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LETTER DATED 7 MAY 1971 FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON APARTHEID ADDRESSED TO THE
PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On behalf of the Special Committee on Apartheid, I have the honour to transmit a note on developments concerning the implementation of the arms embargo against South Africa,^{1/} and the text of a communiqué issued by the Special Committee on 24 February 1971, regarding the resumption of arms sales to South Africa by the United Kingdom.^{2/}

It may be recalled that on 2 July 1970, the Chairman of the Special Committee had addressed a letter to the President of the Security Council bringing to the attention of the Council available information on the violations and circumventing of the arms embargo against South Africa, and suggesting measures to strengthen the embargo.

On 23 July 1970, the Security Council adopted resolution 282 (1970) by which it called upon all States to strengthen the arms embargo against South Africa without reservation. The resolution, inter alia, called on States, specifically to withhold the supply of all vehicles and equipment for use of the armed forces and para-military organizations of South Africa, and to cease the supply of spare parts for that purpose.

As the Special Committee has repeatedly emphasized, South Africa has been encouraged to carry out its inhuman racial policies by the assistance it has received from certain countries and foreign economic interests in building up its military strength. The deployment of South African forces in Namibia and in Southern Rhodesia is but one proof of South Africa's aggressive designs, and its

1/ A/AC.115/L.285, Add.1 and 2.

2/ Press release GA/AP/206.

determination to resist by force the United Nations efforts to promote the independence of neighbouring colonial countries. Moreover, it has been reported in the press that the South African Government has at least twice offered ground and air units for Portuguese military campaigns against the legitimate struggle of the peoples of Angola and Mozambique for independence. It is therefore a matter of great regret to the Special Committee that three permanent members of the Security Council - France, the United Kingdom and the United States - failed to support resolution 282 (1970).

In its resolution 2624 (XXV), the General Assembly called upon all States to implement fully the provisions of the Security Council resolution. It expressed deep concern over the increasing military build-up of South Africa which constitutes a grave danger for the cause of peace and security on the African continent. It again drew the attention of the Security Council to the grave situation in South Africa and in southern Africa as a whole, and recommended that the Council resume urgently the consideration of effective measures, including those under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations (resolution 2671 F (XXV)).

Despite these resolutions, adopted by overwhelming majorities, serious breaches of the arms embargo have continued. On 22 February 1971 the United Kingdom Government announced under various pretexts, its decision to grant export licences for WASP helicopters and certain spare parts to South Africa, thus signalling the resumption of arms sales to that country.

The Special Committee views the decision of the United Kingdom as a clear breach of the provisions of Security Council resolutions 181 (1963), 182 (1963), 191 (1964) and 282 (1970) and of its international obligations under the Charter. It rejects the United Kingdom Government's contention that a legal obligation exists for it to supply the helicopters and spare parts. It notes, moreover, that the United Kingdom Government has yet to give its assurance that it would not consider further sales of military equipment beyond those defined in its White Paper (document S/10132).

Information concerning the involvement of the United Kingdom has been more readily available than that of other countries because of the public and political controversy it has created, and of the extensive coverage given to the matter by the national and international press. In the case of France, presently the main

supplier of arms, the Federal Republic of Germany, Israel, Switzerland, Belgium, the United States and others, information has been restricted, so that the amount of coverage given in the report by the Rapporteur to the collaboration of these countries does not necessarily reflect the full extent to which they are involved in the arms trade.

Thus, it is obvious that French sales of military aircraft have continued and that the supply of other defence equipment from France is being envisaged. United States-made helicopters are being openly advertised and sold in South Africa. These can be adapted for military use, as has been the experience in other parts of the world. The Federal Republic of Germany and Israel's involvement are becoming more apparent.

The Special Committee on Apartheid considers it essential that all breaches of the arms embargo by States concerned should be stopped forthwith if the purpose of the measure is not to be defeated. It will continue its efforts to obtain fuller information concerning any breach of the arms embargo and to expose its authors. Such information will be incorporated in subsequent reports and made available to the Security Council and the General Assembly.

Accept, Sir, etc.

(Signed) Abdulrahim Abby FARAH
Chairman
Special Committee on Apartheid
