

CANADIAN SUPPORT FOR THE PROMOTION OF DIALOGUE
AND NEGOTIATIONS ABOUT A NON-RACIAL SOUTH AFRICA
AND EFFORTS TO COUNTER PROPAGANDA AND CENSORSHIP

The key objective of Canadian policy with regard to South Africa is to help bring about an end to apartheid and the creation of a non-racial democracy through negotiations. Canadian efforts are two-pronged. Economic and other sanctions are designed to pressure the South African Government to take steps that will result in irreversible change. At the same time Canada has a number of programs designed to assist victims of apartheid, promote dialogue and negotiations about a non-racial future and counter South African propaganda and censorship.

In their October 1987 Okanagan Statement, Commonwealth Heads of Government declared: "we believe that we should take advantage of any opportunity to promote real internal dialogue." Following the August 1988 meeting of the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa (CFM), Canada launched a major fund to promote dialogue among South Africans about a non-racial, democratic future. The scope and funding of this program has increased significantly since then, from \$640,000 in 1988/89, to \$1 million in 1989/90 and \$1.8 million this year. In 1991/92 \$2.3 million has been earmarked for the Dialogue Fund.

Dialogue projects, which are designed by and for South Africans, include assistance to the alternative press, funding for events bringing together South Africans of different races to learn about each other and discuss a common future, support for human rights and professional organizations trying to break down the barriers of apartheid, promotion of the idea of a non-racial future through the arts and popular culture and assistance for discussions between the ANC and primarily white South Africans. Increased emphasis is being given to projects which will more directly assist the process of negotiations, such as the provision of constitutional expertise and funding for research, conferences and seminars on issues and options for a post-apartheid South Africa.

Commonwealth Heads of Government also noted in the Okanagan Statement the need to expose the truth about apartheid and declared that the Commonwealth should give high priority to counteracting South African propaganda and censorship. Canada prepared a strategy on that subject and presented it to the CFM in Toronto in August 1988. At that time Canada also announced the establishment of the \$1 million Canadian Action Plan to counter South African propaganda and censorship. Since then Canada has supported a number of anti-censorship activities in South Africa and projects aimed at informing Canadians about the realities of apartheid.