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LETTER DATED 28 MAY 1982 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF  
SWAZILAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF  
THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement made by Dr. Sishayi Nxumalo, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Royal Swazi Airline at the 14th Annual General Assembly of the African Airline Association (AFRAA) held in Addis Ababa, Socialist Ethiopia, from 5 to 8 April 1982, together with resolution AGA 14/16 adopted by the Assembly.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have these texts circulated as Security Council document.

(Signed) N. Z. M. MALINGA  
Permanent Representative

Annex I

Statement by the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Royal Swazi  
Airline at the 14th Annual General Assembly of the African Airline  
Association (AFRAA) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 5 to 8 April 1982

Mr. President,  
Secretary-General,  
Members of AFRAA,  
Ladies and gentlemen.

We would like to thank you Mr. President, for giving Royal Swazi the opportunity to explain to you and all our sister African carriers who are present here as well as the observers and members of the press, the unfortunate incident which has beset our airline on 25 November 1981.

A brief, condensed and detailed report on this incident is submitted for your perusal as follows:

On 27 October 1981 Royal Swazi received a block booking for 45 tourists to travel to the Seychelles on 25 November 1981 on Royal Swazi's regular scheduled flight ZC 100. This booking was given and confirmed to us by Budget Tours, one of the largest IATA tour operators in South Africa. This operator has offices in London, Mauritius, Zimbabwe, Austria as well as South Africa. Budget Tours issued South African Airlines tickets for the full fare paying passengers, whilst Royal Swazi issued 3 free tickets to those members of this group who were presented as tour leaders. All tickets were confirmed for a departure on 25 November with a return flight on December the 10th. All tickets were paid for in full.

On the day of departure the group arrived by bus and were checked-in according to normal procedures prevailing with any national carrier. Luggage was weighed in and labelled and stored in the hold of the aircraft. Normal security procedures were applied, passengers and hand luggages were screened by X-ray equipment, while passengers were also checked bodily with hand held detectors. This group of tourists presented themselves to us as members of an association called the Honourable Order of Frothblowers, people who obviously enjoyed their beer drinking but also participate in fund raising work for charitable purposes. The flight between Swaziland and the Seychelles, with a stop-over in Comores, proceeded without any problem and never ever during the flight did any member or members of this group give any indication of their sinister and unsavoury intentions to our cabin staff or cockpit crew. They all behaved like any other normal passenger will behave aboard an aircraft.

The disembarkation of the passengers after arrival in the Seychelles took place without any problem. Passengers were cleared by immigration and collected their luggage in the customs hall. Approximately 39 members of this group had cleared customs and had boarded the bus to take them from the airport terminal to the Reef Hotel, when in the false bottoms of a suitcase belonging to one of the last passenger, a customs official discovered a rifle. It is prohibited in the

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Seychelles to import weapons of any kind, such as spear-guns, knives, etc. items to be used by tourists during fishing expeditions. The customs official who discovered the gun in the suitcase of this passenger (who is now known to be a mercenary) only intended to confiscate the rifle, issued a receipt for it, against which receipt the rifle and the gun can be collected upon departure from the Seychelles. However, the passenger (mercenary) panicked, beat the customs official and grabbed his gun. Within seconds after this all mercenaries got off the bus, took their guns from their luggages and took over the airport. Approximately 60 hostages were taken by the mercenaries including 3 members of Royal Swazi cabin crew; and the airport was held in control by the mercenaries until the departure of the hijacked Air India Boeing 707, which aircraft was on a scheduled commercial flight from Salisbury to India via the Seychelles. The aircraft was taken over by the mercenaries and diverted to Durban.

The cockpit crew of Royal Swazi aircraft, who had already checked into the Reef Hotel, before the take-over of the airport, were contacted by phone from the airport by a person who identified himself to the captain by saying, "I am Tom, the coup has failed, return to the airport immediately and fly us out of here."

The Royal Swazi captain refused and immediately contacted the Seychelles police and informed the police commissioner of the telephone call.

Later that evening the captain, first and second officer were taken to police headquarters in Victoria, where they helped the police in their investigations. In the course of the following morning all 3 cockpit crew members were released unconditionally and were re-united with the air hostesses in the Reef Hotel. The entire crew returned to Swaziland after the curfew was lifted and travel arrangements were completed.

As a note of interest, which will again confirm the innocent appearance of these individuals and the manner in which this booking was handled, it is brought to your attention that the Reef Hotel where these mercenaries would have spent their two weeks, had organized a cocktail party to celebrate the first large group of tourists at the beginning of the Seychelles tourist season.

As soon as Royal Swazi officials were informed of this attempted coup, Royal Swazi immediately informed IATA, ICAO, and AFRAA and sent a detailed telex, based on facts known to us at that time to the Chief Executive Officers of all African carriers who are members of the African Airline Association. Furthermore, the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland published an official communiqué which is quoted below in toto:

"The Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland has been shocked and deeply saddened to learn that a certain group of persons who had arrived in the Seychelles as passengers in our national airline on 25 November 1981 subsequently committed serious acts of aggression against the people and the legitimate Government of the Republic of the Seychelles.

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"2. The Royal Swazi National Airways flight ZC 100 had departed Matsapha airport in Swaziland at 09.27 hours on 25 November 1981. The usual security checks were carried out at the airport on all passengers prior to their embarkation for the flight to the Seychelles. There was no reason to suspect any passenger of anything out of the ordinary.

"3. The Swaziland Government completely dissociates itself from this naked act of aggression against a sovereign sister State and wishes hereby to express its deepest sympathy to the Government and the people of the Republic of Seychelles for any losses that might have been sustained as a result of this wanton act of aggression.

"4. The Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland deplores the decision of these wanton aggressions to use our national airlines in the pursuit of their selfish ends. Furthermore, the Swaziland Government wishes to assure the Government of the Republic of Seychelles that the competent authorities of this Kingdom are carrying out a thorough investigation of this regrettable abuse of our national airline."

As a result of this incursion in the Seychelles, the Government of the Seychelles requested the Security Council of the United Nations to investigate this matter. During the month of February, the UN Commission of Enquiry after having done their work in Seychelles proceeded to Swaziland, where they spent 4 days with Government and airline officials. During their investigation the United Nations Commission realized that neither the Kingdom of Swaziland nor the Royal Swazi as the national carrier of this country were involved in this affair. As mentioned in the Swazi Government communiqué we strongly condemn this act of hooliganism and view with utter disgust and contempt the actions of these criminals, who, not only made use of Royal Swazi aircraft under false pretense, but also must have used other carriers to take mercenaries of the advanced party into the Seychelles. We, therefore, categorically state that these mercenaries, together with Seychellois nationals who are opposed to their present Government, are solely responsible for this act of aggression. The use of Air India, which endangered so many lives, is a further indictment against these "dogs of war", which illustrates the vulnerability of all our aircraft.

Royal Swazi National Airline, as one of Africa's youngest and smallest carriers has suffered a severe blow as a result of the Seychelles affair. As a result of the partial destruction of our aircraft and its detention, up till today, by the Government of the Seychelles, Royal Swazi had to lease in an aircraft with which it could continue to operate approximately 50% of its international schedule. The resultant loss in projected revenue, (specially so during the tourist season which had just commenced) loss in profit is mounting day by day. Expenses for the lease of an aircraft, drop in tourism (in Swaziland) has reached today a figure of \$1.9 million. Items such as loss of confidence in Royal Swazi, good-will, reliability etc. have not been taken into account. A loss of great importance to us, which has to be considered is the resultant delay in the

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expansion of our airline to destinations such as Addis Ababa. Therefore, bearing in mind the colossal financial losses suffered by the Seychelles and Swaziland we call upon those Governments whose nationals took part in this shameful act, to compensate the Seychelles and Swaziland. We also demand that those involved in bringing the culprits to trial, should give the kind of sentences deserved by such people who have little regard for life, property, and established Governments.

In the meantime the aircraft although fully insured is still in the Seychelles and it is being held at the President's discretion. A team of experts from the manufacturers, Fokker BV in Amsterdam, Holland, recently inspected the aircraft and assessed the damage done to the airplane. It has now been confirmed that the aircraft is repairable, but is being subjected, as a result of the prevailing climatic conditions, to heavy corrosion. This continued deterioration of the aircraft will, of course, seriously affect the repairing condition of the aircraft if and when released. It is now estimated that from whatever date the aircraft is released to its rightful owners, it will take approximately one year to complete the repairs.

We had hoped that the national Governments, whose citizens were involved in the execution of this criminal act would have come to the aid and rescue of one of the youngest airlines in Africa. So far none has done so. The burden of assistance to Royal Swazi has fallen on our sister State of the Peoples Republic of Mozambique. We therefore call upon AFRAA to use its best endeavours:

1. To assist the Kingdom of Swaziland and the Seychelles to recover the great losses they have sustained as a result of this incident.
2. To assist Royal Swazi to return to its full operations.

In conclusion we would like to emphasize to all AFRAA member States and airlines to be on the alert against these evil forces, which must be condemned, by this body, in the strongest possible terms and with voices that will penetrate all corners of this earth.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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Annex II

Resolution accepted as amended April, 1982

The 14th Annual General Assembly of AFRAA meeting in Addis Ababa, Socialist Ethiopian, from 5 to 8 April, 1982.

Considering with concern the intervention by Royal Swazi pertaining to the unfortunate incident of November, 25th, 1982 in the Republic of Seychelles and which resulted in damaging and subsequent detention of their F.28 aircraft.

Considering that such acts will have serious negative effects on the orderly and safe development of Civil Aviation in Africa.

Noting the relevant provisions in the Articles of Association of AFRAA aimed at the promotion of orderly, safe and economical commercial aviation in Africa.

Recognizing with appreciation the assistance provided by the national carrier of Mozambique (LAM) to Royal Swazi.

Noting further with concern that so far only 29 OAU Member States are parties to the Tokyo Convention (1963) on offences committed on board an aircraft, 28 OAU Member States are parties to the Hague Convention (1970) for the suppression of unlawful Acts against the safety of Civil Aviation, and 25 OAU Member States are parties of the Montreal Convention for the unlawful seizure of aircraft.

Resolves:

1. To urge African Governments who have not yet done so to ratify the international security conventions, as a matter of urgency.
2. To deplore the incident and to call upon all competent authorities to endeavour to prevent such occurrence which will not only negatively affect the development of civil aviation in Africa, but will also unnecessarily endanger human lives and property.
3. To call upon all member airlines to extend all possible assistance with a view to enable Royal Swazi to return to normal operations as soon as possible.
4. DIRECTS the Legal Committee to monitor developments in this respect, and to call upon parties concerned to enter, as a matter of urgency, into consultations, with the object to come to a fair and just settlement as soon as possible.

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