release of prisoners, the return of exiles and the suspension of the armed struggle.

6. Notwithstanding these welcome developments, Ministers noted that there had as yet been very little change on the ground and that there had been more promises than concrete action by the South African Government. The Committee expressed particular concern over continuing constraints on political freedom. In the Groota Schuur and Pretoria Minutes, the Government undertook to review security legislation, repeal its repressive provisions and present amendments in the present session of Parliament. Despite