

UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY
COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

S/12900
19 October 1978

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 19 OCTOBER 1978 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE
PERMANENT MISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

From 16 to 18 October 1978 the Foreign Ministers of the five Western members of the Security Council held discussions with the South African Government on the future of South West Africa.

The following documents have now been released by the South African Prime Minister, the Honourable P. W. Botha:

(a) Introductory statement by the Prime Minister of South Africa at the meeting with the Foreign Ministers of the five Western members of the Security Council in Pretoria on 16 October 1978.

(b) Joint statement by the South African Government and the five Foreign Ministers regarding South West Africa dated 19 October 1978.

(c) Statement by the South African Government following the acceptance of the above-mentioned joint statement by the South African Government.

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

(Signed) David W. STEWARD
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

Annex I

Opening statement by the Hon. P. W. Botha, Prime Minister of the
Republic of South Africa, on 16 October 1978

You and those who accompany you are most welcome as representatives of your countries, as well as in your individual capacities, to the Republic of South Africa and Pretoria.

It is the sincere hope of our Government and peoples that your historic visit will accomplish the rediscovery of the Cape of Good Hope, its strategic importance and its friendship to the free world.

Allow me to invite you to avail yourself of the opportunity of seeing more of our country than this conference room. You owe it to yourself, but also to the world. We are prepared to create the necessary facilities, considering your limited time. While you travelled so far I hope you will allow my colleague of Foreign Affairs to organize, for instance, a visit to Cape Town and the Witwatersrand. I am also very glad that some of you have found it possible to visit Windhoek and to have discussions with representatives of those most directly concerned with the future of South West Africa. Before we come to specific points, I should like to express my views to you as leading members of the Western world on some salient features affecting the strategic situation in southern Africa. I, consequently, request your indulgence for a short while.

The ideals for which the West stands - and I refer especially to those democratic principles of individual and political freedom - are as dear to us in South Africa as they are to you. South Africa is part of the free world and is anxious to discuss problems that have arisen between us and the rest of the family of nations, on the basis of mutual respect. We have understanding for the points of view of others and hope that, on their part, those who are animated by goodwill would appreciate the real nature of the grave problems which face the southern African subcontinent.

As a country, we deplore the ideology of communism and are prepared not only to fight to preserve the democratic ideals but actively to oppose communism.

I would ask you to recall that in the years since South Africa became a unitary State, following the Act of Union in 1910, we have fought together with four of the five countries represented here today. In World Wars I and II, South Africa, as a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations, was to be found playing its part in the defence of the common ideals of Western democracy. In Korea, we joined the group of Western countries in the fight against communist aggression and expansionism.

It is perhaps ironical that the current dispute with the United Nations can be traced back to a war in which South African forces, acting on behalf of, and in concert with Great Britain, seized what was then German South West Africa and

/...

held it as captured territory until it was turned over to South Africa's administration as a mandate from the League of Nations at the end of the First World War. During the First World War this country brought upon itself a bloody civil war in which some of the best people of South Africa died as a result of our participation on the side of the West - and, more specifically, because the Government of the time conquered South West Africa. That was the price which South Africa paid - civil war and insurrection, because the interests of the West had to be served. One hundred and ninety thousand white soldiers took part in the First World War on the side of the West; 60,000 non-whites took part; 12,450 died in battle. During the Second World War, South Africa once again stood on the side of the Allies, in spite of discord and divisions within its own ranks. South Africa supplied 400,000 soldiers. Twelve thousand died. Then came the Berlin airlift. In the Berlin airlift, 10 South African crews of three men each undertook 2,500 flights and delivered 8,000 tons of supplies to West Berlin. Then came Korea. South Africa made 800 members of the Airforce available to Korea. We appreciate that Korea still has the decency to invite us to its festivities, and we shall attend them. All these are South Africa's contributions to the West.

From that time until the present era, South Africa has been concerned with, and responsible for, the security of the Territory of South West Africa. For many decades this was not a serious problem. Only in recent years has the security of South West Africa become affected by new developments in the southern African strategic context.

These new developments to which I refer concern, of course, the entry of Soviet Russia into Africa and, more especially, into southern Africa. Soviet activity in the Horn of Africa affects us in the southern tip of the continent less than does their activity in our neighbouring States, but I would suggest, gentlemen, that, for your countries and for the whole of the free world, you should be vitally concerned at these developments throughout the African continent. I am not so presumptuous as to suggest that you are not so concerned.

I feel it unnecessary on such an occasion to analyse in depth and in detail the Soviet over-all strategy to further its policy of imperialism and expansionism to all quarters of the globe. What I do want to cover, however briefly, is the South African perception of the threat of communist expansionism in southern Africa. In passing, I cannot ignore the dramatic build-up of the Soviet blue-water fleet in the Indian Ocean, which does not concern only African strategists but from all reports available to me is very much a matter of concern for NATO, who have drawn up contingency plans for the protection of the oil-route round southern Africa.

The first obvious intrusion by Communist Russia into the affairs of southern Africa was, of course, Angola, and in conformity with what I said earlier on, we in South Africa were prepared to risk physical conflict in order to stop a Marxist-orientated group from seizing power in that country and which would rob the Angolan people of their right of self-determination. We are thankful that in spite of lack of promised support from the West, we succeeded in halting chaos and Cuban advance into South West Africa.

/...

Russian intervention in Angola, through their Cuban surrogates, clearly had only one purpose. This was no war of national liberation, with so-called freedom fighters supported by the USSR against so-called colonialist oppressors. The Portuguese had gone, and the issue was - who was going to rule in Angola - the pro-Western UNITA or FNLA, or the pro-Communist MPLA? The Russians were determined to get MPLA into power, and having cocked their noses at the West, they did so.

The West may say that it does not matter that there is a Soviet-imposed Marxist Government in Angola. While we accept that the people of any country, including Angola, have a right to choose their own government, even a Marxist government, we in South Africa believe most strongly that it is an entirely different matter if such a government is imposed on the people by force under Soviet direction. We see this as the thin edge of the wedge - or to quote an American strategic view - the start of the domino theory.

When FRELIMO came to power in Mozambique, the South African Government stated, as a matter of policy, that it was not for us to choose a particular type of government for that country. We indicated that we would be prepared to co-operate with the new Government on a basis of non-interference in each other's affairs and provided they respected our sovereignty. This, in itself, assumes that Mozambique would not make available its territory as a springboard for action against the Republic. In the short term, we do not expect this to happen, but looking ahead, one must take cognizance of developing relations between FRELIMO and the Soviet Union.

Russia may not have a large physical presence in either Angola or Mozambique at the present moment, but when the chips are down and it really matters in a strategic sense in the fundamental conflict between East and West, Soviet troops, aircraft and ships could reach those territories within hours rather than days. The Soviet capability to reinforce very rapidly - even half-way across the globe from Russia - has already been amply and chillingly demonstrated.

Let us suppose that in addition to Angola and Mozambique, the Soviet Union were to get a firm foothold in South West Africa by imposing a satellite government. This is not a far-fetched possibility. There could be little doubt that Sam Nujoma's SWAPO has already become a Soviet pawn and is determined to seize power by subversion, intimidation and other forces. This, incidentally, is the main reason why SWAPO is so determined to get the South African forces out of South West Africa. If you, gentlemen, have any doubts about SWAPO's intentions, we shall gladly make available to you the information our intelligence has collected. But I dare say much of this is already available to your own intelligence authorities. To get back to my point: say the Soviets and SWAPO succeed, what then?

- South West Africa, together with Angola, would provide the USSR with a solid bloc along the west coast of central and southern Africa, enabling it to be used at will to the detriment of southern Africa and the free world. It would, for example, control South West Africa's mineral resources, including its uranium.

/...

- Botswana, Bophuthatswana, Transkei and Lesotho could wittingly or unwittingly become pawns in the Soviet master game.

- Cuban troop presence in Angola could be reduced, making the Cubans available for further adventures on behalf of their Russian master, e.g., against the Western-supported State of Zaire, where, already, the United States claims to have evidence that the Cubans were behind the invasion of the Shaba Province earlier this year.

- If Mobutu's shaky hold on his country were to be broken, he would almost certainly be replaced by a Marxist, and we would then be faced by a situation in which the Marxist-orientated countries of Congo, Zaire and Tanzania would form a belt across Africa from east to west, effectively cutting Africa in half and isolating southern Africa to be dealt with at leisure.

- Zambia, Rhodesia and Malawi would be largely dependent upon the goodwill of the four Marxist seaboard States of Angola, Zaire, Tanzania and Mozambique for their imports and exports and thus liable to an economic stranglehold which could force them to toe the Marxist line.

- The isolation of the Republic of South Africa, economically, politically and militarily is now complete and final, and Russia would be standing before her ultimate strategic goal in Africa.

We cannot escape the impression that at least some Western countries, while expecting South Africa's active co-operation in search of peace, nevertheless take steps which we cannot interpret as otherwise than hostile.

It would seem that they hold the view that stability in southern Africa and our future are to be sacrificed in the hope of satisfying the third world and thereby indirectly curtailing Soviet expansion. This is a vain hope.

I know you will say that the best way of avoiding such a situation is to find internationally accepted settlements in South West Africa and Rhodesia. We are aware of the benefits which can flow from such solutions. It is this realization which has motivated South Africa to commit herself over the past 18 months to negotiations with the five Western countries, with the objective of achieving an internationally recognized settlement. South Africa has conducted these negotiations in all sincerity and good faith.

But, gentlemen, it would be of little avail if an internationally accepted settlement were to be reached in South West Africa at the cost of internal stability. A chaotic South West Africa or a country dictatorially ruled by a Soviet puppet, although internationally recognized, would be poor compensation to a people who had been promised orderly independence by the end of this year. If the people of South West Africa, or a substantial portion of them, were to believe that they were mere pawns in an international game, in which their wishes did not count, and were not even ascertained, we would have failed dismally. I hope this can be avoided.

/...

We have reached a critical juncture, and the results of the present discussions might affect the whole of southern Africa for many years to come. It is my Government's hope that we can avoid running over hastily into a tragic confrontation. The present situation is delicately poised, and we have to move with caution. In this framework, the envisaged December elections in South West Africa should be seen neither as a final step nor a South African challenge to the international community. As we said in our reply to the Five on 6 October:

"All options will be open to the elected representatives and they will, therefore, also be free to recommend acceptance of the Secretary-General's report. South Africa will, at that time, point out to them the various alternatives and their likely consequences, both internally and externally. South Africa will also again bring to their attention the views of the Five in regard to the requirements for international recognition of an independent South West Africa."

Before concluding my remarks, I wish to draw your attention to the substantial progress South West Africa and its peoples have made under the guidance of my country.

South Africa's support is not only a matter of money but also embraces railways, harbours, post and telegraph services, research in various directions, water supply, and power supply and development. General economic development, such as banking, agriculture, mining, took place under the leadership of the Republic of South Africa.

Since 1961 to 1977 (not to mention earlier statistics), the Republic of South Africa contributed to South West Africa development in the form of special subsidies, loans for electrical supply and building of main roads, the sum of not less than R 637 million. This amount does not include the more or less R 200 million we are spending annually on our peace-keeping forces to maintain the security and peace in South West Africa against Marxist insurgency from outside.

Let me be quite candid with you.

An independent South West Africa with a responsible government will have to take cognizance of these facts.

An irresponsible government, motivated by Marxist theories can only destroy South West Africa and its infrastructure in the same way it brought chaos, hunger, lack of health services upon and destroyed potential economic growth in Angola and Mozambique. Quite correctly a leader in Kavango stated in clear terms: "I say that the Republic of South Africa is our best friend."

Finally, gentlemen, let me advise you, we have a practical vision for southern Africa. Firstly, as far as the internal affairs of my country are concerned, we did not as a Government, create plural societies.

/...

They are South Africa's proud heritage. We do not see this state of affairs as our eventual doom. We accept it as our challenge and an addition to our other resources of wealth. The beauty of the creation itself is to be found in its diversity. The diversity of our peoples is not an unbearable burden. It is an opportunity to serve humanity.

It is true we also inherited many unnecessary discriminatory measures from colonial history. We have already done away with some of them and will continue to do so wherever common interest can be served.

Furthermore, the freedom and right of self-determination and self-expression we demanded, fought for and achieved for my own people, we are prepared to grant to others. We shall, at all times, follow the road of constitutional and evolutionary development in this regard. We shall, with determination, withstand revolution and the creation of chaos. We have the unqualified support of most South Africans on this principle.

Thirdly, I personally have already contributed my efforts towards creating a new dispensation for coloured and Asian South Africans on the basis of mutual co-operation and responsibility for the future. Our coloured and Asian communities have made rapid progress during the last few decades.

Consultation on different levels have been accepted. Parliament will attend to these further matters within a few months. As to our black peoples - nobody forces them to accept independence, although they are all enjoying self-government. Transkei and Bophuthatswana attained their goal by constitutional means, without bloodshed, and are certainly deserving of better treatment from the civilized, democratic world.

We have problems still to be solved, many of which resulted from the colonial period and rapid industrialization. We can be trusted to cope with these problems, through discussion and deliberation, in a civilized South African way. We are a country of relaxed peoples; the only people in my country who are not relaxed are those who make themselves available to serve revolutionary and communist causes and who prefer militant action against orderly government.

We believe in a community of free nations in southern Africa - where proper health services, training of people, higher standards of living, proper housing of families, opportunities for work and economic progress will be possible.

Our neighbouring States in southern Africa need technological, scientific and other forms of assistance. They need capital for sound development. They do not need terrorists who exploit their territories.

The Republic of South Africa is capable of contributing its proper share in a positive way.

My advice is stop shouting at us. Stop creating stumbling blocks in our way. There is a different, more wise approach to deal with us.

Our different indigenous peoples, white, brown and black, have never been slaves.

We do not intend being slaves, now or in future.

Annex II

Joint statement of 19 October 1978 by the South African Government
and the Foreign Ministers of the five Western members of the
Security Council

1. On 25 April 1978, the South African Government announced its acceptance of the proposals of the Western Five for an internationally acceptable settlement of the Namibia problem. However, when the United Nations Secretary-General published his report on the implementation of the proposals, the South African Government expressed concern that certain aspects of the report were not in accordance with the Western proposal. The areas of concern were the size of the military component of UNTAG, the question of consultations, the proposal for police monitors and the date of the elections. The statement by the Secretary-General in the Security Council on 29 September addressed itself to clarification of these areas of concern.

2. The five Foreign Ministers and the South African Government discussed these clarifications further, in order to establish common ground on the implementation of the report of the Secretary-General.

The following main points were examined:

(i) POLICE FORCE

While the South African delegation considered the number of civilian personnel envisaged for police-monitoring responsibilities excessive, it believed that the Secretary-General's explanatory statement in the Security Council had removed South Africa's preoccupation with the character and role of the personnel concerned. It had become clear that the functions of the existing police forces would not be affected.

(ii) CONSULTATION

The Five intimated their agreement that they were committed to the principle of fair consultation, emphasizing that this had been reaffirmed by the Secretary-General in his introductory statement of 29 September in the Security Council. This would cover, inter alia, the composition and actual size of the military component of UNTAG. The Five intimated that they would seek confirmation that their interpretation coincided with that of the Secretary-General. On that basis, the South African delegation felt that the question of consultation could be resolved.

(iii) TROOPS

The composition and the actual total figure of UNTAG would be determined by the Secretary-General after consultation by his Special Representative with the Administrator-General in the light of the prevailing circumstances.

/...

3. The South African Government and the five Foreign Ministers accordingly believe that it would now be appropriate for the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Ahtisaari, to resume his discussions with the South African Administrator-General of Namibia within the framework of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which endorsed the Secretary-General's report. The aim of these discussions would be to work out the modalities of the proposed elections under United Nations supervision and to fix a date for these elections. The five Foreign Ministers therefore intend to recommend to the Secretary-General that he should instruct Mr. Ahtisaari to proceed to Windhoek as soon as possible. In addition, it was regarded as appropriate to recommend to the Secretary-General that he begin consultations on the composition of the military component of UNTAG.

4. The South African Government stated that the planned December elections must be seen as an internal process to elect leaders.

The South African Government will thereafter use its best efforts to persuade them seriously to consider ways and means of achieving international recognition through the good offices of the Special Representative and the Administrator-General.

In implementation of this goal the Special Representative would consult with the Administrator-General on all aspects of the Secretary-General's report (including the fixing of a further election date).

5. The five Foreign Ministers stated with regard to the unilateral elections in December that they saw no way of reconciling such elections with the proposal which they put forward and which the Security Council has endorsed. Any such unilateral measure in relation to the electoral process will be regarded as null and void.

Annex III

Additional statement of 19 October 1978 by the South African Government

No South African troop reduction without peace. Election date
not to be affected by continuation of violence

1. The South African delegation stressed that the reduction of South African troops in South West Africa would only commence if and when a complete and a comprehensive cessation of hostilities had been brought about.
2. A continuation of violence can therefore interrupt and delay indefinitely the reduction of South African troops and therefore conceivably also the holding of elections.
3. To prevent any party from unilaterally delaying the holding of elections, it is therefore necessary that a firm election date be fixed. This date must then be adhered to, irrespective of whether there is a cessation of hostilities and a consequent reduction of South African troops.
