



## **“THE RIGHT TO KNOW THE TRUTH”: RELATIONS BETWEEN SWITZERLAND AND SOUTH AFRICA 1948-1994**

### **INVITATION TO A WORKSHOP**

**ON TUESDAY, 11 MARCH 2008, 10h00 – 17h00**

**THE OLD FORT – CONSTITUTION HILL JOHANNESBURG**

**Hosted by the South African Human Rights Commission,  
the Swiss Apartheid Debt and Reparations Campaign,  
the Khulumani Support Group and  
the Department of Political Studies, University of the Witwatersrand**

In 2000, the Swiss National Science Foundation was commissioned by the Swiss Federal Council to investigate the relations between Switzerland and South Africa during Apartheid after an intense and concerted lobbying campaign by various solidarity groups. Ten different research teams investigated aspects of Swiss-South African relations under increasingly difficult conditions because of limited and denied access to archival resources.

It is well known that Switzerland - based on an alleged commitment to neutrality and non-intervention – excluded itself from international sanctions and anti-apartheid international pressure to promote democracy and respect for human rights in South Africa. Instead, Switzerland maintained strong diplomatic, scientific and economic relations with South Africa, some of which arguably sustained the apartheid system.

The Swiss National Science Foundation research project was led by Professor Georg Kreis from the University of Basel. It focused on different state and non-state agents that formed, influenced and profited from relations between Switzerland and South Africa between 1948 and 1994, the period of National Party rule.

The Kreis Report explored the legal and political context of these relations both within Switzerland and internationally. It traced the perceptions and politicisation of the continued relations between the apartheid regime and the Swiss among the Swiss population. It also evaluated the scope of the relationship and reactions, measures and

interventions in the political, economic and non-economic domains such as sports, culture and tourism. In addition it dealt with Swiss solidarity groups supporting the liberation movements.

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Professor Georg Kreis is Professor of Contemporary History at the University of Basel and President of the National Commission against Racism in Switzerland. Professor Kreis coordinated the research project and compiled the findings in the publication entitled: **Switzerland and South Africa 1948-1994**.

At the conclusion of the proceedings, you are cordially invited to the

## **BOOK LAUNCH**

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## **PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME WORKSHOP**

### **“THE RIGHT TO KNOW THE TRUTH”**

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| <b>10h15</b> | <b>Welcome</b>  |
| <b>10h30</b> | <b>The right to know – democratisation of research</b><br>Barbara Mueller, Swiss Apartheid Debt and Reparations Campaign                  |
| <b>11h00</b> | <b>Seeking respectable allies – Secrecy and complicity in South African-Swiss relations</b><br>Professor Georg Kreis, University of Basel |
| <b>12h15</b> | <b>Lunch</b>  |
| <b>13h30</b> | <b>Introduction TBA</b>   |
| <b>13h45</b> | <b>Hedging apartheid – an untold story</b><br>Mascha Madoerin, Economist, Research Group on Swiss-South African Relations                 |

- 15h00**                    **Tea break**
- 15h30**                    **South African Responses**  
Commissioner Jody Kollapen, Chair South African Human Right  
Commission  
Khulumani Support Group
- 16h00**                    **Where to go from here?**  
Professor Sheila Meintjes
- 18h00**                    **Book Launch**  
**Switzerland and South Africa 1948-1994**  
Commissioner Jody Kollapen, Chair South African Human Rights  
Commission  
Professor Georg Kreis, University of Basel

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