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LETTER DATED 5 JUNE 1980 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF
SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT
OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

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 5 June 1980.

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

(Signed) J. Adriaan EKSTEEN
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 5 June 1980 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs
and Information of South Africa addressed to the President of
the Security Council

Concern has on several occasions recently been expressed, inter alia, by the Secretary-General himself, about the deteriorating international status of the United Nations. I would agree that the Organization has suffered a grave loss in credibility. The damage is possibly irreparable because, while the remedy is no secret, the membership exhibits no disposition to adopt it. It is simply to observe the Charter. Only those uninitiated in the working of the United Nations fail to recognize that the Organization is paying no more than lip-service to its own purposes as set out in the Charter, for example:

"To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace;"

"To be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of these common ends."

and, in the preamble:

"To practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours."

There is no other accounting for the calling of a meeting of the Council to discuss what is termed "the situation in South Africa". As you know, the United Nations was not created with the object of discussing the internal situation in any country: this is specifically excluded by Article 2 (7) of the Charter. The Charter calls for the Organization to maintain peace between nations when peace is threatened, but this is not at issue in the agenda for the Security Council meeting.

The image of the Organization is further damaged by the patent employment of double standards. The situation in South Africa is being grossly distorted by inflammatory accusations. There is domestic turmoil and turbulence of considerable proportions in many countries in different parts of the world today, in both industrialized and developing countries. Why is there no Security Council meeting to deal with the real flashpoints in the world? A member of the South African Parliament indeed recently posed the question as to why a Council meeting had not been called to discuss the riots, accompanied by appreciable loss of life, in the United States of America, which saw fit to criticize South Africa because of recent incidents.

The truth is that South Africa is seen as a convenient lightning conductor for those who wish to distract attention from their own difficult circumstances. The Security Council has been able to accomplish nothing in regard to an occurrence

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of major aggression committed very recently, the armed invasion of one country by another, a situation which the United Nations was indeed created to deal with, in terms of the Charter. The aggressor presumes to sit at the table of the Security Council today in judgement on South Africa, in relation to a matter exclusively within South Africa's domestic jurisdiction, whose consideration by the Council is constitutionally invalid. This is indicative of the degree of hypocrisy and cynicism tolerated and cultivated within the United Nations.

While no opportunity to denigrate South Africa is missed by the Organization, there is no appreciation of South Africa's problems, policy objectives and achievements. The Secretariat is an active anti-South African propaganda machine. In particular, the United Nations gives support to those very movements which are committed to creating and stimulating unrest in the country, resulting in indiscriminate violence. To be true to the Charter, the United Nations should, in the first instance, deny support to those movements which seek to disrupt orderly government and espouse violence. The escalation of conflict will inevitably lead to extensive violence, and will add immeasurably to the problems of the whole southern African region.

It is ironic that the Security Council should seek to display an attitude of vindictiveness against South Africa at a time when the Government in South Africa is more than ever committed to, and actively engaged in, a programme of constructive political evolution and constitutional reconstruction designed to accommodate the aspirations of all the national entities of South Africa. The South African Government has sought to increase contacts and discussion between leaders in an effort to establish the broadest basis for co-operation between white and black, to remove legitimate grievances and resolve contentious issues. This policy of consultation, deliberation and co-operation will lead to the growth of mutual trust, tolerance and understanding and facilitate the building of a socio-economic and constitutional structure with justice for all and without disadvantages based on colour or race. There is indeed support among all the responsible leaders of South Africa for such a policy, that will secure a future in safety and dignity for all the peoples of South and southern Africa.

The South African Government has demonstrated its determination to seek a just dispensation in South Africa. There are those, however, who have no wish to see stability and good relations in South Africa. Some States seek to profit from instability and disorder, and even promote conflict with no concern whatsoever for the real good of the peoples whose interests are at stake.

Misguided attempts by Members of the United Nations to use the machinery of the Organization to bring outside pressure to bear on South Africa while encouraging subversion and conflict internally, will not achieve their ends. They will increase South Africa's resolve to pursue effective internal solutions, which she is confident are within her capacity. Solutions to domestic problems can be found only internally, free from external interference and pressure. Nor will this strategy against South Africa succeed in diverting attention from the tragedy of poverty and stagnation which is overcoming a great many of South Africa's critics in the Organization or from the resultant disorder and conflict in a considerable

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number of them. These countries are discovering that the United Nations does not have the capacity to be the hoped-for panacea for all their ills and their ultimate salvation. The real trouble-spots on the globe today lie elsewhere than in South Africa. The United Nations should focus on them.

The South African Government greatly regrets clashes between the authorities and militant individuals or groups, even if they are trouble-seekers and especially if deaths should result, but civil unrest is a wide-spread phenomenon today, and South Africa is entitled to expect critics to exhibit a sense of proportion.

The South African Government does not prescribe solutions to others. Likewise it will not countenance interference in its domestic affairs.

R. F. BOTHA
Minister of Foreign Affairs
and Information
