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LETTER DATED 6 FEBRUARY 1981 FROM THE DEPUTY 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 6 February 1981.

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

(Signed) D. W. STEWARD  
Deputy Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 6 February 1981 from the Minister of Foreign Affairs and  
Information of South Africa addressed to the Secretary-General

"Excellency,

On 2 February 1981 the Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations addressed a letter to Your Excellency stating that South Africa had 'invaded' Mozambique and assassinated 'refugees'. On the same day Your Excellency expressed deep concern for 'a raid into Mozambique by units of the South African armed forces'.

In order to place South Africa's action in its proper perspective, it is essential that I draw Your Excellency's attention, first of all, to a Press Release I issued on 19 February 1980 regarding activities which were already at that time being planned against South Africa from within Mozambique. That Press Release contained the text of a formal note addressed by the South African Department of Foreign Affairs to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Mozambique, and read as follows:

'In spite of the assurances received from the Mozambique authorities that A.N.C. terrorists and other subversive organizations do not operate from their territory against South Africa, recent events have produced conclusive evidence that terrorists who plan subversion in South Africa are being harboured in Mozambique and are conducting murderous operations and acts of sabotage against the Republic of South Africa from bases in Mozambique.

The South African Government holds the Government of Mozambique fully responsible for the presence of these terrorists in its territory and for their actions which are indisputably in breach of international law. These activities violate the territorial integrity of South Africa and amount to acts of aggression.

In these circumstances it is incumbent on the Mozambique Government, in the interests of the maintenance of internationally accepted norms of conduct, to take effective steps to terminate these hostile acts and to ensure that no haven is given in Mozambique to individuals or groups perpetrating such acts. The South African Government reserves the right to take whatever steps may in its view be necessary, wherever and whenever, to protect South African life and property.'

In subsequent discussions the Mozambique Government was again informed about A.N.C. activities in Maputo. The South African Government offered to produce proof that the A.N.C. members in Maputo were not acting and behaving as refugees, but were actively involved in terrorist activities directed

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against South Africa. The Mozambique Government was warned on several occasions that unless practical steps were taken to put an end to these activities South Africa would be forced to act and take appropriate steps.

The action the South African Defence Force was compelled to take on 30 January 1981 was directed solely at A.N.C. terrorists. Everything possible was done to avoid contact with Mozambican forces and civilians. The attack on these terrorist targets followed after irrefutable information had been obtained that Mozambique was being used as a springboard for terrorist attacks against South Africa.

The South African Government has in its possession evidence that the terrorist attacks on an industrial installation, and on public buildings in South Africa, as well as the holding of hostages in a bank, had been planned and launched from the A.N.C. premises in Maputo.

I am constrained to reaffirm the South African Government's position on terrorism, namely that it is resolutely committed to act against the threat which terrorism poses to South Africa and its people, whether it originates within South Africa or in a neighbouring country. A country actively or passively supporting those who plan and commit terrorism and subversion, and which, in addition, harbours them, will have to bear the consequences.

The time has come for those countries which identify with terrorist movements and their designs, and also provide sanctuaries to them, to make a clear choice between constructive development and violent destruction. South Africa's choice in that respect is clear. It is imperative that they also make their choice. The South African Government stands ready to co-operate with and assist those who want to play a constructive role in developing their countries and in promoting peace and stability in their regions.

However, South Africa shall not cease to protect its people and their property against the onslaught of terrorism, wherever it breeds. Accordingly, my Government will continue to combat and eliminate this threat, irrespective of the consequences.

May I take this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurance of my highest consideration.

R. F. Botha  
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Information

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