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THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS CONDEMNS
SOUTH AFRICAN RESTRICTIONS ON BEHALF OF THE
COMMONWEALTH COMMITTEE OF FOREIGN MINISTERS

The Right Honourable Joe Clark, Secretary of State for External Affairs, issued the following statement today on behalf of the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa. The Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa (of Australia, Canada, Guyana, India, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) strongly and unequivocally condemns the Draconian new measures announced by the Government of South Africa against 17 organizations. These measures will limit severely if not totally prohibit political activity by a number of the most important groups engaged in non-violent opposition to apartheid and in providing support to its victims.

The Commonwealth Heads of Government at Vancouver unanimously reaffirmed the commitments of their governments to work together towards an end to apartheid and the injustices and suffering it brings about for most South Africans and for their neighbours. The Government of South Africa must enter into meaningful negotiations with authentic leaders of the majority of the South African population. Instead of moving in this direction it has chosen to place further restrictions on their fundamental political rights.

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Secretary of State
for
External Affairs

Secrétaire d'État
aux
Affaires extérieures

Canada

The Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group concluded that black South Africans "have had enough of apartheid" and that they are "no longer prepared to submit to its oppression, discrimination and exploitation". The question is not whether apartheid will be brought to an end but how and when. Actions by the Government of South Africa to restrict open and peaceful opposition to apartheid even further will only serve to increase the likelihood of a growing cycle of violence. These actions underline the need for the international community to widen, tighten and intensify the application of measures which Commonwealth members have undertaken to encourage the dismantling of apartheid.

The Committee joins many South Africans and the international community in calling on the Government of South Africa to reverse its actions and begin to set the stage for meaningful negotiations towards a non-racial representative government. The Committee reaffirms its commitment towards this objective.