

## THE CULTURAL BOYCOTT

The African National Congress' position on the cultural boycott has come under increasing attention. *Mayibuye* asked the ANC's Department of Arts and Culture to outline the organisation's position.

At a Consultative Conference hosted by the ANC's Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) in April this year, the following position on the cultural boycott was outlined:

"Our cultural boycott policy aims primarily at affirming the illegitimacy of the apartheid regime. We do not regard the government as representative of the people of South Africa, the majority of whom, black and white, reject this racist ideology.

"Rather we are promoting the sovereignty of the South African majority and their right to steer the course of the destiny of our country in the direction of a united, non-racial democratic South Africa.

"The overwhelming thrust of the cultural boycott therefore is to *keep out foreign performers and academics who do not come to South Africa at the express invitation and consent of the democratic movement*. This means that visits to South Africa by foreign artists and academics must be realised and sanctioned through consultation with the relevant organisations, including anti-apartheid movements at the country of origin. In this way we can ensure that the emerging democratic structures are developed and supported as an alternative to apartheid agencies." [Emphasis added]

This position was endorsed at the "Cultural and Academic Links With South Africa Symposium" held in Los Angeles, hosted by the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid.

### DEMANDS

It would be incorrect to see the cultural boycott policy in isolation from the rest of the approach being used by the DAC. The April Consultative Conference also adopted the following demands which political organisations involved in the process of negotiations should, in conjunction with the cultural movement, table:

**that the government must abolish the racially constituted cultural departments and structures so that a national Arts and Culture body, which is democratic and non-racial, can be formed;**

**that this body should reflect the reality of the diversity of our culture and work towards the development of a national identity.**

**For this it was agreed that a non-sectarian, non-racial, non-sexist cultural organisation needs to be established. It was also decided that the establishment of an Arts and Culture Foundation be investigated. This foundation would have the task of addressing the imbalances created by apartheid and to enforce the cultural boycott.**

**Funding was raised as a crucial issue. It was felt that central funds must be distributed fairly among cultural structures. Visiting artists and academics must contribute towards the coffers of the democratic cultural structures.**

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