

should de Klerk fail — for example through a coup — the country would face social collapse similar to that which has befallen Lebanon, and the kind of bloodbath of which the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group warned.

The most likely scenario lies in the middle ground: tough negotiations, haltering progress and some substantial dissent within both black and white communities. In these circumstances, sanctions could be a useful carrot and stick, especially if the “big bang” theory of the complete removal of sanctions in one go was replaced. It would be possible to envisage staged removal of sanctions, and distinguish between “softer” sanctions — such as political contact, or cultural boycott — and the most powerful ones such as the sports boycott, or the bottom line issues of trade and investment.

After his European tour, Mandela indicated that sanctions could be on the bargaining table, although whether as a whole or in parts was not stated: “It is quite possible that an arrangement may be made between the Government and the ANC in which it will be possible to examine the review of sanctions even before a new constitution operates.” Major concessions on sanctions cannot be expected until progress on the basis of a new constitution is assured, given the scepticism about government bona fides which is still strongly felt at grassroots level. Whatever the final outcome, sanctions will retain their place in the South African equation until the moment in which South Africa achieves freedom, and takes up a full place in the community of nations.

NOTES

- ¹ A sanction is a measure used to deter a country from breaching a treaty, or other international obligation, to punish it for an action taken, or to encourage it to modify its behaviour. It can be applied by an individual country, group of countries or the international community as a whole. It carries a moral connotation, implying that the target is a wrongdoer, and in this sense, the use of sanctions implies a

judgement about acceptable behaviour. Sanctions can touch any activity — including sport and culture — but normally affect the imports and exports of the targeted country, especially access to money, expertise, armaments and advanced technology.

- ² “Southern Africa: The Way Ahead: Britain’s View,” 23 October 1989, document issued at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, Malaysia.

³ *Ibid.*

FURTHER READING

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