

to make a decision about this situation which, in addition to stalling the process of economic recovery, assaults the legitimate expectations of progress of Peruvians.

Although elected by a majority of our citizens, I do not wish to become a factor of disturbance, much less an obstacle to strengthening the democratic system. Therefore, after deep reflection and objective evaluation of the situation, I have made the decision: First, to deactivate the National Intelligence System; and, second, to call general elections for the earliest possible date, a measure I hope will be welcomed and understood in its real context by the relevant agencies.

Needless to say, in these general elections, I will not be participating, but rather, [leave it to] those who feel capable of serving as President or handling Congressional responsibilities.

I am certain that the people will know, with prudence, how to choose the [country's] best destiny.

I have governed in Peru for ten years. Not even my detractors can fail to acknowledge fundamental achievements, which I will not enumerate. You know them. These achievements give me great satisfaction, and are tangible proof of the dedication and affection I have invested in the job of governing, especially when it was for the benefit of the neediest of my compatriots. This, for me, is sufficient.

Few governments in the history of Peru have inherited disasters such as we have had to deal with, turning these and other historic obstacles into opportunities for national development and viability.

I hope that Peru, my country, to which I have given ten years of intensive effort, to achieve maximum efficiency in raising it up from the ashes, will not regress in terms of peace and development.

Were Peru to regress in that sense, what meaning would there be to the enormous sacrifice of civilians, police, soldiers, and authorities at every level, without whose selfless contributions there would be no peace today, either internal or external?

My two terms of government, I will admit, were not free of errors or omissions. These may have postponed attention to the legitimate interests of certain sectors of the citizenry, which I certainly regret.

To those who voted for our government program, with hope and enthusiasm, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. I ask for understanding. It is not a question of renouncing our ideals and principles, but of taking a realistic step, so that Peruvians can continue to build their future in democracy, understanding by democracy, what you understand and desire: real concrete opportunities for the least favored sectors of society.

I am confident that the people will know, with maturity, how to continue on the path of progress. I shall also be on that path, as always, identified with the people.

Thank you very much.

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## Interview: Sheila Sisulu

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# South Africa Strives To Eliminate Poverty

*In his speech to the Sept. 6-8 United Nations Millennium Summit, South African President Thabo Mbeki said that the leaders gathered there must know, that billions of people have great expectations from the UN. "It must be," he said, "that we will have to jostle with various pagan gods at whose feet we prostrate ourselves, over all of whom tower the gods of inertia, the market and globalization." He listed the atrocities of the last millennium, from slavery, to colonialism, world wars, and the Holocaust, followed by the Rwandan genocide. Though the dead may have been forgotten, he said, the living have not, and have given the mandate to political leaders. "The poor of the world stand at the gates of the comfortable mansions occupied by each and every king and queen, President, prime minister, and minister privileged to attend this unique meeting.*



*"The question these billions ask is—what are you doing . . . to end the deliberate and savage violence against us that, every day, sentences many of us to a degrading and unnecessary death!"*

*Mbeki said that the challenge facing the summit was to demonstrate "the will to end poverty and underdevelopment," and to show the will to succeed, as those who defeated Nazism did. He ended, "I, like the poor at our gates, ask the question—will we, at last respond to this appeal?"*

*"All of us, including the rich, will pay a terrible price if we do not, practically, answer—yes, we do!"*

*EIR asked President Mbeki, at a press conference, whether, given the dramatic situation he denounced, discussion had taken place on the sidelines of the summit, about the need to rethink the entire approach followed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and other institutions, over the last decades, whose policies have contributed to the destruction of Asia, Ibero-America, and Africa. Would it not be time to promote the opposite approach, to scrap the IMF, and issue long-term, low-interest loans for real infrastructure development?*

*President Mbeki answered, "We are working on an Africa*



South African  
President Thabo  
Mbeki

*Development Strategy, bearing in mind all the issues which you raised,” and acknowledged the problem posed by the IMF. “We have a huge health problem in Africa,” he said, “which includes HIV/AIDS. It is true, you can’t deal with the health crisis, on the one hand, and at the same time, on the other hand, create the conditions which generate such health problems.” He said that there was a global debate on the need for a new monetary system, and on how to control short-term financial flows, within which, was the debate on a specific strategy for Africa.*

*Sheila Sisulu is South Africa’s Ambassador to the United States, a post she has held since 1999. She was interviewed by Lawrence Freeman in Washington, D.C. on Sept. 12.*

**EIR:** The first question I’d like to bring up, is the problem of AIDS. This has been compared to a new Black Death. It is estimated that 16 million people have died, that 35 million are infected; the statistics show that 70% are from Sub-Saharan Africa. The figures that I’ve seen show 4 million, or 10% of the South African population, has AIDS, and that life expectancies in some of the countries in southern Africa have been reduced by one-third to one-half. And this is also leading to decreases in productivity, workers dying, so there has been a significant impact on the economy. Now, President Thabo Mbeki courageously told the truth, repeatedly, and again at the Durban conference: He said the spread of AIDS is linked to poverty and malnutrition, lack of health care. This is something that Mr. LaRouche, the founder of *EIR*, said many years ago, and he was viciously attacked for this. Why do you think that there was such an outcry by the “AIDS establishment” against President Mbeki’s remarks, which are obviously true? And, what are the plans that South Africa is undertaking to deal with this new Black Death that is spreading throughout southern Africa?

**Sisulu:** With regard to our approach to dealing with the HIV-

AIDS pandemic, we believe that prevention is the core to our program for dealing with the HIV-AIDS issue. And, of course, care of those already sick, dealing with the orphans of HIV and AIDS, and seeking science to find a vaccine that will respond to the African version, if you will, of the pandemic. So, ours is to seek a program as comprehensive as possible, to address the pandemic.

On the issue of why people are uncomfortable with President Mbeki’s position vis-à-vis the role of poverty in the spread of HIV and AIDS: I think it’s because there’s no medication for poverty. There’s no tablet, for poverty. And so, it’s a very difficult issue to deal with. And it goes beyond HIV and AIDS.

I think partly, also, people may be panic-stricken, and want a quick fix. But, I think, as he pointed out in his speech in Durban, and as he has pointed out in other speeches unrelated to HIV and AIDS, the key challenge for developing countries — Africa in particular, and South Africa is no different — is poverty. So, whatever afflicts us, unless we deal with poverty, we will remain in that situation.

**EIR:** Are there any specific plans in South Africa to deal with poverty and also to deal with health care?

**Sisulu:** Yes, new policies, and new strategies, have been put in place, to try and expand access to health care to the majority of the people. As you well know, that wasn’t the case until 1994. And also, to focus on primary health care, so that you’re dealing with making people healthy, rather than treating them when they are already sick. And that is also linked to the poverty strategy, so that poverty alleviation, through economic development, through job creation, would, in fact, ensure that people are able to take care of themselves.

**EIR:** Including a good diet, plenty of nutrition, protein, without which, the immune system is weakened.

**Sisulu:** The point about it, with almost any disease, as the former Minister of Health, a physician himself, has gone on record as saying, if you have two children, one well-nourished, and healthy, and another not, and you expose them to the same amount of infection, the malnourished child is likely to die, rather than the nourished one. The nourished one might not even register feverish symptoms. Their immune system would be able to fight it. So, this pandemic of HIV and AIDS, when it attacks somebody whose immune system is already compromised, would obviously have a much more devastating impact on that person, than it would on a healthy human being.

**EIR:** And I think that is why President Mbeki drew such flak, because he raised the issue of poverty, which is the main issue affecting all of Africa.

**Sisulu:** That is the point I was making earlier, that President Mbeki has consistently raised the issue of poverty, almost as the first issue that has to be attacked, both by African coun-

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*We come into our freedom and independence from apartheid at a time when globalization is in effect, whereas other countries came into their independence when protectionism was the norm. Therefore, a strong African economic bloc is important.*

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tries, and by the international community relating to Africa. Because once you eradicate poverty, then you are able to deal with a lot of the ills that affect people.

**EIR:** I know that President Mbeki, in addition to his remarks at the UN, also brought up the question of restructuring the global system, given the failure of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Their structural adjustment programs, etc., have weakened the population, and therefore have allowed the quality of life to be so poor that AIDS has spread. And given the fact that there is over \$300 billion in debt that Sub-Saharan Africa supposedly owes, President Mbeki has raised the question of a new global system. Isn't the time right, now, for a new system, to bypass the IMF and World Bank, to establish a new, just world economic order, as it was called many years ago, for a new arrangement among nations to deal with these problems, rather than sticking with the old system that has failed? Mr. LaRouche has called this a New Bretton Woods; other people have called for a new financial system to respect life and quality of life. What direction does South Africa think it, and the rest of Africa, should take, in terms of moving on to a different arrangement for the developing sector?

**Sisulu:** I think in his speech to the UN, President Mbeki was making the point, that whatever financial institution or investment organization you have, needs to have the people, the majority of the people that are participating in those institutions, about whom decisions are made, being part of the decision-making process. And so, for instance, with the UN, it is unacceptable that the developing world, Africa in particular, has no place in the UN Security Council, that makes those decisions. So, our position is primarily that, certainly in this case Africans, and African countries, ought to be part of the decision-making process, even as to how to reform these organizations. At the moment, African countries do not have any real say in decisions that affect them in the long run. So, without preempting the nature of the new, if you want, institutions, if we go that route, it is important that even in the discussion about what those institutions should be like, Africans and African countries, and other developing countries, must participate.

**EIR:** In South Africa in particular, some of the policies that have been followed are along the lines of globalization and

privatization. Maybe it's a sensitive area. President Mbeki comes to power after apartheid is finally eliminated, yet there is a great deal of poverty, there's a great deal of unemployment; someone made the case that some of these problems are because of following the policies of the IMF and privatization and globalization. What are the plans that President Mbeki has for dealing with poverty in South Africa, which is also linked to the question that we first raised, the issue of AIDS?

**Sisulu:** Our position on dealing with the issue of poverty, is informed by the reality we find ourselves in. We come into our freedom and independence from apartheid, if you will, at a time when globalization is in effect. It's there. Which means that the protectionist policies of the past, cannot be sustained. Whereas other countries came into their independence, however many years ago, when protectionism was the norm. We come in, when it isn't the norm. And so, we either get bypassed, and lose out, or we get into fights, and make ourselves a force to be reckoned with. But we ourselves, as South Africa alone, cannot take on globalization, in the way that it is panning out. Therefore, for us, the issue of a strong African economic bloc, is important, and we see it as our responsibility, along with other leaders within the region and the continent, to ensure that we position ourselves to be sufficiently competitive.

In the short term, for us in South Africa, we've opened our markets, and are continuing, even, to open our markets, particularly to our neighbors; we have signed a free-trade agreement, in which we are bringing down our tariffs in relation to our neighbors, because we want to make sure that our balance of trade is much more favorable in relation to our neighbors, because otherwise it is unsustainable.

**EIR:** You're referring to the Southern Africa Development Community?

**Sisulu:** SADC, right. So, we are of the view that we will only become, as Africa, a player in the global economy, if we are strong as a region. And therefore, we want to move, as we have done in South Africa, to democratize, to be competitive, to mobilize our economy, and so forth.

**EIR:** It seems, some of the trade unionists in South Africa are having disagreements with the government the best way to proceed.

**Sisulu:** Sure, and discussions are ongoing as we speak. If

fact this week, Cosatu [the Congress of South African Trade Unions] has a congress, and the government will be meeting with the leadership. When we get to a situation where whatever the government does is non-negotiable and totally right, then there is a problem. And the government and the African National Congress are very clear, that good governance has to do with being open to the views of the people that you're supposed to be governing. And the labor unions are important, so therefore, we have to listen to them.

**EIR:** Recently there was the election of the Parliament in Zimbabwe. There is tremendous pressure being put on President Robert Mugabe, some of it from Britain, that he should not be carrying out this land reform, the policy is to give something like 10 million Zimbabweans the right to have some land. Right now they're on communal property, about 10 acres per family, and most of the land is monopolized by about 4,500 Rhodesian and British farmers. In recent meetings, President Mbeki has supported President Mugabe on land reform. Will President Mbeki continue to support the rights of the nation-state of Zimbabwe? And isn't this also a question for South Africa, where again, the majority of black Africans do not have land, and there's still land being held by white farmers?

**Sisulu:** On the land issue, I think President Mbeki is on record as saying that the issue of land in Zimbabwe is real, and it's not a new issue. It's an issue that has been discussed, and agreed upon, as far back as the last agreement [at Lancaster House in 1979]. And it is important for all parties to that agreement to, in fact, ensure that the policy is implemented. He has gone on record as also saying, that this must be done in an orderly way that is free of violence. And that continues to be his position: that it is not a made-up story that there is a land issue in Zimbabwe. It is an acknowledged position, it was acknowledged in Lancaster House, that came up a few years ago, and now it's about time that all parties work toward its speedy resolution. And that is his stand.

And as far as South Africa is concerned, the question was raised, whether the issue would come up. I think, first of all, we say definitely not. And the reason being, we have put in place a range of mechanisms to ensure the orderly transfer of land, back to the people from whom it was taken. The Land Commission assists people to formulate their claims to land from which they were forcibly removed, or that they have claim to because it's ancestral land. And if that level of the process does not resolve the issue, then it goes to the next level, which is the land claims court, where the courts would then make a determination as to who the land belongs to. And none of the land in South Africa was taken away as part of the apartheid policy. In fact, it was kept by the state, and so, some of that land, but not all of it, when there's claim to it, has to be given back.

President Mbeki mentioned this, when he spoke to our Parliament, and the question was raised why this also hap-

pened. We have a Constitution that protects everybody's rights, and we will adhere to that Constitution. But also, South Africa is much more industrialized than most countries in southern Africa, and as a result, people are not clamoring for land to live off. They're clamoring for land to live on. So, housing, and housing ownership, and property ownership, is more the issue, which is why there is a lot of pressure for us. If there is any pressure, it will come from housing, and ownership of land to live on, rather than to live off.

So, the only thing that we would need to do, is to speed up the process, and to ensure that it doesn't take 20 years before the policy is fully implemented.

**EIR:** If you look at Africa as a whole—and I've seen it in Nigeria and Sudan firsthand—the lack of infrastructure is the number-one question—water, electrical power, roads. LaRouche and *EIR* have put forth the idea that there should be a complete economic development and infrastructure-building approach throughout Africa, east-west railroads, north-south railroads, connecting it up to Asia and the Eurasian Land-Bridge that the Chinese are working on.

This is not going to be done under the present IMF-World Bank system. Mr. LaRouche thinks that this financial system is on its last legs, and that we will see a return to protectionism, a return to nation-states deciding policy without the interference of the World Trade Organization, and the World Bank and the IMF; and that states will come together in a community of principle, where each state is committed to the General Welfare of its population, and trading with other countries to that end.

Is this the direction we should be going, to develop the continent of Africa, and break from current policies?

**Sisulu:** The last meeting of the Group of Eight received a class from three Presidents—President Mbeki, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria, and President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria. And what the three have been mandated to do, by the OAU [Organization of African Unity], is to develop what is loosely termed, global strategy on Africa, that the three would develop a framework on. It's still in that conceptual phase at the moment. But primarily, it speaks to the issue of what President Mbeki calls African solutions for African problems. As to the details of how, the elements of this strategy, I have no idea how it's going to actually pan out, except to say, that central to that strategy, will be African countries, and their vision for their countries, for the continent, in relation to the rest of the world.

As to whether there would be a United States of Africa, well, there should be, that debate took place recently, in Tripoli, and I think there was a discussion, saying, we need to find a way of uniting, and possibly having a Parliament of Africa. But these are matters that are under discussion.

Is this the way that the world should go? I cannot say that this is the way the world should go, but certainly it seems to be the way that Africa is going.