

Southern Africa: Toward Economic Liberation

On 1st April 1980 the leaders and representatives of the independent states of Southern Africa came together in Lusaka. At this historic summit meeting they signed the Declaration Southern Africa: Toward Economic Liberation. This Declaration commits the countries of the region to work harmoniously to integrate their economies and gradually to reduce their dependence, particularly, but not only, on the Republic of South Africa. Accelerated economic development and regional self-reliance are the twin objectives of the Declaration.

The document culminated efforts which started being developed at a meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Negotiations of the Front Line States, held in Botswana in early 1979. Having agreed on a policy of regional cooperation, the participants elaborated afterwards practical programmes necessary to transform that wish into reality. Thus, in July of the same year, in Arusha, the first meeting of the **Souther Africa Development Coordination Conference (SADCC 1)** was held. Also guests from the international community were present, as studies in the various areas, where regional cooperation could be realized, were presented.

Finally, in April 1980, the **Top conference of SADCC** was held, where the representatives of Lesotho, Swaziland and Malawi came to join the Front Line States in the project. Although the meeting was held some weeks before Zimbabwe's

Independence, the Prime Minister Robert Mugabe as well, signed the Declaration, thus pointing out the firm assistance SADCC would receive from his government. The **Ministerial Conference of SADCC**, besides, would take place 5 months later in Salisbury, then Independent Zimbabwe's capital city. Thus, when recently **SADCC 2** was held in Maputo, with the aim to appeal to possible investors and donors of the international community, who in a spirit of cooperation wanted to help the concrete programmes of the Conference, practically all the States of Southern Africa were present. A potentially powerful economical block with a total population of 60 million, living on a 5 million square kilometres territory and with a gross national product of about 20 billion dollars.

Because of the historical importance of this initiative we will transcribe the whole text of the **Lusaka Declaration**, which can be seen as the touchstone in which lays a strategy of a radically new development in this region of the African continent.

Signed by the Presidents of Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia, respectively: José Eduardo dos Santos, Seretse Khama, Samora Moisés Machel, Julius Nyerere and Kenneth Kaunda; by the Prime-Ministers of Swaziland and Zimbabwe, respectively Mabandla Dlamini and Robert Gabriel Mugabe; by the Minister of Trade, Industry, Tourism and Labour of the Kingdom of Lesotho, Mooki Molapo and by the Minister of Education of Malawi, Dick Tennyson Matemje, the document states:

SOUTHERN AFRICA: TOWARD ECONOMIC LIBERATION

A Declaration by the Governments of Independent States of Southern Africa made at Lusaka on the 1st of April, 1980

We, the undersigned, as the Heads of Government of majority-ruled States in Southern Africa, offer this declaration to our own peoples, to the peoples and Governments of the many countries who are interested in promoting popular welfare, justice and peace in Southern Africa and to the international agencies who share this interest. In it we state our commitment to pursue policies aimed at the economic liberation and integrated development of our national economies and we call on all concerned to assist us in this high endeavour.

Dependence in Context

Southern Africa is dependent on the Republic of South Africa as a focus of transport and communications, an exporter of goods and services and as an importer of goods and cheap labour. This dependence is not a natural phenomenon nor is it simply the result of a free market economy.

The nine States and one occupied territory of Southern Africa (Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe) were, in varying degrees, deliberately incorporated — by metropolitan powers, colonial rulers and large corporations — into the colonial and sub-colonial structures centring in general on the Republic of South Africa.

The development of national economies as balanced units, let alone the welfare of the people of Southern Africa, played no part in the economic integration strategy.

Not surprisingly, therefore, Southern Africa is fragmented, grossly exploited and subject to economic manipulation by outsiders. Future development must aim at the reduction of economic dependence not only on the Republic of South Africa, but also on any single external State or group of States.

Liberation: Political and Economic

While the struggle for genuine political independence has advanced and continues to advance, it is not yet complete.

We, the majority-ruled States of Southern Africa, recognise our responsibilities, both as separate nation States and as a group of neighbouring majority-ruled African countries, to assist in achieving a successful culmination of our struggle.

Our urgent task now is to include economic liberation in our programmes and priorities.

In the interest of the people of our countries, it is necessary to liberate our economies from their dependence on the Republic of South Africa to overcome the imposed economic fragmentation and to coordinate our efforts toward regional and national economic development. This will be as great for Namibia as it is for all the independent States of the region.

Southern Africa is a focal point of conflict. How can it be otherwise when a racist regime holds Namibia under military

occupation, grossly exploits the people and the economies of the independent states and is a major barrier to our national development? It is not the quest for liberation, but the entrenched racism, exploitation and oppression which is the cause of conflict in Southern Africa. The power behind this is in large measure economic. Economic liberation is, therefore, as vital as political freedom.

We, the majority-ruled States of Southern Africa, do not envisage this regional economic coordination as exclusive. The initiative toward economic liberation has flowed from our experience of joint action for political liberation. We envisage regional coordination as open to all genuinely independent Southern African States.

In this spirit we call on governments, international institutions and voluntary agencies to give priority to increasing financial resources to support Southern African efforts toward economic liberation and independent economic development. This we believe is the route to genuine interdependence and represents the best hope for a just and cooperative future for the region as a whole.

Development Objectives

The development objectives which we will pursue through coordinated action are:

1. the reduction of economic dependence, particularly, but not only, on the Republic of South Africa;
2. the forging of links to create a genuine and equitable regional integration;
3. the mobilisation of resources to promote the implementation of national, interstate and regional policies;
4. concerted action to secure international cooperation within the framework of our strategy for economic liberation.

Strategies and Priorities

We will identify areas in which, working in harmony, we can gear national development to provide goods and services presently coming from the Republic of South Africa and weave a fabric of regional cooperation and development.

Key to this strategy is transport and communications

The dominance of the Republic of South Africa has been reinforced and strengthened by its transport system. Without the establishment of an adequate regional transport and communications system, other areas of cooperation become impractical. The economic liberation of Namibia, following its attainment of genuine political independence, will require the creation and operation of adequate transport and communication links with its natural partners to replace the artificial ones which currently bind it to the Republic of South Africa.

We will therefore create a Southern African Transport and Communications Commission to coordinate the use of existing systems and the planning and financing of additional regional facilities. The ports of Mozambique serve four States in the region and with the genuine independence of Zimbabwe can be developed to serve two more. Zambia uses transport facilities in five regional states. The development of Mozambican, Tanzanian and Angolan ports and the coordination of facilities more effectively to meet requirements of the land-locked States are necessarily of regional concern.

Transport and Communications will be a major focus of regional action.

The coordination of transport facilities to meet the needs of land-locked States is crucial. With the attainment of genuine independence in Zimbabwe it is urgent to restore transport routes linking it to the Indian Ocean through Mozambique. Additional areas in which coordinated action will be needed include major new projects such as a possible railway from Botswana through Namibia to the Atlantic Ocean, thereby creating an alternative route to the sea for Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe; the coordination of airline schedules so that movement within the region is practicable; the study of existing and proposed micro-wave and ground satellite facilities to identify how they can be interlinked, possibly through the Rift Valley Station.

The Commission will be located in Maputo and serviced by a small technical unit. It will coordinate transport and communication links among participating States. The Commission will seek participation of all genuinely independent States in the Southern African region. In addition, in many fields notably in transport, observer status will be open to Liberation Movements wishing to participate in anticipation of genuine independence. Similarly, in manpower development and research, the involvement of Liberation Movements is es-

essential to amass the knowledge and train the personnel necessary once political liberation is achieved.

Regional coordination must be operational — it must result in concrete programmes and projects.

This will require both domestic and external finance. Present estimates, for example, show that in excess of US\$ 1.5 billion will be needed to finance urgent transport and communications projects over the next decade.

We emphasize the importance of additional resources being made available to assist efforts to coordinate regional economic development projects. In the first instance, we intend to use the Regional Transport & Communications Commission to mobilise finance for urgent projects in priority sectors by holding ad hoc pledging sessions with existing bilateral and multilateral funding agencies. As economic cooperation develops, a Southern African Development Fund will be created and research to this end is being initiated. Its scope would be subsequently broadened and it might prove desirable to create a separate regional development bank. We therefore urge the friends of Southern Africa to pledge financial support to this Fund.

CONCERTED ACTIONS

Regional cooperation in the field of transport and communications is seen as crucial to economic liberation and has therefore been given the greatest attention. In other sectors, similar programmes of concerted action are envisaged.

For trade development we recognise that many of us have existing bilateral and multilateral trade and customs arrangements. But even within these constraints we believe that there is room for substantial increases in trade among ourselves. To this end existing payment systems and customs instruments will be studied in order to build up a regional trade system based on bilaterally negotiated annual trade targets and product lists.

A majority of the people of Southern Africa are dependent on farming and animal husbandry.

Their future livelihood is threatened by environmental degradation and in particular by desert encroachment as well as recurrent drought cycles. Even today few of the States of the region are self-sufficient in staple foods. Both environmental protection and food security are major challenges both nationally and regionally.

We, therefore, urge that the International Centre for Re-

search on Agriculture in the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRASAT) set up a Southern Africa Regional Centre in Botswana.

We further urge the development of the existing facilities in Botswana for production of foot and mouth disease vaccine to provide for the needs of all of the majority-ruled countries in Southern Africa.

The spread of this disease currently threatens Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and Mozambique. A coordinated approach to its control and elimination is urgently needed.

Likewise, we will undertake concerted projects in order to exploit natural resources, in particular those of common hydrological basins.

It is a matter of urgency to identify ways in which the coordination of research and training as well as the exchange of information can strengthen programmes to protect our environment and increase food production. In the field of food security the possibility of the coordination of national reserve policies and the facilitation of interstate exchanges will receive priority attention.

We have decided to give special attention to the sharing of training and research facilities.

We have further decided to stimulate the exchange of information aimed at achieving a concerted policy in the fields of mining, industry, energy and agriculture. In particular, consultations among those States requiring petroleum products and electricity on the one hand, and those with petroleum refining capacity and electricity on the other, must be undertaken to achieve regional solutions.

The effort for economic development is an essential condition to free the Southern African States from the exploitative migrant labour system.

We are committed to a strategy of economic liberation. It is a strategy which we believe both needs and deserves international support. Southern African regional development must be designed and implemented by Southern Africans. It will, however, be achieved more rapidly and will be more effective if development takes place within the context of global cooperation.

International bodies and States outside Southern Africa are therefore invited to cooperate in implementing programmes towards economic liberation and development in the region.

This preliminary identification of aims, strategies and sec-

tors illustrates both the magnitude of the task facing us and some of the broad areas within which outside assistance will be welcomed.

It is envisaged that Southern African Development Coordination meetings of member Southern African States and other invited participants should be held annually. This will provide a mechanism for surveying results, evaluating performance, identifying strengths and weaknesses and agreeing on future plans. Economic liberation and development in Southern Africa cannot be attained either easily or speedily. What is therefore needed is sustained cooperation.

We view this declaration as a statement of commitment and strategy. Under-development, exploitation, crisis and conflict in Southern Africa will be overcome through economic liberation.

The welfare of the peoples of Southern Africa and the development of its economies require coordinated regional action. It is our belief that in the interest of popular welfare, justice and peace, we in Southern Africa have the right to ask and to receive practical international cooperation in our struggle for reconstruction, development and genuine interdependence. However, as with the struggle for political liberation, the fight for economic liberation is neither a mere slogan to prompt external assistance nor a course of action from which we can be deflected by external indifference.

The dignity and welfare of the peoples of Southern Africa demand economic liberation and we will struggle toward that goal.

This Declaration is produced in ten original copies, eight in the English language and two in the Portuguese language.