



SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

Diplomatic mission to the USA Washington Memorandum

1. Background

Between 1 and 9 February 2025, a series of statements and concrete steps by the Trump administration in the USA led to an enormous diplomatic crisis between South Africa and the US. This came after years of hostile foreign policy by South Africa towards the US.

What began as a social media post by President Trump against events in South Africa and was followed by statements from senior politicians such as Senator Cruz of Texas, ended with the US Secretary of State's announcement that he would not attend the G20 Foreign Ministers' Summit in Johannesburg on 21 February.

Two days after Minister Marco Rubio's announcement, President Trump signed an executive order on 7 February that sent shockwaves through South Africa.

President Trump spoke out strongly against South Africa's domestic and foreign policies that seriously harm minorities in South Africa but also threaten American national security interests. Meanwhile, members of the US Congress have also announced that they are in favor of economic sanctions against South Africa.

The Solidarity Movement

The Solidarity Movement is by far the largest Afrikaner movement in South Africa and has more than 600 000 members. It is also one of the largest civil movements in the country. If their families are included, the Movement represents about 2 million people. The Movement has a network of more than twenty self-help community organizations of which Solidarity and AfriForum are the largest. The organizations are active in the fields of work, security infrastructure, training, education, workfare, social, cultural and heritage affairs. The Movement receives no government funding.

Since President Trump's announcement, a stormy debate has been raging in South Africa, and the Solidarity Movement has been placed at the center of this debate. The ANC placed the blame for the executive order squarely at the door of the Solidarity Movement. They have denied their own role in the weakening of diplomatic relations. Charges of treason were even laid against AfriForum, which was supported by the ANC.

The Solidarity Movement immediately reached out to the South African government and appealed to them to swiftly reach out to the Trump administration in order to come to an agreement that will protect South Africa from any economic sanctions and other measures, such as the cutting of humanitarian aid.

However, the South African government decided to prove President Trump wrong and arrogantly refused to negotiate. They see the diplomatic crisis as a "communication" problem, and not one about serious policy differences.

The relationship between South Africa and the USA benefits South Africa disproportionately. South Africa has extremely favorable terms of trade with the US, runs a large annual trade surplus with the US, and also receives billions of dollars in humanitarian and other aid.

President Ramaphosa, however, decided to assemble a delegation that will travel to the USA to argue that the Trump administration's arguments about South Africa are unfounded and wrong, and to affirm that South Africa will not allow the USA to "bully" the country. At the State of the Nation address this year, he said: "We will not be bullied" in obvious reference to Washington's cut-back in aid to South Africa. He added, "South Africa continues to stand in solidarity with the people of Palestine, who, having endured decades of illegal occupation, are now experiencing indescribable suffering. South Africa has acted in accordance with its obligations under the Genocide Convention by instituting proceedings against Israel at the International Court of Justice."

The consequences of this approach are likely to be a further deterioration in the relationship between the two countries.

The Solidarity Movement was not invited to be part of the government delegation, but we also made it clear to the ANC that we would not be part of such a delegation if the delegation's mandate merely comprised the above.

Therefore, the Solidarity Movement has decided to send a delegation to the USA in the interests of its members, the Afrikaners specifically, but also in the interests of South Africa and all South Africans in general.

2. The Solidarity Movement's stance on SA's relations with the USA

The Solidarity Movement has been involved in political engagement in the USA for 21 years, and in recent years became increasingly aware of the diplomatic rift that has begun to emerge between South Africa and the USA.

First and foremost, we are deeply grateful to President Trump for pointing out serious flaws in South Africa's domestic and foreign policies. We are also grateful for the hand of friendship he has extended to the Afrikaners.

We also welcome the US government's concern regarding certain policies of the South African government's domestic policy, such as the 117 racial laws promulgated by the ANC since 1994, the Expropriation Act, and the treatment of Afrikaners as second-class citizens based on our ancestry, culture and race.

3. Solidarity Movement's outreach to the USA

Given the events of the past few days, the massive debate on this in South Africa, and the important issues regarding the future relationship between South Africa and the USA, the focus of the Solidarity Movement's visit to the USA will mainly be on the following issues:

1. South Africa's foreign policy and the need for it to be realigned in an agreement between the USA and South Africa;
2. The breach of the 1994 agreement between the ANC and the Afrikaners, and the need for a cultural accord to reaffirm our constitutional right to cultural autonomy;
3. More information on the Afrikaners in South Africa;
4. The Solidarity Movement's role as a civil society organization that provides many "state services" without state income;
5. Confirmation of a set of facts regarding legislation (education, racial laws, the Expropriation Act) and policy in South Africa;
6. Humanitarian aid to South-Africa;
7. Renewal of the African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA) and South Africa's participation in this.

To illustrate the above points, we will briefly highlight a few points. However, we have full reports on the key points that we will also make available.

3.1. *South Africa's foreign policy*

In recent years the ANC has maintained a contradictory position on international law and human rights. Actions such as joint military exercises with China and Russia and the withdrawal from international obligations started to put more pressure on the bilateral relationship with the United States of America (US).

Last year, the distrust between the two countries gave rise to a bill introduced in the US Congress proposing a reconsideration of the US relationship with South Africa.

The Solidarity Movement shares the Trump administration's concerns about the South African government's foreign policy, especially with regard to Israel, China, Iran, Russia, Rwanda and Taiwan.

Our Movement believes that we can make a substantial contribution to mitigate the damage caused by the current diplomatic row.

The Solidarity Movement believes that it is in the interests of the US and South Africa to reinforce democracy in the country by strengthening civil society and the private sector.

Recommendation

In light of the above, we recommend:

- **That the pressure on South Africa be sustained, but that the focus be on pressuring the ANC leaders who are responsible for these policies.**
 - **That the capacity of civil society and the private sectors that are standing for a free market and an investor-friendly economy be strengthened.**
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3.2. *Afrikaners in South Africa*

Afrikaners are a Western community at the southern tip of Africa. They have been formed in Africa and have developed a unique language in Africa. The group is therefore unique in the sense that it is a Western community indigenous to Africa.

The community is a visible, well-performing yet discredited and underappreciated minority. This exposes the group.

In 1994 a historic agreement was reached in which the United States played a decisive role. This led to a transition of government in terms of which the majority was given political power in exchange for certain protection for the minority. However, the ANC breached this historic settlement by, among other things, an attack on property rights, the introduction of aggressive racial laws and attacks on Afrikaans educational institutions, including schools. Rural security structures were dismantled, and attempts to exercise the constitutional right to self-determination and cultural autonomy have been undermined.

The government has just passed a new law, the Basic Education Laws Amendment Act (BELA) which empowers a government official to force Afrikaans schools to change their language policy. We regard depriving a community of its right to receive education in its own language as an act of aggression and a breach of the 1994 settlement.

Traditionally, Afrikaners are also a farming community and almost 75% of South Africa's commercial farmers are Afrikaners.

The frequency and murder rate for this specific is higher than other categories, that receives specialised response from government. This community is therefore particularly exposed to a government that wants to expropriate without compensation, while also being exposed to land grabs and land occupations. Racial legislation also actively discriminates against this community. Racial discrimination is not limited to this group as it also includes white South Africans in general as well as other minorities.

In light of this, we welcome Pres. Trump's Executive Order which, among other things, addresses issues affecting the Afrikaner community, indirectly recognizing the Afrikaner's right to exist. This was followed up by an explanatory note from the US Embassy. The issues include expropriation without compensation, the government's failure to prevent violent attacks, as well as unfair racial discrimination and a general concern about South Africa's foreign policy.

The possibility of resettlement through the United States' Refugee Admissions Program and possible humanitarian aid are being considered and we have an appreciation for the Trump administration's inclusion of these matters in the Executive Order.

Although individuals may qualify for a resettlement program the majority of Afrikaners will still remain in South Africa.

During the past 30 years Afrikaners have begun to establish cultural infrastructure in South Africa so that we can still live here freely and safely, in order for us to make a sustainable contribution towards the country and all its people. This is being done under the banner of the Solidarity Movement, with Solidarity and AfriForum being the largest organisations. Security structures, social structures, job structures, training structures and cultural structures have been established. All of this is being done without state support.

The vulnerability of Afrikaners has again been confirmed by charges of treason laid against AfriForum by one of South Africa's most extremist political parties and the welcoming of such by the ANC. The protection of Afrikaners in South Africa lies in their own structures.

Recommendation:

In light of Pres. Trump's Executive Order, we propose that:

- **Afrikaners' aspiration for a free, safe and prosperous life and cultural autonomy at the southern tip of Africa be recognized.**
 - **Pressure be put on South Africa to declare farm murders a priority crime and to condemn politicians who called for killing them.**
 - **Aid be provided to an Afrikaner development fund to assist with community infrastructure protecting Afrikaners. This includes security structures, social structures, job structures, training structures and infrastructure to settle Afrikaners in vulnerable places in a concentrated manner.**
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3.3. *Expropriation*

Pres. Ramaphosa signed the Expropriation Act on January 23, 2025. For the first time provision is made for expropriation at zero compensation. While there are many other problems associated with the Expropriation Act, zero compensation is a serious problem. The Act must also be seen against the ANC's declared objective of also amending the Constitution of South Africa to enable expropriation without compensation on a large scale. At the ANC's 54th Congress held in December 2017 it was decided to amend section 25 of the Constitution to enable expropriation without compensation. Since then, Pres. Ramaphosa has lent his support to the amendment of the Constitution on several occasions. However, the ANC could not obtain the required two-thirds majority in Parliament. Despite this, the Expropriation Act, which provides for zero compensation, was signed by Pres. Ramaphosa. This Act could be an instrument in the hands of the government to achieve their stated goal without amending the Constitution. The passing of the Expropriation Act must therefore be seen within the context of the ANC's own declared objective.

Recommendation:

It is recommended to:

**Put pressure on the government to pass an Amendment Act removing the zero compensation clause;
Request an undertaking from the government that the Constitution will not be amended to allow for expropriation without compensation at a large scale.**

3.4 *BELA*

The Basic Education Laws Amendment (BELA) Bill was finally signed into law by President Ramaphosa late last year.

This law deprives school governing bodies (and therefore the parent community) of the ability to determine the language and admission policy of schools in the future. For the Afrikaner community and the Afrikaans language community, this could have devastating consequences for the survival of Afrikaans and Afrikaans culture, and it constitutes a breach of the agreement on the protection of language and culture, which was concluded in 1994.

This is capturing of schools by a centralized government. The amended Act leaves no doubt that the head of the Department of Basic Education now has the final authority over language and admission

Recommendation:

The American government must put pressure on the South African government to repeal those provisions in the BELA Act that remove schools' right to determine their own language and admissions policies.

3.5 *Racial laws*

South Africa is the most racially regulated country in the world, in spite of article one of the Constitution that declares the country as a non-racial country. The 117 race laws that were promulgated since 1994 when the ANC took power, not only discriminate against Afrikaners but are to the great detriment of economic growth, job creation and equality. Since South Africa implemented an aggressive racial policy, the number of the unemployed has increased from 4 million to 8 million. Companies have to pay premiums for black empowerment transactions. The best example is South Africa's electricity utility, Eskom, which has to pay 30% more for procurement due to a black empowerment premium payable. The South African racial dispensation is an enrichment program for a small group of elites. The black empowerment policy is also to the detriment of foreign investment. A recent example is Elon Musk's Starlink which cannot do business in South Africa because it does not meet the 30% black shareholding requirement. Despite foreign pressure Pres. Ramaphosa announced in his 2025 State of the Nation Address that the government would launch a R100 billion race empowerment fund and that the private sector would pay an extra type of tax to fund it, also announcing that racial regulations would be intensified. During the first quarter of 2025 public hearings will be held in South Africa with a view to making racial quotas in various sectors even harsher. The UN's International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Labour Organisation's Convention 111 stipulate that racial programs must be temporary in nature. This was also confirmed by the Harvard court ruling in the US.

Recommendation:

That pressure be put on the South African government to indicate before the G20 Summit to be held in Johannesburg in November 2025 how racial legislation would be phased out.

3.6 AGOA

The Solidarity Movement is extremely grateful for South Africa's participation in AGOA.

In 2024, the value of our country's exports to the US was R156.8 billion. Trade with the US provides jobs to approximately 576,000 South Africans. Of them approximately 250, 000 are directly or indirectly linked to AGOA. Exports to the US constitute approximately 3.4% of South Africa's gross domestic product. For South Africa this is substantial. In the context of the US's international trade it is, however, negligible.

The paradox of South Africa's non-participation in AGOA is that America's allies in South Africa, and the group Pres. Trump has identified as vulnerable will be hit hardest. The agricultural sector, of which Afrikaners constitute approximately 75% will be hit hard. In 2024 exports from the agricultural sector to the US amounted to approximately R10 billion. Many workers in the steel, chemical, mining and automotive industries are still Afrikaners and members of Solidarity. These are the industries that would suffer almost irreparable damage should South Africa be removed from AGOA. Entire communities will be affected. Other people who would be affected are South Africa's most vulnerable communities. The ANC has succeeded in buffering the elite against economic shocks through black empowerment transactions. If South Africa is kicked out of AGOA because of South Africa's reckless policies, it will affect us and the vulnerable communities, yet it will have little impact on the political elite. This is probably why they are indifferent in their relationship with the US.

The Solidarity Movement is making a serious call for South Africa's continued inclusion in AGOA.

Recommendation:

**It is recommended that
South Africa continues to be included in AGOA;**

As an alternative to excluding South Africa from AGOA, punitive measures be directed at senior ANC leaders, corrupt individuals and those siding with international terrorist organizations;

If South Africa is no longer included in AGOA alternative agreements and methods be found that could soften the blow on individual farmers, manufacturing businesses and ordinary citizens who would suffer the most because of the negative consequences of the irresponsible actio

We are also asking that other methods be found to pressure the ANC to bring about policy change.

The Solidarity Movement disagrees with the ANC but loves our country. Our visit to the US is to find a positive outcome for our country. This does indeed require putting pressure on the ANC as their international and national policies are to the great detriment of our beautiful country and its people.