

TRANSAFRICA NEWS

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HAITIAN MILITARY RETAINS CONTROL DESPITE EMBARGO

U.S. Begins Repatriation of Refugees Following Court Order

A resolution of the Haitian political crisis appeared to be near when exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide agreed to the first part of a negotiated plan by the Organization of American States (OAS) to restore constitutional democracy. Aristide agreed to meet with Rene Theodore and accepted him as the candidate to become the new prime minister in a settlement that would lead to Aristide's return after an interim period.

Unfortunately, OAS negotiating efforts stalled when Theodore and other Haitian parliamentary leaders failed to appear for the meeting with Aristide. According to an OAS official, Theodore did not want to attend such a meeting until the Haitian parliament officially confirmed him as prime minister. Neither Theodore's con-

firmation nor the meeting with Aristide have taken place.

Aristide, who is Haiti's first democratically elected President, has indicated that he will not endorse the entire OAS plan until Theodore makes several political concessions. These include publicly acknowledging Aristide's primacy as president, denouncing the coup and agreeing to the ouster of its leaders, setting a date for Aristide's return, reaching agreements on cabinet nominees and devising a plan for reform.

Since the coup on September 30, 1991, TransAfrica has supported the OAS economic embargo and its negotiation efforts to return constitutional democracy to Haiti.

Refugees Forcibly Returned

TransAfrica has been steadfast in its opposition to the forced return of Haitian refugees who are seeking asylum in response to the political turmoil that followed the ouster of President Aristide. Over 15,000 Haitians have sought succor from the United States after risking their lives on dilapidated and overcrowded boats. For the last three months, most of these desperate refugees have been housed at Guantanamo Bay naval base in Cuba and on Coast Guard cutters.

Through a press conference and our co-sponsorship of a national rally in Washington, we have demanded that U.S. officials properly interview all refugees and grant them the right to

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State and Local Sanctions in Jeopardy

In his speech before the U.N. General Assembly in December, 1991, ANC President Nelson Mandela reiterated the need for international communities to retain federal, state and local sanctions against the apartheid regime. Although President Bush lifted federal sanctions last July, 26 states, one territory (Virgin Islands), 94 cities and 24 municipalities continue to enforce economic sanctions against the de Klerk government.

However, sanctions are in jeopardy in all of these regions. The South African government, which spent two million dollars lobbying for the lifting of federal sanctions, has now turned its campaign towards state and local sanctions. In this legislative session, most if not all regions

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ANC officials Oliver Tambo, Cyril Ramaphosa, Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu meeting with delegates of the Democracy Now Tour in Johannesburg. See p. 2 for details.

Haiti, cont.

apply for asylum from political persecution in Haiti. The Administration did not listen to our call.

On January 31, 1992, the U.S. Supreme Court lifted the ban on the forced repatriation of Haitian boat people. TransAfrica condemned this immigration policy as "callous and irresponsible." "The decision smacks of political and racial discrimination and is grossly insensitive to the plight of Haitian refugees," said Randall Robinson.

TransAfrica will continue to decry the U.S. action as cruel and inhumane until the forced repatriation is halted. The assertion that the refugees are fleeing poverty and not political repression has not been sufficiently substantiated. INS figures clearly indicate increases in the number of Haitian refugees following the political crises caused by the foiled elections in 1987 and the coup in 1991. Experts have acknowledged the Haitian military's violent opposition to democratic rule and the brutal means that they have employed to discourage Aristide's supporters. "To forcibly return these individuals to this hostile and potentially

dangerous environment is irresponsible, mean-spirited and discriminatory," said Robinson.

TransAfrica will continue to push for Congress to enact emergency legislation that will block the forced repatriation. We urge Congress to pressure the President and the Secretary of State to take responsibility for this policy and to publicly address the nation about the plight of the Haitian refugees.

Several members of Congress, particularly Congressman Charles Rangel (D-NY), have been outspoken in their criticism of Bush's policies and their determination to allow Haitians equal protection as guaranteed under international law.

Congressman Mazzoli (D-KY) has sponsored a bill (H.R. 3844) which guarantees the protection of Haitians in the U.S. or in U.S. custody from forced repatriation until democratic rule is restored in Haiti. This bill also increases the allocation of Haitian refugee admissions to the U.S. H.R. 2508, sponsored by Congressman Fascell (D-FL), prohibits aid to a military government in Haiti. The Senate approved the conference report but the House disapproved.

Please write or call your Congressional representatives in support of these bills which will be reviewed this session.

Foreign Aid Bill Up for Review in March

In 1991 TransAfrica successfully lobbied Congress to increase development assistance for Africa from \$800 million (FY 1991) to \$1 billion. The recession, the upcoming Presidential election and the \$10 billion in housing guarantees promised to Israel, all contributed to stalling the passage of the foreign aid bill of 1992.

As presidential politics turn towards severe domestic economic problems, Congress has been hesitant to pass new foreign aid allocations. A continuing resolution was passed last fall which gives Congress until March 31, 1992 to pass the foreign aid bill. If the bill does not pass at that time, lower aid levels authorized for 1991 will apply for FY 1992. Alternatively, Congress may pass another continuing resolution to delay the vote again.

Please contact your members of Congress and encourage them to support a foreign aid bill with \$1 billion for Africa by March 31st.

"DEMOCRACY NOW TOUR" VISITS SOUTH AFRICA

Last summer, ANC President Nelson Mandela extended an invitation to prominent African Americans to visit South Africa for discussions on the progress of the anti-apartheid movement. TransAfrica was asked to assist with the logistics of the trip in conjunction with Lindiwe Mabuza, Chief Representative of the ANC to the United States.

These arrangements culminated in a short fact-finding trip to South Africa on October 19 - 22, 1991, called the Democracy Now Tour. TransAfrica Executive Director, Randall Robinson, Legislative Director, Anne Griffin, and Legislative Assistant, Kristin Wells, spent three days in South Africa last October as participants in the "Democracy Now Tour."

In all, twenty-seven prominent Americans participated, representing a wide spectrum of fields from labor, business, entertainment and sports, to religion, politics and women's groups. The delegation consisted of notable personalities including: Quincy Jones, Arthur Ashe, Earl Graves, Dorothy Height, Congresswomen Maxine Waters, former Congressman Walter Fauntroy, Bertram Lee, William Lucy and Mayor Richard Hatcher.

With this invitation, Nelson Mandela wanted to remind the world that progress in South Africa had to be measured very carefully. South Africans, he said, are still suffering under apartheid. "Until all apartheid laws have been abolished and non-racial, universal voting rights are enshrined in law, our quest for freedom will continue," said Mandela.

The African National Congress took advantage of this visit to outline current obstacles to negotiations and to discuss South Africa's tremendous developmental needs. Upon their return to the United States, the delegates expressed a desire to ensure that South Africa become a more pronounced part of the Bush Administration's foreign policy agenda.

State & Local, cont.

retaining sanctions will probably face bills calling for their repeal. Since federal sanctions were lifted, Oregon and Fairfax County, VA have rescinded these laws. Florida, North Dakota and Missouri are already considering a similar move in this legislative term.

TransAfrica supports the will of the South African majority in their call to maintain sanctions. State and local sanctions have created the economic pressure on the South African government which has led de Klerk to the negotiating table.

The objective of one-person one-vote democracy has not yet been met in South Africa. Sanctions should not be lifted until a nonracial democracy in South Africa has been achieved. Please contact your local officials (governors, mayors, city councils, legislators, treasurers) to let them know that you want local sanctions maintained until there is true democracy in South Africa.

Kenyan President Moi Arrests More Government Critics

Foreign Aid Withheld by Western Donors

Bowing to internal and external pressure, Kenyan President Daniel arap Moi agreed to allow multi-party participation in Kenyan politics in December of 1991. TransAfrica remains skeptical of Moi's commitment to the democratic process and his ability to allow a fair transition to multi-partyism.

Opposition forces, now centered around the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD) have been steadily gaining strength over the last year, despite the arrests of prominent anti-government critics.

In mid-January police broke into the home of Professor Wangari Maathai, a leading environmentalist, to arrest her for spreading a rumor that Moi was planning a coup to prevent multi-party elections. Former Vice President Josephat Karanja and businessman Matu Wamae were also arrested for "publishing an alarming publication." All three are members of FORD and were freed on bail.

Last month, several cabinet ministers and assistant ministers from Moi's Kenya African National Union (KANU) have resigned, accusing the government of corruption and other un-democratic action. Many local and regional KANU officials have also resigned.

As Moi's government falls into disarray, former officials now with the opposition claim that Moi and the military have planned a coup to end progress towards democracy. The Moi government has denied these charges. Top officials have accused the defectors of being Kikuyu tribalists who are attempting to regain political control from Moi's Kalenjin ethnic group.

TransAfrica continues to encourage the U.S. government to exert tougher diplomatic and financial pressure on Moi's regime. Congress cut aid to Kenya (excluding humanitarian aid) in FY 1991. That restriction will continue in 1992 until Moi addresses his government's human rights violations and makes progress toward democracy.

In November, the Paris Club meeting of Western donor nations withheld further loans to the Kenyan government under similar stipulations. In its April meeting, the Paris Club will review the political situation in Kenya once again.

Please continue sending letters to the State Department, encouraging tough action against President Moi until he fully accepts the need for a fair system of transition to democracy.

Address letters regarding Kenya to:
Mr. Herman J. Cohen
Asst. Secretary of State, Africa
2201 C Street NW Room 6234A
Washington, DC 20520

Letters regarding continued withholding of aid by the Paris Club should be addressed to:

Mr. Ronald W. Roskens
Director, USAID
320 21st St. NW Room 5942
Washington, DC 20523

Mobutu Shuns Democracy in Zaire

The national conference for democracy was begun in August to negotiate a transition to democracy from Mobutu Sese Seko's 27-year rule. The proceedings resumed in December after a two month suspension following riots in September. Catholic Archbishop Monsengwo Pasinya was named chairman and prospects appeared bright after Mobutu and his latest Prime Minister, Nguza Karl-I-Bond, made assurances of their commitment to the transition to democracy.

After disputes over the number of opposition sympathizers amongst the conference delegates, Mobutu's supporters walked out in early January 1992. All government funding for the conference was withdrawn.

Shortly thereafter, Nguza closed the conference claiming that it was "out of control" and too costly. It had become clear that the delegates were going to vote for Mobutu's removal. By closing the conference, the government was able to reclaim the power of planning the transition process. Nguza announced that he would hold parliamentary elections and allow the new parliament to write a new constitution and organize presidential elections.

Opposition leaders were attacked by police when they attempted to march to the Presidential Palace in protest. They have promised a general strike if the conference is not re-opened. The U.S. and Belgian governments have openly criticized the Zairian government for closing the conference.



1991 Scholarship Winner, Kiarna Cheatom of Chicago, Illinois.

Courtesy Dwayne Freeman.

Essays for the 1992 Paul Robeson \$1000 Scholarship are due by April 1, 1992. Contact Kristin Wells at (202) 547-2550 regarding essay requirements.

SAVE THE DATES!!

TransAfrica Annual Weekend Approaches

The 11th Annual Conference will be held on June 5, 1992 in Washington, DC. The theme this year is "Transformations in Africa and the Caribbean: Meeting Democracy's Challenge." The day long conference will start at 8:00 a.m. in the Dirksen Senate Office Building. Notable panelists from the world of academe, foreign policy, government, advocacy and non-governmental organizations will discuss the current wave of democracy in Africa and the refugee and immigration issues involving the Caribbean. Searching for solutions for the crippling foreign debt that faces the Caribbean people is also on the agenda.

On June 6th we will host TransAfrica's 15th Annual Dinner at the Washington Hilton Hotel. Over the years the dinner has become a prestigious high profile-event drawing up to 2,000 guests. Members like yourself will be joined by foreign heads of state, representatives from the State Department, members of Congress and the diplomatic corps, celebrities and other prominent African American guests.

Register now for both the Conference and our Annual Dinner and show your continuing support for TransAfrica - the nation's only advocacy organization dedicated to building a progressive U.S. foreign policy towards Africa and the Caribbean. This is our chance to show the country and the world that our voices and thoughts will continue to make a difference!

We hope that you can attend these upcoming events and join TransAfrica's Annual Weekend Celebration. Special travel arrangements and hotel rates are available. If you would like more information, please contact us at TransAfrica. The deadline for early registration rates is May 10th. Call us at (202) 547-2550 today!

THANKS TO OUR INTERNS

TransAfrica and the TransAfrica Forum would like to thank all of our interns from 1991: Raffi Balian, Jory Steele, Tabitha Mann and Stacey Bain. Your work has been invaluable to us and we wish you the best of luck in 1992!

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