



Institute of
Commonwealth Studies

SCHOOL OF ADVANCED STUDY • UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

REVIEW OF
African
Political Economy

A Revolutionary Life:

Ruth First 1925-1982

A symposium at Senate House, 7th June 2012

ruthfirstpapers.org.uk

Ruth First was an anti-apartheid activist, investigative journalist, and scholar. First worked her entire life to end apartheid in South Africa. Writing in 1969, she explained how her life was dedicated 'to the liberation of Africa for I count myself an African, and there is no cause I hold dearer'.

Her knowledge of Africa was phenomenal and she knew many of the continent's leading political figures, including Nelson Mandela and Ben Bella. First was an influential figure who saw activism, solidarity work (for the anti-apartheid struggle), research and writing as essential elements for a revolutionary.

She was exiled from South Africa in 1964, with her husband, the prominent South African communist Joe Slovo, and their children. In 1982, while working in Mozambique, Ruth First was killed by a letter bomb sent by South African secret service.

2012 is the thirtieth anniversary of Ruth First's murder. The Institute of Commonwealth Studies (ICwS) and the Commonwealth Advisory Bureau are holding a one-day celebration of Ruth First's extraordinary life and work. The event is part of a year-long project to digitise some of Ruth First's papers and books held at the ICwS.

The event will include Justice Albie Sachs, Gillian Slovo, Barbara Harlow, Alpheus Mangezi and Alan Wieder, followed by a book launch by Don Pinnock.

RSVP: chloe.pieters@sas.ac.uk

Registration fee: £10 (£5 for students/retired/unwaged)

INCLUDES LUNCH, COFFEE and WINE



UNIVERSIDADE
EDUARDO MONDLANE
CENTRO DE
ESTUDOS
AFRICANOS