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LETTER DATED 12 MAY 1980 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SOUTH  
AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

At the request of the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs and  
Information, the Honourable R. F. Botha, I am enclosing the text of a letter he  
has addressed to Your Excellency on 12 May 1980.

I should appreciate it if this letter could be circulated as a document of  
the Security Council.

(Signed) J. Adriaan EKSTEEN  
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 12 May 1980 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs  
of South Africa addressed to the Secretary-General

1. As has been repeatedly stated, South Africa seeks an international settlement of the Namibian question. In this spirit the South African Government accepted the concept of a Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) as a possible substitute for the monitoring of SWAPO troop restrictions to base, as provided for in the settlement proposal (S/12636) accepted by South Africa on 25 April 1978. It did so on the understanding that certain issues would be satisfactorily resolved. Thus a number of aspects of the DMZ were fully explored during the visits of the United Nations teams to South West Africa/Namibia and to South Africa in February and March 1980 respectively, as outlined in paragraphs 9-17 of Your Excellency's report of 31 March 1980 (S/13862).

2. In an effort to facilitate the implementation of the settlement proposal, South Africa, in the course of the discussions, accepted the following:

(a) The South African port of Walvis Bay could be used by UNTAG for logistic supply.

(b) Maximum logistic assistance within the limitations of South Africa's own resources could be provided to UNTAG.

(c) The air component of UNTAG could be militarized.

(d) South African bases in the DMZ, which South Africa would under the settlement proposal be entitled to retain during the first 12 weeks of the transitional period, could be reduced by 50 per cent.

(e) The full authorized military component of UNTAG could be deployed (the reserve battalion no longer remaining in the country of origin as has been agreed previously).

3. On the basis of information made available to it, the South African Government has now tested and evaluated the feasibility of the DMZ, especially whether it could be a possible substitute for the monitoring of SWAPO troop restrictions to base.

4. In the context of its effort to make the DMZ a feasible proposition, and for reasons fully explained to the United Nations teams, the South African Government wishes to be informed whether the introduction of the DMZ would mean that:

(a) The South African Government's offer to reduce its bases inside the DMZ by 50 per cent to 20 selected locations is accepted;

(b) The effectiveness of UNTAG inside the DMZ will be increased through the deployment of a substantially larger percentage of UNTAG in the entire zone;

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(c) Acceptable arrangements regarding the disarmament of SWAPO personnel on the closure of bases, i.e. seven days after certification of the election, would be made; and

(d) The claim by SWAPO to bases inside the Territory would not be revived.

5. It would of course also be desirable that all elements present or operating in the DMZ extend their co-operation to make this proposal effective. In this regard I refer to a telegram addressed to Your Excellency by a representative of the President of UNITA on 3 March 1980, and copied to the South African Prime Minister. A copy of the text is attached. The implications of this communication should not be underestimated.

6. South Africa has been pressing for urgent implementation of the settlement proposal since accepting it on 25 April 1978. Various opportunities to implement it have been frustrated as a result of deviations condoned by the United Nations at the insistence of SWAPO. The successful implementation of the settlement proposal or of any proposal designed to achieve a peaceful solution will continue to be seriously jeopardized if all the parties are not treated on an equal basis. There is no justification for the General Assembly to declare one party the sole representative of the Territory and to act accordingly. The parties are entitled to equal consideration of their views.

7. Your Excellency will be aware of the extreme concern which exists regarding the impartiality of the United Nations, a prerequisite to free and fair elections. Moreover, it has consistently been the South African Government's position that equal treatment should be extended to all political parties participating in the political process. You will recall that the representatives of the political parties in South West Africa/Namibia found it possible to agree to travel to Geneva for the simultaneous consultations conducted there in November 1979 on the Demilitarized Zone, when you were able to assure them that they would have equal access to your representatives. They interpreted this reaction on your part as an acknowledgment of their equal interest in deliberations affecting their future. However, General Assembly resolution 34/92 of 12 December 1979 reverted to the affirmation that SWAPO is the sole and authentic representative of the people of South West Africa/Namibia and granted increased financial assistance to SWAPO, again severely compromising the United Nations claim to impartiality. Pursuant to this resolution, the Council for Namibia embarked on a series of visits in which representatives of SWAPO were to be included. These visits were to cover various countries, including the Five for the first time since the commencement of their settlement initiative.

8. The South African Government deems it imperative that all participants in the political process must now be placed on an equal footing at least by those directly responsible for implementation. Accordingly, the South African Government wishes to be informed whether:

- (a) The Secretary-General and the Secretariat will refrain from giving effect to the recognition by the General Assembly of SWAPO as "the sole and authentic representative of the people of Namibia";

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- (b) The Secretariat, which has a major fiduciary and practical role in regard to the impartial implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), will refrain henceforth from giving effect to those elements of General Assembly resolutions, and resolutions of subordinate bodies, in respect of South West Africa/Namibia, which single out SWAPO for preferential treatment not accorded to other political parties; and
- (c) The Secretary-General, as head of the Secretariat, will refrain from applying funds from the regular United Nations budget, for the exclusive use of SWAPO, to promote its aims and purposes, inter alia, through its office in New York and its inclusion in the activities of the Council for Namibia, for which it is financially assisted by the United Nations.

9. The political parties of South West Africa/Namibia rightly demand fair and equal treatment. I urge Your Excellency to enable the South African Government to satisfy the political parties as to the impartiality of the envisaged United Nations involvement in the process leading to an election and independence.

10. As soon as the issues raised herein have been resolved the South African Government would co-operate in implementing Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

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Enclosure

Text of a telegram dated 3 March 1980 addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations by a representative of the President of UNITA and copied to the Prime Minister of South Africa

"We have always hoped that all the parties concerned with the project of the creation of a demilitarized zone in South of Angola would take up contact with UNITA which effectively controls the population in that zone.

As we have learnt by radio that a delegation of the UNO was in the region in connection with this subject, we have decided to sent this telegram to you to state the following:

- (a) We demand to become a party to take part in putting into effect the plan for the creation of the zone in question.
- (b) We call for a guarantee of freedom of movement for our populations which live from cattle.
- (c) If the UNO forces which will establish themselves north of Namibia try to intervene in the life of the peaceful populations under our authority, UNITA will take all the appropriate measures.
- (d) After having fought Portuguese colonialism for fifteen years and after four years of resistance against Russian-Cuban neo-colonialism, we consider that a new intervention by foreign forces in the South of Angola, on the side of Cuban forces will not be tolerated by our people and by our UNITA movement.

Our foreign representative, Mr. Jeremias Chituanda, who is in New York at this moment is authorized to discuss this problem with your representative if you consider this useful."

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