

# THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT



Nordic Solidarity with South Africa

New Insights on Social Movements and Governments

# Why focus on history of solidarity? I

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- Despite xenophobia, Denmark is also grassroots movements and solidarity with suppressed people in repressive states
- Strings to international solidarity in the North
- Intellectuals had an important part to play in the attempt to free and heal a divided nation
- One of the lessons is that we do not have to accept new forms of global apartheid lying down

# Recording anti-apartheid solidarity history I

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- Access to western anti-apartheid movements' (AAM) archives is important to South Africans
- In South Africa AAM records are registered at:
  - South African Democracy Education Trust, (SADET);
  - ANC Archives at University of Fort Hare;
  - South African History Online, (SAHO);
  - Nelson Mandela Centre of Memory;
  - South African History Archive (SAHA);
  - Apartheid Museum, Johannesburg;
  - UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye Archives;
  - Digital Innovation South Africa (DISA);
  - ... and many other places.



# Recording anti-apartheid solidarity history II

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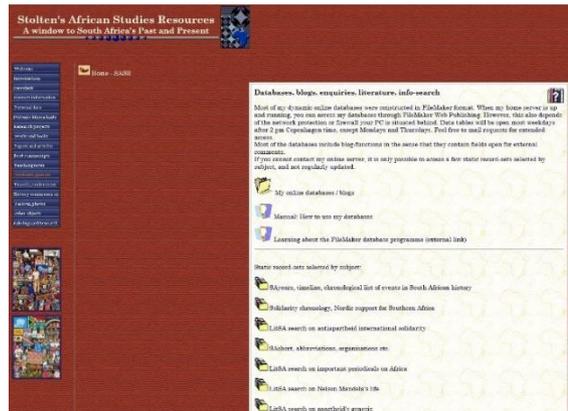
- Abroad, AAM records are registered at:
  - Rhodes House, Oxford;
  - SOAS / ICS, University of London;
  - The Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala;
  - The African Studies Centre, University of Leiden;
  - African Studies Center, Michigan State University;
  - CAMP Collection, University of Chicago;
  - African Studies Centre, University of Leiden;
  - International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam;
  - University of Canterbury Library, New Zealand;
  - Russian State Archives of Contemporary History;
  - ... and many other institutions.



# Recording anti-apartheid solidarity IV

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- For a listing of AAM literature, search my online database LitSA from my website [www.jakobsgaardstolten.dk](http://www.jakobsgaardstolten.dk) | Databases, queries Field, Key Words = International solidarity (Open access)

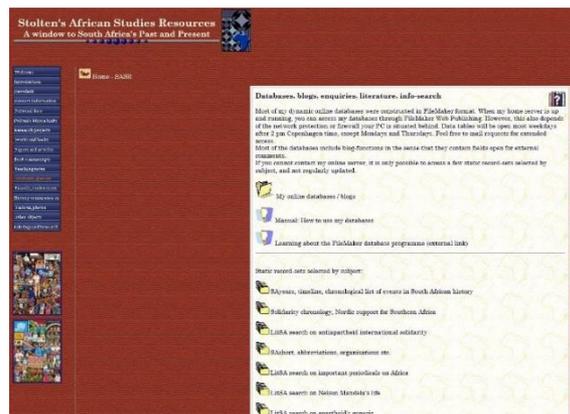


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# Recording anti-apartheid solidarity V

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- For a Nordic event overview, search my online database Solidarity Chronology from my website [www.jakobsgaardstolten.dk](http://www.jakobsgaardstolten.dk) | Databases, queries (Open access)



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Solidarity Chronology				
Year	Event	Explanation	Notes	Subject area
1959 –	Launch of the Swedish Fund for the Victims of Racial Oppression in South Africa. (September). Windhoek 'Old Location' shootings, Namibia. (December).			International solidarity. Sweden.
1959 –	The scholarship system is extended to three years, and the Namibian student Hans Beukes, who is involved in illegal political activities, is the first to benefit from this.			International solidarity. Norway.
1960 –	Sharpeville massacre, South Africa. (March). ANC and PAC banned. (April).			International solidarity. Sweden.
1960 –	First consumer boycott of South African goods declared by the Swedish Trade Union Confederation and the Cooperative Union and Wholesale Society. (April)			International solidarity. Sweden.
1960 –	The trade union movement launches a Nordic consumers boycott in the period May–August, and the import of South African fruit is down by 95%. The Norwegian authorities state that this is a private action.			International solidarity. Norway.
1960 –	Consumer Boycott campaign against South African products, initiated by the trade union movement and co-ordinated with other Nordic countries. ANC deputy President Oliver Tambo		NAI Disk.Pap.	International solidarity. Denmark, Danish Solidarity, Danish aid policy.
1961 –	Armed uprisings by MPLA and UPA (FNLA) in Angola mark the beginnings of the Thirty Years' War in Southern Africa. (Feb - March). Nobel Peace Prize to Albert Luthuli. Launch			International solidarity. Sweden.
1961 –	Swedish South Africa Committee established. (March).			International solidarity. Sweden.

# Recording anti-Apartheid solidarity VI

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- AAM and half-official writings often uncritical
- History-writing on AAMs is continued solidarity
- The single AAMs took part in a global social movement



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# Why focus on history of solidarity? II

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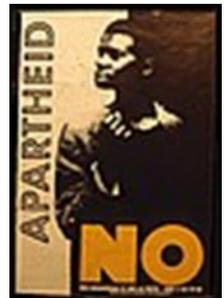
- South Africa is a fascinating microcosm that may hold answers to global problems related to racism, xenophobia, and conflict resolution
- People took their destiny in their own hands through self-mobilising popular movements
- Revealing the possibilities and limitations of social revolution and revolutionary socialism
- Possible success for western civilization, modernization, and political human rights in a third world region

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# Difficulties of global solidarity I

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- Members of western solidarity movements can only seldom portray themselves as directly affected victims of conflict or repression
- Success for the global solidarity movement may inflict higher living costs on people in the west expected to be involved in protests
- A growing part of western populations are feeling uncomfortable by the potential costs of solidarity



# Difficulties of global solidarity II

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- The value stream still goes north; the western native country profits by the exploitation of the third world
- Few combined victories for the liberation/ solidarity moments have lead to permanent, fundamental socio-economic changes lately
- Even activists and researchers are often stuck in a tradition of nationalism or localism

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# Arguments for continued solidarity

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- An oblique and unequal world is also an unstable world which produces fugitives and terrorism
- More wealth would transform countries now poor into better trading partners
- Inside academia: theory of liberation and social movements theory are attractive research areas



# Roots and history of solidarity I

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- French activists aided the American Revolution and the French Revolution had later influence
- Anti-slavery campaign emerged in England
- African-American missionaries reported on King Leopold's regime in the Congo
- Working class internationalism after 1848
  - Socialist Internationals and Comintern



# Roots and history of solidarity II



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- Anti-colonialism and pan-Africanism
- Vietnam, Chile, anti-Americanism
- After 1990 decline in popular solidarity
- Government aid canalised through professionalised NGOs
- Inside research: national AAM case-studies in many countries



# AAM pillars of strength



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- Concerns about domestic racism in western countries reinforced a common understanding
- AAMs were part of the liberation of Southern Africa through popular support
- Both broad domestic and international appeal through boycotts and sanctions
- Combination of tactics of the desk and the street, of blockades and conferences
- Basic optimism of freedom movements 1945-90

# The Danish AAM, LSA I

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- LSA exclusively supported the ANC
- Collecting money for ANC's Radio Freedom and a printing press to SACTU, Free Mandela Campaign
- Coordinating consumer boycotts, sports boycott
- Demand for government sanctions
- Visits by exiled celebrities
- Militant actions against, Shell, AP Møller-Maersk
- Occupation of the South African embassy

# The Danish AAM, LSA II

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## □ Types of protests

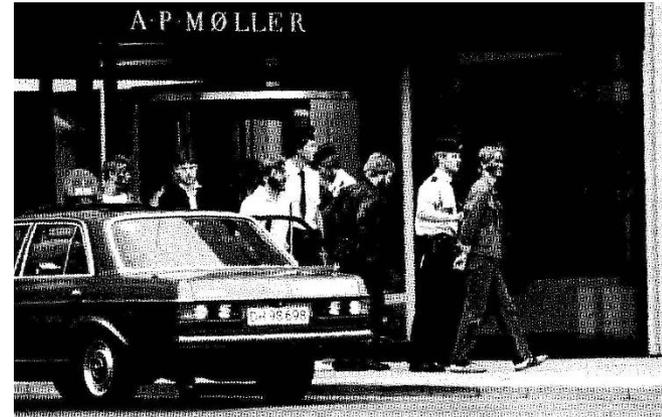


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# The Danish AAM, LSA III

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## □ More protests



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# The Danish AAM, LSA IV

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- The aim was to bring the liberation struggle into ordinary peoples' everyday life
- Based on both identification and universal ideals
- Alliances with NGOs, not states
- The desk and the street, blockades and conferences, street theatre, substantiated demands
- Internal conflicts: forms of action, socialist sectarianism, widening of the agenda

# Developments in support after 1990

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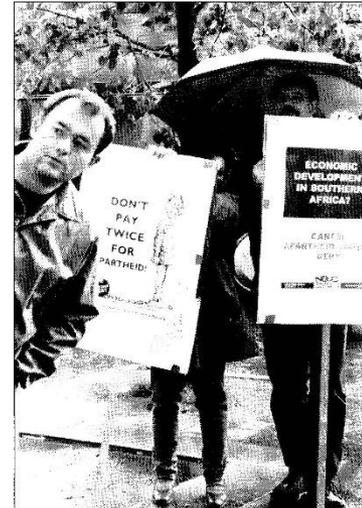
- Take over of popular solidarity traditions by government to government transitional aid
- Deterioration of NGO political solidarity
- From NGO-links to RDP's collective enthusiasm to GEAR's individualised demobilisation
- Mix of aid and business interests
- Economic stability, growing social gaps
- Need for continued NGO solidarity

# Official Nordic transitional aid

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- Support of civil society organisations has been too vague and casual
- Poverty-orientation should have been increased by continuing anti-apartheid funding policies for the organisation of marginalised groups
- Corporate sector, business-to-business aid mainly helped large Nordic companies

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# Foreign government and organisational interests

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- Social-liberal influence on nation building
- Non-colonial, small-state possibility for market share
- Domestic humanitarian legitimacy
- Undermining of socialist objectives of freedom struggle
- Organisational profiling
- Individual career interests
- Scattered attempts to maintain ideals

# Aid/support before and now

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- Ideals were upheld
- Promoting the Scandinavian model
- Supporting state structures
- More aid is better aid
- Development knowledge considered necessary
- Less aid is fine with us
- What is best for ourselves counts
- Conditionalities imposed
- Fragmented NGOs competing
- Development theory less relevant

# The postapartheid history of solidarity

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- Progressive enclaves of African Studies sustained
- Donor governments pointing out their own national merits of solidarity
- Building the historical legend, that the anti-apartheid support of the Nordic countries was especially heroic
- Competitive use of solidarity history
- NGOs holding on to liberatory history for the defence of the ideals of the liberation struggle

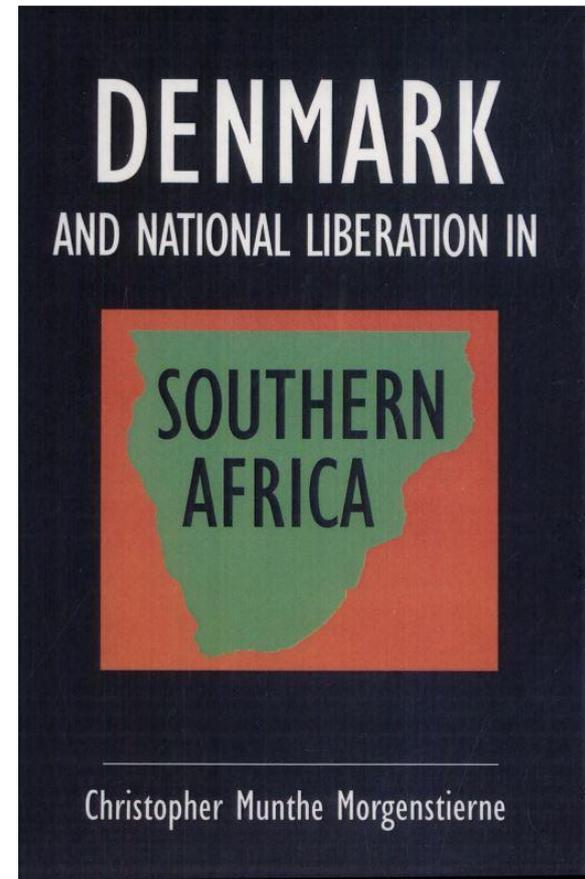
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# Nordic differences

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- Competition over trade and aid
- Official histories and book series



# Problems of solidarity for discussion I

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- What is solidarity? Mutual political support, foreign aid, charity or philanthropy?
- Is armed struggle to be viewed as liberation strategy or as terrorism? Home/abroad?
- Are there parallels to current discussions on war against terrorism?
- Who were responsible for oppression? Should historical agents apologise, give compensation, be condemned, punished or forgiven?

# Problems of solidarity for discussion II

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- Are “national” solidarity movements outdated?
- Have ethnic nationalism and social-religious extremism as strategies grown stronger because socialist visions has been weakened?
- Can we recognise any of the South African patterns in modern “global apartheid”?
- Have historical research or African Studies any importance for continued solidarity?

# THE ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT

The end