January 6, 1992

ACTION ALERT

Dear Friends,

In the past few weeks, representatives of the South African government and their agents have been actively campaigning to prematurely repeal the state and local sanctions which you supported and helped push through your legislature a few years ago. So far, we know the South African government representatives have visited North Dakota, West Virginia, and Florida.

Nelson Mandela insists that apartheid continues so long as he and 30 million black people still cannot vote in their own country. Negotiations on the future of South Africa began this past December but the ANC has said that the Pretoria regime cannot be both a player and a referee in the negotiations. The South African government is an "illegitimate government," says Mandela, and must hand over power to an interim, transitional government during the process of negotiations. Also, Mandela has urged states and cities to hold on to their sanctions until South Africa is ruled by a more representative interim or transitional government and de Klerk is no longer in power.

The apartheid regime plans to use the upcoming legislative sessions to reverse the state and local sanctions laws thereby rewarding itself before the black majority of South Africa can choose a government of their choice.

Here are some of the things you can do to strengthen Nelson Mandela's negotiating position and support the struggle for freedom for the people of South Africa:

*** Call your legislators who introduced and supported the divestment bills in your state or city. Alert them about the plans of the Pretoria regime and its allies to lift these laws prematurely;

*** Write or call the leaders of your legislature and let them know that Nelson Mandela doesn't want these laws reversed until South Africa is ruled by an interim government representative of all South African people;

*** Call the office of the state or city clerk and find out if there are any bills pending on South Africa;

*** Write letters to your local newspaper announcing your support for the freedom of the people of South Africa, explaining why sanctions are still important.
Sanctions have helped force the Pretoria government to the negotiating table and they strengthen Mr. Mandela's position as he goes into talks with the white government. The same people who opposed imposing sanctions against South Africa are now lobbying for states and cities to lift their anti-apartheid laws prematurely.

The two organizations currently lobbying states and cities in Pretoria's interests are the American Legislative Exchange Council, an American right-wing lobby group, and the Southern Africa Forum, a group funded by the South African government. They have been actively lobbying legislators throughout the U.S. and even organized all-expenses paid trips to South Africa for some. As you may recall, both these organizations testified unsuccessfully against divestment legislation in several states.

State and local sanctions laws are now the key to keeping pressure on apartheid. They can help make it possible for South Africa to have an interim government in the coming year. Nelson Mandela has said that only once an interim government is established will he consider calling for an end to sanctions. We hope 1992 will be the year when white minority rule finally ends and the apartheid regime is removed from power.

Please keep us informed of efforts in the final push for freedom in South Africa.

Sincerely,

Dumisani S. Kumalo
Projects Director

Enclosure

PS. If I can provide you with any additional information about developments in South Africa or assist you in any way, please give me a call.