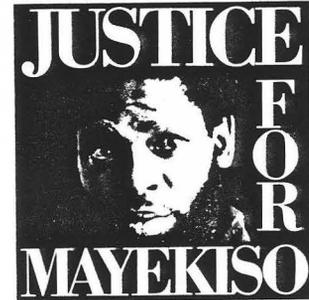


**THE AMERICAN
JURISTS COMMITTEE
MONITORING THE CASE OF
MOSES MAYEKISO**



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**COMMITTEE OF PROMINENT AMERICAN JURISTS FORMED
TO PROMOTE JUSTICE FOR SOUTH AFRICAN LABOR LEADER**

WASHINGTON, D.C., November 17 — A group of 10 distinguished American jurists has been formed to monitor the treason trial of one of South Africa's most prominent black union leaders — Moses Mayekiso, the head of the UAW's counterpart union in South Africa.

The American jurists who will be monitoring the trial include top members of the United States judiciary, legal scholars, veteran prosecutors, a major university president and a corporate lawyer who served as a presidential cabinet member.

The panel of jurists was convened at the invitation of UAW President Owen Bieber. "We intend to focus the international spotlight on the Mayekiso case," Bieber said, "because clearly the South African government is trying to weaken the anti-apartheid movement and the black trade unions which in recent years have emerged as the key force opposing the apartheid regime."

Mayekiso, 39, is a former autoworker who last year was elected to be the General Secretary of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA). Following several arrests for political activism in earlier years, Mayekiso again was arrested in June, 1986, upon his return to South Africa from a trade union conference in Sweden and placed in detention without charges and being denied access to attorneys.

In April of this year Mayekiso and four other co-defendants formally were charged with treason, subversion and sedition relating to their earlier activities in organizing a "residents' council" as an alternative to the local apartheid government in their home township of Alexandra (located outside Johannesburg).

The first two charges potentially are capital crimes in South Africa for which a defendant, upon conviction, may be executed by hanging.

One member of the American Jurists Committee visited South Africa in August of this year and acquainted himself with the facts of the Mayekiso case.

International attention on the Mayekiso case already has had an impact as the judge in October ruled out the possible imposition of the death penalty for Mayekiso and his four co-defendants.



The 10 members of the American Committee of Jurists monitoring the case of Moses Mayekiso include, in alphabetical order:

- GRIFFIN B. BELL, former U.S. Attorney General who for 15 years served as a federal judge on the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit
- WILLIAM T. COLEMAN, JR., a corporate lawyer and Chairman of the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund who formerly served as Secretary of Transportation during the Ford Administration
- MARVIN E. FRANKEL, a New York City attorney who for 13 years served on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York
- ARTHUR J. GOLDBERG, who served on the U.S. Supreme Court from 1962 through 1965 following two years as Secretary of Labor during the Kennedy Administration
- ELIZABETH HOLTZMAN, the District Attorney for Brooklyn, New York, who previously served four terms as a Member of the U.S. Congress representing part of New York City
- DAMON J. KEITH, a federal judge on the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit who formerly was Chairman of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission
- ABNER J. MIKVA, a federal judge on the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia who previously served five terms as a Member of the U.S. Congress representing north Chicago
- ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, a law professor at Georgetown University in Washington who is the former chair of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
- STEPHEN REINHARDT, a federal judge on the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit who formerly served as the President of the Los Angeles Police Commission and Secretary of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee
- BENNO C. SCHMIDT, JR., the President of Yale University who formerly was the Dean of the Columbia University Law School and remains a legal scholar specializing in constitutional law and the history of race relations

These 10 American jurists will be carefully monitoring the Mayekiso trial as it proceeds over the coming weeks. "The UAW hopes to send one or more of the members of this most impressive committee of judges and lawyers to observe portions of the Mayekiso trial in South Africa," said President Bieber, "to assess the quality of justice being administered, and to report back to the full committee and the American public on the proceedings and outcome of the trial."

An eminent barrister from the United Kingdom observed the proceedings of the opening phase of the Mayekiso trial in October at the invitation of the International Metalworkers Federation (IMF) with which both the UAW and NUMSA are affiliated. The IMF is a Geneva-based trade union secretariat representing 14 million workers

worldwide which is waging an international campaign to ensure justice for Mayekiso and the four others.

The Jurists Committee is disturbed by the legal principles underlying South Africa's apartheid system and spotlighted by the Mayekiso case, which raises critical questions about fundamental issues of justice in South Africa — such as whether the alleged actions of this well-known labor leader and community activist actually occurred and whether the charges truly constitute treason, subversion and sedition.

Members of the Jurists Committee believe that citizens of every nation who place value on concepts such as "equal justice" and the "rule of law" have acute interests in not only the outcome of the Mayekiso case itself but in the manner in which it proceeds.

Of special concern to the Jurists Committee and other observers is the administration of justice in a nation which practices apartheid, under which blacks are denied numerous freedoms essential to any democracy. For years it has been argued that South Africa's judicial system serves to counter some of the worst excesses of the apartheid system — that the judicial process there provides some safeguards for the black majority.

Through the Mayekiso case, the Jurists Committee will assess the extent to which "justice" and the "rule of law" can prevail for the black majority still repressed by the white minority in South Africa.

For additional details on the specific charges against Moses Mayekiso and his four co-defendants — as well as background on conditions in the black South African ghetto of Alexandra Township and Mayekiso's career — consult the two addenda to this document.

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WHO IS MOSES MAYEKISO?

Moses Mayekiso is a former autoworker who today holds the top position in the second largest trade union in the most heavily industrialized nation in all of Africa: he is General Secretary of the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa.

Moses was born 39 years ago not far from Cape Town in South Africa's Cape Province. As a young man he became a migrant worker in the gold mines to the north, living after work each day in the harsh, prison-like conditions of the male-only hostels.

Mayekiso joined the Metal and Allied Workers Union, now part of the larger NUMSA, after going to work in an auto parts plant. Like so many of the men and women who lead America's major labor unions today, Moses promptly became a union activist, confronting managers accustomed to exploiting the black workforce with impunity.

Through MAWU, Moses helped pioneer the democratic, shop-floor-based trade unionism now widespread in South Africa. After a major "stayaway" strike in 1984, he was arrested and kept in solitary confinement at the notorious John Vorster Square prison. Twice again in 1985 the apartheid government jailed him — each time being eventually forced to drop charges and release him.

Mayekiso helped draft the constitution in late 1985 of the Congress of South African Trade Unions — a militant, 700,000-member-strong federation of black trade unions — and carried the fight for justice into the black township of Alexandra where he lived with his wife and seven children.

When South Africa declared its State of Emergency on June 12, 1986, Mayekiso was meeting with unionists in Sweden. The white minority government refused to renew his passport, which expired June 14, in an attempt to force one of South Africa's key black labor leaders into exile.

Instead, Mayekiso flew home to South Africa soon after — where he was immediately jailed. He has been without his freedom for more than 16 months.

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SOME FACTS OF LIFE IN ALEXANDRA TOWNSHIP

Alexandra, located on the northern outskirts of Johannesburg and bordered by some of South Africa's most affluent white suburbs, is a slum of decaying, inadequate housing structures which has existed for 75 years. Today more than 100,000 South Africans, nearly all of them black, are crammed into one square-mile of land serviced by only two roads and by no electricity.

Primary health care remains an overwhelming need in "Alex", as the township is known to its impoverished residents, and disease and illnesses commonly are waterborn since raw sewage exists in open drainage and stagnant water pools throughout the township. Sewage still is collected daily in buckets and, without electricity, cooking is performed over coal stoves in incredibly crowded housing.

The South African government has allocated no substantial public spending for Alexandra over the decades, as it always has planned to eliminate the township and resettle its residents in the well-known township of Soweto on the southern edge of Johannesburg. More recently, however, the government decided to accept the permanent nature of "Alex" and only since 1986 has indicated that it intends to spend funds to improve the township.

Among the predominantly working class of "Alex" in recent years there has been increasing resistance to the infamous "pass laws" of personal identification and other regulations. There have been ongoing battles with South African police and defense forces and twice during 1986 Alexandra became a battle zone — with security forces pouring into "Alex" and operating a military occupation from their base in a local stadium. Many local citizens during the past months have been killed or injured.

The charges against Moses Mayekiso and his four co-defendants all relate to events in Alexandra during the events of 1986. In brief, Mayekiso and the four other Alexandra residents are alleged to have:

- * formed a "residents' committee" called the Alexandra Action Committee with the purpose of establishing an organ of self-government;
- * launching rent and consumer boycotts
- * creating informal judicial structures known as "Peoples Courts"
- * launching a campaign to pressure the South African police and defense forces to depart from the township
- * launching a campaign against the existing town council of Alexandra, a structure created by the apartheid government.

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