



## Dutch rightwinger's visit causes rift

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THE visit to South Africa this week of Martin Bosma, a member of a rightwing Dutch political party, has polarised the Afrikaner community.

Bosma, of the Partij voor de Vrijheid (Party for Freedom), is to meet senior members of the Solidarity Coalition, which includes AfriForum, the Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurvereniginge and the Dameskring, to "discuss ties between Afrikaans and Dutch speakers and the other members of the Dutch language union", according to AfriForum spokesman Alana Bailey.

But the news has upset the

Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut CEO Christo van der Rheede, who suggested that Bosma's visit would undo "many Afrikaans-speaking people's efforts to rid Afrikaans of its apartheid baggage".

Bosma is regarded as a close ally of the Party for Freedom leader Geert Wilders.

Though it is not known exactly what will be discussed, Bosma is visiting shortly after Wilders launched a controversial website in which he urged the Dutch public to file complaints against immigrants from central and eastern Europe.

Radio Netherlands Worldwide said yesterday that the website showed news clippings with provoca-

tive headlines that blamed foreigners for "petty crimes, noise nuisance and taking jobs from the Dutch".

The Washington Post reported yesterday that Wilders had told the Associated Press that the website had drawn more than 40 000 comments since the weekend.

Van der Rheede, in a letter circulated yesterday, said: "I am of the opinion that his [Bosma's] visit is nothing else but a smokescreen to assist Afrikaans-speaking rightwingers here in their narrow-minded efforts to get international and national recognition for their exclusive Afrikaner 'struggles'."

He said "the majority" of Afrikaners were "opposed" to the visit.