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LETTER DATED 8 FEBRUARY 1966 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF GUINEA
AT THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

With reference to General Assembly resolution 2024 (XX) and Security Council resolution 217 (1965), I have the honour to transmit to you herewith, on the instructions of my Government, the text of the statement on the Rhodesian question made on 14 December 1965 by H.E. Ahmed Sékou Touré, the President of the Republic of Guinea.

I should be grateful if you would have this statement circulated as an official document of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

(Signed) M'BAYE Cheik Omar
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.

* Also issued under the symbol A/6263.

STATEMENT ON THE RHODESIAN QUESTION MADE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF GUINEA
ON 14 DECEMBER 1965

25 May 1963 marked the birth at Addis Ababa of the first truly African organization legitimately and legally empowered to act at the international level on behalf of all the nations of Africa and henceforth to assume responsibility for guiding the evolution of our continent towards the goal of greater liberty through rapid and harmonious economic development.

From that day onward, our peoples have committed themselves collectively to the just path of total emancipation, while the imperialist Powers, taken aback by the energetic commitment of the Organization of African Unity to strive for the complete liberation and reunification of Africa on the basis of its unique character and of solidarity and social advancement, have ceaselessly hatched conspiracies of every type in order to block the attainment of the dynamic objectives set out in the charter of Addis Ababa.

The subversive activities, internal turmoil and violent changes of government occurring in many African countries are a direct result of this very real offensive by the imperialist Powers against the stability and normal evolution of our countries.

At the same time, Africa hears eloquent statements from all sides of a desire to provide disinterested aid, the real aim of which being to mislead us once again into treating with our worst foes, those who will never forgive Africa for having regained its sovereignty and proclaimed its determination to ensure an independent course of development based essentially on its own human and material resources.

All complexes aside, can Africa really struggle to develop its own personality and to safeguard its own interests while helping the former colonialists, on the old basis of inequality, to maintain the British Commonwealth and the French Community?

No, the place of the African States must henceforth be only within the OAU and those international organizations which have no connexion with the former imperialist structures imposed on our peoples at a particular period for the sole purpose of setting a formal seal upon their historical backwardness.

At the present time, the attitudes of the United Kingdom with regard to Rhodesia, of Portugal towards its colonies and of France towards Somalia show clearly the basic incompatibility between the objectives set for our peoples by the OAU and those pursued on our continent by these colonial Powers.

Current developments show more eloquently than ever that a commonwealth, whether British or French, is necessarily based on the primacy of the interests of the former metropolitan countries.

Rhodesia is an African country, ruled by force against the will of its people. Its liberation and advancement can be achieved only through its own consistent struggle, supported by the fraternal peoples of Africa.

All those who point to the United Kingdom's responsibility for the tragedy which is now overtaking the Zimbabwe people emphasize the direct and decisive role played by the United Kingdom Government in the execution of the mad schemes of Ian Smith and his associates. They cannot convince international opinion, and far less African opinion, that the freedom and happiness of the people of Rhodesia depend exclusively on those who, in violation of all morality, have used their superior technology to force upon that people a way of life characterized by irresponsibility and a lack of dignity and based wholly on exploitation and oppression.

We solemnly assert that only the African population of Zimbabwe and the independent African States can and must assume responsibility for the struggle which will finally put an end to the colonization of Rhodesia and, with freedom and dignity regained, open the way for social progress.

The recent Accra Conference of African Heads of State and Government solemnly warned the United Kingdom that if it encouraged a unilateral declaration of independence by the 200,000 white settlers at the expense of the rights and dignity of the 4 million Africans of Rhodesia, the African States, faithful to the OAU charter, would not hesitate to intervene in every possible way to liberate the Zimbabwe people, whom the Ian Smith clique wishes to condemn to eternal bondage.

This resolute attitude in defence of the higher interests of the African peoples received new support at the session of the OAU Council of Foreign Ministers held at Addis Ababa on 3-5 December 1965.

It is clear that in turning a deaf ear to the indignant outcry of international opinion and the warnings of the legitimate spokesmen of thirty-six independent African nations, the United Kingdom Government is simply showing its total contempt for the African Governments, which it obviously regards as given more to words than to action and as still capable of being swayed when their will conflicts with that of the United Kingdom Government. It is also apparent that the United Kingdom Government is relying on the shameful precedent represented by the continued white domination of South Africa and South West Africa in the face of the unanimous position taken by the peoples of Africa. It will be recalled that the British accomplices of the racist settlers of South Africa made similar insincere protests and threatened measures of economic coercion when the latter seized power in that country at the expense of the indigenous inhabitants. However, such measures were never applied, for the same illegal regime continues to rule with greater ferocity than ever. Who, therefore, can now deceive us into thinking that the United Kingdom's African policy is in conflict with that pursued by Ian Smith in Rhodesia?

Is the intention to blindfold us once again so that we will not see the cruel reality behind the humiliation and enslavement of our peoples? Or is it to make us believe that the OAU does not exist and that our Governments have been tamed and corrupted and are therefore incapable of clearly discerning the true interests of Africa?

No, the era of the exclusive domination of the colonial Powers and of the absolute primacy of interests which were foreign to our peoples is definitely over.

The Africa of today has come of age. It has understood that the history of the world can no longer be written without its conscious participation and without striving to bring the same happiness and progress to all the peoples of the world.

If it is the United Kingdom's deliberate intention to ignore the wise lessons of that country's own national development and those learned from its former position of supremacy with regard to the countries of America, Europe and Asia in order to deny the inevitability of the evolutionary process leading to the complete emancipation of Africa, then it is up to the African States and particularly to those which have freed themselves from all alien influence, to remind the United Kingdom Government of these lessons of the past.

If all African Governments appreciated the historic significance of unanimous application of their decision on Rhodesia, not one would fail to honour its word and its vote, for that is a political and moral imperative for the dignity of all Africa.

However, if unfortunately - and unfortunately for themselves - certain African political leaders should betray history and the higher interests of Africa by adopting an attitude of complacency and complicity towards the foes of Africa who wish to perpetuate the rule of violence and ignoble racism in Rhodesia, then we, for our part, are convinced that the peoples of Africa and the future generations of our continent will not fail to pour their unanimous scorn upon those leaders.

We are also convinced that the inveterate mouthpieces of neo-colonialism will fail if they try to block or delay action by an Africa which is justly outraged by the crime committed in Rhodesia. Those who argue in defence of the wretched "associations of horse and rider" - for such are the neo-colonialist structures, whether they be the British Commonwealth or the French Commonwealth - can no longer mislead a single African who is aware of the thousand obstacles which the colonial Powers have placed on the road to African freedom.

The time-limit set for the United Kingdom Government to put an end to the scandalous situation created in Rhodesia by the racist settlers expires at midnight today, 14 December 1965.

In keeping with the decisions taken by the OAU, 15 December should witness the formal severance of all diplomatic relations between the African States and the United Kingdom in the event that the latter opts for the Ian Smiths and against the whole of Africa, which is fighting for a better future.

We know that every type of pressure, and indeed threats, have been brought to bear upon the various African Governments with a view to thwarting the proper implementation of the OAU's decisions.

Above all, however, we also know that the peoples of Africa and all nations that believe in justice and freedom expect African Governments to take an attitude which reflects the OAU decisions and the determination to restore Africa to the sovereign and effective exercise of its historic responsibilities.

The people of Guinea, who remain totally and unconditionally committed to the great struggle for the independence of all peoples, for fraternal co-operation based on equality and for peace, cannot be betrayed by their Government.

For these reasons, we declare that the Government of the United Kingdom, which by virtue of its objective position has rendered a disservice to the sacred cause of African liberty, cannot maintain diplomatic relations with the Government of the Republic of Guinea until further notice.

The Embassy of the United Kingdom in the Republic of Guinea is accordingly closed as at midnight on 14 December.

Furthermore, the staff of the diplomatic mission in question are requested to cease all activities in the national territory of the Republic of Guinea.

FOR THE FREEDOM AND UNITY OF THE AFRICAN MOTHERLAND ADVANCING TOWARDS A BETTER LIFE:

LONG LIVE THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE ZIMBAWE PEOPLE!

LONG LIVE THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY!

Ahmed Sékou TOURE

