



## NATIONAL

# Storm rages over right-wing visit

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**A** VISIT by a member of a right-wing Dutch political party to South Africa this week has polarised the Afrikaans community. Martin Bosma, a member of the Partij voor de Vrijheid (Party for Freedom), is due to "discuss ties between Afrikaans and Dutch and the other members of the Dutch Language Union", according to AfriForum.

Botha will meet senior members of the Solidarity Coalition, which also includes

## Afrikaners split in build-up to meetings with controversial Dutch politician

AfriForum, the Federasie van Afrikaanse Kultuurverenigings, and Dameskring.

But the news has upset Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut (AHI) chief executive Christo van der Rhee. He fears the visit could undo "many Afrikaans-speaking people's efforts to rid Afrikaans of its apartheid baggage".

While it is unclear exactly what will be discussed, Bosma's visit comes shortly after PVV leader Geert Wilders launched a

controversial website in which he urged Dutch people to file complaints against immigrants from countries in central and Eastern Europe.

Radio Netherlands Worldwide reported yesterday that the site had displayed news clippings with provocative headlines blaming foreigners for "petty crimes, noise nuisance".

The "foreigners" were also blamed for "taking jobs from the Dutch".

The Washington Post reported that Wilder said the website had drawn more than 40 000 comments since the weekend.

He was also quoted as saying: "We are a sovereign country, we are a democratic political party and we voice the concerns of many Dutchmen."

In a letter circulated yesterday, the AHI's Van der Rhee said: "I am of the opinion that his [Bosma's] visit is nothing else but a smokescreen to assist Afrikaans-

speaking right-wingers in South Africa in their narrow-minded efforts to attain international and national recognition for their exclusive Afrikaner 'struggles'."

He said the majority of Afrikaners opposed the visit, and would not take part in meetings with Bosma.

AfriForum spokesman Alana Bailey said Van der Rhee had not communicated his dissatisfaction over the visit with the organisation, but added that AfriForum

would not tolerate wild statements, including those issued by Wilder on Muslims.

"We believe that communities should recognise and respect each other. AfriForum strongly condemns any derogatory utterances," Bailey said.



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