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Welcome

Dear students,

Land of Good Hope? – the subtitle of this textbook has been coined on the analogy of the phrase *Cape of Good Hope*. In the 15th century sailors who had rounded the south-westernmost point of Africa, the *Cape of Storms*, were full of hope to reach their destination in the east. And so the *Cape of Storms* was renamed *Cape of Good Hope*.

When in 1990 the apartheid dictatorship had been overcome by a globally unique process of peaceful negotiations, when political freedom had been secured for Africans, Indians/Asians, Coloureds and Whites, the *Rainbow Nation* of South Africa was similarly hopeful to overcome the country's main challenges of poverty, crime and HIV/Aids.

The 1990–1994 Government of National Unity and the following five years under Nelson Mandela as President resulted in most South Africans having an overall optimistic attitude.

But 16 years after the first free and democratic general election in 1994, doubts are being raised whether the ANC government will live up to its promises. Such questions are not only being asked by the millions of people living in townships and squatter camps, but also by black and non-black people alike who have not had a chance to climb the social ladder.

That is one of the reasons why we have kept the question mark in the title of this revised edition.

You, the students, will find out yourselves – by working on the texts of this book and on additional sources of information – to what extent this question mark is justified.

Following the texts you won't find masses of detailed questions. In our experience the majority of students do not expect lists of questions or tasks on the respective texts. Instead they prefer to be given suggestions and impulses, on the basis of which they can then work on their own or in teams.

It is our hope that this textbook will provide a basis for deeper insight into the achievements, challenges and expectations of the *Rainbow Nation*, unquestionably one of the most fascinating countries in the world.

Best wishes and good luck

Dr. Horst Mühlmann and Dr. Werner Schneider

PS: A collection of useful websites for your further information can be found on p.104 and under <http://www.cornelsen.de/csel/south-africa>.