

**ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD OF THE SACBC STATEMENT ON THE
RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS (11/10/89)**

The Conference welcomes the news that Messrs Walter Sisulu, Jafta Masemola, Andrew Mlangeni, Oscar Mpetha, Raymond Mlaba, Elias Motsoaledi, Wilton Mkwayi and Ahmed Kathrada will be released from prison unconditionally. We express our disappointment at the inexplicable delay in releasing Mr Nelson Mandela, a key actor in the South African political drama.

The release of leaders such as these is we believe, a crucial step on the way to genuine negotiations, as well as the removal of all legal bars to free political activity.

The crucial test of the government's sincerity about negotiations will be its handling of the overall situation, in particular the state of emergency and its draconian restrictions.

We pray that this first step by President de Klerk into the untested waters of the Rubicon will be the forerunner of those other measures required to initiate genuine dialogue and ultimately lead to justice and peace for all the people of our country.