



Foreword

by Nelson Mandela

The title of this book, *No Easy Victories*, is well chosen. Taken from the great West African leader Amilcar Cabral, it reminds us that the people of Africa, struggling to end colonialism and gain majority rule, paid, and continue to pay, a heavy price. Some, like Cabral himself, were killed before achieving the prize of victory and they are too little remembered. Others, like me, were able to complete our long walk to freedom and have remained in the public eye. Despite the best efforts of the apartheid regime to make me invisible, I walked out of prison after 27 years into the glaring light of television cameras that projected my release around the globe. This was proper, for my release was the result of developments in South Africa, strengthened by the demand for my freedom from a worldwide anti-apartheid movement.

The editors and authors of this book have undertaken to tell the story of the American involvement not just in the anti-apartheid movement, but also in the broader anticolonial movement that is decidedly less well known. As it recounts five decades of activism, it explores the relationships between anticolonial and anti-apartheid movements in Africa and struggles for justice within the United States.

The Americans we trusted most were those who understood that their civil rights movement and the anti-Vietnam War movement, for example, were part of the same battle we waged in Africa. We were all working to free ourselves from the bondage of race-based oppression, whether in the form of apartheid in South Africa or the legacy of slavery and racism in the United States. We were part of a worldwide movement that continues today to redress the economic and social injustices that kill body, mind, and spirit. Just as we watched and learned from the continuing struggle within the United States, so too did activists there gain strength from our struggles.

On occasion the work of our American colleagues was indispensable. The economic sanctions bill passed by the U.S. Congress in 1986 is a case in point. Without the decades-long divestment campaign undertaken by university students, churches, civil rights organizations, trade unions, and state and local governments to cut economic ties to South Africa, the U.S. Congress would not have acted, even to the extent of overriding a presidential veto. International sanctions were a key factor in the eventual victory of the African National Congress over South Africa's white minority regime.

This successful campaign demonstrated what can be accomplished when citizens take up their responsibility to help shape U.S. political and economic policy for Africa. This work remains urgent. The post-September 11 world has witnessed an alarming rise in U.S. unilateralism, proliferating areas of instability and armed conflict, a growing gap between the world's rich and poor, and a shocking failure to adequately respond to the HIV/AIDS crisis, which will kill more people in Africa than all the wars for national liberation put together. *No Easy Victories* makes clear that our lives and fortunes around the globe are indeed linked. My hope and belief is that it will inspire a new generation to take up today's challenges.