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LETTER DATED 6 OCTOBER 1971 FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED NATIONS COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA ADDRESSED TO THE
PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the request of the United Nations Council for Namibia, I have the honour to transmit herewith, for the attention of the members of the Security Council, a copy of the text of a letter dated 3 September 1971 from Chief Clemens Kapuuo of Namibia, addressed to his solicitor in London.

I should be grateful if the letter, the text of which was made available to the Council for Namibia by the Reverend G. Michael Scott, could be circulated as an official document of the Security Council.

(Signed) E.O. OGBU
President
United Nations Council
for Namibia

ANNEX

Letter dated 3 September 1971 from Chief Clemens Kapuuo,
Chief of the Herero Peoples, Namibia, addressed to
Miss Sarah Leigh of Lawford and Company, London

I am writing to you as elected head of the Herero peoples of South West Africa. I am deeply concerned, and so are my peoples, with the way the natural mineral resources of this country are being removed from it with the full knowledge and permission of the South African Government. From statistics given hereunder, you will see that the future of the Herero and other indigenous peoples will be greatly affected by the present policy of the illegal South African Government. You may well know that apart from its mineral wealth which is substantial, South West Africa is a poor country. The Africans who will be brought to these mines under the contract labour system, who will work for periods of twelve to eighteen months deprived of their natural family life, unable by current laws to negotiate their salary, and prevented under strict laws from bettering their conditions, benefit but little. This country, which is our country, is being exploited by greedy entrepreneurs, robbed of its wealth, and rendered barren for the future. Our fear is that when freedom finally comes to this land, it will be returned to us with no minerals left. Thus, you will see the one wonderful asset which we have for developing the land for the well-being of all its people will have been taken away from us. We deplore what the Government in Pretoria is currently allowing. We have not been consulted in all this. We wish you to take whatever action you may deem necessary to bring the matter to the highest international court of justice. Further, we appoint the Reverend Michael Scott, who has so wonderfully upheld our cause at the United Nations, to act in association with you in this respect as our agent.

We would like to make it clear that in this matter our appeal as the Herero nation does not in any sense preclude appeals by other African peoples in this Territory. At a time when the International Court has declared South Africa's continuing presence in South West Africa to be illegal, we would urge that immediate steps be taken by the highest bodies to protect the rights of the indigenous peoples of this Territory from being exploited. We wish all foreign firms to be removed immediately; we wish to be consulted on ways and means by which our peoples can have a fairer share in benefiting from the wealth of the land of their birth.

Signed on behalf of the Herero people.

(Signed) Clemens KAPUUA

Enclosure

1. The Herero peoples of South West Africa, together with their chief and headmen welcome the decision of the World Court in declaring South Africa's presence in South West Africa to be illegal, and joins that body in calling for the instant withdrawal of South Africa from our country.
2. Noting the increase in the number of foreign mining organizations who have recently come to exploit the country's mineral wealth, we protest this and call for its immediate cessation. For the following reasons:-
 - (1) Africans generally benefit but little from the mining companies.
 - (2) Pay received by Africans varies from between R17 per month to R45 per month in the mining industry. A comparison with white pay is immediately revealing. A white shift boss receives R385 per month and a mine captain R435. We regard this as shocking exploitation of African peoples who cannot bargain for better pay or conditions and whose progress is being constantly retarded by a white government in Pretoria.
3. Recent research has shown that every African who maintains an average family should receive at least R78 per month if his physical condition is not to deteriorate.
4. Figures which show the income from all sources clearly indicate that mining is the most fruitful: mining 46.8 per cent; agriculture 16.8 per cent; fishing 3.2 per cent; other sections combined 33 per cent. Only 30 per cent of the total budget for education is paid to non-whites, although there are five times as many blacks as whites. In salaries to teachers paid by the government a white receives R5,100 p.a. as a headmaster; a black receives R792. Teachers receive: whites R2,600; blacks R384. 69 per cent of African children are in classes below standard one with 147 students in High Schools according to figures released in the government's Odendaal report. There has been a slight improvement over the years, but the exploitation of the economy for the whites as against the blacks continues. Pensions for our aged are totally inadequate and we deplore and are angry at the suffering of so many aged African people dumped in the wastelands of the reserves. Whites receive R440 p.a.; blacks receive R70. Experience time and time again shows us that there are great delays even in their receiving this pittance.

5. Our final conclusion is that the whole wealth of the nation is being exploited for the benefit of the whites. We are not impressed with fine tarred roads; with huge hand-outs to the white farming community; with subsidized white houses for administration workers and others. We ask for the immediate removal of foreign mining firms; we demand that the mineral rights of this nation be protected to prevent them being totally removed before they can be applied to the building up of this country for the well-being of all its peoples.

(Signed) C. KAPUHO
