



SISTER COMMUNITY PROJECT

ACTION ALERT

February 12, 1990.

FATE OF THREATENED COMMUNITIES STILL HANGS IN BALANCE

In spite of the release of Nelson Mandela, the unbanning of the African National Congress and other positive steps forward in South Africa, the larger dimensions of apartheid remain untouched.

In particular, several communities in South Africa still are under threat of removal, or are facing incorporation into "homelands" against their will.

Over the past 18 months, seven communities in the United States have established linkages with threatened black communities in South Africa. These are the first formal linkages between black South African communities and the outside world. Participating communities are Atlanta, Berkeley, Louisville, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Wichita. Seattle and Chicago are actively moving towards establishing linkages as well.

President F.W. De Klerk has stated that it is time to put past animosities behind us, and to begin building a new South Africa.

It is in this spirit that we call on the government of F.W. De Klerk to abandon efforts to move communities or to incorporate them into "homelands" against their will. In addition, we call on the government to recognize emerging democratic structures like civic organizations, residents associations or action committees as legitimate representatives of their communities. Finally, we call on the government of South Africa to provide adequate resources to neglected communities so that they can begin the rebuilding process immediately.

Over the past 30 years, 3 1/2 million black South Africans have been moved against their will. Although old-style removals where communities were loaded onto trucks and moved at gunpoint are a thing of the past, we call on the government to drop all vestiges of its forced removals policies.

The displacement of millions of black South Africans outside any meaningful economic structures will shape the future of South Africa for decades to come. Negotiations must be accompanied by steps to reverse the negative effects of an outdated policy.

For more information, contact Anne Poirier at (415) 824-2938, or call representatives of your local sister community project.