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LETTER DATED 19 MARCH 1979 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES OF THE
PERMANENT MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
ADDRESSSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the request of the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honourable R. F. Botha, I am enclosing the text of a letter he has addressed to Your Excellency on 19 March 1979 in connexion with the request by the People's Republic of Angola for an urgent meeting of the Security Council (S/13176).

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

(Signed) J. Adriaan EKSTEEN
Chargé d'Affaires

Annex

LETTER DATED 19 MARCH 1979 FROM THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF SOUTH AFRICA ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF
THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I find it incomprehensible that on the very day that the "proximity talks" are to begin, a meeting of the Security Council is called ostensibly to condemn South Africa. The action by the security forces was directed at terrorist bases. It was an operation aimed at protecting the territorial integrity of South West Africa and the safety and security of its inhabitants. SWAPO's persistent and incessant acts of violence against inhabitants of South West Africa are to be condemned, not the protective action by the South African forces.

While the South African and South West African security forces acted with the greatest restraint during the past three months, SWAPO arrogantly continued with its subversion, exploding bombs in crowded business areas, abducting civilians and terrorizing the inhabitants to the point where further inaction on the part of the security forces would have amounted to dereliction of their duty to protect the people of South West Africa.

What should therefore be the subject of an urgent discussion in this Council is the persistent and escalated campaign of violence conducted by SWAPO against the very people whom they claim to represent, at a time when serious efforts are being made to bring the Territory peacefully to early independence.

SWAPO is attempting to take over by force political power in South West Africa, thus depriving the inhabitants of South West Africa of their right of self-determination and making impossible their quest for independence through constitutional means.

There is no need for any party in the Territory to conduct a violent struggle to achieve political freedom. It has been agreed that the Territory will achieve independence on the basis of one man, one vote, that colour discrimination would be removed (which is in fact taking place) and that the United Nations would be present to satisfy itself on the fairness of the electoral process.

South Africa has committed itself to a peaceful solution based on the settlement proposal. As early as 20 September 1978 (S/12854) in a letter to the Secretary-General, South Africa categorically stated that "it is willing to confirm that the moment SWAPO undertakes to stop violence and, in fact, carries out its undertakings, action against SWAPO by the South African forces would cease".

Are we to conclude from the consideration of this item that the Council as a whole and its members individually, favour a solution by force in South West Africa?

In recent months South Africa has brought to the attention of the Secretary-General some 300 incidents of violence and physical intimidation by SWAPO against the people of South West Africa.

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The following are but a few examples:

- 23 August 1978: Attack against Katima Mulilo. Ten members of the security forces were killed and 10 were injured.
- 12 September 1978: Mine explosion near Ondangwa killing two civilians and injuring four.
- 15 October 1978: Two mine explosions near Ombulu resulting in the death of 17 members of the civilian population.
- 16 October 1978: Abduction of four civilians near Eenhana, of whom two were subsequently murdered.
- 1 December 1978: Two explosions in Windhoek injuring 14 persons.
- 30 December 1978: Explosion in Swakopmund injuring 50 persons.
- 13 February 1979: Attack on base at Nkongo by approximately 250 terrorists.
- 27 February 1979: Attack on base at Elundu.
- January/February 1979: Disturbing increase in SWAPO's violent activities: 17 cases of sabotage of power, telecommunication and water installations; 9 incidents of abduction of members of the civilian population, 24 landmine incidents, 15 cases of intimidation resulting in the death of 3 black leaders.

The attention of the Governments of the People's Republic of Angola and the Republic of Zambia has also repeatedly been directed at these acts of violence emanating from their territories.

SWAPO cannot claim a free hand to continue its acts of subversion and aggression against the Territory and its people. SWAPO should not be allowed to rely on the Security Council to provide a protective shield, if not encouragement, for perpetrating these heinous acts.

SWAPO should not be afforded sanctuaries from where it can launch attacks on South West Africa.

Has the Security Council ever called a meeting in response to South Africa's repeated protests against SWAPO's aggression? No. Action is demanded by the people, action against those who murder, abduct, maim and terrorize.

SWAPO's announced programme of violence is undeniable. Why is action not taken against them or those who harbour them?

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Their uncontrolled activities demand that they be restricted to base and that such restriction should be monitored by UNTAG.

The deviations in the Secretary-General's latest report, in particular the one that would create the opportunity for SWAPO to obtain bases in South West Africa if its armed personnel can cross the border, have virtually invited SWAPO to establish forward positions immediately north of the South West African/Angolan border from where they can infiltrate and then claim to be assigned to designated bases inside South West Africa.

The inhabitants of South West Africa have lost confidence in the impartiality of the United Nations. They are following these proceedings with concern and anxiety. They look to the Council to curb those who are daily threatening their lives, their property, their very existence.

The Council would go a long way to restoring their confidence if it were to adopt a resolution on the following lines:

"The Security Council,

"Having noted the repeated acts of violence committed by SWAPO against the population of South West Africa,

"Having noted further that acts of terror by SWAPO have continued unabatedly while serious efforts are being made to find a peaceful solution for the problem of South West Africa,

"1. Condemns SWAPO for its violence against the people of South West Africa;

"2. Calls upon SWAPO to cease immediately its violence and terror and to co-operate forthwith in the implementation of the settlement proposal (S/12636)."
