

## **Nederland tegen apartheid?**

### **Government and anti-apartheid movements.**

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During the apartheid period the Netherlands was regarded as one of the most active anti-apartheid countries. To underscore this, in 1990, during a visit to the Netherlands, Nelson Mandela thanked the Dutch people for their role during the apartheid period.<sup>1</sup> On the other side of the spectrum, during the apartheid period, the National Party (NP) government published a list of 'dangerous organisations', which included three Dutch organisations, more than those mentioned for any other country.<sup>2</sup> These highlight the widely held view by the South African public that the Netherlands was very important in the struggle against apartheid. This paper aims to examine the reason for this view and to assess to what extent the Netherlands really was anti-apartheid. In the paper the role of the government and non-government organisations will be considered separately in order to ascertain the nature and depth of the Netherlands involvement in the struggle against apartheid.

Historiographically, the official Dutch government's role in the freedom struggle has been researched by few historians and non-historians.<sup>3</sup> Other than the works done by participants in the non-government anti-apartheid movements<sup>4</sup>, and a few biographical studies of the participants,<sup>5</sup> there has been little historical analysis of

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<sup>1</sup> D. Hellema & E. van den Bergh, 'Dialog of Boycot. De Nederlandse – Zuid Afrika-politiek na de Tweede Wereldoorlog', Het Instituut voor Zuidelijk Afrika (IZA) nr 2, November, 1995, p.12.

<sup>2</sup> E. van den Bergh, 'Dialog was geen dialoog, sancties bleven omstreden' in *Amandla*, November 1995, p.14.

<sup>3</sup> K.W. Grundy, "'We're against apartheid, but...': Dutch foreign policy towards South Africa.' in *Studies in Race and Nations*, vol 5, no 3, 1973-1974, Colorado; G.J. Schutte, *De roeping ten aanzien van het oude broedervolk. Nederland en Zuid Afrika, 1960-1990*, Suid-Afrikaanse Instituut (SAI) Reeks, no 1, Amsterdam, 1993; S. de Boer, *Van Sharpeville tot Soweto. Nederlands regeringsbeleid ten aanzien van apartheid, 1960-1977*. Amsterdam, 1999; J.W. Van der Meulen, 'Nederland en de apartheid' in S. Rozemond, *Het woord is aan Nederland. Thema's van buitenlandse beleid in de jaren 1966-1983*. S'Gravenhage, 1983; A. Meijer, 'Voortrekkers of voordeeltrekkers? Het Nederlandse beleid ten aanzien van Zuid-Afrika.', Leiden, sa; W.G. Hendricks, 'De betrekkinge tussen Nederland en Zuid Afrika, 1946-1961.' PhD.-verhandeling, Universiteit van Wes-Kaapland (UWK)1984.

<sup>4</sup> J.J. Buskes, *South Africa's apartheid policy- unacceptable*. sl, 1956; Hellema & Van den Bergh, 'Dialog of Boycot; Kairos, 'Kerk en bevrijdings-bewegingen'. Utrecht, 1981; C. Edelenbos (ed.), *Defence and Aid Fund, 1965-1991. In goed vertrouwen*. sl. 1991; C. Braam, *Operatie Vula. Zuidafrikanen en Nederlanders in de strijd tegen apartheid*. Amsterdam, 1993; J. van Beurden & C. Huinder, *De Vinger op de zere plek. Solidariteit met Zuidelijk Afrika, 1961- 1996*. Amsterdam, 1996; R. Rozenberg, *De bloedband Den-Haag-Pretoria. Het Nederlandse Zuid-Afrikabeleid sinds 1945*. Amsterdam, 1986.

<sup>5</sup> CJR Clur, 'From acquiescence to dissent: Beyers Naude, 1915-1977', MA- dissertation, University of South Africa (UNISA), 1997.

their participation in the struggle<sup>6</sup>. There is however no historical analysis comparing the actions of the government to those of the anti-apartheid movements.

### 1. South African – Dutch relations prior to apartheid

Before focusing on the apartheid period, it is necessary to briefly consider the origin of the relations between the Netherlands and South Africa. The connection between the two countries dates back to 1652 when the Dutch company- the Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC)- set up a refreshment post in the Cape. Although, the initial intention was not to colonise the area, soon a Dutch colony was developing in the Cape. The VOC remained in the Cape until 1795, when the British occupied the colony for a few years. The Dutch government then took control of the colony from 1803 until 1806, where after it was finally taken over by the British. With the final withdrawal of the Dutch from the Cape, a population with ties to the Netherlands remained in the country. These people spoke a derivative of the Dutch language, Afrikaans, and kept up certain Dutch traditions. However, aside from these cultural connections, there was little formal contact between the Netherlands and southern Africa over the next century.<sup>7</sup>

Relations resurfaced in the late nineteenth century. By this time, some of the people of Dutch origin, the Afrikaners, had moved inland and formed two Boer Republics- the Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek (ZAR) and Oranje Vrijstaat (OFS). In the late nineteenth century these Republics fought against the British for their freedom in two wars of independence, (1880-1881 and 1899-1902). It was during these wars that the link between the Netherlands and the Afrikaners was rekindled. Many people in the Netherlands felt that the British were not justified in their action against the Boers, and they offered their support- both moral and physical- to the Boers. This newly formed bond, made stronger by the diminishing position of the Netherlands in international affairs, influenced foreign relations between the two countries during the twentieth century. The link with the Boer Republics became a link with the whole of South Africa after the Union of South Africa in 1910.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> M. Van Klavern, *Nederland's aandeel in apartheid. Nieuwe feiten gegevens economische relaties Nederland-Zuid Afrika*. Den Haag, 1983; C. van Lakerveld (ed.), *Nederland tegen apartheid*. Amsterdam, 1994, Frank Jaap Buijs, *Overtuiging en geweld. Vreedzame en gewelddadige acties tegen de apartheid*. Amsterdam, 1995.

<sup>7</sup> H.J.van Aswegen, *History of South Africa to 1854*. Pretoria, 1990, pp.68, 74-78, 105, 158; A. Vandenbosch, *Dutch foreign policy since 1815. A study in small power politics*. The Hague, 1959, p.71.

<sup>8</sup> B.J.H. de Graaf, *De mythe van de stamverwantschap. Nederland en de Afrikaners, 1902-1930*. SAI Reeks 2, Amsterdam, 1993, pp.1, 3; M. Kuitenbrouwer, *The Netherlands and the rise of imperialism. Colonies and foreign*

Despite relations being stronger in the twentieth century than they had been during the nineteenth century, they were still quite limited in the first few decades of the century. Trade agreements were formed, cultural links established and diplomatic ties formed, but in general relations were confined to the Afrikaner section of the population. It was only after World War II that close ties were formed. It was in this period that the Netherlands felt the need for a link with a country with a language and culture similar to theirs. The post-war period was a time of difficulty in the Netherlands, and large-scale immigration took place. A large number of people immigrated to South Africa from the Netherlands in the first decade after the war. It was however, also in this period that the NP came to power in South Africa in 1948, and that apartheid was established in the country. The relationship in these last decades was characterised by the Netherlands taking an increased interest in events in South Africa.<sup>9</sup>

## **2. Government**

The policy and actions of the Netherlands' government must be considered in order to assess to what extent it was their actions that gave the Netherlands an anti-apartheid character. Their relations, from the promulgation of apartheid ideology in 1948 until the release of Mandela in 1990, will briefly be examined.

With the introduction of apartheid policy in 1948, the relations between South Africa and the Netherlands continued without change. The Netherlands' government took note of the new policy being introduced, but appeared to believe that there was no real cause for alarm.<sup>10</sup> The first disagreement to take place between the Netherlands and the NP government was at a diplomatic level. Otto du Plessis was sent to the Netherlands as ambassador in 1948, but a problem arose due to rumours that he had Nazi tendencies. Du Plessis was recalled and was replaced by D.B. Bosman, quickly resolving the problem. The Netherlands' ambassador in South Africa, J. van den Bergh, remained on friendly terms with Du Plessis.<sup>11</sup> With this problem out of the

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*policy, 1870-1902*. Oxford, 1991, pp.73-74, 190-192; Van Aswegen, *History of South Africa*, pp. 105, 158; Vandenbosch, *Dutch foreign policy since 1815*, p.71.

<sup>9</sup> G. Klein, 'Relations between the Netherlands and South Africa in the twentieth century', BA(hons) dissertation, University of Pretoria (UP), 1999.

<sup>10</sup> Nederlands Instituut voor Zuidelijk Afrika (NIZA), 19.4, P.A.Groenhuis, pp.5-6.

<sup>11</sup> Archief van de Ministerie van Buitelandse Zaken (BZ), code 9, 2435, 911.26, ZA, binnelandse bestuur, 1958-1960.

way, relations between the Netherlands and South Africa continued. South Africa remained one of the most important countries for the Netherlands with regards to immigration, with 2839 Dutch immigrating to South Africa in 1954 alone. Exchanges on academic and scientific level continued,<sup>12</sup> while the cultural link between the Netherlands and South Africa was strengthened, culminating in the signing of the Cultural Accord in 1953.<sup>13</sup>

Although discussions on apartheid took place, and the United Nations (UN) General Assembly criticised the policy,<sup>14</sup> most countries, including the Netherlands, believed that the UN had no right to comment on apartheid as it fell within the realm of the domestic affairs of South Africa.<sup>15</sup> Ambassador Van den Bergh felt apartheid should not be compared to ideologies of World War II, but indicated to the South African government that the Netherlands' government could not accept apartheid due to the general Dutch public's view of the policy. He also said that the official view was less radical.<sup>16</sup> The ambassador did not criticise the policy in 1959 when the police suppressed rioters, or with the introduction of land division policies, which he regarded as 'fair' when the protectorates were taken into consideration. There was however criticism when leaders of the African National Congress (ANC), who were seen as moderate, were banned. It was believed that banning would just lead to more radical action, as was seen in the forming of the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) in 1959. Apartheid was considered to have a logical grounding with regard to blacks, but problematic when considering the coloureds, who had no separate culture.<sup>17</sup>

#### **i. Sharpeville - the first turning point**

International opposition to apartheid came in 1961. Pictures of the Sharpeville massacre of 21 March, where police opened fire on protestors killing 69, were flashed across the front pages of international newspapers. The horror and violence of apartheid was brought home, and criticism of the policy was directed against the

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<sup>12</sup> Jaarboek Buitelandse Zaken overgelegd aan der Staten Generaal (BZ), 1955/1956, Afrika, p.134.

<sup>13</sup> Central Archives Depot (SAB), Pretoria; Sekretaris van Onderwys, Kuns en Wetenschap (OKW). Sekretaris van Unie-Onderwys, 1911-1968 (UOD). E261/4/8/1: SA Nederlandse Kultuurverdrag, leerstoele en institute, 1931-1961; SAB, Pretoria: (UOD). E261/4/2/3: Cultural agreement with the Netherlands, October 1950- April 1960; Jaarboek BZ, 1952/1953, Afrika, p.147.

<sup>14</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1960/1961, Afrika, p.101.

<sup>15</sup> Klein, 'Relations between the Netherlands and South Africa in the twentieth century', pp.32-34.

<sup>16</sup> Archief BZ, code 9, 2442, 911.30, ZA, binnelandse toestand (rassenprobleem), 1957-1958.

<sup>17</sup> Archief BZ, code 9, 2443, 911.30, ZA, binnelandse toestand (rassenprobleem), 1959.

South African government. The Netherlands faced the same change of heart,<sup>18</sup> and hereafter they no longer supported South Africa in the UN.<sup>19</sup>

In the 1960s this resonated at parliamentary level. During the 1965 budget discussion, the Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA) pointed out that the Netherlands' government was not doing much to prevent a situation similar to that of World War II from recurring and the Pasifistisch Socialistische Partij (PSP). The Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij (SGP) however disagreed, maintaining South Africa was doing all it could for the blacks and it would be suicide to give them the vote.<sup>20</sup> However, in the light of this discussion, the Netherlands' government decided to make a donation to help those convicted under apartheid legislation. The Defence and Aid Fund (DAF) was chosen to receive the donation as other European countries also gave money to this organisation.<sup>21</sup> Although an amount of 100 000 guilders was decided on, parliamentary disagreement continued as some maintained they should not interfere in the internal politics of South Africa.<sup>22</sup> The donation became known as the 'ton van Luns',<sup>23</sup> and caused much debate in parliament and in public circles. The South African government reacted by declaring the DAF a banned organisation in March 1966.<sup>24</sup> The Netherlands' government decided to go ahead with the donation, and gave it to the UN Trust Fund for South Africa formed in 1965.<sup>25</sup>

However, due to the problems caused by the 'ton van Luns' the Netherlands' government decided to embark on a policy of critical dialogue which would be more productive.<sup>26</sup> Internationally criticism of apartheid continued, and the Netherlands government also openly criticised apartheid.<sup>27</sup> Despite this, the discussions that took place between the Netherlands' ambassador and the South African government in

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<sup>18</sup> W.G. Hendricks, 'De betrekkinge tussen Nederland en Zuid Afrika, 1946-1961.' PhD.-verhandeling, Universiteit van Wes-Kaapland (UWK) 1984, p.210; G.J. Schutte, *De roeping ten aanzien van het oude broedervolk. Nederland en Zuid Afrika, 1960-1990*, Suid-Afrikaanse Instituut (SAI) Reeks, no 1, Amsterdam, 1993, pp.7-8.

<sup>19</sup> Hendricks, 'De betrekking tussen Nederland en Suid Afrika', pp.217-218, 239-241.

<sup>20</sup> Bibliotheek van het Algemeen Rijksarchief (Bib ARA): Verslag de handelingen van de tweede kamer der Staten General gedurende het zittingsjaar (2de kamer) 1964-1965, 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, 6 October 1964, pp.114-115, 142-143, 227-229.

<sup>21</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1964/1965, Zuid Afrika, p.126.

<sup>22</sup> Bib ARA: 2de Kamer 1964-1965, 25<sup>th</sup> meeting, 2 February 1965, p. 1151.

<sup>23</sup> J. Luns was the Netherlands Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time of the proposed donation to the DAF.

<sup>24</sup> Hellema & Van den Bergh, 'Dialogo of boycott', p. 6; De Boer, *Van Sharpeville tot Soweto*. pp.134-151.

<sup>25</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1965/1966, Zuid Afrika, p.125.

<sup>26</sup> R. Rozenberg, *De bloedband Den-Haag-Pretoria. Het Nederlandse Zuid-Afrikabeleid sinds 1945*. Amsterdam, 1986, pp.21-22.

<sup>27</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1967/1968, Afrika, p.145.

1963 remained cordial. The ambassador said apartheid could not be accepted as it was against human rights, and urged that South Africa should participate in UN discussions on apartheid.<sup>28</sup>

The only other issue of major concern that arose in the 1960s was the question of the Netherlands supplying South Africa with submarines. Due to the selective arms embargo this became an issue in parliament, and the debate ended with the decision that they would not go ahead with the deal. This was one of the first times that a question regarding South Africa was so prominent in the Dutch parliament.<sup>29</sup> The Netherlands continued to follow a policy of open dialogue with South Africa for the next few years, but nothing spectacular came of the post-1961 change in government policy.

## **ii. The J.M. Den Uyl government - a more radical policy**

The first donation by the Netherlands' government to the freedom movements came in 1969 under the P.J.S. De Jong Cabinet when they gave 250 000 guilders for education and health services to Frente de Libertacao de Mocambique (FREMILO) in Tanzania. Two years later the Netherlands' Queen, Juliana, gave a donation to the Anti-Racism fund of the World Council of Churches (WCC). This resulted in a lot of negative reaction inside South Africa, but the Dutch government argued that it was acceptable as long as the money was not used for violence.<sup>30</sup> The B.W. Biesheuvel Cabinet continued with some support for the freedom movements, but the next turning point in the relations with South Africa only came in 1973 when the Den Uyl government came to power. It made promises of support for the freedom movements in its governing statement, and promised to increase donations to 12.5 million guilders in 1974 for Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. Aid would be given through the UN and only under guarantee that it would not be used for military purposes. The government policy, however, became one of assistance to refugees via the freedom movements, rather than direct support for the freedom movements.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Archief BZ, code 9, 2449, 911.30, ZA, binnelandse toestand (rasenprobleem), 1963.

<sup>29</sup> De Boer, *Van Sharpeville tot Soweto*, pp.155-174.

<sup>30</sup> Komitee Zuidelijk Afrika (KZA), 'Partij kiezen voor Zuid Africa. Balans van het Nederlandse beleid.', Amsterdam, sa, Deel 1, pp.14-15.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p.5.

The Den Uyl government started a new phase in the Netherlands' support for the victims of apartheid by concentrating on humanitarian aid to southern Africa.<sup>32</sup> The 1975 budget for aid to countries fighting for their freedom in Africa stood at 20 million guilders. Independent countries in Africa received developmental aid, which was budgeted separately. South Africa was seen as a developing country so that aid could be provided through the homelands. The Den Uyl government also gave financial support to southern Africa via other organisations, including the WCC, UN, DAF and Netherlands' trade unions.<sup>33</sup> Support was also given to the frontline states, which were independent countries in southern Africa whose economy relied strongly on South Africa and whose independence was often undermined by South African military action. Western countries were also very important to the Southern Africa Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), resulting in the Den Uyl government giving aid to Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique and Angola.<sup>34</sup>

During 1976, the government continued to offer support to the victims of apartheid and racism and increased donations to southern Africa. The aid to the South West African Peoples Organisation (SWAPO) remained the same on condition it was not for military purposes. Donations to the UN Fund for Southern Africa were increased to 850 000 guilders, and the Trust Fund for South Africa got 100 000 guilders plus 250 000 guilders extra for judicial help.<sup>35</sup> The Den Uyl government faced problems as not all members wanted to support the freedom movements and the cabinet was divided on the point of economic relations with South Africa. It was however under Den Uyl that aid to the freedom movements increased considerably, although not as much was achieved as was expected in 1973.<sup>36</sup>

The Den Uyl government did not stay in power for long, and in 1977 was replaced by the A.A.M. Van Agt government. Under Van Agt, aid to the freedom movements persisted, but was reduced to a few million guilders per year. Aid was also given via different organisations, making it difficult to determine how much was actually given.

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<sup>32</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1975/1976, Afrika, pp.164-170.

<sup>33</sup> Archief BZ, code 9, 6077, 911.30, ZA, rasprobleem 2de spoor, 1984, KZA, Partij kiezen voor Zuid Afrika', deel II, pp.5-6.

<sup>34</sup> KZA, Partij kiezen voor Zuid Afrika', deel II, pp.5-6, deel IV, pp.11-13.

<sup>35</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1976/1977, Afrika, pp.159-165

<sup>36</sup> NIZA, 19.4, P.A. Groenhuis, pp.5-6; R. Pameijer, 'Het is een elementaire plicht van ons land om op te treden' in *Amandla*, October 1993, pp.23-25.

Material support to the freedom movements remained limited to humanitarian uses, although the government did stay in contact with the freedom movements and received visits from their leaders. The budget for aid was reduced during 1977, although money could still be assigned from other emergency and development funds. Aid to the frontline states remained a priority in the face of oil boycotts and other pressure on the government.<sup>37</sup>

An important South African issue, which surfaced in 1975-1976, was the discussion on the provision of nuclear power plants to South Africa. Some members of parliament were strongly against the Netherlands getting involved, feeling it dangerous to extend the nuclear power of South Africa in this way. They also wanted the government to put pressure on other EC partners not to provide nuclear power to South Africa.<sup>38</sup> After a number of debates in the Netherlands' parliament, South Africa decided to rather turn to France with the request before getting a final answer from the Netherlands.<sup>39</sup>

The next important event to impact on the Netherlands' government was the Soweto uprising of 1976. Once again there was an outcry in the Netherlands, and across the world, about the racially discriminatory policy of South Africa. The Netherlands' government declared that the uprising was the expected outcome of the discriminatory South African policy.<sup>40</sup> Solidarity was shown with those fighting apartheid, but by this time the most decisive actions within the Netherlands were being taken by the anti-apartheid movements rather than by the Netherlands' government. Despite support for some form of sanctions and an arms embargo, the Netherlands' government was not prepared to introduce this alone. Action would not be taken unless in the form of European Community (EC) actions against South Africa.<sup>41</sup>

The combined impact of the Soweto uprising and the fact that South Africa made no changes to her policy, but just continued with bannings and arrests, led to many within the Netherlands' government wanting to drastically review their South Africa

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<sup>37</sup> KZA, Partij kiezen voor Zuid Afrika', deel II, pp.5-6, deel IV, pp.11-13.

<sup>38</sup> Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, XV; 2de Kamer, 1979-1980, doc: 16079, nr 1.

<sup>39</sup> De Boer, *Van Sharpeville tot Soweto*, pp.325-329.

<sup>40</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1975/1976, Zuid Afrika, p.167.

<sup>41</sup> De Boer, *Van Sharpeville tot Soweto*, pp. 334-363; Hellema & Van den Bergh, 'Dialog of boycott', IZA nr 2, pp.7-8.



policy. After the death of Steve Biko in 1977 the Netherlands' government froze the Cultural Accord. In November 1977 the UN decided to make the voluntary arms embargo mandatory, while the EC introduced a code of conduct for business.<sup>42</sup> The 1970s thus ended with plans for a more concrete and critical policy to be introduced by the Netherlands' government. However, rather than live up to such expectations, the policy became more moderate again, making the 1970s the most radical period in the Netherlands' official criticism of apartheid.

### **iii. Few concrete steps during the 1980s**

The 1980s were characterised by small changes in the relations between South Africa and the Netherlands. Debates regarding sanctions and boycotts continued, humanitarian support for those affected by apartheid was provided and attempts at dialogue with the South African government persisted. In the early 1980s there were signs that the Netherlands' government tried to make their South African policy more concrete. The first change concerned the Cultural Accord. In 1977, as already mentioned, the government had frozen the Cultural Accord, but as the South African government made no changes to their policy, it was decided to finally abandon the Accord in 1981. At the same time, the Netherlands' government declared that it would no longer give a subsidy to immigrants going to South Africa.<sup>43</sup> In March 1982 the Netherlands government decided to introduce a visa requirement which was coordinated with the Benelux countries in 1983. This was implemented because they felt it was unfair that South Africa restricted anti-apartheid people from entering South Africa, but that they could do nothing in return.<sup>44</sup>

In the same period, many parliamentarians wanted to introduce legislation to make investment in South Africa impossible. The UN Security Council had not made moves in this direction, and so countries like Sweden had introduced their own legislation. The Netherlands' government decided to investigate the effects of such a law, and found that while most within the economic sector were against apartheid, they were not in favour of breaking ties with South Africa. The government thus decided to look

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<sup>42</sup> Archief BZ, code 9, 6077, 911.30, ZA, rassenprobleem 2de spoor, 1984; Jaarboek BZ, 1977/1978, Zuid Afrika, pp.161-162.

<sup>43</sup> Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, XIII; BZ, 1977/1978, Africa, p.168.

<sup>44</sup> Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, II; 2de Kamer, 1981-1982, pp. 2507; Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, II, 2de Kamer, 1983-1983, doc: 17895, nr 1, 2.

for an alternative, and turned to the EC code of conduct. This code was based on the view that social equality would lead to political equality, and laid out guidelines for businesses in South Africa. It was decided to limit investment to those who adhered to the code,<sup>45</sup> and any Netherlands' company with a branch or section in South Africa needed to hand an annual report to the Minister of Foreign Affairs showing they met the minimum requirements of the EC code. Political parties had mixed views regarding the implementation of the code.<sup>46</sup>

In 1982 the R.F.M. Lubbers government came to power in the Netherlands, introducing the so-called two-stream policy, which would remain policy until the end of the apartheid period. The South African government under P.W. Botha, who had promised to introduce changes in South Africa, had a major influence on their policy. The Lubbers' government felt they should encourage the South African government, and so brought in a policy that on the one hand desired dialogue with South Africa and on the other offered financial assistance for development projects inside South Africa. The policy aimed to support peaceful change, social development and those inside South Africa who wanted change. The government believed that in this way it could influence the treatment of banned anti-apartheid activists, and saw this policy as a type of cultural link with the entire South African population. The policy included humanitarian support for the ANC and PAC, and offered money for projects inside South Africa dealing with training and development. This money was distributed via the Netherlands' embassy in South Africa. Further support was given to the frontline states to help them obtain economic independence from South Africa.<sup>47</sup> This policy was however regarded as a step back after the actions of the Van Agt government.<sup>48</sup>

The Netherlands' government did still take careful note of the political developments in South Africa, and although they did not abandon the two-stream policy, they did realise that the South African government was not introducing real reform. The Netherlands' government continued to see P.W. Botha as less dogmatic and the tricameral parliament as an attempt at peaceful change. However, aside from these

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<sup>45</sup> Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, XIII; 2de Kamer, 1983-1983, doc: 17895, nr 3, 8, 11.

<sup>46</sup> Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, IV; 2de Kamer, 1987-1988, doc: 18689, nr 4.

<sup>47</sup> Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, XIII; 2de Kamer, 1983-1983, doc: 17895, nr 1, 2.

<sup>48</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1984/1985, Zuid Afrika, p. 42-44; Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, XIII; 2de Kamer, 1983-1983, doc: 17895, nr 1, 2; NIZA, 19.4, P.A.Groenhuis, 1989, pp.5-6.; Rozenburg, *De Bloedband Den Haag-Pretoria*, pp.28-39.

aspects, they saw no real change in the situation in South Africa.<sup>49</sup> The 1980s were rather characterised by a State of Emergency,<sup>50</sup> which led to violence and further radicalisation of the black population.<sup>51</sup> Some political parties wanted the government to send a clear message to South Africa that the reform was insufficient.<sup>52</sup>

In reaction to the lack of change in South Africa, the Netherlands' government continued to criticise and condemn apartheid.<sup>53</sup> They pointed out how the majority of the population still lived as second class citizens with no political say and continued repression.<sup>54</sup> They decided to increase actions organised under the second stream of the two-stream policy<sup>55</sup> and again called for the freedom of Mandela, with some parties even wanting to offer him political asylum.<sup>56</sup> The Netherlands' government wanted to increase international pressure on South Africa, and after numerous debates in parliament were able to convince the UN to introduce a resolution ending the import of military ware from South Africa.<sup>57</sup> They also wanted to extend the ban on fruit, coal, wine and vegetables, but could not reach an agreement within the EC. They criticised the South African actions in the frontline states and called for national dialogue so as to prevent further polarisation of groups inside South Africa. The Netherlands' government did not have much success within the EC in these actions,<sup>58</sup> as was the case with the call for an oil boycott.

The oil boycott was the issue that was central in most discussions on South Africa during the 1980s. Many felt that if the Security Council did not introduce measures the Netherlands should go it alone. The issue was investigated, and it emerged that the EC members and the Benelux countries did not want to join the Netherlands in an oil embargo as it had certain legal obstacles.<sup>59</sup> In 1979 a motion had been accepted in parliament outlining three options regarding the oil issue: either an oil embargo together with the EC; an embargo with some countries of the EC; or the Netherlands

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<sup>49</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1979/1980, Zuid Afrika, pp.102-103; Jaarboek BZ, 1982/1983, Zuid Afrika, pp. 119-120; Jaarboek BZ, 1984/1985, Zuid Afrika, p. 42-44.

<sup>50</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1987/1988, Zuid Afrika, pp.39-42.

<sup>51</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1984/1985, Zuid Afrika, p.42-44; Jaarboek BZ, 1985/1986, Zuid Afrika, pp. 45-48.

<sup>52</sup> Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, X; 2de Kamer, 1983-1984, doc: 18162, nr 1-2.

<sup>53</sup> Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, XIII; 2de Kamer, 1983-1983, doc: 17895, nr 1, 2.

<sup>54</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1979/1980, Zuid Afrika, pp.102-103.

<sup>55</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1987/1988, Zuid Afrika, pp.39-42.

<sup>56</sup> Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, XIII; 2de Kamer, 1983-1983, doc: 17895, nr 10.

<sup>57</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1984/1985, Zuid Afrika, p.42-44.

<sup>58</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1986/1987, Zuid Afrika, pp.38-41.

<sup>59</sup> Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, XIII; 2de Kamer, 1983-1983, doc: 17895, nr 1, 2, 9, 11.

would introduce a voluntary embargo alone if the EC did not find a better weapon to fight apartheid. As no better weapon had been found by 1980, Scholten called for the oil embargo to be introduced alone. He took this stand on behalf of the Christen Democratisch Appel (CDA) faction, but pointed out that a minority of the faction did not support the request.<sup>60</sup> A second motion by the CDA, supported by the entire faction, called for round table discussions with all racial groups in South Africa.<sup>61</sup>

The CDA motion calling for an oil embargo was accepted in the Second Chamber on 30 May 1980 but the various parties had very different opinions and many discussions ensued. Despite much support for the introduction of a one-sided oil embargo, at the final vote it was decided not to introduce the measure. A final debate took place on the night of 26 June 1980, and the cabinet almost collapsed. A motion of no confidence in the government was passed, but at the last minute more members of the CDA gave their support to the government, saving the cabinet and stopping the introduction of the oil embargo.<sup>62</sup> In the meantime it was decided that steps to boycott coal, stop investment and end the 1935 Trade Agreement should be introduced.<sup>63</sup>

Another issue to come under discussion during the early 1980s was the question of an arms embargo against South Africa. This resulted in the UN resolution of 1985 which stopped the import of arms from South Africa. During 1983, various motions were proposed in the Second Chamber concerning the provision of arms to South Africa.<sup>64</sup> The UN Security Council provision of 1977 remained the minimum requirement for the embargo,<sup>65</sup> although not all Western countries adhered to these compulsory measures. It was felt the government should put pressure on these countries and extend actions in the UN.<sup>66</sup>

Monetary support for the freedom movements was another aspect of Netherlands' government policy that changed during the 1980s. The government officially gave no support to the ANC, and only gave humanitarian aid to South African refugees. The

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<sup>60</sup> Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, V; 2de Kamer, 1979-1980, pp.5417- 5418.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.5417- 5419.

<sup>62</sup> Buijs, *Overtuiging en geweld* p.39- 44; Van Beurden & Huinder, *De Vinger op de zere plek*. pp.95-98.

<sup>63</sup> Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, XIII; 2de Kamer, 1983-1983, doc: 17895, nr 4.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, nr 5.

<sup>65</sup> Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, XV; 2de Kamer, 1981-1982, doc: 18409, nr 3.

<sup>66</sup> Bib ARA: Handeling beide Kamers, XIII; 2de Kamer, 1983-1983, doc: 17895, nr 7, 11

apparent problem for the majority of the Dutch was the violent nature of the ANC. In 1981 the Van Agt government said that the ANC was considered to represent a large proportion of the South African population, and that the government supported them in their striving for equality in South Africa. The government policy was however not in line with this statement, and increasingly changed under the Lubbers government. During March 1985 the Second Chamber debated the Netherlands' foreign policy, and new departments were created for the donation of money to anti-apartheid movements. Van den Broek said only legal activities in South Africa should be supported under the two-stream policy, which limited help to trade unions, churches and educational institutions. No money was to go to political organisation, although due to pressure from various groups some humanitarian help to freedom movements continued.<sup>67</sup>

The Netherlands' government did however do quite a lot for South Africa during the 1980s through the second stream of the two-stream policy. Here the aim was to run programmes giving bursaries, supporting health care, education, trade unions and children's projects.<sup>68</sup> The two-stream policy also aimed at spreading information on South Africa throughout southern Africa by radio and TV, so as to keep those in exile informed.<sup>69</sup> The government was criticised about this policy, especially as there was disagreement over exactly where money should go and where support was needed most.<sup>70</sup> The Anti-Apartheidsbeweging Nederland (AABN) felt that the two-stream policy reduced resistance against South Africa by restricting action to the frontline states and humanitarian projects. The AABN felt that the government tended to stay away from projects involving the ANC.<sup>71</sup>

In the late 1980s South Africa was still an important factor on the government agenda after F.W. De Klerk came to power in 1989. The Lubbers government came up with a three-phase policy. The first phase would give De Klerk time to introduce reforms, phase two would be a new attempt to expand EC sanctions, and to ban the import of coal and phase three would introduce one-sided sanctions if the Netherlands could not

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<sup>67</sup> Archief BZ, code 9, 6077, 911.30, ZA, rassenprobleem 2de spoor, 1984; *Amandla*, April 1985, p.7; *Amandla*, January 1987, pp.14-15, AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, Jan 1987 (special edition), p.a.

<sup>69</sup> NIZA, 10.1E (Tweede spoor), 1985-1994, Projects.

<sup>70</sup> NIZA, 10.1E (Tweede spoor), 1985-1994, Tweede Kamer, 10/12/1986.

<sup>71</sup> NIZA, 10.1E (Tweede spoor), 1985-1994, AABN evaluation of 2 stream policy, 11/2/ 1987.

get EC action. No final date was given for such a decision. The policy meant that in principle the CDA could continue as before, unless the PvdA, now in coalition with them, tried to enforce the changes.<sup>72</sup> In this period, economic pressure continued together with did social development, with the focus on education, schooling, rural development, humanitarian help and trade unions. A third stream was also developed to allow for dialogue with members of the anti-apartheid movements.<sup>73</sup>

The above overview of the Netherlands government's reaction towards apartheid highlights how it was not the government's actions that gave the Netherlands an extremely anti-apartheid character. The Netherlands government did pay attention to apartheid, but there was a general lack of concrete action. They focused on protecting their own trade priorities and on historical links with South Africa, and for these reasons were slow to start active opposition to apartheid. After Sharpeville in 1960 criticism emerged, although it was only after 1973 and 1976 that any real action was apparent. The Netherlands never played a leading role in the anti-apartheid struggle,<sup>74</sup> although their role within the UN and EC should not be downplayed or ignored. It can however be seen that those wanting to take definite steps against apartheid could not count on the Netherlands' government to do so, especially where these actions were in support of the freedom movements. It is now necessary to consider the anti-apartheid movements to ascertain if their actions were more notably anti-apartheid.

### **3. Anti-apartheid movements**

Anti-apartheid organisations emerged in the Netherlands in May 1960, with the Comite Zuid-Afrika (CZA) being formed by J. Buskes, K. Roskram, and two members of the PvdA.<sup>75</sup> The basic aim of this organisation was to inform the Netherlands' public about the situation in South Africa.<sup>76</sup> The 1970s saw the rise of numerous anti-apartheid organisations in the Netherlands. This decade saw the birth of three main organisations - Werkgroep Kairos, the AABN and the Komitee Zuidelijk Afrika (KZA), smaller organisations and thirty work groups to support these organisations locally. All these organisations focused on ending apartheid and

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<sup>72</sup> R. Rozzenburg, 'CDA and PvdA leggen een windei' in *Amandla*, November 1989, p.3.

<sup>73</sup> Jaarboek BZ, 1988/1989, Zuid Afrika, pp. 48-49.

<sup>74</sup> NIZA, 10.1, D. Hellema in *Het Parool*, p.7, 6/6/1995.

<sup>75</sup> NIZA, 19.4, A. Vuurens, 30/5/1997, p.62.

<sup>76</sup> J.J. Buskes, *South Africa's apartheid policy- unacceptable*. sl, 1956, pp.2-4; Comite Zuid-Afrika (CZA), *Informatie Bulletin*, December 1960 (1), p.1; Hellema & van den Bergh, 'Dialogo of boycot' IZA nr 2, p.12.

supporting those fighting apartheid.<sup>77</sup> The primary reason why civil society organisations began was in reaction to the Netherlands' government's lack of action against apartheid.

This section of the paper is going to look briefly at the actions of the three main anti-apartheid movements- Kairos, the AABN and the KZA- in order to establish if it was these movements that gave the Netherlands a particularly anti-apartheid character. It is necessary to first outline the origin of each movement.

Werkgroep Kairos came into being in 1970 as a result of a connection with the Christian Institute (CI) of Beyers Naude<sup>78</sup> that was based in South Africa. Cor Groenendijk, J. Verkuyl and Erik van den Bergh held influential positions in the movement. Kairos decided to fill the need for a Christian anti-apartheid organisation in the Netherlands as well as focus on informing the Dutch public.<sup>79</sup> As a Christian organisation, Kairos' aim was to give information to the churches on developments in South Africa. It did not have a broad following, but was very important in church circles, both inside the Netherlands and South Africa.<sup>80</sup>

The AABN came into existence after some of the more radical elements within the CZA broke away under C. Braam, B. Schuitema and P. Juffermans in 1971.<sup>81</sup> The leaders of the AABN highlighted the role World War II played in their interest in apartheid, outlining their task as supporting those fighting apartheid and disseminating information on the apartheid situation.<sup>82</sup> Unlike the Netherlands' government and many other organisations, the AABN did not find the question of whether to support the armed struggle a moral dilemma, but rather felt that support for and solidarity with the freedom movements was the most important facet of its work.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> KZA, 'Partij kiezen voor Zuid Afrika', Deel 1, p.14; Van Klaveren (ed.), *Nederlands' aandeel in apartheid*, p.52; Hellema & Van den Bergh, 'Dialog of boycott', IZA nr 2, pp.4, 12-13.

<sup>78</sup> Clur, 'From acquiescence to dissent: Beyers Naude', MA- dissertation, 1997, p. 131.

<sup>79</sup> NIZA, 19.4, A. Vuurens, 30/5/1997, pp. 64- 65; *Amandla*, August 1985, p. 29; Kairos, pamphlet, Utrecht.

<sup>80</sup> M. van Klaveren (ed), *Nederland's aandeel in apartheid. Nieuwe feiten gegevens economische relaties Nederland-Zuid Afrika*, Den Haag, 1983, p.55; NIZA, 19.4, P.A.Groenhuis, 1989, pp.17- 18.

<sup>81</sup> NIZA, 19.4, A. Vuurens, 30/5/1997, p.63; CZA, *Informatie Bulletin*, December 1968 (42), p.2; KZA, 'Partij kiezen voor Zuid Afrika', Deel 1, p.14; C. van Lakerveld (ed.), *Nederland tegen apartheid*. Amsterdam, 1994, p.63.

<sup>82</sup> Hellema & Van den Bergh, 'Dialog of boycott', p.12.

The KZA was the last of the three organisations to be founded, but in many ways it was the most effective. The KZA is often identified as the biggest of the committees working with southern Africa, and, unlike the AABN and Kairos, it did not develop initially with the aim of fighting apartheid. In 1961 the Angola Comite (AC) was established to support the freedom struggle in Angola, with Sietse Bosgra and Trineke Weijdemá as leaders. Aside from just supporting Angola, the whole of southern Africa became a zone of concern growing out of its interest in the decolonisation process. With its aim being reached in Angola in 1975, the committee decided to change its name and focus. The KZA was established in 1976, and decided to concentrate its actions on the South African, Zimbabwean and Namibian freedom movements.<sup>84</sup> For the KZA the most important element of the struggle was to increase international awareness of the situation in South Africa, and in this way increase international criticism of apartheid. The KZA focused on the ending of diplomatic, economic and friendly relations with the white South African government.<sup>85</sup>

The different ideologies and aims of the three anti-apartheid movements make it clear why they continued to function as three separate organisations. The different style of the organisations was sometimes a hindrance and a waste of time as they fought over issues such as demands on the Netherlands' government; how to react to human rights violations by the freedom movements; and whether it more important to get mass mobilisation or government action. Division did however also have a positive side as it led to a more active agenda as they competed to increase their contact with South African organisations. The anti-apartheid organisations were also pushed to greater action by the Netherlands' governments' lack of reaction and by other organisations that concentrated on keeping ties with white South Africa alive. On occasion, the anti-apartheid groups did work together in order to be more effective in their aims.<sup>86</sup>

#### **i. Relations with movements outside the Netherlands**

All three of the movements under discussion found ties with groups originating in South Africa important as this kept them in touch with local developments. The

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<sup>83</sup> Anti-Apartheidsbeweging Nederland (AABN), *Jaarverslag 1976*, p.1.

<sup>84</sup> NIZA, 19.4, P.A.Groenhuis, 1989, p.14, C. Van Lakerveld, *Nederland tegen apartheid*, p.63; F.J. Buijs, *Overtuiging en geweld*, p. 25.

<sup>85</sup> Van Klaveren (ed.), *Nederland's aandeel in apartheid*, pp.53- 54.



AABN and KZA concentrated more on the exiled freedom movements, while Kairos built up stronger links with movements operating inside South Africa. Aside from moral support for the freedom movements, material support was also seen as very important, and the groups offered support both through the supplying of money and goods.

Kairos formed a very close link with the CI of Naude based in South Africa,<sup>87</sup> and had other contacts with representatives from church organisations inside South Africa. Kairos also helped those who were visiting the Netherlands from South Africa for research and study purposes.<sup>88</sup> During 1980, an ANC delegation under Oliver Tambo visited the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark in connection with the WCC. Kairos viewed this personal contact as good, but did not favour all of European support being given to the ANC.<sup>89</sup> This highlights Kairos' preference for movements operating inside South Africa, not in exile. It continued with this point of view in the mid-1980s when it tried to increase the financial support made available to the UDF,<sup>90</sup> and with a campaign in June 1985 with thousands of protestors gathered behind the banner 'stop apartheid, steun het UDF'<sup>91</sup>. As a result of its links with the church, Kairos worked together with the WCC on many of their campaigns and supported calls for financial support made by the WCC. In 1970 the WCC started a separate fund to support the struggle to end racism, called the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR), and indicated it would concentrate on southern Africa.<sup>92</sup> The PCR was established as separate to the Special Fund to Combat Racism, which had a wider focus.<sup>93</sup> Kairos supported and promoted the PCR. It felt that each individual should make a choice in a war situation regarding what actions they saw as justified. The apartheid situation was perceived as a war situation, and it believed it should offer material help to churches and refugees in South Africa.<sup>94</sup> Kairos made known the views of the

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<sup>86</sup> Van den Bergh, 'Dialog was geen dialoog' pp.16-17.

<sup>87</sup> NIZA, 19.4, A.Vuurens, 30/5/1997, pp.64- 65.

<sup>88</sup> Kairos, *Jaarverslag 1990*, pp.47-50.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, p.74-75.

<sup>90</sup> NIZA, 10.1A (Algemene regeringsbeleid), 1985-1991, Beleid beschouwd NR 5185 5/7/1985. Samengesteld door de rijksvoorlichtingdienst afdelinginterne voorlichting, Den Haag .Zuid Afrika, p.5, from: De Volkskrant, 11 Junie 1985. 'Beyers Naude vraagt steun voor bonden Zuid-Afrika'.

<sup>91</sup> NIZA, 10.1A (Algemene regeringsbeleid), 1985-1991, Beleid beschouwd NR 5185 5/7/1985. Samengesteld door de rijksvoorlichtingdienst afdelinginterne voorlichting, Den Haag .Zuid Afrika, p.5, from: De Volkskrant, 11 Junie 1985. 'Beyers Naude vraagt steun voor bonden Zuid-Afrika'.

<sup>92</sup> Kairos, 'Kairos, kerk en bevrijdingsbeweging', p.61.

<sup>93</sup> A. Van den Heuvel, *Shalom and Combat. A personal struggle against racism*. Geneva, 1979, pp.35-37.

<sup>94</sup> Kairos, 'Kairos, kerk en bevrijdingsbeweging', p.74.

different Dutch churches and tried to encourage churches to support the programme.<sup>95</sup> Resistance to the church supporting the struggle however continued, and ‘geen kerkgeld voor geweld’ were against donations being made to these ‘terrorists’ in Africa.<sup>96</sup>

The AABN focused mainly on the exiled freedom movements, but also showed support for those operating inside South Africa. An AABN demonstration was held in Amsterdam in 1976 in order to show solidarity with the school children of Soweto after the uprising, and to take a stand against apartheid.<sup>97</sup> During 1984 the AABN decided to extend its help, which included both financial and moral assistance, to the UDF.<sup>98</sup> The AABN spent most of its time trying to form closer relations with the freedom movements in Africa and trying to raise money for them. Near the end of 1975 the AABN decided that moral and monetary support for the ANC was insufficient, and that the AABN should take an active role in helping to train guerrilla forces.<sup>99</sup> During 1976, the contact between the AABN and the freedom movements began to increase considerably. The AABN felt that aside from active support for the freedom movements, it should also keep close contact with individual members of the freedom movements. This contact grew over the years, both with members of the AABN visiting Africa, and members of the freedom movements visiting Amsterdam, mainly funded by the AABN or by other anti-apartheid groups.<sup>100</sup> In May an AABN delegation under Braam took part in a seminar, organised by the UN, in Cuba, dealing with apartheid.<sup>101</sup> As regards visits to the Netherlands, the general secretary of South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), Duma Nokwe of the ANC Executive Committee, together with three members of SWAPO, Stephen Nkomo of the ANC-Zimbabwe and Herby Piley and Reg September of the ANC all visited in 1976. In November of that year a meeting was held in Amsterdam and was attended by leaders of various southern African freedom movements.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> *Amandla*, August 1985, p.30; Kairos, ‘Kairos, kerk en bevrijdingsbeweging’, p.61.

<sup>96</sup> Kairos, ‘Kairos, kerk en bevrijdingsbeweging’, p.62.

<sup>97</sup> Instituut voor Internationale Sociale Geschiedenis (IISG), stzmap AABN I & II, AABN document, 1976/6/18.

<sup>98</sup> IISA, stzmap, AABN I & II, AABN documents, 1984.

<sup>99</sup> AABN, *Kommunikee*, April 1975, p.11.

<sup>100</sup> AABN, *Kommunikee*, March 1976, p.6.

<sup>101</sup> AABN, *Jaarverslag 1976*, p.18; AABN, *Kommunikee*, May 1976, p.1.

<sup>102</sup> AABN, *Jaarverslag 1976*, pp.17-18.

During 1977 the AABN experienced an increase in international connections, both in quantity and quality of contact. Various representatives from the freedom movements were met during the ANC-Noordkreet campaign, and later in the year, the AABN held a meeting in Amsterdam with a SWAPO delegation led by president Sam Nujoma. Braam represented the AABN at the 'Wereld Konferensie voor aktie tegen apartheid' held in Lagos in August 1977, and she was able to build links with various members of the ANC. She also visited the offices and refugee camps of the freedom movements based in Angola, Zambia and Tanzania. During the last months of the year, talks were held in Amsterdam and London with representatives of the ANC, SWAPO and the Patriotic Front (PF). Here the material help offered by the AABN and their program of action was discussed.<sup>103</sup>

The main focus of the AABN's international activity during 1978 was the increase of contact with the various freedom movements, and at the beginning of the year Braam and her husband visited the ANC in Tanzania, while taking them supplies.<sup>104</sup> The AABN was able to increase their funding for and the number of official visits by delegations from the ANC, SWAPO, PF and SACTU. ANC visitors included Alfred Nzo and Thabo Mbeki. Contacts were made with anti-apartheid organisations in London and with the UN special committee against apartheid.<sup>105</sup> Aside from increasing international visits during 1978, the AABN also expanded the support offered by the Material work group to include work camps, assistance in the teaching at schools, and the forming of educational centres and secondary schools.<sup>106</sup> This shows the more direct contact the AABN had with the ANC. It not only sent money, but also tried to get involved on the ground level in ANC projects.

International contacts continued to grow over the next years, with 1983 being particularly important due to the campaign 'openbare hoorzitting tegen de Zuid Afrikanse aggressie'. The campaign focused on the South African aggression against the front-line states. The AABN joined the 'World campaign against military and nuclear collaboration with South Africa', and established new contacts in this way. During 1983 and 1984 much attention was paid to the education campaign and the

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<sup>103</sup> AABN, *Jaarverslag 1977*, pp.11-12, 22-23.

<sup>104</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, Feb 1978 (89), p.13.

<sup>105</sup> AABN, *Jaarverslag 1978*, p.26; AABN, *Jaarverslag 1977*, pp.22- 23.

<sup>106</sup> AABN, *Jaarverslag 1978*, p.9.

Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College received specific preference.<sup>107</sup> In 1987 the ANC had its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and to mark this occasion the AABN organised a celebration activity in Amsterdam attended by various representatives of the ANC.<sup>108</sup> The AABN organised a Women's Conference in 1989 to show solidarity with the position of women in South Africa.<sup>109</sup> This shows how the AABN kept up contact with the exiled freedom movements till the end of the apartheid period.

Operation Vula is further evidence of the close link between the AABN and the ANC, and through this the relationship on a non-economic level is apparent. Operation Vula was an ANC operation, started in 1986, concerned with the setting up of safe houses inside South Africa and in the frontline states, as well as the infiltration of South Africa by people from the top levels of the ANC. The leader of the AABN, Braam, was asked to help the ANC with this operation, which differs from other AABN operations in that it was an ANC initiative. While working on this operation, Braam came into contact with important ANC members, such as Ronnie Kastrils and Mac Maharaj. She was in daily contact with Ivan Pillay, who was in charge of the practical aspects of Operation Vula.<sup>110</sup> This is proof of the trust and close relationship the AABN formed with the ANC.

The AABN also focused on providing funding for the exiled freedom movements, and in particular for the ANC. One of the early actions of the AABN was the 1974 'steun die vrijheidsstrijd in Zuidelijk Afrika' campaign which was planned together with various youth organisations. The main concern of the AABN with this project was to help fund education in the African refugee camps.<sup>111</sup> The AABN felt that financial support should be given to SACTU, Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), without any restrictions on what the money should be used for.<sup>112</sup> In the AABN report setting out its programme for 1975, the aim of providing direct and indirect financial help to various organisations so as to bring about an end to social discrimination based on racial or other differences was

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<sup>107</sup> AABN, *Jaarverslag 1983/1984*, pp.24- 25.

<sup>108</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, Dec 1987 (148), p.10.

<sup>109</sup> C. Braam, *Operatie Vula*. p.204.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p.129.

<sup>111</sup> AABN, *Jaarverslag 1978*, p.15.

<sup>112</sup> AABN, *Anti- apartheids Nieuws*, Nov 1974 (69), p.4.

emphasised.<sup>113</sup> Already in early 1975 the AABN made it apparent that financial support for the freedom movements was more important than an economic boycott.<sup>114</sup> In April meetings of groups of the AABN were held in Amsterdam, Nijmegen and IJmand, where it was decided to introduce a Steunfonds to support the underground trade unions in South Africa.<sup>115</sup> After only four months of the Steunfonds campaign, 13 000 guilders were already collected.<sup>116</sup>

A demonstration was held in Amsterdam in 1976 in reaction to the Soweto uprising to try and get more people to support the resistance movements in South Africa. By the end of 1976 the Steunfonds stood at almost 80 000 guilders. Donations increased at this time due to the Soweto uprising,<sup>117</sup> and the AABN increased campaigning as it called for unconditional support for the ANC and the freedom struggle in South Africa.<sup>118</sup> In October 1976 the AABN brought out the first *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, which replaced the *Anti-Apartheids Krant*. The newspaper had a page asking for donations for the AABN.<sup>119</sup>

The following year, the AABN wanted to increase its material support for the freedom movements, and for this reason planned an increase in the number of campaigns. Special attention would be paid to the ANC and to their increased number of refugees, thus introducing operation ANC- Noordkreet. The financial help was mainly aimed at supplying basic needs of food and clothing for these refugees who had left South Africa due to the bad situation there. A protest march, entitled 'een jaar na Soweto', brought in money for the purchase of clothing, food, sleeping bags, groundsheets, writing and educational material. Collections of medicine, food and toiletries were also made.<sup>120</sup> A 1977 campaign entitled 'Zuidelijk Afrika vecht voor zijn vrijheid' aimed at getting increased financial support for the ANC, SWAPO and PF.<sup>121</sup> No separate campaign for trade unions was held, although support was still given to SACTU. Due to the increased focus on material support, the Material Help work

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<sup>113</sup> AABN, *Kommunikee*, November 1974, p.5.

<sup>114</sup> AABN, *Kommunikee*, April 1975, p.2.

<sup>115</sup> AABN, *Anti-apartheids Nieuws*, April 1975 (72), p.6.

<sup>116</sup> AABN, *Anti-apartheids Nieuws*, July 1975 (73), p.10.

<sup>117</sup> AABN, *Jaarverslag 1976*, pp.9-10; AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, October 1976 (81), pp.5-7.

<sup>118</sup> IISG, stzmap AABN I & II, AABN document, 1976/11/18; AABN, *Jaarverslag 1976*, pp.9-10; AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, October 1976 (81), pp.10-11.

<sup>119</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, October 1976 (81), p.15.

<sup>120</sup> AABN, *Jaarverslag 1977*, p.10; AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, April 1977 (84), p.2.

<sup>121</sup> IISG, stzamp, AABN I & II, AABN documents, 1977; AABN, *Kommunikee*, October 1977, p.10.

group was formed in 1977. The planned increase in material help to freedom movements for 1977 was successful, and greater solidarity was shown.<sup>122</sup>

In drafting its programme for 1978 the AABN decided to increase funds donated to 'onderwijs tegen apartheid'.<sup>123</sup> During 1978 the Material work group expanded considerably, and began to give more form to the material support offered by the AABN. The work group also went about organising the buying of transport for the ANC and the production of technical material.<sup>124</sup> More donations were needed for the ANC in 1978, as more refugees fled South Africa and joined the ANC. The AABN stepped in with more humanitarian support,<sup>125</sup> three deliveries of supplies<sup>126</sup> and money to purchase two cars.<sup>127</sup> The programme 'onderwijs tegen apartheid' was started to help fund the education of the young students who had fled South Africa after the Soweto uprising.<sup>128</sup> By June 1978, 'onderwijs tegen apartheid' had already raised 30 000 guilders.<sup>129</sup> In November a collection was held for the ANC hospital, and over 20 000 guilders was collected. Support for SACTU also increased with the founding of the A.C. de Bruyne Instituut to spread information about the struggle.<sup>130</sup>

Actions continued to increase over the next few years, as apartheid gained greater priority in the post-Soweto period. However, within a few years apartheid lost its prominent position with the government, which meant that public support for the AABN also decreased, but it continued with its work until the end of apartheid.

In October 1982 the AABN called for donations for Radio Freedom, the ANC radio station broadcast from Tanzania, and raised 85 000. It also helped with the education of presenters and the provision of radio equipment.<sup>131</sup> The AABN thus continued their policy of direct support for the freedom movements through material support, education and other assistance. In October 1984 the AABN focused on the needs of Radio Freedom despite its weaker financial position, which can be attributed to the

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<sup>122</sup> AABN, *Jaarverslag 1977*, pp.7, 8, 12-13; *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, April 1977 (84), p.2.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, p.24.

<sup>124</sup> AABN, *Jaarverslag 1978*, pp.8-9.

<sup>125</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, Feb 1978 (89), p.13.

<sup>126</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, Feb 1978 (89), p.13.

<sup>127</sup> AABN, *Jaarverslag 1978*, pp.17-18.

<sup>128</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, April 1978 (90), pp.2-3.

<sup>129</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, June 1978 (91), p.3.

<sup>130</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, Feb 1978 (89), p.5; AABN, *Jaarverslag 1978*, pp.16-19.

<sup>131</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, October 1982 (117), pp.4-7.

more friendly line of Netherlands' government and the AABN's close relations with the ANC and the armed struggle.<sup>132</sup> As late as 1989 the AABN was still trying to collect money for the ANC and SWAPO and collections were held throughout the Netherlands.<sup>133</sup> This shows how the AABN continued to support the ANC until the ANC was unbanned by the South African government in February 1990. It can be seen that the efforts of the AABN in supporting the ANC were fairly successful. Although its monetary support was never extensive, it did help the ANC in various projects, and provided considerable advice and support.

The third anti-apartheid movement to be discussed, the KZA, also had links with organisations inside South Africa. After the founding of the UDF in 1983 it decided to give money to this movement as it was non-racial and inside South Africa.<sup>134</sup> From 1985 onwards the KZA no longer saw the armed struggle as sufficient to bring freedom to southern Africa, and so it supported other movements and developments inside South Africa and focused increasingly on actions inside the Netherlands.<sup>135</sup>

The KZA paid attention to forming relations with the freedom movements, focusing on the ANC and SWAPO.<sup>136</sup> In 1976 ANC member and South African Communist Party (SACP) leader Joe Slovo invited Bosgra and Weijdemans to Luanda for the celebration of one year of freedom for Angola. At the celebration they met ANC members who asked them many questions about their political affiliation and how they differed from the AABN. At the time, they did not fully understand these questions, but realised later that it was a reaction to the lack of trust the ANC had for new movements and because division between the AABN and KZA was overemphasised in reports. The KZA did however establish good relations with leading figures in the ANC, and were seen as providing immense financial and material support, together with solidarity. They never told the ANC what they should be doing.<sup>137</sup> In 1992 after Mandela was released from prison he met with Bosgra of the KZA, highlighting how this group also built up strong relations with the ANC.

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<sup>132</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, October 1984 (129), pp.2-3.

<sup>133</sup> AABN, *Antiapartheids Krant*, April/May 1989, p.6.

<sup>134</sup> Van Beurden & Huinder, *De Vinger op de zere plek*, pp.131-140.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, p.131.

<sup>136</sup> NIZA, 19.4, P.A.Groenhuis, 1989, p.14.

<sup>137</sup> Van Beurden & Huinder, *De Vinger op de zere plek*, pp.141-143, 157-158.

Financially speaking the KZA was much more successful than the other anti-apartheid organisations. From 1977 until 1991 the KZA collected 57.5 million guilders through their 'Bevrijdingsfonds'. Of this money, more than 25% went to the ANC.<sup>138</sup> The KZA received funding from various organisations, and their funding was often higher than that received by other anti-apartheid organisations within the Netherlands.<sup>139</sup> The KZA, just like the AABN and Kairos, got a subsidy from the Netherlands' government and money from the Nationale Commissie Voorlichting en Buwustwording Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (NCO). It also got money from the EC, UN and other ministries.<sup>140</sup> The KZA was also the organisation through which the government made their donation to the freedom movements available. This meant that the KZA received more money from the government than the other organisations.<sup>141</sup> The money from the Netherlands' government could only be used for refugees and the money from the EC was to be used for peaceful development.<sup>142</sup>

In 1977 the KZA introduced the Bevrijdingsfonds when it decided that it would rather support freedom movements than developing countries. The Bevrijdingsfonds collected money from individuals, churches and organisations. In the first year, individual donations alone equalled nearly 1 million guilders and even more came from institutions. The fund was used to sponsor the ANC, SWAPO and other movements in Namibia and South Africa. The KZA saw itself as a supporter of the ANC, but from a distance, so most of the money was used for refugee camps run by the freedom movements. It saw itself as having a political responsibility, and agreed with the ANC on most issues, including the armed struggle. On occasion, the KZA did question the strategy of the ANC, and were never quite sure whether the ANC or UDF should get more support.<sup>143</sup> The KZA also had an emergency fund, which could be called on by the freedom movements in any urgent situation. The KZA also helped SWAPO with their needs, especially with the purchase of goods.<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> NIZA, 19.4, P.A.Groenhuis, 1989, pp.14-15; Van Lakerveld, *Nederland tegen apartheid*, p.65.

<sup>139</sup> Van Lakerveld, *Nederland tegen apartheid*, p. 65.

<sup>140</sup> Buijs, *Overtuiging en geweld*, p.25; Van Lakerveld, *Nederland tegen apartheid*, p.65; Van Beurden & Huinder, *De Vinger op de zere plek*, pp.131-132.

<sup>141</sup> Van Lakerveld, *Nederland tegen apartheid*, p.111.

<sup>142</sup> NIZA, 19.4, P.A.Groenhuis, 1989, pp.14-15.

<sup>143</sup> Buijs, *Overtuiging en geweld*, p.25; Van Lakerveld, *Nederland tegen apartheid*, p.65, 111; Van Beurden & Huinder, *De Vinger op de zere plek*, pp.124-128, 131-132.

<sup>144</sup> Van Beurden & Huinder, *De Vinger op de zere plek*, pp.128, 312-136.



In order to understand the extent of the monetary support given by the KZA, it is useful to look at donations for the year 1990:<sup>145</sup>

AMOUNT	PURPOSE
900 000 guilders	Namibia
5.1 million guilders	South Africa (this money was donated: for judicial help and re-integration, to save the <i>Vrije Weekblad</i> , from bankruptcy, to the African Scholarship Program (ASCOP) and to the South African Prisoners Education Trust (SAPET) for 1250 bursaries for children of political prisoners
700 000 guilders	ANC

The income for the KZA for 1990 was received as follows:

AMOUNT	ORIGIN
1 million guilders	Collections and donations
500 000 guilders	Netherlands' government
4 million guilders	European Community
1.3 million guilders	Other organisations
TOTAL = 6.8 million guilders	

These tables show how by 1990 the KZA was concentrating on funding actions inside South Africa. The KZA was more successful financially as a result of its larger support base and because it received more money from government and EC agencies for distribution.

The above discussion sums up the direct contact the anti-apartheid groups had with movements in southern Africa, and the support they gave these movements. The success of the anti-apartheid groups can however not be assessed until their campaigns within the Netherlands have also been taken into consideration.

## ii. Actions focused inside the Netherlands

Actions inside the Netherlands were also a very important element of the struggle against apartheid, and it was this type of action that both the KZA and *Werkgroep Kairos* focused on. There were different types of actions taking place inside the Netherlands; some aimed at bringing about boycotts; some to break ties with South Africa and some focused attention on informing the public. In order for the anti-apartheid groups to get sufficient donations, it was imperative that they made themselves known within the Netherlands, and for this reason all three groups organised activities in the Netherlands. Due to the fact that *Kairos* and the KZA

<sup>145</sup> NIZA, 10.2B, *Werk tegen apartheid*, 8/1991.

worked quite closely together on projects inside the Netherlands, they will be considered first, followed by a discussion on the AABN's actions.

In August 1972, the Central Committee of the WCC held a meeting in Utrecht, and took a resolution to fight racial politics in South Africa. The church called on all individuals to use their influence through actions, disinvestment, the stopping of trade and the pulling out of shareholders in South Africa.<sup>146</sup> In reaction to this call, Kairos decided to embark on a campaign against investment in South Africa in 1973. They chose to focus on the Koninklijke Nederlandse Petroleum Maatschappij NV, with Shell Nederland being a part of this company. Shell was one of the Netherlands' biggest investors in South Africa, and was involved with providing oil for the army and government of the Ian Smith regime in Zimbabwe.<sup>147</sup> In the beginning, the focus of the oil campaign lay in dialogue and investigation. During the 1973 shareholders meeting Kairos leader, Groenendijk, requested a discussion with the leaders regarding the provision of oil to both Zimbabwe and South Africa. Three more meetings took place by 1976, bringing about no change in the Shell policy.<sup>148</sup> In 1976 Kairos, together with the Oecumenische Studie en Actiecentrum voor Investerings (OSACI), brought out 'Shell in Zuid Afrika'. This study highlighted how Shell was involved in the whole southern African region, and how they were openly backing the South African government. They also found that, although Shell paid her workers slightly more than others in South Africa, the wages were still too low and the company practised racial discrimination.<sup>149</sup>

The KZA, after deciding to focus on economic investment in South Africa and sanctions against South Africa, joined Kairos's Shell campaign.<sup>150</sup> The KZA held the view that South Africa was very dependent on her outside contact and for this reason economic boycotts would be beneficial in ending apartheid.<sup>151</sup> Kairos and the KZA had different working methods, but together made the campaign more successful, with a relationship characterised by ongoing co-operation and almost daily contact.<sup>152</sup> The

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<sup>146</sup> Raad van Kerken Nederland (Internationale Zaken) 'Buitenlandse investering in Zuid Afrika' in *Oecumenische Informatie* (1), 1975, p.3.

<sup>147</sup> *Amandla*, August 1985, p.29; Van Beurden & Huinder, *De Vinger op de zere plek*, pp.85-86.

<sup>148</sup> Van Beurden & Huinder, *De Vinger op de zere plek*, p.86.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.87-88.

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*, p.84.

<sup>151</sup> KZA, *Sancties tegen Zuid Afrika*, p.17.

<sup>152</sup> Van Beurden & Huinder, *De Vinger op de zere plek*, pp.85, 157.

second phase of the campaign was a phase of greater action with wider political and social support. The role of Shell in Zimbabwe was emphasised, and with the help of some British activists, the KZA and Kairos brought out the publication *Het Olieschandaal*. In March 1979, Kairos and the KZA started a new campaign, trying to get government support for the oil embargo.<sup>153</sup> To begin with focus was placed on the spreading of information about Shell, aiming to have an effect on the name of Shell within the Netherlands as there was a need for countrywide support for the campaign. Advertising was successful, and protest meetings were held in approximately 150 places across the Netherlands with the support of hundreds of local groups and political parties. Shell employees were provided with information on the actions of Shell, and the discussions begun by Kairos in 1973 continued. In order to make the impact of the oil campaign more international, Kairos and the KZA set up the Shipping Research Bureau (SRB) in 1980 to investigate the secret export activities of oil companies in relation to southern Africa.<sup>154</sup>

Another aspect of the campaign was to convince the government to introduce an oil embargo, and to do this, the KZA and Kairos worked together with some Second Chamber members of the PvdA and of the Christian parties. In 1979 Iran joined in the oil embargo, meaning that the Rotterdam harbour became very important in the provision of oil to South Africa. A petition was signed calling for support for a one-sided oil embargo by the Netherlands and thousands of letters and telegrams were sent to parliament in support of an oil embargo. Actions resulted in the major debate on 26 June 1980,<sup>155</sup> which reflects the prominence of the South African issue.

The last phase of the oil campaign was influenced by the situation in South Africa when P.W. Botha called off the State of Emergency in June 1985 and promised reform. However, it was soon realised that the South African government would make no real concessions, and many companies withdrew from South Africa. The climate was made perfect for the launch of another campaign in the Netherlands with Shell becoming the victim of various acts of sabotage within the Netherlands in 1985 when Revolutionaire Anti- Racistische Aktie (RaRa) burnt buildings in protest against

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<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.88-90; Buijs, *Overtuiging en geweld*, p.38.

<sup>154</sup> Buijs, *Overtuiging en geweld*, p.38-39,50; Van Beurden & Huinder, *De Vinger op de zere plek*, pp.90-95.

<sup>155</sup> Buijs, *Overtuiging en geweld*, p.39- 44; Van Beurden & Huinder, *De Vinger op de zere plek*, pp.95-98.

investment in South Africa and actions started in United States of America (USA) against Shell in 1986.<sup>156</sup> A report was prepared for the Shell shareholders meeting and, influenced by the actions in the USA, 150 Shell workers in the Netherlands called on Shell to leave South Africa. Shell was in a difficult situation, and in 1989 a huge demonstration was held outside the Shell laboratory in Amsterdam North. Discussions and actions continued until 1990 when Mandela was released.<sup>157</sup> Although the oil campaign never resulted in Shell leaving South Africa, it did still have an effect on Shell and on the Netherlands' public. The entire oil campaign had an effect on South Africa, and P.W. Botha reported that the oil boycott between 1973 and 1984 cost South Africa 22 billion Rand. The effect could have been greater had more countries organised and participated in the campaigns.<sup>158</sup>

The oil campaign was not the only economic action organised by the KZA. Another campaign focused on the purchase of Kruger Rands by Netherlands' banks and ran from 1982-1983. The banks however, following the lead of ABN/AMRO, were not quick to take up this campaign.<sup>159</sup> The situation in the gold mines was publicised, and the campaign got the support of local groups and trade unions. With the help of members of the public, who threatened to change banks if the sale of Kruger Rands was not stopped, the campaign ended up being highly successful.<sup>160</sup> The success of the campaign can be attributed to banks not relying on the sale of Kruger Rands and the opportunity for public participation. By February 1985 the sale of Kruger Rands was entirely stopped within the Netherlands.<sup>161</sup> Due to the success of the Kruger Rand campaign, the KZA began the 'Pluck geen vruchten van apartheid' campaign against the trade in South African fruit in 1985. The KZA got the help of several local groups, and grocers and importers were all asked not to import or sell South African fruit. The importers were the most difficult to convince, but by 1986 virtually no South African fruit was available in the Netherlands.<sup>162</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Van Beurden & Huinder, *De Vinger op de zere plek*, pp.101-102.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.102-105; Buijs, *Overtuiging en geweld*, pp.105-106.

<sup>158</sup> Van Beurden & Huinder, *De Vinger op de zere plek*, p.106.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 98-100; Buijs, *Overtuiging en geweld*, p.56.

<sup>160</sup> Buijs, *Overtuiging en geweld*, p.101.

<sup>161</sup> Van Beurden & Huinder, *De Vinger op de zere plek*, pp.98-100.

<sup>162</sup> Buijs, *Overtuiging en geweld*, p.101.

Kairos and the KZA also tried to isolate South Africa. In December 1981, the Netherlands's delegation at the UN voted in favour of a resolution calling for a boycott of South Africa in terms of 'sport, culture, tourism, science and immigration'. The year 1982 became the 'sanction year against South Africa', and members of the UN were called on to break ties with South Africa. A Kairos and KZA delegation met the UN Committee Against Apartheid in London and got permission to set up a special organisation in the Netherlands to co-inside with the proposed sanction year. The organisation received UN funding and 65 000 guilders from the Netherlands' government, and it set about getting the Van Agt government to take concrete steps in breaking ties with South Africa.<sup>163</sup>

Kairos and the KZA decided to focus on education, cultural and business links with South Africa during the sanction year. With regard to education, the organisation aimed to spread information on what was happening in South Africa; show solidarity with the victims of apartheid; and break all education and scientific links with South Africa.<sup>164</sup> They wanted to act within the education sector both within the Netherlands and in Africa. In Africa, they wanted to help in the refugee and freedom movement schools, and to provide schooling material.<sup>165</sup> In the cultural sphere, they wanted to stop relations on a non-governmental level that continued despite the ending of the Cultural Accord.<sup>166</sup> With regard to business, the organisation worked together with the FNV, and realised that economic relations with Western Europe and the USA were important pillars on which apartheid rested. Economic sanctions were therefore a big threat to South Africa. The sanction organisation decided to publish the names of those companies still operating in South Africa, together with a discussion on apartheid.<sup>167</sup> It also wanted to stop the exchange of technical ideas and people.<sup>168</sup>

This organisation made various suggestions regarding government policy, and what could be done within the Netherlands to break ties more effectively with South Africa. As regards sport, Minister H. de Boer called on all sport organisations to end contacts with South Africa. After little reaction, he sent letters to communities asking that the

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<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.107-110.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, p.11.

<sup>165</sup> KZA & Kairos, 'Suggesties voor acties in het kader van de sanctie jaar tegen Zuid Africa', sl,1982, pp.2-5.

<sup>166</sup> KZA & Kairos, 'Akktiesuggesties in het kader van het jaar van de sancties tegen Zuid Africa', p.16.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.5-7.

<sup>168</sup> KZA & Kairos, 'Suggesties voor acties in het kader van de sanctie jaar tegen Zuid Africa', pp.2-5.

non-participation of South Africa become a pre-requisite in connection with the special subsidy that most clubs received from the community when renting sports grounds. Some of the communities agreed to this provision.<sup>169</sup>

Both Kairos and the KZA agreed that informing the public was very important. This was also one of the main purposes in founding Kairos and it aimed to spread information to Christians. This was done through pamphlets and the *Amandla* newspaper, which it distributed together with the KZA and Boycot Outspan Aktie (BOA). Each group kept the money from their subscribers and got a certain number of pages to report on the events relevant to their group.<sup>170</sup> Kairos called on churches to hold anti-apartheid meetings and organise anti-apartheid programmes. It informed Christians on what it felt they should be doing in the struggle, called on them to use civil disobedience, and to take part in consumer boycotts and to offer help to political prisoners. Kairos emphasised the cross as a symbol of liberation, but did not want the church to become a third force, and so called on people to act with secular groups. Kairos also promoted the views of other organisations and discussed the various opinions of the different churches.<sup>171</sup>

Although the AABN concentrated on actions related directly to the freedom movements and was therefore not as active within the Netherlands, it also realised the importance of isolating South Africa financially. Already in 1976 the AABN, together with the Dutch trade unions, took part in a disinvestment action calling for a boycott of South African goods and publishing information on contacts with South Africa.<sup>172</sup> The AABN published lists showing boycotts of other countries compared to those of the Netherlands; which companies still invested in South Africa and the export figures to South Africa were compared to those of other countries.<sup>173</sup>

An important element of the AABN's work was keeping the Dutch public informed about apartheid, the situation in South Africa and the actions of the freedom

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<sup>169</sup> KZA & Kairos, 'Akktiesuggesties in het kader van het jaar van de sancties tegen Zuid Afrika', pp.2-3.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, p.83.

<sup>171</sup> Kairos, *Jaarverslag 1990*, p. 4-50; Kairos, 'Challenge to the Church. Theological comment on the political crisis in South Africa'. Utrecht, 1985, p.48-51; *Amandla*, August 1985, p.29.

<sup>172</sup> AABN, *Jaarverslag 1976*, pp.11-12, 14; AABN, *Jaarverslag 1977*, p.9.

<sup>173</sup> K. Zeelberg & F. Nijssen, 'De Nederlandse belangen in Zuid Afrika. Handel en wandel van 'onze' multinationals'. AABN, Amsterdam, 1976; Kongress Map: Zuidelijk Afrika Congress, 6-8 September 1974, 'Geen geld voor onderdrukkend geweld'. Groningen, 1976, p.7.

movements. This was largely done in order to get more support for the AABN so that it could support the freedom struggle more effectively. Publications were sold for profit, and thus constituted another way of collecting funds. As early as May 1971 the AABN was active in about seventy places in the Netherlands, with information evenings being organised.<sup>174</sup> The AABN used their publication to inform the public on the actions of the Netherlands' government and on the funding offered by the government to the freedom struggle.<sup>175</sup>

In 1976 the AABN published an ANC report on the situation in South Africa and on the number of children arrested for resistance.<sup>176</sup> It called on people to participate in the struggle in any way they could. Donations were solicited for the ANC and the ANC Youth League.<sup>177</sup> During 1976, solidarity was built up in the Netherlands, and information on Soweto was widely spread. Sympathy among the Dutch public increased and<sup>178</sup> the AABN recognised the struggle as entering a new phase.<sup>179</sup> In 1983 various campaigns aimed at informing the public were organised by the AABN. The cultural group of the ANC came to the Netherlands and information was spread regarding the situation in the frontline states.<sup>180</sup> In 1990, after F.W. De Klerk's speech, many reporters asked the AABN for statements regarding his message,<sup>181</sup> highlighting the important role and position the AABN held within Dutch society as providers of information right up until the end of apartheid.

This discussion proves that the anti-apartheid organisations did play an active role in forming the public opinion of the Dutch people. It was to a large extent this public point of view that made people regard the Netherlands as exceptionally anti-apartheid. The anti-investment actions also influenced international opinion on the anti-apartheid status of the Netherlands.

### **iii. Actions to influence the Netherlands' government**

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<sup>174</sup> AABN, *Anti-apartheids Nieuws*, May 1971 (55), p.2.

<sup>175</sup> AABN, *Kommunikee*, December 1973, pp.6-8.

<sup>176</sup> AABN, *Kommunikee*, August 1976, pp.1, 4 10.

<sup>177</sup> AABN, 'Investeer niet in apartheid', Amsterdam, sa.

<sup>178</sup> AABN, *Jaarverslag 1976*, pp.1, 7.

<sup>179</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, December 1976 (82), pp.9-10..

<sup>180</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, Aug 1983 (122), pp.5-13; AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, October 1983 (123), pp.6-7

<sup>181</sup> Braam, *Operatie Vula*, p.252.

All three organisations felt that pressure on the government was an important aspect of the struggle. Although these actions could be considered together with actions inside the Netherlands, they are considered separately due to them focusing on the government rather than on the public and private sectors.

Kairos' policy supported economic aid for southern African countries. It called on the Netherlands government to increase financial aid to the frontline states and humanitarian support to the freedom movements and other anti-apartheid groups. It also wanted the government to provide more money for victims of apartheid and South African refugees. Kairos felt the government should take steps to free political prisoners,<sup>182</sup> and was disappointed with the Netherlands' government during the 1980s, whose policy it saw as 'taking a step backwards'.<sup>183</sup>

With regards to government policy, the KZA focused on publicising the lack of a concrete South Africa policy in the Netherlands. The KZA saw the changing of government policy as central to the struggle, and Bosgra identified the central problem as a lack of policy. The KZA recognised that the government would never listen to it completely, but decided to do what it could to influence policy. It knew the government would never turn to a total boycott and unreserved support for the freedom movements, but saw selective sanctions as a good start.<sup>184</sup> In 1977 about ten young South African refugees arrived in the Netherlands after leaving South Africa for anti-compulsory conscription reasons. The Netherlands was not quite sure how to deal with these refugees, but the KZA called on the government to view all South Africans, black or white, as political refugees with all the attached rights.<sup>185</sup> The situation did however not improve much, even after the Netherlands supported a UN resolution in 1978 to take in South Africa refugees.<sup>186</sup>

In the Netherlands, the majority of the political parties supported boycotts, but despite campaigns by the KZA to try and get the government to stop the export of oil to South Africa, the government did not change its policy. In 1991, the KZA pointed out that

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<sup>182</sup> Kairos, 'CDA- Tweede Kamerfractie. Den Haag 1981-4-7' in 'Zuid Afrika uit Zicht?', Apartheid, Nederlandse kerken en het CDA'. Utrecht, 1981, p.21.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, p.23.

<sup>184</sup> Buijs, *Overtuiging en geweld*, p.26.

<sup>185</sup> KZA, Partij kiezen voor Zuid Afrika', deel II, p.20.

<sup>186</sup> NIZA, 19.4, P.A.Groenhuis, 1989, p.14; KZA, Partij kiezen voor Zuid Afrika', deel IV, p.14.



France, Denmark, Italy, Spain, Belgium and Greece all had a direct or indirect ban on the export of oil products to South Africa. The Netherlands however, continued to export oil as follows<sup>187</sup>:

VALUE	YEAR
4.7 million guilders	1985
15.2 million guilders	1986
2.9 million guilders	1987
2.2 million guilders	1988
10 million guilders	1989
3 million guilders	1990

The government was not prepared to stop investment in South Africa, but encouraged businesses to operate along the lines of the voluntary code of conduct. The Netherlands continued to export technological goods to South Africa, despite the fact that the export was not that important for the Netherlands.<sup>188</sup>

In their newspaper, the AABN highlighted how the Netherlands' government's budget for 1980/1981 no longer provided official support for the ANC. Small amounts were still given to SWAPO and to splinter groups of the Namibian National Front. The government was trying to distance themselves from the freedom movements, although they did still support independence in southern Africa by giving 60 million guilders to the Zuidelijk Afrika Programma.<sup>189</sup> This assistance was useful as the money could be used for communication and transport and it was thus effective with regards to helping the struggle in South Africa. Other changes in government aid were also discussed, but seen as useless without concrete political steps to accompany them.<sup>190</sup> The AABN criticised the government's two-stream policy,<sup>191</sup> and questioned how anti-apartheid the Netherlands' government really was as it had turned down nearly all requests for help by the AABN for projects fighting apartheid over the last two years. In its defence, the government claimed that they could never support violent action in South Africa, and that they did already help ANC refugees in neighbouring countries.<sup>192</sup>

<sup>187</sup> NIZA, 10.1A (general), Tweede kamer der staten general, nr 77, 17 895, 20/2/1991; KZA, *Sancties tegen Zuid Afrika*, pp.22, 39,49.

<sup>188</sup> KZA, *Sancties tegen Zuid Afrika*, pp.22, 39,49.

<sup>189</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, October 1980 (105), p.4.

<sup>190</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, October 1983 (123), pp.5-6.

<sup>191</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, October 1984 (129), p.3.

<sup>192</sup> AABN, *Zuidelijk Afrika Nieuws*, October 1986 (141), pp.3-9.

Although the anti-apartheid organisations had little success in making major changes to government policy, they did manage to make both the public and the government aware of inadequacies in government policy. This aspect of the anti-apartheid organisation's actions did not really affect the international opinion of the Netherlands as an anti-apartheid country, but does emphasise the extent to which it was not the government itself that gave the Netherlands such an anti-apartheid character.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Having considered the actions of both the Netherlands' government and those of the anti-apartheid groups in the Netherlands, it can be seen that it was the anti-apartheid groups rather than the Netherlands' government that had a decisive anti-apartheid policy. The Netherlands' government was aware of the apartheid situation, and did condemn apartheid, but continually failed to introduce concrete steps against South Africa. The majority in the Netherlands' government also supported financial aid to the freedom movements, but actions of this sort were continually downscaled.

On the other hand, the non-governmental groups were prepared to give open moral, political and material support to the freedom struggle. Only the three main anti-apartheid groups have been discussed, but the numerous small and local groups should not be ignored. Despite having slightly different aims and different procedures, all the anti-apartheid groups were effective in their own way. All three organisations discussed did organise effective campaigns, and did achieve success in their specific aims. It can also be seen that the AABN concentrated more on the ANC, while Kairos and the KZA focused on economic actions inside the Netherlands. The success of all three groups in informing the public can be seen in their increased support during the 1980s. The groups had little concrete success in changing government policy, but managed to keep the South African issue under discussion in parliament.

Werkgroep Kairos occupied an important position in the struggle in giving Christian resistance a voice. Its connection to the CI and the meaning of this link for the CI should also not be ignored. The way Kairos worked together with the WCC was also very important, as this organisation had a major international impact on the struggle against apartheid. The AABN also played a special role in its relationship with the ANC. It was the AABN that the ANC formed the closest relationship with, and the

ANC remained the AABN's top priority throughout the struggle. The trust in this relationship is visible in the ANC's initial suspicion towards the KZA and in its reliance on Braam during Operation Vula. The KZA was financially the most successful group and made the most money available to the freedom struggle. Within the Netherlands the KZA had the widest following, and in this way was effective with regards the boycott campaigns. The KZA was also chosen by the Netherlands' government to distribute its aid to the freedom movements, again showing how it was perceived as the group most widely accepted within the Netherlands.

The question of whether the groups would have been even more effective had they all stood together and joined must be considered. This greater unity would have led to increased action in certain spheres, and also less time would have been wasted on inter-group conflicts. However, the value of the division must not be overlooked. Due to the fact that there were organisations with different views, continual questioning and debate took place within each organisation in order to determine if they were acting in the most effective way. This division also led to various actions taking place simultaneously. In this way people from a wider spectrum could all participate in the struggle along the lines that they saw best. The division in the Netherlands had both positive and negative effects, and the individual contribution of each organisation must not be underrated.

Finally, it needs to be considered whether the Netherlands as a whole really did take a major stand in the apartheid struggle. When looking at the financial support made available, both the anti-apartheid groups and Mandela refer to large amounts of monetary aid. This aid came primarily from the anti-apartheid movements, and not from the Netherlands' government, and these groups obviously did not have access to the same amount of money as the government did. Thus, although they gave considerable aid given the size of their operations, the sum could not equal that of government support. Also, if the money from the Eastern bloc was compared to that from the Western countries, it is likely that aid from the East would far exceed that from the West.

It needs to be remembered that the white South African government identified the Netherlands' anti-apartheid actions as highly dangerous and effective. This is another

reason why the Netherlands' actions are considered so important, but it has little to do with the actual nature of the actions. Already in 1965, when the Netherlands' government offered 100 000 guilders to the DAF, the South African government reacted extremely. This was because South Africa interpreted actions by the Netherlands' government and public as much more serious than actions by other countries. The Afrikaner still looked to the 'blood-bond' experienced at the start of the century, and in light of this, expected the Netherlands to support them. Actions from the Netherlands thus had to be much less threatening in nature in order to get the same reaction from South Africa, as actions by other countries.

Therefore, although the Netherlands was one of the most important countries in the West with regard to their anti-apartheid struggle, their role should not be over exaggerated. However, at the same time the importance of the support they gave to the freedom movements must not be ignored- at both a moral and material level. In order for the relative value of the Netherlands' actions to be calculated, it is necessary to do more comparative studies with other Western countries, in terms of both government and civil society.