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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE SUPPRESSION  
AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF APARTHEID

Reports submitted by States parties under article VII  
of the Convention

Addendum

SEYCHELLES

[6 March 1986]

1. The preamble to the Seychelles Constitution Decree 1979 and article 3 of its second schedule provide for the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual and further elimination of all forms of discrimination.

2. Schedule 2 of the Constitution of the Seychelles People's Progressive Front, article (iii), provides for the promotion of security and the maintenance of the unity of the people in a democratic organization with no social, economic, religious or racial discrimination. Article (v) provides for the eradication of all forms of discrimination, oppression and exploitation.

3. The following legislation has been enacted in the Seychelles in support of the Convention:

(a) The Status of Married Women Act, 1971, safeguards equality for the woman in all fields where sex discrimination could arise, especially as regards her capacity to enter into a contract and her rights to property and employment. In 1985 the Women's Association was abolished due to the fact that women now enjoy the same rights in all respects;

(b) The Tenants "Right" Act, 1981, and the Education Act, 1982, aim at securing the rights of poorer people to own land and secure a good education;

(c) The Social Security Decree, 1980, and the Pension (Increase) Act, 1980, ensure adequate pensions for old people;

(d) Other legislation protects people at work, for example the Occupational Safety and Health Decree, 1978, the Wages and Conditions of Employment Regulations, 1981, and the Employment Act, 1985, protect workers from discriminatory practices.

4. In Seychelles apartheid is condemned by the Government, the Party, the trade unions, the press, radio and television. Schools are informed about the evils of the system and its results.

5. Seychelles is an active member of the Liberation Committee of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and contributes \$US 17,000 annually to African liberation movements. Representatives of the Government of Seychelles attend regular meetings of the OAU Liberation Committee where they participate in deliberations concerning direct action against apartheid South Africa. Many representatives of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) have already been to Seychelles by invitation of the Seychelles Government and the Seychelles People's Progressive Front. There are at the moment six Namibian students studying construction engineering at the Seychelles Polytechnic.

6. Since 1978, the Government has been working towards the severance of all links with South Africa. A ban on South African Airways was imposed in September 1980, together with the closure of the Seychelles Tourist Office in South Africa. There were 43 per cent fewer South African visitors to Seychelles in 1985 compared with 1984.

Other restrictive and positive measures against apartheid

7. As stated above, Seychelles long ago moved from words to action:

- (1) We do not have investments in South Africa and vice versa;
- (2) We do not have trade in arms or military co-operation;
- (3) We do not have sports links;
- (4) We do not have cultural/educational links;
- (5) We do not have diplomatic or consular representation with South Africa;
- (6) Seychelles Government nationals travelling abroad avoid transiting through South Africa.

Existing trade with South Africa

8. At independence in June 1976, Seychelles inherited a regular and dependable service trade with South Africa - sailing time amounting to some nine days at the most. Since 1979, Seychelles has been doing its best to sever links with South Africa but merchants are constantly faced with the bitter experience of poor supply and shipping arrangements from countries within the region and any alternative sources would have to be backed by reliable shipping service.

9. We are able to state that Seychelles has been importing more from the Far East recently, but there are problems involved:

- (a) Shelf life of goods being imported, compared with the length of sea passage - particularly perishables;
- (b) Availability, reliability and quality of commodities from the new source - certain transshipment facilities result in an increase in landed costs in Seychelles - e.g., Australian goods transhipped in Singapore.
- (c) There are also problems of exchange control regulations in some countries.

10. Seychelles had considered transshipment of its goods through Mombasa instead of Durban, but Mombasa was not considered popular amongst exporters because of losses, delays and high costs.

11. It is worth noting that, in 1979 during a meeting between the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Seychelles Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Kurt Waldheim mentioned the possibility of assisting Seychelles with shipping and air freight costs to counter the effects of sanctions against South Africa by Seychelles, but the idea never materialized.

Conclusion

12. By Cabinet Decision C78/D158 of 6 September 1978, all government Ministries were charged with considering the extent of Seychelles reliance on South Africa and requested to advise on how such reliance could be phased out taking into account the economic implications for Seychelles.

13. The banning of South African Airways in 1979 cost Seychelles from 5.5 million to 7 million Seychelles rupees per annum in terms of revenue at the airport and 18 million rupees in tourist revenue. The South African flights used to bring in approximately 15 per cent of the airport revenue measured in terms of landing fees. South African Airways was also providing calibration services to Seychelles on very favourable terms in respect of airport navigational aids. Now that British Airways has withdrawn its services the setback in revenue is much more severe than had been expected.

14. The Seychelles Government's policy is to encourage the people to be self-sufficient in agriculture, animal farming, fishing, etc., and to consume locally grown products. This has helped to contribute towards fighting apartheid.

15. Regardless of the above facts the oppressed people of South Africa will certainly always rely on the majority of the people of Seychelles as faithful allies in their battle to destroy apartheid and all that it stands for.