



UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY
COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

S/12023
25 March 1976

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 23 MARCH 1976 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF PORTUGAL
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to refer to the letter addressed to Your Excellency by the Permanent Representative of South Africa on the 20th of this month, and circulated as Security Council document S/12019.

Annex I of the above-mentioned letter contains a statement made by the Prime Minister of the Republic of South Africa, The Honourable B. J. Vorster, on 21 March 1976, regarding the question of withdrawal of South African troops from the area of the Calueque Dam, in Angola.

In a portion of this statement, the Prime Minister of South Africa affirms that his country's troops occupied the Calueque Dam site as of August 1975, with the alleged purpose "of protecting the lives of the workers and of safeguarding the installations", having immediately informed the Portuguese Government of that fact and urging them to take over that task. Mr. Vorster adds that "the Portuguese Government could not do so at the time and requested South Africa to continue its protective measures and to remain in situ until such time as they could assume this responsibility".

It must not fail to be noted that, contrary to what was stated by the Defence Minister of South Africa, in November 1975, Mr. Vorster now admits that his country's troops penetrated Angolan territory on 9 August 1975, with neither the knowledge nor the advance authorization of the Portuguese Government, which only became aware of that action after it had already taken place.

As a matter of fact, on 12 August 1975, the Ambassador of Portugal in Pretoria was called to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of South Africa and informed that a South African military force had been sent to Calueque. Later on that occasion, the Portuguese Ambassador protested against that territorial violation.

On 18 August 1975, these protests were repeated in Lisbon to the South African Ambassador, who had been called for that purpose to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They were again reiterated in a Note addressed to him on 3 September 1975.

Consequently, the affirmation that the Portuguese Government had asked South Africa to remain in the Calueque area and to continue to assume the safety of work in progress at the Dam, is completely without foundation.

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My Government gave no advance authorization to the Government of South Africa to undertake such action and did not fail to protest, once it became aware of it.

I would be grateful if Your Excellency would have this letter circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) José Manuel GALVÃO TELES
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Portugal
to the United Nations
