

## CONCLUDING STATEMENT

### Developments in and Prospects for Southern Africa

#### Situation in South Africa

1. The Committee noted that for the first time since its establishment developments in South Africa seemed to offer real opportunity for movement away from the apartheid policy. The unbanning of the ANC, the PAC and other political organisations; the abolition of the media emergency regulations; the rescinding of restrictions on 33 organisations; the release of some political prisoners - most notably the unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and the Groote Schuur meeting between the South African Government and the ANC at the beginning of May suggest that the South African Government may be recognising the need to take concrete steps towards breaking the logjam and initiating genuine negotiations with the representatives of the majority population of South Africa.

2. The Committee welcomed these significant developments but stressed that they were still partial and preliminary measures which have not yet met Commonwealth and agreed international objectives of the dismantling of apartheid and the establishment of a non-racial, democratic and non-fragmented South Africa. The Committee recognised that the creation of a climate conducive to negotiations was still to be fully achieved. The prisoners released so far were only a small fraction of South Africa's political prisoners. The Committee further noted that despite the lifting of bans and restrictions on individuals and organisations on 2 February, repression continues. According to the South African Human Rights Commission, 324 people were being held under the State of Emergency as of 9 May, 1990, with a further 74 detained under internal security and other legislation. Hundreds of people have been wounded and over one hundred killed in confrontations with police since 2 February. The Committee condemned these instances of continuing repression which were at variance with the Government's own pronouncements.

3. In the face of all this, the Committee called on the South African Government to implement in full and as a matter of utmost urgency the measures first put forward by the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group (EPG) and more recently amplified and adumbrated in the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations Special Session Declarations as agreed international consensus on the way forward. These are to:

- release all political prisoners and detainees unconditionally and refrain from imposing any restrictions on them;