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## South Africa Chronology ~~(S/NF)~~

1 January - 31 March 1990

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*This chronology is a compilation of significant developments affecting South Africa and is drawn largely from media sources.*

### Trends

As the initial euphoria over Nelson Mandela's release from prison fades, he and President de Klerk face the difficult task of leading a multitude of factions to the negotiating table in an effort to find a political compromise acceptable to a majority of South Africans. De Klerk will concentrate on calming white fears, shoring up his political base, maintaining law and order while keeping the security forces in check, and capitalizing on foreign goodwill. For his part, Mandela must seek to resolve growing black-on-black unrest, reestablish grassroots ANC membership and organizational structures, and foster unity among antiapartheid forces. ~~(S/NF)~~

As he enters his eighth month in office, de Klerk is scrambling to cope with the political fallout from his bold reformist moves, including legalizing the ANC and releasing Mandela. A resurgence in black township violence, driven partly by the euphoria surrounding Mandela's release, is adding both to white fears and to the potential for large-scale clashes between black protesters and police that could draw new international condemnation. Rightwing white extremist activities and organizing have grown, giving substance to a nascent white backlash to de Klerk's moves. On the other hand, whites are undoubtedly pleased that the newly unveiled government budget contained some modest income tax relief, largely a result of cutting 14 percent from real defense spending—a "peace dividend" from withdrawing from Namibia and cutting back on white conscription requirements.

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De Klerk continues to exploit every opportunity to improve South Africa's foreign relations, both in Africa and internationally. The Namibian independence ceremony afforded him a foreign relations bonanza. In addition, Foreign Minister Pik Botha traveled to African and European countries, laying the groundwork for travels by de Klerk in the coming months. ~~(S/NF)~~

The violence in Natal Province and in the interspersed Zulu homeland KwaZulu continues to flare periodically, presenting a serious challenge to de Klerk, Mandela, and KwaZulu leader Buthelezi. Although the unrest is rooted partly in ideological differences between the ANC and Buthelezi's Zulu-based Inkatha movement, much of the violence has degenerated into turf battles among rival gangs. The seemingly intractable nature of the violence has discouraged leaders from staking too much of their personal reputations on stopping it. ~~(S/NF)~~

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Mandela, who personifies black political aspirations, will look for opportunities to exploit his personal standing to forge a broad antiapartheid front that includes leaders from South African churches, homelands, unions, civic groups, and, where possible without sacrificing principle, rival political organizations. Until Mandela and the ANC have fully explored the prospects for alliance-building, formal negotiations with the government are unlikely. Most recent indications suggest that these substantive talks must wait at least until after the ANC holds its national congress, now scheduled for December. ~~(CND)~~

**3 January**

**ANC.** ANC president Oliver Tambo travels to Sweden for medical treatment for a stroke suffered last year.

**Foreign.** Foreign Minister Pik Botha travels to Hungary to meet with government officials.

**Unrest.** South African Transport Services (SATS) fires 22,380 strikers for participating in an eight-week strike. At least 16 people have died in strike-related violence.

**15 January**

**ANC.** Seven recently released ANC leaders travel to Zambia to meet with exiled ANC leaders.

**ANC.** Joe Slovo, General Secretary of the banned South African Communist Party (SACP), publicly claims his organization is shifting toward the idea of multiparty democracy.

**Military.** When budget cuts affect the South African Lavi fighter-jet project, Israeli engineers are dismissed.

**19 January**

**ANC.** The ANC opens a new office in Tokyo.

**24 January**

**Unrest.** Transvaal; police seal off the township of Khutsong in order to prevent a large protest march by youths against alleged police brutality.

**25 January**

**ANC.** Jailed ANC leader Nelson Mandela releases his proposed peace plan calling for negotiations between the ANC and Pretoria.

**Foreign.** Cuba temporarily suspends its troop withdrawal from Angola following the deaths of four Cuban soldiers.

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27 January

*Unrest.* Pietermaritzburg, Natal; a clash between more than 100 supporters of the United Democratic Front (UDF) and Inkatha results in five deaths.

28 January

*Security.* President de Klerk calls a national meeting of police officers and declares that police strongarm tactics and involvement in political issues will not be tolerated.

31 January

*Security.* Pretoria announces plans to appoint a judicial commission of inquiry (the Harms commission) to investigate allegations of police death squads following public demand for an independent investigation.

1 February

*Homelands.* The Ciskei government declares a state of emergency in two of its districts.

2 February

*Political.* In President de Klerk's speech at the opening of parliament, he announces the imminent and unconditional release of Nelson Mandela, the unbanning of the ANC, PAC, SACP and other anti-apartheid organizations, the lifting of restrictions on internal organizations, the lifting of many media restrictions, and the release of detainees held because of their affiliation with affected organizations; he also proposes to restrict the use of the death penalty. De Klerk's announcement receives widespread national and international praise, but also sparks a surge of white extremist activism.

7 February

*Homelands.* Bophuthatswana; over 70,000 participate in a peaceful protest march for reintegration into South Africa.

*Security.* The South African Defense Force confirms it is systematically withdrawing from townships with the exception of certain Natal areas.

8 February

*Unrest.* Alexandra; police allegedly teargas and beat demonstrators protesting a British cricket tour.

9 February

*Namibia.* The Constituent Assembly adopts a constitution.

11 February

*Reform.* After 27 years imprisonment, ANC leader Nelson Mandela is unconditionally released from prison. He delivers a speech at a mass rally in Cape Town attended by over 30,000 supporters.

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- 12 February**      *Unrest.* A flareup of violence in Natal townships results in as many as 50 deaths in two days. Additional South African Defense Force troops are sent in to help control the unrest.
- 13 February**      *ANC.* Johannesburg; Mandela's address to 120,000 people is considered moderate by government officials.
- 19 February**      *Foreign.* Lesotho; three military councilors are purged; General Metsing Lekhanya remains chairman; King Moshoeshoe II is relieved of his power.
- 21 February**      *Political.* A supreme court recount of the September 1989 parliamentary election ballots for the Fauresmith district results in a ruling that the National Party won over the Conservative Party by five votes.
- 22 February**      *Unrest.* ANC leader Walter Sisulu travels to Natal to meet with Inkatha leaders to discuss area unrest.
- 23 February**      *Foreign/Economy.* Britain lifts voluntary sanctions on new investment in South Africa.
- Homelands.* A strike by the majority of Venda's civil servants over disproportionate salary increases for senior officials brings the government to a virtual standstill.
- 24 February**      *Namibia/Security.* Namibian police issue arrest warrants for three men in connection with the assassination of SWAPO official Anton Lubowski. The three suspects are allegedly members of South Africa Defense Force's Civil Cooperation Bureau (CCB), which is linked to South African death squads.
- 25 February**      *Foreign.* Cuba resumes its troop withdrawal from Angola.
- 27 February**      *ANC.* Mandela travels to Lusaka to meet with external ANC leaders. He also travels to Harare, Dar-es-Salaam, and Stockholm.
- Unrest.* Natal; Despite Mandela's call for an end to violence, fierce fighting breaks out in Malagazi between supporters of UDF and Inkatha. Over 200 residents are left homeless when 42 shacks are razed.

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- 3 March** *Homelands.* Ciskei; a bloodless coup by the Ciskei Defense Force puts Brig. Gen. J. Gqozo in charge.
- 5 March** *Homelands.* Pretoria sends security forces into Ciskei at its request to help maintain law and order following the coup. The homeland later declares a state of emergency.
- Labor.* Alexandra, Johannesburg; 6,000 teachers strike over wage and working conditions.
- Security.* The head of the CCB is arrested in connection with the criminal investigation by the Harms Commission into politically motivated murders and violence by security members.
- 7 March** *Homelands.* Bophuthatswana; a state of emergency is declared in four districts and expanded to the entire homeland within a week due to growing unrest incidents. Press reports also indicate a surge in unrest in the Gazankulu homeland; 25 people are killed, over 200 huts razed, and workers stage a mass strike.
- 9 March** *Unrest.* Kathlehong, East Rand; a rally by over 75,000 people and fierce clashes between rival taxi operations leave 25 dead. Over 700 homeless families seek refuge at police stations and demand increased security protection.
- 14 March** *Economy.* The \$27 billion 1990-91 fiscal budget is released and reveals a military budget decline of 14 percent in real terms and the creation of a special \$1.2 billion trust fund for social improvements for blacks.
- 16 March** *Political.* Pretoria sets 11 April as the date for President de Klerk to meet with a delegation of internal and external ANC leaders. The meeting is later postponed.
- Unrest.* Sebokeng, Natal; thousands of residents seek refuge at police stations and hospitals following rumors of impending attacks by Zulus. At least 14 residents are later killed and hundreds injured in clashes with police.
- 17 March** *ANC.* Nelson Mandela returns to South Africa.
- 20 March** *Foreign.* Pretoria reaps the benefits of international contact with high-level foreign dignitaries transiting South Africa en route to Namibian independence celebrations.

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21 March

*Namibia.* Independence is commemorated by the lowering of South Africa's flag and the raising of Namibia's flag. The celebration guest list includes South Africa's President de Klerk, Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze, US Secretary of State Baker, British Foreign Secretary Hurd, Finnish Foreign Minister Paasio, and numerous African heads of state, including Presidents Kaunda and dos Santos.

*Unrest.* With varying degrees of success, blacks carry out a nationwide strike to commemorate Sharpeville Day; support is strongest in Pretoria and Durban areas.

25 March

*Unrest.* Soweto; three limpet mine explosions occur in the area, one at the city council chambers, one at a private house, and the third at a electrical substation.

26 March

*Namibia.* Derek Brune, a former South African spy, is appointed personal security chief for President Nujoma.

29 March

*Unrest.* Mandela and Buthelezi plan a joint ANC-Inkatha rally for early April in an effort to quell Natal area violence. Mandela, however, later cancels the rally.

30 March

*Foreign.* Hungary plans to open a permanent interest representation office in South Africa, and Pretoria will open a reciprocal office in Budapest.

*Unrest.* The prohibition on gatherings that involve school and work boycotts is extended for one year.

*Unrest/Homelands.* Four explosions near Venda's capital damage a liquor store, a parliament building, a electricity substation, and buildings in the business district.

#### Key Dates in May and June

1 May

International Workers Day.

26 May

Anniversary of the founding of the National Party.

31 May

Republic Day. Anniversary of the founding of the Republic of South Africa.

16 June

Anniversary of the outbreak of the Soweto riots in 1976.

26 June

Anniversary of the ANC's Freedom Charter in 1955.

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