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## **The Future of South Africa by Nelson Mandela**

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As the 1980s drew to a close I could not see much of the world from my prison cell, but I knew it was changing. There was little doubt in my mind that this would have a profound impact on my country, on the southern African region and the continent of which I am proud to be a citizen. Although this process of global change is far from complete, it is clear that all nations will have boldly to recast their nets if they are to reap any benefit from international affairs in the post Cold War era.

The African National Congress (ANC) believes that the charting of a new foreign policy for South Africa is key element in the creation of a peaceful and prosperous country. Apartheid corroded the very essence of life in South Africa.

This is why the country's emerging political leaders are challenged to build a nation in which all people - irrespective of race, colour, creed, religion or sex - can assert fully their human worth; after apartheid, our people deserve nothing less than the right to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.

This vision cannot be realised until South Africa can again participate fully in world affairs. For four decades South Africa's international relations were dogged by the apartheid issue. By the end of the 1980s, South Africa was one of the most Isolated states on earth. Recovering from this will be no easy task. Conscious of this

difficulty, the ANC is involved in developing those policies which will be necessary to take South Africa into the new world order as a responsible global citizen.

Additionally, it is concerned with the need to forge a truly professional diplomatic service which will serve all of South Africa's peoples and represent their rich diversity. Fortunately, foreign governments have recognised the importance of this and are generously providing training for young South Africans who wish to make careers in foreign affairs.

Within the context of the current multiparty negotiations, preliminary discussions are also under way between political parties with an interest in foreign affairs in an effort to bridge the divides between them on important policy questions. The pillars upon which our foreign policy will rest are the following beliefs:

- that issues of human rights are central to international relations and an understanding that they extend beyond the political, embracing the economic, social and environmental;
- that just and last solutions to the problems of humankind can only come through the promotion of democracy worldwide;
- that, considerations of justice and respect for international law should guide the relations between nations;
- that peace is the goal for which all nations should strive, and where this breaks down, internationally agreed and nonviolent mechanisms, including effective arms control regimes, must be employed;
- that the concerns and interests of the continent of Africa should be reflected in our foreign policy choices;

- that economic development depends on growing regional and international economic cooperation in an interdependent world.

These convictions stand in stark contrast to how, for nearly five decades, apartheid South Africa disastrously conducted its international relations.

Because the world is a more dangerous place, the international community dare not relinquish its commitment to human rights. This appeal also has a special significance for South Africa. The anti-apartheid campaign was the most important human rights crusade of the post World War II era. Its success was a demonstration, in my opinion, of the oneness of our common humanity: in these troubled times, its passion should not be lost. Consequently, South Africa will not be indifferent to the rights of others. Human rights will be the light that guides our foreign affairs. Only true democracy can guarantee rights.

This is why the ANC's decision to take up arms to secure the rights of South Africa's people will only be fulfilled in a government of the people, by the people and for the people. We have always embraced the cry for democracy across the world and South Africa will therefore be at the forefront of global efforts to promote and foster democratic systems of government.

This is especially important in Africa, and our concerns will be fixed upon securing a spirit of tolerance and the ethos of government throughout the continent. There cannot be one system for Africa and another for the rest of the world. If there is a single lesson to be

drawn from Africa's postcolonial history, it is that accountable government is good government.

The growing violence of narrow "nationalism", which can lead to the Balkanisation of states, is of particular concern to South Africans. Ancient and long-dormant animosities have been unlocked by the ending of the Cold War, and these now threaten the very existence of some countries. Some suggest that an international divide is emerging between countries that tolerate diversity and those that do not. The latter will fall prey to internecine strife, sapping, if not destroying, the potential of their people.

These countries will fall further and further behind the great technological advances being made elsewhere. As we witness in Yugoslavia, it is the young who will inherit the political and economic wasteland consigned to them by the archaic enmities of their fathers.

For many this fate beckons South Africa. Respect for diversity has been central to the ANC's political credo. As South Africa gears itself for its first democratic election, this tradition will guide our electoral campaign.

But beyond our shores we will, as responsible internationalists, also honour this creed. A central goal of our foreign policy will, therefore, be to promote institutions and forces that, through democratic means, seek to make the world safe for diversity.

Around the globe new conflicts and divides are surfacing. The chasm between the industrialised North and the underdeveloped South is deepening. If there is to be global harmony, the international

community will have to discover mechanisms to bridge mechanisms to bridge the divide between the rich and the poor. South Africa can play an important role in this regard because it is situated at a particular confluence of world affairs.

But so too the United Nations has been from the straightjacket of the Cold War. South Africa`s people look forward to our country`s return as a full and active member of the United Nations has a pivotal role to play in fostering global security and order.

But to achieve this, serious attention must be paid to a restructuring of the organisation. South Africa intends to play a vigorous role in the debate on this issue. The UN should not be dominated by a single power or group of powers, or else its legitimacy will continuously be called into question. We hope a mechanism can be found so that the Security Council can reflect the full tapestry of humankind.

The United Nations and other international organisations have an important role to play in controlling the worldwide flow of arms. We know this bitter experience. South Africa`s transition to democracy has been unnecessarily violent; much of the blame lies in the proliferation of small arms throughout southern Africa.

In addition to acceding to the major arms-control regimes, South Africa actively support the United Nations` commitment to a general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

South Africa cannot escape its African destiny. If we do not devote our energies to this continent, we too could fall victim to the forces that have brought ruin to its various parts. Like the United Nations, the Organisation of African Unity needs to be attuned to the changes

at work throughout the world. A democratic South Africa will bring to an end an important chapter in Africa's efforts too achieve unity and closer cooperation, but it will not close the book. Africa's international position has been acutely affected by global change. Some of this is positive. It has for instance, become less likely that our continent will, as in the past, be treated as a battleground by contending forces in wider international conflicts. Economically the position appears less promising. The shift in international attention toward Eastern Europe has, in the view of some, increased Africa's marginalisation and weakened the continent's economic position. Africa must respond to this by transforming its economic base. Greater economic cooperation between the countries of the continent and the reshaping of trading networks can make a significant contribution In this regard.

Southern Africa commands a special priority in our foreign policy. We are inextricably part of southern Africa and our destiny is linked to that of a region, which is a more than a mere a geographical concept. The historical patterns of relations in southern Africa have, however, been highly uneven and inequitable. The regional economy that emerged under colonialism entrenched the domination of one country (South Africa) and incorporated other countries in subsidiary and dependent roles as labour reserves, markets for South African commodities, suppliers of certain services (such as transport) or providers of cheap and convenient resources (like water, electricity and some raw materials). South Africa's visible exports to the rest of the region exceed imports by more than five to one. This is a reflection not just of the stronger productive base of the South African economy, but of barriers of various kinds that have kept goods produced in regional states out of the South African market. Destructive apartheid policies have, moreover, caused further

distortions. While South Africans experienced discrimination and repression at home, southern Africa fell victim to apartheid's destabilisation strategy, which left two million dead and inflicted estimated \$62.45 billion of damage on the economies of our neighbours.

I share the views of many that the forging of closer economic relations can potentially be of great benefit both to a democratic South Africa.

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