

Allow me to quote from the ANC's recently adopted document providing guidelines and principles for approaching South Africa.

"We believe that a conjuncture of circumstances exists which, if there is a demonstrable readiness on the part of the Pretoria regime to engage in negotiations genuinely and seriously, could meet the possibility to end apartheid through negotiations".

Canada has never been naive about the ANC. In the past, we have disapproved of elements of their approach and criticized their actions.

But we accept their legitimacy. We believe they have now opened the door to serious dialogue. The excuse of a Communist threat is fading, as is the portrait of a black menace fixated only on violence and terror. The ANC's new conditions for negotiations closely mirror those adopted by the Commonwealth. It is now up to the white regime to reciprocate.

The preconditions for meaningful negotiations in South Africa remain as established by the Commonwealth in 1987:

- the lifting of the state of emergency;
- the release of Nelson Mandela and all other political prisoners;
- the unbanning of the ANC and other political parties;
- the mutual suspension of violence.

There is a hope that these steps may be closer to realization than under the previous government.

The real litmus test of the new South African government will be its willingness to negotiate with the legitimate leaders of the black majority.

Until then, pressure should not be lifted. Let that be clear.

Let it also be clear that in the absence of progress of this sort, collective action will increase. Others will join in.

Unless significant progress is made, the US Administration will come under new pressures for further action in the spring. Also let us not forget that Mrs. Thatcher is as opposed to apartheid as she is to sanctions. Her patience too has limits.