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QUESTION OF NAMIBIA

Letter dated 28 August 1981 from the Chargé d'Affaires a.i.
of the Permanent Mission of South Africa to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

At the request of the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs and Information, the Honourable R. F. Botha, I am enclosing the text of a letter he has addressed to Your Excellency on 28 August 1981.

I should appreciate it if this letter could be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under item 36 of the provisional agenda.

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

* A/36/150.

ANNEX

Letter dated 28 August 1981 from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
and Information of South Africa to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to Your Excellency's note dated 13 August 1981 which was addressed to South Africa's Permanent Representative to the United Nations regarding the request by the Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe, on behalf of the African Group at the United Nations, for the convening of an emergency special session of the General Assembly pursuant to its resolution 377 A (V).

The events surrounding this initiative are rather strange. This emergency special session is envisaged to commence a mere 10 days before the start of the thirty-sixth regular session of the General Assembly, which already has the "Question of Namibia" on its provisional agenda. True to the pattern of artificial urgency injected into the question during previous regular sessions, the General Assembly is bound to decide again at its opening meeting to discuss that agenda item in plenary. What is, however, even more disturbing is the fact that the status of "emergency" to be accorded to this session was decided upon several months ago. This method of contriving an "emergency" in order to advance the cause of a particular political group makes a mockery of the envisaged session even before it commences. This move certainly does not serve to enhance the status of the Organization, whose organs are being deliberately, albeit willingly, manipulated in the process. Neither the request by the African Group attached to your note nor Your Excellency's note itself is convincing as to the reasons for the necessity of holding an emergency session.

Instead of wasting funds on the convening of an emergency special session, those requesting it should rather pay attention to the plight of millions suffering daily throughout Africa because they lack basic necessities such as food, clean water and health care. That would have been a much more worthwhile course. The movers behind the convening of this session should realize - and be told by those for whom they are responsible - that an "emergency" session set up to castigate and threaten South Africa is not and cannot be a substitute for the urgent needs of the peoples of Africa to which they are prepared to pay only lip service.

The South African Government does not want to be associated with this manoeuvre and, therefore, strongly opposes the request for an emergency special session.

If, in spite of this objection, the emergency special session is nevertheless convened, the South African Government reserves the right to make its views known, if and when necessary.

R. F. BOTHA
Minister of Foreign Affairs
and Information