



Anti-Apartheid Movement

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*The Anti-Apartheid Movement
Consultative Status with
the Economic and Social Council
(ECOSOC) of the United Nations*

6 July 1988

Rt Hon Margaret Thatcher MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
LONDON
SW1

Dear

I am writing concerning the continued imprisonment in South Africa of Mr Nelson Mandela. As you will be aware, he will be celebrating his 70th birthday on Monday 18 July. I have greatly appreciated the support expressed by you and your Government for his immediate and unconditional release. I was particularly encouraged by the statement which Mrs Chalker made in the House of Commons on 8 June in which she stated that Her Majesty's Government looked forward to his release before his 70th birthday as well as the subsequent appeal made by the European Council on 28 June. I fear, however, that the prospects of securing his release before his 70th birthday are now extremely slim.

During the past month there has been a remarkable increase in concern expressed for Nelson Mandela both in Britain and across the world. The Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday Tribute at Wembley stadium on 11 June, in particular has helped to bring the message of Mr Mandela's continued imprisonment to the attention of millions of people across the world. The very next day I was involved in the launch of the Nelson Mandela Freedom March from Glasgow to London. Twenty five people, symbolising the 25 years of Mr Nelson Mandela's continued imprisonment, are marching 600 miles from Glasgow to reach London on the weekend before Mr Mandela's birthday on 18 July.

The commitment which these 25 people are making is but an example of the efforts made by people from all walks of life to try and secure the release of Mr Mandela. Naturally, I am most concerned as to what further efforts Her Majesty's Government can make in order to secure his release.

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I wondered therefore if you would be willing to meet me and a small group of the Marchers to discuss what further possible initiatives you might be able to take to help secure this objective. Naturally, it would be particularly appropriate if such a meeting would take place on July 18th, but of course I will be ready to meet you whenever it was convenient for you.

+ Trevor Huddleston CR
President.