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2036TH MEETING

Held in New York on Monday, 24 October 1977, at 3.30 p.m.

President: Mr. Rikhi JAIPAL (India).

Present: The representatives of the following States: Benin, Canada, China, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, India, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritius, Pakistan, Panama, Romania, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/2036)

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. The question of South Africa:
Letter dated 20 October 1977 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/12420)

The meeting was called to order at 4.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The question of South Africa:

Letter dated 20 October 1977 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/12420)

1. The PRESIDENT: Letters have been addressed to the President of the Security Council by the representatives of Nigeria and Tunisia in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the question on the agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure.
2. In view of the limited number of places available at the Council table, I invite the representatives of Nigeria and Tunisia to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber, on the usual understanding that they will be invited to take a place at the Council table when they wish to address the Council.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Harriman (Nigeria) and Mr. Mestiri (Tunisia) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

3. The PRESIDENT: I wish also to inform the members of the Council that I have received a letter dated 24 October from the representatives of Benin, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Mauritius which reads as follows:

“We, the undersigned members of the Security Council, have the honour to request that, during its current meetings devoted to the consideration of ‘The question of South Africa’, the Council should extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. M. J. Makatini of the African National Congress and to Mr. David Sibeko of the Pan Africanist Congress.”¹

4. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to the request and, at the appropriate moment in the Council’s proceedings, I shall invite Mr. Makatini and Mr. Sibeko to make their statements.

It was so decided.

5. The PRESIDENT: The Security Council is meeting today in response to the request made on behalf of the Group of African States in a letter dated 20 October from the representative of Tunisia, acting in his capacity as Chairman of the African Group for the month of October [S/12420].

6. Members of the Council also have before them four draft resolutions, sponsored by Benin, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Mauritius, contained in documents S/12309, S/12310, S/12311 and S/12312 of 29 March 1977. In addition, I wish to draw the attention of the Council to document S/12422, which contains the text of a letter dated 21 October from the representative of Sri Lanka to the Secretary-General.

7. The first speaker is the representative of Tunisia, who wishes to make a statement in his capacity as Chairman of the African Group for the month of October. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

8. Mr. MESTIRI (Tunisia) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, first of all I should like to thank you and the other members of the Council for calling on me today to set forth the views of the African Group, of which I have the honour to be the Chairman, on the situation in South Africa. As Tunisians and as Africans, we are particularly pleased that this meeting is taking place under the presidency of the representative of India, the first country to denounce the horrors of *apartheid*.

¹ Subsequently circulated as document S/12423.

9. In my letter of 20 October, I asked you, in my capacity as Chairman of the Group of African States, to convene a meeting of the Security Council to resume consideration of the question of South Africa, where recent developments in an already extremely tense, intolerable situation require suitable and urgent action on the part of the Council.

10. It is certainly not necessary here for me to go into the origins of this problem, which has been with us as long as the United Nations itself and which was inscribed on the agenda of the General Assembly at the behest of your delegation, Mr. President. The Security Council dealt with this matter for the first time in 1960, when the Sharpeville massacre prompted the Tunisian delegation—then a member of the Council—to submit the matter to this body. I do not intend at this point to go back that far, but I would remind the Council of what has happened with regard to the question since the last session of the General Assembly, when a number of resolutions were adopted on *apartheid* and on its harmful effects in South Africa. On 9 November 1976, the General Assembly adopted resolution 31/6 D, in which it requested the Security Council to take urgent action, under Chapter VII of the Charter, with a view to implementing military sanctions against South Africa. Furthermore, in resolution 31/6 K, the Assembly urged the Council to consider steps to achieve the cessation of further foreign investments in South Africa.

11. Unfortunately, the General Assembly's appeal has remained unheeded. The vigorous measures advocated by the international community have not been adopted. Still worse, South Africa has taken advantage of the situation to step up its repression, continue its *apartheid* policy, try to create more bantustans and pursue with impunity its attacks on neighbouring countries. Meanwhile, the Security Council met in March 1977 to consider the question of South Africa in the light of the wave of repression unleashed by the Pretoria régime. However, no decision was adopted in that connexion. The debate was adjourned to allow for broader consultations. Seven months have since elapsed without any concrete action being taken in regard to South Africa.

12. Once again we are faced with massive measures of repression, even more brutal than before, which cannot be justified. Directed particularly against those whites and blacks who advocate dialogue and peaceful resistance, these measures, as the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Tunisia stated, "are obviously aimed at the immediate prevention of any possibility of a peaceful settlement and at the creation of an irreversible situation as a result of which the entire area might well be plunged into violence and confrontation".

13. In the circumstances, it is difficult to continue to pretend to believe that there is any willingness on the part of the Pretoria Government to bring about a sincere change in its racist attitude. In fact, the events of the past few days have exposed the true future intentions of the leaders of South Africa: they are a reaffirmation of the policies of *apartheid*; to those of us who were hoping against hope, they are a reminder that it is vain to continue to entertain illusions, particularly since these are not isolated events. They are most definitely part of a very clear pattern that

reveals an adherence to the same kind of ruthless logic inherent in the *apartheid* system itself. Indeed, the measures taken against the various organizations of the black population and their press agencies are a follow-up to the Soweto killings and the assassination in prison of Steve Biko. They are particularly reprehensible, and it is only natural that they should have prompted an outcry and called forth condemnation on the part of all peoples of the world, even from countries which have been the most indulgent towards the *apartheid* régime. It is with great interest that we have taken note of the clear condemnations which have come from certain Western countries, including the United States, and we note with satisfaction the reactions of those who have indicated their disapproval by recalling their ambassadors, even if only temporarily. Those condemnations and demonstrations of solidarity, though they may have come somewhat late, are signs of interest which the African countries cannot consider negligible. Unfortunately, however, although useful and even necessary, mere condemnations have never before been as inadequate as they are in the present circumstances. The situation in South Africa is deteriorating swiftly, posing an ever greater threat to the area and to international peace and security.

14. In our view, unless the Security Council wishes to fail in its mission, it must abandon its wait-and-see policy. Thus far, since 29 March, it has had before it four draft resolutions introduced by the three African States members of the Council. It is to those four texts that we should now direct our attention. Some have said that they are designed to intimidate and others have described them as a panacea. In reality, they are neither, but they must be reread in the light of the events that have taken place since the Council's last debate on the subject and placed in their proper perspective. When we read, for example, paragraph 3 of document S/12309, which demands that the racist régime of South Africa

"Cease forthwith its indiscriminate violence against peaceful demonstrators against *apartheid*, murders in detention and torture of political prisoners",

and when we think of Steve Biko's death a few months later, we are somewhat troubled by our consciences—at least it is to be hoped we are. I cannot say that if we had adopted that draft Biko would still be alive, but at least the question is an open one. And the same applies to the other drafts, none of which is particularly drastic regarding Pretoria. The actions advocated are the very least that could be done to awaken the public opinion of the whites of South Africa and to create an awareness among them of how serious the situation is as a result of the behaviour of their leaders. That Africa has asked that no military assistance should be given to the murderers of Soweto could hardly be called an extremist measure.

15. I do not know whether the hesitation and delaying tactics of the Council have encouraged the Government of Pretoria to act as it has done. But it is important that on the eve of the elections of the white minority that minority should know that the United Nations is determined to act, that the patience of the Security Council has reached its limits and that all the members of the Council are now

prepared to assume their responsibility. Any hesitation, any avoidance of responsibility, would only encourage the most fanatic of the whites, to the detriment of the ever growing numbers of those who have realized where salvation lies.

16. We are convinced that the moment of truth has arrived. If the United Nations does not meet Pretoria's most recent challenge, no decisive progress can be made anywhere in southern Africa. We are not suggesting that the challenge of racist violence should be met by the legitimate violence of the enforcement action provided for in the Charter; we are suggesting that there should be minimal solidarity in action limited to the economic area and to military and nuclear co-operation.

17. The Security Council, after the General Assembly, has devoted several debates to the situation in South Africa. The Government of Pretoria has many times been condemned for its policies of *apartheid* and for its repressive action. We do not believe that a long debate is necessary in view of recent events. Condemnation of those measures would, of course, be welcome, although paragraph 1 of draft resolution S/12309 already covers that.

18. What the African Group wishes to express to the Council, through me, is that it hopes that the Council will give unanimous approval to the draft resolutions which are before it and will thereby help the people of South Africa in its harsh trial under *apartheid*, from which we are convinced it will inevitably emerge victorious.

19. The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is Mr. David Sibeko, to whom the Council extended an invitation earlier this afternoon. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

20. Mr. SIBEKO: Mr. President, your country has been a living inspiration to all of us who find ourselves living under the yoke of colonial domination or white settler occupation. India, in the post-war period, became the first to lower the standard of British colonialism and raise itself up as a nation free and independent among the nations of the world. As the representative of Tunisia has already pointed out, it was your country which first raised the question of South Africa's *apartheid* laws, the laws of racial discrimination, at the United Nations. The subject has continuously and consistently occupied this body ever since.

21. I crave the Council's indulgence and, on this occasion, would begin my statement by referring to what was said to me, in a private conversation, by a representative of an important Power after our first appearance in the Council. That representative remarked to me that, after hearing our statement and then later listening patiently to the fulminations of Vorster's representative, he was left in no doubt, personally, as to who was better qualified to govern South Africa.

22. There is not a single statesman or objective journalist who has ever encountered Mangaliso Sobukwe, the President of the Pan Africanist Congress, and come away without the impression that Sobukwe possesses the political wisdom, the moral authority and the sense of justice required to heal the deep wounds inflicted on the African

people by more than 300 years of oppression, and then to lead our nation as a whole to peace and prosperity as a free people.

23. Instead, what is imposed on the majority people in our country is a régime headed by tyrants who, because they are afraid of facing up to the consequences of the failure of their policies, as was stated last week by their own newspaper *Die Transvaler*, are deliberately charting a course that is leading South Africa to a racial inferno. The holocaust towards which Vorster and his ruling clique are dragging South Africa will inevitably extend its burning results far and beyond that country's own borders. Without question South Africa's *apartheid* régime is posing a very grave danger to world peace.

24. The most crucial task assigned the Security Council is to preserve world peace. And when this peace is as blatantly threatened, as is the case in South Africa today, it is a matter of duty—a sacred duty—for the members of the Council to move swiftly to deal with that danger.

25. According to Vorster's own police boss, Jimmy Kruger, last week the South African *apartheid* régime found itself compelled to take drastic measures against at least 16 mass organizations of the Azanian people and two white-led anti-*apartheid* groups because they were fomenting revolution in South Africa. The *apartheid* régime also found it necessary to proscribe two newspapers published for blacks: *The World*, a daily, and its sister paper, *Weekend World*. The measures against those opponents of the *apartheid* régime were accompanied by wholesale arrests and the detention of the leaders of those mass organizations, as well as the editor of *The World*, Percy Qoboza. Racist to the end, the Vorster régime is treating its white opponents with kid gloves, relatively speaking, because so far it has only placed the brave Donald Woods, editor of the East London *Daily Dispatch* and Dr. Beyers Naude, Director of the Christian Institute, under house arrest and banning orders.

26. What is happening in Azania is that the oppressed black masses are approaching the limit of their endurance and are demonstrably determined to rid themselves of the oppression that tramples them underfoot. Against mighty odds, on 16 June last year, the children of Soweto became universally recognized as the symbol of the Azanian people's resolve to free themselves. Their courageous struggle with bare hands, stones, sticks, bottles and other crude weapons against the machine guns, armoured cars and other sophisticated weapons of Fascist South Africa's paramilitary police has been emulated across the country for their compatriots.

27. In spite of savage massacres which have wasted over 1,000 black lives, including those of 4-year olds, the masses continue to rise in tidal waves, in cities and in villages, in urban townships and in the hated bantustans. At last the Vorster régime has been forced to acknowledge openly that there is a national uprising in Azania. Fearing that the uprising is now destined to grow into all-out armed struggle, the *apartheid* régime has declared a virtual state of emergency as a first step towards severely tightening the Draconian laws which already exist in that country.

28. The South African racist régime has announced that the ban on the black mass organizations, including the Black People's Convention and the South African Students' Organization, is permanent. Further, Kruger has told newsmen that he does not plan to bring the detainees to trial. According to *The Washington Post* yesterday, Mrs. Qoboza was told by her husband when she visited him at the Modderbee detention jail that the security police said the detainees would be kept behind bars without trial until August next year.

29. By the week-end, the number of people detained since last Wednesday had risen to 200. Amongst those held are prominent Azanians like Rachidi Hlaku, the National President of the Black People's Convention, the Right Reverend Manas Buthelezi, Chairman of the Black Parents' Association and a Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Southern Africa, Dr. Nthato Motlana, a prominent physician who is Chairman of the Soweto Committee of 10—this is his second detention since 16 June 1976—and S'mangaliso Mkatshwa, the Convener of the Black Renaissance National Convention in 1975 who is the acting Secretary-General of the South African Catholic Bishops' Conference. Earlier this year, he had been placed under house arrest and other restrictions for a period of five years.

30. These men and others with them in detention have been branded Communist agitators. Percy Qoboza, a devout Catholic with a degree in theology, who, even when we were schoolboys in the same township, Sophiatown, could never have been confused with a radical, has had his paper closed down and has himself been placed under arrest because the columns of *The World*, which is owned by South African mining houses, were perceived by Vorster and his cronies to be part of the Communist conspiracy.

31. But, as we all know, Hlaku, Buthelezi, Motlana, Mkatshwa and the other hundreds are in jail merely because they have articulated the universally-known grievances of the black people under *apartheid* colonialism. This is a democratic exercise, taken for granted in those countries on whose behalf Vorster claims he crusades against communism. Percy Qoboza and Donald Woods are "guilty" of faithfully reporting those grievances and the views of their fellow detainees, another freedom which is basic in those democracies.

32. According to the External Service of the British Broadcasting Corporation this morning, in South Africa it is believed that this Security Council debate is going to be the toughest ever for the *apartheid* régime. World opinion has swung sharply in favour of the oppressed millions in South Africa, and the régime realizes this. Kruger told an interviewer that the South African Cabinet had taken this into account before deciding on the massive bans and sweeping arrests. They carried out the severe measures of repression regardless.

33. It is common knowledge that Vorster knows full well that he has those of his traditional trading partners and allies of long-standing that are represented here in a kind of diplomatic bind, so he timed his action with evil precision. They need him to secure satisfactory results for their initiatives over Namibia and Zimbabwe. If those countries

refrain from casting their customary negative votes and thus leave the way open for mandatory resolutions against the *apartheid* régime, Vorster's threat is that he will not play ball over the decolonization of Namibia and Zimbabwe. This is well known.

34. There is a simpler explanation of what this racist villain is doing to the five Western countries in the Security Council which have been negotiating with him over Namibia and Zimbabwe: he is blackmailing them. His ransom price is another triple veto to prevent the Council from taking action under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. That is blackmail.

35. It is the Western countries themselves which have taught us never to give in to a blackmailer because he keeps coming back over and over again. It will be interesting to see how they deal with this obscenely cynical one. While we have been impressed by the sharp criticisms pouring out from Bonn, London, Ottawa, Paris and Washington, and further impressed by tiny steps in the right direction like the recalling of ambassadors, it must be borne in mind that Vorster is no mere juvenile delinquent to be treated with mild rebukes. He murders in cold blood and now he shows another criminal bent: he is a blackmailer. He is a dangerous gangster. The justice demanded by the people of Azania from the international community, which has declared *apartheid* to be a crime against humanity, cannot be further delayed if the spilling of blood in our country and across its borders is to be minimized. It cannot be avoided.

36. It also has to be kept in mind that, with or without international punitive measures, the Azanian people and their liberation movement are determined to intensify the struggle until political power and the land are restored to the people. Against this, Vorster has not only taken the drastic measures we are all too familiar with, but he has licensed his Fascist army to commit aggression against any African State which he considers is posing a danger to *apartheid* South Africa, and this at a time when he has developed the capacity to build and deploy nuclear weapons. About two weeks ago, he falsely accused Botswana and Mozambique of training Azanian guerrillas, a familiar prelude to the execution of the diabolical plan to commit aggression against independent African States opposed to South Africa's *apartheid* policies and white settler colonialism.

37. What Anthony Lewis says in *The New York Times* of this morning applies not only to his own President and his own country; as far as we are concerned, it affects all America's allies. This is what he says:

"... , Mr. Carter's attempt to make Western values matter once again in foreign affairs is at risk here. The risk lies in the very fact that the South African Government claims to be defending those values... If the United States seemed to be acquiescing in the bizarre claim, the Carter policy would deserve to be taken with a grain of cynicism."

38. We do not take our friends represented in the Council for granted. Their past record here and their pronounce-

ments in the General Assembly and elsewhere leave us confident that they will support the course of action recommended in the draft resolutions submitted to the Council. Our people are eternally grateful for the support they have always drawn from free African countries, from non-aligned countries, from socialist countries and from the Nordic countries. Their gratitude is manifest in the sacrifices they make as they struggle to destroy *apartheid* colonialism and build a country which will fully respect the principles of the United Nations contained in the Charter and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Our problem has always been with persuading the United Kingdom, France, the United States and their allies to go along with the rest of the United Nations membership in supporting our just cause.

39. Finally, I wish to say that Vorster's reckless action of last week—which is made more ominous by his scheme to

create an *apartheid* reich with himself as fuehrer after the whites-only elections on 30 November—has presented the international community with an excellent opportunity to redeem its authority, through the United Nations. This debate must conclude with the adoption of resolutions that will pave the way—only pave the way—towards the immediate proclamation of a total arms embargo against *apartheid* South Africa, towards the withdrawal of investments, plus trade and other economic sanctions against South Africa, towards the isolation of the *apartheid* régime in the fields of sports and culture, towards the termination of all joint or exchange scientific projects and towards the total diplomatic isolation of the *apartheid* régime in South Africa, until white minority rule is overthrown and Azania emerges as a democratic, non-racial society. Otherwise, Vorster will declare you all “irrelevant”.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.

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