

Resources from the South Africa Divestment Movement



Many student organizers in the fossil fuel divestment movement and other divestment movements have expressed interest in what can be learned from the South Africa divestment movement that occurred on U.S. campuses in the 1970s and 1980s. Here are some selected materials from that movement that discuss its political arguments, support from South African leaders, coalition-building, and creative strategies. Most are available – along with almost 7,000 other documents, images, and audio and video recordings – on the African Activist Archive website (<http://africanactivist.msu.edu/>) and on Facebook at [ow.ly/oNYnz](https://www.facebook.com/ow.ly/oNYnz).

The **Climate Justice Working Group** of the newly-formed **US - Africa Network** can provide speakers and more information about both the history of the South African divestment movement and the contemporary impacts of fossil fuel extraction and climate change on Africa. A speakers list on South Africa divestment is available from USAN.ClimateJustice@gmail.com.

Voices for Withdrawal

by Stephanie Urdang, Don Jamison, Africa Fund
May 1985 (6 pages) [ow.ly/o14ae](https://www.ow.ly/o14ae)

A concise argument for U.S. corporate withdrawal from South Africa and statements by courageous South African leaders for whom taking this position was a criminal offense.

Divestment Actions on South Africa by U.S. and Canadian Colleges and Universities

by Africa Fund Aug 1988 (2 pages) [ow.ly/o14em](https://www.ow.ly/o14em)
List of colleges and universities that divested from companies in South Africa, either partly or fully.



Basil Clunie

Students protesting at Northwestern Univ. - 1981

Anti-Apartheid Activities in the United States of America: A Rising Tide

United Nations Centre Against Apartheid
by Prexy Nesbitt, American Committee on Africa
December 1977 (13 pages) [ow.ly/o14hv](https://www.ow.ly/o14hv)

This testimony describes organizing in U.S. anti-apartheid movement by the black community, churches, single-issue support groups, and labor unions. It also summarizes the student divestment movement during this period.

Questions and Answers on Divestment

by James Cason, Lisa Crooms, Jennifer Davis, The Africa Fund
July 1987 (4 pages) [ow.ly/o12fW](https://www.ow.ly/o12fW)

Answers basic political questions about the impacts of U.S. companies in South Africa as well as financial issues raised by some opponents of divestment.

Endowment for Divestiture organized by Harvard University alumni

by Micheal Alter Fall 1987 (1 page) [ow.ly/oes2S](https://www.ow.ly/oes2S)
Explains endowment fund created to receive donations from graduating seniors and other alumni that will be given to Harvard University only when it divests from companies operating in South Africa.



Roger J. Wyan

Police attack shanties at UC Berkeley, April 1986

Dealing with University Repression: A Resource for Student Activists

by ACOA and Center for Constitutional Rights
Undated, early 1987? (6 pages) ow.ly/o14kQ

Pamphlet for organizers dealing with disciplinary and legal actions during the escalation of divestment protests beginning in Spring 1985.

Columbia Coalition for a Free South Africa

by Coalition for a Free South Africa [Columbia Univ]
April 12, 1985 (15 pages) ow.ly/o14nG

Press packet explains the campaign of students, faculty, and alumni; summarizes the history of the campaign going back to 1978; and lists supporters.

Make It in Massachusetts, Not In South Africa: How We Won Divestment Legislation

by MASS DIVEST

December 1984 (4 pages) ow.ly/o14pc

Summarizes a successful state legislative campaign, discussing the importance of coalition-building, sticking with a strong demand, and addressing financial issues.

Legislative Action Against Apartheid: A Case Study of the Connecticut Campaign

by Connecticut Anti-Apartheid Committee

January 1982 (4 pages) ow.ly/o14qD

Describes the state legislative campaign from 1978 to 1981 by a coalition involving many unions as well as religious and civil rights groups. [Partial divestment legislation was adopted in 1982.]

Testimony by Randall Robinson

October 22, 1981 (5 pages) ow.ly/oB28o

Testimony by Executive Director of TransAfrica on U.S. corporate activities in South Africa before the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Free South African Movement Demands

1985 or 1986 (1 page) ow.ly/otHpu

Poster created by the Free South Africa Movement (FSAM) in Chicago listing divestment in the context of other demands.



Rick Reinhard

Randall Robinson & Bishop Desmond Tutu at Dec. 1984 FSAM protest at South African Embassy

Michigan State University divests from apartheid South Africa, 1978

by Will Lawrence for Global Nonviolent Action Database, project of Swarthmore College

September 19, 2010 (3 pages) ow.ly/o8Jq3

Discusses divestment at a public university with publicly-elected Trustees. (For case studies of two dozen other student campaigns, search for "divestment" - ow.ly/ovORY)

Anti-Apartheid Organizing On Campus ... And Beyond

by South Africa Catalyst Project

Palo Alto (61 pages) ow.ly/oi96B

A resource for expanding the movement beyond campus divestment. Includes six campus case studies and discusses other organizing targets.

The US-Africa Network is a project of Eastern Educational Resource Collaborative (East Ed).

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For more information:

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