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CREDENTIALS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION OF
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

QUESTION OF NAMIBIA

Letter dated 2 March 1981 from the Permanent Representative of
South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the President
of the General Assembly

I must protest most vigorously at Your Excellency's refusal to recognize my clearly-expressed wish to address the point of order raised by the Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Cameroon on behalf of the African Group at the 102nd plenary meeting of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly this morning. As you will be aware, under the terms of rule 29 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly:

"Any representative to whose admission a Member has made objection shall be seated provisionally with the same rights as other representatives until the Credentials Committee has reported and the General Assembly has given its decision." (emphasis added).

South Africa wished, firstly, to request information and clarification regarding the point of order raised by the Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Cameroon. This was so because South Africa's material interests, including its right to participate in the General Assembly, were involved. Our right to address such a request to the President is explicitly recognized in paragraph 79 of the conclusions of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly. 1/

Secondly, once Your Excellency had made your ruling on the point of order, South Africa wished to appeal against that ruling, as it was perfectly entitled to

1/ See General Assembly resolution 2837 (XXVI), annex II.

do under the terms of rule 71 of the General Assembly's rules of procedure. It was that right of South Africa which Your Excellency conspicuously chose to ignore.

It had been my delegation's intention to appeal against the ruling in view of our perception that the convening of the Credentials Committee under the present circumstances and in the light of previous experience was simply a device to deprive South Africa of its right, guaranteed under the Charter, to participate in the proceedings of the General Assembly. It was our perception that this action might once again lead to an egregious breach of the Charter. Your Excellency, as President, was bound by rule 71 to put our appeal to the vote. It is incomprehensible that Your Excellency should have decided not to observe the rules of procedure in this regard.

In addition, I must protest against the refusal of the responsible Secretariat official to inscribe South Africa's name in the list of speakers with regard to the debate on the question of South West Africa/Namibia - an action which was also clearly a violation of the provisions of rule 29 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

I should appreciate it if this letter could be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda items 3 and 27.

(Signed) J. Adriaan EKSTEEM
Ambassador
