



# Women

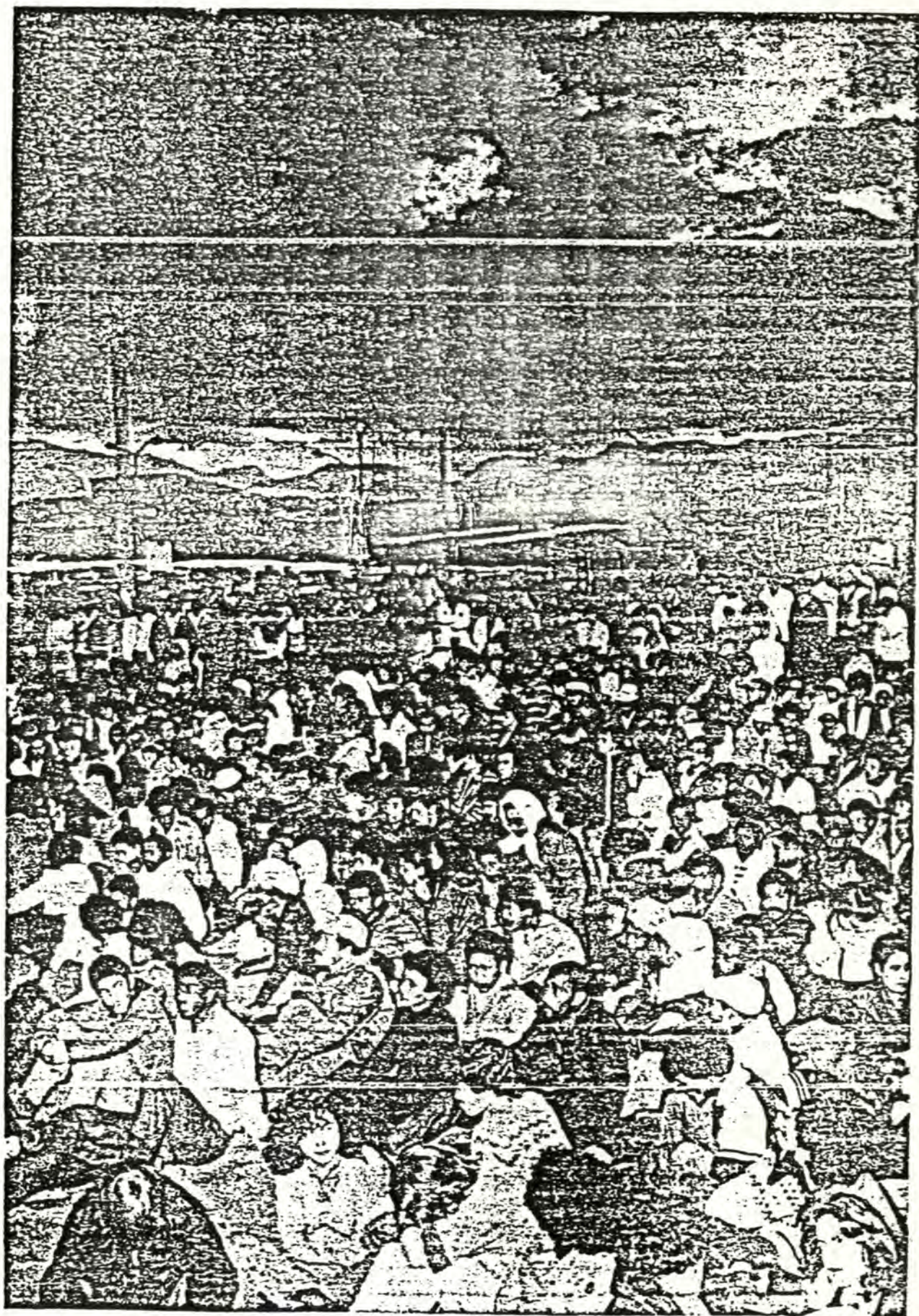
This conference notes:

1. that the extent to which women are organised is a barometer of the level of struggle as a whole;
2. that many of our finest and bravest of women have been forced into exile by the apartheid system;
3. that this system thrives on divisions, one of which the division between men and women created by unequal wages and conditions of employment; inequality before the law and vicious applications of removals and pass laws against women.

WE BELIEVE:

1. that the goal of full recognition of all women; of freedom, happiness and security for our children cannot be achieved in the present political and economic situation;
2. that oppression in South Africa cannot be wholly removed without removing the oppression of women.

WE THEREFORE CALL on all women to bring their organisations into the United Democratic Front, so that we can make real our commitments to fight shoulder to shoulder with our menfolk in the common struggle against race, class and sexual discrimination.



# Speeches

The Following are condensed versions of the speeches delivered at the national launch of the UDF.

# Frank Chikane

(Opening address to national conference)

Comrades, friends, this day, today, is a culmination of seven months' work to see the launching of the United Democratic Front. We are sure going to go into the record of history as an important event, bolstering the tide of the struggle picking up that day when the people shall say, we are free, justice is here, when the people shall live together as brothers and sisters without the exploitation and oppression of the other. However, although this is a unique day, it falls within the spectrum of the history of struggle in South Africa.

The first gathering of this nature took place in 1936 when the All African Convention was called to resist the removal of Africans from the voters roll and the enforcement of the 1936 Bill, which restricts the majority of oppressed South Africans from the land of their birth. The second event of the same nature happened in 1955, the People's Congress was held. The Coloured People's Organisation was there, the Congress of Democrats was there, the South African Indian Congress was there, the African National Congress was there, South African Congress of Trade Unions were there. They adopted the Freedom Charter on that occasion as the minimum demands of the struggle of the people. The unity then was necessitated by the onslaught by the nationalist Government which came on strongly to entrench apartheid, by putting up the Group Areas Act, the Suppression of Communism Act: which meant that all opposition to the system would be declared communism, the Population Registration Act, and the Bantu Education Act. All those Acts necessitated the coming together of the people to fight together as the oppressed.

The struggle of our people has put so much pressure on the system that it could not take it anymore. Apartheid could not contain the resistance of the people, and as a result the oppressive state had to think of a new way of continuing to oppress the masses of our people of South Africa. The best way was to make an alliance with the military as well as with what I want to call the "super capitalists." Together they could work out a system that would actually contain the pressure that comes from the people.

These Constitutional Proposals, the Reform Proposals, Koornhof Bills came up as an attempt therefore to reach a climax of apartheid instead of leaving it to collapse. Although these were already discussed amongst people, the Labour Party created a division last year by accepting the proposals. That division was exploited by the system to try to give the impression that all the 'Coloured' people in this country accept those proposals and the liberal press also creates this impression. They expected also that the Indian Council suit. People who are concerned with justice started talking amongst themselves. At the Anti-SAIC conference people put up a commission to discuss the question of unity to fight against these proposals. I was there when Dr Alan Boesak called for a broad front to oppose these proposals.

This broad front therefore agreed on a declaration of principles on which they had to work. We are going to look into the final draft of those principles today, but those are

minimum demands around which we can rally in opposing these reform proposals. The idea of the Front therefore was a new concept in the struggle of the people for the last twenty years about, and it was understood to be standing for unity in action, accepting the fact that all the organisations coming together have got differences. There are also differences of class, differences of ideology, differences of intent, but all of them agree that they reject the reform proposals that are proposed by the Botha regime, and as a result they need a broad front to do this. That necessitates therefore, the formation of this group, not necessarily as a national political organisation, but as a united front for the sole purpose of opposing the Reform Proposals and the Koornhof Bills. Although the liberal press since then tried to project it as a Charter Organisation, we will still maintain our position. This is a broad front where all organisations and people in South Africa can come together, irrespective of race, religion and culture, with the explicit exclusion of those who work within the system. The front presents also its unique dynamic which we should contend with. We should learn also to listen and understand each other, to learn to work for this unity to put pressure on the system.

People went back to their regions consulting with people in the organisations to make this a reality. This resulted in meetings held in various regions to discuss the formation of the United Democratic Front. Natal launched their regional UDF in May, 1983, the Transvaal in May and the Western Cape in July. The Eastern Cape is also following these efforts. And, the hard work of these local regional organisations in reaching grassroots have put us

where we are today, so that we can reject the Constitutional Proposals and the Koornhof Bills in a national and representative voice of the masses because these will only serve to entrench the apartheid system. The South African Constitutional Bills will only create yet another undemocratic constitution. The Koornhof Bills will only concretise the deprivation of African people and their birthrights. Those bills put together will only serve to ensure white domination to the unequal distribution of wealth and the exploitation of the people. Workers shall continue to be divided. Low wages, poor working conditions, suppression of trade unionism and the migratory labour system shall continue. Apartheid will continue in the classrooms where students will still continue with unequal facilities and not get progressive education. The Group Areas Act will remain intact. The Bantustan policy will be vigorously implemented to justify the exclusion of Africans from the decision-making machinery of the country. Rents will continue increasing whilst unemployment increases and standards of living will be dropping every day. Women will still be oppressed, non-racial sport will continue to suffer, and I want to emphasise lastly, that therefore, to keep this system, you need a repressive apparatus that is going to destroy people, that's going to kill opposition, that's going to suppress and silence those who oppose this type of a system and therefore you need a very strong repressive machinery and a military fixed state to be able to deal with this type of situation. And, I want to call upon you all peace loving people in South Africa to put hands together, to walk side by side to fight against the implementation of these reform proposals so that we can then destroy the system, so we can put up a government by the people where people shall govern according to their will.

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# Francis Baard

It is a great honour for me to open up this wonderful rally and I welcome all delegates and everybody who is here. It reminds me of a song we used to sing at school - it was 'land of hope and glory, mother of the peace'. That means South Africa is our mother land and South Africa is going to be free even if the government does not want it.

I want to call upon our leaders. As we gather here in Cape Town they are locked up next door to us. So, I want to go out of my way to say: "Mandela come out, roll out, ..... with all the rest of the political prisoners". We say we demand your release today because we want to take you home.

I say Mr Chairman, with all the blessings to all you people here, and I am asking the blessings to lead us to the different towns, villages and homes and with the same blessings I say to the people of Cape Town who have kept us here and giving them blessings to remain with them.

We say, South Africa, we want a parliament among the people here. We want a government of the people and our government would have to be elected among you people.

Now with these few remarks Mr Chairman, I declare this rally open.

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# Archie Gumede



Mr Chairman, sons and daughters of Africa - we meet on a very rare occasion and shortly after an honour has been bestowed on me which I do not feel I deserve but which will need the support of all people who were party to my election to the position - that is to being one of the three presidents of the United Democratic Front. We are all aware that this is an historical occasion. It is not often that the people who are gathered here have ever come together. There are people from the Transvaal, people from the Free State, people from the Border region, from Natal - demonstrating for all to see that South Africa is one country. We believe that South Africa is one nation and we are willing to demonstrate our belief in its nationhood. Today's happening is a true demonstration of the unity of the oppressed people of

South Africa. Being such an occasion, it is important that we show our determination not to accept oppression but to fight that oppression until we overcome, and given the determination that I have seen today, I have no doubts that we shall overcome.

This being an inaugural meeting, there is no report to be read to you. All we can say is what our goal is and how we are going to reach that goal. That goal we can reach only if we are to remain united and we are willing to work, join and link others who do not happen to be among us today. You all understand what this United Democratic Front is all about. You can see the banner there behind you - U.D.F. It is a front - it is not an organisation - it is a front and it is composed of different organisations which do not necessarily agree, ideologically in all respects with each other's points of view but who have all agreed that apartheid must be banished from the face of South Africa. It is a front - at this stage which is established for the purpose of struggling against the Constitutional Bills and the Koornhof Bills which are intended to entrench apartheid in our society. The individual organisations of this front have their own identity, but they are determined to co-operate with one another in this specific issue. You know the expression that is used in one of the bills is 'Orderly Movement', that is movement under the control of pass laws. Now many people here are feeling that they ought to co-operate in moving under the jurisdiction of the pass laws? I think today's meeting is a demonstration of the fact that it is only force that will obtain movement in terms of that Orderly Movement Bill and that when people are uprooted

from the place in which they already settled, that is called resettlement. How many of those people are to be resettled and how many are being resettled merely in order to satisfy an ideology for which they have absolutely no sympathy? We shall face this challenge by organising the people wherever they are. We have one advantage - we are able to move among our people with ease and we are able to communicate with them at will and organise and show them the road to freedom. Moses led the children out of Egypt - there is simply no reason why the people of South Africa cannot move out of the apartheid state into a state in which all shall be free and the people shall govern. However, I wish to make this quite clear that slogans are helpful but they are not the end of the road. To these slogans must be added sweat, to these slogans must be added labour and careful thought and careful action. You must be aware that the system has many ways of provoking people into rash action and that is one of the things that all of you must guard against. Whatever action you take must be action that has been fully debated and must be applied with determination. When you go back home, please go to your neighbours and tell them about what you found at Cape Town today. Tell them the experiences that you have had, the joy of living not in isolation but in association with all the people of South Africa. Please be aware of acting in isolation. It is a simple fact that we are interdependent, there is no-one who is independent and in these circumstances it is important that we should learn to co-operate with one another. We must avoid adventurism and we must act conscientiously and act with determination until we overcome.

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# George Sewpersadh

From this gathering and the spirit of this gathering we can see that the most of the people are determined to build a united democratic South Africa where there will be freedom for all. The wealth of this country has been produced by the workers in this country, and the message of the UDF is that those people who are responsible for the development of this country must have a share in the destiny of this country. The rulers of this land have tried to break the people by creating institutions like the Presidents Council and the South African Indian Council. They tried to get people to accept these institu-

tions. But, the people have made it clear that they are not things, that they are human beings and that they are not for sale - and no matter how much they are bribed they will not accept these institutions. This gathering here shows that the people of South Africa are not merely asking for change but they, by their activities and their struggle, they will actually change South Africa and bring about a South Africa in which power will be in the hands of the people. We will never rest, we will continue with the struggle until leaders like Nelson Mandela are free to govern this country.

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# Samson Ndou

I greet you in the name of the struggle for national liberation and social justice.

I am speaking as a trade unionist and worker. I am speaking in the place of Thozimile Gwetsha - the trade union leader. He is unable to be here today as the South African and Ciskei Security Police are making it difficult for him. Fellow unionists were detained on Wednesday.

Shooting, banning and imprisonment carry on while the government tries to make us believe that the government is really changing. We as workers know that nothing is changing and we cannot remain aloof from an attempt that shows that the people should defend themselves. Workers are part of society, part of the community, therefore, changing the society is a responsibility of workers because we have that power. As workers we have faced problems in the factory, low wages, unhealthy and dangerous working conditions, lack of

representation. This is the reality of our working day and we know trade unions are fighting to change this. But, when the factory gates close we go back to our communities, our townships where we also experience problems. With our poor wages we have to face high rents, unrealistic electricity bills, expensive transport, we live in overcrowded houses because there are not enough houses for us.

In our schools, our children do not have proper facilities and are given a racist education, are taught in a way that hides the real proud history of our people. Students in schools are fighting to change these. Organisations have very difficult tasks facing them and different problems to fight but they are fighting a whole system which is responsible for each and every problem that we face. Although trade unionists and workers struggle is the major struggle as it is a fight between workers and bosses, we cannot hope to change the syst-



em as a whole unless we unite all the organisations working in different areas.

Exploitation and low wages in the factories cannot exist without influx control, pass laws, group areas, and the education system. Our people are oppressed wherever they are. We must fight to change that exploitation and oppression.

The word change is a word used by the ministers of parliament and liberal bosses. We know that these changes are not based on the will of the people because we do not have rights and because wherever changes are spoken about by those who divide us, those changes are not in the interest of the workers but in the interest of the bosses.

These Koornhof and Constitutional Proposals are not the first acts of the repressive regime, they are simply the ongoing process of domination and exploitation of one class over another. This is the history of our country. This is why we fight for freedom. The current state of parliament cannot be seen in isolation from this ongoing process of domination and exploitation of the majority of our people. The government and the bosses have tried all the means

at their disposal to obstruct the organisation of workers. In 1974 a frightened Nationalist regime responding to the waves of strikes which spread through Natal and the Witwatersrand amended the Industrial Conciliation Act in an attempt to offer workers work committees in place of trade unions. Workers however, refused to have anything to do with these toothless bodies and continued to organise themselves. Within months, twenty new independent black trade unions had been formed. In 1976 our children took the lead and shook the country with 18 months of continuous acting against apartheid domination, saying that they would rather die fig-

hting for freedom than live passively as slaves.

They stood unflinchingly in the face of police, guns, batons, dogs and teargas - this has been a point of no return and left a memory in the minds of freedom loving people which could never be erased. With the suffering of their children in mind, workers threw themselves into the tasks of organising to smash this brutal system. A terrified Nationalist government, working hand in hand with the bosses, appointed the Wiehahn Commission to look into new ways of controlling the organisations of the working class. When it replied the committee made a lot of noise about the registration of trade unions. Some liberal and fascist circles hailed this as a breakthrough. After some sixty years of refusing to officially recognise the existence of black trade unions, the government agreed to recognise them. Those of us who had been hardened in years of struggle saw these proposals for what they were - an attempt to impose new and stricter control on the working class. Workers stood firm, they were not fooled. Since when were the government and the bosses seen to agree with our organisations? How could they expect us to trust them when every day they force us to work for long hours for little pay under dangerous conditions when we have to travel long distances by trains and by busses from the ghettos and come to their tiny cities to cater to their needs.

Through our united refusals to accept these so-called new dispensations we will be able to counter a parliamentary side-show which has convinced no-one. Fanie Botha has already sent bosses to deal with "undisciplined" trade unions. Despite this challenge we were able to maintain our independence and our democracy and to grow as organisations of the working class. We face severe challenges from the bosses taking advantage

of the economic recession. Hundreds and thousands of workers have been fired or retrenched, in an attempt to break trade union organisations. The threat of retrenchment is used to intimidate those lucky enough to have jobs into not joining trade unions. Anyone determined enough to demand higher wages or better working conditions is immediately threatened with dismissal. The government meanwhile has taken a back seat and is leaving it up to the bosses to break the unions.

In unity however, there is strength. To counter this threat, the unions have been trying to form a federation to make a combined attack on the bosses. Such a setup will be the most powerful alliances of trade un-

ions to emerge since the South African Congress of Trade Unions was forced underground by way of state oppression in the early 60s. I would like to use this platform today to call on all democratic trade unions to unite and work together in defence of the interests of the working class. But, the struggle of the working class will have to go beyond the factory gates. Women, students and workers must come together to build this political movement and in doing so, must work together as progressives and as democrats and agree to bury organisational and ideological differences in the interest of a broader movement. Forward to the United Democratic Front, forward to the workers' struggle, forward to the people's democracy.

**AN INJURY TO ONE  
IS AN INJURY TO ALL  
A DISMISSAL TO ONE  
IS A DISMISSAL TO ALL**

# Aubrey Mokoena

Thank you Mr Chairman, comrades. I greet you all in the mighty name of liberation - I say to you Amandla - Africa. We gather here on this very great occasion. We all belong to different religions but I think we will all agree that we are all children of God who have been created in his image and his likeness. We congregate here like a big avalanche, like a big glacier which is going down a big mountain of apartheid to erode inexorably. We must remember our leaders on Robben Island and we must pray, but when we pray we must not do like the missionaries who said we must close our eyes and in the meantime they pull the land from beneath our feet. I would like to call upon you to pray like revolutionaries with your eyes wide open because I believe we can never win the struggle unless God is amongst us. And, the God I am talking about is not a God who is an accomplice to oppression. It is not a God who just ignores things that happen to us. I would like us to pray for Nelson Mandela, I would like us to pray for all his comrades. I would like us to pray for all the people who have been detained, I would like us to pray for all the people who are standing trial because of the unjust laws of the country and who are being tried for their convictions. I would like us to pray for those people who are in exile and I beseech you to pray with your eyes wide open as revolutionaries - I would like us to pray for people who are in prison, I would like us to pray for the people who died in the struggle for liberation - for the blood they have shed from the start of the conflict 331 years ago lives coming through the ages culmin-

ating in 1976 when the youth said 'enough is enough' and that blood which was shed is surely going to irrigate the tree of freedom. Why are we gathered here this afternoon? We are gathered here because of the conflict and dehumanisation of our people. We are gathered because of their dispossession and because our people have been disenfranchised.

The regime is talking about total strategy and total onslaught and we are here under the banner of UDF to galvanize our forces to move forward like an enormous pillar, like an enormous force to say NO to the Koo-rnhof Bills, to say NO to the Constitutional Laws and to say NO to the feudal dispensation.

The continent of Africa is stretching its muscles, is rising in hope and is going ahead to the goal of liberation. But, we cannot have a struggle without a struggle; everybody is invited to come under the big umbrella of UDF. There are people who want to establish small principalities. Time and again they raise their little umbrellas and say come under my umbrella, next week somebody also is going to say come under my umbrella, we know, we do not want to be fragmented.

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## Leila Issel

My daddy cannot be here because he is banned. He supports the UDF and he wants us to be free. He believes that freedom will come in our lifetime.  
AMANDLA!

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# Abdul-Hamid Gabier



In the name of Allah most gracious and most merciful. I testify there is no God worthy of word but Allah, and I testify that Mohamed is the messenger of Allah.

Mr Chairman, my brothers and sisters, I wish to convey to you the salutation and best wishes of the Muslim Judicial Council - namely Sheikh Mohamed. His travels to the north had been arranged a long time ago and could not be postponed.

For me, this is indeed a unique occasion in the history of South Africa. More so for the oppressed people of South Africa. The formation of the UDF and its launching is like a dream come true. People from all walks of life have come together for the first time to voice their rejection of the South African situation, particularly the Koornhof Bills and the so-called new dispensation for so-called coloureds and Indians by introducing the President's Council. This gathering, despite all the hardships and difficulties which we the oppressed face, shows the power of humanity, the noble creation of God.

We are committed religiously from an Islamic point of view to

associate ourselves with the oppressed to help us in bringing about a just society. Let it be said here today loud and clear as South Africans, we demand changes. not cosmetic changes. We demand justice, we demand equality for all our people. We demand the restoration of the rights with which we were born and the abolition of the homelands, we demand freedom of movement and the abolition of the pass laws. We oppose, with all that it means, apartheid, segregation, separate development and any other name for Africans. We oppose Apartheid in toto because it is anti-religious. We demand the establishment of a democratic government representing all the people for all the people.

Anything short of this will be non-democratic and anti-democratic and as such will be unacceptable. We have been divided for too long, brothers and sisters. Our survival depends on our unity. We owe this to our children and grandchildren and the generations to come will be proud of what we have done not only today but when we are called on the future to sacrifice for the freedom of South Africa.

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# George Blouws

I have heard many slogans being shouted here today but slogans alone will not bring us freedom. I want to tell you comrades that we must go back to our organisations to strengthen them.

Right through the country the flame of freedom has been lit - this gathering here today proves that no-one could flicker out the flame of freedom. It's alive and well.

We know that today we have before us in the parliament of the white regime, a constitution which is being proposed for the people.

Mr Chairman and the nouse, I want to avail myself this opportunity to welcome each and everyone to the people's parliament. This is the people's parliament.

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# Oscar Mpetha

(Taped message to the UDF rally from Oscar Mpetha, who was unable to attend through illness.)

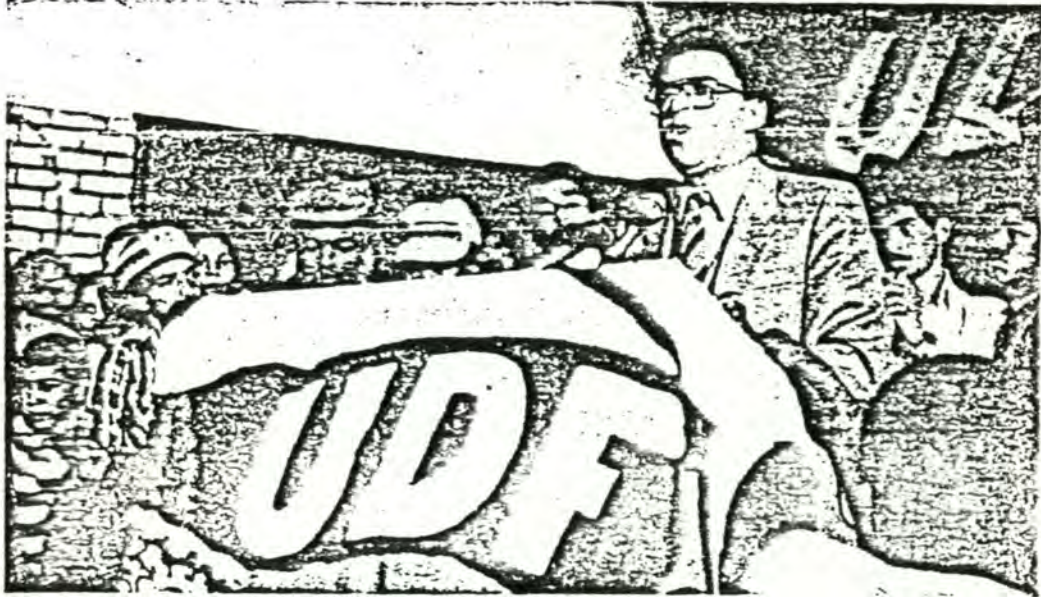
I welcome all the brave women and men who have come to attend the UDF launching in our province. I think that it is a great honour for us to host the first national UDF gathering here in the mother city.

I believe the way in which people from all over the country have responded to the UDF shows us the way ahead. The people themselves are now directing the opposition against the Nationalists. The people themselves have shown that the National Party has no majortiy at all. The time has come for the Nationalists to learn that they can no longer harrass people and push them around.

I feel it is a graet pity that I am unable to attend this historic occasion and address you all personally. I am with you though on this great day.



# Allan Boesak



President, distinguished platform guests, ladies and gentlemen! We have arrived at a historic moment. We have brought together under the aegis of the United Democratic Front the broadest and most significant coalition of groups and organisations struggling against apartheid, racism and injustice since the early nineteen fifties. We have been able to create a unity amongst freedom loving people this country has not seen for many a year. I am particularly happy to note that this meeting is not merely a gathering of loose individuals. No, we represent organisations deeply rooted in the struggle for justice, deeply rooted in the heart of our people. Indeed, I believe we are standing at the birth of what could become the greatest and most significant people's movement in more than a quarter of a century.

We are here to say that the Government's constitutional proposals are inadequate, and that they do not express the will of the vast majority of South Africa's people. But more than that, we are here to say that

what we are working for is one, undivided South Africa which shall belong to all of its people, an open democracy from which no single South African shall be excluded, a society in which the human dignity of all its people shall be respected. We are here to say that there are rights that are neither conferred by nor derived from the State; you have to go back beyond the dim mist of eternity to understand their origin: they are God-given. And so we are here not to beg for those rights, we are here to claim them.

In a sense, the formation of the United Democratic Front both highlights and symbolizes the crisis apartheid and its supporters have created for themselves. After a history of some 331 years of slavery, racial discrimination, dehumanization and economic exploitation, what they expected were acceptance of the status quo, docility and subservience. Instead they are finding a people, refusing to accept racial injustice and ready to face the challenges of the moment.

After more than three decades of

apartheid, they expected humble submission to the harsh rule of totalitarianism and racial supremacy. Instead, they find a people ready at every level of society to fight this evil system.

After more than twenty years of apartheid education they expected to see totally brainwashed, perfect little 'hotnotjies' and 'kaffertjies' who knew their place in the world. Instead, they find the most politically conscious generation of young people determined to struggle for a better future.

After the draconian measures of the 1960s and the ever harsher oppression of the so-called security laws, they expected a people immobilized by the tranquilizing drugs of apathy and fear. Instead, they find a rising tide of political and human consciousness that swept away complacency and shook South Africa to its very foundations.

After the tragic happenings of the seventies - the banning of our organisations and so many of those who struggle for justice; the torture and death of so many in detention; the merciless killing of our children on the streets of the nation; they expected surrender. Instead, here we are at this historic occasion telling South Africa and the world: we are struggling for our human dignity and for the future of our children - we shall never give up!

In all of this, those in power in this country have made the fundamental mistake of all totalitarian regimes who do not depend on the loyalty of the people but on the power of the gun: they have not reckoned with the determination of a people to be free. Because they depend on propaganda, deceit and coercion, they have forgotten that no lie can live forever and that the fear of the gun is always overcome by the longing for freedom. They have forgotten that it is true: you can kill the body but you can-

not kill the spirit and the determination of a people.

The most immediate reason for us coming together here today is the continuation of the Government's apartheid policies as seen in the constitutional proposals. In recent weeks some people have asked me with greater urgency than before (and I am sure this question has been put to you also) "Why do you not see the positive side of apartheid?"

Now when you are white, your children's education is guaranteed and paid for by the state; when your job is secure and blacks are prevented from being too much competition; when your home has never been taken away and the citizenship of the country of your birth is not in danger; when your children don't have to die of hunger and malnutrition and when your over-privileged position is guaranteed by security laws and the best-equipped army on the continent - then I can understand why some people believe that apartheid has its positive side.

But for those of us who are black and who suffer under this system there is no positive side. How can we see something positive in a system which is built on oppression, injustice and exploitation? What is positive about a system which destroys, systematically and by design, the human dignity of people; which makes as irrelevant and unimportant a thing as skin colour the basis of society and the key to the understanding of human relationships, political participation and economic justice? How can apartheid be positive when in the name of Christianity it spawns policies which cause little children to die of hunger and malnutrition, which break up black family life and which spell out a continuous hopeless death for millions of black people?

How can apartheid be positive when it keeps part of South Af-

rica's children manacled in the chains of unfreedom and the other part in the chains of fear? And even so, the time has come for white people to realise that their destiny is inextricably bound with our destiny and that they shall never be free until we are free, and I am so happy that so many of our white brothers and sisters are saying that by their presence here today.

Because it is true: people who think that their security, and peace lie in the perpetuation of intimidation, dehumanization and violence, are not free. They will never be free as long as they have to kill our children in order to safe-guard their over-privileged positions. They will never be free as long as they have to lie awake at night worrying whether a black government will one day do the same to them as they are doing to us, when white power will have come to its inevitable end.

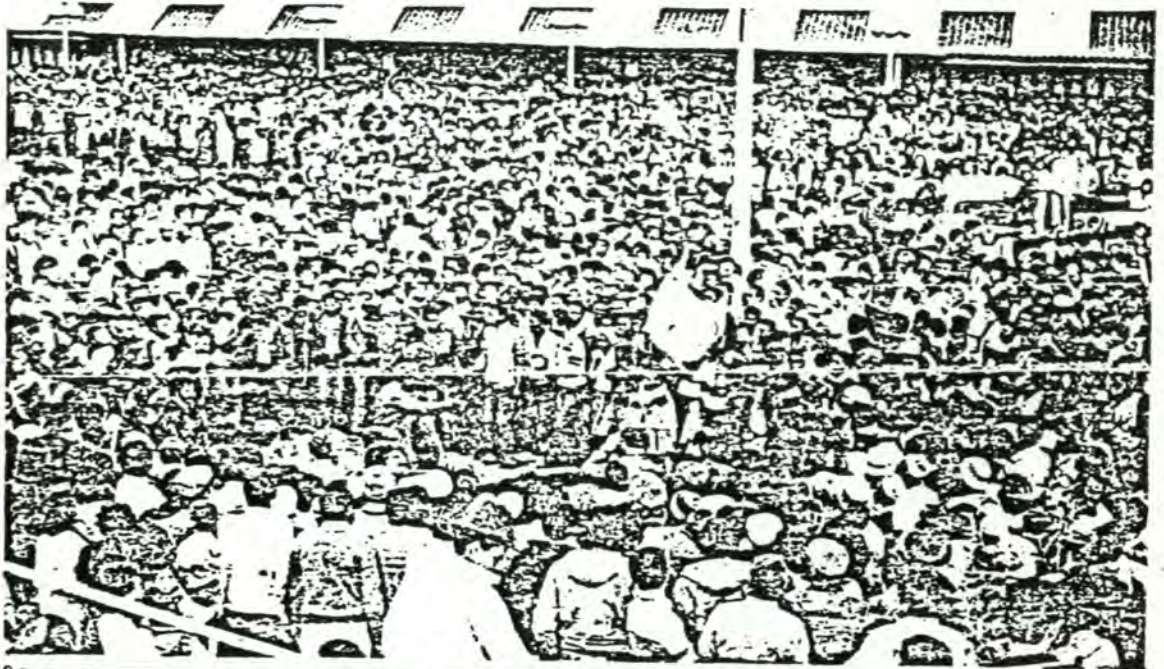
But we must also ask the question: what is positive about the Government's constitutional proposals? In order that there should be no misunderstanding, let me as clearly and briefly

as possible, repeat the reasons why we reject these proposals.

- Racism, so embedded in South African society, is once again written into the constitution. All over the world, people are beginning to recognize that racism is politically untenable. Sociologically unsound and morally unacceptable. But in this country, the doctrine of racial supremacy, although condemned by most churches in South Africa as heresy and idolatry, is once again enshrined in the continuation as the basis upon which to build the further development of our society and the nurturing of human relationships.

- All the basic laws, those laws which are the very pillars of apartheid, indeed, those laws without which the system cannot survive - mixed marriages, group areas, racial classification, separate and unequal education, to name but a few - remain untouched and unchanged.

- The homelands policy, which is surely the most immoral and objectionable aspect of the apartheid policies of the government, forms the basis of the





willful exclusion of 80% of our nation from the new political deal. Indeed, in the words of the proposals by the President's Council, the homelands policy is to be regarded as "irreversible". So our African brothers and sisters will be driven even further into the wilderness of homeland politics, millions will have to find their political rights in the sham independence of those bush republics; millions more will be forcibly removed from their homes into resettlement camps.

- Clearly the oppression will continue, the brutal break-up of black family life will not end. The apartheid line is not at all abolished, it is simply shifted so as to include those so-called coloureds and Indians who are willing to co-operate with the Government.

- Not only is the present system of apartheid given more elasticity making fundamental change even harder than before, but in the new proposals the dream of democracy to which we strive is still further eroded.

- So while the proposals may mean something for those middle-class blacks who think that the improvement of their own economic position is the highest good, it will not bring any significant changes to the life of those who have no rights at all, who must languish in the poverty and utter destitution of the homelands, and who are forbidden by law to live together as families in what is called "white South Africa".

It cannot be repeated often enough that all South Africans who love this country and who care for its future, black and white, Jew and Gentile, Christian and Muslim, have no option but to reject these proposals.

Apartheid is a cancer in the body politic of the world, a scourge on our society and an everlasting shame to the church of

Jesus Christ in the world and in this country. It exists only because of economic greed, cultural chauvinism, political oppression, maintained by both systematic and violence and a false sense of racial superiority. And therefore we must resist it. We must resist it because it is in fundamental opposition to the noble principles of our Judeo-Christian heritage, and of the Muslim faith. We must resist it because it is a fundamental denial of all that is worthwhile and human in our society. It is in opposition to the will of God for this country. We must resist it because in its claim to be Christian apartheid is a blasphemy, idolatry and a heresy.

To be sure, the new proposals will make apartheid less blatant in some ways. It will be modernized and streamlined, and in its new multi-coloured cloak it will be less conspicuous and less offensive to some. Nonetheless, it will still be there. And we must remember, apartheid is a thoroughly evil system and as such it cannot be modified, modernized or streamlined. It has to be irrevocably eradicated. And we must continue to struggle until that glorious day shall dawn when apartheid shall exist no more.

And so, to those who ask why we are not satisfied and when we shall be satisfied we must say in clear, patient terms: we shall not be satisfied as long as injustice reigns supreme on the throne of our land. We shall not be satisfied as long as those who rule us are not inspired by justice but dictated by fear, greed and racialism. We shall not be satisfied until South Africa is once again one, undivided country, a democracy where there shall be meaningful participation in a democratic process of government for all our people.

We shall not be satisfied until the wealth and riches of this country are shared by all. We

shall not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.

We must turn to one other important question, namely the question of whites and blacks working together. This has been mentioned as a reason why the United Democratic Front has been so severely attacked by some and why they have refused to give their co-operation.

They are saying to us that white people cannot play a meaningful role in the struggle for justice in this country because they are always, by definition, the oppressor. Because the oppression of our people wears a white face, because the laws are made by a white government, because we are suffering so much under a system created and maintained by white people, they say there can be no co-operation between white and black until all of this is changed.

I would like to say to those who think this way that I understand the way they feel. We have seen with our own eyes brutalization of our people at the hands of whites. We have seen police brutality. We have experienced the viciousness and the violence of apartheid. We have been trampled on for so long, we have been dehumanized for so long. But it is not true that apartheid has the support of all white people. There are those who have struggled with us, who have gone to jail, who have been tortured and banned, there are those who have died in the struggle for justice. And we must not allow our anger for apartheid to become the basis for a blind hatred of all white people. Let us not build our struggle upon hatred and hopes for simple revenge. Let us even now seek to lay the foundations for reconciliation between white and black in this country by working together, praying together, struggling together for justice.

No, the nature and the quality of our struggle for liberation

cannot be determined by the colour of one's skin, but rather by the quality of one's commitment to justice, peace and human liberation. And in the final analysis, judgment will be given, not in terms of whiteness or blackness, whatever the ideological content of those words may be today, but in terms of the persistent faithfulness we are called to in this struggle.

Besides, the very fact that we are talking about the constitutional proposals already reveals the paradox in this argument. The government have been pushing ahead with these proposals precisely because they have been supported and accepted by some people from the black community who think that the short term economic gains and the semblance of political power are more important than the total liberation of all South Africa's people. So our struggle is not only against the white Government and their plans, but also against those in the black community who through their collaboration seek to give credibility to these plans.

But there is something else that we must say. South Africa belongs to all its people. That is a basic truth we must cling to tenaciously for now and for the future. This country is our country, and its future is not safe in the hands of people who despise democracy and trample on the rights of the people, whether they be white or black.

Its future is not safe in the hands of people - black or white - who depend upon economic exploitation and human degradation to build their empires; Its future is not safe in the hands of people - black or white - who need the flimsy and deceitful cloak of ethnic superiority to cover the nakedness of their racialism; Its future is not safe in the hands of people - white or black - who seek to secure their unjustly required privileged positions by



violent repression of the weak, the exploited and the needy.

Its future is not safe in the hands of people - white or black who put their faith simply in the madness of growing militarism. So for the sake of our country and our children, whether you be white or black, resist those people, whether they be white or black.

So let us not be fearful of those who sit in the seats of power, their lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification. Let us not be intimidated by those who so arrogantly, so frighteningly, echo their master's voice.

We are doing what we are doing not because we are white or black, we are doing what we are doing because it is right. And we shall continue to do so until justice and peace embrace and South Africa becomes the nation it is meant to be.

In the meantime let me remind you of three little words, words that express so eloquently our seriousness in this struggle. You don't have to have a vast vocabulary to understand them. You don't need a philosophical bent to grasp them -

they are just three little words. The first word is ALL. We want all of our rights. Not just some rights, not just a few token handouts the government sees fit to give - we want all our rights. And we want all of South Africa's people to have their rights. Not just a selected few, not just "coloureds" or "Indians" after they had been made honorary whites. We want the rights of all South Africans, including those whose citizenship has already been stripped away by this government.

The second word is the word HERE.

We want all of our rights here, in a united, undivided South Africa. We do not want them in impoverished homelands, we don't want them in our separate little group areas. We want them here in this land which one day we shall once again call our own.

The third word is the word NOW.

We want all of our rights, we want them here and we want them now. We have been waiting so long, we have been struggling so long. We have pleaded, cried, petitioned too long now. We have been jailed, exiled, killed for too long. Now is the time!

And as we struggle let us remember that change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and hard work of those who are willing to take the risk of fighting for freedom, democracy and human dignity.

As we struggle on, let us continue to sing that wonderful hymn of freedom: Nkosi Sikilel i Afrika! I know today we are singing that hymn with tears in our eyes. We are singing it while we are bowed down by the weight of oppression and battered by the winds of injustice. We are singing it while our old people languish in resettlement camps and our children are dying of hunger in the homelands.

We are singing it now while we suffer under the brutality of apartheid and while the blood of our children is calling to God from the streets of our nation.

But we must work for the day when we shall sing it when we are free. We shall sing it on that day when our children shall no longer be judged by the colour of their skin but by the humanness of their character.

- We shall sing it on that day when even here in this country, in Johannesburg, Cape Town, in Port Elizabeth and Durban the sanctity of marriage and family life shall be respected, and no law shall require of man to put asunder what God has joined together.

- We shall sing it on that day when in this rich land no child shall die of hunger and no infant shall die untimely; and our elderly shall close their eyes in peace, and the wrinkled stomachs of our children shall be filled with food just as their

lives shall be filled with meaning.

- We shall sing it when here in South Africa white and black will have learned to love one another and work together in building a truly good and beautiful land.

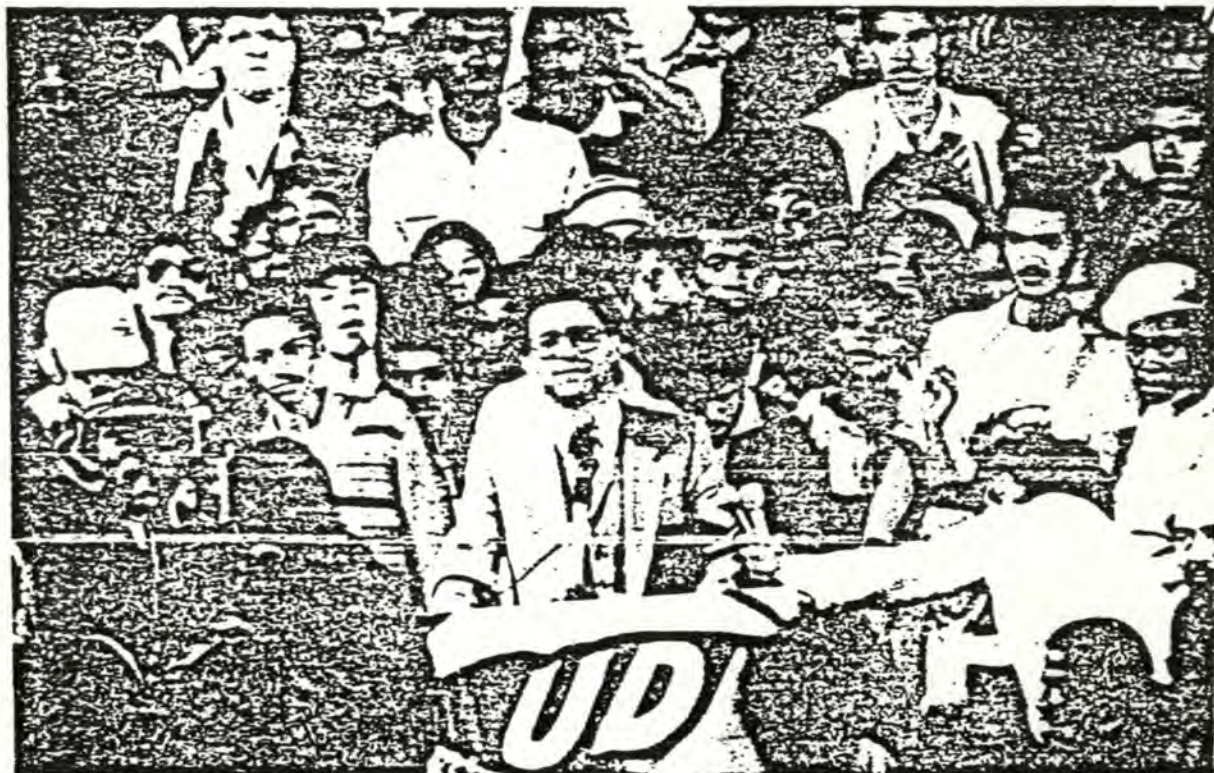
with this faith, we shall yet be able to give justice and peace their rightful place on the throne of our land

With this faith, we shall yet be able to see beyond the darkness of our present into the bright and glittering dayling of our future;

With this faith we shall be able to speed up the day when all of South Africa's children will embrace each other and sing with new meaning:

NKOSI SIKILEL I'AFRIKA!

GOD BLESS AFRIKA - GUIDE HER RULERS - BLESS HER CHILDREN GIVE HER PEACE!



# Biographies



Archie Gumede, Oscar Mpetha and Albertina Sisulu were elected National Presidents of the United Democratic Front at the founding conference on August 20 1983.

## Archie Gumede



Archie Gumede, an advocate from Natal, has been involved in political organisation almost the whole of his life. His father, Josiah Gumede, was one of the founding members of the African National Congress in 1912, and President of the ANC from 1927 to 1930. Archie was a member of the Durban delegation to the historic Congress of the People in 1955 and a treason trialist the following year.

Since 1979, Archie has been president of the Natal Release Mandela Committee. During 1980, the Release Mandela Campaign, conducted throughout South Africa, called for the release of all political prisoners as one of the essential conditions to be met before a new constitution based on the will of the people could be drawn up.

## Oscar Mpetha



Seventy Three-year-old Oscar Mpetha, respected community leader, was a founder member of the African Food and Canning Workers' Union. Through his involvement in the AFCWU, Oscar served as an organiser for the South African Congress of Trade Unions in the Western Cape, during the 1950s. He was also elected President of the Western Cape Region of the African National Congress. Along with Chief Albert Luthuli, he was detained and then banned for many years.

With the re-emergence of the democratic trade union movement during the 1970s, Oscar once again became active in the AFCWU. He was also instrumental in

establishing the Nyanga Residents Association. In 1980 he was detained, along with 50 others. After five months in detention, Oscar and 18 others were charged with "murder" and "terrorism". After a marathon three-year trial Oscar was found guilty of terrorism, but was released on R1 bail pending appeal.

Shortly after his release, Oscar was elected President of the W. Cape region of the UDF, and is one of the three national UDF presidents. Poor health, including the amputation of one leg, did not allow him to attend the National UDF launch. He did however deliver a taped message to the rally.

## Albertina Sisulu



Albertina Sisulu, recently unbanned after 17 years, was not able to be present at the UDF launch. She is currently awaiting trial, facing charges under the infamous Internal Security Act.

Albertina is a person who has demonstrated over the years the type of commitment and dedication needed in the struggle for a non-racial and democratic South Africa.

In the 1950's, she belonged to both the then-legal African National Congress Women's League and the Federation of South African Women (FSAW). She played a leading role in mobilising and organising women around issues such as rent increases, education and pass laws. As one of the leaders of the FSAW, she was part of the 20 000-strong demonstration of women that gathered on August 9 1956 outside the Union buildings in Pretoria to protest the extension of passes to African women.

Albertina is the wife of ANC leader Walter Sisulu, who is now serving a life sentence on Robben Island.

## Rev Frank Chikane



Frank Chikane was a student at Turfloop from 1972 to 1976, and then became a pastor in the Apostolic Faith Mission Church. He was first detained in January 1977, and again for six months in 1977/78. Frank was suspended from the church in 1981 for "involvement in politics" and again detained at the end of 1981 for seven months. He is at present the Director of the Institute for Contextual Theology, and a vice-President of the UDF (Transvaal Region).

## Helen Joseph



Helen Joseph was born in England in 1905 and came to South Africa in 1931. After the Second World War, she became a director of a community centre in Fordsburg, and in 1949, she was appointed supervisor of community centres in Cape Town for the "coloured" community.

In 1951, Helen moved back to Johannesburg to become secretary of the Medical Aid Society of the non-racial Garment Workers' Union led by Solly Sachs. During this time, she helped to form the Congress of Democrats, and became the Transvaal secretary of the Federation of South African Women.

In 1956, thousands of women from all over South Africa converged on the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest the extension of passes to African women. Together with Lillian Ngoyi, Sophie Williams and Rahima Moosa, Helen sought to present to the then Prime Minister, Dr Strijdom, with a nationwide petition, demanding the repeal of the hated pass laws. Strijdom was "not available".

Later that year, Helen was both arrested for Treason and became a listed person, which meant she could not (and still cannot) be quoted. In 1957 she was banned from attending social gatherings. Detained for five months. After Sharpville, she became the first person in South Africa to be placed under house arrest. This ban was renewed again in 1967 for a further five years. Following a major operation for cancer in 1971, her banning order was not immediately renewed. However, Helen was jailed in 1977, for four months, for refusing to answer questions about an alleged visit to Winnie Mandela. In 1980, she was banned again for a further two years.

The UDF salutes Helen as a veteran in the struggle for a free, non-racial and democratic South Africa.



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