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QUESTION OF NAMIBIA

POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA

Letter dated 17 December 1979 from the Permanent Representative
of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General

On 12 and 17 December 1979 the General Assembly concluded its discussion of agenda items 27 (Question of Namibia) and 28 (Policies of apartheid of the Government of South Africa) respectively. The result of the debates on these two agenda items was the adoption of General Assembly resolution 34/92 on South West Africa/Namibia and of General Assembly resolution 34/93 on South Africa.

The South African Government rejects all these resolutions in their entirety as unconscionable and egregious breaches of the United Nations Charter.

For Your Excellency's information I quote from the reaction of the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs in rejecting these resolutions:

"They violate the United Nations' own principles and maliciously support strife rather than seeking genuine and constructive solutions. Together they amount to no more than political manoeuvring to bring pressure to bear on South Africa. South Africa is used as a lightning conductor to attract the wrath and condemnation of the General Assembly away from those countries in real breach of the Charter, perpetrating genocide and other atrocities, actively supporting subversion of other Member States, propagating violence and neglecting the development of their own peoples."

As to the attention the General Assembly is continuously given to South Africa to the exclusion of much more urgent and serious situations and developments, the Foreign Minister declared:

"The image of 'apartheid' created by the United Nations is a lie. South Africa could to all intents and purposes join other Member States in condemning the policy of 'apartheid' which United Nations documentation seeks

to lay at South Africa's door. Such a system of oppression and racial hatred does not apply in South Africa. Indeed, there are many situations in countries Members of the United Nations, which are deserving of United Nations condemnation, countries unable to provide the most fundamental human needs, countries making war against and undermining other countries. The United Nations conveniently ignores the real flash points and uses South Africa as a scapegoat. The General Assembly especially has a highly developed system of double standards. In South Africa's case, hundreds of statements are maliciously made annually. The shopworn allegations of previous years are repeated ad nauseum in the hope that the lie would become the truth by repeating it. The motives and the methods of certain Member States are downright dishonest. The report of the Special Committee against Apartheid contains deliberate distortions. The Committee's research department, the Centre against Apartheid, sifts through volumes of press and other material on South Africa - selecting only what is negative and derogatory and compiles a compendium of half-truths, innuendos, disparagement and vilification. Nothing positive about South Africa is ever recorded. No contribution is ever asked from South Africa. On the contrary, South Africa has since 1974 unconstitutionally and contrary to every legal precept been prevented by the General Assembly from participating in proceedings of that organ and from presenting its own case. The material is not subjected to the test of critical review and comment by South Africa. But the report is sent into the world as gospel."

The Foreign Minister concluded by referring to the dishonest and unethical procedure the General Assembly is displaying in regard to southern Africa, and stated:

"That makes the United Nations a cynical gathering and deprives it of credibility and stature in international intercourse. This is in contrast to the important and constructive role that South Africa is playing in southern Africa today. The United Nations is mischievous in the extreme. It will be no influence for reason, progress and sanity in southern Africa, but will be used by our enemies to obstruct peaceful development and understanding between white and black. It is also clear, however, that these efforts are becoming increasingly irrelevant for the future of our region. In the role the United Nations has chosen for itself it is at present not only redundant in southern Africa but a menace."

I should appreciate it if this letter could be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda items 27 and 28.

(Signed) Adriaan EKSTEEN
Permanent Representative
