

UCLA

Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies

Title

Stop the Execution of Solomon Mahlangu

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4dz4244b>

Journal

Ufahamu: A Journal of African Studies, 8(3)

ISSN

0041-5715

Author

n/a, n/a

Publication Date

1978

DOI

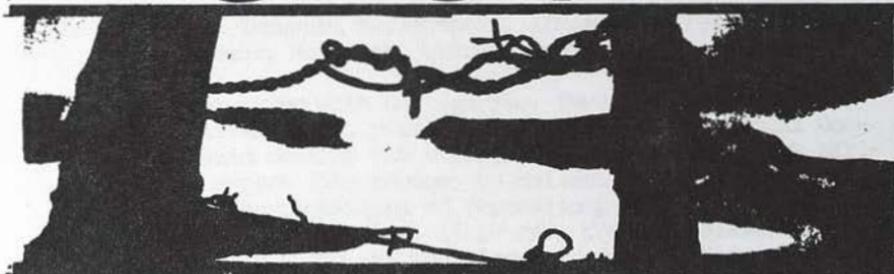
10.5070/F783017363

Copyright Information

Copyright 1978 by the author(s). All rights reserved unless otherwise indicated. Contact the author(s) for any necessary permissions. Learn more at <https://escholarship.org/terms>

Peer reviewed

Stop the execution of
SOLOMON
MAHLANGU
sentenced to death
for fighting apartheid



ISSUED BY: AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (SA)
BOX 38, 28 PENTON STREET, LONDON N1 9PR.

STOP THE EXECUTION OF SOLOMON MAHLANGU

International Anti-Apartheid Year

The African National Congress of South Africa calls on the International Community to ACT NOW to save the life of 21 year old Solomon Mahlangu, sentenced to death for fighting apartheid. While the heroic working people and youth of our country show that they are prepared to continue the struggle for FREEDOM until victory, the responsibility of all democrats increases. 1978 is Anti-Apartheid Year and we look for the fullest support for our movement and its militants.

The case of Solomon Mahlangu can not be seen in isolation. He is a symbol of the revolutionary black youth of South Africa: The youth who have joined together with all sections of the oppressed population, under the leadership of the ANC, to fight for a non-racial, democratic South Africa, free of all exploitation.

Since June 1976 the world has witnessed the unparalleled brutality of the Vorster regime. Peaceful protests by our unarmed youth were met with bloody terror. Since then OVER 1,000 OF OUR PEOPLE HAVE BEEN KILLED by the fascists. Since 1975, too, over 20 patriots have been murdered in Security Police detention.

But the racist regime is facing mounting resistance from outside and from within its borders.

Forward To Peoples' Power!

Our people's spirit can never be crushed. Under the leadership of the ANC, they have responded to the fascist terror with ever increasing militancy. The white supremacists are forced to admit our strength. In April of this year, the head of the South African Security Forces while commenting on exchanges that had taken place between ANC guerillas and the fascist forces in the eastern Transvaal, said "...you can see it is no longer child's play...it is an extended onslaught we are fighting." Indeed the best sons and daughters of our country have swelled the ranks of *Umkhonto we Sizwe*, military wing of the ANC.

The world is aware that our struggle spans many decades. Militant but non-violent resistance to apartheid made up one rich chapter in the history of our fight for freedom. The fascist's response was increased repression, culminating in the

banning of our organisation. By 1961 it was clear that the road to freedom lay through the armed seizure of power. That year saw the formation of *Umkhonto we Sizwe*. MK's Manifesto declared: "The Peoples patience is not endless. There comes a time in the life of every nation when there remains only one choice: submit or fight. That time has come to South Africa."

Last October's banning of all anti-apartheid groups stressed once again the correctness of ANC policy: we have to combine legal and illegal forms of struggle. The victory of genuine People's Power in neighboring Angola and Mozambique proved to our people that armed struggle leads to freedom. This victory has been a source of inspiration to us, and represents a turning point in Southern Africa in favour of national liberation and social emancipation. Soweto '76 and after must be seen in this light. It is clear that we have reached a new stage in our struggle.

Solomon Mahlangu On Trial

Solomon Mahlangu is a typical product of apartheid South Africa. At 21 years, this honourable son of our people had experienced as a black South African, extreme oppression and degradation in the land of his birth. He has suffered the education designed for servitude but like so many of his brothers and sisters he has resisted fascist power. He was one of the many student activists fighting the hated Bantu Education system. He was also one of the many who, realising the need for the guidance, discipline and leadership of the liberation movement, turned to the African National Congress and left his country to prepare for the battle ahead.

Solomon returned to South Africa with some young comrades in 1977. They entered Johannesburg on the 13th of June, just 3 days before the first anniversary of the Soweto massacre. They were stopped by the fascist police in the centre of town and in the course of their arrest 2 white men were killed.

Solomon Mahlangu and Mondy Johannes Motloug, 20, first appeared in Johannesburg Magistrates court on the 26th of September 1977. The indictment consisted of two charges of murder and five charges under the notorious Terrorism and Internal Security Acts. Mondy Motloug was unfit to stand trial because he had sustained such EXTENSIVE BRAIN DAMAGE at the hands of the Security Police.

Solomon pleaded not guilty to all charges. He told the court how he was arrested and how he was assaulted by Captain Cronwright and Lieutenants de Waal and Struwig. A Major

told him to make a statement to the magistrate without mentioning the assaults. He refused and was again assaulted. After he had fainted twice the police said it was time they started "killing me gradually". On several occasions two policemen on either side of him grabbed him by the thighs and flung him into the air so that he crashed down on the floor.

On the 23rd of March 1978, Solomon Mahlangu was found guilty of "common purpose" in the shooting that had taken place and he was SENTENCED TO DEATH. When the sentence was read Mahlangu gave the ANC salute and shouted "AMANDLA!".

It is not Mahlangu but Vorster and his gang who are the criminals. Solomon Mahlangu is a patriot who, like hundreds upon hundreds of his compatriots, has answered the call of the ANC and its military wing *Umkhonto we Sizwe*. HE IS A PRISONER OF WAR AND MUST BE TREATED UNDER THE RELEVANT GENEVA CONVENTIONS.

The ANC calls on you to:

- * Raise the case of Solomon Mahlangu at every level of your Government urging them to take action.
- * Protest to Prime Minister Vorster, Union Buildings, Pretoria, South Africa.
- * During United Nations Anti-Apartheid Year publicise the plight of this Freedom Fighter.
- * Urgent campaigns for the release of all political prisoners in South Africa must be embarked upon without delay.
- * STOP THE EXECUTION OF SOLOMON MAHLANGU
- * SUPPORT THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (SA)

VICTORY IS CERTAIN!
 AMANDLA NGAWETHU!
 MATLA KE ARONA!
 POWER TO THE PEOPLE!