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SPECIAL REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID
Recent developments concerning relations between Israel and
South Africa

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* This is a mimeographed version of a special report of the Special Committee against Apartheid, which will be issued in printed form in Official Records of the General Assembly, Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 22A (A/40/22/Add.1 to 3).

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

7 October 1985

Sir,

I have the honour, in accordance with paragraph 7 of resolution 39/72 G adopted by the General Assembly on 13 December 1984, to transmit herewith a special report of the Special Committee against Apartheid on recent developments concerning relations between Israel and South Africa.

The Special Committee requests that this report be issued as a document of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Joseph N. GARBA
Chairman of the Special Committee
against Apartheid

His Excellency
Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar
Secretary-General of the
United Nations
New York, N.Y.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Although relations between Israel and South Africa date back to the assumption of power of the National Party in South Africa in 1948, the last 10 years have witnessed an increasing collaboration between the two régimes amounting not only to a virtual alliance threatening the peace and security in southern Africa and the Middle East, but also constituting a threat to international peace and security. Accordingly, the Special Committee has devoted particular attention to the matter and has brought it regularly to the attention of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

2. Because of the serious implications of such collaboration and for political convenience, Israel tends to minimize the extent of its collaboration with South Africa and has unleashed a campaign against the United Nations for reporting on this collaboration.

3. There is an increasing awareness of the dangerous consequences of the collaboration between the two régimes world-wide. It is becoming the topic of academic inquiry and is widely reported by the media, including those of Israel and South Africa.

4. The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and many other governmental and non-governmental organizations continue to express their concern at this growing collaboration and have strongly condemned it.

5. In his message to the Special Committee on the observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on 21 March 1985, Prime Minister Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe stated:

"This evil crime (apartheid) is not, of course, confined to the African continent. Indeed, the doctrine of zionism is as dangerous and racist in concept as apartheid and is as much the real cause of conflict within the Middle East as apartheid itself is the central cause of conflict and tension within South Africa and in the entire region itself.

"Nothing demonstrates, or more clearly proves, the affinity between zionism and apartheid than the undeniable, ever-growing level of political, military and economic co-operation between the Boers and the Zionists - a truly unholy alliance indeed.

"Just as in South Africa there can and will be no real movement towards peace and stability until those who have it in their power to bring peace accept that apartheid itself must be eliminated, so must those same people realize that no lasting peace will come to the Middle East until the doctrine of zionism is abandoned and until meaningful, sincere dialogue begins between all parties involved in the conflict.

"Racial discrimination is indeed a scourge and a most dangerous one at that, but unlike disease or drought or famine - these being the calamities of nature - scourges such as apartheid and zionism are avoidable because they are man-made and are brought about deliberately and consciously by man.

"Of course, the Boers and Zionists have no intention of abandoning their cherished but so totally discredited philosophies of racial superiority. No, we cannot expect that of them for they are far too bigoted and too blind to see the tragic folly of their ways."

6. The Declaration adopted by the Special Committee on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Sharpeville Massacre states:

"14. The Special Committee, noting the universal importance of 21 March as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, reiterates that racism negates all the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, is a crime against humanity and a threat to world peace and security, and appeals to all Governments and organizations to strengthen their support of the struggle against all forms of racism, including apartheid and zionism.

"...

"16. The Special Committee condemns the military, nuclear, political, economic and cultural co-operation between the Zionist régime and the South African apartheid régime. The active collaboration between the two régimes has increased apartheid South Africa's aggression and destabilization in the whole of southern Africa."

7. The General Assembly, at its thirty-ninth session, once again condemned the collaboration between Israel and South Africa and adopted resolution 39/72 C of 13 December 1984, which states in its operative part:

"The General Assembly,

"...

"1. Commends the Special Committee against Apartheid for publicizing the growing relations between Israel and South Africa and promoting public awareness of the grave dangers of the alliance between Israel and South Africa;

"2. Again strongly condemns the continuing and increasing collaboration of Israel with the racist régime of South Africa, especially in the military and nuclear fields;

"3. Demands that Israel desist from and terminate all forms of collaboration with South Africa forthwith, particularly in the military and nuclear fields, and abide scrupulously by the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council;

"4. Calls upon all Governments and organizations to exert their influence to persuade Israel to desist from such collaboration and abide by the resolutions of the General Assembly;

"5. Requests the Special Committee to continue to publicize, as widely as possible, information on the relations between Israel and South Africa;

"6. Requests the Secretary-General to render, through the Department of Public Information and the Centre against Apartheid of the Secretariat, all possible assistance to the Special Committee in disseminating information relating to the collaboration between Israel and South Africa;

"7. Further requests the Special Committee to keep the matter under constant review and to report to the General Assembly and the Security Council as appropriate."

8. The present report is prepared in accordance with the above-mentioned resolution.

II. VISIT OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF SOUTH AFRICA

9. Since 1977, when the then Prime Minister of South Africa John Vorster visited Israel, officials of the two countries have frequently exchanged visits. Though these contacts are usually played down by the two sides, they reveal an identity of interests. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of South Africa visited Israel in November 1984 and held consultations with the Prime Minister and several working sessions with his Israeli counterpart. The talks were described by both sides as useful and constructive; they covered a wide range of issues that reflected growing political, military, economic and cultural relations. The talks also underlined the importance of the role of the Jewish community in South Africa.

10. The South African Foreign Minister reviewed with the Israeli Foreign Minister the relation of the régime with the neighbouring African States and the Israeli Foreign Minister informed him about the situation in Lebanon and other developments in the Middle East. 1/ Due to the clandestine nature of some of their dealings and the international condemnation of this alliance, Israel and South Africa have always concealed the extent of their relationship and particularly their nuclear and military collaboration. However, in spite of the virtual black-out on their military and nuclear collaboration and the lack of details on their indirect trade, the information available, including reports by the media, indicates a growing collaboration between the two countries.

III. NUCLEAR COLLABORATION

11. Nuclear collaboration between Israel and South Africa has been widely reported since 1977 when South Africa was spotted preparing a site for a nuclear test in the Kalahari desert. 2/

12. According to reports of the United States Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), the Israelis have been co-operating with South Africa since the 1970s and are now involved in its nuclear-power plants in order to help the South African régime develop the technical expertise necessary for nuclear weapons. The Special Committee has been following up developments related to the reported nuclear explosion in the South Atlantic in 1979. Israel and South Africa were reported actually to have detonated a low-yield atomic bomb. 3/

13. In a report entitled "The September 22, 1979 mystery flash: did South Africa detonate a nuclear bomb?" issued on 21 May 1985 by the Washington Office on Africa Educational Fund, further evidence is provided indicating that Israel and South Africa tested a nuclear bomb on 22 September 1979 in the South Atlantic. This organization was able to obtain information from the United States Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) under the United States Freedom of Information Act indicating "the NRL's firm conclusion that a nuclear explosion had, indeed, occurred". These data include results from measurements showing a high level of radioactivity in the thyroids of Australian sheep soon after the reported flash of 22 September. These data, as well as the Atmospheric Administration meteorological data and radiation testing, indicate that wind and weather currents could have taken fall-out from a nuclear test on 22 September 1979 in the South Atlantic to the area in Australia where the sheep were located. The report also indicates that DIA and the Los Alamos Nuclear Laboratory, as well as individuals in the Department of State, concurred with NRL in determining that a nuclear bomb had been detonated. It also refers to the reported Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) statements that a nuclear bomb had been exploded in a joint South African-Israeli test. Columnist Jack Anderson went to the extent of stating that "the United States had prior knowledge that South Africa and Israel would explode a small nuclear device in the fall of 1979, an investigation we have conducted over the last five years indicates". 4/ He confirmed that both CIA and DIA were certain that the Vela satellite had indeed detected a nuclear blast.

14. The United States and international media reported the release of the above-mentioned report. The Guardian, London, The New York Times, The Washington Post and Reuter, Johannesburg, carried the news of the report and the press conference when it was released. The Village Voice stated that the former Administration of President Jimmy Carter had decided to cover up because, had it been known that Israel had the bomb, it would have destroyed the Camp David accords, put pressure on the President to cut military aid and thus hurt the President in his re-election campaign. 5/

IV. MILITARY COLLABORATION

15. The Special Committee has, for several years, been warning the international community about the growing extent and the dangerous consequences of the military collaboration between Israel and South Africa. In addition to the supply of arms and ammunition and becoming a conduit for arms supplies to South Africa, Israel has been involved in the development of South Africa's arms industry.

16. According to a memorandum released by the British Anti-Apartheid Movement on 11 July 1985, Israel played an important role in providing South Africa with arms. In the Old Bailey case that involved some 31 shipments of components of machine guns, as well as FN rifles, to South Africa, these shipments were flown to South Africa via Israel or Switzerland. The memorandum also reveals that the Scorpion missile produced by South Africa is a version of the Israeli Gabriel.

17. It was reported that although accurate statistics were hard to come by, it appeared that South Africa had been the leading purchaser of arms from Israel, acquiring as much as 35 per cent of Israeli arms exports in recent years. Israeli sales to South Africa have included gunboats and Gabriel missiles. 6/

18. It was reported that with initial help from Israel, South Africa had taken the first move towards enhancing its naval capability by converting a commercial 19,000-ton tanker into a forward base ship with a flight deck and hangar for helicopters as well as anti-aircraft guns and extra accommodation for up to 500 men. 7/

19. It was reported that South Africa was trying to recruit engineers and technicians from Israel. A number of Israeli professionals were going to South Africa to look for work as Israel's defence industry was suffering from a recession. The Israeli shipyards had built a number of missile boats, an area into which the South African ship industry had begun to expand in recent years. There are many similarities between the military aspects of the two shipyards and Israeli shipyard engineers, technicians and shipbuilders could contribute a great deal to the South African industry. 8/

20. The collaboration between Israel and South Africa is not limited to recruitment of engineers and technicians but includes exchange of visits and expertise in the military and nuclear fields as well as participation by soldiers from each country in the military exercises and training. It was reported that Israel encouraged South African Jews to travel to Israel and to serve in the military for a month each year. According to Mr. Mishik Reinitz of the Volunteer for Israel Council, in two years more than 3,500 South Africans aged 22 to 60 had travelled to Israel and they had proven to be a valuable asset to the Israeli Defence Force. 9/

V. ECONOMIC COLLABORATION

21. Israeli-South African economic co-operation has been increasing. It was reported that bilateral trade between Israel and South Africa reached a record R 280 million in the first 11 months of 1984, with the likelihood that it could be higher once the figures for December were revealed. 10/ The figures for trade between Israel and South Africa do not usually include oil, arms sales and gold, nor for diamonds, which are marketed indirectly.

22. The growing trade between the two countries is also helping to increase investment. It was reported that South African investment in Israel is increasing in spite of the economic crisis facing the latter. There are a variety of South African companies involved in trade between Israel and South Africa. Anglo-American and Gencor supply coal and Mondi supplies much of Israel's paper. Iscor, which was reported before as a joint venture, represents the success of efforts by the two countries to encourage trade and investment. Other examples of co-operation between the two countries are Unicorn Lines in shipping and South Atlantic Corporation in fishing. Cape Gate, a South African company with assets exceeding \$200 million, has been conducting business in Israel for more than 10 years and held \$25 million in assets in Israel. Cape Gate signed an agreement with an Israeli commercial bank to establish the Discount Bank Investment Corporation to stimulate investment in Israel. 11/

23. The Director-General of Finance of South Africa, Dr. Joop de Loor, announced that South African exports to Israel would expand in view of the new proposals submitted to expand the lines of credit to Israel. South Africa has been giving credit to Israel for three years and these proposals aim at expanding it. Dr. Loor visited Israel at the beginning of the year to negotiate bilateral trade agreements. He stated that that visit had opened a trade triangle with Israel and the United States of America. He said the United States Government gave favourable treatment to goods with 25 per cent Israeli content. He added that one of the proposals was to import unfinished goods from South Africa, then re-export them to the United States of America when they had been completed. He also stated that South Africa and Israel were working on a three-way package deal for tourists that would allow Americans to visit Israel via South Africa. 12/

24. The role of South Africa in assisting Israel to face its economic crisis reflects an increasing political, military, economic and cultural co-operation between the two régimes. According to a statement by Mr. Joe Hallis, Chairman of the South Africa-Israel Chamber of Commerce, there should be even greater efforts to increase South African exports to Israel. He expected that South Africa would play an important role in reviving the Israeli economy. In the mean time, it would acquire a good opportunity to take advantage of favourable exchange rates to increase its role in the Israeli market. 13/

VI. COLLABORATION WITH THE BANTUSTANS

25. Israel is considered one of the few countries that maintains political, military, economic and cultural relations with the bantustans.

26. It has been reported that Israel was involved in Transkei, Ciskei, Venda and Bophuthatswana. Tel Aviv is the seat of a "commercial mission of Ciskei". The so-called "President" Lennox Sebe of Ciskei visited Israel several times in the last few years. 14/ During a visit in November 1984, The Jerusalem Post Magazine published his picture reviewing Ciskei student pilots at Herzliya airfield in Israel. The magazine said that, according to Ciskei officials, the pilots are learning to fly crop-spraying planes. The magazine was sceptical about this claim and indicated that the owner of the school, also known as a supplier of military equipment, is under indictment in the United States for his Ciskei links. It may be recalled it was reported that these students are training as air force pilots. 15/

27. It was also reported that during the visit there was a ceremony twinning Ariel, an Israeli colony in the West Bank, with Bisho, the capital of Ciskei. 16/

28. The bantustan of Bophuthatswana was reported to have set up an office and raised its flag in Tel Aviv although Israeli officials denied that this could be construed as recognition and claimed that Israel did not recognize bantustans. 17/

29. On 26 July 1984, the so-called "President" Sebe of Ciskei opened the first of six Israeli factories due to be set up in Ciskei. This indicates the growing economic ties between Israel and the bantustans. 18/

30. The growing relationship between Ciskei and other bantustans and the Israeli business community represents an exploitation of these poverty-stricken bantustans. According to the Daily News (Durban), "high-flying salesmen, mainly from Israel, are selling President Sebe an international airport among other things ... including the sale of a fleet of helicopters". The purpose of these sales is to exploit Ciskei and to strengthen the reign of terror of these chiefs. 19/

VII. ACADEMIC, CULTURAL, SPORTS AND OTHER COLLABORATION

31. Cultural relations between Israel and South Africa reflect the affinity between the ideologies of the two régimes as well as their growing collaboration in the political, economic, military and other fields.

32. In the register of entertainers, actors and others who have performed in apartheid South Africa published by the Special Committee in December 1984, the names of 24 Israelis are listed.

33. In April 1985, the popular Israeli singer Yardene Arazî visited South Africa to organize a celebration on the occasion of Israel's thirty-seventh anniversary of independence. 20/

34. The Mayor of Tel Aviv paid an official visit to South Africa in April 1985. He was the guest of the South African Foreign Minister and the Zionist Federation of South Africa. 21/

35. Professor Beno Rothenberg, Director of the Israeli Institute of Mining and Metals of Tel Aviv, toured South African universities in February 1985. 22/

36. The Associates of South Africa at Ben Gurion University were reported to be very active in promoting co-operation between the two countries. According to the Associate Assistant-Director, Miss Beau Lunin, "we believe that South Africa and Israel have many similar needs and there is a great deal that the two countries can learn from each other". They have been involved in exchange of visits and other forms of scientific and cultural co-operation. 23/

37. Israel has been concentrating on tourism as an important source of foreign exchange. South Africa is one of the major targets for the Israeli tourism authorities. South African traffic to Israel increased 30 per cent to 12,000 in the first six months of 1984 compared with 1983. 24/

38. As regards sports, Israeli officials and athletes fearing international retaliation have been trying to conceal their sporting contacts. It was reported that South African Jews in Israel were furious at the revelation that 200 South Africans would be participating in the Maccabiah, the Jewish world games to be held in Israel later this year, because of the fear of such retaliation against the participation of South Africa in these games.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

39. The Special Committee expresses its deep concern at the increasing and continuing collaboration between Israel and South Africa, and in particular their close military and nuclear co-operation, which constitutes a defiance of the United Nations and a threat to peace and security not only in southern Africa and the Middle East but also in the world at large.

40. The Special Committee condemns this diabolical alliance between Israel and South Africa and calls for concerted international action against it.

41. The Special Committee recommends to the General Assembly that there should be closer co-operation between the Department of Public Information and the Centre against Apartheid to disseminate information on this collaboration.

42. The Special Committee also recommends that the General Assembly urge all States and, in particular, Western States, not to extend any assistance that enhances the collaboration between those régimes.

43. The Special Committee intends to continue in its efforts to expose the collaboration between Israel and South Africa and in mobilizing world public opinion against such collaboration.

Notes

1/ The New York Times, New York, 6 November 1984; The Star, Weekly Airmail Edition, Johannesburg, 12 November 1984.

2/ Peter Pry, Israel's Nuclear Arsenal (Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1984), p. 37.

3/ Ibid.

4/ Newday, New York, 26 April 1985.

5/ The Village Voice, New York, 28 May 1985.

6/ The Washington Post, Washington, D.C., 22 March 1985.

7/ The Daily Telegraph, London, 7 August 1984.

8/ Daily News, Durban, 17 January 1985.

9/ The Star, Weekly Airmail Edition, Johannesburg, 9 October 1984.

10/ The Star, Johannesburg, 21 May 1985.

11/ The Sunday Times, business times, Johannesburg, 9 September 1984.

12/ Argus, Cape Town, 20 February 1985.

13/ The Star, Johannesburg, 4 April 1985.

Notes (continued)

- 14/ Solidarity, Prague, September-October 1984.
- 15/ The Jerusalem Post Magazine, 9 November 1984.
- 16/ Ibid.
- 17/ The New York Times, New York, 5 June 1984.
- 18/ Reuter, Johannesburg, 26 July 1984.
- 19/ Daily News, Durban, 23 January 1985.
- 20/ The Star, Weekly Airmail Edition, Johannesburg, 8 April 1985.
- 21/ South African Digest, Pretoria, 3 May 1985.
- 22/ Ibid., 22 February 1985.
- 23/ The Star, Johannesburg, 19 September 1984.
- 24/ The Sunday Times, Johannesburg, 16 September 1984.
