

## AFRICAN FREEDOM STRUGGLE - IN DENMARK:

Organisations as Policy Developers and Policy Advocates

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Danish policies and debates about possible intervention strategies were a long-time issue in Danish foreign policy. For over 30 years, from 1960 to 1994, Southern Africa was a matter of concern, discussion, initiatives and efforts for small groups of grassroots, for large activist movements, for press coverage and in periods for heated debates in parliament.<sup>1</sup>

Danish interventions took two forms. One was that of sanctions and boycott of trade, diplomatic, cultural and sports relations. Attention must be made to the distinction between sanctions and boycott that was not always clear at the time or in present historic debates, either. Whereas sanctions are imposed by law by the official Denmark and form part of the country's foreign policy, boycotts are initiatives carried out by groups of consumers, athletes etc. on their individual initiative.

The other form of Danish intervention was that of government funded support to refugees, to scholarships, to humanitarian organisations and to national liberation movements. This support was in its substance humanitarian rather than political. It went to education, to health activities and to construction and other support to refugee camps. And support practice was that a Danish or international NGO was the project holder administrating the support and carrying out activities. At times this was in collaboration with a national liberation movement, but Danish funding was never given in cash to a movement.

However, the existence of Danish support had political impact, sometimes less, sometimes more. But this was independent of the actual support and much more a result of how - and how loudly - it was announced and marketed.

### 1960 - 1965: Consumer boycotts and the establishment of official humanitarian support

In late 1959, the Western social democratic trade union federation ICFTU joined an initiative from the British Anti-Apartheid movement and launched a consumers boycott campaign. The Nordic TUCs (LO) met and coordinated a campaign for the months of April and May of 1960.

On March 21 the South African Police shot and killed demonstrators at the police station in the township of Sharpville. The PAC and ANC movements were banned and most of their leadership went underground, while ANC deputy president Oliver Tambo went into exile. The events drew much global attention. The UN Security Council denounced the South African action and called for

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'harmony between the races'. In Denmark, Foreign Minister Krag denounced apartheid in parliament on 31 March.

A month later, Tambo came to Denmark to speak at the First of May in Copenhagen, invited by the local Social Democratic Party and union branches, as part of the boycott campaign. Tambo compared apartheid with nazi racism and asked people to join the boycott campaign, although he did not invite government to impose legal sanctions.

Boosted by Tambo's visit and new international reports about the conditions in South Africa, the boycott campaign was a huge success. Just 15 years after German nazi occupation and holocaust, apartheid constitutional racism and the killing of demonstrators was simply not acceptable. Wide sections of the Danish public avoided South African marmalade and other products, or even participated in information and other activities. But after May where the campaign was set to end, activities ceased.

In the UN, prospects for coordinated international action against South Africa were fading because Western members of the Security Council were against it. Instead, the General Assembly finally adopted a resolution in November 1962 that invited member states to boycott South Africa, diplomatically and economically. Before the assembly, the Nordic Foreign Ministers had agreed to abstain from voting on the resolution, despite ANC requests to support it. The Nordic rationale was that if the Security Council would not make sanctions mandatory and if such sanctions were not backed by South Africa's major trading partners Britain, United States and France, a UN initiative would merely be a gesture that would damage the good cause and undermine the UN.

In Denmark, there were new popular initiatives. Danish youth organisations organised an international seminar in Århus in 1962 prior to an African-Scandinavian Youth Congress in Oslo. In 1963 the Danish Youth Council (DUF), with a strong involvement of Social Democratic organisations, took the initiative to carry out a new boycott campaign against South Africa. A majority of the members of the Danish parliament signed a petition to boycott, but this did not influence the government policy agreed with the other Nordic countries. 'The Nordic governments agree fully that official sanctions will not contribute.. as long as they can not be effective, and such un-coordinated action will only undermine the UN', Social Democratic Foreign Minister Hækkerup said.

Danish dockworkers had mistaken the signatures of a majority of parliament members for a political majority and boycotted a Swedish ship carrying South African fruit. But the case was taken to the court of arbitration and workers were fined. No legislation was made to support their action. Official sanctions against South Africa were not part of Danish policy until the 1980s.

Instead, Hækkerup in September 1963 on behalf of the Nordic countries condemned apartheid and suggested the UN should produce a UN plan for democracy in South Africa. In December the Security Council requested the

General Secretary to provide humanitarian and legal aid to victims of apartheid and invited member countries to contribute. Following Norway and Sweden, Denmark reacted in the middle of 1964 by sending its first support, a one time grant of Kroner 200,000 to scholarships through the International University Exchange Fund.

In January 1965, the Danish Foreign Ministry 'along the lines of Danish policies and in order to make support less anonymous' produced a permanent arrangement for support. Inspired by Norway, an advisory board to the Minister was established to help allocate the money and eight people from Danish NGOs, but formally in their individual capacity, were appointed. The first allocation went mainly to refugees through the UNHCR, the World Council of Churches and the Zambian Red Cross, and to legal aid in South Africa through the Defense and Aid Fund. In the Danish press the Danish support was widely welcomed. In the coming years, allocations were made along similar lines, and with an increasing volume. With racist Rhodesia's unilateral declaration of independence from Britain, with international denunciation of South African rule in Namibia and with increasing attention on Portuguese colonial territories, the Danish support was soon expanded to also cover these countries.

The allocation had had the effect 'to end anonymity'. The news that Denmark along with Holland would support Defense and Aid Fund was on the radio news and on newspaper front pages in South Africa. Foreign Minister Muller was prompted to comment that 'such support would go to communists and murderers working to overthrow the legitimate South African government'.

In general, Danish foreign policy reactions to the state promoted racism of apartheid South Africa were a support that was humanitarian in its form and in its allocation practice. At the same time Denmark condemned apartheid diplomatically, like the most of the world did. Denmark and the other Nordic countries did not apply official sanctions in spite of popular campaigns with quite strong roots within the ruling Social Democratic Party. However, while Danish support was humanitarian in its form, its mere existence was a political statement that from the beginning showed it could have an impact.

The Danish anti-apartheid movement in the 1960s in Denmark were two. The 'Anti-Apartheid Kommiteen' was established in 1962, and became the Danish affiliate to International Defence and Aid Fund. Its purpose was to support liberation movements, first ANC and PAC, later also other Southern African movements. It actually produced a handbook on sabotage, written by veterans from the Danish resistance movement during the German occupation 1940-45. In 1966, it carried out a fund raising campaign for the movements that failed. After the big trials, South Africa was no longer on the headlines and an issue that could mobilise broad public support.

The other side of Danish anti-apartheid movement were existing NGOs such as the humanitarian 'DanChurchAid' and the international scholarship programme 'World University Service', represented by the Danish international students'

council 'DIS'. Also, the Danish Youth Council organising the 1963 boycott campaign, the Danish Refugee Council and Amnesty International Denmark were involved in various information etc. It was from these organisations the members were appointed to the mentioned Advisory Board to the Minister to help allocate the funds from the 'Anti-Apartheid Appropriation'.

### 1969/71 - 1977: Humanitarian support developing to also supporting activities in collaboration with national liberation movements

In the beginning of 1968 a right-liberal government took over in Denmark after social democratic governments in the 1960s. The humanitarian anti-apartheid allocations continued and were increasing, with the involvement of Danish NGOs. In the public, Vietnam had become the dominating area for involvement and discussion. Two socialist but non-communist parties to the left of the Social Democratic Party moved motions in parliament to officially recognize national liberation movements, but with no success.

That motion was much aimed at Vietnam, but also at Africa, as Southern Africa also had some attention from the New Left students' movement. Fighting US-lead Western imperialism and capitalist dominance also involved manifestations against fascism in Spain and Denmark's NATO partners Greece and Portugal. This co-incided with Denmark's NATO membership formally needing renewal in 1969, after 20 years. In this context, Danish activists saw liberation movements engaged in guerilla warfare against US dominance or Portuguese colonialism as fighting the same cause as themselves when they were battling against the police during a World Bank summit in Copenhagen or demonstrating outside the US embassy. And therefore, solidarity with liberation movements and supporting them was an act of mutual comradeship.

In 1969 the Social Democratic Party, in order to establish itself as active and progressive in the face of the new left, adopted a new action programme, 'Det nye Samfund' (For a New Society). A Solidarity Fund was established to raise support from social democratic organisations and individual members. The programme pledged the party's support to liberation movements in both Vietnam and in Africa and in the winter 1970-71 the party proposed the anti-apartheid allocation be increased from 1.5 to 6.5 million. The right-liberal government rejected these initiatives, but still, the first official Danish support to liberation movements took place under that government:

Before the start of the financial year 1971-72, Swapo, Zanu and MPLA of Namibia, Zimbabwe and Angola respectively, had submitted applications for humanitarian support from the Danish anti-apartheid allocation. Only the MPLA followed up on this with a detailed application of Kroner 50,000 as support for a Land Rover equipped as an ambulance to operate in liberated areas. The purpose - medical humanitarian assistance - was technically fully in line with existing allocation practices. The NGO members of the 'Anti-Apartheid Advisory Board had for some years argued that liberation movements, especially in liberated areas, should be recognised and supported in their health, education

and other activities. Otherwise, people in such areas would be discriminated compared to the new African states as they could not receive Danish development assistance.

However, the political section of the Ministry did make some reflections over this new supporting relationship being established with a liberation movement engaged in an armed struggle against Portugal - a NATO partner of Denmark. 'Support to national liberation movements is an innovation', an internal memo established. Documents from the start in 1964-65 and the record of allocations made since then were scrutinized by the Ministry departments to establish the nature of the appropriation and how the MPLA ambulance fitted in. They concluded the ambulance could be supported, as four conditions were still recognised:

- not to supply arms
- the existence of UN resolutions inviting support as a reference that it would not violate international law
- acceptance from neighbouring countries
- recognition of the liberation movement in question by the OAU

In October 1971 the government resigned and a new Social Democratic government took office. In his opening speech, Prime Minister Krag mentioned plans to increase support to national liberation by five million, in accordance with the 1969 party action programme. The new Foreign Minister K.B. Andersen upon his return from the UN General Assembly repeated the message at a press conference in November. Meanwhile, Ministry officials produced a memorandum that stated that, despite the minister statements, support would continue to be humanitarian, channelled 'through' Danish or international organisations, not 'to' the liberation movements, although co-ordination with the movements would now take place in some instances. In an example of elegant bureaucrat-manship, the memorandum said that 'now support can also be given to national liberation movements... but funds will never be paid to liberation movements, and thus, no practice has been changed'.

Interestingly, neither Krag's speech, Andersen's press conference nor readings on the budget triggered any political debate. But, in March 1972, Andersen made official visits to Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia, and while in Dar and Lusaka, he visited the Mozambican FRELIMO and Angolan MPLA liberation movements. At press conferences with the hosting Presidents, Andersen explained that Denmark would start funding support to national liberation movements. Media across Africa welcomed this whereas Portuguese newspapers criticized Denmark for several weeks, and in South Africa, 'The Star' ran the headline: 'Terror groups offered 12 million Rand'. Prime Minister Vorster denounced 'the Danish guerilla grant'.

Now debate did arise in Denmark. For weeks there were heated discussions in parliament and in the press. In the light of the cold war it was argued that liberation movements were dominated by communists and that Danish funds would be used for arms. The move was also questioned internally in the Social

Democratic Party when the Chairman of the strong metal workers union objected that the support would lead to orders to Portugal and South Africa being cancelled, and damage Danish exports and employment. Andersen made use of the mentioned memorandum from his ministry and tried to explain that money would not go 'to' the movements - despite what he said at his press conferences in Denmark and in Africa - but would still be channelled to NGOs for humanitarian and educational purposes. Debates continued for six years. Several motions and questions were made in parliament, lots of letters to editors and campaign materials were published.

The pattern of NGO activities on Southern Africa changed as part the 'new left' mobilisation around 1970. That year, a new generation established took over leadership of World University Service (WUS)- Denmark. Failing to convince international WUS to formally support national liberation movements, they established WUS-Dk as an independent entity with this purpose, while still raising funds for WUS-I scholarship programmes.

In 1971, students of theology and political science established 'Kirkernes Raceprogram', an independent branch of the World Council of Churches' 'Program to Combat Racism (PCR)', decided in Uppsala in 1968. With formulations to work with liberation movements, it was not considered possible in DanChurchAid, otherwise the main WCC partner in Denmark, to support PCR and its Fund. Kirkernes Raceprogram became rather active in the first half of the 1970s keeping South Africa on the agenda with information campaigns (with frequent visits by exiled Namibian Bishop Colin Winter), and documentation of harsh workers conditions in Danish companies operating in South Africa. One rather spectacular action took place at a general assembly of the big trading company and shipping line 'East Asia Company'. Prominent church people, including a Bishop, with individual shares, posed embarrassing questions to the board, and a two-hour debate followed that was well covered by the Danish business press.

In 1971, WUS-Dk, together the high school students' organisation DGS and the UN youth association 'I.F.' carried out the major 'Afrika-71' campaign that included the publishing of booklets, seminars, a tour by Ruth First and an operation day's work fund raising campaign. The campaign tried to make contact with liberation movements in Portuguese colonies, and the best response came from MPLA. International Secretary Lucio Lara agreed to come to Denmark for meetings and participating in the campaign, and he met with Foreign Minister Andersen.

The WUS-MPLA contacts led to a proposal for the construction of a junior secondary school for MPLA refugees in Congo-Brazzaville. WUS had a total of Kroner 3.5 million allocated from the anti-apartheid allocation for the years 1972-75 and acted as the project contractor whereafter it was run by UNESCO with Swedish funding. Later allocations to projects with liberation movement involvement were supplies to MPLA refugee camps in Zambia and Swapo camps in Angola and to DanChurchAid through the World Council of Churches to

Frelimo and MPLA camps, and later to ANC schools in Tanzania. Still, the bulk of Danish anti-apartheid support took place through Danish and international NGOs without co-operation with liberation movements.

Although the new expanded practice was established in 1972, the debate continued. In 1974 a one-year right-liberal minority government made moves to cut support through Danish NGOs and co-operation with national liberation movements. Foreign Minister Guldberg explained he was not confident that Danish support was not mis-used for arms. However, after fierce debates and lobbying Guldberg had to back down as he could not come up with evidence to convince even the necessary right wing parties otherwise supporting the government that cash money went to liberation movements and could be mis-used.

The allocation practice developed by the allocation committee and confirmed by Andersen once again withstood criticism because it was technically still humanitarian support, with Danish and International NGOs as the liable contractors. The political profile, as promoted by Andersen during his Africa visits, was a political output that was built upon the humanitarian practice. This made it robust during political storms while it could still make some strong impact as criticism of the regimes in Pretoria, Salisbury and Lisbon. It also reflects the political climate in Denmark for support to liberation in Southern Africa. Humanitarian and educational support had a strong backing whereas direct support would be disputed. And yet, the humanitarian support was given a political impact that was sometimes very strong.

With a Social Democratic - Liberal coalition government in 1978-79, a long phase of developing the form of Danish official support through the anti-apartheid appropriation ended, and it continued to grow steadily in volume.

#### 1978 - 1985/86: Establishing official trade sanctions

Since the Nordic countries had agreed in 1962 that they would not impose unilateral trade sanctions against South Africa without a mandatory UN initiative, this had been Danish policy. Whereas humanitarian support - with or without the involvement of national liberation movements - was increasing over the years, boycott remained an issue for the individual consumer. The Soweto uprising in 1976 with its student protests and many shootings, and the killing in 1977 of Steve Biko brought South Africa back on the agenda, internationally, in the UN, at the Nordic level, and in Denmark.

The increasing number of reported human rights violations after Soweto combined with statistics showing that Danish trade relations with South Africa were expanding due to huge coal purchases, despite political statements, was a paradox that mobilised individuals and organisations in Denmark. From 1977, local South Africa Committees were established that demonstrated against shops selling South African fruit and agitated for government measures against South Africa, for boycotts and sanctions. The campaign resulted in the large supermarket chains 'Irma' and the cooperative 'Brugsen' dropping South African

products, and in consumer commodity imports going down. At the same time, in November 1977, the Socialist People's Party (SF) proposed a motion in the Danish Parliament, referring to a UN General Assembly sanctions programme of November 9, 1976, and to increasing Danish coal purchases in South Africa.

Danish trade with South Africa had previously been at a very modest scale in absolute terms until it became totally dominated by coal imports. After the oil crisis in 1973, the Danish parliament decided that fuel imports should not be dominated by oil. At the same time, South Africa was investing heavily in coal mining and exporting facilities. From a modest start of 21.000 tons in 1976, Danish purchases increased steadily to a rather constant 3 million tons from 1979/80, about 10% of South Africa's coal exports, worth more than DKK 1 billion.

In March 1977, the Nordic Ministers of Foreign Affairs gathered in Reykjavik for one of their regular bi-annual meetings. Southern Africa was on top of the list. The meeting adopted a number of guidelines to coordinate policies, and in March 1978 in Oslo, the Nordic countries adopted a joint 'Action Programme'. It was agreed: - to prevent new Nordic investments in South Africa, - to negotiate with Nordic companies to reduce their production in South Africa, - to request sports and cultural contacts to be terminated, and - to increase support to refugees, liberation movements and victims of apartheid. The programme was significant joint Nordic action, but it was not a formal shift away from the 1962 policy not to impose sanctions, repeated in 1976 when the Nordic countries had abstained from voting in favour of a UN General Assembly sanctions programme that SF used as a reference for its proposal.

The November 1977 SF motion was the following months modified to become the Danish action plan on the Nordic Programme, and was adopted in its final form on 26 May 1978. The Danish Parliament:

- declared its support to the Action Programme,
  - invited the government to work out specific initiatives in accordance with the programme,
  - requested the government to terminate export credits for South Africa and phase out the Export Officer based at the Pretoria embassy, and
  - requested Danish power companies to stop their coal purchases in South Africa.
- SF proposals to stop the joint Scandinavian airline SAS from flying on South Africa and to stop migration to South Africa was not backed by the ruling Social Democratic Party, and were not included.

On March 17-18 1978, Danish NGOs, labour organisations and the bigger South Africa Committees (SAKs) in Copenhagen and Århus organised a major conference with the participation of Danish Ministers and Members of Parliament, ANC and SWAPO representatives and Danish and international organisations. This was less than a week after the agreement in Oslo on the Nordic Action Programme and at the beginning of the UN Anti-Apartheid Year starting a few days later. The same month the organisers established the 'Landskommiteen Sydafrika Aktion' (LSA) to coordinate Danish organisations

and individuals during a national campaign inspired by the UN Anti-Apartheid year. The campaign included information, lobbying and fund raising, often in connection with demonstrating outside shops selling South African fruit and other products. However, it soon seemed to many members and member organisations that LSA was to a large extent run and funded by people and trade unions connected to the Communist party, and Social Democratic organisations withdrew from LSA. In 1979, LSA continued to campaign actively. Funds were raised and donated to ANC for equipment to its 'Radio Freedom' in Lusaka, and a printing machine to the exiled trade union SACTU's newspaper 'Workers Unity'. Local committees were established in several Danish towns, which gave the movement quite a wide national backing, and spectacular actions were carried out to draw press attention and spread information.

The Danish NGOs and especially the LSA and Kirkernes Raceprogram focused increasingly on the increasing trade relations. The contradiction between the statements of the Nordic Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the increasing coal purchases and the meagre results of the soft Danish May 26 1978 motion seemed an obvious paradox to many Danes. It strengthened the NGO notion that legislation on sanctions was necessary. However, the 1962 Nordic policy on sanctions was still in force. In late 1980, Social Democratic Minister of Foreign Affairs Kjeld Olesen said in Parliament: 'As long as the UN Security Council has not adopted sanctions against South Africa, it is un-realistic that the Nordic countries do it. The government opposes isolated Danish initiatives.'

This would not change until some special developments took place in Danish political constellations: In 1982, the Social Democratic minority government resigned and a conservative-liberal government took over. This was another minority government, based on the support of the centrist, social liberal party 'Radikale Venstre' (RV). RV agreed with the government that solving Denmark's economic and financial problems was to have top priority. However, on a number of international and defence issues, RV disagreed with the new government and sided with the opposition of the Social Democratic and the socialist parties. South Africa was one of them.

The first example of a parliamentary decision by this so-called 'alternative majority' is from January 1983. During a debate in Parliament, the Social Democratic Party moved a resolution that stated that the government should request Danish power companies to phase out their coal purchases in South Africa before 1990. The government spoke against it during the debate, but facing a majority it had to abstain from voting, in order not to be defeated on the issue. Not surprisingly the government evoked the position of previous Social Democratic governments, and their argument that further sanctions would have to be part of a coordinated UN effort, based on mandatory Security Council resolutions. But the Social Democratic Party explained that its patience had now finally run out because of the continuing coal purchases. The government survived, the resolution was passed and a new parliamentarian pattern was set for the coming years.

In February 1984, the Socialist Peoples Party (SF) party moved a new resolution. As a follow up on the January 1983 resolution and the Nordic Action Programme of 1978, the wording was relatively soft compared to the party's positions during the debates, but the purpose was to gain support from the Radikale Venstre and the Social Democratic Party. The resolution demanded that:

- Danish power companies should report their coal purchases and their initiatives to follow the 1978 and 1983 requests to gradually end their purchases from South Africa before 1990,
- the government should make it clear to shipping and oil companies that trading oil with South Africa was contradictory to Danish legislation,
- the Danish government should work actively against Nordic involvement in IMF credits to South Africa,
- the government should, if necessary through legislation, prevent any new Danish investments in South Africa,
- flight connections to South Africa by the Nordic airline SAS should cease immediately.

The government was against the resolution during the first reading, in the Foreign Policy Committee and during the second and final reading when it was passed on May 29. They still repeated the argument that sanctions would have to be international and mandatory. Like the 1983 motion, the SF resolution still used the word 'requests' when talking about coal purchases and oil supplies. But it was qualitatively new that these requests had a build-in time factor and that parliament had committed itself to pass legislation if businesses did not follow the requests. Regarding investments, the government argued that there was no legal basis for the motion, but in response, 'the alternative majority' asked the government to produce such basis if necessary. The resolution was passed on the 29th, against the vote of the government.

The following year the government 'behaved', and in February 1985 it proposed a bill against new investments in South Africa. It was modified to include Namibia too, and to instruct Danish businesses already involved in South Africa to report regularly on their activities, wage rates and other conditions for their employees. The bill was passed in May with the government parties abstaining from the vote.

Danish NGOs continued their lobbying and actions. The 'Kirkernes Raceprogram' and the local SAK in Århus continued to dig up documentation on the trade between Denmark and South Africa. Other NGOs were also increasingly active in information and lobby work, based on their contacts and project activities in the Southern Africa region; many funded by the Apartheid Appropriation. In 1981, Mellempøkketigt Samvirke established the coordinating body 'Føllesmøderne' (The joint meetings) to help NGOs exchange information and plans and to coordinate contacts with the politicians.

The NGOs analysed the coal trade, and documented how the low South African prices were the result of 'apartheid discounts' to maintain a market, as more and more customers phased out. Thus, as SAK-Århus pointed out, the argument that Denmark should go for the cheapest coal on the world market, without making any political considerations was in itself a political free ride on other countries' sanctions. In 1985 Kirkernes Raceprogram published a comprehensive profile of Danish trade, investments and other economic involvement's in South Africa, a follow up on a pioneer book from 1974.

From 1982, SAK-Århus ran a boycott campaign against South African coal by lobbying the local town council, and during 1985, Århus and later other major Danish towns voted to boycott South African products, referring to the various resolutions in parliament and to UN Security Council Resolution no 569 of July 26, 1985. An more important side effect was that the local government representatives on the semi-official Danish power company boards were instructed to pressure managements to speed up the out phasing of their South African coal purchases.

In 1984-85, LSA was re-established as a loose umbrella structure for local SAKs, and a new active SAK-Copenhagen was established. In the years to come, it carried out lots of spectacular activities to inform about the situation and human rights violations in South Africa, and it was a strong advocate for Danish sanctions legislation. The actions in Copenhagen were in deed not always legal, but always based on the self-defined moral foundation that representatives of a system that did not provide equal rights to its citizens should not expect to enjoy such rights themselves. In May 1985, South African Airlines and a Danish trading company had their office furniture, typewriters etc. 'forcibly removed' into the streets 'in solidarity with the three million blacks that had been deported'.

In October 1985, the South African consulate in Copenhagen was occupied. A major police force managed to clear the premises before a press conference could be held, but the occupants got hold of the consulate's code book, which was hurried to ANC in Lusaka. The authorities raised charges against the activists to pay for the damages. The lawsuits could have ruined them personally, but they were never followed up by the Danish legal system.

After the May 1985 bill on Danish business involvement in South Africa, the opposition parties in the Danish parliament kept asking the government for further action on the Danish coal purchases. On December 13, 1985 a Social Democratic motion was approved in Parliament requesting the government to legislate a six months phasing-out of coal imports, and an immediate stop in all other trade. The moderate text was an invitation to the government parties so that they could vote for it, but this failed as one of the minor coalition parties, the 'Centrum-Demokraterne' was against any kind of sanctions.

The government produced the legislation required in the resolution. On 6 May 1986, a 'Bill against coal imports from the Republic of South Africa' was adopted

that prohibited any coal imports after 6 November, three years before the deadline requested in 1983. On 30 May a 'Bill against trade with the Republic of South Africa', covering all other imports and exports was adopted by the 'alternative majority', with the government parties abstaining from voting.

The liberal Foreign Minister, Elleman-Jensen, had presented the bill by declaring that he did that without any pleasure. The government parties regretted during the debate that Denmark alone was now about to impose general trade sanctions on South Africa, ahead of the other Nordic countries, Denmark's EC partners and UN Security Council resolution texts. They referred to the Swedish position from October 1985 against legislation on general sanctions. The opposition explained they saw no other options than getting as many countries and groups of countries as possible to move ahead with sanctions and try to motivate others. They were also confident that the other Nordic countries would soon follow Denmark's example.

As from 15 December 1986 all trade with South Africa was banned, marking the final step away from the Nordic 1962 policy of 'following the UN'. Denmark was the first Western country to impose full sanctions on South Africa, after maintaining for decades that such measures had first to be taken by South Africa's largest trading partners to have any effects.

The process leading to sanctions began around 1978 and constitutes a second phase of Denmark's involvement in the struggle for liberation in Southern Africa. The interacting factors behind the process were new international focus on events in South Africa after the Soweto-uprising in 1976, increasing public and NGO pressure and a stronger UN commitment. Plus, as the determining factor at the domestic political level, a change of attitude in the Danish Social Democratic Party.