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Relations between Israel and South Africa

Special report of the Special Committee against Apartheid

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

1 November 1977

Sir,

I have the honour to send you herewith the special report of the Special Committee against Apartheid on relations between Israel and South Africa, adopted unanimously by the Special Committee on 28 October 1977.

This special report is submitted to the General Assembly and to the Security Council in accordance with the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolutions 2671 (XXV) of 8 December 1970 and 31/6 of 26 October and 9 November 1976.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Leslie O. HARRIMAN
Chairman of the
Special Committee against Apartheid

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

/...

Special report of the Committee

1. The Special Committee has followed with grave concern the continuing and increasing collaboration by the Government of Israel with the apartheid régime in South Africa in the military, nuclear, political, economic and other fields.
2. It may be recalled that this collaboration reached a new and dangerous stage following the visit of the Prime Minister of the apartheid régime to Israel in April 1976, the conclusion of a series of agreements during and after that visit, and the subsequent announcement that Israel would supply warships to the South African Navy.
3. On the recommendation of the Special Committee, the General Assembly, in resolution 31/6 E of 9 November 1976, strongly condemned the continuing and increasing collaboration by Israel with the racist régime of South Africa as a flagrant violation of the resolutions of the United Nations and as an encouragement to the racist régime of South Africa to persist in its criminal policies.
4. The Government of Israel has, however, defied this resolution, and the condemnations by numerous Governments and organizations all over the world, as well as the South African liberation movements, and further expanded its collaboration with the apartheid régime.
5. Developments in this connexion were reviewed in a report by the Special Committee's Sub-Committee on the Implementation of United Nations Resolutions and Collaboration with South Africa. The text of the Sub-Committee's report is reproduced in the annex to the present report.
6. Israel's increasing collaboration, especially in the military field, has been one of deliberate choice and a hostile act against the oppressed people of South Africa.
7. In this connexion, the Special Committee wishes to draw the attention of the General Assembly and the Security Council to the following statement made by its Chairman on 8 July 1977:

"... the Special Committee will soon issue a report on the growing relations between Israel and South Africa and call for world-wide condemnation. In giving special attention to Israel, the Special Committee is in no way selective. Israel has enormously increased its ties with South Africa in defiance of United Nations resolutions. It received the Prime Minister of the apartheid régime soon after the defeat of its naked aggression against Angola and signed a series of agreements. It announced the supply of warships to South Africa last August when that country was massacring African school children in Soweto and other centres.

"While many other trading partners of South Africa are taking steps to curtail collaboration with South Africa, Israel has increased its

/...

collaboration. It has thereby flung a challenge to all freedom-loving people and proclaimed its hostility to Africa. African and other non-aligned States cannot entertain any relations with Israel so long as it does not desist from collaboration with the apartheid régime."

The Chairman stated further at the 351st meeting of the Special Committee, on 7 October 1977:

"Israel is one of the few countries which is increasing collaboration with South Africa in all fields instead of disengaging itself.

"Even France, which has procrastinated for many years on the arms embargo, has announced that it will not sell any more military equipment to South Africa. Israel remains the one and only country which is deliberately flouting the arms embargo.

"The Special Committee, I may recall, invited all Member States, including Israel, to participate in the World Conference for Action against Apartheid, held at Lagos, and report on actions taken or contemplated by them against apartheid. Israel accepted the invitation and nominated a delegation. But shortly before the Conference convened, it announced withdrawal from the Conference on the spurious ground that the World Jewish Congress had not been invited. ...

"Then, immediately after the Lagos Conference, when the South African régime realized the extent of its isolation, the South African Foreign Minister rushed to Israel and was received by the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister and others.

"As the Havana Seminar warned, the South African régime is trying to establish an alliance of régimes hostile to the United Nations and Israel is co-operating in this disgraceful venture.

"The Special Committee will, therefore, need to publicize and denounce this Pretoria-Tel Aviv axis and warn the Israeli Government of the consequences of its alliance with the apartheid régime, which is a hostile act against the oppressed people of South Africa and, indeed, all of humanity."

8. The Special Committee wishes to emphasize that the growing alliance between the Government of Israel and the apartheid régime, reflecting their common disregard of the United Nations, represents a challenge to the international community in its efforts to secure freedom and peace in southern Africa. It notes with concern the insidious propaganda by the Government of Israel and its supporters against the United Nations organs and against Governments which have advocated firm action against apartheid.

9. It considers that the General Assembly should once again condemn the Government of Israel and demand that it forthwith cease collaboration with South Africa. It should promote maximum publicity for all relevant information and encourage Governments and organizations to exert all their influence to oblige the Government of Israel to desist from its disastrous course.

ANNEX

Report on recent developments in the relations
between Israel and South Africa

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Special Committee against Apartheid submitted a special report to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session concerning the growing collaboration between Israel and the racist régime in South Africa. 1/ Subsequently, the General Assembly, in resolution 31/6 E of 9 November 1976, expressed its deep concern about the military assistance provided by Israel to the apartheid régime and strongly condemned the continuing and increasing collaboration by Israel as a flagrant violation of United Nations resolutions and an encouragement to the racist régime to persist in its criminal policies.

2. In November 1976, the Israeli newspaper Maariv reported that internal and external pressures in opposition to Israel's links with South Africa had convinced the Israeli Government to undertake an evaluation of its relationship with the apartheid régime. The paper reported that the Israeli Government had already undertaken some steps to "lower its profile" in South Africa, notably by postponing two visits by Cabinet officers to South Africa. A few weeks later, however, the Jerusalem correspondent of the Johannesburg Star reported that Israeli sources had denied that recent pressure from the United Nations and some Western States had influenced the Israeli Government in its stand on South Africa. According to the report, "the United Nations criticism was only to be expected", the sources said, "and anyway, will not go on for much longer". 2/ After the recent elections, the new Israeli Minister-designate of Defence, Mr. Ezer Weisman, said his Government would improve its links with South Africa, and in particular continue its defence supplies. 3/

3. A review of the development of relations between the two countries since the last report of the Special Committee shows that Israel has continued to intensify its links with South Africa in all fields despite universal condemnation of such collaboration.

4. The South African Foreign Minister, Mr. R. F. Botha, made a two-day "private visit" to Israel in early September 1977. The South African Embassy in Tel Aviv

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 22A (A/31/22/Add.1-3), document A/32/22/Add.2.

2/ The Star, Johannesburg, weekly airmail edition, 27 November and 11 December 1976.

3/ Sunday Times, Johannesburg, 12 June 1977.

confirmed that Mr. Botha had paid a "courtesy call" on the Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. Menahem Begin, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Moshe Dayan. 4/

II. MILITARY AND NUCLEAR COLLABORATION

5. Israel has intensified its supplies of arms to South Africa in flagrant violation of the United Nations arms embargo. Increasing reports of nuclear collaboration between Israel and South Africa have aroused considerable concern in the international community.
6. Press reports have indicated that Israeli military industries have a backing of about R100 million in South African orders. Reportedly, the equipment on order includes missiles, gunboats and fighter jets. 5/
7. In January 1977, officials of the United States Government stated that Israel had sold six gunboats armed with Gabriel missiles to South Africa. They reportedly said that since these missiles might have been built along the lines of the American Sidewinder missile the sale might be in violation of United States official policy prohibiting re-export of arms. A spokesman for the Israeli Embassy in Washington, however, denied that Israel had sold any arms with American components "without prior consent from those involved". 6/
8. According to a report in the Financial Times (London) of 7 August 1977, Sandhoek-Austral shipyards near Durban are to begin manufacturing Dabur coastal patrol boats under licence from Israel. 7/
9. According to information provided by the Anti-Apartheid Movement in the Federal Republic of Germany, Israel appears to be acting as an intermediary for the sale of West German military equipment to South Africa, in particular speedboats. 8/
10. The Committee has received disturbing reports that Israel's increasingly close co-operation with South Africa in the military sphere may have been extended to the nuclear sphere. These reports have been denied by the Government of Israel. 9/

4/ Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, 5 September 1977.

5/ The Star, Johannesburg, 30 March 1977.

6/ Jerusalem Domestic Service, 12 January 1977; International Herald Tribune, Paris, 13 January 1977.

7/ Quoted in P. F. Wilmot, "Zionism and apartheid: structure of imperialism", New Nigerian, Lagos, 25 August 1977.

8/ Informationsdienst Südliches Afrika, No. 4, April 1977, Waffengeschäfte BRD -- SA.

9/ The New York Times, 18 April 1976; Sunday Times, Johannesburg, 12 June 1977.

11. Several observers have expressed concern that the scientific and technological co-operation agreements concluded by the two countries in 1976, and which have established closer ties between the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and the Israeli National Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, may involve the transfer of nuclear know-how. According to a recent report, Israel may be supplying nuclear technology in return for enriched uranium. 10/

12. In its previous report, the Committee had already indicated that South Africa may be supplying uranium to Israel in return for arms. 11/

13. According to other reports, Israel may be assisting South Africa in developing its delivery capability for nuclear devices. 12/

III. ECONOMIC COLLABORATION

14. Trade figures for 1976 released by the South African Embassy in Israel showed that trade between the two countries had increased by about 13 per cent during the year. South African exports to Israel (mainly iron, steel, food-stuffs and mineral products) rose to \$US 44 million, 14 per cent higher than in 1975. Israel's exports to South Africa (mainly agricultural machinery, electrical goods, chemicals and textiles) rose 12 per cent to \$US 44.2 million. 13/

15. Exchanges of economic missions and other measures to increase economic ties have been intensified since the conclusion of a co-operation agreement between the two countries in April 1976. Mr. Ytzak Unna, Israel's Ambassador to South Africa, announced that Israeli businessmen "have full confidence in the future of South Africa". 14/

16. A top-level South African trade delegation held talks with Israeli manufacturers, industrialists and politicians in September 1976, reportedly with

10/ P. F. Wilmot, *op. cit.*; Elisabeth Mathiot, *La collaboration entre Israël et l'Afrique du Sud*, Paris (Editions France-Pays Arabes, 1977); *The Star*, Johannesburg, weekly airmail edition, 14 May 1977. According to the *Morning Star*, London, of 11 May 1976, papers delivered at a joint Israel-South Africa scientific conference in Johannesburg in April 1976 included papers on nuclear physics and isotope chemistry.

11/ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 22A (A/31/22/Add.1-3)*, document A/31/22/Add.2, para. 52.

12/ Ronald W. Walters, "South Africa's nuclear power development: political and strategic implications", testimony before the Sub-Committee on Africa of the Committee on International Relations of the United States House of Representatives, 21 June 1977; P. F. Wilmot, *op. cit.*

13/ *The Star*, Johannesburg, weekly airmail edition, 19 February 1977.

14/ *Ibid.*, 14 May 1977.

the aim to increase trade between the two countries. The delegation was organized by the South African-Israel Chamber of Economic Relations in conjunction with the Israel-South African Chamber of Commerce, the Israeli Manufacturers' Association and the Israeli Ministry of Commerce and Industry and included the chairman of the Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce, the managing director of the Industrial Development Corporation, and several prominent businessmen. The talks reportedly centred around bilateral trade in electronics, chemicals, metal industries and plastics. 15/

17. In November 1976, three senior Israeli officials visited South Africa for discussions on economic relations between the two countries. They were the Controller of Foreign Exchange, the Director of the Investment Authority and the Director of the Investment Centre. 16/

18. It was also reported that an Israeli economic delegation led by a cabinet minister would visit South Africa in 1977. According to Mr. Ytzak Unna, Israeli Ambassador to South Africa, the delegation leader would probably be the Minister of Finance, Mr. Y. Rabinowitz. The purpose of the mission would be to discuss the implementation of the South African economic trade agreement. 17/

19. The Governor of the Israeli Reserve Bank, Mr. Aron Gafny, visited South Africa for a week in September 1977. He called for increased economic co-operation between the two countries, particularly in joint ventures. 18/

20. An Israeli team composed of experts in business, economics and finance is scheduled to hold seminars in South Africa in October 1977. Purpose of the visit is to encourage South African businessmen to take advantage of the free trade agreements between Israel and the European Economic Community by setting up subsidiaries in Israel or entering into joint ventures with Israel-based companies. 19/

21. In September 1977, South Africa and Israel concluded a bilateral agreement to prevent tax duplication. In addition to provisions to avoid double taxation of each other's citizens residing or earning in the other country, the agreement was reported to contain clauses favourable to Israel. These related to South Africa's recognition of tax exemptions granted by Israel to foreign companies in order to promote investment in its economy and taxation of South African pensioners now living in Israel according to Israeli law. 20/

15/ Ibid., 11 September 1976.

16/ The New York Times, 29 November 1976.

17/ Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, 25 November 1976.

18/ Ibid., 6 September 1977.

19/ Ibid., 13 September 1977.

20/ Ibid.

22. The Tel Aviv department-store chain Shalom Stores held a "South African Week" in May 1977, featuring fashions, food-stuffs, hardware and other consumer items, many of them being introduced in Israel for the first time. 21/

23. The Israeli Koor Group is reportedly planning to expand its activities in the South African chemicals industry. According to Mr. F. J. H. le Riche, managing director of the South African company Sentrachem, further co-operation between his group and Koor Chemicals was being negotiated. Mr. le Riche stated that the proposed co-operation would make South Africa more independent of imported chemicals, while at the same time creating possibilities for increased exports. Agbro (Pty), the first joint undertaking by the two groups, has already started production of chemical components for herbicides. 22/

24. According to information disclosed by Mr. Hillel Seidel, an opposition member in the Israeli Parliament, Koor is also planning to represent the South African steel industry in the European Economic Community (EEC), where Israel enjoys preferential trade tariffs because of its status as an associate member. About 40 per cent of South Africa's total exports to Israel are made up of steel from the South African Iron and Steel Corporation (Isacor), a parastatal company. It was reported that a joint Isacor-Koor steel services centre would be opened in Kiryat Gat, near Tel Aviv, this year. The centre would import South African semi-processed steel and iron for further processing and export. When the deal was announced in May 1976, it was also reported that South Africa was greatly interested in the completion of the project because of Israel's export potential to the EEC. A senior Koor official, however, denied that Koor would be representing South African steel in Europe. 23/

25. According to press reports, a major agreement may have been concluded between the two countries for the supply of coal from South Africa for an electric power plant being built near Hadera in central Israel. Mr. Alan Tew, managing director of the Transvaal Coal Owners Association, confirmed that negotiations were taking place, but denied that any formal agreement had been reached. He stated that Israel was interested in buying about one million tons of coal a year from South Africa. 24/

26. Consolidated Power (Pty), a joint undertaking of the Tadiran Israel Electronics Industries and the South African company Calan, began operations at

21/ South African Digest, Pretoria, 20 May 1977.

22/ The Star, Johannesburg, weekly airmail edition, 2 October 1976. Koor is owned by the Histadrut trade union of Israel and is one of Israel's largest industrial concerns.

23/ The Star, Johannesburg, weekly airmail edition, 19 March 1977.

24/ Ibid., 6 November 1976; New Statesman and Nation, London, 11 February 1977.

Rosslyn near Pretoria in December 1976. Tadiran is a major manufacturer of tactical military communications equipment and is partly owned by Koor Industries (50 per cent), the Israeli Ministry of Defence (15 per cent) and the United States company GTE International (35 per cent). According to details released by the new company's managing director, Mr. Y. Brosh, the company manufactures "emergency lighting systems" for factories, shopping centres and offices, as well as for home use. In addition, the company will handle on an agency basis "other Tadiran products and installations which are too specialized to be made in South Africa". 25/

27. A containerized shipping service for general cargoes between South Africa and Israel was introduced in September 1976. According to Mr. W. B. Davies, a director of Unicorn Lines, which runs the service, containerization had become necessary because of increased trade between South Africa and Israel. 26/

28. Increasing traffic between the two countries has also reportedly led the Israeli national airline El Al to plan adding a fourth weekly flight to South Africa or to put the Boeing 747 jet on the route instead of the smaller planes presently in use. 27/

29. There have been increasing reports of Israel's interest in the Transkei bantustan. The southern Africa correspondent of the Israeli radio reported on 29 October 1976 that about a month and a half earlier, a delegation from the Transkei agriculture "ministry" had visited Israel seeking agricultural aid. They had met with the Agriculture Ministry and had toured several villages. The report was denied by the Agriculture Ministry. However, the new Transkei agriculture "minister" subsequently confirmed that his predecessor had indeed visited Israel and conferred with Agriculture Minister Aharon Uzan, although no final agreement had been concluded. The Transkei reportedly intends to send another delegation to Israel in the near future. 28/ Early in 1976, a member of the Israeli Parliament, Mr. Mordechai Ben-Porat, had reportedly stated on the occasion of a visit to South Africa that Israel was interested in helping South Africa "develop" the Transkei by supplying technical assistance and training. 29/

30. In February 1977, two representatives of the Bantu Investment Corporation (BIC) visited Israel as part of a tour of Western Europe designed to attract investment to the bantustans. The Jerusalem correspondent of the Johannesburg Star reported that many Israeli companies, in particular the plastics industry, were attracted by the

25/ Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, 8 December 1976; South African Digest, Pretoria, 14 January 1977; Electronics Directory, Israel, 1973/74.

26/ South African Digest, Pretoria, 22 October 1976.

27/ The Star, Johannesburg, weekly airmail edition, 19 February 1977.

28/ Jerusalem Domestic Service, 29 October 1976.

29/ Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, 26 April 1976.

idea of investing in the bantustans. A plan under consideration was for Israeli manufacturers "to utilize the low cost semi-skilled labour available in the Republic and then import the goods back to Israel, either completed, or with the necessary finishing being handled here and then exported elsewhere, possibly to the European Economic Community ...". 30/

31. Scientific ties also continue to be strengthened within the framework of the co-operation agreement between the two countries. It was reported in March 1977 that the first South African scientist would leave in July for six months' research in electronics at a technological institute in Haifa. Further appointments would be made in April. In June, the first of four Israelis would arrive in South Africa for two months' research at the Institute of Oceanology in Stellenbosch. 31/

32. In June 1977, South Africa and Israel combined to put on the first conference ever held in South Africa by the International Association of Water Pollution Research. 32/

IV. CULTURAL, SPORTS AND OTHER RELATIONS

33. South African Jewish families are reportedly emigrating to Israel as part of Israel's policy of creating settlements in the occupied territories. It was reported recently that an initial settlement of 15 South African families would grow tomatoes in a moshav in an occupied area. 33/

34. The 71-member South African Youth Chamber Orchestra toured Israel for three weeks in December 1976. The tour, which was described as "triumphant" in the South African press, was the result of an invitation from Israel as part of the cultural exchange programme between the two countries. 34/

35. The Association of Round Tables in South Africa has started three Round Tables in Israel. The Association, a member of the World Council of Young Men's Service Clubs, an international youth organization, reportedly was chosen to form the Round Tables in Israel because of the ties between South Africa and Israel. 35/

36. South African teams participated in the tenth Maccabiah games in Tel Aviv in July 1977.

37. An Israeli volley ball team, Maccabi Tel Aviv, toured South Africa for four weeks from 2 August 1977.

30/ The Star, Johannesburg, weekly airmail edition, 26 February 1977.

31/ South African Digest, Pretoria, 25 March 1976.

32/ Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, 13 June 1977.

33/ Ibid., 3 February 1977.

34/ Ibid., 14 December 1976; The Star, Johannesburg, weekly airmail edition, 29 December 1976.

35/ South African Digest, Pretoria, 5 November 1976.