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LETTER DATED 14 FEBRUARY 1979 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I.
OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED
NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

At the request of the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs,
the Honourable R. F. Botha, I am enclosing the text of a message he has sent to
Your Excellency on 14 February 1979.

The message deals with the incident which I brought to Your Excellency's
attention earlier today in which a force of approximately 250 SWAPO terrorists
yesterday launched an unprovoked attack on the South African base at Nkongo,
South West Africa.

You will recall that during our meeting, I stressed that in the view of the
South African Government this was a grave development which it was considering in
an extremely serious light.

Once again I wish to reiterate the utmost concern of the South African
Government about this incident which constitutes a most dangerous development at
this critical stage in the search for a peaceful and constitutional independence
of South West Africa.

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

(Signed) J. Adriaan EKSTEEN
Chargé d'Affaires

Annex

Letter dated 14 February 1979 from the Minister of Foreign
Affairs of South Africa addressed to the Secretary-General

It is with grave concern that I have to bring to your attention the following:

At 2135 hours on 13 February 1979 a group of approximately 250 SWAPO terrorists attacked a South African base at Mkongo in South West Africa from a north-westerly and north-easterly direction. The attack was supported with heavy mortar (82 mm). And small arms (AK-47) fire. As a result of counter-action by the South African Security Forces the attack was repelled. During the attack several members of the Security Forces were wounded.

I must insist that you give searching consideration to the invidious situation now pertaining and that you inform me what steps you intend taking to correct this untenable situation. South Africa has not only agreed to a solution which satisfies all the requirements of the United Nations, but has also reached agreement with your Special Representative, Mr. M. Ahtisaari, on all the controversial issues relating to implementation of the proposal of the Five (S/12636) as far as South Africa is concerned; the way to a settlement of this thirty-three year old issue is open. But at the moment when emplacement of the first units of UNTAG can reasonably be expected within two weeks, SWAPO launches an attack in force on an installation well inside South West Africa. This in spite of the low profile deliberately adopted by the South African Security Forces during the recent months of intensive final negotiations; this despite the fact that there has been no provocation on the part of the South African Security Forces. On the contrary, it has been SWAPO that has constantly displayed bad faith during two years of negotiation by launching provocative attacks in South West Africa by stealth, and killing innocent civilians by assassination, mines and other subversive means.

SWAPO's intentions are transparent. Mr. Nujoma, speaking in Luanda only three days ago, after having met Mr. Ahtisaari, raised a number of spurious objections to parts of the proposal of the Five to which he had already committed SWAPO, as you have repeatedly assured us he has done. His object in attempting to reopen negotiations on a non-negotiable settlement plan is clearly to prevent the implementation of the settlement, and the reason is equally clear. He realizes that the people of South West Africa have rejected SWAPO and the violence and horror for which it stands.

The sneak attack under cover of darkness last night is motivated by the same considerations. SWAPO is becoming ever more desperate as the time for implementation draws nearer and wishes to provoke South Africa into an action which SWAPO can use to get off the hook on which it finds itself. I wish to alert you to this device and also to sound a warning that South Africa cannot and will not be circumscribed by these political or any other considerations in the actions she may deem necessary to protect life and property and secure the safety of the country. I must lay the responsibility for SWAPO's intransigence at the door of

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the United Nations, whose General Assembly maintains the outrageous fiction that SWAPO is the exclusive representative of the people of South West Africa by its resolutions and by supporting SWAPO financially and in United Nations propaganda, thus purporting to afford them a degree of status in the world.

I call upon you, Mr. Secretary-General, to repudiate this creature of violence and to condemn its vicious action. This step would go a long way towards minimizing the suspicion of the people in South West Africa that the settlement plan with United Nations involvement does not provide a vehicle for the attainment of peace and the democratic future for which they are all longing.

While the South African Government has sought a peaceful solution assiduously, SWAPO has continued its acts of violence incessantly. Whatever differences of opinion there might be as regards the interpretation of words and agreements, there can be no doubt as to the conclusions to be drawn from the acts of violence which SWAPO arrogantly persists in committing. Today is 14 February 1979. I have repeatedly urged you to decide on a cease-fire date and to ensure that the process of implementation starts by 26 February 1979. There can be only one reason for your inability to proceed as envisaged - SWAPO's unwillingness to abide by the terms and spirit of the settlement plan.

In the circumstances, and in the light of this latest armed attack on a base inside South West Africa, I would appreciate it if you could urgently inform me whether you believe that SWAPO has accepted the terms of the settlement proposal and if so how do you reconcile their statements and actions with such acceptance.

I must sound a warning that the whole delicate edifice of agreement which we have built so carefully over the past period is in danger of collapse in the light of SWAPO's dastardly attack of yesterday night.

I must insist that you now explain to the South African Government how you now anticipate the settlement proposal being implemented taking into account the callous disregard displayed by SWAPO.

I wish to assure you that the people of South West Africa will in no way be deflected by any actions or stratagems on the part of SWAPO from their resolute determination to attain their independence and safeguard their future by constitutional means.

(Signed) R. F. BOTHA
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
