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LETTER DATED 7 NOVEMBER 1979 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL

At the request of the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honourable R. F. Botha, I am enclosing the text of a letter he has addressed to Your Excellency on 7 November 1979.

I should appreciate it if this letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) J. Adriaan EKSTEEN
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 7 November 1979 from the Minister of Foreign Affairs
of South Africa addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to your letter dated 5 November 1979, the text of which also appears in Press Release SG/SM/2827 of 6 November 1979, regarding a proposed meeting in Geneva to discuss the question of South West Africa/Namibia.

In conveying my Government's response to the proposals of the Five regarding the Demilitarized Zone on 12 October 1979, I stated, inter alia, that during the discussions with Sir James Murray it was indicated that in order to consider whether the Demilitarized Zone could be a substitute within the framework of the settlement proposal for the monitoring of SWAPO bases, it would be necessary to obtain more details and satisfactory assurances. Therefore, as early as August 1979 it was suggested that such details and assurances could best be provided in discussions between the military commander of UNTAG and the South African military authorities.

The working paper of 1 October to which you refer in your letter did not contain the information the South African authorities were hoping to receive in this regard. In my response of 12 October I accordingly listed some of the questions which are indicative of the practical problems of implementation and asked whether they could be elucidated, for example -

Will the conditions which apply to the South African forces in terms of the proposal equally apply to SWAPO personnel; for example will all parties be required, prior to the cessation of hostilities, to announce simultaneously undertakings to abide by a cease-fire with effect from a specified date?

What will the detailed responsibilities of the military component of UNTAG in the Demilitarized Zone be? What will their size at any given moment be in Angola, Zambia, Botswana and South West Africa/Namibia, bearing in mind the figures for UNTAG agreed upon? How will they carry out their responsibilities?

What will the status be of MPLA, Cuban, Zambian and Botswana forces in the proposed Demilitarized Zone or any other zone close to the South West Africa/Namibia borders? Are there any specific conditions which have been attached to their presence and, if so, are they to be monitored?

I also stated that the South African authorities still felt that the only way of "elucidating these and related questions would be for the military personnel concerned jointly to examine the issues, while at the same time enlightening themselves locally as to the situation on the ground".

/...

We have had no reply as yet to these and the other questions posed in my communication, and my Government still feels that the meeting of the military personnel is an essential step to meaningful further discussions.

It is noted that you have also invited SWAPO as well as the Governments of Mozambique and Tanzania, while the democratic political parties in South West Africa have been excluded. When similar discussions were held in New York during March 1979, they were present. My Government has repeatedly made it clear that the views of the democratic leaders of South West Africa/Namibia in these matters are of paramount importance.

The South African Government would therefore reiterate that:

- (A) As a preliminary step, the military personnel of UNTAG have discussions with the South African military authorities, at the same time acquainting themselves with the situation in the Territory;
- (B) At any ensuing further discussions, arrangements be made for the leaders of the democratic parties in South West Africa/Namibia to be afforded an equal opportunity to present their views.

R. F. BOTHA
Minister of Foreign Affairs
