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NOTE VERBALE DATED 14 SEPTEMBER 1978 FROM THE PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE OF BENIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED  
TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

The Permanent Representative of the People's Republic of Benin to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to request him to have circulated as a Security Council document, in connexion with the complaint by Benin, the text of the statement made by Comrade Michel Alladaye, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Co-operation of the People's Republic of Benin, at the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries held at Belgrade.

Annex

Statement made at Belgrade on 29 July 1978 by His Excellency  
Michel Alladaye, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Co-operation  
of the People's Republic of Benin at the Conference of Ministers  
for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries

First of all, on behalf of my country, the Republic of Benin, and on behalf of my delegation, I wish to express the great satisfaction and pleasure we feel at being here today in Belgrade, the beautiful capital of a country which the People's Republic of Benin is honoured to number among its friends, whose name evokes so many struggles and so many victorious combats against innumerable foreign invasions, against systems for the exploitation of man by man, and for the building of a socialist society; a country which, in its unshakeable determination to maintain its national independence and dignity has constantly remained open and attentive to the appeals of other peoples, particularly those of the third world, who are struggling resolutely for the effective conquest of the right to freedom, independence and social progress.

We conceived and established the bases of our movement of Bandung in 1955, but it was at Belgrade in 1961 that its principles were developed and its bases extended so as to make it a vast and powerful international movement. Consequently, no better site for this conference could be found today. What country could be in a better position than the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia - a veritable keystone of our movement by reason of its fidelity to principles and the permanent availability of its eminent leader, Marshall Josip B. Tito - to host our conference in a period when the third world countries are facing special difficulties, a period when all the forces of evil are sounding the trumpets of confusion and division with the cynical aim of destroying the unity and solidarity created at the price of so many years of effort and struggle.

You will readily understand that my delegation, taking the floor after so many brilliant speakers, feels some diffidence in seeking to restate what has already been said so often and so well.

Nevertheless, you will, I trust, allow me to add our modest contribution to the important and constructive contributions made by my predecessors on this rostrum which have already ensured that this conference will be an unprecedented success.

The basic characteristic of our time is the exacerbation of the antagonistic contradictions which divide the camp of the forces of liberation and progress from the camp of reaction, oppression and the exploitation of man by man.

International imperialism, faced with the dynamic development of the struggle of the peoples of the world for freedom, independence and sovereignty, brought to bay by the legitimate struggle of the peoples and countries of the third world for the establishment of a more equitable and just new international economic order, and harassed by the struggles of the peoples of the capitalist countries, is now in the throes of a serious crisis.

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Ever since the historic meeting at Bandung, all the oppressed peoples have raised high the standard of freedom, in opposition to enslavement and in support of social progress and dignity.

In turn, in Asia, Africa and Latin America, our heroic peoples have, by the force of arms, won their right to freedom, independence, and full and complete sovereignty.

Since the historic 1973 Algiers summit in particular, the national liberation process has gained new momentum both quantitatively and qualitatively. Thus, the heroic peoples of Cambodia, Viet Nam and Laos have broken the chains of domination and enslavement by inflicting an unprecedented defeat on United States imperialism.

The peoples of Mozambique, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Sao Tome and Principe and the Cape Verde islands have shattered the Portuguese colonial empire which had endured for more than five centuries.

The struggles of the people of Palestine and the peoples of South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia and Western Sahara have likewise increased in scope and strength, while in many other countries the struggle to consolidate national independence has been waged victoriously.

However, one of the greatest victories won in recent years by the third world countries has undoubtedly been the courageous decision taken at the Algiers summit to ensure their full sovereignty over their natural resources. All these victories, and particularly that won in the economic sphere, which is the very essence of international imperialism, have inevitably intensified the latter's resentment of the third world countries. Consequently, international imperialism has for some years now been stepping up its general counter-offensive with a view to halting the national liberation struggle, putting an end to the just claims of the third world countries and pursuing its iniquitous plundering of our natural resources.

Attacks by national armies and armies of mercenaries, application of the "divide to weaken and conquer" policy, political assassinations and attempted economic suffocation are some of the appropriate methods used by international imperialism to achieve its sinister ends.

In recent years, the most characteristic events in this general offensive by international imperialism, notably in Africa, have been the following:

The flagrant aggression and attempted genocide organized against the Saharan people;

The imperialist armed attack launched against the People's Republic of Benin on Sunday, 16 January 1977 with the complicity of certain puppet African heads of State;

The cowardly and treacherous assassinations of the great Nigerian leader Murtala and the great African patriots Amilcar Cabral and Marien Ngouabi;

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The repeated armed attacks against the valiant peoples of Angola, Mozambique, Zambia and Botswana;

The tense situation in the horn of Africa deliberately created and maintained by international imperialism;

The attempts to liquidate the Palestinian resistance movement;

The destruction of the legal régime of the Comoros by a mercenary army paid by international imperialism;

The overt threats of destruction made by some European leaders against the progressive African régimes.

Elsewhere in the world other characteristic and equally important events illustrate this aggressive policy of international imperialism.

In the Far East, the Korean homeland is arbitrarily divided by United States imperialism, whose military occupation of the southern part of Korean territory prevents the Korean question from being settled by the Koreans themselves in peace and freedom.

Similarly, the people of East Timor, after waging a heroic liberation struggle against the former colonizers, have seen their national territory invaded by foreign troops from a country which is a member of the movement of non-aligned countries, with the blessing of international imperialism.

In Latin America, international imperialism maintains its colonization of Belize and Puerto Rico, despite the legitimate and profound aspirations of the peoples of those territories.

In the Indian Ocean, international imperialism, pursuing its aggressive policy, is illegally occupying islands over which African States hold sovereignty, and using them as military bases for the implementation of its diabolical plan for the colonial reconquest of countries in Africa and Asia.

My country, the People's Republic of Benin, has not been spared from the schemes of international imperialism for colonial reconquest and further enslavement and exploitation. After more than 80 years of barbarous direct colonization and more than 10 years of neo-colonialization, the Beninese people chose, by the popular revolution of 26 October 1972, to build their own future in full independence and in full sovereignty on the basis of the fundamental principles of non-alignment, following the course of scientific socialism.

Since that historic decision of our people, my country, the People's Republic of Benin, has been a standing target for international imperialism which, in a frantic effort to destabilize our political system so as to reconquer our country, launched an imperialist armed attack by mercenaries, who are international outlaws and specialists in mass crime, on Sunday, 16 January 1977.

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This imperialist armed aggression, aimed at overthrowing the Government of Benin and liquidating the leaders of the Beninese revolution, was organized by international imperialism with the active complicity of the leaders of certain countries, who are unfortunately members of the non-aligned movement and present here in this room.

Irrefutable proof of this despicable act of piracy, banditry and colonial reconquest has been provided. Collusion at all levels has also been brought to light by the different fact-finding missions sent to Cotonou, such as the Security Council mission headed by Mr. Illueca of Panama, the mission of the Secretariat-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) headed by Mr. Peter Onu, and the ministerial commission of inquiry of the Organization of African Unity headed by Mr. Abdelsalam Treki, Secretary for Foreign Affairs of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

The base and ignoble roles played by certain African heads of State, in complete violation of the principles of the non-aligned movement and the Charters of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations, have been clearly established.

In the course of these tragic and dramatic events, one of our colleagues, who is present here, was paying a friendly visit to my country. This was the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Comrade Ho Dam, whose residence was, for several hours, at the centre of the particularly bloody confrontations which we had with the army of mercenaries.

Comrade Ho Dam could have lost his life as, unfortunately, several of my compatriots did on that day.

The Beninese people are still suffering the consequences of that cowardly act of imperialist armed aggression aimed at colonial reconquest. As everyone knows, after the historic summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity, at Khartoum, the President of the Gabonese Republic took the serious decision to expel from his country the Beninese nationals who had settled on Gabonese land decades ago and whom he himself estimated as numbering more than 10,000. The President of Gabon, as he himself has said, decided to expel all Beninese except for the political exiles, and these political exiles are precisely the ones who betrayed the cause of the Beninese people and have been found to be agents of international imperialism.

Even now, as we are speaking in this august Assembly, thousands of my compatriots are herded in camps like cattle, their houses plundered and their property stolen; whole families have been separated, children abandoned without food or care, a number of people seriously wounded, while others have died as a result of brutal treatment.

Allow me, Mr. President, now that I have been given the opportunity to address this august Assembly and particularly the African Group and you yourself, to express the gratitude of the Beninese people for the solidarity you have shown in

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this time of trial. These are the conditions which the Beninese people are enduring in their struggle to build their own future, drawing on their own forces in consistent application of the principles of non-alignment.

These, too, are the most typical features of the large-scale offensive launched by international imperialism in Africa, in Asia and in Latin America.

In view of this situation, what should the non-aligned movement do?

In our opinion the non-aligned movement should adhere firmly to the principles of the struggle against colonialism, neo-colonialism, and imperialism and its by-products - racism, apartheid and zionism. Within this framework our conference must support and assist by all possible means the struggle of the peoples of Namibia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Western Sahara, Palestine, East Timor, Belize and Puerto Rico for independence, liberation and sovereignty, and that of the Korean people for the independent and peaceful reunification of their divided homeland.

In our opinion, as a corollary to the anti-imperialist struggle, the non-aligned movement must support the struggle of peoples and States to guarantee their sovereignty and security.

This conference must therefore condemn the imperialist acts of armed aggression and subsequent acts aimed at destabilizing the régimes of independent countries for the sake of colonial reconquest. This conference must also, therefore, understand the reasons why certain independent countries are appealing to other friendly countries of their choice to help them, under special circumstances, to guarantee their security. In this connexion my delegation was particularly shocked by the malicious insinuations circulating in some quarters concerning the internationalist assistance of Cuba in Africa and the assistance of the socialist countries in Africa. My country supports the internationalist assistance of Cuba in Africa because this assistance, given to sovereign Governments at their request, is in keeping with the Charters of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations and the principles of the non-aligned movement. We also support the assistance given by the socialist countries to the non-aligned countries.

In our opinion, the non-aligned movement must support the struggle of peoples for a free and independent choice of economic and political system in keeping with their aspirations and for social progress.

The positions of the People's Republic of Benin on the various problems confronting our world today are quite well known, having been repeatedly stated in various international forums.

We should like, however, to reiterate here, without empty eloquence but with all due firmness, not only our condemnation of the revolting Vorster and Smith régimes but also our support for the struggle of the peoples of Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa against colonial domination and against racism and apartheid.

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We should like to reiterate our indignation and sorrow at seeing two African States belonging to our movement invading and occupying the ancestral land of the Saharan people and to assure the Frente POLISARIO of the unswerving support of the militant people of Benin for the just struggle they are waging against their aggressors.

We support the struggle of the peoples of East Timor and the South Moluccas.

We support the heroic Korean people in the struggle they are waging against United States imperialism and the puppet clique of Chung Hee Park to reunify their divided homeland in harmony, through dialogue and without foreign interference.

We assure the peoples of Belize and Puerto Rico of our support in the struggle they are waging for the attainment of independence and sovereignty for their territories.

We should like, lastly, to reaffirm that the militant and revolutionary people of Benin will always be behind the valiant and heroic of Cuba in the fight they are waging to thwart all the manoeuvres of United States imperialism and recover their sovereignty over Guantanamo, which is being arbitrarily occupied.

I should not wish to conclude without thanking most sincerely the Government and people of Yugoslavia for the militant and fraternal welcome given to our delegation since our arrival in the beautiful land of Yugoslavia. I wish you every success in your work. Thank you.

Ready for the Revolution

The Struggle Continues.

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