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LETTER DATED 9 NOVEMBER 1979 FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED IN PURSUANCE OF RESOLUTION 253 (1968) CONCERNING
THE QUESTION OF SOUTHERN RHODESIA ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE
SECURITY COUNCIL

At the request of the Security Council Committee established in pursuance of resolution 253 (1968) concerning the situation in Southern Rhodesia I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of a statement adopted by the Committee at its 350th meeting today and issued to the press. The statement is in connexion with the information received by the Committee from governmental sources in London indicating that the United Kingdom Government intended to discontinue in the near future the application of the Security Council sanctions against the illegal régime of Southern Rhodesia. As indicated in the penultimate paragraph of the statement, and in view of the urgency and seriousness of the matter, the Committee would be grateful if you could kindly bring the contents of the statement to the attention of the members of the Council.

(Signed) Ampim D. J. BLANKSON
Deputy Permanent Representative of
Nigeria to the United Nations
Chairman of the Committee

* Reissued for technical reasons.

Annex

The question of the maintenance of Security Council sanctions
against the illegal régime in Southern Rhodesia

Text of statement by the Committee

1. The Security Council Committee established in pursuance of resolution 253 (1968) concerning the question of Southern Rhodesia held an urgent meeting on 8 November 1979 for the purpose of considering the question of the maintenance of Security Council sanctions against the illegal régime in Southern Rhodesia. The Committee had learned with distress that the United Kingdom Government contemplated the non-renewal of some sanctions (Sect. 2 of the United Kingdom Southern Rhodesia Act, 1965) and the lifting of the rest, "as soon as Rhodesia returns to legality with the appointment of a British Governor and his arrival in Salisbury", 1/ Southern Rhodesia. The Committee expressed grave concern that the measures contemplated by the United Kingdom Government would amount to unilateral action by that Government with regard to the sanctions established by the Security Council against the illegal régime in Southern Rhodesia. The Committee emphasized that only the Security Council, which had instituted the sanctions in the first place, had a right to lift them. All Member States should therefore continue to respect and apply strictly the provisions of all the relevant Security Council resolutions on Southern Rhodesia, until all the aims and objectives set out in resolution 253 (1968) have been completely achieved. 2/
2. The Committee felt that it would be failing in its duty if it did not pronounce itself on the declared intention of a Member State to violate the sanctions by discontinuing their application. Its concern was all the greater because the Member State involved, the United Kingdom, carries the dual responsibility of the Administering Power of the rebel territory and of a permanent member of the Security Council primarily responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Committee noted further that the Security Council sanctions system against Southern Rhodesia was established in the first instance at the request of the United Kingdom Government.
3. Therefore, the Committee decided to issue this statement. It also decided to appeal to all Member States and in particular to the Government of the United Kingdom through its representative in the Committee to continue to observe scrupulously all the provisions of the sanctions established by the Security Council. Furthermore, the Committee decided to transmit a copy of this statement to the President of the Security Council for the attention of its members.

1/ From statement by the United Kingdom Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in Parliament on 7 November 1979.

2/ See resolutions 253 (1968), preambular para. 4; 277 (1970), preambular para. 2; 288 (1970), operative para. 3; 314 (1972), operative para. 1; 318 (1972), preambular para. 4; and 320 (1972), operative para. 1.

4. The representatives of France and Portugal expressed their delegations' reservations on both the principle and the text of the proposed statement by the Committee in the absence of sufficient time to get instructions from their Governments. The Norwegian delegation stated that it was not in a position to pronounce itself on the substance of the statement owing to the lack of time for its delegation to obtain instructions from its Government. The United Kingdom delegation dissociated itself from the proposed statement, the issue of which it regarded as wholly inappropriate and the terms of which it considered inaccurate and unjustified. The representative of the United States stated that, bearing in mind the sensitivity of the negotiations currently taking place in London, his delegation was unable to participate in the consideration of the proposed statement by the Committee.
