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LETTER DATED 24 DECEMBER 1987 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to enclose for your information the text of a statement dated 23 December 1987 by the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. R. F. Botha, regarding Security Council resolution 606 (1987).

I should be grateful if this letter and its annexure could be circulated as documents of the Security Council.

(Signed) A. Leslie MANLEY
Permanent Representative

Annex

Statement by the South African Minister of Foreign
Affairs, Mr. R. F. Botha on United Nations Security
Council resolution 606 (1987) of 23 December 1987

The position of the South African Government on this issue has been clearly stated. All foreign troops ought to be withdrawn from Angola. The present conflict in Angola is the direct result of the violation of the Alvor Agreement by the MPLA régime which is at present being kept in power by force of arms of Cuban forces supported by sophisticated Soviet equipment and personnel.

This situation threatens the security of the whole of the southern Africa region. South Africa has a direct interest in the security of the region. The South African Government has made it clear that it cannot allow an escalation of the conflict in the Angola South West Africa/Namibia border area and took certain limited action in order to ensure that the conflict does not take on broader proportions.

The chief of the South African defence force, General Jannie Geldenhuys stated on 5 December (1987) that the process of withdrawing members of the South African defence force and the South West Africa territory force from Angola had begun following the successful completion of certain tasks in the interests of South Africa and South West Africa/Namibia. This process is continuing under operational conditions and it is not in the interest of the security of South African defence force personnel to disclose any further details.

It should however be reiterated that it has become imperative that all foreign forces and military personnel be withdrawn from Angola and elsewhere in the region if stability and peace is to be achieved. It is simply not in the interest of Angola or the region for this conflict to continue.

As regards the report of the Secretary-General, it is noticed that the Secretary-General's mission to Angola merely reports on what has been conveyed to them by the MPLA authorities and commanders. The South African Government rejects the version of the events as conveyed to the Secretary-General's representatives. It ought to be possible for the Secretary-General to determine the facts on the ground. For instance, is he aware of the troop strengths of the various fighting forces? Does he know who is supplying what to whom? Or the nature of Soviet equipment supplied to the MPLA régime and which has been used and which is still being used? Does he know who the commanders, advisers and instructors are? The numbers of aircraft, helicopters, tanks and missiles of Soviet origin which are involved? Does he know who mans them, who commands them and who instructs how to use them? Does he know what role such commanders, advisers and instructors play in this war?

Surely all these facts can be determined and ought to be reflected in order to give the Security Council and the world a true and balanced picture of what is actually occurring in Angola at this time.
