

A new clock started ticking on election day, September 6. That the international community is pausing in the aftermath of the election is not a weakening of resolve. The cyclical, historical pattern of increasing and receding pressure on South Africa is over. The pressure is now unyielding. Pretoria must understand that this time, the world demands action.

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South Africa will remain on the international agenda as long as it chooses to be. The action or inaction of Pretoria will determine the focus of Canada, the Commonwealth and other states and organizations on apartheid.

It is part of our Western tradition to be optimistic. That is what keeps us striving to improve the global lot. The tragedy of South Africa has been a potent challenge to this optimism.

Despite civilization's best efforts, history is littered with tragedies which, although foreseen, were not prevented. Let us hope that this is not the next example. And let us guide our actions to ensure that a decade hence, we can say we were there, we tried and we prevailed.