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POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE  
GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Thirty-ninth year

Letter dated 20 September 1984 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to refer to General Assembly/Security Council document A/39/487-S/16741 dated 14 September 1984, containing the text of a declaration on South Africa by the Foreign Ministers of the Ten Member States of the European Economic Community adopted on 11 September 1984.

Annexed hereto is the text of the South African Government's reply, dated 20 September 1984, to the above declaration.

I should be grateful if this letter and its annex could be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 31 and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kurt VON SCHIRNDING  
Permanent Representative,  
Ambassador

ANNEX

Reply of 20 September 1984 by the South African Government to the  
declaration on South Africa by the Foreign Ministers of the Ten  
Member States of the European Economic Community adopted on  
11 September 1984

1. The South African Government takes exception to the tone and content of the declaration of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the European Economic Community of 11 September 1984. Events in South Africa, including the election of Coloured and Indian representatives that were recently held in South Africa, are manifestly an internal affair and therefore in no way the concern of the Ten or any other outside authority. The declaration by the Ministers of the European Economic Community constitutes unreasonable and unacceptable interference in the domestic affairs of the Republic of South Africa. None of the Governments concerned would tolerate similar interference by any outside agency in their internal affairs.
2. In the present instance, this unwarranted interference is aggravated by the manifest ignorance of the relevant facts that the declaration reveals.
3. The Coloureds and Indians in South Africa were given the opportunity to participate in elections under the terms of the new constitution. They were not coerced to do so, but were enabled to elect representatives to the South African parliament.
4. Regrettably there were elements who were not prepared to allow the democratic process to proceed unhindered. Their intimidatory and violent actions resulted in the loss of life and considerable damage to private and public property.
5. The Government had no alternative but to intervene by way of preventive action to protect the lives and property of its citizens.
6. The South African legal system is as soundly based on the rule of law as the legal system of any of the Ten, and the South African Government is as much concerned as any other civilized State about fundamental human values, freedoms, dignities and justice for all. It was precisely for this reason that it could not allow the damage to property and the threat to life to continue unchecked. It had a duty to intervene to ensure the security of its citizens and the protection of their lives and property.
7. The South African Government notes with concern that nowhere in the declaration of the Ten is any regret expressed for the loss of life and damage to property caused by the violence.
8. The South African Government rejects the assertion that black South Africans have been deliberately expelled from South African political life and denied adequate political means through which to express their grievances. Whether the world likes it or not, a substantial percentage of the black peoples of South

Africa opted for political independence years ago. It is irrelevant that the Ten and the world at large refuse to acknowledge this act of self-determination. What is relevant, is that millions of black people exercised a political option of their own free will and without any suggestion of coercion on the part of the South African Government.

9. The Ten must also be aware of the special Cabinet Committee established last year by the Prime Minister to investigate the constitutional advancement of black people living outside the independent and national states. The mandate of this Committee and the purpose of the South African Government in establishing the Committee have been fully explained in public. The Government would refer the Ten to the statement in the Security Council of the United Nations on 16 August 1984, when the South African representative rejected, in advance, the draft resolution under discussion in the Council. Government policy was clearly stated by the State President of the Republic of South Africa in public addresses on 14 and 18 September 1984. On 14 September the State President reiterated that the position of the black communities living outside the independent and national states was receiving the urgent attention of the special Cabinet Committee, that consultations were continuing across the broadest possible spectrum and that a great deal of work had been and was being done to find suitable political mechanisms that would be acceptable to and in the interest of those communities.

10. On 18 September 1984, the State President again committed himself to finding appropriate constitutional accommodation for black South Africans. He said in Parliament that:

"Politically, black participation requires structures and processes other than those offered by this constitution. We therefore realize that the constitution in terms of which this Parliament has been created ... does not provide fully for the diversity which marks the South African population. Democratic political participation must also be further extended among our black communities in South Africa in order to ensure their advancement and to meet the demands of justice.

My Government will continue to create, on the basis of consultation and negotiation, a framework within which co-operation with black states, both independent and self-governing, can take place. Furthermore, means will have to be found to enable black communities outside the independent and self-governing states to participate in political decision-making in matters affecting their interests. Thus we have to continue to build on the foundations which were laid by the establishment of black local authorities."

11. The imputation in the declaration that no progress has been made in bringing about constitutional arrangements that include all South Africans in the political process and the assertion that blacks have been "deliberately expelled" from South Africa's political life is a travesty of the truth and reveals a total misconception of what has already been achieved in South Africa and of the mechanisms that have been set in motion to bring about a realization of the reasonable aspirations of all South Africa's peoples.

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12. It is the considered view of the South African Government that South Africans themselves, black and white, Coloured and Asian, are best qualified to determine what is in their best interests and how their political and other rights can be satisfactorily assured. It is not for those who are safely ensconced thousands of miles away, and who need bear no responsibility for the consequences of their actions and the policies that they demand from South Africa, to prescribe to South Africans how they should go about securing their interests.

13. The South African Government will continue on the course it has set itself of promoting orderly and evolutionary change for the benefit of all the country's peoples.

Department of Foreign Affairs  
20 September 1984

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