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Twenty-ninth session  
Item 38 of the preliminary list\*  
POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE  
GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Twenty-ninth year

Killing of African mine workers at the Lorraine Gold Mine in South Africa

Report of the Special Committee on Apartheid

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\* A/9600/Rev.1.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

2 July 1974

Sir,

..... I have the honour to transmit to you for the attention of the General Assembly and the Security Council the report on killings of African mine workers in South Africa, adopted by the Special Committee on Apartheid on 26 June 1974.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Edwin O. OGBU  
Chairman  
of the Special Committee on Apartheid

His Excellency  
Mr. Kurt Waldheim  
Secretary-General of the United Nations

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1. The Special Committee on Apartheid invites the attention of the Security Council and the General Assembly to the recent killings of two African workers by South African police at the Lorraine Gold Mine in Allanridge in South Africa's Orange Free State on 28 May 1974.
2. The two miners were killed and five others injured when demonstrations broke out after a wage dispute in which the African workers demanded further wage increases. Police reinforcements, who had been called to contain the situation, fired on the demonstrators, reportedly killing one of the miners.
3. It will be recalled that the South African police, in a similar manner, killed 12 miners and wounded many others at Western Deep Mine in Carletonville, South Africa, on 11 September 1973. Following the widespread public criticism of the police actions at Carletonville, the racist Government in South Africa went into the motions of ordering a judicial inquest into the death of the African miners. In October 1973, Mr. C. H. Badenhorst, the presiding Magistrate of the inquest, exonerated the police and the mine authorities from any wrongdoing in their handling of the matter. With unseemly haste, and displaying its cynical attitude and its lack of fairness, the racist Government in South Africa promoted to the rank of major a senior police lieutenant who had ordered the police to open fire at the mine workers in the Carletonville mine compound.
4. It has also been reported that four African mineworkers at the Harmony Gold Mines in Virginia, Orange Free State, were killed and six others wounded as a result of riots and demonstrations during the weekend of 8 and 9 June 1974, in a dispute over wages and work conditions. As a result of the riots, mine officials called in the South African police, who were reported to have arrested a number of people.
5. Mr. Otto Kersten, General Secretary of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in his cable, dated 13 June 1974, to the Special Committee reiterated the profound concern of the International Free Trade Union Movement over the "continuous violation of human and trade union rights by the South African mining companies and authorities" and strongly condemned the practice of calling in armed police to quell the "just protests for fair wages and conditions". The cable went on to call for an internationally supervised investigation into the matter.
6. In its report to the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session, 1/ the Special Committee pointed to the grave crisis in South Africa in the past decade during which the racist Government in South Africa had resorted to the most brutal measures of repression against opponents of racism and apartheid. The recent Lorraine Gold Mine killing incident attests to the intensification of the measures of repression by the white minority régime against the black majority, even against workers seeking a decent living wage or trade union rights.

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1/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 22 (A/9022), paras. 65-89.

7. At the 289th meeting, held at Geneva on 31 May 1974, during its special session in Europe, the Special Committee issued a statement concerning the killings of the two African mine workers, condemning "this savage act as another crime by the South African régime in support of economic interests engaged in the brutal exploitation of African workers".

It went on to say:

"This act shows the need for concerted international action against this crime and assistance to the oppressed black people of South Africa.

"The Special Committee warns that this crime cannot long go unpunished.

"It calls for speedy action by the international community and Governments to sign and ratify the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, and to take all other necessary measures to put an end once and for all to the killings of African workers for protesting against starvation wages.

"The Special Committee expresses its sorrow over this tragedy, and wishes to convey its condolences to the families of those who died.

"The Special Committee appeals to the trade union organizations and other non-governmental organizations to provide assistance to their families and to those who were injured."

8. The Special Committee has consistently stressed the explosiveness of the situation in South Africa resulting from the oppressive policy of apartheid imposed on the black African majority. It has drawn particular attention to the harrowing conditions of workers in South Africa's gold mines and to the rank injustices committed against Africans.

9. The Special Committee is gravely concerned over the repeated killings of African miners and considers that this development can no longer be viewed in isolation from the entire deteriorating situation in South Africa, resulting from the inhumanity of the policy of apartheid.

10. The international community cannot remain silent in the face of these repeated killings of African mine workers whenever they demonstrate for an improvement of their conditions.

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