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POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA

Letter dated 15 July 1988 from the Permanent Representative of
Kuwait to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a statement issued by Kuwait in the context of the international campaign for the release of the African freedom fighter Nelson Mandela and on the occasion of his seventieth birthday.

I request you to have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 36 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Mohammad A. ABULHASAN
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

The international community is currently celebrating the seventieth birthday of the great freedom fighter Nelson Mandela. Mandela has been behind prison bars for 25 successive years, but this international celebration is actually a celebration of the struggle of the people of South Africa. Mandela is at the core of that struggle and embodies its aspirations, its ambitions and its determination to remove the odious apartheid régime and replace it with a non-racist, democratic, united and free society in which each individual, whatever the colour of his skin, may enjoy freedom and equality before the law.

These are the principles and objectives of the freedom fighter Mandela, who calls for the black majority in South Africa to be given a framework of identity which will give dignity to its members and accord them an active role in determining their destiny and that of their homeland. Mandela's rejection of all the offers made to him concerning his release in exchange for his repudiation and renunciation of these exalted principles is a clear sign that he is a great man. His greatness is characterized by his noble silence and his choosing to remain behind bars rather than accede to any inducements. This firmly established commitment is corroborated by his statement that: "Even if we are allowed to discuss our problems, we shall remain in prison" and also by his statement that: "I greatly prize my freedom, but I am even more concerned about your freedom from the apartheid régime."

The occasion of the seventieth birthday of Nelson Mandela affords a unique opportunity for confirming international concern about his continuing imprisonment and for stepping up international pressure in order to increase the possibilities of his release and that of his fellow prisoners and political detainees. The international community as represented in the United Nations has continued for more than two decades to appeal to the Pretoria Government to withdraw the charges of treason against Mandela and his fellow opponents of the racist policy in their country, to halt the arbitrary detention of these individuals and others and to release them immediately, without restriction and unconditionally, as a first step towards a just solution, because they are qualified to play a leadership role in the self-determination of that African country. However, unfortunately, the racist Pretoria régime has ignored these humanitarian appeals and has endeavoured to consolidate the policy of apartheid and to intensify its oppression of the African majority in South Africa. It has thus redoubled the tide of repression or closed all doors to agreement, thereby demonstrating that it has failed to absorb the lessons of the contemporary history of liberation movements on its borders, ignoring the fact that it is impossible to suppress the will of the African majority by force and through repressive police organs.

While the international community is celebrating Mandela's seventieth birthday, Kuwait is of the view that the oppressed people of South Africa depends greatly on the international community to assist it in its noble struggle for the elimination of the odious apartheid régime. This role that the international community is expected to play is represented in the words of Mandela when he says: "I detest the practice of apartheid, and I am upheld in that by one fact, namely, that the majority of men detest it to the same degree."

In order to demonstrate to Mandela and to his people the truth of those words, Kuwait, its Emir, its Government and its people, renews its call to Governments, organisations and peoples to give practical proof of their detestation of racial discrimination, and particularly of the racist Pretoria régime, and of the fact that they are determined to bring about the release of Mandela and his fellow freedom fighters. This will only be possible if the international community increases its pressure on the Pretoria Government and isolates it completely, particularly since it has been demonstrated in a manner that leaves no room for doubt that no form of co-operation with that racist régime will be effective in changing things for the better.

On the occasion of the twelfth anniversary of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid of 18 July 1976, Kuwait calls upon all signatories to support the struggle of the people of South Africa and its resistance to the apartheid régime and to contribute to United Nations efforts for the elimination of the apartheid régime in South Africa and for the termination of its flagrant violations of human rights and its crimes against humanity, which present a threat to international peace and security.

For its part, Kuwait commends the united popular struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa against the apartheid régime and again affirms and supports the legitimacy of its struggle for a non-racist, democratic and united society.
