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DRAFT ECC POSITION ON TROOPS IN THE TOWNSHIPS

In the context of rapid political transition towards a non-racial democracy in South Africa, we believe that the internal role of the SADF, given its composition and orientation, should be strictly controlled and closely monitored.

ECC recognises that in the process of political transition the potential exists for violent conflict and civil strife. In this regard the ongoing violence in Natal is matter of grave concern to us.

We believe that the SADF should not be deployed internally to perform police functions or to suppress free political activity.

To the extent that it becomes necessary to deploy SADF troops in situations of civil conflict, either by reason of specific requests from recognised community representatives or because of the gravity of the conflict, ECC strongly believes that the SADF's role should be strictly limited to:

- 1) Maintaining a neutral presence to monitor and promote peace between competing groups.
- 2) Maintaining neutrality vis a vis other security forces operating in the area.
- 3) Exercising maximum restraint in the use of force.

In such circumstances, we believe that the SADF should endeavour to facilitate the monitoring of its role by independent bodies.

We further believe that where SADF troops are deployed in civil conflict situations, conscripts should be granted exemption from such duty upon application.

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