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COMMITTEE FOR ACADEMIC FREEDOM IN AFRICA

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INTRODUCTION

This issue of CAFA is devoted to a chronology of the struggles which African students have waged between 1985 and 1993, primarily in response to the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) to which their countries and academic institutions have been submitted.

This chronology is a testimony of the passion and energy African students have devoted to preserving their academic freedom. The hundreds of dead students, the thousands arrested and tortured, the many more who have demonstrated and gone on strike in the face of violent repression, between 1985 and 1993, teach us that the struggle for access to knowledge is not *passé* in Africa. It also confirms our claim that the major forces threatening academic freedom in Africa in the 1980s and 1990s have been the Structural Adjustment Programs which the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have imposed on African governments and economies.

In country after country, student demonstration after demonstration, in its slogans, flyers, position papers the African student movement has shown a remarkable homogeneity of demands. "NO to starving and studying," "NO to tuition fees," "NO to cuts in books and stationary," "NO to the elimination of grants and allowances," "NO to Structural Adjustment, to corrupt leaders, and to the recolonization of Africa," are slogans that have unified African students in the SAP era to a degree unprecedented since the anti-colonial struggle.

This chronology is by no means complete. Not only are many "invisible" struggles absent from this report, but absent as well are the struggles of students in South Africa, to which we plan to dedicate a future issue. An account of the African student movement is also not complete without the inclusion of the struggles of teachers—who increasingly have joined with their students to demand that African universities not be dismantled. In this case too we refer to future issues of CAFA for a fuller account. We are opening up an archive for material concerning the African university student movement and will periodically update this chronology. If you have any items that you think belong in the archive please send it to us.

We thank the student organizations and colleagues in Africa who have helped us to compile this issue. We also thank Steve Askins, Dennis Brutus, Dan Coughlin, Julius Ihonvbere, and Jon Kraus for their help.

Finally we would like to thank Africa Network for citing CAFA in its "Kwanza Honors List: 1992."

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