



General Assembly Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/44/89 /
S/20414
23 January 1989

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Forty-fourth session
QUESTION OF NAMIBIA

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-fourth year

Letter dated 23 January 1989 from the Permanent Representative of
Zimbabwe to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to forward the enclosed press statement issued by the African Group at the United Nations on 20 January 1989, with a request that it be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under the item entitled "Question of Namibia", and of the Security Council.

(Signed) I. S. G. MUDENGE
Ambassador/Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Press statement issued in New York on 20 January 1989 by the
African Group on Namibian independence

The African Group at the United Nations has learnt with grave concern of reports to the effect that some members of the Security Council are trying to pressure the United Nations Secretariat to propose severe reductions of the budget for the preparations leading to the independence of Namibia.

According to this information, these members want the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) military personnel to be reduced from 7,500 to 4,000. This is not only contrary to the letter and spirit of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which set an upper limit of 7,500 military personnel, but also would be going counter to the provisions of Security Council resolution 629 (1989). The latter resolution requests the Secretary-General to propose cost-saving measures, wherever possible, but without prejudicing the ability of UNTAG to carry out its mandate.

It is important to point out to the international community that the racist Pretoria régime already has over 100,000 soldiers in Namibia and other para-military and ethnic forces, not to mention a police force of over 13,000.

After decades of being brutalized by the racist régime's instruments of coercion, a meagre United Nations force of 7,500 is barely adequate to restore the confidence of the long-suffering Namibian people, let alone the 4,000 being proposed to cover a territory of about 824,269 square kilometres. At a time when the Namibian people are anxiously awaiting free and fair elections, the reduction of UNTAG military personnel will deprive them of the right freely to choose their representatives.

The African Group at the United Nations rejects the proposed reduction and calls upon the international community to raise its voice against the cuts.
