

MESSAGE OF SUPPORT TO STUDENT MASS MEETING HELD AT JAMESON HALL  
ON THURSDAY, 13 OCTOBER 1988 FROM DULLAH OMAR

(Dullah Omar is the Chairperson of the UDF. The UDF being a restricted  
organisation cannot issue statements and so this message of support comes  
in his personal capacity)

Comrades

I greet you today in the name of our democratic struggle. I greet you in the name of the oppressed and exploited people of this land. I greet you in the name of the working masses who are fighting to create a new society which is free from exploitation and free from oppression.

I salute you for your great courage and determination to keep the flame of liberty alive in our country. You, the young students, come from the loins of the oppressed working masses of this land. You are the sons and daughters of the workers - those who produce the wealth but who are forced to live in poverty.

The oppressed youth of our land - of which you, the students, form a part - have played a major role in the struggles of the oppressed masses over the last decade or more. Our youth have shown great courage and commitment to the cause of freedom. By practical example have our youth shown that freedom is not something which one must only talk about. Freedom is something that has to be fought for. Freedom is something that has to be sacrificed for. For you and for all of us in struggle, freedom is a way of life. Struggle is a way of life. We cannot divide our lives up into compartments.

It is not for nothing that our youth have been called "the young lions". Today I greet our young lions with pride. Some of you are possibly not yet in the category of young lions. Some of you are still cubs. A young lion is a symbol of courage. A young lion is a symbol of daring. A young lion is a fighter. The mark of a young lion is bravery. All this our youth have shown. But that is not all. A young lion is also a thinker - one who plans. One who strategises. One who works out tactics. A young lion is one who fights thoughtfully and who thinks fighting.

This is what our struggle requires today. We must fight but we must also think. We must understand the society in which we live in order

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to change that society. It is the historic task of our students to participate in that process.

In the gigantic battle for the hearts and minds of our people – particularly the hearts and minds of our young – our oppressed students have played a tremendous role. It is through the sacrifices, the courage and fighting spirit of our young – particularly at school – that the democratic movement has defeated the aims and objects of the slave system of bantu education and tribalised education in general.

The Soweto uprising of 1976 is remembered because of the contribution of our students. The uprising of 1980 and 1985 is also remembered. But with each unfolding struggle new lessons were learnt and carried over.

By the time the 1985 uprising came along, our students realised that they can no longer fight alone. They realised that they must unite with their parents, the workers of this land. Hence arose the slogan of worker student youth unity. Hence arose the commitment on the part of our students to fight side by side with their oppressed and exploited parents. Hence arose the understanding that that commitment must find expression in organisational unity. Hence arose the unity between our students organised in their SRC's and co-ordinating structures on the one hand and the giant worker trade union federation, Cosatu, on the other.

Even though the United Democratic Front is restricted and not allowed to perform any act or activity, it is a matter of history that within the United Democratic Front our young lions played a vital role. It is they who together with their mothers and fathers, created the conditions for the united front between Cosatu and the UDF.

Today when we face apartheid October elections, you as part of the youth of this land are once again playing a vital role. For this we salute you. Without your participation our struggle can never succeed. But you cannot fight alone. You must fight side by side with the working masses of this land.

In the spirit that this is what you are doing and in the spirit of

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noble sacrifice, I greet you today and extend to you the warmest greetings of all our democratic organisations and people and of those who are presently in prison.

Rise once more to the occasion! Go back from your meeting to the schools to participate in the process of real education. Go back to our communities and help to spread the gospel of liberation. Apartheid and apartheid institutions provide no solutions for us. Let it be clearly understood that we shall not take part in apartheid structures. We say: Down with the Apartheid System! Down with the system of exploitation! Down with collaborators! Long live the organisations of the people!

ALUTA CONTINUA!  
AMANDLA NGAWETHU!

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DULLAH OMAR