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LETTER DATED 18 AUGUST 1976 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to enclose the text of a statement issued in Windhoek today by the Constitutional Committee of the South West African Constitutional Conference.

I should be glad if this letter and the enclosed text could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) V. W. STEWARD
For R. F. BOTHA
Permanent Representative

Annex

Statement of 18 August 1976 issued by the Constitutional Committee
of the South West African Constitutional Conference

During the first meeting of the Constitutional Conference in September 1975, a Declaration of Intent was issued; in which certain principles were laid down and certain aims were established.

We hereby reaffirm this Declaration of Intent and reiterate our conviction that a real and permanent solution for our country's problems can be found along this course. During the recent past, a detailed study has been made of different aspects of the over-all situation. We are happy to be able to announce that agreement in principle has been reached in respect of the most important points. In particular, we wish to refer to the following:

1. Self-determination and independence

The Committee is in agreement that 31 December 1978 can, with reasonable certainty, be fixed as the date for independence for South West Africa. In the meantime, many matters will obviously have to be negotiated with South Africa: as, for example, Walvis Bay; 1/ South African Railways; water and electricity supply; monetary and financial matters; security etc.

As soon as a constitutional foundation has been agreed upon and the above negotiations completed, we envisage, in terms of such constitutional foundation, the creation of an interim Government to manage the transfer of functions and to establish a permanent Government on the basis of a constitution which will be finalized during the interim period.

2. Territorial integrity

The Committee reaffirms the interdependence of its various population groups and its firm desire to maintain South West Africa as a unity.

3. Form of government

As we do not wish to anticipate a final arrangement at this stage, it would be premature to furnish details concerning a form of government, but the Committee can already announce that it envisages a system of government in which, particularly in the central body, provision will be made for the adequate protection of minority groups.

1/ The port and settlement of Walvis Bay on the west coast of the Territory, 434 square miles in extent, is a part of the Republic of South Africa, as are a number of islands off the coast of South West Africa.

4. Peaceful solution

We reject once again any attempt to solve our country's problems by violence and urgently appeal to all civilized nations to oppose with all the strength at their disposal any attempt to solve our problems by force.

5. Social and economic matters

We wish again to appeal to the South African Government and all other private or public bodies to execute the decisions of the Conference on these matters with all speed.
