HEARINGS ON NAMIBIA CALL FOR INCREASED PRESSURE ON PRETORIA

Stories by Namibia Communications Centre

The World Council of Churches ended its Washington, D.C. Hearings on Namibia May 4 with a call for increased economic and political pressure to force South Africa to implement the UN independence plan. The WCC panel, headed by former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, stated that "South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia must be dealt with as an issue in its own right."

In a carefully worded but uncompromising statement, the international panel said the time had come for churches around the world to move from "approaching" to "confronting" their governments on Namibia. "The struggle against the violation of human rights imposed by apartheid and the struggle for the independence of Namibia is a matter of faith for the churches."

The time has come for churches around the world to move from "approaching" to "confronting" their governments on Namibia.

Those who sat through the three days of hearings were not surprised by the panel's conclusions, for the testimony by six witnesses from Namibia and nine international church and legal experts presented a frightening picture of life under South Africa's military occupation.

The President of the Namibian Council of Churches, Bishop James Kauluma, told the packed chamber that the farmland and homes of church members are the "playing grounds of destructive atrocities by the South Africa troops." The Bishop said that the churches continue to preach the gospel in spite of this occupation saying, "Those who oppose justice, peace, independence and unity among men oppose God's will, for he is the source of all that they oppose." Bishop Kauluma said in seeking to do the will of God, "The churches in Namibia identify themselves with the problems of the people. This makes the churches targets of reprisals by the evil forces within the country."

Earlier, Mr. Sam Nujoma, president of SWAPO, Namibia's liberation movement, told the WCC panel that America's insistence that Cuban troops leave Namibia's northern neighbor Angola before South Africa quits Namibia provided Pretoria with a "convenient excuse to perpetuate its illegal occupation of Namibia."

"The earth is soaked with the tears and blood of the former and present generations," said Namibian theologian Zephania Kameeta. "The land and sea, out of which minerals, food and energy resources are being stolen are giving you witness. But, in spite of the powerful witness of history, the world claims not to know of this...the world wants to hear more and more, they are starting to enjoy our suffering."

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EDITORIAL

THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM: BUILDING CATHEDRALS

With all the Namibia hearings, conferences, events, sanctions legislation and Angola talks that filled the month of May, some may be tempted to think that the Kingdom has come, that the struggle for freedom in Namibia is nearly over. Now we can all relax and congratulate ourselves a bit.

However, one must also report that, for instance, the historic D.C. Namibia Hearings were not covered by major press nor attended by many congresspeople, even though the distinguished witnesses were brought right to their doorstep on the anniversary of Kassinga. South Africa’s war in Namibia and Angola still escalates daily. The struggle for freedom in Namibia has been going on now for over 100 years!

Reflecting on these rather painful realities, I am reminded of the book Hope For Faith, a conversation between Byers Naude’ (former general secretary of the South African Council of Churches) and Dorothee Sölle (a German theologian and peace activist). Following are their final questions to each other:

Naude’ asks of Sölle: “Do you, in yourself, have the strength to endure whatever may come to you by way of disappointment, by way of rejection, by way of non-recognition, by way of waiting, perhaps your whole life, without being able to participate in the victory of the truth that you are standing for?”

Sölle responds: “I am thinking of a friend’s answer to that, ... when he talked about the cathedrals which were built during the Middle Ages. Most of them were built over 200 years, some over 300 years even, and some of the workers in those cathedrals never saw the whole building, they never went to pray there, they never saw the glass and all the beautiful things they gave their life for. And then this friend said to me, ‘Listen Dorothee, we who are building the cathedral of peace, maybe we won’t see it either. We will die before it is completed, and yet we are going to build it. We are going on even if we won’t live in that building.’ ”

Then Sölle asks of Naude: “Give me your blessing my brother, I need it.”

You and I have been extraordinarily blessed this spring with the presence and words of so many Namibian sisters and brothers at events across the country. We need the blessing of their challenge, their hope, their courage. For we too, with them, are building a cathedral of justice. We must keep writing letters about sanctions, educating people, trying to change U.S. foreign policy, praying, speaking out—especially in this election year.


Being involved in the struggle for freedom in Namibia and southern Africa—even at “long distance” from Colorado, California, Wisconsin, Ohio or New York—is a rare privilege. On the eve of May 4 this year in Washington, D.C., Zephania Kameeta, Nashilongo Elago and I sat together remembering. We remembered the long suffering and commitment of the Namibian people. We remembered also the commitment of so many of you. We drank a toast to a free Namibia and vowed to celebrate together in an independent Namibia. May it come soon Lord!

“When the day comes on which our victory will shine like a torch in the night, it will be like a dream. We will laugh and sing for joy.”

(Psalm 126, paraphrased by Kameeta, from Why, O Lord?)

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National Namibia Concerns is an education/advocacy network working with the Namibian churches for a just independence for the people of Namibia.

Editor: Susan Burchfield, Interim Director
Executive Director: Solveig Kjeseth (on leave in Zimbabwe)
Board President: Barbara Fullerton
ACTION ALERT

Supporters of strong sanctions and Namibia won an important victory in May when the Dellums Bill, HR 1580, was voted out of the Foreign Affairs Committee. Thank you to all of you who lobbied with your representatives during April! You made a difference!

HR 1580 is scheduled to come before the full House for a floor vote as we go to press. HR 1580 calls for comprehensive sanctions against South Africa, mandates complete disinvestment, and will end virtually all trade between the U.S. and the apartheid economy. This legislation would substantially strengthen the limited U.S. sanctions imposed on South Africa in 1986.

The Senate is now considering legislation, S 2378, introduced by Senator Edward Kennedy that is identical to HR 1580 as amended by the House Foreign Affairs Committee. S 2378 now replaces S 556. The Senate will be closely watching to see what happens in the full House vote.

It is crucial that every member of the House be contacted and urged to vote for and oppose weakening amendments to HR 1580. It is also important to thank those representatives that have cosponsored the Dellums Bill and voted for it in committee. In the Senate there are already efforts to weaken S 2378. Urge your Senators to become co-sponsors of S 2378.

Urge your Representatives and Senators to support HR 1580 / S 2378 and oppose all weakening amendments. All members can be reached through the Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121, or write: U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515 and U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510. For a pre-recorded legislative update on these bills call Africa Hotline at (202) 546-0408.

A Summary of some important measures included in the bill:

- Independence for Namibia under UNSCR 435 as one of five conditions, four of which must be met before sanctions can be lifted. (This is one part of the Bill in danger of being “traded off”—be sure to urge keeping Namibia in HR 1580 / S 2378.)
- A Prohibition on Investment in South Africa and Requirement that U.S. Corporations ending their investment consult trade unions when withdrawing.
- A Prohibition on Imports into the U.S. from South Africa (excluding strategic metals the President deems essential to U.S. defense or economy) and Exports to South Africa from the U.S.
- A Prohibition on Intelligence or Military Collaboration, and Nuclear Assistance to S.A.
- A Ban on Corporate Involvement in Oil Sector
- Penalties for Foreign Companies Taking Commercial Advantage of U.S. Sanctions

Resolved:

That the church council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America at its April 1988 meeting affirm its support for comprehensive and mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa as a means for moving the government of South Africa to negotiate with recognized African leadership; and

That the bishop of this church communicate this position to

the President,
the Secretary of State
and the Congress of the United States,
The South African government
and the Secretary of the United Nations.

Be sure to check with your church or organization for stands it has taken on sanctions that you can quote when you contact your Congresspeople (see right).

Even though it is dangerous, many Namibians and South Africans continue to voice their support for sanctions. (See page 5 for Kapi Mujoro’s March testimony before a congressional committee)

We hereby appeal to all governments having economic ties with the South African government, and specifically the United States, . . . to impose comprehensive and mandatory sanctions upon South Africa. We choose to live through the comparatively short discomforts of sanctions in hope, rather than endure one more day of dehumanization under the South African racist government or its surrogates.—Resolution of the Council of Churches in Namibia.
Students In Namibia

Stories by John Evenson, Namibia Communications Centre

WINDHOEK STUDENTS REMEMBER KASSINGA

Thousands of school pupils, some only nine years old, boycotted classes in Katutura, Windhoek, Namibia, May 4 to march in memory of the dead of Kassinga. High schools in the Namibia capital’s black township, Katutura, were reported deserted. At one stage, marchers crossed to the Khomasdal mixed-race suburb, returning with students from the Augustineum high school. The procession, estimated at 6,000, was further swollen by students from the city’s Windhoek Academy. NANSO, the Namibia National Students Organization, played a major part in the proceedings.

The marchers set out soon after seven in the morning, carrying a black banner proclaiming “We Remember Kassinga.” Ten years ago on May 4 South African paratroopers massacred over 600 unarmed Namibian refugees, men, women and children, at the Kassinga refugee camp in southern Angola.

When the students tried to leave Katutura to march the four miles to “white” Windhoek, the police were waiting. They attacked with tear gas and rubber bullets, then chased the marchers, hitting out with truncheons.

Windhoek: May 27, 1988

20,000 STUDENTS ON STRIKE OVER SADF FORCES IN NAMIBIA

Ten secondary schools and more than 20 primary schools in the Ovamboland region of Namibia were closed today as pupils continued their protest against the proximity of South African military and police. Almost 20,000 students throughout Namibia are now boycotting classes, according to Lutheran Bishop Kleopas Dumeni. The latest addition to the wave of student protest which began in March is Oshigambo Lutheran High School, where 200 students decided this morning to boycott classes in a show of solidarity.

The three schools most seriously affected—all secondary—are Ponhofi, Ombalantu and Ogongo. Some classrooms and boarding dormitories are no more than 200 yards away from a base. Several pupils have been killed and many hurt. Dormitories have been broken into by drunken soldiers and policemen, and schoolgirls assaulted. In April 1987, at least 13 primary schools near the Angolan border were burnt down at night by men believed to be stationed in nearby camps.

The army have posed as SWAPO guerrillas and abducted pupils on the pretext of taking them to Angola.

The following morning soldiers call to inquire about the missing children, using their absence as a pretext to arrest leaders of NANSO, the student organization supported by growing numbers of black schoolchildren.

The bases protest is just one aspect of the continuing conflict over education. Blacks suffer from overcrowded classrooms, unqualified teachers, the absence of textbooks. Predictably, examination results have been very poor.

Until recently, many schools in Ovamboland would have at least one white soldier-teacher on the staff, his rifle stacked menacingly in a corner of the classroom. One particular cause of friction is the use of Afrikaans as the language of instruction in high schools. As in the South African township of Soweto in 1976, it is despised by school children as the language of the oppressor. Black schools across the country are switching progressively to English.

Windhoek: June 9, 1988

POLICE AND ARMY CRACK DOWN ON STUDENTS—CABINET MINISTER THREATENS “EMERGENCY”

The acrid smell of tear gas hangs over Katutura today as South African police again attacked protesting students. An estimated 40,000 children are now on strike. Eyewitnesses saw the police move with clubs and rubber bullets into crowds of chanting children. Another told of four policemen who surrounded an eight year old girl, beating her with clubs into the ground.

The chairman of South Africa’s appointed government in Namibia, Mr. Andrew Matjilla, said today that a “state of national emergency” may be proclaimed tomorrow because of the spreading unrest throughout the country.

Students at Oshigambo High School.
Above: Nurses and Kapi Mujoro in the People’s Clinic Treatment room.
Below: Otjimbingwe People’s Clinic.

REPORT FROM NAMIBIA:
OTJIMBINGWE PEOPLE’S CLINIC

by Rev. Kapi Mujoro, Principal
Paulinum Lutheran Seminary, Otjimbingwe

Otjimbingwe People’s Clinic was born one year ago out of the death and suffering of the people. The people here are responsible human beings who deserve decent health care and life, as anybody else. They view decent medical treatment as their basic human right.

I, a pastor in the local congregation here also, buried only one baby in the first 3 months of this year (1988) in comparison with five during the same time last year before the inception of the People’s Clinic. In a nutshell, this clinic is a great help to the community here.

Otjimbingwe People’s Clinic is to be found in a homeland reserved for the black people located in the western part of Namibia between Windhoek and Walvis Bay. Otjimbingwe is an economically disadvantaged village far removed from all industrial developments in the country.

Although the said government runs a medical clinic here, the People’s Clinic came into existence as a result of malpractices by the government clinic. The Boer physician who is the head of the region is a racist and does not diagnose or touch the black patients. The regional hospital over 50 miles from Otjimbingwe is inadequately equipped and is like a concentration camp. It lacks facilities, enough beds, decent food. The patients are not regularly visited by the physicians and many die or are dismissed without treatment. Some examples:

A. Benjamin Gaoseb died in September, 1986, after the physician, Dr. Wagner, refused to treat him. The physician gave the impression as if he knew the problem of the patient without a diagnosis.

B. Bernadus Kariseb died of an appendix burst in 1987. The same physician declined or neglected to treat him.

C. Petronella Tjimune, who was six months pregnant, was admitted at the regional hospital for TB. After four days she realized that the baby was not alive. She reported, but the physician declined and suggested that Petronella wait for a month before the baby could be evacuated.

After repeated appeals to the government, the people of Otjimbingwe were forced to launch an alternate clinic, known as People’s Clinic. This clinic is run by the people themselves and provides decent service to the community. Since its inception, cases of abnormal deaths have disappeared; and the people support it.

Furthermore, we have our own nurses who reside in Otjimbingwe and physicians coming from Windhoek. We receive financial support from the churches, particularly the Council of Churches in Namibia. Thus also we shall appreciate if concerned people will provide some assistance. We need urgently a new ambulance and money for general maintenance of the clinic.

We wish to register that health care service is not a privilege. It is our right. It is a gift from God that we stay healthy and have life in abundance. If the racist regime of South Africa refuses its responsibility, we will help ourselves, for God loves us.

On March 23, 1988, Kapi testified for a U.S. congressional committee hearing on sanctions. For a Namibian or South African to testify in favor of sanctions means certain risk of life. Kapi concluded his testimony by saying: “We Namibians are demanding comprehensive economic sanctions against South Africa. We are prepared to pay for our freedom and independence with hunger. In a nutshell, we are dying already. It would be better to die knowing that apartheid is being removed rather than go on for years and years dying for nothing.”
MAY CONFERENCES

Cries of Anguish, Voices of Hope / Wisconsin Conference on South Africa and Namibia met in Madison, Wisconsin May 4-5.

Among the presentors and participants were:

1. Gabriel Uahengo, Kassinga Massacre survivor, gave the Opening Plenary speech on Kassinga Day.

2. Namibian students from several colleges came to Madison and became resource people for us all.

3. Joseph Diescho of Namibia, author of new novel Born of the Sun (story page 9), spoke on “The USA-South Africa Connection.”

4. Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, keynoter on Kassinga Day, spoke to a crowd of 12,000 in the U of W Field House.


6. Chuck Ruehle presented on “Racism in Our Bones: from the South Bronx to Soweto” with Prexy Nesbit, and led the singing and the wrap up action session. Sue Larson led the Madison planning team.

Other presentors included Neo Nnumzana, ANC Representative to the U.N. and U.S.A., Mark Thomsen, Bill Johnston, June Kjome, Daniel Kunene, Janine Surratt, Bill Nelson, Lawrence Albrecht, Ted Steege, and Susan Burchfield.
Cleveland, Ohio, was host to a Conference on Namibia: The Struggle for Independence on May 7.

7. Lutheran pastor Gerson Max spoke about his ministry with migrant workers in Namibia. Rev. Max is currently doing advanced studies at Trinity Lutheran Theological Seminary, Columbus, Ohio.


9. Bill Johnston brought his many years of study together to serve as opening speaker, giving a historical overview of the Namibian struggle.

10. Hinyangerwa Asheke, SWAPO Deputy Permanent Observer to the U.N. was the afternoon keynoter on “Making the Connections.”

11. Cleveland conference sponsors: Janet Craswell, Washington Office on Africa; Dan Rossbach, Lutheran Namibia Taskforce of NE Ohio; and Susan Burchfield, National Namibia Concerns. Youngest activist: Abigail Rossbach. Janet provided a plenary on current legislation. Susan presented on “The Church in the Struggle” and did the conference wrap up.

Other conference presenters included: Kenneth Grundy, Barbara Fullerton, Elizabeth Landis and Nouehle Nkumbi.
Selma Shejavali, matron of “People’s Primary School” stood on the stone steps outside her classroom. Four hundred small faces turned eagerly toward her as they sang: “we’re like a tree that’s planted by the water...” and “we shall overcome, someday.”

The “People’s School” is organized, taught and paid for by the people, not the government. Three years ago, parents in Katutura, the black township outside of Windhoek, set up their own school which would use English, be academically sound, teach children their “true history,” and prepare them for responsible participation in a free, independent Namibia.

The People’s School started with 210 pre-schoolers, teaching them self-respect and liberation songs along with their letters and numbers. The next year, kindergarten was added, and in 1988, the older students moved into first grade.

Classes meet wherever there is space, some in small rooms, others in the ruins of a dormitory demolished by the government, still others sit in the shade of a tree. There are shortages of everything: books, paper, scissors, colors, pencils. But the learning goes on. The children seem to understand that their education is a vital part of the struggle.

There are fifteen teachers who receive only a fraction of the salary paid to teachers in government schools. But these teachers believe in the cause. For the parents, too, this People’s School education demands sacrifice. They pay 25 Rand each month, even though many of them earn only 200 Rand.

At Selma’s suggestion the children sang several more songs for the American visitor. Then they lined up, thirty to a teacher, and trooped off to class.
RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

BORN OF THE SUN
Do you need a good book for summer reading? We’ve got it for you! There is no better way for us to learn about the struggle for freedom in Namibia than to listen to a Namibian tell the story. In his new novel BORN OF THE SUN Joseph Diescho tells a powerful story that calls us out of our North American missionary mentality and into the suffering, hope and courage of the Namibian people. Presently a Fulbright scholar at Columbia University in New York City, Joseph grew up in the northern war zone of Namibia experiencing many of the things he writes about in his novel. (Photo—page 6)

BORN OF THE SUN is the story of Muronga, a young man who has grown up in a Namibian village where his only contacts with the outside world have come from the local German Catholic missionaries. He accepts their teaching and Baptism with courtesy but he is uneasy about their preaching about the “wrongs” of the African culture.

The quiet, peaceful life changes dramatically when South African rulers of his country send their “commissioner for Native Affairs” to the village. Everybody must now pay taxes. The solution: send their young men to work in the diamond and gold mines of the White man. Muronga and his friend Kaye volunteer on behalf of their village.

At the mine Muronga comes to know the evils of apartheid. Gradually as the miners become acquainted with other black workers through conversations at mealtime and secret meetings at night, they organize a people’s front to fight for their rights. Confrontations with the authorities result in imprisonments. Far away from his village, wife and child, Muronga must make difficult choices about how to continue in the struggle for freedom and liberation of his people. The final choice which Muronga and his friends make is the climax of the story.

BORN OF THE SUN, published by Friendship Press, is available from NNC for $7.00 postpaid.

TORCH IN THE NIGHT: WORSHIP RESOURCES FROM SOUTH AFRICA
Built around twelve themes, these adaptable worship services include ritual, stories, poems, art, and responsive readings directly from South Africa. Author Anne Hope was born in Johannesburg, South Africa. Deprived of her citizenship in 1973, she spent many years in Kenya and Zimbabwe training leaders. She now works in Washington, D.C., with the Center of Concern. Just published in 1988 by Friendship Press, TORCH IN THE NIGHT is available from National Namibia Concerns for $6.00 postpaid.

NEW VIDEOS AVAILABLE
National Namibia Concerns has several new videos available for rent. For an updated listing of videos and films contact our office. Described below are two recent additions to our video/film library.

NAMIBIA: INDEPENDENCE NOW!
Producer: U.N. Council for Namibia in 1985, 40 minute video. Shot in refugee settlements in Angola and Zambia, this film combines images, interviews, poetry and song to present an overview of the Namibian struggle against South African occupation. In their nurseries, schools, medical training centers and communities, thousands of exiled Namibians are building a new society through the leadership of SWAPO, preparing for inevitable independence.

THE CRY OF REASON
1987, 58 minute video. This film traces the religious and political odyssey of Rev. Byers Naude, former head of the South African Council of Churches. Originally an important leader in the white Afrikaaner Dutch Reformed Church, Naude turned against apartheid 25 years ago after the Sharpeville Massacre. He determined to devote his ministry to ending apartheid, was rejected by white society, “banned” for eight years for his views, and embraced by blacks.
NNC EXEC BOARD MEETS

May 5-6 the executive committee of the National Namibia Concerns Board of Directors met in Madison, Wisconsin. The full Board has affirmed the election of new officers as well as a smaller working Board of Directors. Officers for 1988-89 will be: President—Barbara Fullerton of Columbiana, Ohio; Vice President—Harold Schlachtenhaufen of Detroit, Michigan; Secretary—Mark Gilderhus of Medford, Oregon; and Member-at-Large—Gabriel Uahengo of Namibia, presently studying in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

NNC Board of Directors for 88-89 will also include: Sue Wolfe, John Evenson, Ruth Jorenby, Elizabeth Landis, Jim Fuller and newly elected Paulina Elago (Namibian student studying at Augustana-Rock Island, Illinois).

In order to add staff in the Denver and Dubuque offices, the Board will undertake a fund raising drive. The present part-time staff is unable to respond adequately to the challenge and to the needs of our large national network. We hope the network will generously respond.

WHAT'S

LUTHERAN SYNOD FUNDS NNC

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council (ELCA) designated May 1, 1988 as Free Namibia Sunday and $1,000 of its synod funds in support of the Namibian people through the work of National Namibia Concerns. The Synod Council then reported its action to all congregations in a letter asking each parish to observe May 1 as a day of education, prayer and advocacy, and to consider a freewill offering for the Namibian people. Thank you SE Minnesota!!

VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY SAYS: GOOD MORNING NAMIBIA

A coalition of groups of Valparaiso University in Indiana combined efforts in a campaign entitled: Good Morning Namibia / The Healing Goes On to raise $3,700 to support the Otjimbingwe People’s Clinic in Namibia (story page 5). Ten percent (10%) of the funds raised was donated to NNC who provided support work, resources, and information about People’s Clinic. The map of Africa surrounded by a sun served as logo for the campaign.

Good Morning Namibia was a month long emphasis involving education, worship, films, coffee houses, letter writing campaigns, displays, fund raising and lots of publicity. For every $10 donation, a group or individual had their name written on a tongue depressor that formed the planks of a bridge between maps of Namibia and the U.S. The bridge spanned almost 30 feet and was displayed in the back of the Chapel of the Resurrection, with a duplicate in the Catholic Student Center.

MOTHER’S DAY GIFT TO NNC

Our office recently received a generous contribution from a Namibia advocate in Washington state, accompanied by this note: As I think of our 5 children on this Mother’s Day, I want to do something for mothers and children of Namibia. Use our gift as you need it. Thank you for continuing your concern. We care.

Bridge of tongue depressors serves as publicity and thermometer for Valpo Namibia fund raising.
HAPPENING

LUTHER COLLEGE HOLDS NAMIBIA CONCERNS DAY

The Namibia/South Africa Concerns Committee of Luther College, Decorah, Iowa, sponsored a number of events this spring. The committee meets weekly for education and support. Some projects include a letter to George Shultz reflecting outrage at the Oshakati bombing, attending the Madison, WI conference, and sponsoring Namibia Concerns Day April 28. In the morning students were greeted with red, blue and green yarn tied to each mail box knob to simulate the SWAPO flag. Rev. Peter Van Zyl, Namibia student at Wartburg Seminary spoke in chapel and led discussions—especially focusing on divestment, a “hot topic” on campus.

SUPPORT FOR POLITICAL DETAINNEES

Several groups and parishes are writing letters to political detainees and their families in Namibia. These letters can help provide hope and also serve to let the South African government know we are aware of their evildoings. Also important are letters written to the South African Ambassador, President Botha, and our own state department demanding the release of detainees. Letters and post cards to detainees and their families should be sent to the Council of Churches in Namibia. For current lists of detainees and the necessary addresses contact National Namibia Concerns.

ELCA CONCENTRATES ON NAMIBIA

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has made Namibia a continuing churchwide emphasis. In an effort to structure Namibia into its total program, the ELCA has formed a Namibia Inner Unit Staff Committee, made up of at least one representative from each of its divisions, chaired by Ralston Deffenbaugh, director of the Lutheran Office on World Community. Publications and program strategies are under consideration. The committee met with Deputy Bishop Zephania Kameeta during his U.S. visit in May. The national ELCA / Church Council has endorsed the current U.S. comprehensive sanctions legislation. On May 19 Presiding Bishop Herbert Chilstrom testified for sanctions at the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Africa sanctions hearings.

NNC RECEIVES U.N. GRANT

National Namibia Concerns says thank you! to the United National Council for Namibia for a 1988 grant. Grant monies are to be used for funding NNC’s quarterly publication Namibia Newsletter, and for sponsoring regional conferences. Some conference grant monies were used to co-sponsor the Madison and Cleveland conferences in May. Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, will host a third Namibia conference November 11-12. The fourth conference for 1988 is yet to be scheduled.
South Africa’s illegal control of the former German colony was decried again and again by witnesses during the hearing. “If we should be silent, even the stones of Namibia would start shouting,” said Kameeta, alluding to the attempts of the South African government to silence him and other Namibians from revealing the in-sufferable conditions in the mineral rich land that is presently under the direct control of State President P.W. Botha.

“If we should be silent, even the stones of Namibia would start shouting.”

Witnesses from Namibia included SWAPO President Sam Nujoma, Anglican Bishop James Kauluma, Nashilongo Elago (General Secretary, Namibia Women’s Voice), Lutheran Deputy Bishop Zephania Kameeta, Timoteus Ndakunda (Primary school principal in the northern war zone), and Paul Ipumbu (Namibian student in Canada and Kassinga Massacre survivor).

Among the international witnesses testifying were Ralston Deffenbaugh (U.S. Director, Lutheran Office for World Community), Rev. Allen Boesak (South Africa, President, World Alliance of Reformed Churches), Commissioner Bernt Carlsson (U.N. Commission for Namibia, and Congressman Mervyn Dymally (Chair, Congressional Black Caucus, sponsor of HR 131 on Namibia).

In addition to General Obasanjo (an Anglican), the WCC panel included Mrs. Lisbeth Palme (Church of Sweden, widow of Swedish prime minister Olaf Palme), Mr. Howard Cooke (United Church of Jamaica, former Jamaican Minister for Public Affairs), Dr. Carl Mau (U.S., former general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation). Archbishop Walter Khotso Makhulu (Anglican Church in Botswana, representing the WCC) was the official spokesperson for the Council at the hearings. The panel brought its report to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar in New York on May 6. The WCC’s Program to Combat Racism organized the hearings with the help of the church-based Washington Office on Africa.

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Ralston Deffenbaugh and Bernt Carlsson, International witnesses at Namibia Hearings.

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Address Correction Requested

☐ Please include me on the mailing list for the “Namibia Newsletter.”

☐ Please send me an introductory packet on the situation in Namibia.

☐ Please send details on film and other resource availability.

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