

OLIVER TAMBO 1917-1993



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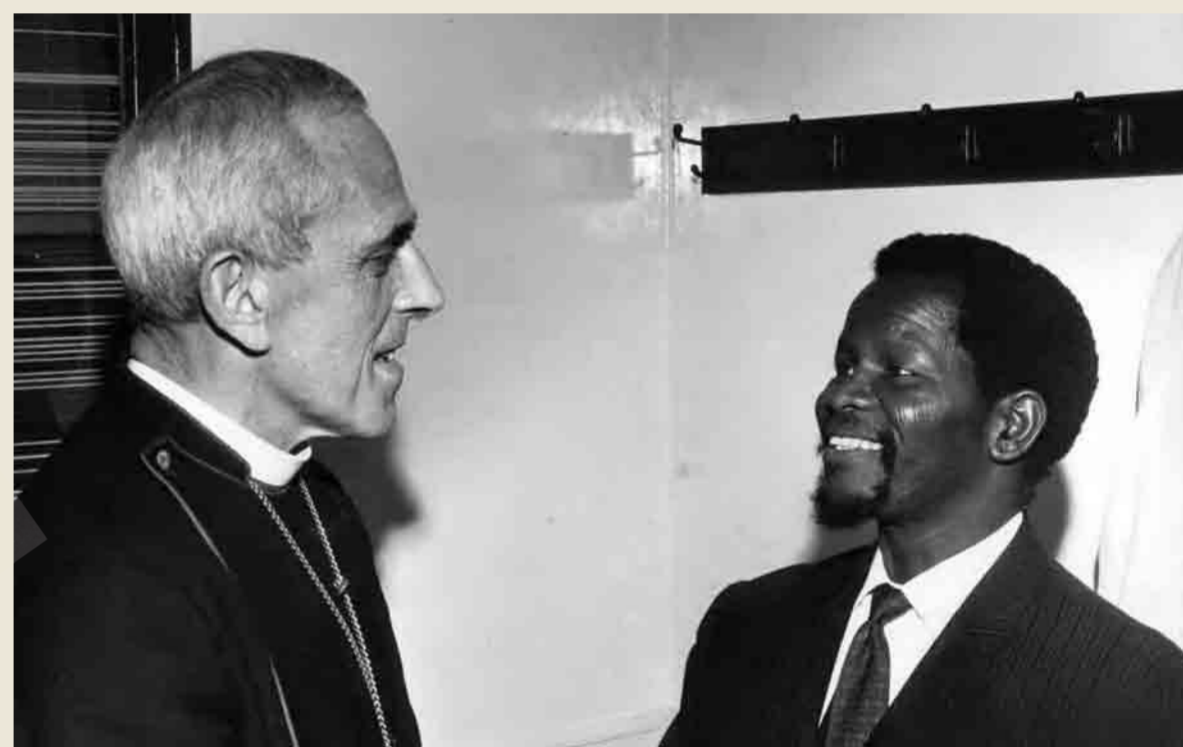
ABOVE LEFT: *Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela in their law office in the early 1950s.* ABOVE RIGHT: *Reunited in Sweden in 1990 after 28 years.*

Oliver Tambo was teacher, political leader, diplomat and revolutionary. As Deputy President and later President, he led the African National Congress in exile for 30 years, while Nelson Mandela and many others were gaoled in South Africa.

Under Tambo's leadership, the ANC's external mission grew from a few exiles into an movement with offices in all the world's major capitals. From the mid-1970s it inspired, and built links with, the mass movement against apartheid inside South Africa. Tambo held the ANC together, seeking consensus, but never afraid to take difficult decisions. He was a strategic thinker, who endorsed the decision to pursue armed struggle in 1961, and in the 1980s seized the chance for negotiations with the apartheid regime.

Tambo was respected by world leaders and inspired hundreds of thousands of people to join the anti-apartheid struggle. This exhibition tells how he crossed ideological and geographical boundaries, building a truly global movement.

Comrades and friends - TOP RIGHT: *Tambo with Trevor Huddleston in 1968. They met as young men when Huddleston was a priest in Sophiatown. Huddleston was later President of the British Anti-Apartheid Movement.* CENTRE RIGHT: *Tambo with Olof Palme, former Prime Minister of Sweden, in 1986. Tambo first met Palme in 1962 and remained a friend until Palme's assassination in 1986.* BOTTOM RIGHT: *Tambo with E S Reddy, Secretary of the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid. Reddy later said: 'He always treated me as a partner in the struggle rather than as a mere friend or supporter'. Another close friend was Canon John Collins. Collins headed the International Defence and Aid Fund, which supported political prisoners and their families. IDAF played an indispensable part in the liberation struggle.*



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Escape from South Africa



'It may affect my future, my practice, my family, but I can't help it. I'm going with the current.' OLIVER TAMBO



LEFT: Tambo arrives in Dar es Salaam in April 1960. ABOVE: Meeting Julius Nyerere, future President of Tanzania. Tambo and Nyerere were to become firm friends.

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Oliver Tambo left South Africa at the end of March 1960 after the Sharpeville massacre. He was sent by the ANC to set up a mission in exile. The following week the ANC was banned. Tambo escaped to Botswana and went on to Dar es Salaam. Via meetings in Tunisia, Ghana and Denmark he reached London, where he was followed by his wife Adelaide and their children. He joined with Yusuf Dadoo from the South African Indian Congress and representatives of the Pan-Africanist Congress and the South West Africa National Union to form the South African United Front. The SAUF's first success was to help force South Africa out of the Commonwealth in March 1961.



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TOP: In London Tambo was reunited with his friend Trevor Huddleston. ABOVE: Tambo at a meeting in Westminster, organised by Christian Action, 11 May 1960. RIGHT: South African United Front leaders at the head of a march along Oxford Street, London, calling for the expulsion of South Africa from the Commonwealth in 1961. L to R: Tambo, Fanuel Kozonguizi from the South West Africa National Union, Yusuf Dadoo from the South African Indian Congress, Fenner Brockway MP and Nana Mahomo from the Pan-Africanist Congress.



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'Nothing will ever make Africa forget those oppressed Africans'

OLIVER TAMBO AT THE OAU HEADS OF STATE MEETING, 1968



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ABOVE: Tambo was reunited with Nelson Mandela in Addis Ababa at a meeting of the Pan-African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa (PAFMECA) in January 1962. Mandela briefed him on the movement's decision to organise armed struggle and the formation of Umkhonto we Sizwe. BELOW: Tambo with Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and South West Africa People's Organisation President Sam Nujoma at a frontline states meeting in Dar es Salaam.



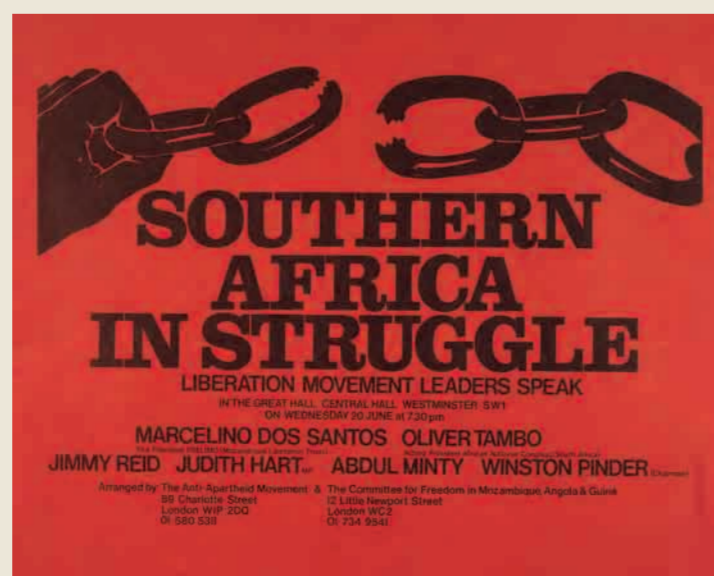
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ABOVE: Tambo arriving with PAIGC President Amilcar Cabral at the OAU Heads of State meeting in Algiers, 1968. ABOVE RIGHT: The President of Mozambique, Samora Machel, welcomes Tambo to the FRELIMO Congress, 1983. RIGHT: Poster for a rally in support of Mozambican independence held in London in 1973.

Africa was the first and most important source of support for the South African liberation movements. As the newly independent African countries joined the UN in the early 1960s, they pressed for mandatory sanctions against South Africa. After the formation of the Organisation of African Unity in 1963, its Liberation Committee provided material support.

Oliver Tambo made firm friendships with African leaders, especially Julius Nyerere in Tanzania, Kenneth Kaunda in Zambia and Samora Machel in Mozambique. In 1964 he moved from Dar es Salaam to Lusaka, where the ANC set up its head office. After the liberation of Portugal's colonies in 1975, South Africa fomented civil war and launched armed attacks on the frontline states - Angola, Mozambique, Botswana, Zambia and Lesotho, and Zimbabwe after its independence in 1980. Tambo understood the extreme pressure these countries were under and was sensitive to their constraints.



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In January 1981 South African commandos attacked houses in Matola, southern Mozambique, killing ANC exiles and Mozambican citizens. Tambo spoke at the funeral of the victims on 8 February 1981. The raid on Matola was one of many South African attacks on civilians in the frontline states.

'There is no longer any possibility of liberating South Africa from apartheid with peaceful means'

OLIVER TAMBO, 1964



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Umkhonto we Sizwe soldiers in training. In 1967 and 1968 MK units joined with Zimbabwean guerilla fighters in an attempt to infiltrate into South Africa through Zimbabwe. Tambo joined them as they prepared to cross the Zambezi river.



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TOP: Tambo arriving in the Soviet Union. He made his first visit there in 1963 to arrange for military training for MK combatants. ABOVE: Tambo with Thabo Mbeki at a meeting with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in 1986. BELOW LEFT: Poster advertising a demonstration in London in 1967 in support of Southern African freedom fighters. BELOW RIGHT: Tambo meets Erich Honecker, President of the German Democratic Republic. The GDR trained MK fighters in counter-surveillance techniques, as well as providing printing facilities for ANC publications.

In 1961 the ANC's armed wing, Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK), launched a sabotage campaign against the apartheid government. In the following years, Oliver Tambo explained to the world why the ANC decided to embark on armed struggle, and sought equipment and training for MK. The main supplier was the Soviet Union, together with its Warsaw Pact allies, especially East Germany.

RALLY JUNE 23
OPPOSE APARTHEID
SUPPORT AFRICAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS

TRAFALGAR SQUARE 3.00 P.M.
MARCH FROM HYDE PARK CORNER 1.45 P.M.

Speakers:
ANDREW FAULDS M.P. **PAUL OESTREICHER**
JACK JONES British Council of Churches
GEORGE KILOH Transport & General Workers Union
JOAN LESTOR H.P. Ad Hoc Youth & Students Committee
OLIVER TAMBO Acting President-General, African National Congress (South Africa)
DAVID STEEL M.P. Chairman

SOUTH AFRICA FREEDOM DAY
ANTI APARTHEID MOVEMENT
 89 CHARLOTTE STREET W.I. 580-5311

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Tambo with the Head of the ANC's International Relations Department, Johnny Makathini, on a visit to China. China provided training for MK guerillas in the early 1960s. The ANC had little contact with China for some years after the rift between China and the Soviet Union, but Tambo re-established links, leading delegations to China in 1975 and 1983.

'I am hoping to get out of here and go round the world begging for moral and material support for our struggle'

OLIVER TAMBO
TO E S REDDY,
31 AUGUST 1967



LEFT: Tambo receives a cheque for \$100,000 raised from sales of the album 'Sun City' at a reception organised by the American Committee on Africa (ACOA) and the Africa Fund in New York, January 1987. Also in the photo are Little Steven, Africa Fund President Tilden LeMelle and Harry Belafonte. ABOVE: The Chair of the Norwegian Chemical Workers Union, Arthur Svensson, hands over a collection for the ANC, 27 April 1987.

The ANC depended on international support to pay for its administration and the living and educational costs of an ever-growing number of young South African exiles. The governments of the Nordic countries and the Netherlands were major donors. Voluntary groups all over the world collected cash and material goods. Oliver Tambo inspired trust in all who met him and travelled widely to receive donations and practical support.



TOP: Dutch artist Truus Menger speaking at the opening of the Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College in Tanzania, 21 August 1985. SOMAFCO was funded by international donors. ABOVE: GDR Ambassador Horst Schoen (right) with Tambo and SWAPO President Sam Nujoma (left) in Luanda in 1979, bringing support from East Germany for the Southern African liberation movements. LEFT: The Italian municipality of Reggio Emilia signed a solidarity pact with the ANC in 1977. In the photo Tambo is inspecting equipment sent by Reggio Emilia on its first 'Ship of Solidarity' in March 1980.

'This is the mass base on which the success of our common struggle depends'

OLIVER TAMBO AT THE 'PEOPLES OF THE WORLD FOR A DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA', CONFERENCE, TANZANIA, DECEMBER 1987



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Oliver Tambo travelled the world meeting people from all walks of life - local government, trade unions, churches, political parties, universities, community groups and individuals opposed to the idea of racial segregation. He inspired them to campaign against apartheid within their own organisations and to set up groups which drew more activists into anti-apartheid campaigns.



PHOTO: PRIVATE COLLECTION

He addressed mass rallies and conferences, and spoke at small meetings of interested individuals. He impressed all who met him with his warmth, dedication and vision of a non-racial democratic South Africa.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT: Poster advertising a rally organised by Dutch anti-apartheid organisations, September 1975; Tambo with the ANC's representative in Australasia, Eddie Funde, meeting supporters in Adelaide, Australia in 1987; Visiting the National Museum of Resistance against Fascism with Mozambican minister José Luis Cabaco and the Deputy Mayor of Reggio Emilia, Italy, Giuseppe Soncini, in June 1977; Tambo is welcomed by the Mayor of Reggio Emilia, Ugo Benassi, at Italy's National Conference Against Racism in Southern Africa, November 1978; Jennifer Davis from the American Committee on Africa with Tambo, January 1987; Banner welcoming Tambo to Victoria, Australia, during his tour of Australia and New Zealand in 1987; Tambo with Sheffield local councillor Mike Pye viewing Sheffield Africa Resources Project's anti-apartheid exhibition, October 1985; Reciter Lutz Görner presents Tambo with a benefit LP recording of Nelson Mandela's defence speech, Bonn, West Germany, 1986; Tambo at a meeting with the Stockholm Africa Group in the 1970s.



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'The enemies of Africa are those governments or concerns which have trade agreements with South Africa'

OLIVER TAMBO, 1960



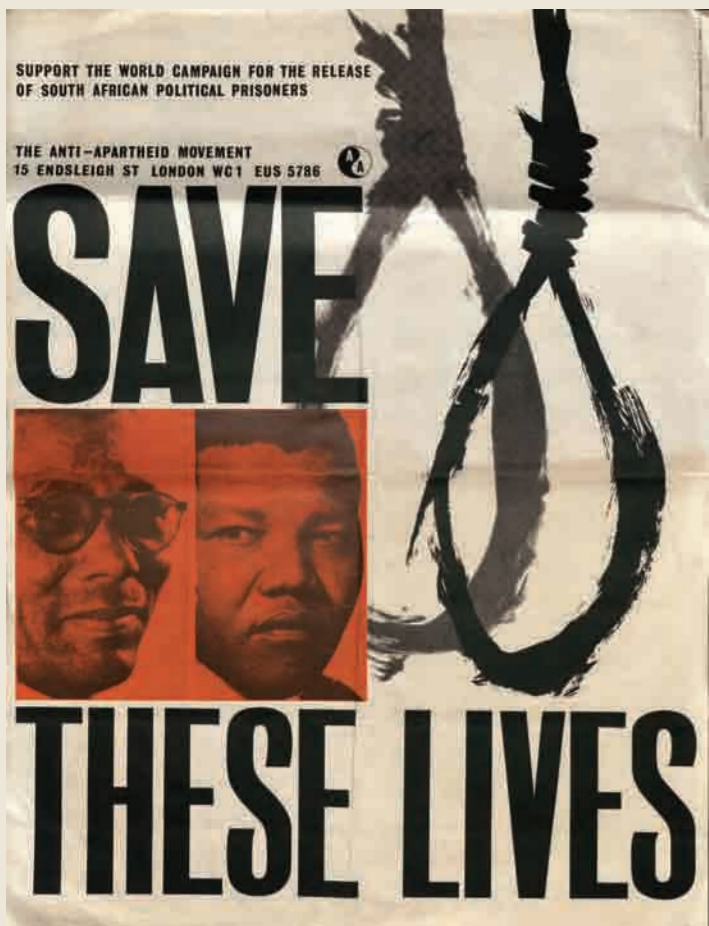
The ANC called for economic sanctions, an end to arms sales and a boycott of South African goods. Britain, the USA and West Germany were the biggest investors and traders in South Africa, and in the late 1960s France took over from Britain as South Africa's main arms supplier. Oliver Tambo asked governments and individuals to isolate the apartheid government. He also appealed for a cultural, academic and sporting boycott. Speaking at rallies and conferences, he inspired hundreds of thousands to join the sanctions campaign.

ABOVE: Tambo was the main speaker at the London Against Racism rally held at Friends Meeting House, London by the Greater London Council on 21 March 1984. In December 1983 the GLC launched an Anti-Apartheid Declaration pledging that it would discourage all links between London and South Africa. Tambo told the rally: 'We believe the international community should focus on the total isolation of the apartheid regime'. BELOW: Demonstrators protesting against Citibank's loans to South Africa outside the bank's New York headquarters in April 1989.



ABOVE: Tambo, Jesse Jackson and Trevor Huddleston at a 150,000-strong rally in London calling for sanctions against South Africa on 2 November 1985. RIGHT: Tambo asked trade unions to take action against ships carrying oil for South Africa at a conference organised by the British National Union of Seamen, 30 October 1985.





ABOVE: Poster for the World Campaign for the Release of South African Political Prisoners, which campaigned for Nelson Mandela and his co-accused in the Rivonia trial. Oliver Tambo was a key mover in setting up the campaign in 1963. BELOW: A bust of Nelson Mandela on London's South Bank was unveiled by Tambo and Mandela's daughter Zenani on 28 October 1985. It was sculpted by Ian Walters and sponsored by the Greater London Council.



'Oliver Tambo is more than a brother to me. He is my greatest friend and comrade for more than 50 years. If there is anyone among you who cherishes my freedom, Oliver Tambo cherishes it more, and I know that he would give his life to set me free.'

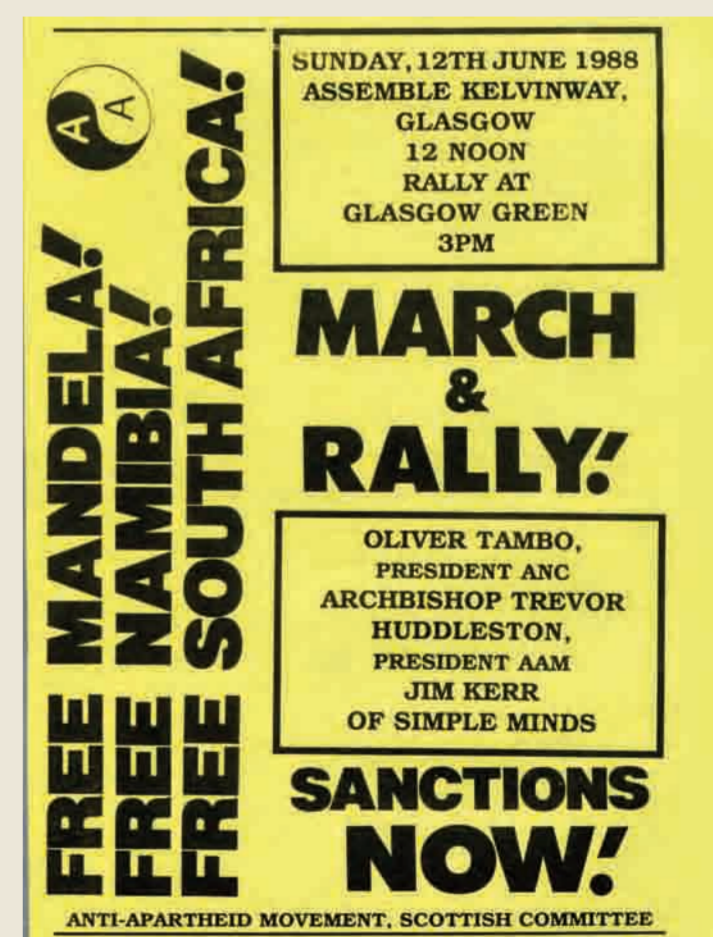
MESSAGE FROM NELSON MANDELA SMUGGLED FROM ROBBER ISLAND, READ BY HIS DAUGHTER ZINDZI AT A RALLY IN SOWETO, 10 FEBRUARY 1985



ABOVE: The Nelson Mandela 70th birthday tribute concert, held at Wembley Stadium, London on 11 June 1988, was attended by a capacity audience of 92,000 and broadcast by the BBC to over 60 countries. Oliver Tambo was the guest of honour. RIGHT: Tambo with his wife Adelaide at the concert. BELOW: After the concert Tambo flew to Glasgow to launch the Mandela Freedom March on 12 June. 25 marchers walked from Glasgow to London. In the photo with Tambo is Jim Kerr of the rock band Simple Minds. BELOW RIGHT: Leaflet advertising the Glasgow rally. BOTTOM RIGHT: Seeing off the marchers with Archbishop Trevor Huddleston, AAM Hon. Secretary Abdul Minty, and Brian Filling, Chair of the Scottish AA Committee.



TOP: Oliver Tambo at a rally calling for the release of all South African political prisoners, Amsterdam, 26 September 1975. ABOVE: Dutch MPs Jan-Nico Scholten and Relus ter Beek with Tambo at the presentation to the Dutch parliament of a petition calling for Mandela's release, 26 November 1980.



'We are asking the world not to solve our problems ... but to assist us to solve those problems'

OLIVER TAMBO AT THE UN SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID, 1968



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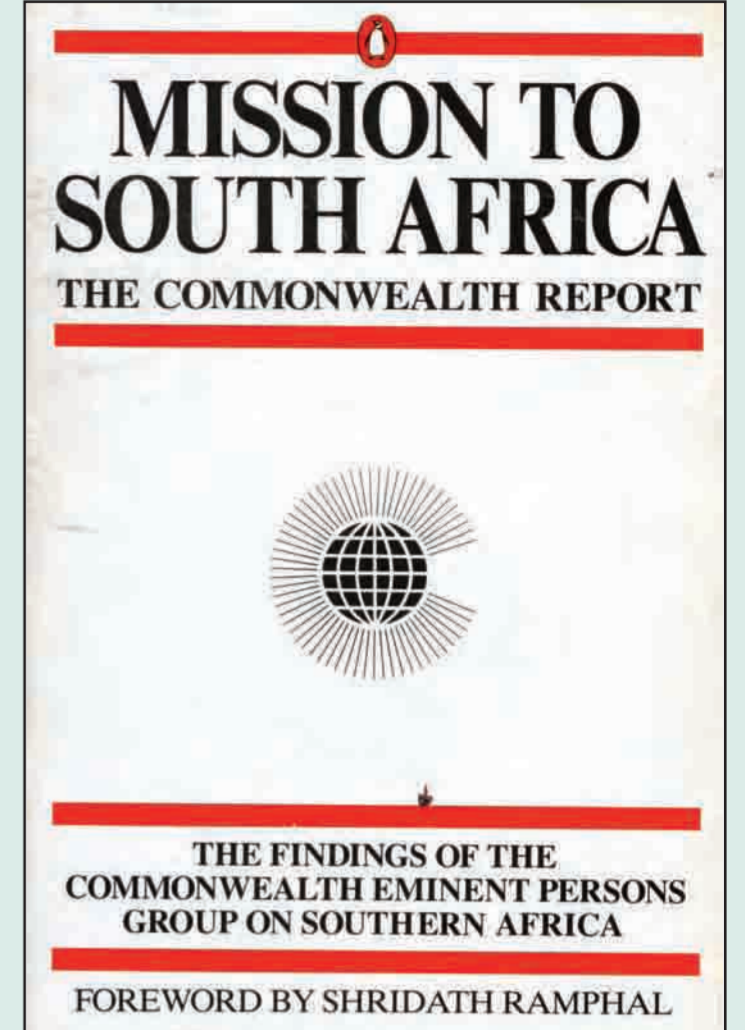
TOP: Oliver Tambo with Swedish writer Per Wästberg at a meeting of the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid in Stockholm, 15 June 1968. ABOVE: Tambo with ANC representative Thami Mhlambiso at the UN, 2 April 1973. ABOVE RIGHT: Tambo with India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and former Prime Minister Morarji Desai on the occasion of the grant of Jawaharlal Nehru Award to Nelson Mandela in November 1980. BELOW: Tambo with Cuban President Fidel Castro at the 6th Conference of NAM Heads of State in Havana, 1979.



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The Commonwealth sent a mission to South Africa in 1986 which concluded that the apartheid government was not ready to negotiate the end of apartheid and called for sanctions.

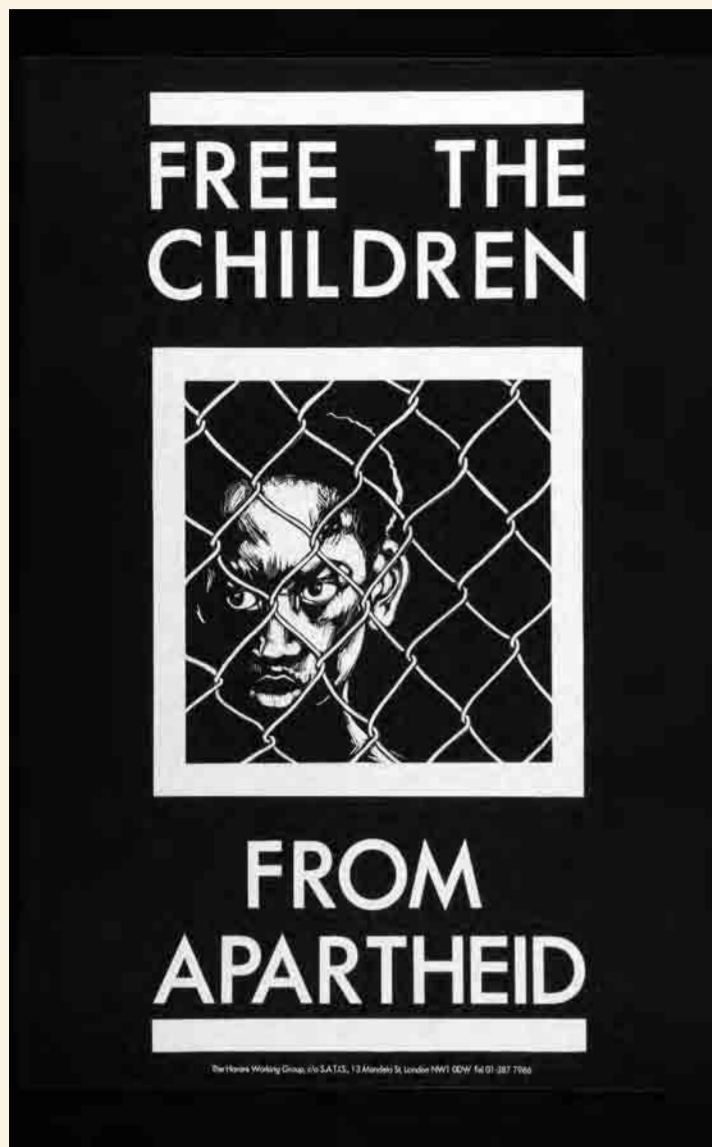
Intergovernmental organisations played a big part in the global anti-apartheid campaign. The ANC worked with the Africa group at the UN to impose mandatory economic sanctions against South Africa. The UN General Assembly called for a ban on trade in 1962, but the US, UK and France repeatedly vetoed sanctions in the Security Council. Oliver Tambo first spoke at the UN in October 1960 and for the next 30 years lobbied, and worked closely with the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was an influential grouping of countries that were neutral in the Cold War. Led by Tambo, the ANC won support from NAM leaders and from the Commonwealth for action to isolate apartheid South Africa.



LEFT: Oliver Tambo with Prince Sihanouk of Cambodia. Sihanouk was a leading figure in the Non-Aligned Movement. ABOVE: Tambo at the 1977 Commonwealth Heads of Government conference in London. The meeting issued the Gleneagles Agreement, discouraging sporting contacts with South Africa.

'We shall attack the apartheid enemy of all humankind on all fronts and from all corners of the globe'

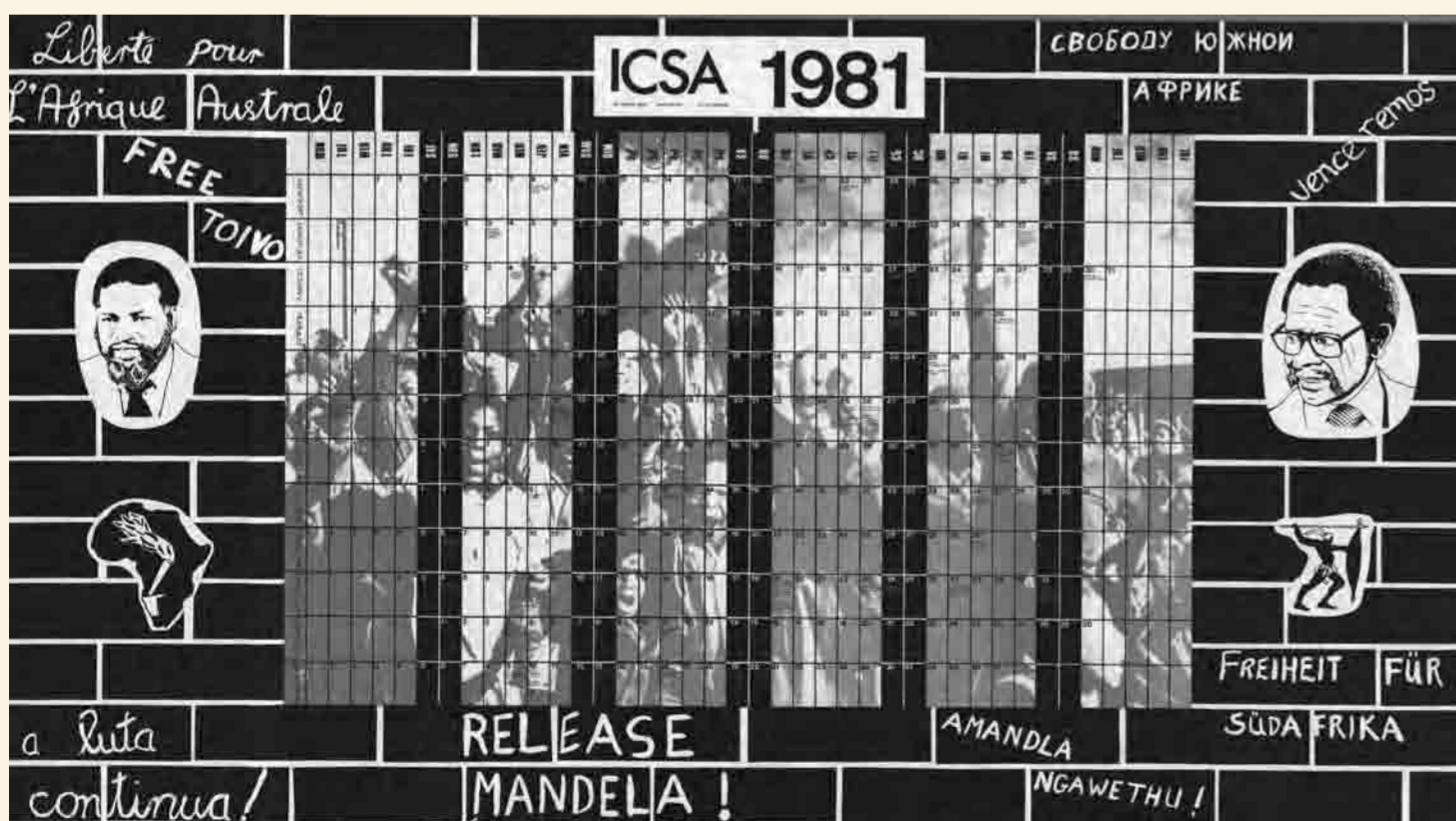
OLIVER TAMBO AT THE 'PEOPLES OF THE WORLD FOR A DEMOCRATIC SOUTH AFRICA' CONFERENCE, TANZANIA, DECEMBER 1987



ABOVE: Adelaide Tambo (left) at the Malibongwe conference on women's rights in South Africa, held in Amsterdam, 1990. BELOW: Tambo speaking at the 'Peoples of the World Against Apartheid Conference for a Democratic South Africa' in December 1987. The conference was convened by the ANC and attended by over 500 delegates from all over the world.

ABOVE: Tambo was the key speaker at a conference on 'Children, Repression and the Law in South Africa' held in Harare, Zimbabwe, in September 1987. Children and young people from inside South Africa crossed the border into Zimbabwe to tell lawyers, teachers and social workers from 45 countries about their experiences.

The ANC initiated and took part in international conferences and liaison groups to co-ordinate global action against apartheid. From the 'Sanctions against South Africa' conference held in London in 1964 to the 'Peoples of the World for a Democratic South Africa' conference in Arusha, Tanzania in 1987, Oliver Tambo was a key participant. At a ground-breaking meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe on 'Children, Repression and the Law in South Africa' in September 1987, he met children and young people who had been detained and tortured by the apartheid regime.



ABOVE: Poster for the International Committee against Apartheid, Racism and Colonialism in Southern Africa (ICSA), set up by Southern African liberation movements after the Lisbon World Conference in 1977. RIGHT: Tambo with Ruth Mompati, British MEP Barbara Castle, Ernest Glinne, Leader of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament, and Mike Terry, Executive Secretary of the AAM, in the early 1980s. With the encouragement of the ANC, the Liaison Group of the Anti-Apartheid Movements of the European Community was later set up to lobby the EEC to impose sanctions against South Africa.



'When the moment for negotiations arrives, it must find us ready'

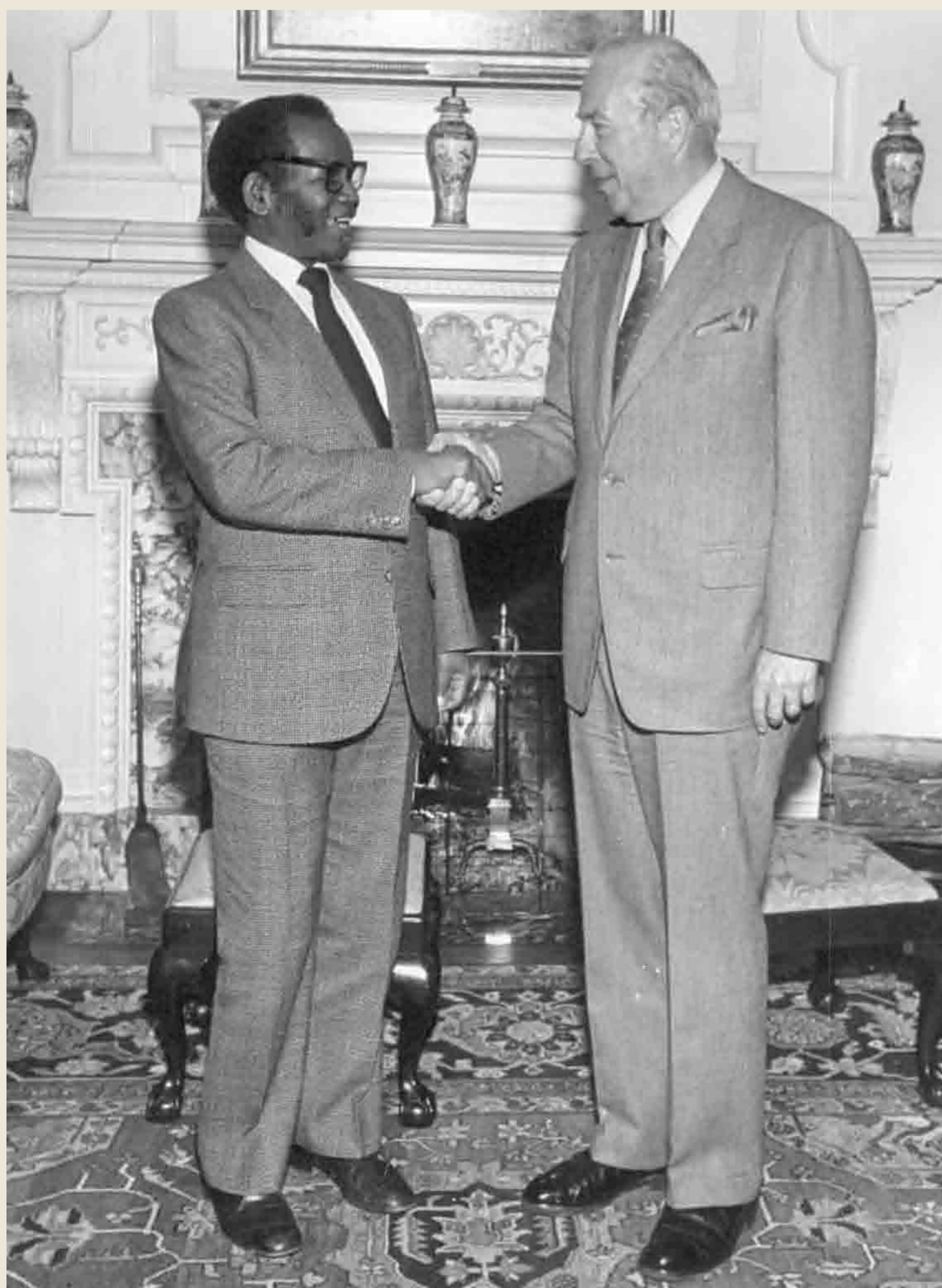
OLIVER TAMBO

As resistance intensified inside South Africa in the mid-1980s, opposition to apartheid spread in the outside world. Even Western governments saw that apartheid was not viable, but they feared revolution and a government led by the ANC. Oliver Tambo welcomed all opportunities for talks, but considered that the key question was how to establish conditions for negotiations which avoided a sell-out and would lead to majority rule. He initiated the process which produced the Harare Declaration, setting out pre-conditions for talks, and travelled round Africa and the world to ensure that the Declaration was adopted by the OAU and UN.

Tambo suffered a severe stroke on 8 August 1989, but he had laid the foundations for the agreement that led to South African's first democratic election and the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as President in 1994.



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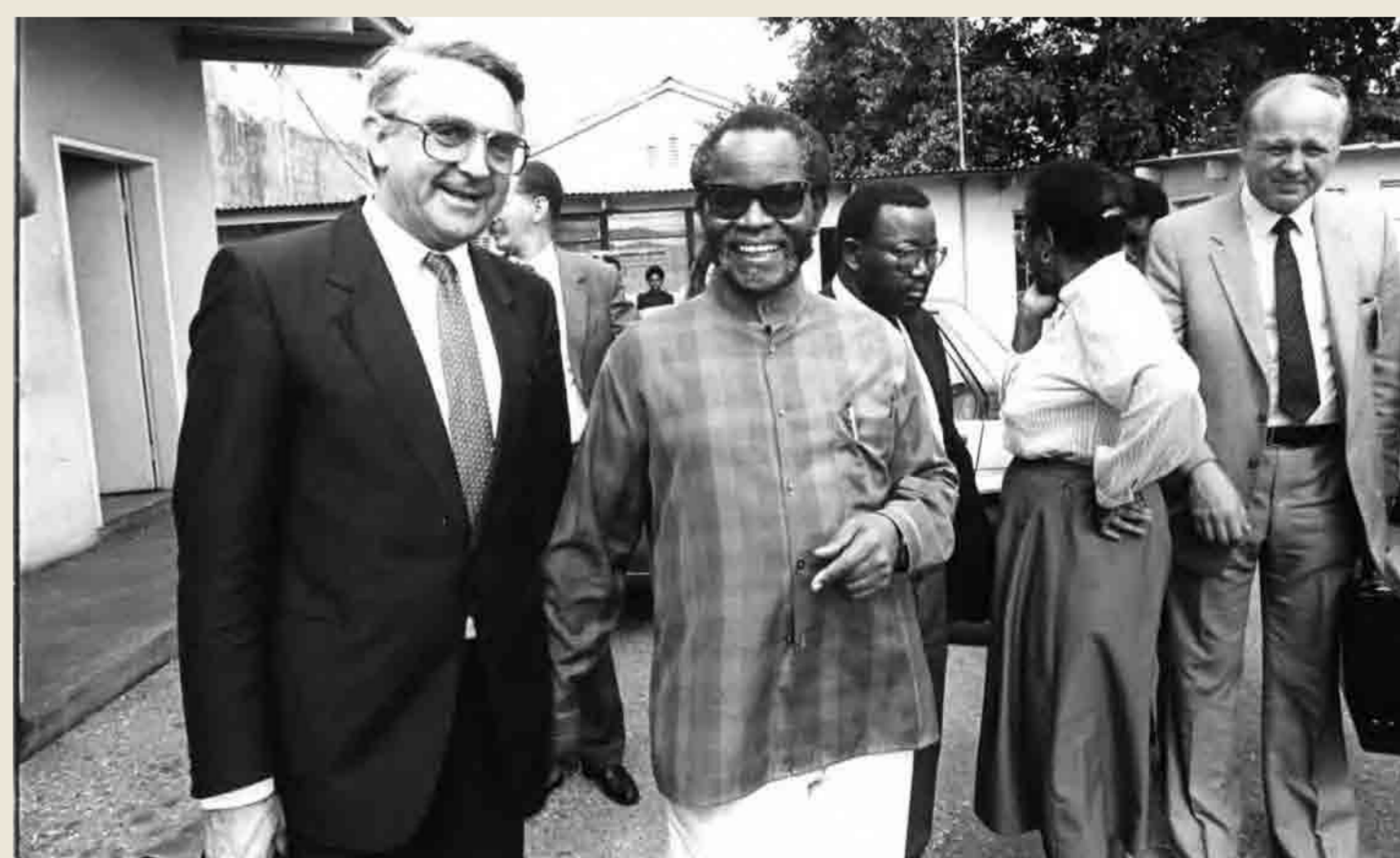
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Tambo met US Secretary of State George Schultz in January 1987. The USA and UK had repeatedly vetoed economic sanctions against South Africa at the UN, but in 1986, after country-wide grassroots disinvestment campaigns and lobbying by the Congressional Black Caucus, the US Congress passed the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act, which imposed a wide range of sanctions.



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TOP: Tambo at a World Council of Churches conference in Lusaka in May 1987. By the late 1980s all the major faith denominations were following the WCC's lead in calling for economic measures against apartheid. ABOVE: 250,000 people joined the AAM's March and Festival for Freedom in June 1986. Although British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher continued to oppose any form of economic action against South Africa, large sections of the British public supported sanctions. BELOW: Tambo welcomes the President of the Association of West European Parliamentarians for Africa, Jan-Nico Scholten, to ANC headquarters in Lusaka in 1988.



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At home in Haringey



Early years - Tambo with Nelson Mandela and his son Dali in his new London home in Highgate, north London in 1962.



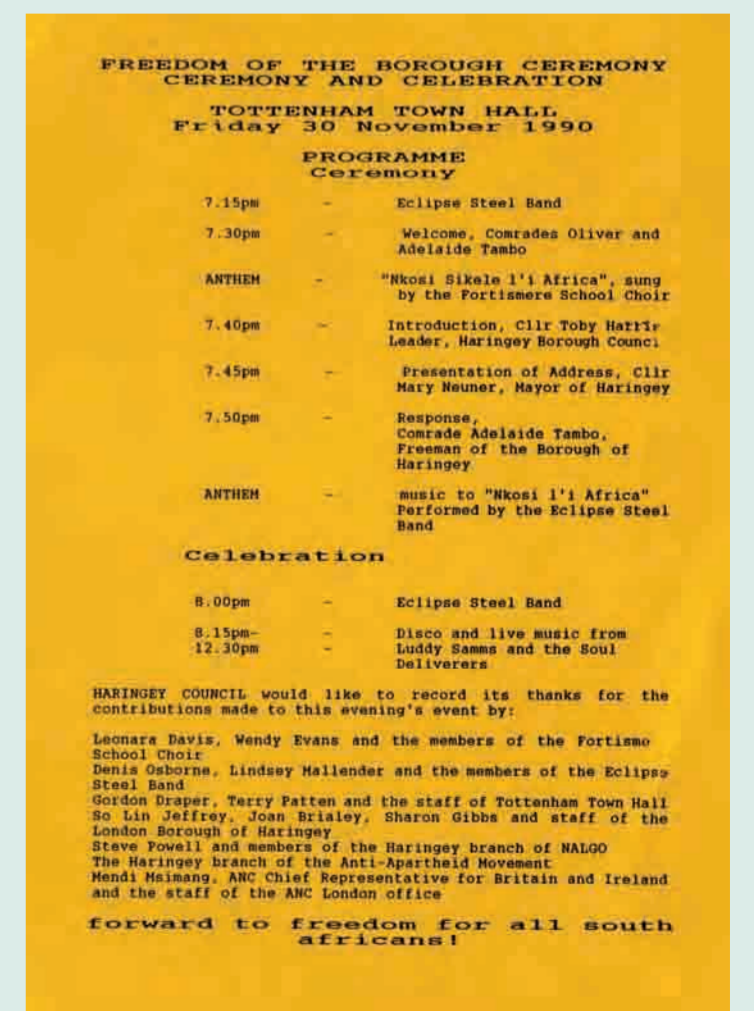
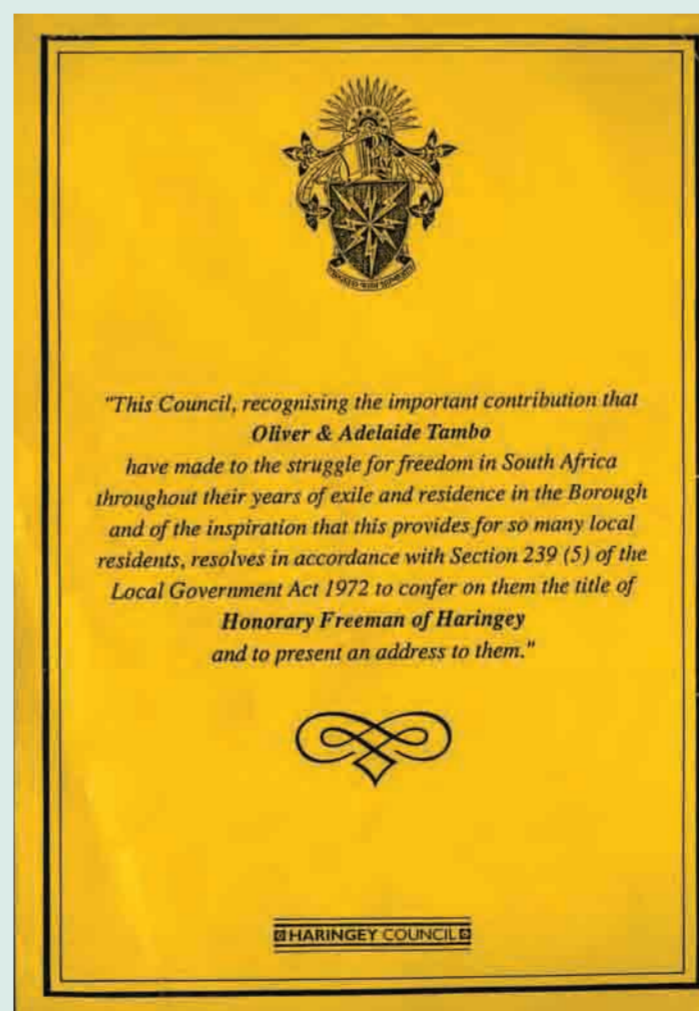
TOP: Tambo returned to his home in Muswell Hill in 1990, after receiving medical treatment in Sweden for a stroke. He was greeted by ANC members, led by the Amandla choir.

ABOVE: Tambo with Anti-Apartheid Movement President, Archbishop Trevor Huddleston, Executive Secretary, Mike Terry, and Chair, Bob Hughes MP, shortly before his return to South Africa on 13 December 1990.

Soon after Oliver Tambo arrived in London in 1960 he was joined by his wife Adelaide and his two children, Thembi and Dali. A third child, Tselane, was born in 1962. They set up home in north London, first in Highgate and later in Muswell Hill in the London Borough of Haringey. Over the next 30 years, Tambo enjoyed very little family life. While Adelaide worked as a nurse in London, he was based first in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and then in Lusaka, Zambia, travelling the world for the ANC. In 1990, after over 30 years of exile, he went home with his family to South Africa.



Oliver and Adelaide Tambo were presented with the Freedom of the London Borough of Haringey in November 1990 by the Borough's Mayor, Cllr Mary Neuner, in recognition of the inspiration they had given to local residents.



Design & picture research: Christabel Gurney. Thanks to: African Activist Archive • Apartheid Museum • Mats Åsman • Clarity Films • David Dorward • Irene Gale • Lutz Görner • Gianluca Grassi/Comune di Reggio nell'Emilia • Åsa Lund Moberg/Nordic Africa Institute • Maggie & John Paterson • Hans-Georg & Ilona Schleicher • Kier Schuringa/Institute of International History, Amsterdam • UN Photo Library • UWC-Robben Island Museum Mayibuye Archives • David Vita

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OLIVER TAMBO — BUILDING THE GLOBAL ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT