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SECURITY COUNCIL
Thirty-fifth year

Letter dated 15 February 1980 from the Permanent Representative
of Mali to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the statement by the African Group on the situation in Southern Rhodesia and to request you to circulate it as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 85 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Seydou TRAORE
Permanent Representative of Mali
Current Chairman of the Organization
of African Unity

* A/35/50.

ANNEX

STATEMENT BY THE AFRICAN GROUP AT THE UNITED
NATIONS ON THE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN RHODESIA

The African Group at the United Nations has been closely monitoring the situation in Southern Rhodesia and has endeavoured to keep the international community informed of its views on the situation.

The African Group reiterates its firm commitment to a genuine independence based on free and fair elections in which all Zimbabweans can participate.

The Group also reiterates its commitment to the full implementation of the Lancaster House Agreement and solemnly declares that a just and lasting settlement in Zimbabwe is possible only with the strict implementation of the Agreement, and the active participation of the Patriotic Front in every stage of its implementation.

The Group reiterates the obligation of Great Britain to decolonize Southern Rhodesia in good faith on the basis of free and fair elections which could lead the Territory to genuine independence acceptable to the international community in accordance with the United Nations General Assembly resolution 1514(XV).

Recent developments in Southern Rhodesia and some of the decisions taken by the British Administration have, to the Group's dismay, assumed a pattern of behaviour that leaves practically no room for optimism. With respect to the British Governor's decision, there is no longer any doubt that he is increasingly taking an open and aggressive stance against a particular wing of the Patriotic Front.

The African Group strongly believes that the situation in Southern Rhodesia has deteriorated to a stage where the international community must now take prompt and firm action.

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The Administering power has, on numerous occasions and with impunity violated the terms of the Lancaster House Agreement. These violations can be seen in the presence of South African forces and mercenaries in Southern Rhodesia inspite of Security Council resolution 460(1979) and 463(1980); the continuous use and deployment of the auxiliary forces to harass and intimidate the Patriotic Front supporters. The extension of the martial law and emergency regulations, the continued and intensified threats and assassination attempts against the Patriotic Front leaders and supporters, the persistent biased treatment against Patriotic Front and the clearly demonstrated favoritism of the British Governor to the Muzorewa clique.

It has not escaped the attention of the Group that there is a systematic harassment and torture of returning refugees and that the British Administration in Southern Rhodesia has taken numerous administrative measures with the clear intention of limiting the ability of Patriotic Front to campaign effectively for the forthcoming elections.

The situation is further deteriorating every minute as a result of the dictatorial powers assumed by the British Governor in Southern Rhodesia. The Governor has given himself powers which the African Group firmly believes are contrary to the spirit of the Lancaster House Agreement. He has arbitrarily extended the state of emergency and announced a number of measures aimed eventually at disenfranchising large areas where the Patriotic Front enjoys overwhelming support.

The African Group vigorously condemns the constant threats and criminal acts against leaders of the Patriotic Front and deplores the obvious inaction on the part of the British Administration to apprehend the criminals and the continued hostile manoeuvres and propaganda against the Patriotic Front.

This attitude of the British Administration is largely responsible for the present tense situation which cannot but provoke the Patriotic Front and thus provide the governor with an excuse to deprive the Patriotic Front from free participation in the elections.

The African countries have repeatedly demonstrated their wish and desire to co-operate with Great Britain in order to bring Southern Rhodesia to full independence and genuine majority rule. Unfortunately all the pleas of Africa and the international community through the Security Council have gone unheeded.

The African Group holds Britain fully responsible for the situation and demands that the British Government immediately take firm measures to normalize the situation in Southern Rhodesia, and thus create conditions favourable to the holding of free and fair elections in which all parties can participate fully.

In this respect the African Group demands that the British Administration in Southern Rhodesia;

1. Strictly adhere to the letter and the spirit of the Lancaster House Agreement.
2. Immediately withdraw South African troops and mercenaries from Southern Rhodesia.
- 3) Facilitate an unimpeded free and rapid return of all Zimbabwean exiles and refugees without threat, intimidation or arrest in conformity with the provisions of the Lancaster House Agreement.
- 4) Release of all political prisoners.
- 5) Immediately confine Rhodesian and auxiliary forces to their bases in conformity with the Lancaster House Agreement.
- 6) Grant equal treatment to all parties to the Agreement.
- 7) Abrogate all laws and emergency regulations contrary to the holding of free and fair elections.
- 8) Guarantee security and freedom of movement to the leaders of Patriotic Front and their followers in all parts of Southern Rhodesia.
- 9) Cease all hostile propaganda against the Patriotic Front and all tendentious actions calculated to facilitate the return of the puppet regime in this Territory.
- 10) Lift the ban imposed on leaders of the Patriotic Front from campaigning in certain electoral districts.

The African Group deems it necessary that the international community, through the United Nations, should be fully associated with this crucial stage in the process of the decolonization of Southern Rhodesia and appeals to the United Nations Secretary-General and all Member States to intervene with the British Government in order to avert the further deterioration of the situation which could constitute a serious threat to international peace and security.
