



international UPDATE

15/96

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GERMANY, EUROPE AND SOUTHERN AFRICA - PARTNERSHIP FOR THE FUTURE

This update is based on a speech given by Dr. Klaus Kinkel,
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Federal Republic of Germany
at SAIIA on the 23 July 1996.

Thank you very much for inviting me to address you here today. I am delighted to be in our beautiful country again. Since my first visits 20 years ago Africa has held a special place in my heart. This applies especially to Southern Africa. Nowhere in the world was the struggle for justice and humanity so long and painful. I have never been able to forget that since coming to the Federal Foreign Office with Hans-Dietrich Genscher in 1974.

There are days when we sense the world has changed. The 9th of November 1989, the day the Berlin Wall fell, was one of them. Another was the 10th of May 1994, the day of President Mandela's inauguration. Never have I witnessed so much joy and hope anywhere in the world. All present on that occasion were deeply moved. 'What are black hopes and what are white hopes, and can they be hoped together?' is what Alan Paton said was South Africa's vital question. Leading South African liberals like Helen Suzman have fought for this. On that day we sensed the confidence: Yes, they can be hoped together! That day was the birthday of the new South Africa, the South Africa of democracy and freedom. But it was more than that. It was a symbol of hope for the co-existence of cultures and religions the world over in one huge community, hope for peace, justice, humanity and tolerance. That was the deeper global and historic significance of that day.

Considering all that had gone before, this country's peaceful transition to democracy is almost a miracle, a miracle owed to many people in this country, but to one in particular, your President Nelson Mandela. It was a wonderful experience for us Germans to welcome this great statesman and conciliator in our parliament in May this year.

Rarely has the representative of another nation been so enthusiastically greeted by the people. With his friendliness and modesty, he won our hearts, for himself and his country. In his speech in the Bundestag he spoke of the similarities between our nations as a result of our history. We Germans feel the same. The life of many citizens in both Germany and South Africa has changed dramatically. However, people's joy at the newly won freedom often gives way to concern about housing and jobs.

In Germany the government has just launched a major public sector saving and employment-promotion programme. Our citizens are having to part with some cherished social acquisitions. No one likes to have to tighten their belt. This must be particularly painful for people who, like many citizens of South Africa, can now, for the first time, hope for a better future. Telling them to have patience is not easy. No country, whether in Europe or Africa, can avoid globalisation. It opens up only one road to prosperity and social progress and that road is competitiveness on world markets. And that competitiveness applies not only to companies but to the country as a whole, its infrastructure and education system, the dependability of its laws, the diligence of its people and the adaptability of society. In Germany, too, we are being reminded that new jobs are only created where companies invest, and today they pick the countries which offer them optimum conditions.

President Mandela and the South African Government have drawn the right conclusion. The new macro-economic programme has thrown the switches for investment and jobs. Of course, South Africa is faced with tremendous problems: high

unemployment, a housing shortage and crime. And of course the road ahead is not going to be easy. But unlike a few years ago you know it is the right one and that it is now up to you to shape a better future for your country. Moreover, your lucky star has given you a uniquely capable political leadership.

The way you are dealing with the past is exemplary. This, I am convinced, will give your country the confidence and perseverance needed to master the difficult transition ahead. What matters most of all to foreign investors is that crime is tackled with determination and markets are further deregulated. But progress has already been achieved in spite of all the difficulties. Growth rates have increased since the political transformation two years ago. Inflation has been slowed down, and the parliamentarians and businessmen accompanying me share my view that the springbok's leap will not be confined to the rugby field! German government and business intend to help you make this leap forward. My visit here together with parliamentarians, a large business delegation and cultural experts is intended to emphasise this.

In his Bonn address President Mandela said South Africa knew that in Germany it had a true friend. Today I want to tell you that we trust in the course you have taken. You can bank on our friendship and on our support in difficult times.

Change in South Africa

South Africa is by far our most important partner on the African continent. With no other country south of the Sahara do we maintain such intensive co-operation, politically, economically and culturally. We even co-operate in the training of our diplomats. Since 1975 we and our Western friends have supported the peaceful change in South Africa. At that time I was Head of Policy Planning under Hans-Dietrich Genscher and therefore very much involved in those matters. A lot of help came from non-governmental organizations, especially the churches. All concerned deserve our sincere thanks for their dedicated efforts to overcome racial segregation throughout Southern Africa.

Nor do I overlook in this connection the 300 German companies with their combined workforce of about 60,000. Entrepreneurs are of course primarily interested in business, which is quite normal. But during the apartheid era many of them also met their responsibility to society. Their factories were islands of equal pay for equal work and places where blacks and whites could work

together. Germany's dual strategy of criticism and commitment, and the fact that our companies remained in South Africa in the difficult years as well, did a great deal to ease the country's new beginning.

Germany is South Africa's main trading partner and second largest direct investor. More than a third of our exports and about two thirds of our investments in Africa go to your country. Our trade volume rose by 12.2% in 1995 compared with the previous year, amounting to 8.47 billion marks. But we don't want to stop there. President Mandela's state visit has given our relations a tangible boost. Partnerships are beginning to take shape between our Länder and your provinces, and we are thinking about the proposal to form a bi-national commission. We also hope to have the new cultural agreement ready for signature before the end of the year. In the fields of defence and environmental policy, too, we are about to intensify our co-operation. Executive Deputy President Mbeki's visit to Germany in September will, I am sure, increase this momentum.

We are also hopeful that negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement between South Africa and the European Union will commence in the near future. True, the European Union has made heavy going of it on account of the well-known agricultural problems, but the offer to open our markets which are now on the table gives your country considerable opportunities and goes beyond the Lomé concessions. More than 60% of farm imports from South Africa would be liberalised. The remaining 40% represents only 4% of total trade.

I know from my talks with company owners and managers that the German business community take a long view of things and want to shape South Africa's recovery together with your. Jürgen Schrempp, Chairman of Daimler-Benz, regards South Africa as his second home. I am glad that he is heading the Germany business community's Southern Africa Initiative.

With this initiative, which was launched in Berlin in the presence of President Mandela, our private sector is indicating that it has faith in Southern Africa's future, in the diligence of its people and in the steady course of democratic progress and market economy pursued by their governments. Its main objectives are to improve market access in both directions and support privatisation measures, as well as to intensify regional integration and co-operation with the European Union.

Southern Africa

This idea germinated at the first meeting of Foreign Ministers of the European Union and the SADC held in Berlin in 1994. I had suggested that meeting in the hope of enhancing the potential for regional integration on both sides, as the trans-frontier pooling of such resources is the model for the future. This has proved true in the European Union and in ASEAN, and it has led on the American continent, to NAFTA and MERCOSUR. The European Union is building bridges to all these organisations. What could have been more appropriate than to bring the SADC and the European Union to the conference table?

Southern Africa has a population of 135 million and produces half of the sub-Saharan GNP. It has an extensive rail network and possesses under its soil practically all the natural resources worth having. All of this makes it one of the world's top ten most important markets of the future. It is the standard bearer for the entire continent. South Africa, in turn, whether it wants to be or not, is the core and engine of this integrating region. This role will become even more pronounced, economically and politically. I have again encouraged President Mandela and my colleague Foreign Minister Nzo to assume greater regional and international responsibility. Not only the region but Africa as a whole needs the voice from the Cape.

The United Nations too is counting more and more on South Africa, for instance as Chair of UNCTAD. In the event of Security Council reform the countries of the Third World, including Africa, should have a larger role. Germany as well must assume greater responsibility - in building the new undivided Europe, in the United Nations, and in its relations with Third World countries. In doing so we are banking on partnership with South Africa. Together we can throw considerable weight onto the scales - in support of peaceful conflict resolution, regional co-operation, protection of human rights, and free enterprise.

We also want to advance EU-SADC co-operation together. The SADC is and remains an important factor for progress in Southern Africa. It is based on the principle of good governance, sound development within the framework of a market economy, the rule of law and protection of human rights. Ideal conditions for a partnership with Germany and the European Union! Partnership also includes better opportunities for development. That is why we have to date made available about 7.5 billion marks to SADC member states since their independence and to the organisation itself. Also

playing a big part are the German Länder and local authorities, since their independence, foundations and churches, and many non-governmental organisations. The European Union has so far made available more than 1.4 billion dollars for the process of peaceful change in the SADC's most important country, South Africa, including the funds already envisaged for the period up to 1999.

The other SADC countries have received about 7 billion dollars in financial assistance from the European Union since 1975 under the Lomé Convention. This is proof that when Germany and the European Union speak of partnership with Southern Africa they are not merely paying lip service. But we not only want partnership for development. We also want political partnership. That is why I am particularly pleased with the lasting success of the conference of EU-SADC foreign ministers in Berlin. The 'Berlin Declaration' placed the dialogue between our two regions on a new level. Political contacts too have increased enormously. I need only mention Chancellor Kohl's visit to South Africa and Namibia and the visits by Presidents Mandela and Nujoma to Germany as well as a whole series of ministerial exchanges. My current trip to Botswana, South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe should also be seen in this regional context.

The SADC's new Organ on Politics, Defence and Security has considerably broadened the range of options for political co-operation. In 1995, 18 African countries placed a total of 6,000 troops at the disposal of the United Nations. At the OAU Summit in Yaoundé, Africa made clear its intention to increase still further its own contribution to peace-keeping measures. We should take advantage of the forthcoming conference of EU-SADC foreign ministers in Windhoek for a thorough discussion on those African regions that are fraught with political crisis. This kind of problem is going to keep us busy in the years ahead as well. It is all the more important therefore to think about the possibilities for joint preventive action. After all, it is always better to prevent a fire rather than to have to put it out.

A matter which I have very much at heart is the removal of a terrible legacy of civil war, anti-personnel mines. We have carried out a German pilot project in neighbouring Mozambique in which 6,000 such mines have been removed. But it has been estimated that about two million of these murderous devices are still there. We have decided to continue our assistance for this project. Our efforts to eliminate the scourge of anti-personnel mines will continue to be one of the main thrusts of our disarmament and development policy.

The Berlin conference has also stimulated closer contact among our parliamentarians and at the same time generated fresh impetus for the involvement of our states, the Länder, in Southern Africa. I am particularly gratified to note that my native region, Baden Württemberg, is planning co-operative projects with South African provinces, especially for the promotion of small and medium sized industries. Nor will cultural relations between Europe and Africa be neglected. Only recently we have had two exhibitions of African art in Berlin - 'Colours' and 'Rainbow Nation' - which were enthusiastically received by the German public, as was last year's festival of traditional Southern African music in several Germany cities. That great writer Nadine Gordimer has won the world for South Africa and its people. I am delighted that she is to attend the inauguration of the Goethe Institute on 23 July 1996.

Also bringing us more and more together is the world's most wonderful pastime, sport. Something I hadn't known for a long time is that Harry Ganns, my Director for African Affairs, is a football coach in his spare time. The drawn game between our national team and yours shows that the German team manager Berti Vogts has already copied his tactic of maintaining 'a peaceful balance of interests'.

Regional Stability

There is considerable hope that stability in this region will spread to neighbouring countries and the whole of sub-Saharan Africa. Let me repeat: Southern Africa can and must be the engine which generates enough political and economic steam to pull the others along with it. In Africa, it is true, there is only a thin dividing line between bitter disappointment and high hopes. The media are mostly interested in one side of the coin only - the civil wars in Burundi, Sierra Leone and Sudan, and the disintegration of law and order in Liberia and Somalia. The squalor in the refugee camps in the

Great Lakes region, Rwanda's overcrowded prisons, shocked me to the core when I went there last year.

But there is the other Africa as well, the Africa of hope. This is also the continent where the people time and again summon up the energy for a new beginning, where there is a will to survive. It is a continent of great humanity. Nearly 20 sub-Saharan countries have overcome the economic stagnation of the 1980s and can now point to growth rates of between 4% to 6%. Indeed, nearly a dozen of them are emulating the Asian tigers, topping 6%. These are the foundations on which we are developing our Africa policy. Not as blue-eyed optimists but as 'Afro-realists', as President Hertzog put it on his visit to Addis Ababa in January. We don't consider Africa 'out of the world'. On the contrary, in the year 2000 sub-Saharan Africa will be home to 640 million people, more than 10% of the world's population.

It is vital to the world's climate that Africa's rain forests should be preserved. The continent's natural resources, too, are of worldwide importance. All these are reasons enough to see in Africa a partner we need.

President Mandela said that the one mankind longs for a better life and no one can live in security and peace if others live in insecurity and strife. That is the reality of the human race today, a community for mutual survival. Africa's problems are our problems and vice versa. In today's world our destinies can no longer be seen separate from one another. That is why we Europeans will not abandon you in your effort to solve those problems. It is a question of morality and of reason. The relationship between the European Union and Southern Africa can be both a model and a stimulus in this process. We want to develop a genuine affinity and proceed forward together. That is how we will achieve success! Our partnership has a future!

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The South African Institute of International Affairs is an independent organisation which aims to promote a wider and more informed understanding of international issues among South Africans.

It seeks also to educate, inform and facilitate contact between people concerned with South Africa's place in an interdependent world, and to contribute to the public debate on foreign policy.