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1981st MEETING: 21 DECEMBER 1976

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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

Documents of the Security Council (symbol S/ . . .) are normally published in quarterly *Supplements of the Official Records of the Security Council*. The date of the document indicates the supplement in which it appears or in which information about it is given.

The resolutions of the Security Council, numbered in accordance with a system adopted in 1964, are published in yearly volumes of *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council*. The new system, which has been applied retroactively to resolutions adopted before 1 January 1965, became fully operative on that date.

1981st MEETING

Held in New York on Tuesday, 21 December 1976, at 10.30 a.m.

President: M. Ion DATCU (Romania).

Present: The representatives of the following States: Benin, China, France, Guyana, Italy, Japan, Libyan Arab Republic, Pakistan, Panama, Romania, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania and United States of America.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/1981)

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Complaint by Lesotho against South Africa:
Letter dated 16 December 1976 from the Permanent Representative of Lesotho to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/12257)

The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Complaint by Lesotho against South Africa:

Letter dated 16 December 1976 from the Permanent Representative of Lesotho to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/12257)

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I should like to draw the Security Council's attention to the relevant Council documents dealing with the item on the agenda. In addition to the document cited in the agenda, the President has received the following communications on this matter: a letter dated 12 November 1976 from the representative of the Libyan Arab Republic [S/12227]; and a letter dated 16 November from the representative of South Africa [S/12231].

2. I should also like to inform the members of the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Lesotho and Madagascar in which they request to be invited to take part in the debate.

3. Consequently, if there is no objection, I propose, pursuant to the provisions of Article 31 of the Charter and rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, to invite the representatives to whom I

have just referred to take part in the discussions without the right to vote.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Molapo (Lesotho) took a place at the Council table.

4. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I invite the representative of Madagascar to take the place reserved for him at the side of the Council chamber, on the usual understanding that he will be invited to take a place at the Council table whenever he wishes to speak.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Rabetafika (Madagascar) took the place reserved for him at the side of the Council chamber.

5. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The Security Council will now proceed to consider the item on its agenda.

6. The first speaker is Mr. Charles Molapo, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lesotho. I should like to welcome him in our midst and I call upon him to speak.

7. Mr. MOLAPO (Lesotho): Mr. President, I wish to express to you and through you to the other members of the Council, my sincere gratitude for this opportunity to address the Council on an issue which is of great importance to my country. It is particularly gratifying to note that the Council is considering this topic under the presidency of a representative of a country with which Lesotho enjoys very cordial, friendly and diplomatic relations. I am more than confident that you will guide our deliberations to a successful and fruitful conclusion.

8. As this august Council assembles here today, a quarter million of my people are in a state of siege. These people are being held hostage by South Africa in an attempt to coerce Lesotho to accord recognition to the bantustan Transkei. Since 26 October 1976, three border posts between Lesotho and South Africa have been unilaterally closed by the South African Government. These are Tele Bridge, Qacha's Nek and Ramats'eliso's Gate. The South African Government by telex acknowledged that the border was closed. It stated:

"Pretoria has the honour to state that since Transkei became independent on 26 October,

South Africa has no control over the Transkei border posts at Tele Bridge, Qacha's Nek and Ramats'eliso's Gate. Representations in respect of the three must be made to the Transkei Government."

9. It is common knowledge that when the National Party of white South Africa took power in 1948, the white minority Government embarked upon a programme of separating its African citizens and, according to its manifesto, proceeded to develop them apart and under the guidance of the Europeans. This theory was developed further by Verwoerd, the architect of bantustans, when he stated in 1961 that, in the long run, "the Bantu will be able to develop into separate Bantu states". He added: "This is a form of fragmentation which we would not have liked, if we were able to avoid it. In the light of the pressure being exerted on South Africa, there is, however, no doubt that eventually this will have to be done". Thus South Africa started to create impoverished mini-States and forcibly to move indigenous African people from the prosperous, well-developed areas into the barren so-called homelands, African reserves. This is a ploy by the white racist minority Government to rid itself of the African majority in the hope of having South Africa remain with a majority of whites in a large, rich, developed "whitestan".

10. As I stated before the General Assembly on 13 October 1976,¹ the policy of bantustanization and balkanization of South Africa is so lacking in sincerity, so devoid of any rational justification and so patently racist in conception that it does not provide any basis for resolving the question of *apartheid*. The homeland areas constitute only 13 per cent of the land mass of South Africa—an example of the twisted white South African logic, when 87 per cent of the population can be entitled to only 13 per cent of the land.

11. The homelands are purportedly based on ethnic criteria, and yet the so-called independent Transkei, supposedly a Xhosa homeland, includes territories traditionally occupied by Basotho and other ethnic groups. Africans are being herded there without regard to the places of their real homes. Yet another irony and absurdity of the system is that it applies to African citizens of South Africa only, when, in fact, the whites should also be separated into "Germanstans", "Frenchstans" and "Boerstans".

12. Under the system, all Africans would lose their citizenship rights and consequential rights in rich South Africa but remain a secure source of cheap labour for the white South African economy. The system enslaves, degrades, debases and dehumanizes the black man and ultimately makes him a foreigner in his own motherland.

13. Since our independence more than 10 years ago, the Government and the people of Lesotho have unequivocally and categorically condemned in no

uncertain terms the racist *apartheid* policies of the South African Government. We have been resolutely opposed, and we are still opposed, to a system based on the myth of white superiority, a system that has been formulated without any pretence of consultation with the people it affects most—the majority of the African people of South Africa—a system which, in desperation, unleashes its most sophisticated guns and weapons and brutally murders innocent, defenceless school children in cold blood and a system which creates bantustans and encircles Lesotho and other neighbouring independent African States with those bantustans with the intention of complicating the already complex problems of those countries and of diverting the world's attention or focus from the real issues of majority rule in South Africa, racial discrimination and *apartheid*.

14. To us, South Africa belongs to all South Africans regardless of their race, colour or creed, and my Government will not acquiesce in any scheme which violates the territorial integrity of South Africa by balkanizing it into so-called independent tribal homelands, without the consent of the majority of the people of South Africa. The so-called independence of Transkei imposed on a people by the white racists of South Africa is nothing but one step in the perpetration of the abhorrent and inhuman racist policies of South Africa. It follows, therefore, that recognition of the independent Transkei would be not only an approval of the racist *apartheid* policies of South Africa but also an actual and active participation in the oppression of the black majority of South Africa and in their condemnation to slavery and the denial of their basic human rights.

15. We therefore commend the wise decision of freedom-loving States—both at the level of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and that of the non-aligned countries, and now at the level of the United Nations—not to accord any recognition to the so-called independent Transkei, thus registering their firm opposition to and rejection of the nefarious *apartheid* acts of the Pretoria Administration. Basing itself on the lofty principles and ideals of the United Nations and our abhorrence of the racist *apartheid* policies, and in fulfilment of its obligations under the Charter and resolutions of the United Nations, the Lesotho Government took a firm and decisive stand and refused to recognize the Transkei.

16. The geopolitical situation of Lesotho has always presented us with problems of such magnitude that ours is a life of hard choices. For us, *apartheid* is a day-to-day reality, a nightmare which haunts us. As my Prime Minister stated at the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Colombo in August 1976, living side by side with South Africa necessitates a constant review of our policies and continual adjustment to new situations. Lesotho, a small, mountainous landlocked African State, is surrounded by a rich devel-

oped country dominated by a white racist minority régime which has turned oppression of the black man into a day-to-day policy.

17. As I stated before the General Assembly on 13 October,¹ we have an outstanding border problem with South Africa. We have consistently pointed out that large tracts of land in the South African provinces of the Free State, Natal and Cape Province rightfully belong to the Basotho nation. The South African Government proposed the establishment of a joint boundary commission and, when we accepted, they restricted the terms of reference of the commission to the Cape Province only. We argued that the commission should deal with all sectors of the boundary question, and South Africa replied by unilaterally terminating the discussions. It is worth while to note that the South African Government has ceded large tracts of land in dispute to the so-called independent Transkei. This has further complicated the already difficult border problems on our south-eastern border with South Africa. Again, for this problem, the responsibility is squarely on the shoulders of South Africa.

18. Lesotho's economy is highly interdependent with that of South Africa. Approximately 45 per cent of the male labour force aged 17 to 45 years is employed in South African mines, factories and farms. Most of our exports go to South Africa and most of our imports come from South Africa. Most important of all, we can exercise our right of transit and free access to and from the sea only through South Africa.

19. It is the policy of the Lesotho Government to extricate itself from excessive economic dependence on South Africa. But we are realistic in this approach, as we are well aware that there is need for accommodation and economic co-operation and not confrontation or economic isolation. In this spirit, Lesotho, together with neighbouring countries, concluded a Customs Union Agreement with South Africa. That Agreement was augmented by the Labour Agreement, which was signed by Lesotho and South Africa in 1973. Those two Agreements govern the day-to-day economic relations between our two countries and, above all, they specifically provide that 15 named border posts shall remain open in order to allow for the free flow of goods and free movement of persons between Lesotho and South Africa. Three of the border posts I have just referred to lie between Lesotho and that part of South Africa called Transkei and serve the south-eastern mountain area of Lesotho.

20. The closure of those three border posts has had dire and profound consequences on our politico-economic life. The area affected is almost cut off from the rest of the country because of the mountainous terrain that rises to an altitude of 11,500 feet above sea level. Up to now it has not been possible for the Lesotho Government, given its meagre economic resources, to build roads linking that area with the

rest of the country. The Government has had to rely on a rudimentary and expensive air transport service consisting of seven six-seater Cessna planes. It is significant to mention that that area produces the bulk of our main exports, namely, livestock, wool and mohair. It follows, therefore, that that area relied upon the three now closed border posts for purposes of export and import of goods and services and movement of persons.

21. The closure of the border posts means that the Lesotho Government has got to find an alternative route for goods and services to and from this area, including the movement of labourers to and from South Africa. These added costs and the magnitude of the exercise are obviously beyond our means. Failure to provide the affected quarter million of our people with the necessary food, clothing and medical services, failure to maintain the flow of trade into and out of the affected area, and, indeed, failure to provide alternative employment for the people who cannot now go to the mines, factories and farms of South Africa, not only will adversely affect and disrupt our economy but will cause untold social and political difficulties.

22. It is common knowledge that the closure of the border was meant to constitute pressure on Lesotho because of our refusal to recognize Transkei. Indeed, we are well aware that this is but a step in a series of steps to be taken by South Africa to put pressure on us to recognize the so-called independence of Transkei.

23. As I have stated before, we shall not be cowed; the people of Lesotho have never succumbed and shall never succumb to blackmail and extortion. Our appeal to the international community is for support in a situation which we view as transient and ephemeral. It is our firm belief that the struggle against injustice towards and oppression of the black people of South Africa will culminate in majority rule. Lesotho has been turned into a confrontation State and we shall shoulder our responsibilities to the very bitter end.

24. On learning of the border closure, my Government took immediate steps to impress upon the South African Government that closure of the three border posts was not only in violation of international law and the maintenance of friendly relations amongst States, but in violation of the Customs Union Agreement and the Labour Agreement. We argued that the closure not only was disrupting the free flow of goods and free movement of persons between our two countries, but was a denial of our transit rights and our rights of access to the sea in respect of that area—rights which are recognized and which form one of the cardinal principles of international customary and conventional law, rights which we mutually translated into our Customs Union Agreement. My Government reminded the South African Government that the closure will result in a loss in our share of the Customs

Union revenue, with consequential adverse effects on our budget. We reiterated our right to exercise one of the basic attributes of sovereignty, namely, to accord recognition to States that we feel qualify for recognition.

25. At first, South Africa undertook to look into the matter, but later the South African Government, by the telex message I have already referred to, advised the Lesotho Government to negotiate the reopening of the border with the Government of the so-called independent Transkei. The Lesotho Government refused and refuses to have anything to do with Transkei, and we cannot be pressured into entering into bilateral negotiations with Transkei, a step that would be tantamount to recognizing the homeland's independence and thereby giving legitimacy to *apartheid*. So far as Lesotho is concerned, the onus is on South Africa, a country with which we have dealings and specific agreements, to open the border posts. It is because of this indifference and lack of co-operation by the South African Government that my Government has resolved to take the matter up in the Security Council.

26. In the interest of extricating itself from this position of a hostage, my Government has committed its efforts to a gigantic roads programme to open up its mountain areas and link them with the rest of the country. Feasibility studies have already been concluded, and it is estimated that the building of these roads will cost about 60 million rand or \$US 70 million. I wish to mention that my Government had intended to implement this programme within the next five years of our development, but the closure of the border has compelled us to put it into effect now. With the assistance and co-operation of the friendly and freedom-loving countries and the United Nations and other international organizations, my Government hopes to raise the necessary finances for the programme. As a short-term and immediate measure, my Government intends to improve the existing road tracks to the mountain area, to set up mechanical repair units and storage facilities at strategic points in the mountain area, to procure heavy vehicles for transport of food and clothing, and to improve existing airstrips and add airstrips to handle medium-sized aircraft to airlift supplies to the areas affected. We have estimated the cost of these short-term measures to be in the region of \$10 million and \$12 million—a very small figure by world standards.

27. My Government is firmly committed to living harmoniously with neighbouring States. We firmly believe that a positive resolution from the Council will go a long way towards improving the general welfare and friendly relations in our region, in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

28. More often than not, closing the borders of a land-locked country is tantamount to an act of aggression, because it is more than a blockade in that these

borders are often the life-blood of the country, the only meaningful expression and symbol of its sovereignty. The southern African situation is already explosive enough because of the existence of the die-hard racist minority régimes that are clinging to a path dedicated to the destruction of our region. As we have already stated, we cannot allow a few selfish white minorities in the region to create situations that threaten or are likely to threaten international peace and security.

29. My Government will do all in its power to prevent incidents that are likely to lead to the deterioration of an already explosive situation in the affected border areas. My Government firmly believes that the measures that we have just outlined and the adoption of a positive and constructive resolution by the Council will go a long way towards reaffirming and uplifting the cardinal principles of the Charter and, indeed, towards avoiding a possible threat to international peace and security in our region.

30. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The next speaker is the representative of Madagascar. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make a statement.

31. Mr. RABETAFIKA (Madagascar) (*interpretation from French*): In the absence of its Chairman, I should like on behalf of the Group of African States to thank all the members of the Council for allowing us to participate in this discussion. Mr. President, we are aware of your real interest in everything that affects Africa; indeed, we have been aware of it for some time. Your colleagues in the African Group have always highly appreciated the relations of confidence you have maintained with them. Finally, the fact that your country, Romania, has always acted as a real friend of Africa gives us reason to hope that these deliberations of the Council will continue in the best possible atmosphere. The African Group wishes again to assure you of its brotherly confidence in you.

32. A new aspect of the climate of violence characteristic of political relations in southern Africa is today before the Security Council, which has this year already discussed complaints against the South African racist régime by Angola and Zambia, quite apart from the illegal occupation of Namibia, the related problem of Zimbabwe and in particular the bloody events which have surrounded the reawakening of a revolutionary spirit among the people of Azania.

33. The closure on 26 October last of the frontier between South Africa and southern Lesotho, which adjoins the Transkei, undoubtedly constitutes a new blow typical of the predilection of South Africa for the violent methods to which it always resorts, whether it is attempting to maintain inside the country a fundamentally unjust order or to impose its will on the outer world which has hitherto been powerless to react effectively to its numerous provocations.

34. The facts of which the Government of Lesotho is complaining fall into the same category as acts of blackmail and open aggression directed against neighbouring independent States in order to force them to renounce their support for the liberation movements and thus to abandon their opposition to colonial domination and *apartheid*. In its resolution 31/6 A, adopted on the very day of the illegal proclamation of the alleged independence of Transkei, the General Assembly condemned that illegal act, just as the Assembly condemned *apartheid*, of which it represents the most virulent form. The United Nations therefore has refused to sanction that entity and has recommended that its Members should not recognize it.

35. Because we stood behind that unanimous decision, which accorded with decisions taken by OAU and the fifth summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries, Lesotho is at present the victim of pressure tactics which are imperilling the lives of a very important segment of its population. The two districts affected by South Africa's decision contain no fewer than 238,000 inhabitants who have been cut off from their national territory because of the peculiar geographical configuration of Lesotho. They have also been cut off from their traditional sources of food and medical supplies. Representing one fifth of the population, today they find it impossible to continue their traditional economic activities because both imports and exports are covered by a Customs Union Agreement between the two countries, as are their population movements, which are covered by a Labour Agreement suspended since the unilateral closure of the frontiers.

36. In this context, the problem confronting us is very clear. South Africa is still a party to the agreements I have mentioned; therefore it must fulfil all the obligations incumbent upon it under their present provisions, since their texts cannot be modified without the prior agreement of Lesotho.

37. In view of the flimsy and unacceptable excuses it has adduced to shirk its obligations, South Africa must be internationally forced to meet its obligations, since contracts are a law between the parties concerned. If it is anxious to re-establish at least a modicum of its already highly attenuated credibility, it must pursue its interests by scrupulously carrying out its conventional obligations instead of trying to create artificial and contrived difficulties for the sovereign Government of Lesotho in order to lead it to adopt an attitude contrary to its options.

38. The reaction of the General Assembly has proved that there is a certain virtue in the cynical behaviour of the racist régime of South Africa, whose extremism has called forth only condemnation, opposition and rejection.

39. It is not by depriving a Government whose earnings are already limited or by forcing it to divert

its budgetary capacities to non-programmed operations that the South Africans can hope to arouse sympathy in the international community for the cause of the racist minority. Nor can they make new friends by disrupting the economic life or social services of a neighbouring country. There is no doubt that the leaders of Pretoria have committed a very grave error of judgement by calculating that, as a landlocked country completely surrounded by South African territory, Lesotho would be more malleable than any other country and more likely to be induced to open a breach in the international quarantine that has been decreed against the Transkei.

40. There can be no doubt that by forcing Lesotho to pay a very high price for its geographical position, which is not a particularly enviable one, South Africa has chosen the worst possible method to advance an illegitimate cause that has already been condemned by the United Nations. Racial segregation and the policy of bantustanization have not become more acceptable to the inhabitants of Lesotho. For them, as for us, those policies can only appear more reprehensible and more threatening—to such an extent that the alleged independence of Transkei and its present ramifications give a new dimension to the whole question of *apartheid*.

41. Relying on tribal leaders and venal politicians, the leaders of Pretoria have in effect proposed a different form of alienation and have provoked division both inside the bantustans and elsewhere by favouring the appearance of a new political class whose interests would depend upon the maintenance of *apartheid* and the evolution of the homeland into sham independence.

42. The dangers involved in such an evolution of events are not limited to the bargain by which the tribes concerned, while remaining subject to the repressive laws of *apartheid*, would cease to belong to South Africa, thus giving up their equitable share of lands and mineral resources of the country. The designs of the racist régime go further than that and envisage that Africans can defend *apartheid* against other Africans in confrontations of the kind that have previously been considered by the Security Council. These dangers, which perhaps are not the only ones which might flow directly from bantustanization, appear to us to be too serious for us not to voice our disquiet concerning them and for us not to express our sympathies with the present concerns of the Government of Lesotho.

43. Therefore, the decisions which the Council should take at the outcome of the present debate should, as we see it, be along the three following main lines.

44. First, they should contribute to strengthening the position of those who form the overwhelming majority in southern Africa, who do not intend in any way to give up their rights and their dignity,

even less to acquiesce in manoeuvres intended to destroy their national unity and to jeopardize the territorial integrity of their countries. The latter are those who are the genuine depositaries of national legitimacy, and our political commitment to them should not vary according to the whim of circumstances. As a corollary, we must constantly mark our opposition to the Transkei, which would have chosen a better way of making known its existence by refusing to play a trump card of the South African régime, that of destroying the solidarity and unity of Africans against racism, colonialism and imperialism in southern Africa.

45. Secondly, once the legal and political responsibilities of South Africa have been determined, undoubtedly once again it will have to be condemned, but in the context of the situation existing in the Council, we wonder whether it would not perhaps be redundant to repeat once again the various appeals which have been made by the General Assembly in favour of sanctions against that country, whether through economic blockade, an obligatory arms embargo or the ending of military co-operation and relations between banks and transnational corporations, on the one hand, and the racist régime, on the other.

46. The preoccupation that overrides all other considerations, in our minds, is that justice should be done to the people of Lesotho by re-establishing peace and security, which under the Charter is the responsibility of the Council to provide by taking all measures it deems fit.

47. In this context—and this is the point of my third and last remark—the highest priority should be given to ensuring that Lesotho's right of transit be respected in all circumstances by South Africa. South Africa must be forced to respect its contractual obligations and to fulfil all the norms of international relations relating to the preservation of international peace and security; but, above all, the international community must help Lesotho to improve its internal means of communication so that a permanent link can be created between the various parts of the territory, thus reducing its vulnerability to such acts of blackmail as are now being considered by the Council. This is a duty which is incumbent upon us all if we want Lesotho to be able to continue to play its part in the policy of opposition to *apartheid*, which is the very heart of the matter. The Charter contains provisions concerning the granting of assistance to those countries that find themselves in economic difficulties as a result of measures decreed by the Organization. The particular case we are considering now is fully in accordance with the situations covered in Article 50, and it would be only fair to give a favourable response to the requests which have been made by the delegation of Lesotho, through the Foreign Minister of that country.

48. Mr. KIKHIA (Libyan Arab Republic): It gives my delegation great pleasure to welcome to the Council and indeed to the United Nations their new representative of France, Mr. Leprette. In view of his great experience both here at the United Nations and elsewhere, we are sure that he will make a valuable contribution to our work in meeting our high responsibilities. We wish Mr. Leprette all success and contentment.

49. On the other hand, we regret the departure of our esteemed colleague, Mr. Rydbeck of Sweden. As I think all will agree, Mr. Rydbeck never failed to impart a sense of dignity and high purpose to all our deliberations and he has proved to be a wise and skilful diplomat. His own personal contributions to the work of the Organization and to that of the Council run parallel to the contributions of his country to the common ideals we hold. He will be missed here at the United Nations, and we wish him all success in his new post.

50. Also, with the departure of Mr. Malik of the Soviet Union we shall lose a strong and familiar voice in the Security Council and the General Assembly dedicated to the defence of oppressed peoples under the colonial yoke, as well as to the defence of the cause of peace and progress in the world. I direct to him, through the Soviet delegation, our sincere wishes and our congratulations on his new high position. While we shall miss the presence and the valuable contribution of Mr. Malik, we know that in his new position he will continue to work for the cause of the high ideals that motivate the Organization, and we wish him success in all his endeavours. It is really a happy coincidence that, at the very time when Mr. Malik is assuming his new duties as Vice-Minister in charge of African affairs, a very important and significant development should have been achieved in the relations between my country, the Libyan Arab Republic, and our great friend and ally, the Soviet Union, marked by the official visit of Colonel Al-Qadhafi, President of the Revolutionary Command Council of the Libyan Arab Republic, to Moscow. It is a pleasure for us Africans to see African affairs in Moscow placed in the able, expert and dedicated hands of a great son of the Soviet Union.

51. The departure of another distinguished colleague, Mr. Huang Hua of China, is deeply felt by my delegation. We representatives of the third world will lose another powerful and sincere friend and ally, but we are confident that Mr. Huang Hua in his new post as Minister for Foreign Affairs of China will continue his sincere efforts in the service of peace, progress and liberation in the world. Through the Chinese delegation, I should like to convey to him our sincere sentiments and congratulations.

52. It is my pleasure and privilege also to congratulate our Secretary-General, Mr. Waldheim, upon his re-election to his lofty position. In this context, it

is appropriate to quote from a telegram sent by Mr. Treiki, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the Libyan Arab Republic, to the Secretary-General. Mr. Treiki said:

"I take pleasure in extending to you my most sincere congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of your re-election to the position of Secretary-General of the United Nations. We are certain that, as a result of this expression of confidence in you, you will even further increase the efforts and contributions that you have made during your tenure of this position in the past. The Libyan Arab Republic assures you that it will support you in all your efforts in the cause of maintaining the peace, security and stability of the world and in the ensuring of freedom and independence for those peoples who are still struggling under the yoke of colonialism and for those nations whose rights have been suppressed by the racist establishment. We wish you all contentment and success. Peace be with you."

53. Once again this year, the Security Council is meeting to discuss a serious matter in southern Africa caused by an irresponsible action committed by the racist minority régime of South Africa against the Kingdom of Lesotho. When the racist régime in Pretoria closed its border with Lesotho on 26 October of this year, South Africa committed a flagrant violation of international law. The closing of the border is already creating extreme hardship for over 200,000 Lesotho citizens living in the districts of the aforementioned area, as well as hardship for the Government, which is losing a sizable portion of its customs revenue.

54. The purpose of the racist régime in this particular situation is quite clear: it is a form of political blackmail aimed at "arm-twisting" Lesotho into according recognition of the bantustan Transkei, which is an appendage and puppet of the *apartheid* régime of South Africa. This action not only poses a serious economic problem for the people and Government of Lesotho but also constitutes a threat to peace and security in that area of the world.

55. During the month of November 1976, the African Group authorized me, as Chairman of that Group, to alert both the President of the Security Council and the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the explosive situation in this area and to urge the action required of the international community to counter this flagrant attempt by the racist régime of South Africa to sway Lesotho from its stand against the *apartheid* policy of the Pretoria régime.

56. I sent a letter concerning this matter to the President of the Security Council, Mr. Illueca, [S/12227] and a similar letter to the Secretary-General. In those two letters the African Group expressed its great concern at the serious adverse economic effects

of that action taken by the racist régime of South Africa against Lesotho. Also, the African Group maintained that the international community must assume its responsibility to give all the support required by Lesotho to ensure its existence and the welfare of its people, and I have the honour today to join my colleague, the representative of Madagascar, in reiterating the position of the Group of African States.

57. The policy of bantustanization, pursued by the Pretoria régime in order to deprive and oppress the indigenous inhabitants of South Africa, is the cornerstone of the policy of *apartheid*, which has been condemned by the United Nations and by world opinion. The so-called independent Transkei has been rejected by the United Nations, OAU and the non-aligned movement. In its recent resolution 31/6 A of 26 October 1976, the General Assembly strongly condemned the establishment of bantustans as designed to consolidate the inhuman policies of *apartheid* and to destroy the territorial integrity of the country. In the same resolution, the Assembly rejected the declaration of "independence" of the Transkei and declared it invalid. The Assembly called upon all Governments to deny any form of recognition to the so-called independent Transkei.

58. Also, the Council of Ministers of OAU, in its resolution CM/Res.493 (XXVII) at its twenty-seventh regular session held at Port Louis from 24 June to 3 July 1976, invited all States, and in particular Member States of OAU in their totality, not to accord recognition to any bantustan, in particular the Transkei. The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU, held at Port Louis from 2 to 6 July, endorsed that resolution.

59. In addition, the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Colombo from 16 to 19 August 1976, in its resolution NAC/CONF.5/S/Res.4, urged all States not to accord recognition to the so-called independent Transkei.²

60. The question under discussion is very clear. The racist régime of South Africa wants to pressure the Government of Lesotho into recognizing the so-called independent Transkei and then the policy of bantustanization and *apartheid*.

61. The Government of Lesotho should not be left to stand alone, to be cowed by the Pretoria régime because of Lesotho's abhorrence of the policy of *apartheid* in South Africa and its full support of the resolutions of OAU and the non-aligned movement and of all United Nations resolutions, in particular General Assembly resolution 31/6 A of 26 October 1976, in which the General Assembly rejected the declaration of "independence" of the Transkei.

62. The Security Council should take appropriate steps, first, to implement effective measures against the

racist régime of South Africa in order to end its defiance of United Nations resolutions and of world opinion; secondly, to condemn the plans of South Africa to create so-called independent bantustans; and, thirdly, to support the Government of Lesotho in its plans for an emergency programme to offset the effects of the closing of the border.

63. Finally, I should like to stress that all African States, including my own, the Libyan Arab Republic, fully support the Government and people of Lesotho and will spare no effort to ensure our solidarity with them.

64. Mr. BOYA (Benin) (*interpretation from French*): The question which is now before the Security Council, namely, the grave and explosive situation created in Lesotho by the closing by South Africa of Lesotho's eastern border with the so-called independent Transkei, is altogether typical of the inhuman and odious policy practised by the racists and colonialists of South Africa.

65. It is true that Lesotho, a land-locked country whose obstinate and brave opposition to the policy of *apartheid* and to its by-product, the cynical policy of the bantustans, is a known fact and openly proclaimed, is today the victim of odious blackmail on the part of the racists and colonialists of South Africa. One merely has to glance at a map of that region of Africa to be convinced of this fact. It is also true that Lesotho, which refuses to yield to this barely concealed blackmail by recognizing Transkei, rigorously applies—as any self-respecting Member of the Organization is duty bound to do—the relevant resolutions of the United Nations on the non-recognition of Transkei and the unanimous condemnation of the policy of bantustans practised by the white colonialists and racists of South Africa.

66. It is only logical, therefore, that the international community, through this organ of the United Nations, should manifest its sympathy and active solidarity with the people of Lesotho, which is an official victim of the application of a collective measure decided on by the Members of the Organization.

67. Accordingly, my delegation hopes that the Council will adopt the necessary measures to alleviate, and even eliminate, the harmful consequences of the action taken against Lesotho by the racist colonialists of Pretoria. But my delegation does not think that we are meeting here to consider only this aspect of the problem, or that this important debate will be concluded quite simply on a note of charity.

68. The people of Lesotho, whose dignity, pride and courage in the face of the provocations by the Pretoria racists is known to all, is not coming here to request generous aid from the very ones who are responsible for the exploitation of the wealth of the third world, and who, by their overt friendship and collaboration

with the racist colonialists of Pretoria, are accomplices in the oppression imposed on the people of South Africa, and in the acts of aggression committed against neighbouring countries. This means that, clearly, the political aspect of the question should not escape us.

69. Indeed, why has South Africa decided to close the three border posts adjacent to Lesotho in the present circumstances? The objective of the racist colonialists of South Africa is to compel Lesotho to recognize the policy of bantustanization and *apartheid*. If Lesotho, a country disinherited by geography, were to yield to this well-calculated blackmail, the racist colonialists of South Africa would be encouraged in their ignominious policy of oppression and aggression. Hence, it is a challenge that South Africa has hurled at the international community and at the United Nations, which, to a Member, unanimously rejects *apartheid* and its by-product, the bantustans, which will make the black population actual foreigners in the land of their ancestors.

70. The matter we are discussing has broader dimensions. Actually, again at issue in the Council are the implications of the policy of *apartheid*, the dangers it poses to the peace and security of independent African States, and its role in imperialist strategy. My delegation believes that the Council should consider this question in all its aspects and that the international community should once again become aware of the situation and of its possible consequences.

71. The bantustan policy is part of the very logic of the odious *apartheid* system, the most cynical, most inhuman and most abject form of colonialist practice. Bantustanization, which has been universally condemned, is a requirement for the survival of the colonialist *apartheid* régime in South Africa. The Transkei is the first of 10 bantustans, the establishment of which on the borders of independent African States is designed primarily to strengthen the white racist minority's grip and oppression and serve as a means of blackmail to force the hand of the independent States of Africa so that they will co-operate.

72. The closure of the borders of Transkei with Lesotho, decided by the racist colonialists of Pretoria, is part of the same series of repeated acts of provocation and aggression which daily victimize the independent African countries of southern Africa. South Africa, the bridgehead of imperialist aggression in Africa, has set up a diabolical plan in an effort to eliminate the nationalist and popular régimes of southern Africa.

73. My delegation once again denounces the imminent accomplices of Western imperialism which daily arm the Pretoria racists. My delegation wishes to pay tribute to all the victims of the policy of *apartheid*, in particular to Lesotho, whose authorities have so far displayed a consistent attitude.

74. The Pretoria racists, treacherous as they are, stop at nothing in order to have their odious, inhuman policy prevail. The Council must once again condemn this policy, which is a violation of inalienable, fundamental human rights, and take the necessary effective measures to overcome the disastrous consequences of the closure of the border. Immediate action by the Organization and its entire system, as well as by All Member States, is indispensable to assist Lesotho.

75. My delegation pays a well-deserved tribute to the people of Lesotho for its courage, and appeals to it not to yield to the blackmail. Since the action taken by South Africa is part of a thinly disguised policy of blackmail to force that country to co-operate, the Council must once again condemn *apartheid* and the policy of bantustanization designed to strengthen it.

76. Mr. LAI Ya-li (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Chinese delegation has listened attentively to the statements made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lesotho and the representatives of other African countries. In their statements, they indignantly exposed and condemned the South African racist authorities for their crimes of flagrantly closing their border adjacent to the southern part of Lesotho and exerting gross pressure on the Kingdom of Lesotho after the concoction of the sham independence of Transkei. The Chinese delegation feels greatly indignant at the series of criminal activities committed by the South African authorities, expresses its admiration for the just position taken by the Government and people of Lesotho in firmly opposing racism and colonialism in defiance of brute force, and gives resolute support to the just proposals and demands put forward by Lesotho and other African countries.

77. The present situation in Africa is excellent. The great African people are launching attacks on evil colonialism and racism. The armed struggle of the peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia is developing steadily in depth and winning continual new victories. Fighting against racial discrimination and *apartheid*, the Azanian people are advancing wave upon wave in their mass movement against violent repression, pounding vehemently at the reactionary Vorster régime. Panic-stricken, the handful of racists in southern Africa are besieged, ring upon ring, by the African people.

78. The Chinese people's great leader, Chairman Mao Tsetung, pointed out: "Make trouble, fail, make trouble again, fail again... till their doom; that is the logic of the imperialists and all reactionaries the world over in dealing with the people's cause, and they will never go against this logic". The handful of racists, Vorster and others, are precisely acting according to this logic. While ceaselessly intensifying their violent repression of the liberation struggle of the people in southern Africa, they are stepping up their schemes of political deception in order to save

themselves from their imminent doom. Recently, they staged a farce of the sham independence of Transkei following the defeat in their series of manoeuvres, such as the so-called "dialogue", "détente" and "racial reconciliation". To put it bluntly, this is to stick the label of "independence" on the notorious "bantustan" and to put the shackles of *apartheid* perpetually on the Azanian people in a "legal form" so as to lure the Azanian people into giving up their struggle, undermine the unity of the African countries and thus attain the criminal aim of sustaining the racist rule.

79. This fraud was so clumsy that, immediately upon its production, it was thoroughly exploded and unanimously condemned by the African people and the people all over the world. On 26 October last, the day when the sham "independence" of Transkei was proclaimed, the General Assembly, meeting in plenary session, adopted resolution 31/6 A by an overwhelming majority of 134 votes, strongly condemning the South African authorities for their policy of bantustanization, categorically rejecting the sham "independence" of Transkei and declaring it invalid and calling upon all Governments to deny any form of recognition to Transkei and to refrain from having any dealings with it.

80. In these circumstances, far from showing any repentance after being sternly condemned by the overwhelming majority of countries in the world, the South African authorities have gone further on their evil course, openly declaring the closure of the border between South Africa and the southern part of Lesotho and despicably exerting pressure on the Kingdom of Lesotho in an attempt to force Lesotho and other African countries to submit to the schemes of the South African authorities and recognize the sham "independence" of Transkei. This is, of course, a sheer pipe-dream. Evidently, such an odious trick on the part of the South African authorities constitutes a serious provocation not only to the people of Lesotho but also to the entire African people and all justice-upholding countries and peoples throughout the world. This can only arouse the people of Lesotho and the rest of Africa to even stronger resistance and struggles.

81. Furthermore, it must be pointed out that at present the two super-Powers are locked in ever more intense rivalry in southern Africa. One super-Power is doing its utmost to maintain its vested interests in southern Africa. Casting a covetous eye on this region, the other super-Power, under the banner of "supporting the national liberation movement", is trying by hook or by crook to meddle in the liberation struggle of this region and undermine the militant unity among the liberation organizations and among the African countries in an attempt to take the place of the old colonialism. However, neither the evil doings on the part of the racists and colonialists nor the conspiratorial schemes on the part of imperialism and hegemonism can check the forward stride of the

African people and the complete victory of their struggle for national liberation.

82. The Chinese Government and people strongly condemn the South African authorities for engineering the scheme of the sham "independence" of Transkei and for their criminal activities of closing their border with Lesotho and exerting gross pressure on Lesotho and the rest of Africa; and we firmly support the people of Lesotho and the rest of southern Africa in their just struggle against colonialism and racism. The Chinese delegation holds that the Security Council should endorse General Assembly resolution 31/6 A and, in the spirit of that resolution, sternly condemn the South African authorities for their scheme of concocting the sham "independence" of Transkei and their criminal activities against Lesotho and other countries; enjoin the South African authorities to put an immediate end to the aforementioned schemes and

criminal activities and call upon all Governments and peoples to give firm support to the people of Lesotho and other parts of southern Africa in their just struggle against colonialism and racism until they win complete victory.

83. In conclusion, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, I should like to thank Mr. Kikhia of the Libyan Arab Republic for his sincere and friendly sentiments towards Mr. Huang Hua; I shall certainly convey them to Mr. Huang Hua.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.

Notes

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Plenary Meetings, 29th meeting.*

² A/31/197, annex IV, Resolutions on political questions.