TO: All Concerned Persons of Faith  
FROM: Dumisani Kumalo, Religious Action Network coordinator  

On August 31 a massive bomb destroyed the headquarters of the South African Council of Churches and other anti-apartheid and human rights groups in Johannesburg, injuring 23 people. Six days later South African security police raided the Cape Town offices of the Anglican Church. There they seized a tape recording of a sermon by Archbishop Desmond Tutu urging South African Christians to boycott segregated local elections scheduled for October. He has called for the boycott "as a nonviolent way of expressing our opposition to the evil and injustice of apartheid." For this "crime" Archbishop Tutu could be sentenced to ten years imprisonment.

The government has denied complicity in the SACC bombing, but church leaders have no doubt that, as Archbishop Tutu said, "This act was committed by the perpetrators or supporters of apartheid." Only hours after the blast, the Minister for Law and Order, Adriaan Vlok, attacked the church leaders as "wolves in sheep's clothing" who support "liberation theology" and "people's democracy."

"The time has come," he warned, "to tear off their masks."

These incidents are as clear as Minister Vlok's threat—South Africa's Christian, Jewish and Moslem communities must end their courageous witness against inhumanity and injustice or face increasing government-sponsored violence and oppression. **We must respond now in support of our brothers and sisters in South Africa—and there is much we can do:**

* **SEND PRAYERS AND MESSAGES OF SOLIDARITY**—The South African people need our spiritual and moral support. Offer prayers and sermons for the victims of apartheid during worship services. Send letters and telegrams of solidarity to:
  
  Reverend Frank Chikane, General Secretary  
  South African Council of Churches  
  PO Box 4621, Johannesburg 2000, South Africa  
  (Please send copies to ACOA.)

* **SUPPORT THE SANCTIONS BILL (S2756) NOW BEFORE THE SENATE**—Earlier this year, Rev. Chikane appealed for the comprehensive sanctions contained in S2756: "We believe that the imposition of such sanctions is the only way to effect change in South Africa with minimum violence." But the Senate must vote before the end of September for the bill to pass this year. Contact your Senators today and urge them to register their opposition to apartheid and to attacks on South Africa's religious community by co-sponsoring and voting for this important legislation:
  
  The Honorable ________, United States Senate  
  Washington D.C. 20510  
  (202) 224-3121

* **JOIN THE RELIGIOUS ACTION NETWORK**—The American Committee on Africa, has established an ecumenical Religious Action Network for the faith community in the United States. (See reverse for more information.)
What Is The Religious Action Network

The religious community in South Africa is under unprecedented attack.

Religious leaders who have taken up the challenge of the struggle to end apartheid have asked for our urgent support. At great personal risk, Rev. Frank Chikane, Secretary-General of the 15 million strong South African Council of Churches, has made a series of urgent appeals to religious congregations in the United States to protest actions of the apartheid government.

These courageous opponents of apartheid must not stand alone.

In the United States, the religious community has long been an active witness for peace and justice in southern Africa. Our recent work in this community has convinced us that still more can be achieved by unifying the many voices crying out across the country. Coordinated actions can lead to far more powerful protests than individual responses, when directed against the entrenched evil of the apartheid system.

*** A year ago when more than 30,000 people, a third of them children, were detained without charge or trial, and many were tortured, we organized congregations from coast to coast to collect keys for our Unlock Apartheid Jail's campaign, as a concrete demand that these prisoners be freed. We have dumped nearly 100,000 keys on the doorsteps of both the South African Consulate in New York and the Embassy in Washington DC, in this way ensuring that South African censorship could not turn the detainees into totally forgotten people.

*** In February 1988, when 17 opposition organizations were banned, ACOA received urgent messages from inside South Africa asking us to help. Within a week, we were able to assist a network of congregations around the United States to include in their services a focus on the protest in South Africa, and empowered them to express their concern by participating in a solidarity message placed as an advertisement in Namibian and South African newspapers.

*** Recently, ACOA alerted congregations to the threat of execution by hanging of six young people known as the Sharpeville Six for a crime they never committed. Many joined in the international protest, which has temporarily stayed the hand of the executioner.

Such swift distribution of information and coordination of urgent response complements the ongoing work of national denominations and regional bodies, as well as the range of interfaith communities that have played a role in bringing churches together to take action on southern Africa. The Religious Action Network will link member congregations into a powerful stream which can help sweep aside the evil of apartheid. Each member congregation will receive bi-monthly news briefings, urgent action alerts, updates on campaigns, a special telephone hotline and help with speakers from southern Africa.

We hope that by now you agree with the urgent need to answer the cry for help from those suffering South Africa's injustice. To speed the end of apartheid, we need you and your congregation to participate fully in the network, and we need your financial support to make this work possible.

For more information contact: Dumisani Kumalo, RAN Coordinator American Committee on Africa, 198 Broadway, New York, NY 10038 (212) 962-1210
Defiant Tutu calls for poll boycott

From Tony Allen-Mills
in Johannesburg

ARCHBISHOP Desmond Tutu yesterday courted a fresh confrontation with the South African government by defying state-of-emergency restrictions and calling on both blacks and whites to boycott next month's countrywide municipal elections.

Speaking from the pulpit of St George's Cathedral in Cape Town, the Anglican archbishop deliberately flouted emergency laws, introduced last June, which made it an offence to advocate a boycott of any state-run election. Describing a boycott as "a non-violent way of expressing our opposition to the evil and injustice of apartheid", Archbishop Tutu said: "I urge black people in this diocese not to vote...and I hope that white Anglicans would join (them) in that action."

Archbishop Tutu said the elections could not be fair because they were taking place "in an unjust dispensation...the government is guilty of intimidation in wanting to force participation, placing heavy penalties for calling for a boycott...I am aware of the penalties attaching to this call."

His remarks came less than 48 hours after Adriann Vlok, the Minister for Law and Order, hinted that a further crackdown on clergymen opposing the state was being considered. Mr Vlok condemned unnamed "wolves in sheep's clothing" who supported "liberation theology" and "people's democracy". He said: "The time has come to tear off the masks - so that people can see who are their friends and who are their enemies."

The government has staked its plans for future black political development on the emergence at the October polls of a compliant new breed of local township councillors. Although the democratic nature of the exercise appears significantly undermined by the absence of any reputable anti-apartheid participants - most of them were banned last February - Pretoria is anxious to legitimise the poll by securing the highest possible black turn-out.

It has launched an expensive publicity campaign encouraging township residents to vote; it has also taken steps to prevent anti-apartheid resistance from organising any significant boycott.

With community-based groups like the United Democratic Front silenced by the government's restrictions, leading clergymen are increasingly stepping into the void created by bans earlier this year. Mr Vlok has warned of action against those who support "revolutionary and activist" organisations.
ACOA received the following telex today from Rev. Frank Chikane:

RCA SEP 08 0912
482099 SA

TO ALL CHURCH LEADERS
HONORARY MEMBERS

THREAT TO ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND ORDER HAS THREATENED TO ACT AGAINST
ARCHBISHOP DESMOND TUTU FOR THE SERMON HE DELIVERED ON SUNDAY THIS
WEEK IN WHICH HE CALLED ON ANGLICANS IN HIS DIOCESAN NOT TO
PARTICIPATE IN THE OCTOBER 26 LOCAL AUTHORITIES ELECTIONS. THE
POLICE VISITED BISHOPSCOURT YESTERDAY AND TOOK AWAY THE
TRANSCRIPT OF THE SERMON TO CONSIDER CHARGES AGAINST THE
ARCHBISHOP.

WHAT ARCHBISHOP TUTU HAS SAID IS EXACTLY IN LINE WITH THE CHURCH
LEADERS' RESOLUTION ON 29TH JULY, 1988 ON THE OCTOBER ELECTIONS.
IN FACT, WE EXPLICITLY AGREED TO USE ALL MEANS AVAILABLE TO
COMMUNICATE THIS DECISION, INCLUDING THE PULPIT, AND I BELIEVE
THAT ALL THE 26 CHURCH LEADERS WHO MADE THIS DECISION HAVE AT ONE
STAGE OR ANOTHER MADE SIMILAR PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS.

I BELIEVE, THEREFORE, THAT AN ATTACK ON ARCHBISHOP TUTU IS AN
ATTACK ON ALL OF US. IF THE ARCHBISHOP IS CHARGED THEN WE ALL
NEED TO BE CHARGED.

I WOULD LIKE TO URGE YOU AS HEADS OF CHURCHES TO USE ALL MEANS AT
YOUR DISPOSAL TO PROTEST AGAINST THE INTENDED ACTION OF THE
GOVERNMENT AND ALSO EXPRESS YOUR SOLIDARITY WITH THE GOVERNMENT
IN THESE TIMES OF TRIAL. REMEMBER THAT IT IS IN OUR OBEDIENCE TO
GOD (TO WITNESS AGAINST THE EVIL OF APARTHEID) THAT WE FIND
OURSelves HAVING TO DISOBEY THE GOVERNMENT.

PLEASE KEEP US INFORMED ABOUT WHATEVER ACTION YOU TAKE IN THIS
REGARD.

YOUR SERVANT IN THE LORD
THE REV. FRANK CHIKANE
GENERAL SECRETARY
SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

08 09 88
ACOA received the following telex from the South African Council of Churches today:

STATEMENT ADOPTED BY SPECIAL MEETING OF CHURCH LEADERS OF MEMBER CHURCHES OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL OF CHURCHES AFTER THE BOMBING OF KHOTSO HOUSE


2. WE KNOW THAT THIS STRATEGY IS BEING PURSUED WITH UNCEASING RUTHLESSNESS BECAUSE THE SACC CONTINUES TO EXPOSE THE MORAL BANKRUPTCY AND EVIL OF APARTHEID. CHALLENGED BY THE GOSPEL TO STAND FOR THE TRUTH, THE SACC IS COMMITTED TO USE EVERY RESOURCE IT HAS TO WORK FOR AN END TO APARTHEID AND TO SUPPORT ITS VICTIMS. WE ARE THEREFORE SHOCKED, NOT SURPRISED, BY THIS ACT OF VIOLENCE AGAINST THE CHURCH.

3. IF THIS EXPLOSION IS NOT A DIRECT ACTION BY THE GOVERNMENT AGENCY IT HAS CERTAINLY TAKEN PLACE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF HATE WHICH THEY HAVE CREATED. IN ALMOST DECLARING OPEN SEASON ON SACC AND OTHER ANTI-APARTHEID BODIES, THEY HOPE TO DEFLECT ATTENTION FROM THEIR REAL CRISIS, WHICH IS THE MANIFEST FAILURE OF THEIR OWN POLICIES AND THE TOTAL BREAKDOWN OF TRUST IN INSTITUTIONS THEY HAVE CREATED.

4. THE BOMB BLAST MAY HAVE DESTROYED A BUILDING WHICH HAS BECOME A SYMBOL OF HOPE TO MANY, BUT IT WAS REALLY AIMED AT THE PROGRAMMES OF SACC AND THE ORGANIZATIONS WHICH SHARED KHOTSO HOUSE AND A COMMON COMMITMENT TO SEE APARTHEID DESTROYED.

WHAT WAS EXPRESSED IN THE DAY-TO-DAY WORK IN KHOTSO HOUSE WAS A DETERMINATION BY THE VAST MAJORITY OF CHRISTIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA TO END APARTHEID AND ESTABLISH GOD'S JUSTICE.

THIS DETERMINATION CANNOT BE DESTROYED, AND WHILE WE ARE UNDER NO ILLUSIONS THAT THIS HAS BEEN THE LAST ATTACK UPON US, WE REAFFIRM THAT COMMITMENT TODAY. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE "HOUSE OF PEACE" WILL IN NO WAY DETER US FROM WORKING FOR REAL PEACE.

SACC COMMUNICATION DIVISION
Bomb Wrecks Offices of Apartheid Foes

By William Clingman

The Washington Post

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1988 A41
Bomb Destroys Headquarters Of S. African Church Group

SOUTH AFRICA, From A41

suggested that the attacks were carried out by right-wing vigilantes, either within or outside of the security forces.

The Khotso House blast bore remarkable similarities to a massive explosion last year that destroyed the downtown headquarters of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), the country's largest black labor federation. Police have made no arrests in connection with that explosion, which left the building uninhabitable.

As in the COSATU bombing, explosives appeared to have been placed in the basement of Khotso House in such a position that they would weaken the structure of the building and force its closure for safety reasons.

The explosion caused heavy damage to several nearby buildings, including a home for pensioners and disabled elderly people. Hospital authorities said they treated 17 people for minor injuries, including a night watchman who fell into the basement as he fled from the collapsing lobby.

Several janitors who live on the sixth floor of the building escaped by jumping to the roof of a neighboring building.

In addition to the SACC, Khotso House has offices of the Black Sash women's antiapartheid group, the Transvaal Rural Action Committee and several church organizations. Hundreds of impoverished blacks visit the Black Sash advice office each day to talk with volunteers about problems confronted because of apartheid.

The Black Sash, in a statement, said, "We must be aware that there are forces active in South Africa which do not want peace if it can be achieved through negotiation, through the redress of injustice and through the transformation of our society. We, for our part, remain committed to that process, come what may."

Until their banning earlier this year, the United Democratic Front, a coalition of 700 antiapartheid groups, and the Detainees' Parents Support Committee also maintained headquarters in the building.

COSATU spokesman Frank Meintjeis said he doubted whether those responsible for the Khotso House blast would ever be arrested.

"More than a year after the massive COSATU House bomb, we have not heard a word from the police about the progress of investigations. The state should clarify its position in relation to violent attacks on extraparliamentary organizations," Meintjeis said.

He recalled that six months ago the Community House in Cape Town, which housed the western Cape Province offices of the Council of Churches and the regional UDF headquarters, also was damaged in an unsolved bombing. In recent months, several other black union headquarters throughout the country have been damaged in bombings or arson attacks.

A police spokesman, Capt. Pierre Louw, said that the possibility of a link between the COSATU headquarters bombing and today's blast would be investigated.