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I'll work for new SA — Matanzima

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Political Editor

IN A dramatic switch in attitude President Kaiser Matanzima of Transkei has pledged himself to "work ceaselessly for the establishment of a greater South Africa" and thus to reintegrate Transkei into South Africa.

President Matanzima was one of six black leaders who signed a declaration of intent after a low-profile meeting near Johannesburg on Monday. He was the only leader from a nominally independent territory to sign the declaration.

The co-signatories were Chief Gatsha Buthelezi of KwaZulu, Dr Cedric Phatudi of Mpumalanga, Professor Hudson Ntsanwisi of

Gazankulu, Mr Kenneth Mopeli of QwaQwa and Mr Enos Mabuza of KaNgwane.

The declaration committed all six leaders to work for the "reunification of those whom apartheid divides" and for a "greater South Africa based on nonracialism and democracy".

The 1976 Status of Transkei Act, under which Transkei was granted independence, separates Transkei Xhosas from fellow blacks in South Africa by depriving them of South African nationality and by making them nationals of Transkei.

It is an apartheid law in two fundamental senses: it was passed by the National Party-controlled SA Parliament and it is integral to the grand apartheid aim of creating a South Africa without black South African nationals.

By signing the declaration President Matanzima appears to have contravened Transkei's 1977 Public Security Act, which makes it a treasonable offence to advocate that Transkei form part of another country.

The Act has been a crucial factor in the demise of opposition parties in Transkei, most of which opposed independence but were prevented by it from propagating their policies.

Penalties range from five years imprisonment to death.

Since the beginning of the year President Matanzima has sought to bring an end to his isolation from black leaders in general, and Chief Buthelezi in particular.

To that end he lifted the ban imposed on Inkatha in Transkei and held discussions with

Chief Buthelezi and later with several leaders at a "summit" in the Eastern Transvaal.

The new declaration of intent is clearly a response in part to Pretoria's proposed three-chamber parliament from which blacks will be excluded.

The six leaders committed themselves to marshalling all their resources to rejecting the "destiny prescribed for us by the white minority" and to dismantling its "oppressive institutions".

"In recognition of the diverse political and constitutional positions in which we have been placed by the policies of fragmentation (we shall) transform them into weapons for our liberation and use them in the interests of our common objectives," they said.

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