



# SECURITY COUNCIL OFFICIAL RECORDS

THIRTY-THIRD YEAR

**2063**<sup>rd</sup> MEETING: 8 MARCH 1978

NEW YORK

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## 2063rd MEETING

Held in New York on Wednesday, 8 March 1978, at 3.30 p.m.

*President:* Mr. Ivor RICHARD  
(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland).

*Present:* The representatives of the following States: Bolivia, Canada, China, Czechoslovakia, France, Gabon, Germany, Federal Republic of, India, Kuwait, Mauritius, Nigeria, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela.

### Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/2063)

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Question concerning the situation in Southern Rhodesia:

Letter dated 1 March 1978 from the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Upper Volta to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/12578)

*The meeting was called to order at 4.20 p.m.*

### Adoption of the agenda

*The agenda was adopted.*

#### Question concerning the situation in Southern Rhodesia:

Letter dated 1 March 1978 from the Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Upper Volta to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/12578)

1. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decisions taken by the Council at its 2061st and 2062nd meetings, I invite the representatives of Angola, Benin, Kenya, Mozambique, the United Republic of Tanzania, the Upper Volta and Zambia to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. de Figueiredo (Angola), Mr. Houngavou (Benin), Mr. Maina (Kenya), Mr. Lobo (Mozambique), Mr. Salim (United Republic of Tanzania), Mr. Bamba (Upper Volta) and Miss Konie (Zambia) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.*

2. The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform members of the Council that letters have been received from the representatives of Sierra Leone and the Sudan in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion. 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 accordance with Article 31 of the Charter and rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure.

3. In view of the limited number of places at the Council table, I invite the representatives of Sierra Leone and the Sudan 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 whenever they wish to speak.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Conteh (Sierra Leone) and Mr. Medani (Sudan) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.*

4. Mr. CARPIO CASTILLO (Venezuela) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like first to introduce myself as the new Permanent Representative of Venezuela to the United Nations and to assure you of my co-operation as well as that of the Government of Venezuela, which I have the honour to represent.

5. Our delegation believes that we are faced with a delicate problem, perhaps one of the most delicate problems in the process of decolonization, in view of the unusual manner in which a solution to the question of Rhodesian independence is being presented to us and the position that we take in the Security Council may lend itself to different interpretations. It is therefore not at all easy to take a satisfactory stand.

6. The illegal Rhodesian régime continues to act on its own and tries ways and means of accommodating its own interests, disregarding factors and institutions which are very important in terms of reaching a true negotiated solution to the problem of the independence and of the very fate of the majority of that country's inhabitants.

7. We are now told that Mr. Smith has reached a compromise with some leaders who represent certain political factions in the Territory, while disregarding very important sectors which are waging a patriotic struggle for the liberation and independence of their country. He has also disregarded the recommendations and decisions of the Security Council and turned his back on the negotiated solutions sponsored by two members of the Council, one of which is the colonial Power that has responsibility for that region of Africa.

8. Our delegation feels that even though the information we have received on the recent agreement reached at

Salisbury is incomplete, it is quite clear that that agreement constitutes just one more hoax perpetrated by the illegal minority régime in its desperate efforts to maintain the odious privileges and forms of discrimination whose existence is the *raison d'être* of the movements struggling for liberation and independence and for the recognition of inalienable political, economic and social rights.

9. In the present case, the aspirations of the people of Zimbabwe have not been fulfilled and some of their leaders have been ignored. Nor are the aspirations of the international community being satisfied. The international community aspires to a just solution to the problem which has been created by the Salisbury rebels. In both cases, it is only just and reasonable that discouragement should prevail, because the agreement, which does not include two factors that are essential if it is to work—one of a national and the other of an international nature—will hardly guarantee peace in that region of the African continent. Here in the Council, our endeavour is to find solutions that will further peaceful and civilized coexistence within and among countries of the international community.

10. Our delegation is aware of the fact that, to a certain extent, there are internal factors involved in this problem. But since the agreement is not the result of a freely expressed self-determination, but rather stems from imposed solutions, we must conclude that colonialism based on military occupation is being replaced by a constitutional mockery that will entrench time-honoured economic, social and political privileges. The situation is made even worse since part of the African indigenous population is being encouraged to engage in internal disputes, rivalries and confrontations among brothers, all of which make the situation in that unfortunate land even more painful and tragic.

11. The national groups that have accepted a settlement with the illegal Smith régime have placed themselves in the same position of illegality which the Council has condemned. Hence, we feel that free elections must be held with the participation of the United Kingdom, whose responsibility continues to be disregarded by the Rhodesian rebels, and under United Nations supervision. We insist on that, because its disregard of such essentials was precisely what led to the declaration of the illegality of that régime which today is offering us a new piece of trickery in the guise of an alleged solution.

12. For these reasons, my country, which has remained faithful to its anti-colonialist doctrine and practices, maintains its firm position that the Security Council should adopt appropriate measures that may lead to a true and just solution of the problem of the effective decolonization of the people and Territory of Zimbabwe.

13. Even though we might be inclined to think that the recent settlement was a positive step by Smith's illegal régime, we have to take into account the fact that that settlement is very different from the solution which the United Nations and the peoples of the international community consider satisfactory and equitable. On the contrary, the electoral system under which there are different or separate electoral rolls is an aberration charac-

teristic of the mental and psychological processes on which the racist practice of *apartheid* is based. And in this case a monstrous attempt is being made to legalize discrimination by means of a contract which, by its legal nature, resembles a constitutional formula that will be of at least 10 years' duration.

14. On the other hand, our delegation believes that the best way to determine who represents the majority of the people of Zimbabwe is to hold free elections; only after that can arrangements, settlements or agreements be reached. We should not presume that we can determine the support enjoyed by the various national movements within or outside the country; that would be unpardonable and we should be acting against the self-determination of a people which is about to attain its independence.

15. In this situation there is reason for deep concern; it is something which affects the very fate of the United Nations, its credibility and its international reputation. We have to adopt a historic decision by which the Organization may either be strengthened or irreparably eroded. That entails grave responsibility for all of us, and especially for those countries which have greater resources to strengthen and back up the implementation of the decision we adopt here.

16. The rebels at Salisbury have responded with a desperate manoeuvre to the rather effective sanctions that have been voted against them so as to bring them back to law and reason. It would be an unpardonable crime for us to consider this response a positive step—when that which in fact has been positive is the just position we have so far maintained with regard to the régime's Fascist and wholly illegal practices—and to abandon the sanctions just when they begin to bear fruit.

17. The international community has applauded and supported the measures and sanctions voted by the Council in order to bring the rebels to reason. Our delegation interprets the step taken by Ian Smith's régime as a modest victory for the United Nations, because it shows that if we act on this occasion with the same firmness as before we shall soon be approaching our goal.

18. The Council must adopt a constructive, well-thought-out and well-balanced resolution expressed in positive terms, a resolution that will bring us closer to a democratic solution of one of the most delicate problems that we have been called upon to discuss. Our stand on this problem must be unequivocal and clear and at the same time it must express restraint, maturity and firmness. It would be cruel irony if the process of decolonization of Rhodesia were to be left in the hands of Mr. Smith and his rebels.

19. The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Venezuela for his kind words. I am sure I speak on behalf of all the members of the Council in welcoming him to his new position at the United Nations and to his membership on the Council. We look forward very much to co-operating with him in our joint work.

20. Mr. FUENTES IBAÑEZ (Bolivia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation is most honoured, Mr. President,

to be participating in this debate under your guidance. We are familiar with your brilliant career as a parliamentarian and internationalist and we wish you every success in your very delicate task.

21. My delegation has followed with the closest attention and interest the statements made so far on the question inscribed on the agenda at the request of the African Group. This question arises in connexion with the so-called internal agreement signed at Salisbury by Bishop Muzorewa, Chief Chirau, Reverend Sithole and Mr. Ian Smith, whereby an attempt is being made to put an end to the situation of illegality and to guide that country along the path of institutional legality. Of course, it is obvious that what we have here is a partial negotiation whose fragility is all the more conspicuous because of the absence of other authoritative political leaders, such as Mr. Robert Mugabe and Mr. Joshua Nkomo of the Patriotic Front, who took part in the Malta talks and whose participation in any agreement would seem indispensable since they represent the groups fighting for freedom.

22. Apart from those facts, we have examined most carefully the background of the situation and have not failed to consider any factor that would enable us to have a more impartial and objective picture of the situation. We are confronted with a new situation of fact, a situation which will be difficult to maintain, inasmuch as it falls outside the framework established by the international community with respect to Rhodesia and amounts to a further case of non-compliance with the recommendations of the General Assembly and the injunctions of the Security Council.

23. We understand as well as anyone the urgency which must be felt by some African political leaders in regard to putting a peaceful end to a conflict situation whose continuation would be fraught with new and bloody sacrifices of unforeseen dimensions. At times, when one is too preoccupied by the need to alleviate immediate suffering, and with natural apprehension of the risks of giving rise to greater evils, one may lose a proper perspective of political events and succumb to the deceptive fallacy of the lesser of two evils. But in this case that theory does not apply, since the solutions are not Utopian. They exist in practical form in the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, which represent irreversible principles, as well as in the proposals of the United Kingdom submitted by you, Mr. President, in your letter of 1 September 1977 [S/12393] to the then President of the Council. We say they are irreversible since their only purpose and goal is to create the essential condition for any negotiations, that is to say, a return to legality before the establishment of the new State. And the return to legal order can only be achieved by a cessation of the state of rebellion which gave rise to the state of illegality and which itself has been impeding any further development.

24. We are confronted with a concrete situation that falls outside the international framework, inasmuch as it would replace that framework by a unilateral decision which cannot possibly be considered national since none of the parties is fully qualified to be completely representative. Faced with this kind of situation, it is the duty of the

Security Council to act in a way consistent with its previous decisions, thus avoiding further tragic risks to international peace and security. If we were to permit the illegality of the Southern Rhodesian régime to be compounded by the arbitrary creation of a successor government to its apocryphal authority, we should be promoting an indefinite continuation of an anomalous situation and an open defiance to the authority of the Organization. That would be a serious situation that would give rise to further friction and create the immediate risk of a civil war whose repercussions would extend beyond the African continent and might plunge the whole world into darkness.

25. We are faced with a situation which has been planned and directed by those who hold the reins of illegal government. They have created a situation that appears based on and aimed at nothing but the idea of transmitting the apparatus of power, in a way that will be to their own satisfaction, to a segment of the population of Zimbabwe that is in complete disagreement with the majority.

26. My delegation has not wanted to overlook the attendant circumstances. In my country we believe that the best policy is always for peoples to adjust to the historical circumstances in which fate has placed them. Thus, even though we consider that the principles laid down by the Charter and the resolutions adopted pursuant to it chart the most reasonable and the simplest course for the normal progress of peoples towards the realization of their most sought-after goals, we cannot fail to recognize that sometimes, because of the very dynamics of political events, it is the peoples—which are, at bottom, the architects and protagonists of their own history—that are alone called upon to seek their own solutions.

27. This factor has prompted us to examine with interest the so-called internal settlement. We believe that, despite its complete lack of any legal foundation, a fact which invalidates it *ipso facto*, there is a ray of hope and that, although only the leaders that are considered “moderates” have participated in it, it is a tacit recognition on the part of the Smith régime that it is no longer possible to swim against the current of history and that the time has passed for defiant arrogance. But to that must be added that it is also too late for subterfuge, which only serves to harden hearts and increase difficulties. Those who have been accustomed to dominating the humble by the strength that power gives them must have learnt the lesson that oppression cannot continue indefinitely and that the school of suffering in which convictions are hardened is also a source of experience and wisdom. Those peoples which have survived foreign domination and which are striving for the total recovery of their national identity mature rapidly and are no longer so easily deceived.

28. But even this tardy realization cannot of itself save the rebel régime from the serious crisis of confidence which afflicts it. Obviously, the distinguished African personalities who have set forth their reasons and informed us of their views in the Security Council agree that the so-called internal agreement is unacceptable, since the structure of the government it proposes has the same basis and relies on the same mechanisms which have accounted for the persistence of the rebel régime ever since its unilateral declaration of independence on 11 November 1965.

29. Needless to say, a transfer of power in such circumstances would be invalid not only in terms of its origin but also in terms of its intentions and objectives. For that reason, the atmosphere of mistrust surrounding the rebel minority régime affects the "internal agreement" too and, what is even more serious, renders suspect those moderate leaders whose co-operation I consider would be of great value within that wide political and racial spectrum that should be a feature of a genuinely representative people's government of Zimbabwe.

30. To continue a policy of deceit and subterfuge is to try the patience of that people and to compel it to make mass action in defence of the public interest, a course that could end in the calamity of a civil war undesirable from all points of view.

31. The Bolivian delegation, in expressing the concern of its Government at this new episode that has temporarily hindered progress towards the just and realistic solutions that we all so much hope for, would like to express its encouragement to the people of Zimbabwe in its struggle for independence and also its hope that those who are participating in the "internal agreement" will recognize that there can be no partial agreement and will come to realize that peace cannot be based on privilege for a certain segment of the population but only on the will of the people united around its authentic leaders.

32. The PRESIDENT: I wish to inform members of the Council that I have received a letter dated 8 March from the representatives of Gabon, Mauritius and Nigeria, which will be distributed as document S/12586 and which reads as follows:

"We, the undersigned members of the Security Council, have the honour to request that, during its meetings devoted to consideration of the 'Question concerning the situation in Southern Rhodesia', the Council extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Canon Burgess Carr, Secretary-General of the All Africa Conference of Churches."

If I hear no objection I shall take it that the Council agrees to the request.

*It was so decided.*

33. The PRESIDENT: I invite Canon Carr to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

34. Canon CARR: Mr. President, allow me to thank you for the honour and privilege accorded me in permitting me to participate in this historic debate at this critical moment in the history of Zimbabwe and, indeed, of southern Africa as a whole. I extend to you the congratulations and best wishes of the All Africa Conference of Churches. We in the Conference are fully aware of your own personal commitment to human dignity, justice and peace in Africa and of your untiring endeavours to assist in resolving the unfinished business of liberation from racism, minority rule and exploitation on our continent. That you should be presiding over this debate on Southern Rhodesia is providential. We ask God to grant you the discernment and wisdom as well as the courage that this moment demands.

35. Over the last six years, the All Africa Conference of Churches has followed closely events in Zimbabwe and endeavoured, where possible, to assist every legitimate effort to achieve a peaceful and just solution of the problem of minority rule in that country. When the Security Council met at Addis Ababa in 1972, I had the privilege of stating our outright rejection of the Smith-Home proposals, and of pledging our fullest support to the then current efforts to prove their unacceptability to the people of Rhodesia as a whole [1634th meeting].

36. Later, we were involved in efforts to reconcile the leaders of the nationalist factions waging the armed struggle against Smith and his racist clique. All along we have sought to provide material and moral assistance to those who, through no choice of their own, have been forced to abandon the joys and privileges of adolescence, the warmth of family life, the thirst for learning, the joys of frolicking and the complacency of age in order to take up arms, indeed, to lay down their lives in defence of the indivisibility of human freedom and dignity. Consequently, the All Africa Conference of Churches has given and continues to give its unequivocal support to the liberation movements waging the armed struggle in southern Africa. It is our view that that struggle represents a sign of hope—hope that the expectations of political independence through majority rule brought to Africa a generation ago may yet be fulfilled. The armed struggle is a moral issue not only because it challenges the immorality of systemic violence and repression but also because it affords opportunity for a new solidarity in suffering to be forged among those who find slavery, racial bigotry and the egotism that fosters repression reprehensible.

37. Two years ago, the General Committee of the All Africa Conference of Churches, during its meetings in Egypt, attempted to give theological meaning to its support for the liberation movements in the historic Confession of Alexandria. Let me cite a relevant section:

"Our current concern with issues related to economic justice, to the total liberation of men and women from oppression and exploitation, and to peace in Africa . . . have led us to a deeper understanding of the Christian heritage delivered to us by the Fathers of the early Church in North Africa.

"Our commitment to the struggle for human liberation is one of the ways we confess our faith in an Incarnate God. . . . Through the continuing work of Christ, God is charting His Highway of Freedom from Alexandria to the Cape of Good Hope."

38. I am taking part in this debate today because we detect in the recent "internal settlement" signed at Salisbury last week a cynical and demonic attempt to supplant God's work of building this "Highway of Freedom". We are not here to condemn anyone, but we are here to denounce the diabolical intrigues of the illegal racist régime at Salisbury, and especially the insidious strategy of beguiling Africans—some of whom may have no less of a commitment to the freedom and dignity of the people of Zimbabwe than anyone else—into becoming co-conspirators in a cruel and costly farce that only entrenches illegality.

We cannot avoid underlining our total and complete abhorrence as well as our dread of the potential for violence and fratricidal ethnic conflict that this so-called settlement will unleash upon the peoples of southern Africa in general, and in the first instance on the people of Zimbabwe.

39. It is beyond the bounds of our competence to comment meaningfully upon the details of the internal agreement. We must leave that to the representatives of Member States and the liberation movements. Our task is to associate the member Churches of the All Africa Conference of Churches with the moral indignation that has been evoked throughout the African continent by this latest contrivance of Mr. Smith to delay the liberation of the peoples of Zimbabwe, to plant the seeds of perennial civil war in that country and to create conditions that will further destabilize the independence of the front-line States.

40. This trick must be condemned because it is patently evil. We would urge that the Security Council should be wary of aligning the United Nations with this evil trick. For more than a decade, the people of Zimbabwe have endured the brutalities of Mr. Smith's usurped, illegal rule. Throughout that period, some of the Churches in Rhodesia, notably the Roman Catholic Church, and leaders of some of the Protestant Churches, through the Christian Council of Rhodesia, have consistently taken clear and forthright positions against any accommodation with Mr. Smith's illegal and repressive régime. The All Africa Conference of Churches therefore views the internal settlement as nothing less than appeasement. The Security Council must therefore reject this internal agreement, because it is self-serving, and those who claim to live by the ethics of Jesus Christ should not be involved in schemes that are self-serving.

41. The All Africa Conference of Churches recognizes the earnest desire of all the Zimbabwean leaders to rid their country of domination by and dependence upon an alien minority. That is not a matter at issue in this debate. What is at issue is the relevance or even the appropriateness of half-measures that are in essence retrogressive at this time.

42. No one will deny that this internal agreement stands no chance whatsoever as long as the Patriotic Front and its fighting forces are left out. It is also illusory to believe that the freedom fighters will acquiesce in any arrangement in which the primary instruments of power continue to be wielded by a tiny privileged racist minority. We must not deceive ourselves. To claim majority rule on the basis of parity in power sharing between Africans and Europeans in Zimbabwe is ludicrous, to say the least. The matter is only

rendered infinitely more indefensible when that minority not only controls all the state apparatus but also exercises an entrenched veto, even in the Parliament, where Africans have a numerical majority. We cannot indulge in such self-deception when innocent men, women and children, when young and old are every day brutalized, terrorized and murdered by atrocious régimes, particularly in southern Africa, and when the boundaries of front-line States are violated with impunity, as was the case recently in Zambia.

43. We are tired of civil strife in Africa. We are tired of one group of Africans being used against other Africans for the benefit of aliens. We are tired of running away from our homes to seek refuge in foreign lands. We are tired of it all.

44. So I would make this appeal to the United Nations: Let us not be diverted from the work of building God's "Highway of Freedom", even if at this juncture the terrain is intractable. Let us remember that it is God's work we are doing and not our own, so we must not abandon it too readily. The Bible urges us not only to seek peace but to pursue it.

45. Let us strive to build the unity of all the Zimbabwean people, first of all by strengthening the solidarity already achieved in the Patriotic Front. It is the Patriotic Front that controls the men and women who are waging war. Unless they are involved, no peace can come to Zimbabwe.

46. Let us strive to broaden the measure of unity that has been achieved. Zimbabweans of every political, ideological and ethnic background have a solemn obligation to their country, to the remainder of southern Africa, to all of Africa and to the world as a whole to abolish the legacy of the animosities that dominated the past in order to build structures of mutual confidence, unity, justice and peace in the future.

47. Finally, let us intensify the pressures that forced Mr. Smith to the negotiating table. We cannot and must not diminish our support for the Patriotic Front. The Council must not lift the mandatory sanctions, not yet. The Council must refuse to bestow international recognition upon this conspiracy further to entrench minority rule in Zimbabwe.

48. The struggle must continue until all the peoples of Zimbabwe, not just a few, and indeed all the peoples of the United Nations family have their share in the victory for decency, human dignity, justice and peace that must inevitably be won in Zimbabwe.

*The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.*

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