

# Brazil boos as Mandela jets in

Behind the rhythmic exuberance of ANC president Nelson Mandela's welcome to Brazil last week there was a poignant spot of embarrassment.

It seems that President Collor de Mello of Brazil recognised an awkward anomaly in the fact that shortly before Mr Mandela's arrival, the Brazilian government had announced it would normalise relations with Pretoria by appointing a full ambassador in SA.

So, to ameliorate any confusion or misunderstanding, a presidential statement announced that the ambassador would be a black Brazil-

ian. Everyone seemed relieved, the bunting went up, flags were draped and the drums rolled for the visitor.

But there was an uncomfortable silence from the Foreign Ministry:

Then, in response to inquiries from a mischievous newspaper, *O Globo*, the truth was squeezed out of a reluctant bureaucracy — Brazil, where about 60 per cent of the population is black or of mixed race, does not have a single black or mixed-race ambassador.

What is more, after well over a century of independence from Portugal, Brazil has never elevated a Brazilian of co-

lour to such a senior diplomatic post.

A weary Mr Mandela met Brazil's only black governor yesterday but cancelled some activities due to tiredness.

Mr Mandela gave an interview with a Brazilian newspaper in which he blasted the West for easing sanctions and criticised the SA Government for giving money to Inkatha.

"The suspension of sanctions and of other forms of pressure on the apartheid regime was tragically premature," he told the *Jornal do Brasil* newspaper. — Washington Bureau, Sapa-Associated Press.

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