



Commonwealth News Release

THE ABUJA COMMITMENT

The Committee, in light of its deliberations, agreed upon the following commitment concerning the situation in Southern Africa. They agreed that this consensus should be known as the ABUJA COMMITMENT.

1. The primary objective of Commonwealth action concerning South Africa remains as agreed unanimously by Commonwealth Heads of Government at New Delhi in 1983: "only the 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 can lead to a just and lasting solution to the explosive situation prevailing in Southern Africa."
2. This objective must continue to govern Commonwealth and international action concerning South Africa, including sanctions and the encouragement of dialogue between all parties.
3. Sanctions are working. They have clearly contributed to persuading the South African Government that change has become necessary, thereby beginning a process of dialogue with the majority in South Africa.
4. The recent momentum must be maintained so as to result in the removal of all obstacles to the commencement of negotiations leading to a non-racial, democratic South Africa.
5. The role of sanctions in encouraging negotiations remains valid and indispensable. To relax sanctions now would prejudice seriously the objective of successful negotiations. Sanctions must remain until there is clear evidence of irreversible change.
6. Appropriate international action concerning South Africa must continue to be based on and responsive to the views of the majority. Such international action can best be effected if it is based on the principles of consultation and consensus.
7. The normalization of the situation in South Africa requires removal of all obstacles to negotiation, the dismantling of apartheid, and a process of democratization extending across the spectrum - political, social and economic - if democracy is to be real and enduring.