I write to encourage you to participate in the "Two Weeks of National Action" between March 21 and April 6, during which many campuses and communities will mark the anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre in South Africa (March 21), the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. (April 4) and the execution of African National Congress freedom fighter Solomon Mahlangu (April 6).

In particular, April 4 will be a National Protest Day for South African Divestment organized locally across the country. Several schools have already indicated plans for creative civil disobedience on that day and marches are being planned in major cities. Since April 4 commemorates Martin Luther King, we encourage groups to link divestment protests to struggles against racism in this country. A full calendar for Action weeks is on the back of this page.

Call Joshua Nessen at ACOA with your plans and to set up strategy meetings for the April 4th protests at: (212) 962-1210 / ACOA 198 Bway NYC 10038.

ACOA has several resources available to help you plan actions:

* Speech by Martin Luther King calling for sanctions.

* A resource packet including: 1) Key anti-apartheid contacts across the country 2) Films and distributors on southern Africa 3) List of investors in South Africa and 4) Summary of university and college divestment action.

* Information about state and municipal legislation for divestment for scheduling lobbying days.

The American Committee on Africa is also encouraging your participation in the national April Actions for Peace, Jobs & Justice April 19-22 in Washington DC with parallel actions in San Francisco and Los Angeles. U.S. policy in southern Africa is one of the major themes of the protest and we have enclosed a copy of the call for these actions.

As part of the April Actions there will be a lobby day on April 22 and on Sunday April 21, 11am-5pm, a preparation conference in Washington DC that will include workshops on southern Africa. To register: 202-667-9485, 212-962-1210.

The massive unrest in South Africa, the Nobel Peace award to Bishop Tutu, and the protests at South African offices across the country, have all combined to heighten awareness of U.S. backing for apartheid.

The Weeks of Action and the April Actions present a critical opportunity for us to demonstrate our support for the liberation struggle, for divestment, and opposition to "constructive engagement".

Sincerely Yours,

Joshua Nessen
Student Coordinator
CALENDAR FOR WEEKS OF ACTION (Suggestions for activities)

Thursday March 21: Commemorations of the Sharpeville Massacre during which police killed 69 unarmed people protesting South African pass laws.

Sunday March 24: Anti-Apartheid activists join with Central America solidarity groups in marking the anniversary of the assassination of El Salvador's Archbishop Romero.

Saturday March 30: Groups hold programs to raise material aid for southern African refugees, for example through Runs For Freedom (Organizing packet for these runs available from ACOA)

Thursday April 4: National Divestment Protest Day/Anniversary of Martin Luther King's Death

1) Protest rallies held across the country for divestment.  
2) Lobbying for state/local divestment bills. 
3) Distribution of black armbands to commemorate victims of racism 
4) Commemorations of Martin Luther King stress link between apartheid and racism in the U.S.

Saturday April 6: Anniversary of the execution of Solomon Mahlangu
Groups distribute black armbands in their community and highlight petitions for the release of southern Africa political prisoners. Information on prisoners available from ACOA.

Day of local lobbying: in state and municipal legislatures during the Weeks of Action for divestment legislation. A list of pending bills with legislative schedules will be available from ACOA (also available list of key anti-apartheid contacts in different regions).

BASIC POLITICAL PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING WEEKS OF ACTION

1) Support of southern African liberation movements and the front-line states.

2) Opposition to all U.S. ties (military, nuclear, economic, cultural, sports, academic, diplomatic) to South Africa with an organizing emphasis on economic divestment and comprehensive sanctions against South Africa.

3) Linking the struggles against apartheid to organizing against racism in the United States.

4) Coordinating opposition to U.S. support of apartheid with mobilizations against other U.S. interventions—notably in Central America.