SAHA IN THE CLASSROOM

THE MOVE TO DEMOCRACY: NEGOTIATIONS

A set of classroom materials

produced by the South African History Archive

for Grade 12 learners

SOURCE BOOKLET FOR LEARNERS



THE SAHA IN THE CLASSROOM SERIES

This series of booklets comprises an introductory booklet on how to use the SAHA in the Classroom series and 9 source booklets for learners, with corresponding guide booklets for educators, exploring the following aspects of South Africa's history from 1976 - 1994:

The 1983 Constitution The United Democratic Front (UDF) and the National Forum Formal repression in the 1980s Covert repression in the 1980s Resistance in the 1980s - civil society Resistance in the 1980s - militancy Resistance in the 1980s - international pressure The move to democracy - negotiations The move to democracy - the role of violence

The South African History Archive (SAHA) is an independent human rights archive committed to recapturing lost and neglected histories, documenting past struggles against apartheid, as well as ongoing struggles in the making of democracy in South Africa. SAHA's central mission is to bring South African history out of the archives and into schools, universities and communities in new and innovative ways. SAHA is also dedicated to using South Africa's Promotion of Access to Information Act in order to extend the boundaries of freedom of information in South Africa and to build up an archive of materials released under the Act for public use.

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INTRODUCTION

These historical sources and questions are produced by the South African History Archive (SAHA) for Grade 12 History learners. They form part of a broader historical study of South Africa in the 1980s.

This booklet examines the process of negotiations that took place during the late 1980s and the early 1990s, in the move to democracy.

In the national examination, you will be asked questions on a wide variety of different sources. These will include written, oral, visual and other material useful to the historian.

There will be questions on both **primary sources** and **secondary sources**:

- primary sources are sources that come from the period that is being studied
- **secondary sources** are sources that are produced after the period of history that is being studied

Before getting to the sources, you will be given the historical context of the process of negotiations that took place during the late 1980s and early 1990s in the move to democracy. This text is much like a secondary source, as the information comes from the books written by historians who have researched this period. The sources themselves are drawn from the archives of SAHA, and will, more often than not, be primary sources.

These learning materials are intended to:

- provide you with an opportunity to use source material to **help your understanding** of South Africa in the 1980s
- provide you with **practice** in answering source-based questions
- guide you on how to approach answers

Some tips:

- Always look at the mark allocation to guide you.
- In this material, two marks are given for each point that can be explained and backed up with evidence from the source.
- A two-mark question will usually award one mark for identifying evidence from the source, and one mark for your explanation.
- When you answer a question for six marks, you need to explain at least three points and provide evidence from the source to back up each point.

After the sources and questions you will find a glossary of difficult terms and a list of books for further reading.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

THE MOVE TO DEMOCRACY – TALKS ABOUT TALKS

In 1988, the State President of apartheid South Africa, PW Botha, suffered a stroke. A few months later, FW de Klerk took over as State President. Unlike Botha, De Klerk was prepared to work towards formal negotiations with the African National Congress (ANC), the South African Communist Party (SACP) and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC).

On 2nd February 1990, President de Klerk unbanned these, and other, political parties and allowed them to operate freely in South Africa. He then freed Nelson Mandela from prison unconditionally.

The last remaining pillars of apartheid like the Group Areas Act and the Population Registration Act were cancelled. Talks about talks could then begin between the government and the anti-apartheid resistance movements.

With De Klerk in mind, a seasoned journalist remarked in wonder, 'he's done it all'. Democratic South Africans had become pessimistic about change in South Africa under PW Botha. Botha had grudgingly introduced reforms, one step forward and two steps back. De Klerk's reforms were sweeping by comparison and were introduced all at once in dramatic fashion. Why did De Klerk make such momentous changes and begin the process of negotiation? Historians are divided about the reasons for De Klerk's decision to introduce so many far-reaching changes in such a short time. Some historians suggest that his personality made him likely to be a far-sighted reformer and have argued that he may have felt a religious calling to 'rescue' South Africa. This argument suggests that individuals can have a profound influence on the course of history and stresses the importance of 'human agency'. It is also known as the 'Great Person' theory of history.

On the other hand, Marxist/ Materialist, and other historians suggest that deep, underlying structural pressures were behind De Klerk's actions. They argue that he had no option but to act as he did as the apartheid state was on the brink on collapse. Economic problems, determined resistance by anti-apartheid organisations in South Africa and the refusal of key African leaders to participate in anything less than meaningful negotiations, meant that de Klerk's government had hit a brick wall.

These historians also point to the collapse of the Soviet Union and argue that this event made it much easier for someone like De Klerk to enter into talks with 'communists' because communism was no longer a serious threat to white South Africans. If anyone else had replaced Botha, these historians argue, he or she would have had to come to the same conclusions and take the same actions as De Klerk. This approach plays down the role of the individual and stresses the importance of 'structure'. Both of these approaches have their strengths but need to be considered in a thoughtful, critical way.

THE ROLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL

Was it De Klerk's personality and his 'conversion' that made the 'talks about talks' possible? De Klerk was a leader who had travelled more widely than Botha as a young man and who was more sensitive to foreign opinion. He had an acute, analytical mind that led him to the conclusion that the only way forward for South Africa was to negotiate. De Klerk was a pragmatist who kept his

emotions under control and looked at events coolly like the lawyer he had trained to be. Yet he was also religious, and saw his appointment as President as a 'calling' to 'save' South Africa from a bloodbath. He later said that he felt that God had chosen him, at this particular moment in time, to carry out a specific task. He was moved by the religious service at his Inauguration on 20th September 1989 where the Reverend Pieter Bingle's moving sermon called on De Klerk to break with the old ways of thinking, or the rut into which South Africa had fallen would soon become a 'grave'. His brother said that De Klerk was in tears after the service.

Soon afterwards De Klerk allowed peaceful protest marches to take place in major cities without the usual harsh police crackdowns. Walter Sisulu was released in October 1989. Soon afterwards De Klerk held a bosberaad or meeting in the bushveld near the small town of Ellisras with his entire Cabinet and followed this up a week later with a meeting with Nelson Mandela. If deep-seated structural pressures were responsible for De Klerk's actions would he not have been more likely to introduce slow, incremental reforms like his predecessor PW Botha? De Klerk did not act in a cautious way but rather like someone in a hurry, a person who was fired up by conviction, confident to the point of recklessness and willing to take what one observer called a 'leap' into the unknown. (On the other hand we should remember that the situation in South Africa was dire, and did not afford the luxury of time for slow, cautious moves.)

On 2nd February 1990, De Klerk shocked South Africa and the rest of the world by announcing, in a speech in a small room adjoining the Parliament, that he was unbanning the ANC, PAC and Communist Party. Nine days later, on 11th February, Nelson Mandela was released. De Klerk's announcement was a political earthquake felt around the world. It opened up, for the first time, the possibility of real negotiations about South Africa's future. Journalists and political analysts were caught completely by surprise. It is hard to imagine PW Botha or any other member of Botha's Cabinet taking such steps.

Later, De Klerk and Mandela together received the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of their individual roles in bringing peace to South Africa. It seemed that in just a few months, De Klerk had turned around a country that was apparently headed for certain destruction and began the process that led to the 'miracle' of South African democracy in 1994.

THE ROLE OF 'STRUCTURAL PRESSURES'

Was it the deep-seated pressures on the apartheid government that led to 'talks about talks'? When De Klerk took over as State President, the black townships were aflame, protestors stoned police convoys and soldiers opened fire on demonstrators using live ammunition. Many leaders of anti-apartheid organisations were detained without trial, were banned or were in exile. The future appeared very bleak as South Africa drifted towards civil war. The State of Emergency that Botha had implemented in 1985 was nearly four years old, 20 000 people had been arrested and thousands had died but still the violence continued.

South Africa was increasingly isolated in the world for its racist system of apartheid. Many countries applied sports, cultural and arms boycotts against South Africa, preventing it from taking part in the Olympic Games and the soccer World Cup. International musicians refused to play in South Africa.

Many countries had imposed economic sanctions that together with disinvestment had seriously weakened an economy already under strain because of the huge budget for the Security and Defence Forces. The South African government had defaulted on its international debt, the Rand had weakened severely and the South African economy had slumped into recession and high inflation. By the time De Klerk took over it was virtually impossible for the apartheid South African government to raise loans anywhere in the world. The writing was on the wall.

De Klerk did not originate the ideas of negotiations or 'talks about talks'. In 1988 steps had been under way for years. Secret meetings had started as far back as 1985. Nelson Mandela, the imprisoned ANC leader, was visited by the Minister of Justice, Kobie Coetsee. Coetsee then met with Mandela's lawyer George Bizos and asked him to convey a message to the ANC-in-exile, expressing the willingness of the Nationalist government to negotiate.

The head of the National Intelligence Service, Nëil Barnard, held many meetings with Nelson Mandela. Even PW Botha met Nelson Mandela secretly. Influential Afrikaners then began to meet with the ANC in Lusaka and reported to Barnard about their progress. Barnard, in turn, informed PW Botha. Thus, indirect talks began between the ANC-in-exile and the apartheid government long before De Klerk came to power. These talks did not come about through any 'change of heart' by De Klerk but were already in place under Botha, and were the result of relentless internal and external pressure on the apartheid government.

Some of this pressure came from the 'young lions' or young black activists in the townships who had turned some urban areas into 'no go' areas except for heavily-armed convoys by white policemen and troops. In many cases MK soldiers had infiltrated these regions and help to establish these 'liberated zones', organising the youth into 'Self-Defence Units'. Black councillors resigned in large numbers as they realised that they could no longer receive protection from the apartheid government and could be 'necklaced' (where a petrol-soaked tyre was placed around a victim's neck and set alight) by the angry urban youth.

Attempts to extend the 1983 Constitution to Africans by introducing a National Statutory Council were stillborn because the government could not find any black leader who commanded a substantial following who was prepared to serve. The black working class was better organised than ever and increasingly used its muscle. A series of 'stayaways' were launched by COSATU, the trade union federation, specifically to back up political demands to release political prisoners and to start meaningful negotiations.

Alan Boesak summed up the determination of ordinary black South Africans when he said that they wanted 'all rights, here and now.' In the opinion of one writer South Africa was at 'five minutes to midnight' for a racial civil war to break out. De Klerk – or any other leader – had no choice but to act swiftly and in a far-reaching way if they wanted to stop the coming bloodbath.

Botha had long resisted negotiating with the ANC, SACP and PAC because they were seen as 'communist' organisations that were funded by communist countries like Soviet Union and China; MK soldiers, for example, were trained in the USSR or in East Germany. FW de Klerk, had also expressed concern about the 'godless' communist threat, but when communism collapsed in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union began to disintegrate in 1989, the 'rooi gevaar' (Afrikaans for 'red' or 'communist menace') evaporated. It became easier for the Nationalists to negotiate with the ANC without being accused of surrendering to 'communists'. De Klerk's rise to power at the

same time that communism was collapsing was a coincidence, but it made it much easier to open negotiations.

HOW WAS SOUTH AFRICA'S FUTURE DECIDED?

In May, 1990, the Nationalist Party met with the ANC at Groote Schuur, the official residence of the State President to discuss what would be needed before negotiations could begin. These 'talks about talks' soon laid down conditions in the form of the 'Groote Schuur Minute', which included the release of all political prisoners and the return of all exiles. De Klerk also lifted the State of Emergency, suspended the death penalty and abolished the Separate Amenities Act. A second meeting followed between the two political parties in Pretoria where the ANC announced the end of the armed struggle.

Formal negotiations were set for December 1991 and were to be called the 'Convention for a Democratic South Africa' or 'CODESA'. Meetings took place at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park in December 1991. ANC members who had been in exile were provided with special temporary indemnity from arrest so that they could participate in the talks. The main negotiator from the ANC was Cyril Ramaphosa, a former trade unionist and head of the National Union of Mineworkers as well as a leading figure in the United Democratic Front (UDF).

At CODESA were 228 delegates from 19 different political parties. It included representatives from the 'independent' states of the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei, which only apartheid South Africa recognised. The ANC, with the popular support of the majority of South Africans and the Nationalist Party which held power, had to share the negotiating table with people whose 'political parties' only represented a few thousand voters. The Pan Africanist Congress and the right-wing white Conservative Party boycotted the talks. Mangosuthu Buthelezi, the leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) refused to take part in the talks, although his party was represented.

All parties present agreed that racial discrimination should never be allowed to occur again, and that an interim government should be appointed until a new constitution was formulated. The ANC went a long way to allay the fears of the IFP, and to encourage Buthelezi to take part in the negotiations, despite evidence that IFP members were perpetrating acts of violence against ANC members; IFP migrant workers in hostels were attacking ANC supporters in nearby townships. (See Source A).

De Klerk faced a growing rebellion of a section of the white Afrikaner electorate, and a number of Nationalist Party constituencies were lost to the Conservative Party in by-elections. To deal with this situation, De Klerk called a Referendum that asked white voters whether they supported ongoing talks that would produce a new constitution. Over 80% of white voters took part and 68% voted 'yes'.

The talks entered a second stage in 1992 – CODESA 2. An important issue raised here was the issue of women's rights (see Source B). Women constituted more than half of South Africa's population yet they were oppressed, exploited and discriminated against in many ways. Women earned less than men for the same work and often suffered physical abuse, including rape, on a scale that was unprecedented in other parts of the world. By appointing a Gender Advisory Commission, CODESA 2 indicated that women's rights would be taken seriously during the constitution-making process.

These talks broke down in May, and in June a terrible massacre was perpetrated on people living in Boipatong, apparently by IFP hostel dwellers with police complicity. However, by September a 'Record of Understanding' was signed by Mandela and De Klerk. This concluded that there would be a five-year Government of National Unity (GNU), where the main political parties would form a coalition. Violence continued, however, and many attacks were made on black people by a mysterious 'third force'. The Nationalist Party tried to claim that the ANC was behind this violence in a series of 'smear' pamphlets.

PEACEFUL NEGOTIATIONS DEFEAT VIOLENCE

The government appointed a new chief negotiator, Roelf Meyer, who got on well with Cyril Ramaphosa, the ANC's main negotiator, and soon the talks were back on track. Joe Slovo, chair of the SACP, made a valuable contribution by proposing a 'sunset clause' where for the five years of the GNU civil servants, police and army officers could remain in their jobs.

The ANC was also willing to allow provinces to hold some powers, and accepted that different political parties could control the new provinces, which would be representative regions. For example, the IFP, which had its stronghold in the 'homeland' of Kwazulu and was influential in the current Natal Province, could feasibly control a new region called 'Kwazulu-Natal' after the elections. The negotiators needed reliable information from each of the existing provinces, so that the new proposed regions could be demarcated in a fair and equitable way (see Source C).

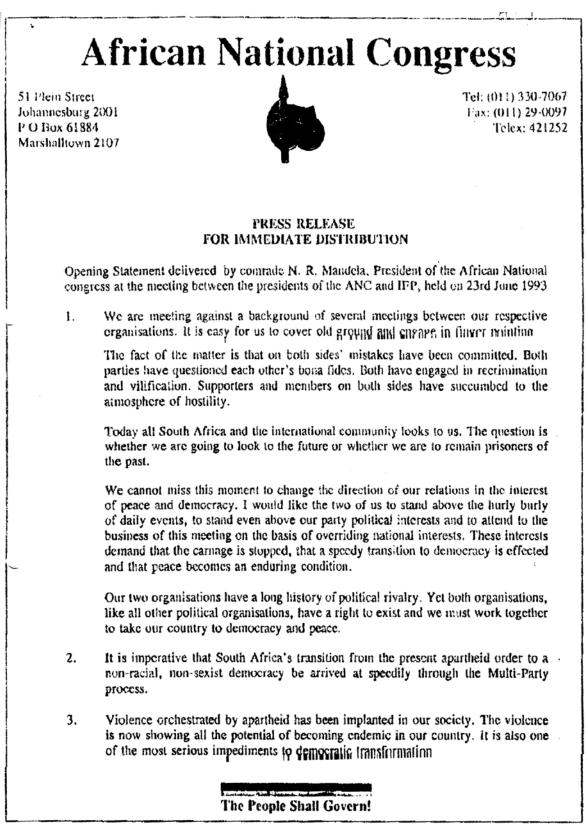
Two major bosberade ('bush meetings') were held between the ANC and the Nationalist Party government in December 1992 and January 1993 to iron out remaining differences. A Negotiating Council was formed to plan democratic elections and develop a new constitution. The assassination of the popular MK leader, Chris Hani, by white right-wingers did not halt this growing determination to work together but rather underlined the need for South Africans to come together and work for democracy.

Democratic elections were set for 27th April 1994. A major problem facing the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) – appointed to supervise the elections – was that most South Africans had never voted before. A massive voter education project was needed. A mock ballot to be used in voter education was produced for the Negotiating Council to study (see Source D).

A new constitution would be drawn up by the Negotiating Council while a Transitional Executive Council (TEC) was established made up of representatives of the main political parties (chiefly the ANC and NP). This TEC was a powerful body and decided to allow certain categories of political prisoners to vote. Ordinary or 'common' criminals who were imprisoned saw an opportunity to petition the TEC for the right to vote as well (Source E) and to gain pardon for their crimes.

The PAC came on board and was prepared to take part in the elections; the IFP refused to accept the agreement until the last minute – just a few days before the elections the IFP was finally persuaded to take part and their logo was added to the election ballots. The elections were held and the new Government of National Unity was formed, bringing the Nationalist Party, ANC and IFP into government. Peaceful negotiations – that were constantly threatened by violent acts – won the day and South Africa experienced the miracle of democratic and free elections.

SOURCE A: Press Release from the African National Congress (ANC) (1993)



From a pamphlet of the South African Council of Churches. (Archived at SAHA as Collection AL3078:A1.1, Press Releases)

QUESTIONS FOR SOURCE A

A1.

Study the above press release and identify four words that attempt to give the impression that the ANC and Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) have drawn closer together. (8)

A2.

Use your own knowledge and Source A to explain why this press release was issued by the ANC. (6)

A3.

Who created this document and which audience is it aimed at? (4)

A4.

*Imagine that you are an ANC member. Write a speech that you will deliver at the next branch meeting to lend support to this press release, without using the same words. (6)

(TOTAL MARKS: 24)

SOURCE B: Report of the Gender Advisory Committee to the Convention for a Democratic South Africa 2 (CODESA)



REPORT OF THE GENDER ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO CODESA 2

Due to enormous public pressure about the lack of representation at CODESA of women, who form 53 % if the population, and subsequent suggestions and submissions by women's organisations, political parties and other organisations, the Management Committee of CODESA decided to form the Gender Advisory Committee. The GAC is a subcommittee of the Management Committee charged with the special task of looking into the Terms of Reference, minutes and decisions of each of the Working Groups, and those of the Management Committee, and advising on their gender implications. All CODESA participants have so far sent representatives to the GAC with the exception of the Bophuthaiswana and Venda Governments.

The GAC met for the first time on 6 April and has diligently studied the Terms of Reference, minutes and most of the decisions already taken by the Working Groups as well as internal and external submissions from women's organisations and political parties, with an unusual spirit of unity. The GAC has reached consensus on many issues, but consensus was not reached on others.

Text:

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(Archived at SAHA as Collection AL3078: B1.21, Gender Advisory Committee)

OUESTIONS FOR SOURCE B

B1.

What was the Gender Advisory Committee of CODESA 2? (4)

B2.

Use Source B and your own knowledge to explain why it was considered necessary to form this Gender Advisory Committee. (4)

B3.

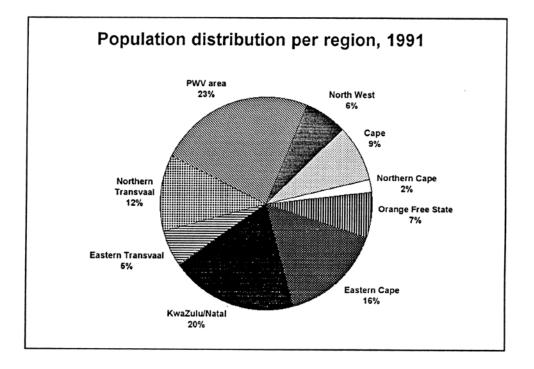
Who produced this document and who is it aimed at? (6)

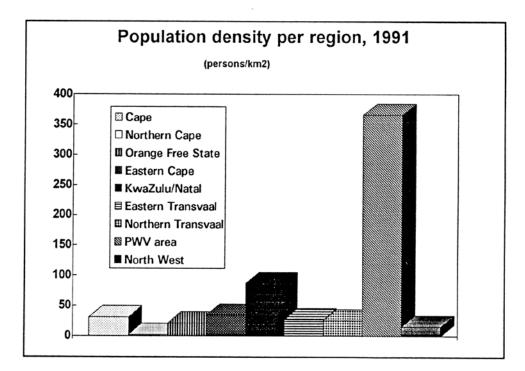
B4.

Write a paragraph for a history textbook that makes use of the evidence in Source B to assess the success of the Gender Advisory Committee to CODESA 2. (8)

(TOTAL MARKS: 22)

SOURCE C: Pie chart showing the division of democratic South Africa into regions (new provinces)





(Archived at SAHA as Collection AL3078:C1.1)

OUESTIONS FOR SOURCE C

C1.

Examine the pie chart and identify region with the most people and the region with the least people. (4)

C2.

Use Source D and your own knowledge to explain why this pie chart was produced during the negotiations process. (4)

C3.

Re-write the names of the nine regions as the provinces they are today. (9)

C4.

*You are a political consultant and a major political party asks for your advice in the upcoming democratic elections. The political party wants to target each region to get the most votes, using its limited funds efficiently. Write a report that will set out the best strategy for this political party for spending its money. (8)

(TOTAL MARKS: 25)

SOURCE D: A Mock Up of an Election Ballot Paper produced during the Multi Party Negotiations (1993)

BALLOT	PAPER				
AFRIKAANSE PARTY	AFP				
EENHEIDSPARTY/UNITY PARTY					
EQUAL PARTY	EP	**			
FUTURE PARTY/ Mokgatlho wa kamoso		Ŵ			
MOKGATLHO WA LENANEO					
MOKGATLHO WA MATLHAGATLHAGA/ ACTIVE PARTY		5.3			
MOKGATLHO WA TOKOLOGO/ LIBERALE PARTY	LP	₹\$			
NEW SOUTH AFRICAN PARTY/ NUWE SUID-AFRIKAANSE PARTY	NSAP				
Vote for one party only	Vote for one party only Stem slegs vir een party				
Record your vote by a X in the square opposite the party for whom you wish to vote	In the Stem dour 'n X to maak in die vierkant teenoor die party vir wie u wil stem				

CHEDULE 2 Section 27)

(Archived at SAHA as Collection AL3078: C1.11, E30)

QUESTIONS FOR SOURCE D

D1.

What clues suggest that this is not a real ballot paper for the 1994 democratic elections but rather a mock up ballot paper? (6)

D2.

Using your own knowledge and Source D, explain why a mock up of the ballot paper was produced. (4)

D3.

Look carefully at the names of the 'political parties' and identify the racial and language groups that these would appeal to. (One mark for each political party) (8).

D4.

*As a political consultant approached by all the political parties, offer advice on the symbols used on the ballot. (8)

(TOTAL MARKS: 26)

SOURCE E: Letter to the Transitional Executive Committee (TEC) requesting voting rights for prisoners (March 1994)

A FLUED O PRISON
MESIUM A PRISON
PRIVATE BAG X23
KREDIYSEAS
9500
01/03/1994
THE CHARDERCON
THE CHAIRPERSON TRANSITIONA EXCECUTIVE COMMITTEE (TE:) KEMPTON PARK
KEMPTON DODY
RE! VOTING RIGHTS AND GESTERAL AMAESTY.
SIR,
Will respect to your highest chair of
hohour, we the undersigned sincerey
Forward our grievances to your attention
Concerning our human rights in voting
to a neu democratic governent.
We are the bonagide citizens of
South Arrica We request to know why we
are judged in meant of crimes as to who
should vote in the just democratic elections.
We gend it is not gair that is certain
category of prisoners should be allowed to
participate in voting and others be ignored as
we have all committed crime begore the eyes
of the Law our grisvances are as follow
1. To vote All in The most Democratic
1. To vote All in The Just Democratic Elections
2. To Be granted General Amnesty.
3. Stopage of harrasmen of privates.
Rights by prisoner authoroties !
1

The TEC was the council made up of the main political parties (the ANC and NP) represented at CODESA.

(Archived at SAHA as Collection AL3183: E.3.6.4.2.2.24)

OUESTIONS FOR SOURCE E

E1.

List the demands made in this letter from prisoners to the Transitional Executive Committee. (6)

E2.

Using Source E and your knowledge explain why the prisoners chose this time to make an appeal. (6)

E3.

Who were the prisoners writing to? Why? (4)

E4.

*Assume that you are a member of the Transitional Executive Committee. Draft a proposal to grant all prisoners the right to vote that is persuasive but which takes into account the concerns that other members may have. (8)

(TOTAL MARKS: 24)

GLOSSARY

bosberaad – a think tank, strategy, or long-term planning meeting

gender – the state of being female or male

human agency – the capacity of human beings to make choices and to impose these choices on the world

indemnity - being exempt from penalties or prosecution

pessimistic – expecting the worst possible outcome

structural – relating to or caused by structure, especially political or economic structure

FURTHER READING

Culpin C. South Africa since 1948, John Murray, 2001

Davenport T.R.H. The Transfer of Power in South Africa, David Philip, 1998

Sparks A. Tomorrow is Another Country, Struik, 1994.

Ministry of Education. Every Step of the Way: The Journey to Freedom in South Africa, HSRC, 2004

Out of Step: War and Resistance in South Africa. Catholic Institute for International Relations Publication, 1989