

**SADC**

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**Southern African  
Liberation Struggles**

**Contemporaneous Documents**

**1960–1994**

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**edited by**

**Arnold J. Temu and Joel das N. Tembe**

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**Countries and Regions Outside  
SADC & International  
Organisations**



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# 9.1

## **Nordic Support to The Liberation Struggle in Southern Africa - Between Global Solidarity and National Self-Interest**

**By Håkan Thörn**

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## Introduction: A Moral High Ground?

In historical accounts of the international support to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, it has often been argued that the Nordic countries played a special role.<sup>1</sup> This special role mainly refers to Nordic governments' financial support to, and top-level political recognition of (and consultations with), the liberation movements. The Nordic countries' aid to the liberation movements in Southern Africa was part of the programs of development assistance (which began in the early 1960s) to countries in what was then termed 'The Third World'. As Southern Africa received a substantial part of this aid, the transfer of resources to the liberation struggle was significant. The development assistance programs of the Nordic countries had two parts; bilateral support to states, NGOs, and various types of programs; and multilateral support to aid agencies of interstate organisations such as UN and the EEC. In the case of the support to the liberation struggle, Sweden, Norway and Finland granted direct financial support to liberation movements in Southern Africa: PAIGC of Guinea- Bissau, FRELIMO of Mozambique, ZANU and ZAPU of Zimbabwe, SWAPO of Namibia and MPLA of Angola.<sup>2</sup> The most important recipient of direct support was the ANC, who from the mid 1970s received aid amounting to a total of 180 million US dollars from Sweden, 85 MUS from Norway and 15 MUSD from Finland. In addition to this, official support was also provided by the governments of Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden to organisations within the broader solidarity movement both outside of, and within, Southern Africa, and to various programs within the UN, and the Commonwealth.<sup>3</sup> In addition to this, Denmark was the first Western country to impose full sanctions on South Africa in 1986, and it was soon followed by Sweden, Norway, Finland and Iceland (Sellström 1999, 1999 ed; 2002; Eriksen ed. 2000; Morgenstjerne 2004; Soiri & Peltola 1999; Einarsdottir 2009).

In the most celebratory accounts, Nordic governments appear to have occupied a 'moral high ground' in the contexts of the Cold war and the intensified global economic competition; while Norway and Denmark as NATO-members transcended their geo-political self-interests, Sweden put 'morality ahead of profit' (Bangura 2004). This narrative has indeed been supported in speeches by prominent leaders of

(1) The term 'Scandinavia' is sometimes used synonymously with the Nordic countries. In a Nordic context however, Scandinavia refers only to Denmark, Norway and Sweden. In the 1840s, a regional movement for the unification of these three countries, called 'Scandinavism', emerged. It did however die out after Sweden refused to assist Denmark in the Second Schleswig war in 1864.

(2) Norway gave official assistance to all of the mentioned liberation movements, Sweden gave official assistance to all except PAC, Finland gave direct assistance to the ANC and to SWAPO.

(3) For example, the figures for the support from Nordic governments to the anti-apartheid solidarity movements were: Sweden, 1,5 billion (SEK), Norway 845 million NOK, Denmark 680 million DKK and Finland 93 million FIM. For a complete account of the bilateral and multilateral support to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, see (Sellström 2008 (Sweden), Eriksen ed. 2000 (Norway); Morgenstjerne 2004 (Denmark); Soiri & Peltola 1999 (Finland)).

(4) The first country in the world that imposed sanctions was India in 1946 (Reddy 1986). Considering the firm resistance to demands for British sanctions from the 1960s and on, it is an historical irony that it was actually the British Administration that took the decision on India's sanctions, as it happened before the country's independence. However, it did so under strong public pressure from the Indian people (Reddy 1986).

the liberation movements such as Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela (Tambo 1988; Bangura 2004), but it nevertheless needs to be modified. The Nordic governments did not impress on Nordic anti-apartheid movements, who constantly argued that the government policies were double-faced, referring to the contradictions between the support to the liberation movements and the continued trade with countries in Southern Africa (primarily South Africa). For example, the Africa Groups in Sweden drew attention to the fact that while Sweden was one of the most outspoken critics of the apartheid regime in the international community, its trade with South Africa at the same time continued to grow. Support to the liberation movements would only go so far as the national economic interest allowed, they argued.<sup>5</sup> And when the Nordic governments imposed sanctions, the movements pointed to loopholes that allowed continued business with South Africa.<sup>6</sup>

Further, in contemporary research on Nordic support to the liberation movements, it has been argued that this support itself involved national self-interest. In the case of Sweden, Tor Sellström (1999) has argued that Sweden's aid to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa could partly be seen as a strategy of promoting the growth of an international community of alliance-free states, whose 'parallelity of interests' eventually would be of benefit for Sweden. In a Government Bill from 1962, written by a working group led by Olof Palme, who later played a major role in Sweden's support to the liberation movements, it was argued that a mutual interest could develop between Sweden and peoples in Asia and Africa who have recently won, or shortly will gain, full independence as these countries had a policy of neutrality in common

(Sellström 1999:67).<sup>7</sup> Vladimir Shubin has argued that this actually *did* benefit the economic interests of Sweden as the Swedish law banning new investments in South Africa, which was passed in 1979, was met with great approval in many African countries, and contributed strongly in 'boosting Sweden's prestige and in the long run creating favourable conditions for ensuring that country's economic interests' (Bushin 1989:111).<sup>8</sup>

Further, if we consider symbolic acts and identity construction as important as self-interest in national political agendas, it could be argued that the support to the liberation movement was an issue of symbolic significance that provided the small states in Northern Europe with an opportunity to portray themselves as something else than merely puppets in the hand of superpowers. For Sweden the development

<sup>5</sup> For an argument made in the 1970s that Swedish policy toward countries in the Global South did not differ qualitatively from other Western states, see for example Larsson and Hermele (1977). See also Bushin (1989).

<sup>6</sup> For example, the law that banned new investment allowed what the Liberal Minister of Trade Hadar Cars in 1979 called 'a certain flexibility', which resulted in that during the first two years of the new law no less than six of the seven applications for investment in South Africa were approved (Bushin 1989:110). The loopholes in the Nordic countries sanctions was also for example pointed out by the Principal Secretary of the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid, Enuga S. Reddy (1986).

<sup>7</sup> Quotes from Sellström 1999, p. 67. Following the theory on national foreign policy of Marie Demker (1996), Sellström argues that Sweden's support to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa was based on the objectives of national security, ideological affinity, economic opportunity and public legitimacy (p. 513f).

<sup>8</sup> Vladimir Bushin is a synonym for Vladimir Shubin (see also Shubin 1999).

of an active foreign policy in support of human rights and anti-colonial liberation did undoubtedly restore its tarnished reputation as a neutral country in the international community after the Second World War.

Beyond the positions of realism and idealism, this chapter intends to analyse and explain the Nordic support to the liberation struggle as a result of the interaction between the Nordic governments and civil societies, occurring under a significant influence of processes of political globalization - from above and from below - that emerged during the post-war era. The above mentioned that contradictions in the policies of the Nordic governments only become intelligible if we understand them as attempts to balance national economic interest, international political relations and pressure from civil society. *My main argument is that the most important factor behind the support from Nordic governments to the liberation struggle was the direct and indirect influence from social movements in national and global civil society.* All of the Nordic countries had significant solidarity movements from the early 1960s

and on. They influenced policies either through interaction in committees set up by the governments, or by pressure through collective action, including numerous campaigns, demonstrations and direct actions. Such direct pressure from civil society was however not the only factor behind the Nordic support. Previous research on the Nordic support has showed that the political leaders who played a key role in the decisions behind the Nordic support often had a personal commitment to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa (Sellström 2008; Thörn 2006). As these commitments in most cases had emerged during previous participation in international youth and student movements with a strong international orientation, through which they had met, and sometimes even made friends with, young African leaders; it is fair to say that their actions later in life, as government members or parliamentarians, was a result of an *indirect* influence from civil society.<sup>9</sup>

The existence of significant solidarity movements was not exceptional for the Nordic countries. It was the close relation between state and civil society that was exceptional and which provided an important condition for the Nordic government's support to the liberation struggle. This closeness between state and civil society, which is a fundament of what is often referred to as 'the Scandinavian model' is related to the historical role of the popular movements in shaping modern industrial society in the Nordic countries.

Previously established historical narratives most often refer precisely to this model when explaining the Nordic support. For example, in the account for the Norwegian

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<sup>9</sup> For example, both Olof Palme, leader of Social Democratic Party (SAP) and Prime Minister of Sweden, and his successor Ingvar Carlsson, served on the executive committee of the youth wing of the SAP (SSU), when the first organisational contact between Swedish Social Democracy and an African movement organisation (TANU Youth League in Tanzania) took place (Schori 1994). And according to Schori, when Palme first met Oliver Tambo, who gave his first public speech in Sweden in Göteborg at a May Day Rally in 1960, it was the beginning of a life-long friendship. Further, Olof Palme has stated that his first political act occurred when he in 1949 donated blood in order to help raise money for the benefit of black students that had been excluded from the white universities in South Africa. One of the recipients of this support was actually Eduardo Mondlane, of Frelimo (ibid).

support Tore Linné Eriksen (2000b:386) quotes Sergio Vieira of FRELIMO as follows: “The absence of a colonial tradition, the values and culture of social democracy, the ethics of the Lutheran and Protestant Church were factors influencing sympathy for our cause.” Certainly there is truth in this statement. Nevertheless, this view however also need to be modified in three respects. *First*, although it is beyond doubt that social democracy played an important role for the support to the liberation struggle in all of the Nordic countries; several important decisions were taken and implemented by non-socialist governments. I will argue that what those parties that were in favour of government support to the liberation struggle most often had in common, was an important support base in the popular movements in civil society, where solidarity with southern Africa early became an important issue. *Second*, it is true that the Nordic countries’ part of colonialism in terms of political control of colonial territories were marginal. However, the Nordic countries nevertheless played a part in colonialism as they were economically and culturally integrated with Europe during the colonial era. *Third*, considering this, it is also fair to say that the role played by the churches in the Nordic support to the liberation struggle was ambiguous. On the one hand, the presence of the Nordic churches in Southern Africa was part of cultural colonialism. On the other hand, many key activists and prominent figures in the solidarity movement were based in the churches, including Scandinavians such as the Swede Gunnar Helander and the Finn Mikko Juva.

While it is accurate to give certain weight to the role of the specific Nordic political model when explaining the uniqueness of Nordic official support to the liberation struggle, *I will also emphasise that this support emerged from the interaction between these specificities and global processes.* The latter specifically refers to the emergence of global civil society (political globalization from below) and the increasing number, and importance, of interstate organisations and international communities (political globalization from above). Further, these processes must be understood as structured by two over-arching global structural conditions: the post-colonial condition and the Cold war.

This chapter will emphasise the *regional level* of Nordic support, which means that it will mainly focus on joint actions as well as similarities between Nordic government’s and solidarity movement’s support to the liberation struggle. I will account for some significant differences between individual Scandinavian countries, but it is beyond the scope of this chapter to make a full and systematic comparison of the similarities and differences between Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.<sup>10</sup>

(10) Iceland is given significantly less attention in this chapter than the other Nordic countries. This because of two reasons: first, support from Iceland to the liberation struggle was marginal compared to the other Nordic countries; second, little research has been done on the actual support from Iceland. According to a paper presented by Einarsdóttir (2009), there were solidarity activities in unions and solidarity organisations from the 1960s and on, but most significant from the mid 1980s. In 1985, Neo Numzana of the ANC was invited to Iceland by anti-apartheid activists, and under the influence of this visit the Icelandic dockworkers union decided to stop unloading South African goods. Although this pressure according to Einarsdóttir contributed to the Icelandic Parliament’s decision to adopt an embargo on South African goods in May 1988, the most important solidarity

The questions that will be addressed are: What were the major characteristics of the support from the governments and from civil societies of the Nordic countries to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa? How can this support be explained? What were the main characteristics of the interaction between states and national civil societies in this process and how did it affect the support? What were the main characteristics of the states' and the solidarity movements' interaction with the liberation movements, with global civil society and with interstate organisations such as the UN?

In relation to the valuable and in many respects detailed historical accounts that have been presented in the series of volumes on the Nordic support from the Nordic Africa Institute (Sellström 1999, 1999 ed; 2002; Eriksen ed. 2000; Morgenstjerne 2004; Soiri & Peltola 1999), my major contribution will perhaps be to try to bring

some further analytical clarity to the How and Why of Nordic support, departing from the analytical framework and empirical research presented in my book *Anti-Apartheid and the Emergence of a Global Civil Society*. In the first section, I present the theoretical underpinnings of the analysis; in the second section, the Nordic countries are put into historical, political, economic and cultural context; the third section will

look at the Nordic support in the context of political globalization from below and from above.

## Theorising Nordic Support

With a few exceptions (c.f. Crawford & Klotz 1999; Shepherd 1977), most research on the liberation and solidarity movements has focused on its *national* aspects, looking for example at the *national* liberation movements of southern African countries or the *national* solidarity movements in Britain, Australia, USA or the Nordic countries (c.f. Fieldhouse 2005; Massie 1997; Jennett 1989; Voorhes 1999; Seekings 2000; Sellström

1999, 1999 ed; 2002; Eriksen ed. 2000; Morgenstjerne 2004; Soiri & Peltola 1999). As national movements played a significant role, and national contexts were crucial for the dynamic of the struggle, this research has been important. Considering that there were anti-apartheid activities in more than 100 countries, there is indeed even more research to do about national movements and contexts. In this sense, the theory of political opportunity structures (McAdam 1996), which focus on the dynamic between social movements and the state, has a certain relevance when analysing the movements that acted in support of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. However, an analysis of the liberation struggle that limits itself only to different national spaces leaves out an extremely crucial aspect of the movement's activities – and indeed an important source of its political influence. While studies of national movements often take some of their relations with movements in other countries into account (i.e. their *international* relations), theoretically informed and systematic

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organisation SAGA (The South Africa Committee Against Apartheid) was actually formed a week after the official boycott decision.

research on one of the most crucial aspects of this movement, its construction of *transnational* networks and forms of action, and its influence on supra-national institutions and transnational corporations, is largely lacking. The little research that has been done using a transnationalist framework to analyse solidarity with the liberation struggle in *the region of Southern Africa* has, at least to my knowledge, mainly been concerned with solidarity with the struggle against apartheid South Africa (including my own). Considering this, the history of the transnational dimensions of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa has only begun to be written. This chapter will focus on this aspect, but to avoid any misunderstandings – I regard a transnationalist approach as one of several possibilities to take research on networks of southern African liberation movements and solidarity movements further.

It may of course be argued that the transnational relations that emerged in the regions of Southern Africa and Scandinavia during the post-war era is an example of an increasing (macro-)regionalisation rather than globalization. However, the liberation struggle in Southern Africa and the solidarity networks that supported it, is a clear example of the fact that macro-regionalisation and globalisation are not necessarily contradictory processes, but may actually support, and interact with, each other (Hettne & Söderbaum 2000).

During the last decades of the 20th century, political action became an increasingly complex and multi-dimensional activity (Della Porta & Tarrow 2005). Politics was not just something occurring in the context of national arenas and international co-operations, but also became increasingly transnational and global.<sup>11</sup> As clearly showed by the case of the interaction between on the one hand Nordic governments and solidarity movements, and on the other hand the Southern African liberation movements, the liberation struggles simultaneously operated on national, international, transnational and global levels. These different levels constantly interacted with each other. For example, the globalization of the liberation struggle was initiated by Southern African liberation movements, and the transnational solidarity movements were always dependent on, and influenced by, the actions of Southern African organizations and networks – working inside Southern Africa or in exile. On the

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(11) For the sake of clarity, I make a distinction between *international processes*, denoting interaction across borders including *exclusively* national organizations or institutions (such as states or national labour unions), *transnational processes*, referring to any interaction across national borders *not* exclusively based on national organisations or institutions, and finally *global processes*, which are different from international and transnational processes in the sense that they *cannot be reduced to* interaction that links national spaces. The ‘global’ refers to a different form of territoriality than the national. Drawing on the perspectives on global processes of Held et. al (1999), Sassen (2006), Scholte (2005) and others, I argue that the concept of globalization implies a social space spanning over all continents; and that it cannot be reduced to a set of relations between a number of nation states (or national organisations). National territories, institutions and organisations may be part of this space, and indeed provide links between the global and the national, but they perform different functions in the global context. With regard to the debate on whether globalisation should be perceived as ‘a-territorial’ or territorial in the sense of ‘glocal’, globalization is territorial in the sense that its institutions and processes are anchored in territories; and it is a-territorial in the sense that it is *not ultimately defined* by any territorial borders. Historically, as well as in the present, there is a connection between the different processes in the sense that global processes may be the (intended or unintended) consequence of international and transnational processes (Thörn 2007).

other hand, Southern African movements, whether mainly working on the inside or on the outside of their home country, were always heavily influenced by transnational processes (Thörn 2006).

Transnational relations were complex and sometimes involved contradictions related to broader structural contexts. In the widest sense the appropriate structural context for the liberation struggle in Southern Africa is the process of intensified political globalization during the post-war era (Held et. al. 1999; Thörn 2002). In this chapter, I will use an analytical distinction between *globalization from above*, and *globalization from below* (Falk 1999). *Political globalization from above* refers to the increasing number and importance of inter-governmental organizations (IGO:s) and

international treaties, a process taking off during the post-war era (Held et. al. 1999: 53). It is important to emphasize that this increasingly complex international system is not just composed of formal institutional arrangements. It should be conceived as a conglomeration of overlapping *international communities*, understood as ‘sites of identity and interest’ (Klotz 1995:27). The Nordic countries constituted one of the significant international communities in the context of the international support to the liberations struggle in Southern Africa.

*Political globalization from below* refers to the emergence of a global civil society during the 20th century, a process constituted by the increasing number of NGO:s, transnational networks and social movements organising across borders (Kaldor 2002; Thörn 2006). During the post-war era, a transnational political culture emerged through the increasing internationalization of old movements, such the labour movement, as well as the emergence of liberation movements in the Global South and new social movements in the Global North, addressing global issues in new ways,

e.g. colonialism/imperialism, solidarity, ecology, peace and gender inequality. The liberation struggle in Southern Africa and the solidarity movements that supported it was part of this process and became, as a ‘movement of movements’, a space of intersection for a wide range of collective actors.<sup>12</sup>

It is important to emphasise that it is not possible to make a clear-cut distinction between the processes of political globalization from above and from below. The Nordic government’s support to the liberation struggle is an example of the fact that post-war political globalization involved alliances between states and actors in the emerging global civil society, as the Nordic governments not only funded, but also consulted, strategized and exchanged information with, the liberation movements.<sup>13</sup> Further, the acts of joint Nordic government support to the liberation

(12) In my book on the transnational anti-apartheid movement (Thörn 2006), I argued that new social movements in Western Europe partly emerged under the influence of the anti-colonial struggle. While it is reasonable to conclude that the solidarity movements in both Britain and the Nordic countries were located at the intersection between the old and the new, the British anti-apartheid movement was clearly more imprinted by the new social movement culture, something which partly can be explained by the fact that it from the beginning to the end had closer connections to the anti-colonial movements.

(13) This was not just the case with the Nordic governments, as for example the anti-apartheid movement approached, interacted, and in a few cases closely co-operated with, national governments, such as those of India,

movements that followed from the regular meetings between ministers of the Nordic countries, is an example of the fact that post-war political globalization also involved direct interaction between movements and intergovernmental organizations and communities (of which also the OAU, the Commonwealth, the UN and the EEC were particularly important).

Further, a crucial structural context was *the Cold War*. According to the Cold War logic, the liberation struggle in Southern Africa was, like any significant political field during the post-war era, national as well as transnational, divided along the conflict lines that constituted the bipolar political world order. Finally, situated in *the context of postcoloniality*, the patterns of conflicts and positions taken in the context of international communities and transnational relations were to a large extent conditioned by the political history of colonialism.

## The Nordic Countries in Context

The Nordic support to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa could not be properly understood without putting the Nordic region's, and the individual Nordic countries', international and global relations into a historical perspective, including especially colonialism, the Second World War and the establishing of a 'Scandinavian welfare model' during the post-war era.

### *The Colonial Legacy*

The Nordic countries are linked by territory, by economic and cultural history, as well as by political alliances, rivalries and wars.<sup>14</sup> The numerous wars that raged between Denmark-Norway and Sweden during early modernity, after the latter had left the union with the former two in 1523, did in 1657 reach the African coast when the Danish King Fredrik III hired a Swede to attack the Swedish slave fort in Cabo Corso (today Ghana) on the Guinea coast. The fort Carolusborg was successfully conquered in cooperation with the Netherlands (Christensen 2002).

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Nigeria and Tanzania.

(14) As early as the 10th century the people living in today's Norway, Iceland, Denmark and Sweden constituted a territory with similar culture, language and religion. In the 12th Century, today's Finland became a part of Sweden, which by this time was one of three separate kingdoms (the others were Denmark and Norway) that ruled the Nordic territory (Iceland was at this time part of Norway). As early as the 14th century, Norway, Sweden and Denmark formed an alliance (known as 'the Kalmar Union', lasting between 1397 and 1523, when Sweden broke out) under the dominance of the Danish monarch. After Sweden broke out of the alliance, numerous wars between Denmark/Norway and Sweden occurred, the borders between the countries changing constantly. The Thirty Year War (1618-1648) shifted the power balance in the Nordic context to the advantage of Sweden, which had a period as an European political power which however ended in a process of unsuccessful wars culminating in the war against Russia, in which Sweden lost Finland (which only became independent in 1917). The Danish dominated union between Denmark and Norway lasted until 1814, when Denmark was forced to cede Norway to Sweden (but kept the Norwegian provinces of Iceland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands). Norway took the opportunity to declare independence, adopting a constitution based on the North American-French model. After a brief Norwegian-Swedish war, the two countries entered a union under the leadership of the Swedish king. The union was peacefully dissolved in 1905.



This event also point to the presence of the Nordic countries in the history of the modern European colonial conquest of Africa. As already mentioned however, it has often been argued that the Nordic countries' part in colonialism was marginal. For example, *Cabo Corso*, which came into Sweden's possession after negotiations between the Swedish Africa company and King Bredewa of Futu (Wolgemuth 2002), was the country's only, and indeed very short-lived, colonial conquest in Africa. While it might thus be argued that the Nordic countries *politically* played a marginal role in the history of European colonialism, their economies were an integral part of the centre of the world system during the periods when it rested on slavery, colonialism and imperialism. For example, both Sweden and Denmark did directly take part in, and indirectly benefited from, the slave trade (Rönnbäck 2010). Through an alliance with Great Britain, Denmark managed to hold on to its territorial possessions on the African Gold Coast well into the 19th century. Together with Denmark's conquests in the West Indies (S. Thomas, St. Croix and St. Jan), the colony on the Gold Coast formed the base for the Danish trans-Atlantic slave trade, as did St. Barthélemy for Sweden, who purchased the Caribbean island from France in 1784 (it was sold back to the French in 1877). It is fair to say that the Nordic involvement in the slave trade, and the opposition to it, marked a historical beginning for the Nordic region's relation to black Africa and its liberation struggles. There was an involvement, but it was at times contradictory, or two-faced: On the one hand Denmark was the first slave trading nation to abolish slavery (through an ordinance in 1792), on the other hand it did not prevent other nations from importing slaves to the Danish Islands in the West Indies (Christensen 2002). On the one hand, the Swedes Anders Sparrman<sup>15</sup> and particularly Carl Bernard Wadström, played an important role in the late 18th century transnational abolitionist movement (Wadström moved to London and committed himself to campaigning across Europe), on the other hand Sweden did not abolish slavery until 1847.

Another important historical beginning was the early and significant Nordic settler presence in the Cape Colony. From the Dutch East India Company's establishment in 1652, a Nordic, economical as well as cultural (through the Mission beginning in the 19th century), presence played an important role in the Cape colonial settlement. According to historian Alan Winqvist (1978:194), the late twentieth century Nordic involvement with Southern Africa 'is directly linked to the long pre-1902 historical contact'. For example, it was according to Winqvist thanks to Jacob Letterstedt, son of a farmer who immigrated to Southern Africa in 1819 after incurring huge debts in connection with a failed attempt to establish a distilling business, that traded between Sweden and South Africa began in the 1850s.<sup>16</sup>

(15) Sparrman was an adept of Carl von Linné, who together with Thunberg and Stockenström belonged to a group of prominent early settlers in the Cape colony that opposed slavery, while other Nordic settlers in the region, such as the Boer folk-hero Louis Tregardt supported it and owned slaves, (Winqvist 1978).

(16) Letterstedt was indeed more successful in South African brewing business, as he founded a brewery that formed the basis of what is today South African Brewery Ltd (Winqvist 1978).

Nordic settlers started to arrive in the Cape with the first Danish trading ships and they eventually became the fifth most significant European group prior to 1900, after the British, the Dutch, German and the French. Scandinavians that immigrated to Southern Africa had either educational or skilled occupational backgrounds, something which tended to make them economically successful in a relatively short period of time after their arrival, as their skills were needed for the colonial exploitation of the region. Nordic settlers played an important role in the colonial mapping of the land for settlement purposes. Nordic settlers were also important figures in the British army's colonial wars against the indigenous peoples. In the early 19th century Nordic settlers were merchants, natural scientists, explorers and missionaries. After the discovery of diamonds in 1867 and gold 20 years later, gold and diamond engineers, railway builders and employees, and land surveyors came from the Nordic countries. A number of prominent Afrikaner families, such as Berg, Tregardt (Louis Tregardt was celebrated as the first Voortrekker) were founded by Scandinavians. The Swede Oscar Wilhelm Alric Forssman was the largest landowner in Transvaal around 1880 (Winqvist 1978).

### **The Anglo-Boer War**

Scandinavians also played a role in the Anglo-Boer war - and reversely the war did actually play a role in the domestic political debates in the Nordic countries around the turn of century. In fact, while the support to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa was the major Nordic solidarity project during the 20th century, a previous wave of Nordic international solidarity was also related to Southern Africa in connection with the Anglo-Boer war. After public solidarity meetings and mobilization, 113 men and 4 women travelled from the Nordic countries to participate in a volunteer Nordic Corps and Ambulance Unit that on the Boer side (Winqvist 1978).<sup>17</sup> The two Nordic solidarity movements, during the early and late 19th century, might seem contradictory, as one supported the Boer, and one opposed them. There is however a certain logic connecting them.

During the wave of European nationalism at the turn of the 19th century, the Nordic countries' links to Southern Africa actually became significant in the domestic political struggle to define the modern national identities of Denmark Sweden and Norway. When Liberals, Conservatives and Socialists from different perspectives constructed their different versions of the Danish, Norwegian and Swedish and national identity, the South African Boer nation was an important point of identification (Rosenblad 1992; Winqvist 1978; Hotlhoon & Linden 1988). For example on 20 January 1902,

the Norwegian newspaper *Verdens Gang* stated: 'It is so easy for us, a small nation, to imagine ourselves in the Boer's situation that we, involuntarily have feelings of compassion towards them' (quoted from Winqvist 1978:190). This identification was based on an image of the Boer as a small nation of farmers fighting a heroic struggle

<sup>(17)</sup> For a report from the participation of Swedish volunteers in the war, see for example *Göteborgs-Posten* 23 March 1900.

against a mighty empire. Thus, as later in the 20th century, the different established political parties' constructions of a national identity shared an internationalist orientation with a strong emphasis on anti-imperialism in the sense of the right of a small state to defend its autonomy against the intervention of imperial powers. The silence, with a few exceptions, in the public debate on the role of the Africans in a future South Africa, implicated that this Nordic nationalism shared the hegemonic Eurocentric and racist world view of European political thinking at the time – the African population simply did not count as historical subjects (Rosenblad 1992; Thörn 2006). In the Conservative daily *Svenska Dagbladet*, Harald Hjärne articulated a position which most explicitly dealt with the issue of the relations of the Africans to the Boer and the British. Criticising the race doctrine of the pro-Germanists (implicating absolute and eternal differences between races), also associating it with the Boer; Hjärne advocated an evolutionist (racist) discourse, arguing that the British, as a leading world power in the process of human progress, had a historical civilizing mission in relation to the African population.

### **The Role of the Mission**

In understanding the relevance of the colonial legacy for the Nordic support to the liberation struggle in southern Africa, the Mission needs special attention, since it is perhaps the most important *historical* factor for explaining the commitment to the liberation struggle in the Nordic countries. However, it is once again the double-faced character of the commitment to, and involvement with, black Africans that needs to be emphasised. On the one hand, the churches were part of cultural colonialism's 'civilizing mission, which served to legitimize economic exploitation and political dominance.<sup>18</sup> On the other hand, missionaries were prominent among those who at an early stage spoke out against colonial oppression. Missionaries were also often prominent in the earliest phase of the solidarity movements during the post-war decades.

There was an early and significant Nordic missionary presence in Southern Africa. The Church of Norway came as early as 1844, when Hans Paludan Smith Schreuder arrived in Natal, and Sweden followed in 1876 (Sellström 1999). Finland's 'special relation' to Namibia goes back to the Church of Finland's missionary work, which started in the 1870s. Soiri & Peltola (1999) show that although there is a strong link between the missionary presence established in the 19th century, and the support to the liberation struggle during the second half of the 20th century. They even argue that in 'regard to liberation movements, and especially SWAPO of Namibia, the Finnish mission influence is without comparison' (ibid. 55). According to Tor Sellström (communication 15 January 2010), the fact that Denmark, in contradistinction

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(18) In addition to the Mission a number of cultural links were established between Scandinavia and South Africa in the early 20th century. For example, Boer started to study Swedish folk dancing and singing and many Afrikaner folk songs are based on Swedish melodies, something which led to actual cultural exchange between the countries (Winqvist 1978).

to Finland, Norway and Sweden, did not provide *direct* support to the liberation movements, could partly be explained by the fact that Denmark did not establish missionary presence in Southern Africa, and thus lacked those social networks that played a crucial role for establishing trust between liberation movements and governments in the other Nordic countries. It should however also be mentioned that the Church support was not immediate. In the 1950s, missionary reports condemned SWAPO (Soiri & Peltola (1999)). The same story is true for the other Nordic missions in South Africa.<sup>19</sup>

In a section on Nordic colonialism and the destiny of the Sami people should also be mentioned, especially as it was actually brought into UN debates on Nordic support to the liberation struggle. Parallel in time and similar in character as the European colonisation of Africa, the formation of modern nation states in the Nordic region involved a colonial expansion into the territories of the Sami, an indigenous people living in the northern part of Norway, Sweden and Finland. The Sami people was also oppressed in a similar manner as the colonised black populations in Africa, something which was legitimised first through a Christian, and later through a scientific and racist discourse. Already in the early days of the League of Nations, the British raised the issue of the Sami as a response to Swedish criticism of the treatment of the black population in South Africa (Winqvist 1978). The Nationalist South African apartheid regime did also at an early stage realise the potential of this issue to undermine the international credibility of the Nordic countries' critique of racism in Southern Africa. For example, in 1960 South Africa's foreign minister Eric Louw in a speech in the UN General Assembly asked if "the Swedish and Norwegian delegations, whose governments are sponsors of the complaints against South Africa, come to this assembly with clean hands?" (quoted from Sellström 1999:43).

### **World War II and the Post-war Era**

The fact that the modern national identities of Nordic countries like Finland and Norway were based on historical narratives about long periods of suffering under 'internal colonialism' or 'foreign rule', provided an opportunity for those who made appeals to the public for support to anti-colonial movements; references to this history was a way of facilitating solidarity on a symbolical level, as it made possible a collective identification between peoples whose historical experiences in many respects radically differed from each other. This seems especially to have been the case in Norway, where nationalism is part and parcel of a narrative of 'struggle for independence'. It was also true for Finland. For example, Mikko Juva, reformer in the Missionary society circles in Finland, in an interview states that he in the late 1950s referred to the fact that "Finland has been for centuries under foreign rule, first Swedes and then the Russians" when he explained his motivations for his support to the liberation struggle in Namibia (quoted from Soiri & Peltola 1999:57).

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(19) Interview with Gunnar Helander, Västerås, Sweden 16 November 1999 (by the author).

Perhaps even more significant in this respect were references to Nordic countries' experience of the Second World War. In the case of Denmark and Norway, the war experience was an important reason for entering NATO soon after the war (1949). This membership did of course present difficulties in supporting the liberation struggle that the non-NATO-members Sweden and Finland did not have. However, as both Denmark and Norway had had an active and armed resistance movement (in which Communists also were prominent) during the Nazi occupation, the war experience at the same time provided an opportunity to legitimise support to the liberation struggle. This was especially so when the debate centred on the legitimacy of giving support to liberation movements that were committed to an armed struggle

– and also when the support was questioned with reference to 'Communist influence' in the liberation movements. In Denmark, references to the anti-Nazi resistance movement played an important role in the Social Democrat's appeals for support to the liberation movements; and it seems to have been successful when considering that the Conservative daily newspaper *Berlingske Tidende* used the term 'resistance movements' (instead of 'liberation movements'), when it praised the Danish support the liberation struggle in Southern Africa in an article in 1972 (*Morgenstjerne* 2003:66).

The relevance of the Second World War for Sweden's support to the liberation struggle is rather different. As already mentioned, Sweden did not manage to stay out of the war simply by referring to its status as a 'neutral' country; it had a price which was rather high; Sweden's concessions to Nazi Germany created a serious moral

damage to Sweden's neutrality. The choice of the title of Pierre Schori's book on Olof Palme's role in the support to the liberation movements in South Africa, *The Impossible Neutrality*, must be understood against this background.<sup>20</sup> Part and parcel of the so called 'active foreign policy' developed by the Swedish Social Democrats during the decades after the war, was an intention to show the international community

that Sweden's neutrality did not equal compliance with oppressive and illegitimate regimes; that it was not incompatible with a strong and active commitment to the UN Declaration of Human Rights. For Olof Palme, who took active Swedish foreign policy a step further than his predecessors, it was even consistent with an active support also to armed struggle, in spite of the fact that Swedish law forbade sales of weapons to any state involved in an armed conflict with another state<sup>21</sup>, something which also applied to the liberation movements. Schori (1994:24) quotes Palme's speech at a UN conference in 1977:

"We all obviously prefer peaceful solutions to violent ones. But those of us who are privileged and who have had the good fortune of peaceful change should never moralise about it, never try to appear virtuous in relation to those who have been forced to take up arms to liberate themselves."

<sup>(20)</sup> Pierre Schori worked very close with Olof Palme on foreign policy matters.

<sup>(21)</sup> However, as was pointed out by the Swedish anti-apartheid movement, Swedish arms were reaching the South African army as late as 1985 (Bushin 1989).

Thus when Sweden was the first Western country to provide direct governmental support to the liberation struggle in southern Africa, in the form of humanitarian assistance to the Portuguese colonies, the fact that it was termed ‘humanitarian assistance’ was of course a legal and rhetorical manoeuvre, as any distinction between ‘civil’ and ‘military’ support to an organisation involved in armed struggle is merely an academic one. This was of course also noted by the supporters of Southern Africa’s colonial powers. For example, the following comment was made in an editorial in the Conservative *Daily Telegraph* on the 28 September 1971:

Mr Palme claims that the aid is tied to humanitarian purposes, and says that Sweden would not supply the liberation movements with arms or the money to buy them. This is not really a respectable argument, especially as he goes on in the next breath to avow for violent struggle for liberation. Any aid to violent movements assists those movements in their violence....Sweden’s attitude is particularly ambivalent, like many things Swedish...Sweden claims to be ‘with the West’ but to have an ‘alliance-free’ foreign policy. The two things do not square up.

For Finland finally, the legacy of the Second World War in relation to the support to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa was again another story. After becoming an independent state for the first time in the aftermath of the First World War, when Finland in 1917 proudly declared itself the first Nordic republic, it soon realised that there were limits to this independence that more than anything else were defined by its borders to the Soviet Union. During the Second World War, it fought two wars with the Soviet Union (1939-40 and 1941-44) and when the war ended, it stood clear that Finland had to live its post-war life in the shadow of a super power in the East. In 1948, Finland signed The Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Assistance with the Soviet Union. This relationship has been characterised as ‘special relationship of peaceful co-existence’ or a neutrality that ‘might also be called balanced inaction’ (Koponen & Heinonen 2002:17). Although active support to the liberation movements was not in contradiction to the interests of its neighbour, such inaction was initially also characteristic for Finland’s foreign policy in relation to Southern Africa. For example, a Finnish representative in the UN in 1959, Max Jakobson, stated that he thought that “‘it was not the business of the UN to interfere with South Africa’”(quoted from *ibid.*: 17), an approach that was later defined by President Kekkonen as being ‘rather as a medical doctor than a judge’ (Soiri & Peltola 1999:71). The passive approach however, did begin to change in 1966, when Finland started to give humanitarian assistance to South Africa through the UN Trust Fund. This change was related to the increasing cooperation on foreign policy emerging between the Nordic countries, which will be dealt with in the last section of this chapter. While this meant that Denmark and Norway on a number of occasions actually acted against the interests of the NATO alliance, it was probably crucial in the case of Finland, its engagement did not contradict the position of the Soviet Union, who played a major role in supporting the liberation struggle (Shubin 1999).

The Nordic countries' active foreign policy, and especially Sweden's identity as a 'international critic', should also partly be seen in relation to the fact that small states, particularly during the Cold War, had a common interest in a strong international law, which provided a defence from intervention of stronger states. As the wave of anti-colonialism marked global politics during the 1960s, adding a stronger North/South dimension to the Cold War Conflict, the emphasis on anti-colonialist arguments also in foreign policy statements grew stronger also in small countries of the Global North.<sup>22</sup> To sum up, in spite of their different positions in the context of the Cold War, the Nordic countries from the early 1960s onwards embarked on a project to construct a more active foreign policy, which in certain aspects should also represent a common Nordic foreign policy, which as an important element included support to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. The decision of the Nordic countries to try to coordinate their foreign policy was intrinsically linked to their common commitment in the context of *domestic* policy during the actual historical period, what has been termed 'the Nordic welfare model'.

### **The Nordic Welfare Model**

There is no doubt that the strength of Social Democracy in the Nordic countries was a crucial factor that made the construction and legitimization of this model possible, but it is also important to keep in mind that due to its 'hegemonic' status in the context of Nordic party politics (up until the 1980s), the policies of the bourgeois, or non-Socialist, governments during this period did not in any fundamental manner divert from this model. Two aspects of the Nordic model are particularly relevant in order to explain and understand the Nordic support to the liberation struggle.

*First*, aid to Southern Africa was consistent with the fundamental ideological principles of the 'classic' welfare state: universal solidarity, practised through political re-distribution of material resources, made possible by progressive taxation. Against this background it was not difficult to legitimize the ambitious aid projects developed by the Nordic countries in relation to the general public in the respective countries.

*Second*, and even more important, support to the liberation struggle was constructed through a close dialogue between state and civil society, taking place in an institutionalised setting characteristic of the Nordic welfare model. The Nordic welfare state was firmly rooted in the political culture of the major popular movements, who started to emerge in the late 19th century and was integral to the process of industrialization in the Nordic region. Three partly intersecting movements, the Free Church Movement, the Temperance Movement and the Worker's Movement managed to mobilize a significant part of the population in the Nordic countries, a process that culminated politically when the Social Democrats came to power.

In Sweden, the concept of 'Folkhemmet' (the 'People's Home'), as articulated by SDP leader Per-Albin Hansson in the 1930s, was the crucial node in the political

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(22) For an analysis of Sweden as an 'international critic' during the post-war era, see Bjereld 1992.

discourse through which Social Democracy gained its legitimacy as a people's (rather than just a worker's) party. Through the practice of creating procedures for consulting movement representatives, as well as organized talks with major business leaders, the Nordic Social Democratic parties facilitated the emergence of a political culture of consensus. Many key anti-apartheid activists came from families rooted in the old movement culture. Church activists often had links to missionaries of their parent generation. While many young activists were students who were often class travellers (Thörn 2006).

It is important to emphasise however, that it was not only the Social Democrats that had strong links to the popular movements that were allowed to play a role in the construction of the welfare state, something which is also important to consider when explaining the Nordic government's support to the liberation struggle (and of course the strong political consensus around the Nordic welfare model). If we consider the strong support for the liberation struggle (and especially the South African liberation movement), in civil society in for example Sweden, and also the fact that both the Centre Party and the Liberal Party (Folkpartiet) have certain strong links to the popular movements, it becomes less of a surprise that it was non-Socialist governments that took the decision on a ban on new investment in 1979 and that increased support to the liberation movements substantially between 1976-82 (Sellström 2002). In fact, Moderaterna (the Conservatives), which was the only political party that constantly opposed Swedish support to the liberation struggle, is also the only established party without substantial links to the popular movement culture.

The strong position of the old movements during the post-war era, including its close ties with the government, did not leave much space for the emergence of new political initiatives - this is an important reason for the relative weakness of new social movements in the Nordic countries in terms of popular participation (Thörn 2006). In order to mobilize substantial popular support, new movements need to construct sharp boundaries between on the one hand the movement/civil society, and on the other hand the state; and the inclusive strategy of the Nordic governments undermined the possibilities for doing so. Thus, although they were making a strong effort to put distance to the old movements, the new social movements in the Nordic countries were heavily imprinted by the consensus culture of the Nordic welfare model. The other side of this coin is however that while public participation in new social movements - in comparison to other West European countries (Thörn 2002) - has been weak, new movements have nevertheless had a relatively strong influence on government policy, something which the support to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa is perhaps the foremost example of.

Relations between the solidarity movements and the state in the Nordic countries were close from the beginning to the end, and I argue that this closer relationship between civil society and the state in the Nordic context is a crucial factor for explaining, and understanding the character of, Nordic support to the liberation struggle in Southern



Africa.<sup>23</sup> In Denmark, Norway and Sweden, there were even formal committees set up for the specific purpose of consultation between representatives from civil society and the government in relation to support to the liberation struggle. In Denmark and Sweden, they became instrumental for shaping and channelling support to the liberation struggle. These committees could be regarded as concrete spaces of interaction between the solidarity movements and the Nordic governments.<sup>24</sup>

In Sweden, the governmental Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) set up the Consultative Committee on Humanitarian assistance (CCHA) in 1964, which became instrumental for the channelling of financial support to the Southern African liberation movements, as well as to Swedish solidarity organizations. Representatives of movement organizations and opinion leaders were invited to the committee (Sellström 1999; Thörn 2006). Even though individuals from the two central solidarity organisations in the 1970s and 1980s, AGIS and ISAK, were never invited to the committee, they received funding from SIDA. SIDA also recruited activists, who became civil servants, in some cases actually preparing meetings where the decisions on the support to the liberation movements in Southern Africa were made.<sup>25</sup>

In Denmark, The Apartheid Appropriation, a humanitarian budget allocation with a close relationship with Danish civil society, was established as early as 1964. From the early 1970s it constituted the major channel for ‘almost bi-lateral relations with national liberation movements’ (Morgenstjerne 2003: 18). In connection with the formation of the Appropriation, and with reference to a similar arrangement in Norway, it was suggested that an Advisory Committee (nick-named ‘the Apartheid Committee’) should be set up.<sup>26</sup> It should be composed of members of Danish NGOs

(23) Morgenstjerne’s (2003:14) description of the relations between the Danish solidarity movement and the government, is characteristic for the other Nordic countries as well: ‘In Denmark, NGOs also played an important role as channels for official Danish support to humanitarian organizations as well as to national liberation movements. They were in fact invited to do so by the government, which thereby granted them both influence on official policies and financial support for their Southern African counterparts. On the other hand the NGOs were also influenced in the process by government positions and by official administrative requirements.’

(24) Sellström (2008:431) also argues that the close relationship between state and civil society was ‘a particular dimension of the Nordic stance’ and he also quotes former activist and ambassador to Sweden Raymond Suttner, stating that there was “‘a compact forged between civil society and (the) state/government (which) was a unique feature of (the) Nordic support’”.

(25) The most likely reason as to why AGIS and ISAK did not have representatives in the CCHA is that they were being perceived as standing too close to the Communist left. As part of a Cold War policy of the Swedish government, whether Social Democratic or anti-Socialist, the Swedish Communist Party was excluded from all-parties parliamentary committees that dealt with Swedish foreign policy issues, including the CCHA, whose minutes were protected from public insight by the Official Secrets Act. While this perception might not have been held about ISAK in general, it was known that AGIS activists played a key role in the activist core of ISAK. Carl Tham, Director General of SIDA and chairman of CCHA, states that ‘...the Africa Groups was probably not perceived as sufficiently strong, you should remember that there were very strict rules of secrecy’. The close contacts and the government funding did not prevent AGIS and ISAK from a harsh and persistent criticism of the government through the years, also after the legislation against new investments by Swedish companies in South Africa in 1979, and the boycott legislation in 1987. Interview with Carl Tham, Gothenburg, 20 September 2000 (by the author).

(26) TS (Technical Assistance Secretariat, later DANIDA, Danish International Development Assistance) actually arranged a meeting with the Norwegian Refugee Council and with SIDA in order to find out about the details

that had qualified knowledge about South Africa. According to Morgenstierne (2003:34-5) the committee was ‘a unique mix between a ministerial body ... and an NGO forum that allocated funds either to themselves or to international NGOs’, its procedure lacking formal structure.

The fact that the government’s financial support was made public in Denmark was largely a result of pressure from the Danish solidarity organisations, who argued that this could help to raise public awareness of the issue. The high degree of ‘publicness’ of the Danish support was different from the cases of Sweden and Norway, where the governments’ financial support to the liberation struggle was not generally known by the public. However, in spite of the fact that the Danish government, in contradistinction to Norway and Sweden, never gave financial support *directly* to the liberation movements, Danish support nevertheless triggered strong critique and fierce debates in the Danish public sphere on whether Denmark’s indirect support to the liberation movements actually violated international law (Morgenstierne 2003). In fact, the decision to make the support public, and the critique it provoked, might thus have contributed to the Danish government’s decision not to give direct support to the liberation struggle.

In Norway, the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Norwegian parliament did as early as 1963 establish a Special Committee on Refugees from Southern Africa, with members representing the Norwegian Refugee Council, the University of Oslo and the Norwegian South Africa Committee. It was intended to work close with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (an arrangement that lasted until 1982) (Eriksen: 2000). The Special Committee thus differed from the similar committees in Denmark and Sweden in that it was not linked to the government’s aid agency. Further, although Norway together with Sweden was unique in its government’s close relation with the liberation movements, the Norwegian Special Committee itself, in contrast to the Swedish CCHA, never developed substantial direct links with the liberation struggle. Considering this, it seems that the Special Committee in Norway was less influential on the government’s policies than the CCHA in Sweden and the Apartheid Appropriation in Denmark. This does not mean that Norwegian civil society did not have a strong impact on government policy. As the most influential solidarity organisation, The Norwegian Council of Southern Africa, in fact was never invited to the Special Committee, the most significant influence from civil society on government policy actually bypassed the Special Committee.

In 1973, the Finnish government set up a Working Group, which in the Finnish context was unique in that it had representatives from political parties from the left to the right, in order to write a recommendation on aid with ‘largest possible political support’ (Peltola & Soiri 1999:98). Further, according to Soiri and Peltola, solidarity organisations exerted great influence on the 1973 government decision to channel humanitarian funds to the liberation movements. It is perhaps significant that when

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 about Norwegian and Swedish support (Morgenstierne 2003).

the Finnish government for the first time involved itself in such a cooperation, it did not only include the Finnish NGO LKD (Students for Medicine), but also an East German NGO, Solidaritätskomitee der DDR, who transported medicine and equipment to Angola. Further, Kalevi Sorsa, who became foreign minister in 1972, had been the chairperson of Cabral Reception Committee. Mikko Pyhälää, who was appointed to the Sorsa's Ministry under Sorsa with the tasks of assessing and reporting events in the liberation struggle, also had an activist background.<sup>27</sup>

### **Aid versus Trade**

Considering that the consumer boycott was one of the crucial strategies of the solidarity movement, there is no doubt that the issue of trade was one of the key issues in connection with the Nordic support to the liberation struggle. In recent debates on globalization and foreign aid, liberal critics of aid have often argued that the only efficient way that rich countries in the Global North can assist countries in the Global South is to facilitate trade and foreign investment. Trade and aid does however not necessarily preclude or contradict each other. However, in the context of the Nordic countries' support to the liberation struggle, there was a sharp contradiction. In a sense, the contradictory relationship between Nordic aid to the liberation movements and the region's continued trade with, and direct investments in, countries governed by colonial governments and the apartheid regime, captures the essence of the ambivalent character of Nordic post-war relations with Southern Africa. As already mentioned, this contradiction was a focus point of the Nordic anti-apartheid movements' critique of their governments; and further it is fair to say the campaigns for boycotts of South African goods, and of Nordic companies with links to, or presence in, Southern Africa, were the most important and successful strategies for mobilising solidarity.

First of all, it should be emphasised that Nordic trade with, and investments in, Southern Africa were modest compared major Western countries. Just to give a few examples: the whole African region's share of Swedish exports was in 1950 3,6 per cent (Wolgemuth 2002); and while Sweden during the apartheid era had a more significant presence in South Africa in terms of foreign investment than its Nordic neighbours, it still only represented 1 percent of foreign interests in the country (Sellström 2008). Denmark's trade with South Africa was up until the mid 1970s 0,5 % of the total of Danish imports and exports (Morgenstjerne 2003). Finland's economic relations with the region mainly consisted of exports to South Africa; the latter's share of Finnish exports was however only 0,74 percent of the total export (and the share of imports were 0,27 per cent) between 1946 and 1966 (Kopponen & Heinonen 2002). Norwegian trade with the region was even less important (both

<sup>27)</sup> Pyhälää had been one of the authors of a comprehensive memo that was proposed by the Finnish South Africa Committee. The memo, which was presented to the Finnish government in August 1972, were signed by all the relevant solidarity organisations and all political parties, demanded that the Finnish government recognise, and give financial support to, the liberation movements in Southern Africa (Peltola & Soiri 1999).

export to and import from the whole of the African region have been more or less stable around 1 percent of total volume of import and export, Tostensen 2002) and its direct investments negligible (Eriksen 2000b).

This does not mean that economic relations with Southern Africa should be regarded as insignificant. Even though it could be argued that it was at relatively low cost that Norway implemented a measure to refuse to grant licenses for the export of currency to South Africa as early as in 1976; and that Sweden adopted a law banning new investment in the same country in 1979, and that all of the Nordic countries imposed sanctions in 1986-7, it should be emphasised that substantial economic values and interests were at stake in the struggle around boycotts and sanctions in the Nordic countries. For example, in 1976 Danish companies started to buy increasing amounts of South African coal (10% of South Africa's coal exports), which meant that by the end of the 1970s, 30% of fuel for Danish electricity supplies (10% of total Danish energy consumption) were imported from South Africa (Morgenstjerne 2003), something which became a crucial issue in anti-apartheid mobilization, as it coincided with increasing awareness about apartheid among the Danish public. Further, the Danish Maersk Lines transported 20-25% of South Africa's oil imports in 1980. (While parliamentary discussions to prohibit this led to no result, Maersk withdrew its involvement under the pressure of public opinion (Morgenstjerne 2003). Norwegian ship owned tankers were the world's most important transporters of crude oil and oil products to South Africa, which made it a highly prioritized issue not just for Norwegian activists but for the broader transnational anti-apartheid movement (Eriksen & Krokan 2000). Major Swedish production companies such as Alfa-Laval, SKF, Sandvik, ASEA and Electrolux had a presence in South Africa, and the fact that the Metal union were on the employer's side when the Swedish anti-apartheid movement campaigned against these investments, was a sign that sanctions were perceived as a possible threat also to Swedish jobs (Thörn 2006). Finland's exports to the region mainly consisted of sawn timber to South Africa, which were strategically important goods as it was used for both mine support and fruit crates (Kopponen & Heinonen 2002). Against this background, it was a hard blow for the apartheid regime when in October 1985, the Finnish Transport Workers Union, through a successful blockade stopped Finnish trade with South Africa (Sellström 2008).

When the British Anti Apartheid Movement (AAM), the leading organisation in the transnational anti-apartheid movement network, made it a strategy to publicly refer to Nordic governments as examples of Western governments with a strong anti-apartheid policy, Nordic solidarity organisations protested, referring not only to the contradictions between trade and aid, but also to the fact that the actual boycott legislation had serious loopholes (Thörn 2006). For example, Norway's measure to refuse to grant licenses for the export of currency to SA did not prevent Norwegian companies and their subsidiaries from investing profits earned in South Africa. And the Swedish law against investments in South Africa in 1979 did only ban *new* investments. Thus the following quote from Tore Linné Eriksen (2000b:392) is largely

true also for other Nordic countries: ‘To cut a long story short: when profits were at risk, the Norwegian government opted for a compromise’.

It would however be a mistake to assess the effects of boycotts and sanctions simply in terms of the actual economic loss for South Africa or the colonial governments in southern Africa. For example, when the Nordic governments presented its measures against South Africa, there was a heavy emphasis on their symbolic character. These sanctions were to be seen as messages to the rest of the world to follow, something which eventually would cause substantial damage to South Africa. As we will see in the next chapter, this was in line with the transnational solidarity movement’s view of the boycott both as a concrete material and a symbolic act.

## Political Globalization from Below and from Above

The rise of solidarity movements in the Nordic countries was largely a result of interactions taking place in global civil society. The emergence of a global civil society during the 20th century was constituted by the increasing number of NGOs, transnational networks and social movements, organising across borders (Held et. al; 1999). During the post-war era, a transnational political culture emerged through the increasing internationalization of old movements and networks, such as the labour movement and radical churches, as well as the emergence of new social movements, which addressed global issues in new ways, e.g. colonialism/imperialism, solidarity, ecology, peace and gender inequality. The struggle for liberation in southern Africa and the solidarity movements were part of this process and became, as a ‘movement of movements’, a space of intersection for a wide range of collective actors. The central aspects of the construction of a movement space for transnational action, as part of a much wider process of political globalization from below, can be analysed through the following interrelated themes: the media, mobility (exile and travel), mobilization and organization.

### The Media

The rise of the transnational anti-apartheid movement parallels with the post-war ‘media revolution’ and the emergence of a global media space (Thompson 1995; Gitlin 1985). The fact that media and information work was a crucial part of solidarity activism (Thörn 2007; 2006; Sanders 2000) was a reflection of the mediatisation of politics, which means that political mobilization and conflicts to an increasing degree are taking place in and through the media. In this process activists discovered that the media had a double face, on the one hand, they could function as arenas to some extent open for participation, on the other hand the media were actors, acting in accordance with ideologies and economic and political interests. In response to this, an active approach to media was developed. This involved *the two interrelated strategies of trying to influence established media, and to develop alternative media*. The strategy of developing alternative media consisted of producing and distributing information through self-controlled channels. News bulletins, magazines, as well as

films and videos were produced and distributed to members and sold publicly. The materials of IDAFs research department and of bulletins like *AA News* in Britain, were also used by activists in the Nordic countries for their own publications, such as for example the Swedish Africa Group's *Afrikabulletinen*. The Danish SAKs also often used information material and research made by British AAM and IDAF (Morgenstjerne 2003). However, with assistance from activists in the liberation movements in Southern Africa and in exile, Nordic organisations also built up their own archives of well-researched information material and photographs, which was also a base for attracting established media (Thörn 2006). Established media was approached in a number of ways; through producing information material designed for journalists, through letters to the editor, often signed by prominent members, and through developing contacts with journalists that was perceived as standing close to the movement. A different way of getting a message across was the staging of 'events' in public space. Especially during the anti-apartheid movement's transnational boycott campaign against Shell in the late 1980s a number of media-oriented public events were staged in the Nordic countries. For example, activists manufactured huge Shell credit cards which were torn apart outside Shell's petrol stations.

### **Travel, Exile and Mobility**

An important factor that facilitated the 'action at a distance' that constituted the links between the liberation struggle in southern Africa and the solidarity movements in other parts of the world, was mobility, i. e. temporary travel, student visits facilitated by scholarships, as well as 'exile journeys'. This made face-to-face interaction possible between individual activists that were based in different parts of the world or were coming from different places of origin. They were people who through individual moves and movements were connecting places, organizations and networks. Travel, or mobility, had different functions within the movement. *First, conferences played an important role* as a space for networking, discussions and co-ordination of national as well as transnational campaigns. A number of international conferences, where representatives of the liberation movements and solidarity activists met, were organised in the Nordic countries. A conference that many activists in both the Nordic countries and in the liberation movements have mentioned as particularly important in an early stage of Nordic solidarity was the Afro-Scandinavian Youth Congress in Oslo in 1962, organised by youth and student organisations from all of the five Nordic countries. Out of the 225 delegates that attended, 125 were from Africa (one fourth from Southern Africa) (Sellström 2008). Here, young African political leaders met Nordic youth, among who later would belong to the leadership in political parties in government (Eriksen a) 2000). In Denmark, a major conference organised by the Danish solidarity movement took place in 1978, with participation from Ministers and Members of Parliament, and representatives for the ANC and SWAPO. Here, the South African exile activist Abdul Minty, on behalf of the British AAM, presented a ten-point program, which included a campaign against SAS (Scandinavian Airlines)

(Morgenstjerne 2003). In Finland, the student organisations SYL and IUF in 1971 organised a conference in Helsinki, attended by representatives of student movements in 60 countries and from six liberation movements in Southern Africa (Soiri & Peltola 1999). One of the most important international conferences during the last decade of the anti-apartheid struggle was Folkrikisdagen mot apartheid (the People's Parliament Against Apartheid), which was organised by Swedish ISAK and the UN Association in Sweden, in February in 1986. Here, Olof Palme held his last public speech (before he was assassinated on 26 February) (Sellström 2008).

*Second, the exile South Africans played an important role as organizers and mobilizers, travelling extensively around the world, making speeches at solidarity meetings and thus giving 'the other' a public face. As early as in May 1960, ANC leader Oliver Tambo spoke at the Social Democratic Workers' First of May Rally in Copenhagen; and the next day he spoke to 3000 workers in a shipyard. He also talked at the Afro- Scandinavian Youth Congress in 1962 and then continued on a Scandinavian journey during which he had talks with the prime ministers of Denmark, Sweden and Norway (Eriksen a) 2000). During the decades to come, a number of representatives from the liberation movements made similar journeys to the Nordic countries – and to other countries around the world. Different from visits to most other Western countries though, was that the stops in Nordic countries always involved meetings both with activist groups and with representatives of governments.*

*Third, according to accounts of solidarity activists travel was related to an emotional aspect of solidarity activism, crucial for the individual's motivation to engage in, as well as to sustain, solidarity action through the years (Thörn 2006). For some activists journeys to Southern Africa meant making direct experiences of the apartheid system that became a starting point for a commitment to the struggle. More important, travel facilitated personal encounters between South African activists and solidarity activists, sometimes developing into friendships. Some activists mention temporary visits by South Africans to Europe, for example by the UDF (United Democratic Front) in the 1980s, as an important source of inspiration for the everyday routines of solidarity activism. However, according to my interviewees, it seems that the most important aspect of the process through which 'the other' was given a face on the level of personal relations in the solidarity movement, was the bonds that were created, and were often developed into long friendships, between exile activists and solidarity activists. Thus, the presence of exile activists was important both in the process of starting up solidarity activities and for sustaining these activities over the decades. Among the exiles that have been mentioned by solidarity activists as people who played important roles in linking Nordic solidarity with the liberation struggles not just formally, but also informally, through personal relations, are Billy Modise, who came to Sweden on a student exchange program in 1960, Sobizana Mnqkikana, who began his work as ANC Chief Representative to Sweden in 1974 and the other Nordic countries, when the ANC opened its mission on Stockholm (Thörn 2006). Further, Lindiwe Mabusa, who succeeded Mnqkikana in 1979, managed to infuse Nordic*

solidarity with inspiration, ideas and energy in her capacity of both political activist and poet, especially when solidarity work during the 1980s took a “cultural turn” (Thörn 2006). Freddy Reddy, who were involved in forming the British AAM, arrived in Norway as a student in 1961 and played an important role in the emergency of a solidarity movement in Norway. Among the exiles in Denmark was P R Dullay, who worked hard to expand the Danish Anti-Apartheid movement nationally; and a documentary on his life that was showed on Danish television in 1988 drew major attention (Dullay 2009). In Finland, SWAPO’s Nickey Iyambo, who came to the country to study in 1964, played an equally important role in mobilising solidarity for Namibia in Finland (Sori & Peltola 1999).

### **Mobilizing Through Boycotts**

The Nordic solidarity movements used a number of strategies for mobilization, which all emerged through interaction in the context of transnational activist networks. I have argued that the boycott was the most important form of mobilization in the context of the solidarity movements (Thörn 2006). The ultimate aim of the economic, cultural and sports boycotts were of course to put pressure on the South African government through isolating the country culturally and hurting it economically. However, as several activists that I have interviewed have pointed out, solidarity organizations also viewed the boycott as an important tool for mobilization and ‘consciousness raising’ of large numbers of people. Through the launching of boycott campaigns, the organizations offered people an opportunity for ‘everyday’ participation in solidarity action. It was argued that in the long run such active participation would generally raise public consciousness about the issue, and eventually increase the pressure on national governments and international organizations, like UN or EU, to impose sanctions. From this point of view, to participate in a boycott could also be seen as ‘voting’ for sanctions. It could also be argued that participating in a boycott could be seen as a form of expressive action that was a fundamental aspect of the construction of the collective identity of the movement. It was an act through which the individual subjects could feel that they had become a part of an imagined global community of solidarity activists. In this sense, the boycott was a form of ‘identification at a distance’ through local action. From this point of view the boycott also *emotionally* connected grass-root activists in different parts of the world.

When boycotts were launched in Europe in the early 1960s, it was a direct import from Southern Africa. The broader transnational campaign against apartheid actually took off after the All Africa People’s Conference in Accra made a call for an international boycott of South African goods in December 1958. Four months later the ANC, who had been discussing a boycott since the early 1950s, launched a boycott in South Africa (Fieldhouse 2005).<sup>28</sup> In December 1959, the International

<sup>28</sup> In Britain the anti-colonial Committee of African Organizations (CAO) responded to the Congress Alliance’s call at a meeting in Holborn Hall in London. Invited to the meeting as Speakers were Julius Nyerere, president of the Tanganyika Africa National Union, and Father Trevor Huddleston. A boycott committee was formed, and



Confederation of Trade Unions (ICFTU), which at the time was led by the Swedish unionist Arne Geijer and had 56 million members in 96 countries, held a meeting in Brussels. Here, it responded to the call for an international boycott by urging its member organizations to contact its respective governments regarding launching some kind of boycott. In a meeting in Stockholm in January 1960, trade unions from all of the Nordic countries agreed to follow the IFTU recommendations to launch a consumer boycott against South Africa (Morgenstierne 2003). When the boycott was launched in Sweden, it caused a major debate within the labour movement. In the labour movement press, critics argued that such an initiative taken in the context of civil society could not be tolerated, because it meant performing foreign policy, a domain of action that belonged to the government (Thörn 2006). The boycott was however implemented over a period of five months in 1960 in both Sweden and Norway. In 1963, as a result of agreements made at the Afro-Scandinavian Youth Congress, the Danish, Norwegian and Swedish youth councils launched a second boycott in 1963. In Denmark, 100 of the 179 members of the Danish parliament signed the boycott appeal. And, although important Swedish labour unions remained sceptical about a boycott, numerous boycotts were launched by Nordic solidarity organisations and unions during the following decades, especially after the formation of various committees to isolate South Africa in the different countries, and often in co-operation with the broader transnational solidarity movement. An important union boycott was the Nordic transport workers boycott on cargos from South Africa in 1985 (Morgenstierne 2003).

### **Movement Organizations**

Social movement studies have emphasized the importance of previously organised networks for the mobilization of a social movement (Della Porta & Diani 2005). Since networks are carriers of values, previously organised networks bring a historical legacy into the formation of a new movement. In the context of the transnational solidarity network in support of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, the churches and the labour movement provided such networks. Understood in its broadest sense, the international labour movement played an extremely important role in the transnational anti-apartheid struggle. However, it also brought into to the movement its historical legacy of factional divisions, which had gained a new meaning and a new significance in the context of the Cold War. Particularly the reluctance among many Western labour Unions to support the ANC and its call for sanctions against South Africa must be related to Cold War divisions between Soviet Communism and Western Socialist Reformism. As already mentioned, church networks played a major role from the beginning to the end of the era of solidarity with the liberation struggle. In the 1970s, when those solidarity activists that were

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soon it evolved into the Boycott Movement, consisting mainly of South African exiles and a few British supporters. In 1960 it changed its name to the Anti-Apartheid Movement, which became the leading organisation in the transnational network of solidarity organisations.

not occupied with the Vietnam War, were focused on the Portuguese colonies, it was to a large extent the churches that kept focus on solidarity with the South African liberation movement. However, the legacy of colonialism was also present during the whole period, sometimes causing ambiguity and contradiction - for example in relation to the debate on sanctions vs. 'constructive engagement'. In this case, it is relevant to mention the close contacts that the Swedish Church Mission had with Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi of KwaZulu Natal, leader of the Inkatha organization (and supporter of constructive engagement), which opposed ANC's call for sanctions. This was a link going back to the late 19th century when the Mission started its South African adventure in Zululand (Sellström 2002).

As in the case of most social movements, a crucial aspect of the mobilization was done by SMOs (social movement organizations) (McCarthy & Zald eds. 2004). In the context of the transnational network, key SMOs were the liberation movements in exile, and those solidarity organizations that solely focused on solidarity with Southern Africa. Some of them were national, like the Danish SAK, some of them were international, like the IDAF, and some of them consisted of networks of local groups, like the Swedish South Africa Committees. These organizations were all part of a transnational solidarity network, which had at least two important nodes on the Northern hemisphere; London as a 'postcolonial capital', where exiled African political activists played a crucial role in initiating the Boycott Movement, and New York, where the UN Special Committee against Apartheid became an important forum for interaction. While the interaction between the liberation movements in exile and the solidarity organisations are a key to understand the emergence of Nordic support to the liberation struggle, tensions of postcoloniality also defined their relations. The solidarity organizations were dependent on good relations with the exile movements for its legitimacy in relation to its supporters and the general public. However, just as important, it was the other way around as well. It was as difficult for the liberation movements to stage their own public meetings in the Nordic countries, as it was in other parts of Europe. However, with Nordic solidarity organisations providing the platform through organising the meeting, representatives of the liberation movements could give public voice to their issue.

What was unique for the exile organisations in the Nordic countries in comparison to other Western countries was that they worked relatively close with both solidarity organisations and the governments. In 1971, the Swedish government agreed to let ANC, SWAPO and ZANU open missions in Stockholm. Considering the critical approach of the solidarity movements to their respective governments, this dual relationship with state and civil society demanded a high degree of diplomatic skill on behalf of the exile organisations. It did however at a few moments create some tension. For example, the Swedish Africa Groups felt that while they at a certain moment was encouraged by the ANC to criticise the Swedish government for the inefficacy of its ban on investment, they at a later stage found out that the ANC had

had informal talks with the Swedish government, in which the Swedish policy was approved (Thörn 2006).

There was also a clear link between the presence and activities of the exile organisations and the support that they received from the Nordic countries. For example, ZANU and ZAPU were granted official support from the Swedish government after diplomatic visits in 1969 by Simpson Mtambanegwe (ZANU), who had been received at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Stockholm, and Edward Ndlovu (ZAPU), who had visited the Swedish Embassy in London (Sellström 1999). The cases where conflicting liberation movements competed for support clearly shows how the support to the liberation movements from the Nordic countries largely emerged through the dynamics of the relations between three actors: the solidarity organisations, the exile liberation movements and the governments. In the case of Zimbabwe, both the governments and the key solidarity organisations (although at the price of constant tension around the issue) of Sweden and Norway supported both ZANU and ZAPU. In the case of South Africa, both the key solidarity organisations and the government in Sweden supported only the ANC, a decision based partly on close contacts with ANC leaders in exile (the government), and the exile PAC organisation's poor performance in the 1970s (it was characterized by serious internal strife), as well as ideological affinities (the solidarity organisations). In contradistinction, the support from the Norwegian government not just to the ANC but also to the PAC (in accordance with the OAU/UN policy) came after strong pressure from Norwegian solidarity organisations, and after that the PAC opened an information office for the Nordic countries in Oslo (which was however closed in 1979) (Östbye 2000).

### **The Socialist International**

As one of those political spaces in which the processes of political globalization from below and from above intersected, the Socialist International (SI) was an organisation that played a key role in linking on the one hand mobilization in global and Nordic civil society, and on the other hand Nordic government support to the liberation movements. As an international, it was part of the emerging global civil society.<sup>29</sup> But as many of the leading SI figures were also ministers in governments, SI meetings could also have an immediate impact on state policies.

Nordic Social Democrats played an important role in promoting active SI support to the liberation movements in Southern Africa.<sup>30</sup> It should however also be emphasised that this active approach may partly be seen as a strategy to compensate for the failure in recruiting African members to the SI. When the first SI conference

<sup>(29)</sup> In 1989 the SI had 82 organisational members (20 million members) (Bushin 1989).

<sup>(30)</sup> According to Bushin (1989:63) 'the actions of the Social Democrats of Sweden and other Scandinavian countries played a major role in the general evolution of the Socialist Internationals' policy on Southern Africa'.

occurred in 1951, it did not have a single African member.<sup>31</sup> The 1960 conference had invited some guests from African countries. Commitment to the liberation struggle also came slow and with important reservations. When resolution taken at the 1961 congress condemned Portuguese oppression in Southern Africa, it was closely linked to a strong emphasis on an anti-communist and pro-NATO doctrine. (Bushin 1989). At the 11th congress in Eastborne in 1969, the Finnish social democratic leader Kalevi Sorsa called for economic and political support for the liberation movements, in opposition to, among others, the British Labour leader Harold Wilson, who advocated non-intervention in Rhodesia. SI Links with the liberation movements in Southern Africa began to be established at the turn of the 1970s, but it was only in 1984 that leaders of the frontline states and the liberation movements in Southern Africa for the first time met the Western leaders of the SI at a conference in Arusha, Tanzania. The Arusha conference is often mentioned as an extremely important event in the final phase of international support to the liberation struggle in South Africa and Namibia. But it did not happen without frictions. As pointed out by Vladimir Bushin, both the official name of the conference, 'The Conference on Southern Africa of the SI Committee and the Socialist Group of the European Parliament with the Frontline States, ANC and SWAPO', and the fact that it was decided upon the eve before the opening, point to the tensions involved.<sup>32</sup>

The direct contacts between the SI and the liberation movements were initiated by Olof Palme and Swedish democracy (Sellström 2002). Palme was in 1976 elected as the Vice-President of SI, charged with a special responsibility to deal with Africa. His close associate Bernt Carlsson, was elected SI General Secretary.<sup>33</sup> In 1977, Palme led an SI delegation that visited Angola, Zambia, Botswana, Mozambique, and Tanzania. This assignment was according to Pierre Schori (1994), who worked closely with Palme on Southern Africa, an extremely important influence on his commitment to the liberation struggle. In his diary, Palme wrote that Swedish Social Democracy, in the wake of Soweto, should take the initiative to make the liberation of Southern Africa a common task for the SI (Schori 1994).<sup>34</sup> According to the diary, he began

(31) It was only in 1981 that 20 years of efforts to form an International for African Social Democracy bore fruit when the formal organization of the Socialist Inter-African (SIA) manifested itself at a conference in Tunis. However, only 10 parties from 9 countries participated, and none of them came from the frontline states. SIA did however not attend with a delegation at the 17th SI - in spite of the fact that Léopold Senghor was re-elected as a Vice-president. VB147. Further, it was only in 1986 at the 17th congress in Lima that the SI for the first time held a conference in the Global South (Bushin 1989).

(32) SIA was not invited to Arusha; the only African Labour party came from Mauritius (Bushin 1989).

(33) In a speech at the 1978 SI Congress, Bernt Carlsson made a famous statement, later quoted by the ANC, regarding the fact that the SI Program of Action in support of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, adopted in 1977, was not really followed by those Social Democratic parties that were in the government seat. Considering this, Carlsson argued that the support to the liberation struggle so far was "a river of words is emptied into a desert of inaction" (quoted from Bushin 1989:94).

(34) Palme had presented these ideas in a speech which he held in Skövde in 1976, when he was still Prime Minister in the Social Democratic government (Thörn 2006). The speech was part of the election campaign. The Social Democrats lost the election and, the fact that Palme now was an opposition leader and not a Prime Minister, facilitated him to devote a considerable amount of time to the SI and the issue of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa during 1977 (Sellström 2002).

this mission at the Nordic Labour Congress in Helsinki in November 1976. The next step was the SI congress in the same month, and it adopted a resolution in support of ‘the struggles in Southern Africa’ (ibid:23) much under Swedish influence. The final step was taken when Palme was invited to speak at the UN Security Council’s debate on the support for Zimbabwe and Namibia in Maputo in May 1977. Although he was invited as a private person, his position was that he spoke as ‘a representative of Swedish Social Democracy and of the International’ (ibid:21). The mission’s report was in October 1977 approved as the SI’s Program of Action of Southern Africa in a Bureau session in Madrid (to which no liberation movements however had been invited, Bushin 1989). Although Palme as a leader of a Social Democratic Party in a non-NATO country was in a better position to confront those who in Cold War terms saw the liberation movements and frontline states first and foremost as communist-aligned, Palme’s political agenda shared the strong anti-communist conviction that prevailed in both the SI and the ICFTU at the time (Östberg 2008). Although Palme in his public speeches emphasised that the SI should act in order that the peoples of Africa must not be ‘pawns’ in the Super-power rivalry (Bushin 1989), his own position was merely a strategic one, playing precisely with the Cold War logic: if we treat the liberation movements as completely Communist-controlled they will become exactly that, because they would have no other alternative than turning Eastward.<sup>35</sup>

### **Joint Nordic Action in Support of the Liberation Struggle**

Political globalization from below interacted in various ways with political globalization from above. Particularly important for liberation movements and solidarity organizations were the UN, the OAU, the EEC and the Nordic political community.

The Nordic countries’ increasing post-war cooperation manifested itself formally in two steps: in 1952 the Nordic Council was formed as a body facilitating cooperation between the Nordic parliaments; and in 1971 the Nordic Ministerial Council was formed as a body for cooperation between the Nordic governments, and between the governments and the Nordic Council (Bjereld, Johansson, Molin 2008). But even before 1971, meetings between Nordic Ministers occurred in relation to specific issues. From the early 1960s, a number of meetings were held between the Nordic Foreign Ministers that were important for the emerging official Nordic support to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. There is no doubt that discussions, and agreements, between the Nordic Ministers carried weight in national politics. For example when a Swedish Communist MP in 1974 asked Foreign Minister Krister Wickman about official recognition of the Republic of Guinea Bissau, Wickman responded that Sweden must consult ‘with other Nordic countries’ (Bushin 1989:37). Decisions taken by individual Nordic countries also clearly influenced neighbours.

<sup>(35)</sup> K. B. Anderson, Danish Social Democrat, who played a crucial role for Danish support to the liberation struggle, argued along the same lines in his memoirs: “‘The point that I repeatedly made was that we would not be doing Western democracy any favours by turning our backs on the liberation movements. On the contrary: it would send them directly into the arms of communism” (quoted from Morgenstierne 2003:57).

After an initiative from Sweden in 1966, the support for the 'Mozambique Institute' (in Dar-es-Salaam), became a joint Nordic project (including also Norway and Denmark, Morgenstjerne 2003). And according to Morgenstjerne (2003), an important factor when Denmark in 1965 decided a special allocation (the Apartheid Appropriation) to support the liberation struggle was that Sweden, Norway and Finland had already launched such support or were planning to do so.

The *direct* support to the liberation movements from Nordic governments also emerged from meetings between Nordic Foreign Ministers. At the bi-annual meeting of the Nordic foreign ministers in Stockholm in April 1971, the Danish Foreign Minister Poul Hartling initiated a discussion on whether support to the liberation movements was against international law, at that time an issue that was hotly debated in his Ministry. Swedish Foreign Minister Torsten Nilsson declared that Sweden had already sent direct support to the liberation movement of Guinea Bissau, and that it would soon also happen in the case of MPLA. Norwegian Foreign Minister Andreas Cappelen stated that Norway was planning to support the liberation movements, emphasising that this was part of a strategy to step up Norway's critique of Portugal's colonial policy (Morgenstjerne 2003). It was however only in 1973 that Norway started its direct support to liberation movements. In October 1971, the new Danish Foreign Minister K.B. Andersen brought up the issue of Southern Africa again at another meeting with the Norwegian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Thorvald Stoltenberg and the new Swedish Foreign Minister, Krister Wickman. Stoltenberg declared that the Norwegian government had now proposed to grant money for printing equipment and medicines for the liberation movements. He also stated that the Norwegian government had agreed to let the OAU hold a conference on liberation on Southern Africa in Oslo. Wickman argued that according to the Swedish interpretation of international law, there was no significant difference between support given directly to the liberation movements or through international organisations. Wickman also assured Andersen that Sweden had no problems whatsoever with their support to PAIGC and MPLA. Although Denmark never gave direct support to the liberation movements, these meetings with the other Nordic Ministers were according to Morgenstjerne (2003) important for the indirect Danish support to the liberation movements.

In the wake of the Soweto, the Nordic ministers made an important step towards a joint policy, when they in 1978 adopted on a Joint Program of Action against Apartheid, which involved 'prohibition or discouragement of new investments in South Africa' (Reddy 1986:14). Again in response to an increasing mobilization in South Africa and in global civil society, the Program of Action was updated at a meeting between the Nordic foreign ministers in 1985. This Program laid the basis for the process in which all of the Nordic countries adopted limited sanctions against South Africa in 1986-87.

## UN, the OAU and the EEC

This joint Nordic official support to the liberation struggle also clearly shows that the formation of a macro-regional Nordic political community was part of political globalization, as it was shaped in interaction with a number of other inter-state organisations, particularly the UN, but also the OAU, and the EEC (although to a much lesser extent, since Denmark was the only Nordic member country during the period of the liberation struggle). This Nordic interstate co-operation also interacted with Nordic civil society - which became increasingly important as unions, student and solidarity organisations formed their own Nordic networks - and with global civil society. For example, the students participating at the WAY (World Assembly of Youth) conference in 1963 were particularly addressing the official joint Nordic policy of sanctions (Morgenstjerne 2003). Further, the IUEF (International University Exchange Fund), based in Geneva, was the major channel for Nordic support from 1964 to 1979. According to E. S. Reddy (1986), at the time Principal Secretary of the UN Special Committee against Apartheid, the Nordic countries' support for the South African liberation movements in the UN in the early 1960s was, after initial hesitation, a result of pressure from Nordic civil society, particularly from youth organisations (there was also, at least in one case, direct communication between a Swedish South Africa Committee and the UN Special Committee, Thörn 2006).

Joint Nordic action in relation to the UN was strengthened after a meeting in April 1963, when the Nordic foreign ministers issued a joint statement condemning apartheid. In September the same year, the Foreign Minister of Denmark Per Haekkerup presented a Nordic initiative in the UN General Assembly suggesting that the possibilities of putting pressure on the apartheid regime should be investigated. As a result of this Nordic initiative the UN Group of Experts on South Africa was established, led by the Swede Alva Myrdal.<sup>36</sup> In 1966, all of the Nordic countries voted for a resolution in the General Assembly that declared that the situation in South Africa was a threat to international peace and security and that universally applied sanctions were the best method to reach a peaceful solution (Reddy 1986). In practice however, the position by the Nordic countries was not to impose sanctions in the respective country until there were mandatory sanctions by the UN Security Council, a position motivated by the argument that such a measure would be pointless if it did not include participation by South Africa's main trading partners. This position, which had been agreed on at a meeting in Helsinki in 1962, remained official policy in all of the Nordic countries until the mid 1980s (Morgenstjerne 2003). Meanwhile, in line with their decision to initiate a joint unilateral support, the Nordic countries provided 60% of the funding when the UN Trust Fund for South Africa was formed in 1966 (Reddy 1986). And when, in 1977, the UN Security Council decided on a mandatory arms embargo, the Nordic countries were among the first to take legislative action.

<sup>36</sup> There was however severe division within the group on the issue of sanctions, and the only result of the group's work was however the UN Educational and Training Program for South Africans (Reddy 1986).

The OAU functioned in many cases as an important link between on the one hand global civil society, including exile liberation and solidarity movements, and on the other hand African governments, the UN and Western governments, including the Nordic countries. An example of this is the visit by an OAU delegation to the Nordic countries in 1971. During the visit, the delegation met representatives from solidarity organisations, such as the *Danish Afrika 71*, as well as government members. In their meeting with the Danish Foreign Minister Andersen, the OAU delegates emphasised the importance of a joint Nordic support (Morgenstjerne 2003). During the meeting with the Norwegian Foreign Minister Andreas Cappelen, the OAU renewed a request for permission to hold an OAU conference in Oslo. Andreas Cappelen then raised the issue at a joint Nordic consultation the same year and it was decided to give the OAU permission to organise the conference. It took place as a joint UN/OAU conference in Oslo in 1973, with Norwegian ambassador to the UN, Ole Ålgård, as President. Among the invited were, in addition to representatives for governments and liberation movements, individual members of solidarity organisations such as the British AAM and IDAF. The conference resulted in a UN/OAU Program of Action to be presented in the UN General Assembly that the Nordic governments in several respects thought was far too radical (there was for example concern about its formulations about NATO as a supporter of colonial wars). After the friction around this issue, there was a compromise. The Nordic countries would support a resolution if it merely recommended the General Assembly to ‘take notice’ of the Program of Action (Eriksen 2000a:72). The resolution was introduced in the General Assembly by Ole Ålgård on behalf of all the five Nordic countries, and Nigeria, Tanzania and Zambia.

For the European anti-apartheid movement, the *EEC* became important particularly in connection with the anti-apartheid issue. When Denmark chaired the EEC in 1978, it tried to push for sanctions against South Africa, especially during the Foreign Minister’s Conference, which was led by K. B. Andersen. The resolutions adopted at the 1978 summit were however very limited and it was only in 1985 that EEC agreed to partial sanctions, which were extended in 1986. This was partly a result of transnational mobilization by the European anti-apartheid movement, which focused on building relationships with members of the European Parliament and met with the European Parliament Socialist Group. This mobilization was led by British AAM and brought the Danish South Africa Committees closer to the transnational network than any of the other Nordic anti-apartheid movements.<sup>37</sup>

## Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that what was unique about the support from the Nordic countries to the liberation movements in Southern Africa – the substantial direct and indirect financial support - was the result of a specific articulation between

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(37) Communication with Christabel Gurney (former AAM) 23 May 2005 and 30 December 2009.



internal (the Nordic context) and external (the global context) factors. I have also argued that, considering certain contradictions between this aid and other aspects of the Nordic governments foreign policy in relation to Southern Africa, the most important factor behind the official support was the direct and indirect pressure from social movements in civil society, globally, regionally (the Nordic context), and nationally. A brief comparison with the case of Britain, using the theory of political opportunity structures (McAdam 1996), further clarifies and deepens this analytical point. While the British Anti Apartheid Movement was the leading European solidarity organisation in connection with the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, it was not nearly as successful as its Nordic counterparts in putting pressure on its government. Why?<sup>38</sup>

The explanation of social movement action in a national context offered by the theory of political opportunity structures (POS) emphasize: 1) the relative openness or closure of a political system; 2) the role of alignments between different elites and;

3) the movement's possibilities for elite alignments. First, the Nordic political system was clearly more open to influence on this issue than the British. Second, alignments between economic and political elites in connection with the issue of Southern Africa were tighter in Britain (particularly under Conservative governments) than in the Nordic countries. Third, while movements in both Britain and the Nordic region had elite allies, the allies of the Nordic solidarity movement (i. e. members of the political elite) were closer to state power. All of these factors thus indicate that the political climate in the Nordic countries made it easier for the Nordic solidarity movement to have an influence on state policy than in Britain.

Finally, the case of Nordic support to the liberation struggle also points to certain limits of POS theory – and of any theory using the nation state as the primary analytical category for political analysis. An assumption made by POS theory is that transnational networks primarily emerge when national political institutions are closed to social movement activists (Della Porta and Kriesi 1999, Sikkink 2005). However, Nordic solidarity organisations were involved in frequent transnational networking in spite of the openness of Nordic political institutions. While I have argued that national identity implicitly played an important role in the context of solidarity mobilization in both Britain and the Nordic countries (Thörn 2006); this example shows that the political structure of the nation state cannot be taken as a self-evident point of departure for the analysis of political action. As national political structures do not provide a sufficient explanation for the character of the solidarity movements in the Nordic countries, I have emphasized the role and influence of both historically instituted national political cultures and the influence of macro-regional and global processes, such as the colonial legacy and post-war economic, political and cultural globalization.

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<sup>38</sup> For a more detailed comparison between the cases of Britain and Sweden, see Thörn (2006).

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# 9.2

## The Soviet Union and the Liberation of Southern Africa

By Vladimir Shubin

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There is an obvious tendency to explain the conflicts in the world, including Africa, after World War Two by the division into East and West, by the “superpower rivalry”. However I believe on the contrary, that most of the conflicts in the world at that period were caused by the internal dynamics of one region or another; in Southern Africa they were the result of peoples’ determination to get rid of colonialism and apartheid, on the one hand, and the resistance of Pretoria, Salisbury and Lisbon and their Western allies to the inevitable, on the other.

In fact, in confidence, Western leaders admitted this: “It is evident from what happened to former French, Belgian and British territories in Africa that these pressures stemmed from the basic desires of the populations and were not due to any external agency<sup>1</sup>”, said in 1962 by President John Kennedy to the Portuguese Minister of Foreign Affairs, Alberto Franco Nogueira.

Indeed, by that time “basic desires of the population” were evident in Southern Africa as well. While the three countries mentioned by Kennedy had (unwillingly and painfully slow) to agree to the independence of their colonies (Algeria being an exception) under majority rule, Portugal and white settlers in Southern Rhodesia plainly refused it, while the racist government of South Africa clung to power.

It made the situation in the Southern Africa distinct from the rest of the continent; hence the forms of support to the forces of liberation had to be different as well. Initially the *political support* was predominant in Moscow’s relations with Africa in the 1950s. It maintained its importance later as well. For example, the Soviet Union was an initiator of the Declaration on granting independence to the colonial countries and peoples, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1960.

As for practical assistance, *financial allocations* were important, more so because in the 1960s and early 1970s, their kind of sources were mostly limited to African states and socialist countries. In the second case the money came from a so-called “International Trade Union Fund for assistance to leftist workers’ organisations”. This fund was established in 1950, on Moscow’s initiative to render material assistance to “foreign leftist parties, workers’ and public [non-governmental] organisations, which are subjected to persecution and repression”.<sup>2</sup> Although Moscow played a leading role in the distribution of money, initially only half of the contributions came from the USSR, with the remainder coming from other socialist countries, up to 1962, including China.

Besides, the Soviets often made contributions into budgets of conferences in support of the liberation struggle, both directly and through international organisations such as the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organisation and the World Peace Council.

The next type of Soviet material support to the liberation movements were *supplies*

of food, clothes, cars, trucks, stationary, sportswear, building materials and other goods.

(1) Schleicher and Engel (1997).

(2) Quoted in: Wright, G., *The Destruction of a Nation. United States’ Policy Towards Angola Since 1945*. (London and Chicago: Pluto Press, 1997), p.43.

*Air tickets and transit facilities* provided by Moscow enabled numerous delegations and representatives of these movements to attend international conferences and visit different countries of the world.

Moscow provided annual “quotas” for rest and *medical treatment* of leaders and activists of the liberation organisations in the USSR, received wounded fighters in military hospitals, dispatched medicine and equipment, trained their members as medical doctors and nurses, and in a number of cases sent medical teams to their camps in independent African countries. Hundreds of freedom fighters went to the USSR for academic and political training.

However, most vital for the liberation movements, was Soviet assistance in the *military field*: supplies of arms and other hardware and training both in the USSR and in Africa, especially in Angola.

A peculiar feature of the Soviet assistance was its provision through two channels: from the government budget (though the requests would come not to the USSR Council of Ministers but to the ruling party – CPSU); and from the Soviet “public” organisations, that is NGOs, such as the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee.

The Soviet assistance to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa began before the formation of the OAU and its Liberation Committee. Naturally, after its inception, bilateral contacts were established<sup>3</sup> and Committee’s delegations visited Moscow several times. It resulted in providing some aid through the OAU structures, but mostly symbolic.<sup>4</sup> However, this was not Moscow’s fault; it followed the advice of the movements themselves, which preferred to receive the Soviet assistance directly. Besides, Moscow was not ready to provide assistance to each and every organisation recognised by the OAU.

One more point should be underlined. Although the move towards Marxism by some leaders of the liberation movements was welcomed in Moscow, it was not regarded as a pre-condition for Soviet assistance. I recall how Professor Ulyanovsky, then Deputy Head of the CPSU International Department said to us, as members of the Soviet delegation to the conference in support of the peoples of the Portuguese colonies, held in Rome in 1970: “We don’t request ideological loyalty from the liberation movements”.

Initially the Soviet Union’s contacts with anticolonial organisations were quite limited and in practice the relations could be maintained only with their exile members in Europe (mostly through local “friends” that is Communist parties) and from the threshold of 1960s increasingly through Soviet representatives in Cairo.

Indeed in the days of President Gamal Abdel Nasser Cairo became a “second home” for representatives of anticolonial organisations from many African countries. Moscow’s position there was favourable for contacts, because apart from the Embassy,

(3) Russian State Archive of Modern History (thereafter - RSAMH), collection 89. inventory 38., file 22, p.1. Extract from the Minutes of the Politbureau of the SUCP (b) Central Committee, N 76/12, 19 July 1950.

(4) For example, I visited the Committee Headquarters for the first time in 1969, when George Magombe was its Executive Secretary.



the Soviets were represented at the Secretariat of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Council, soon restructured into AAPSO, Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation. The Cairo body, in particular, called for solidarity campaigns with the anticolonial struggle and its member organisation, the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee took an active part in them. For example, 4 November 1959 Lucio Lara, who was in exile in Frankfurt, West Germany, sent a letter on behalf of the Anti-colonial Movement to the Secretariat in Cairo, suggesting organising an international protest campaign against Lisbon's repressions. The Soviet Committee supported the idea and on 3 August, the date of the 1959 massacre in Guinea-Bissau, was chosen as a Solidarity Day.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the Cairo Centre circulated a letter from the African National Congress on the eve of the 1959 ANC conference, requesting that a message of greetings be sent and the Soviet Committee, responded positively.

Only after the independence of Tanganyika, achieved in December 1961, that it was possible for several liberation movements to establish offices in Dar es Salaam, on the shores of the Indian Ocean; these offices were in contact with the Soviet Embassy, which was opened there before long.

The exceptions were two movements from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean: the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) and the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) which established their offices in Conakry.

These two movements, as well as the National-Democratic Union of Mozambique (UDENAMO) were members of the Anti-Colonial Movement (MAC), which united nationalist organizations in the Portuguese colonies.<sup>6</sup> According to the available archive information, Moscow's first contact with MAC was established when on 9 December 1959, Mario de Andrade, its chairman sent a letter to Prof Ivan Potekhin, chairman of the newly established Soviet Association of Friendship with African Countries, who was also a founding director of the Africa Institute in Moscow. De Andrade requested Soviet scholarships for students from the Portuguese colonies, however Potekhin responded that at that time, the association did not yet have "a capacity to invite young African cadres to study in the Soviet Union".<sup>7</sup> Soon the situation changed to the better, and the association began providing such scholarships, but in any case from the early 1960s the leading role in supporting the liberation struggle was acquired by the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee.

It should be mentioned, that some contacts with future leaders of the liberation movements were established even earlier, on a pure humanitarian grounds. Thus, Mario de Andrade and Marcelino Dos Santos from Mozambique took part in the First Conference of Writers of Asian and African countries in Tashkent, the capital of Soviet Uzbekistan, held in late 1958.

(5) The exception was an annual financial contribution to the OAU radio service.

(6) State Archive of the Russian Federation (hereafter – SARF), collection 9540, inventory 1, file 689, p.1-3.

(7) Later MAC was reorganised into the Conference of the Nationalist Organisations of the Portuguese Colonies (CONCP).

Let us now consider Moscow's relations with the liberation in the countries of Southern Africa.

## Angola

Mario de Andrade, who became President of MPLA, came to Moscow again in August 1960, this time from Conakry, to take part in the International Congress of Oriental Studies, and then remained as a guest of the Soviet Writers' Union. He also had meetings, mostly of informative nature, at the Solidarity Committee and Africa Institute. In particular, he described the MPLA's contradictions with the Union of the Peoples of Angola (UPA), headed by Holden Roberto, and called it "rather a racist organisation and due to its ties with the USA, a reactionary one".<sup>8</sup> He also forwarded a very limited request for assistance – to send some "political literature in foreign languages".<sup>9</sup>

The nature of MPLA's relations with Moscow changed when this organisation resorted to the resolute form of struggle. On 6 December 1960 it declared that "direct action" was "the only means by which the people of Angola could attain independence"<sup>10</sup>, and on 4 February 1961 the Angolan patriots tried to storm a prison in Luanda, which signalled the beginning of the armed struggle.

Several months later, on 22 July 1961 Mario de Andrade, and Viriato da Cruz, the MPLA Secretary-General came to Moscow at the invitation of the Solidarity Committee. This time the visit was highly political, they had an important meeting in the CPSU headquarters with Nuretdin Muhitdinov, member of the Presidium (Politbureau) and secretary of the Central Committee, and raised a number of important issues, such as financial assistance, the provision of arms and the training of party cadres in the Soviet Union in various fields.<sup>11</sup>

According to Petr Yevsyukov, "Camarada Pedro", who for almost 15 years, was the main liaison between Moscow and the liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies: "They both made a good impression as serious people who knew the situation and were candid in their accounts and judgments and an important decision to begin multi-sided assistance to the organisation was taken".<sup>12</sup>

The same year \$25,000 were allocated to the MPLA from a so-called "International Trade Union Fund for assistance to left workers' organisations".<sup>13</sup>

(8) Lara L. *um amplo movimento. Itinerário do MPLA através de documentos e anotações de Lucio Lara*. Vol.I, (Luanda: Lucio e Ruth Lara, 1998), p.206. (Letter of Mario de Andrade to Lucio Lara, Paris, 9 December 1959).

(9) SARF. *Ibid.* p.104. De Andrade came to Moscow from Conakry.

(10) *Ibid.* p.105.

(11) Communiqué of the People's Movement for Liberation of Angola, SARF, collection 9540, inventory 1, file 689, p.117.

(12) SARF, collection 9540 gs, inventory 2 s, file 40, p.141.

(13) Memoirs of P.Yevsyukov, p.24. Some Russian military historians claim that the USSR "assisted the MPLA armed formations" from 1958, (*Nezavisimoe voennoe obozrenie* [Independent Military Review], Moscow, no 24, 1998. However in 1958 such "formations" simply did not exist.

This visit was preceded by the expression of support to the liberation struggle in Angola at the highest level. In his public reply to Mario de Andrade's message, which he sent on behalf of the MAC, Nikita Khrushchev, then the First Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party and Prime-Minister declared: "The patriots of Angola can be sure that the sympathies of the peoples of the great Soviet Union are fully on their side".<sup>14</sup>

In 1962 Dr Agostinho Neto, a popular poet and politician, managed to escape from Portugal (he was under house arrest there) "with the help of Portuguese communists"<sup>15</sup> and he was elected the MPLA President. The Solidarity Committee immediately invited him via the Soviet Embassy in Leopoldville (Kinshasa), where MPLA Headquarters was moved from Conakry, and the visit was planned for January 1963, but he could not make it, because he had to go to New York, where he attended a meeting as a petitioner to the UN Committee.<sup>16</sup>

When Neto finally came to Moscow, according to Yevsyukov, "the negotiations with him ended quite successfully". However, MPLA's situation in Congo deteriorated; its government fully supported the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) created by Holden Roberto on the basis of the UPA and the so-called Angolan Revolutionary Government in Exile (GRAE) headed by him.

Besides, the situation within MPLA became rather complicated, and the Soviets were worried by the differences between its leaders, in particular between Neto and de Andrade. "The break-up of relations between these people caused a rather negative reaction among MPLA members and was beyond our understanding".<sup>17</sup>

Yet the Soviet assistance to MPLA continued. As in the case of other liberation movements, it was co-ordinated by the CPSU Central Committee, through its International Department, though some government bodies as well as NGO (called "public organisations" in the USSR) had their part to play. After several years of the armed struggle (it began in Guinea-Bissau in 1963 and in Mozambique in 1964) the time came for re-assessment of the situation. "...an urgent necessity arose to evaluate the state and prospects of this [anti-colonial] war, to try to study the situation on the spot, if not inside these countries [Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau], then at least from the territory of the neighbouring states"<sup>18</sup>

So, the group had a mission "to do all necessary work on collection of materials to determine the line of the CPSU Central Committee for our further co-operation

(14) RSAMH, collection 89, inventory 38, file 4, p.4. The report of the Head of the CPSU CC International Department B.N. Ponomarev on expenditures of the International Trade Union Fund for Assistance to Left Workers' Organisations.

(15) *Pravda*, 16 June 1961. The MPLA was not mentioned by Khrushchev, but neither was it mentioned in da Andrade's letter.

(16) Memoirs of P.Yevsyukov, p.25. Anatoly Khazanov, a Russian historian, states in his biography of Neto that his first visit to Moscow was in 1964 (Khazanov, A. *Agostinho Neto* (in Russian), (Moscow: Nauka, 1985), p.107), but though Yevsyukov writes "I don't remember the exact date", most probably it happened earlier.

(17) SARF, collection 9540 gs, inventory 2c, file 69, p.32.

(18) Memoirs of P.Yevsyukov, p.25.

and policy”.<sup>19</sup> The group consisted of Petr Manchkha, Head of the International Department’s African Section, Yevsyukov, Gennady Fomin, Head of one of the African Departments of the Soviet MFA and Vadim Kirpichenko, then his counterpart in the KGB, future lieutenant general and First Deputy Head of the PGU (First Main Directorate) – Soviet political intelligence. Yevsyukov recalls that on the basis of its report forwarded in a special message from the Embassy in Dar es Salaam, the Politbureau took a decision on Soviet “future policy towards African countries, in particular, on our all-round support to the militant nationalists in the Portuguese colonies.”<sup>20</sup>

Yevsyukov’s story is supported by the memoirs of Kirpichenko, who describes how, apart from discussions with the leaders of the movements and of adjacent independent African states, that is, Tanzania, Zambia, Congo, and Guinea, the group looked for other various sources of information as well. In particular, a Soviet doctor who worked in the MPLA military hospital near the Angolan border confirmed that the MPLA did conduct combat actions: the wounded fighters were regularly admitted into the hospital.<sup>21</sup>

On the basis of his experience Yevsyukov praises the role of the African states then adjacent to Portuguese colonies, in particular Guinea (Conakry), Congo (Brazzaville) and Tanzania. Having recognized the right to independence for the peoples of the Portuguese colonies and legitimacy of their armed struggle, the governments of these countries rendered support to the liberation movements. “This selflessness deserves the highest mark. Sometimes difficulties and even conflicts arose, but the neighbours continue rendering assistance till the very victory. The risk for adjacent countries... was evident.”<sup>22</sup> Portugal did not just threaten, but carried aggressive actions, such as an attack against Conakry in November 1970.

Yevsyukov continues: “Settlements were created on the territories of Tanzania, Guinea (Conakry) and Congo (Brazzaville) where the headquarters of the nationalist parties were housed and actively worked, as well as the centres for training of political and military cadres...; Tanzania and Guinea (Conakry) provided at the disposal of FRELIMO and PAIGC respectively, strips up to 15 kilometers long, along the whole borders with Mozambique and Guinea Bissau”<sup>23</sup>

It is important to underline that Moscow assistance to these and other liberation movements was provided under the terms of special agreements with independent African countries and thus the relevant governments were fully in the picture of Soviet supplies. The practical work in this respect was performed by the officials of the organization, which had a rather long name – Main Engineering Department of the State Committee for Economic Ties with Foreign Countries.

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(19) Ibid, p.17.

(20) Ibid.

(21) Ibid.

(22) V. Kirpichenko. *Razvedka: litsa i lichnosti*. [Intelligence: Faces and Personalities] (Moscow: Gea, 1998), pp 205-206.

(23) Memoirs of P.Yevsyukov, p.8.

However, for many years practically all information on Soviet assistance to freedom fighters, even of a purely humanitarian nature, had been withheld from the public in the USSR and abroad. Only in 1970, Professor Vassily Solodovnikov, the head of the Soviet delegation to the International Conference of Support to the People of Portuguese Colonies, held in Rome, for the first time clearly stated in his interview with *Pravda*, the major Soviet newspaper, that Moscow was supplying “arms, means of transport and communications, clothes and other goods needed for a successful struggle” to the liberation movements and that “military and civilian specialists are being trained in the USSR”, although no figures and other details were given.<sup>24</sup>

Thus, according to accessible archive documents, financial allocations to the MPLA increased steadily: from \$25.000 in 1961 to \$145.000 in 1966 and \$220.000 in 1973.<sup>25</sup> Apart from arms and ammunition, civilian goods like foodstuffs and clothes, among others, were supplied initially, mostly via the port of Port-Noir in Congo and later, the MPLA opened an Eastern front to Dar as Salaam as well for goods to be transported to Zambia and Eastern part of Angola.

However the liberation struggle in Angola was hampered by the rivalry between the liberation movements. Apart from FNLA, mentioned earlier, Jonas Savimbi, former general secretary of that organisation, in 1966 founded the Union for Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA).

After the creation of the FNLA a special mission of the newly-founded Organisation for African Unity (OAU) Liberation Committee, comprising representatives of Algeria, Congo-Leopoldville, Guinea, Senegal, Nigeria and Uganda, visited Leopoldville (not yet renamed Kinshasa) in 1963. Though earlier most of these countries, especially Algeria, supported MPLA the mission unanimously recommended that all African or external aid to Angolan liberation fighters be channelled through the FNLA exclusively and that all independent African states accord diplomatic recognition to the GRAE. This surprise choice was largely caused by da Cruz’s defection; he and a small group of his supporters demanded to “withdraw all authority” from the movement’s steering committee, headed by Neto, to constitute a new leadership of the MPLA and to join the FNLA.<sup>26</sup>

The situation became rather confusing, and this affected Moscow’s attitude towards Angola. When on 17 December 1963 representatives of the Soviet Solidarity Committee, met Holden Roberto at his request in Nairobi, during celebrations of the independence of Kenya, the FNLA leader claimed that the unity with the MPLA should be achieved under his leadership, and underlined the recognition of FNLA and his “government” by the OAU Liberation Committee and 12 African states.<sup>27</sup> The Soviets were not much impressed by Roberto’s words; in their report they stated that he was

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(24) *Ibid.*

(25) *Pravda*. 7 July, 1970.

(26) RSAMH. Collection 89, inventory 38, file 4, p.4; *ibid.* file 9, p.4; *ibid.* file 40, p.4.

(27) Marcum, J. *The Angolan Revolution*. Volume II, p.97; SARF, collection 9540, inventory 1, file 692, p.55.

“nervous, guarded, mistrustful”, but nevertheless, proposed maintaining contact with Roberto and even inviting him to the USSR as a guest of the Solidarity Committee.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, the question of contacts with Roberto was considered in Moscow at that period in a much higher level as well. According to Yevsyukov, Nikita Khrushchev personally became worried why the USSR did not recognise GRAE and gave relevant instructions. So, bypassing the CPSU International Department the Soviet governmental decision was taken. Accidentally, it happened when Agostinho Neto was visiting Moscow and at the meeting at the International Department he was informed about it.

Yevsyukov writes: “[this] statement sounded ... like a death sentence for A. Neto...”.<sup>29</sup> The situation was saved mostly by Alvaro Cunhal, General Secretary of the Portuguese Communist Party” who happened to be in Moscow and, as “Camarada Pedro” puts it, “no information on our recognition of the [Roberto’s] government appeared in Pravda and it couldn’t appear”.<sup>30</sup>

The growing critical attitude to Roberto apparently influenced the decision to receive Jonas Savimbi in Moscow, soon after his resignation from the FNLA and GRAE. On the word of Oleg Nazhestkin<sup>31</sup>, a KGB officer who was dealing with Angola as a junior diplomat of the Soviet embassy in Leopoldville: “When Savimbi began criticising Roberto with an obvious intention of placing himself at the head of the UPA, our officers intensified their work with him, to try to ‘tear him off’ Roberto. A trip by Savimbi to Moscow was organised... However, Savimbi was too ambitious; he did not accept the Soviet proposal of uniting all patriotic forces in Angola as a condition of rendering effective support to the Angolan liberation movement by the USSR”.<sup>32</sup>

Yevsyukov, who took part in the discussions with Savimbi, describes his visit somewhat differently. In his memoirs he writes that “Jonas Savimbi tried to make us believe that he was ready to co-operate with A. Neto” and put the blame of the lack of it on the MPLA leader<sup>33</sup>, but in another document he is much more critical and names Savimbi among “agents of imperialism” “unmasked” as a result of “time-consuming discussions” at the Solidarity Committee.<sup>34</sup>

The International Conference of Support of Peoples of Portuguese Colonies, held in Rome in June 1970, attended by 171 national and international organisations, was a watershed as far as the attitude of various political forces in Western Europe to the liberation movements was concerned. Thus, Agostinho Neto was invited to

(28) SARF, collection 9540 gs, inventory 2c, file 64, pp.282-284.

(29) Ibid. 284.

(30) Memoirs of P. Yevsyukov, p.26. I heard similar story from Manchka as well (Discussion with P. Manchka, Oslo, 13 April 1973).

(31) Ibid.

(32) The late Oleg Nazhestkin first published his article under the title, “Angola. In a fire ring of the blockade (remembrances of an intelligence officer)” (*Azia i Afrika segodnya* [Asia and Africa Today], Moscow, 1996, no 1, pp.69-76, no 2, pp.32-37), under the pen name “Oleg Negin”; then an extended version of it appeared under his own name in a collection of memoirs of Soviet intelligence officers, Karpov V.N (ed), *Vneshnyaya Razvedka* [External Intelligence] (Moscow: XXI vek - soglasie, 2000). Finally a more “academic” version was published under the title, “Superpowers and events in Angola (1960s-1970s)” in *Novaya i noveishaya istoriya* [New and Newest History]. Moscow, No 4, 2005.

(33) *Novaya i noveishaya istoriya*, No 4, 2005, p.31.

(34) Memoirs of P.Yevsyukov, pp.24-25.

Sweden by the Social Democratic Party immediately afterwards, though it took several months for the Swedish government to agree to “educational and medical supplies - vehicles were later included - directly to the MPLA” by the Swedish International Development Agency.<sup>35</sup>

Even more important was the first ever papal audience for Agostinho Neto, Amilcar Cabral and Marcelino dos Santos, then FRELIMO Vice-President in the Vatican. It was really “a shattering blow to Portuguese colonialism, to the policy of the Portuguese branch of the Catholic church”<sup>36</sup>, which supported the colonial war; it signified the recognition of the legitimacy of the liberation struggle waged by the MPLA, PAIGC and FRELIMO.

It should be underlined that these new contacts were made not at the expense of the old friends. A very clear statement on that matter was made in Rome by Amilcar Cabral: “We will receive assistance from everybody. We are not anticommunists. Whoever wants to help us can help, but don’t put any conditions. Don’t think we shall leave our old friends for the sake of new ones.”<sup>37</sup>

However, initially the convening of the conference in Rome, the capital of the country allied to Portugal in the NATO, was problematic. For instance, the Soviet representatives, including the author could not attend a preparatory meeting in March, because our visas were issued on the very day of the gathering, and it took a lot of efforts by the Italian organisers, especially by Lucio Luzzatto, then Vice-President of the Italian National Assembly and a leftist Socialist to ensure that all delegates would be allowed to come in. The Soviet support was important; we provided a considerable part of the conference budget and many air tickets.

The Rome Conference strengthened the position of MPLA as a leading anticolonial organisation in Angola. In 1971 the OAU “formally withdrew” the recognition it extended to GRAE in 1963 (earlier, in 1965 it had already retreated from its previous position and its Liberation Committee began to render assistance, though rather limited to MPLA as well).<sup>38</sup>

Soon enough, however, unforeseen developments radically changed the situation. On 12 December 1972 Neto signed in Kinshasa an agreement with Roberto on the creation of the joint body, the Supreme Council of Revolution. Moreover, he agreed to the second role in it, becoming the deputy to Roberto. This step, Yevsyukov insists, “Completely disoriented MPLA members and supporters, as well as us”.<sup>39</sup>

At that period MPLA delegations were sent to a number of friendly countries. Their mission was rather difficult, if at all possible: according to Luvualu, while talking about the alliance with the FNLA, the leadership of his organisation nevertheless

(35) Autobiography of P.Yevsyukov, p.7.

(36) Sellstrom, T. *Sweden and the National Liberation in Southern Africa*. Volume I: Formation of a popular opinion 1950-1970. (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1999), p.428.

(37) Memoirs of P.Yevsyukov, p.20.

(38) A. Kabral’s speech at the Rome conference (the author’s notes).

(39) Marcum, J. *The Angolan Revolution*. Volume II, pp.171, 187.

sought “to prepare the recognition of the MPLA as the only representative of the fighting people of Angola”.<sup>40</sup>

The first MPLA representative who came to Moscow after the agreement with the FNLA had been signed on 12 December, to attend the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the Soviet Union, was Floribert “Spartacus” Monimambo, then a member of its Political and Military Coordinating Committee. At the discussions with the Soviets he underlined that the MPLA, remained the leader of the national liberation movement in Angola.<sup>41</sup> However we could feel that, though Monimambo did not openly object to the MPLA’s alliance with the FNLA, he was worried about a number of negative consequences: the “resurrection” of Holden Roberto, a possibility of subversive activities against the MPLA in Zaire in the future, even elimination of its leaders, a gap for the penetration of enemy agents. In describing the new united body, the Supreme Council of the Angolan Revolution (its headquarters were supposed to be in Kinshasa), Monimambo tried to prove to us that though Holden Roberto had become its president and Agostinho Neto his deputy, decisions would be taken by the two of them together. He also expected that MPLA would in reality play the decisive role in the united military command. The MPLA leadership called on the socialist and “revolutionary democratic” countries to recognise the new front officially but to maintain close contact with the MPLA.<sup>42</sup>

Finally, Neto led the MPLA delegation to Moscow in late January 1973 and tried to convince his Soviet interlocutors that the agreement with the FNLA meant “a new stage for the movement”, which should present the MPLA with the opportunity to reach “vital centres of the country”, allow the resumption of supplies to the area north-east of Luanda, where MPLA fighters had been isolated for years. Besides, Neto hoped that the MPLA would be able to work actively among a million Angolan refugees in Zaire. He said that many Zaireans welcomed the fact that the MPLA could be in Zaire. Furthermore, he believed that Mobutu (“a little Napoleon”) needed the MPLA in Zaire for his own prestige.

Neto expected that while Roberto became the president of the new council, he as vice-president would control the secretariat, supplies and military affairs, and that his organisation would “continue to exist as MPLA but in alliance with the FNLA”.<sup>43</sup> Neto insisted USSR should maintain its (rather negative) attitude to the FNLA until the MPLA expressed “another opinion”.

Neto informed us that proposals about the alliance had been discussed in MPLA ranks from June to December 1972 and insisted that the decision taken had been a “collective” one. Its consequences were discussed as well: “some are worried, and

(40) Memoirs of P.Yevsyukov, p.29.

(41) Ibid.

(42) According to Ulyanovsky, Moscow had raised the issue of creating a liberated area on the coast to facilitate supplies with Neto, but the MPLA could not make it. (Author’s notes on the discussion of R. Ulyanovsky with T. G. Silundika and D. Dabengwa, Moscow, 19 January 1976).

(43) Discussion with S. Monimambo, Moscow, 20 December 1972.



the others are optimistic”<sup>44</sup>. However he also spoke about the “strange behaviour” of some elements who were trying to use “tribalism and regionalism”, apparently hinting at growing tension within his organisation, caused to a large extent by that very agreement.<sup>45</sup>

This tension reached its peak when two so-called ‘revolts’ within MPLA ranks against Neto’s leadership took place – the “*Revolta do Leste* (Eastern Revolt)” in Zambia, led by Daniel Chipenda, and the “*Revolta Activa* (Active Revolt)”, led by Joaquim Pinto de Andrade and his brother Mario de Andrade in Congo-Brazzaville. The former came into the open when, in July 1973 Chipenda and his supporters issued a statement criticising the MPLA leader, accusing him of “presidentialism” and strongly opposing the agreement with FNLA. The “*Revolta Activa*” followed on 11 May 1974.<sup>46</sup>

“*Revolta do Leste*” had drastic consequences for the MPLA in Angola and abroad. Chipenda was not only the MPLA top commander on the Eastern Front, but also “a person who on MPLA’s behalf was in contact with various organisations, including international support organisations and the embassies”<sup>47</sup> [in Lusaka]. It should be mentioned, that Chipenda was quite popular among those Soviets who were dealing with Angola. He visited the USSR many times, beginning from the days when he was the head of the MPLA Youth. In particular, Yevsyukov in his memoirs does not conceal his sympathy for Chipenda: “Daniel Chipenda in those times when I knew him was a member of MPLA leadership, dealing with military matters. A forthright and frank man, he did not hide his critical attitude to some decisions of Neto, concerning the armed struggle against the Portuguese.”<sup>48</sup>

Meanwhile, a sceptical attitude to the alliance with the FNLA was wide spread among many Soviets who were dealing with Angolan affairs, be it in Moscow or in Africa. Army General (later Marshal) Victor Kulikov, then Chief of the Soviet General Staff, on 21 December 1973 sent a memorandum to the CPSU CC under the title, “On the situation in the national liberation movement in Angola”, in which he express his concern with “termination of the combat actions in Angola” due to a split in the MPLA. Moreover, he put the blame on Neto, accusing him of “ignoring he national question [ethnic problems] in the formation of leading bodies, underestimation of political and educational work and one-man methods of leadership”, which cause “sharp aggravation of inter-tribal contradictions and a spilt in the party”.

Kulikov criticised Neto’s agreement with the FNLA, which “profited only Holden’s organisation” and “so far gave nothing to the MPLA” and suggested through the Soviet ambassadors in Zambia and Congo-Brazzaville to express Moscow’s concern to Neto

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(44) Author’s notes made at a meeting with an MPLA delegation headed by A. Neto, Moscow, 21 January 1973.

(45) Ibid.

(46) Ibid.

(47) Marcum, J. *The Angolan Revolution*. Volume II, p.203-204, Khazanov, A. *Agostinho Neto*, pp.128-129.

(48) Sellstrom, T. (ed.). *Liberation in Southern Africa – Regional and Swedish Voices. Interviews from Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, the Frontline and Sweden* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1999), p.17.

and Chipenda, as well as “to remind [them] that the assistance provided by the Soviet Union to the MPLA depends on the state of the struggle”.<sup>49</sup>

Kulikov’s paper became a basis for the decision of the CPSU CC Secretariat, taken on 10 January 1974.<sup>50</sup> The Soviet ambassador in Lusaka was instructed to meet both Neto and Chipenda and to call on them “to restore the unity of the party and thus not to allow the Portuguese colonisers and their agents to finally subvert the Angolan national liberation movement”.<sup>51</sup>

However, Moscow’s actions were not fruitful. Yevsyukov writes: “In our opinion, the achievement of agreement between A. Neto and D. Chipenda was necessary and possible. The decision was taken to send a group of Soviet comrades from the International Department of the CC CPSU and GRU [military intelligence] to Zambia. All our efforts to reconcile these two men for the sake of the common cause had not produced a positive result. I became convinced that the differences were rooted in the personal ambitions of the two and not in their concern for the fate of the struggle”.<sup>52</sup>

Paulo Jorge, a prominent figure in the MPLA, says that when the “Eastern Revolt” took place assistance to the MPLA was suspended “for a while in order to understand what had happened. ... even the Soviet Union suspended their assistance. We had to explain the situation to them”.<sup>53</sup>

However, if this suspension did happen, it was only for several months in 1974, after the failure of all Soviet efforts to reconcile the two “factions”; and it was far from all-round. MPLA cadres, both civilian and military, continued their studies in the USSR. Supplies, such as foodstuffs as well as financial assistance continued. In 1973 MPLA was allocated \$220,000 in cash,<sup>54</sup> apart from assistance in kind. Although the archive document does not specify whether this money was transferred to Neto personally, this was most probably the case.

The late Oleg Nazhestkin, the then KGB officer, wrote in his memoirist article that in fulfilment of an instruction from Moscow the Soviet Ambassador in Lusaka informed Neto about the “suspension of assistance to MPLA until the question of restoration of the unity of the MPLA leadership with Chipenda’s group is resolved”.<sup>55</sup> The date of the message was not indicated by him, but the language of the Central Committee’s decision, mentioned above, was more guarded; the ambassador had to inform Neto and Chipenda that “... the requests for military and other material

(49) Memoirs of P.Yevsyukov, p.64. On the other hand much later Neto accused Chipenda in connections with the PIDE (Portuguese secret police) in the years when he was a student in Portugal, (Freitas, A. J. Angola. *O longo caminho da liberdade*. (Lisboa: 1975). p.163. Quoted in: Khazanov, A. *Agostinho Neto* p.128).

(50) RSAMH, collection 89, inventory 46, file 104, pp.4-6. This letter and other relevant documents were regarded as highly confidential; they were classified both as “Top secret” and “Special file”.

(51) Ibid. pp.1-3.

(52) Ibid. p.2.

(53) Memoirs of P.Yevsyukov, p.33.

(54) Sellstrom T. *Liberation in Southern Africa – Regional and Swedish Voices*, p.17.

(55) RSAMH. Collection 89, inventory 38, file 40, p.4. This sum was much higher than allocations for the PAIGC (\$150,000) and FRELIMO (\$85,000).

assistance for 1973 have been complied with. The equipment for the MPLA has been delivered to the PRC [Congo-Brazzaville] and Tanzania. However, the continuing disagreements in the MPLA hamper the provision of assistance to the party by the Soviet organisations.”<sup>56</sup>

However, according to Nazhestkin in 1974 initially a part of the allocation was handed over to Neto, but then “...an instruction came to our *rezedentura* [KGB station] in Lusaka to suspend the transfer of the rest of [financial] assistance for 1974 [to Neto] and to pass it to Chipenda...”<sup>57</sup>

Thus, by 27 April 1974, when the left-wing officers overthrew the colonial regime in Lisbon, Portuguese revolution, which opened the prospects for Angola’s rapid transition to independence, Moscow’s relations with the MPLA were strained. Several months passed before active support of Agostinho Neto and his followers was resumed. James Ciment writes in his book that Portuguese officials in Angola “began turning a blind eye to Soviet shipments of small arms to MPLA”.<sup>58</sup> As it often happens when Western academics write about the Soviet policy, he does not refer to any source. In reality, however, before independence, no Soviet arms were supplied to the MPLA in Angola; they went to neighbouring African countries.

Moreover, the situation was still confused when in August 1974 a so-called “Congress of MPLA” was convened in Zambia. The movement was in a real crisis and its leadership had to agree to the pressure of their “host countries,” namely Zambia, Congo-Brazzaville, Zaire and Tanzania. In particular, “the balance of forces”, that is the number of delegates from Neto’s supporters and two “revoltas” was not in his favour.

So, after some days of pointless discussion Neto and his supporters left the venue of the “Congress” on 22 August 1974<sup>59</sup> and in September they convened a meeting

- inter-regional conference of MPLA militants – inside Angola, avoiding external pressure.<sup>60</sup> Neto was confirmed there as the top leader of the movement and the very fact of convening the conference on the Angola side spoke in his favour and helped Moscow to take a proper position.

What influenced it? First and foremost, of course, the evident support to MPLA, personified by Neto, inside Angola, especially in the capital. Then, a positive assessment of his position was received in Moscow from a broad range of foreign sources – for example, from the ruling Socialist Unity Party of Germany (GDR), which in May signed a bilateral agreement on co-operation with MPLA in Berlin;<sup>61</sup> and even from Lars-Gunnar Eriksson, a Swedish social democrat, whom I met in

(56) Ibid. p.33.

(57) RSAMH, collection 89, inventory 46, file 104, p.2.

(58) *Novaya i noveishaya istoriya*, No 4, 2005, p.34. However, his articles contains a number of gross mistakes, for example, he writes about a conflict between the MPLA, FNLA and CNA [instead of UNITA]; CNA is a Russian version of UPA, the FNLA’s predecessor.

(59) Ciment, *J. Angola and Mozambique: Postcolonial Wars in Southern Africa*. (New York: Facts on File, 1997), p.46.

(60) Declaration of the Executive and delegates of the M.P.L.A. to the congress, Lusaka 22nd August 1974. SARF, collection 9540, inventory 1, file 703, pp.30-32.

(61) Statement of the MPLA Inter-regional Conference of Militants, Angola, 18/9/1974. Ibid. 38-39.

Geneva soon after the “Congress” in Zambia. Very important for us was a discussion with Angolan students who took part in the “congress”<sup>62</sup> and whom Agostinho Neto instructed “to tell everything that happened”<sup>63</sup>.

More positive information was coming from the Soviet embassies in Africa as well, in particular from the ambassador to Congo-Brazzaville, Yevgeny Afanassenko. Sergey Slipchenko, Ambassador to Tanzania, took a similar position.

By the end of 1974 the situation became clear. Although Chipenda was elected “MPLA president” by his supporters, in reality nobody else recognised him, and in February 1975 he joined the FNLA as Roberto’s deputy.

The MPLA delegation headed by Henrique (Iko) Carreira (who became the first Angolan Minister of Defence) came to Moscow in December 1974. When he met us in the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, Carreira explained the attempts of the “fraternal African countries” to change the MPLA leadership by their wish to “present the MPLA as an organisation, acceptable to Mobutu”. However, in his words, now the MPLA leadership could talk to those countries that wanted to destroy the organisation, which enjoyed support inside Angola.”<sup>64</sup>

Carreira spoke about the MPLA’s “a strategic and tactical alliance” at that stage with the Movement of Armed Forces (MFA), which ruled Portugal then, but emphasised that the movement could not give them military support, because the Portuguese army “was tired”.<sup>65</sup>

Facing a 10,000-strong FNLA army, the MPLA leadership was ready to conclude an agreement with UNITA “to prevent it from making an alliance with Roberto’s “pro-imperialist organisation”.<sup>66</sup>

Carreira was quite satisfied with his discussions in the International Department and the Soviet military: “Comrades understood the situation. With their assistance we shall deliver a final blow to the forces of reaction”.<sup>67</sup>

On the other hand Moscow sent to Angola several journalists. The first, who visited Luanda in September, even before the MPLA established its headquarters there was Oleg Ignatyev, a Pravda correspondent, who had earlier visited the liberated areas in the African colonies of Portugal, several times.<sup>68</sup>

Then, in January 1975, on the eve of the formation of the transitional government in Angola, my university mate Igor Uvarov came there as a TASS correspondent<sup>69</sup> and

(62) Record of discussion [of the SAASC delegation] with the head of the African Section of the SUPG [Socialist Unity Party of Germany] CC International Department, [Berlin, 30 May 1974]. Ibid. p.48.

(63) Their trip was funded by Soviet NGOs with the blessing of the CPSU International Department; this is an example of continuing support to the MPLA in 1974.

(64) Discussion with Angolan students, Moscow, 9 September 1974.

(65) Discussion with the MPLA delegation headed by H. Carreira, Moscow, 30 December 1974.

(66) SARF, collection 9540, inventory 1, file 703, p.12. Record of discussion with the delegation of the MPLA, 30 December 1974.

(67) Ibid.

(68) Discussion with the MPLA delegation headed by H. Carreira, Moscow, 30 December 1974.

(69) Ignatyev, O. *Secret Weapon in Africa* (Moscow: Progress, 1977), p.93.

stayed there for about two months.<sup>70</sup> He was present at the ceremony of the launch of the transitional government on 31 January 1975, envisaged in the agreement signed in the Portuguese city of Alvor, on 15 January 1975 between MPLA, FNLA UNITA and Portugal.

The Soviet Union supported the formation of the transitional government but we felt its chances to succeed were not high. It was not easy to bring together the movements which for many years were often confronting each other with arms; but also because there was foreign interference. Encouraged by the grossly increased assistance from Washington and Kinshasa, FNLA forces moved from Zaire into Angola in February and began attacking the MPLA.<sup>71</sup>

In Uvarov's words at that time, "Moscow... knew nothing about the situation in Angola".<sup>72</sup> Therefore his mission was vital. Apart from sending "overt" telex messages to TASS, he was allowed by the MPLA to transmit coded messages to Moscow, via the movement's radio stations in Luanda and Brazzaville as well as the Soviet embassy in Congo.

In late February Uvarov managed to charter a small plane and go to Brazzaville, and from there he was sent to Moscow, where his assessment of the situation was valued highly.<sup>73</sup>

Agostinho Neto's return to Luanda on 4 February, 1975, for the 14th anniversary of the beginning of the armed struggle was a manifestation of the overwhelming support of the MPLA by the population in Luanda. About 300,000 people had assembled at the airport to meet him.<sup>74</sup> The MPLA invited the Soviet Solidarity Committee to send a delegation to Angola to take part in the festivities. Its head was Alexander Dzassokhov, who enjoyed a high prestige in Moscow's establishment as an efficient specialist in the third world<sup>75</sup> and his report (just like Uvarov's information) was invaluable not only for the political leadership, but for the Soviet General Staff as well. Dzassokhov discussed with Neto and other members of the MPLA leadership not only the developments in Angola, but also the assistance the movement expected from its friends abroad, especially means of transport, radio communication and printing equipment.<sup>76</sup>

The next important Soviet visitor to Angola was Navy Captain Alexey Dubenko<sup>77</sup> who came to Luanda in March under cover and stayed there for some months.

As mentioned above, Moscow supported the Alvor agreement but had to face reality; the threat of armed intervention from Zaire, growing assistance to the

(70) The farewell to Colonel (Rtd) Uvarov took place in Moscow with all military honours on 8 December 2006.

(71) Discussion with I. Uvarov, Moscow, 23 October, 2003.

(72) Ibid.

(73) Ibid.

(74) Ibid.

(75) Dzassokhov, A. *Formula politicheskogo dolgoletiya*. [A Formula of Political Longevity] (Moscow: Sovershenno Sekretno, 2004), p.271.

(76) Later he was Ambassador, Chair of the Parliamentary Committee on International Affairs and in 1990-1991, a member of the CPSU Politbureau.

(77) The author's notes at the meeting of the African Commission of the SAASC, Moscow, 14 February 1975.

MPLA's rivals from Zaire, South Africa, and, for a certain period, from China. A large group of MPLA members came in March to the USSR for military training: higher commanders were admitted to the famous Higher Officer Courses "Vystrel" in Solnechnogorsk near Moscow, and the bulk, up to 200 individuals (company commanders, APC crews, etc.) in Perevalnoe, in the Crimea. They completed their crash course in late June and constituted a core of the future 9th Brigade (contrarily to its number it was the first regular unit of the MPLA armed forces – FAPLA).<sup>78</sup>

At last the chance to visit Angola for the first time was received by "Camarada Pedro", who was a member of the Solidarity Committee delegation invited to Luanda for the 1 May celebration. <sup>79</sup> However on 29 April the FNLA attacked the headquarters of the UNITA, MPLA-connected trade union organisation trying to sabotage the celebrations.<sup>80</sup> And as soon as the delegation arrived to Luanda, it became clear that "war was really waged in town".<sup>81</sup>

The next day the delegation met Neto. "The discussion began in a small garden near the building, Yevsyukov recalls, but soon bursts of sub-machine-gun fire were heard and bullets began whistling over us. A. Neto suggested continuing the discussion at the other side of the building. To my surprise externally he appeared quite in control of himself, I did not suspect that he could be so fearless."<sup>82</sup>

Though the delegation faced an emergency situation, the first-hand information it brought to Moscow was exceptionally helpful. Its thorough, 15-page long report contained an analysis of the situation, conclusions and recommendations.<sup>83</sup> The debriefing in the International Department followed as well.

The delegation met Agostinho Neto three times, as well as other political military leaders of the MPLA.<sup>84</sup> Neto's words characterised the political position of his organisation in such a way: "They all call us 'red' here; though our organisation is a movement composed of different social forces, we are on the same side of the barricades with socialist countries".<sup>85</sup>

Neto was worried that in spite of the MPLA efforts to improve its relations with UNITA, it was coming closer to FNLA, and facing armed provocation from Roberto's

(78) Requesting the permission to open this office, the Ministry of Defence referred both to growing military ties with Angola and to "the volume of tasks facing the Main Intelligence Department of the General Staff in the southern part of the African continent" (RSAMH, collection 89, inventory 27, file 1, pp.1-6).

(79) Presentation by Roberto Leal Ramos Monteiro "Ngongo", Angola's ambassador to the Russian Federation at the meeting with the Soviet veterans at the Angolan embassy in Moscow on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of independence, 13 November, 2000; . Discussion with R. Monteiro "Ngongo", Moscow, 17 July 2002.

(80) The delegation was headed by Gennady Yanaev, then chairman of the Committee of Soviet Youth Organisations, who in 1991-1992 was the USSR vice-president (and even acting president for three days during a so called "coup" in August 1991 and Eduard Kapsky, who then was an associate professor at the Institute of Social Sciences and later replaced Yevsyukov in the International Department.

(81) Report of the delegation of the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee on their stay in Angola. SARF, collection 9540, inventory 1, file 704, p.6.

(82) P.Yevsyukov memoirs, p.30-31.

(83) Ibid. p.31.

(84) Report of the delegation of the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee on their stay in Angola. SARF, collection 9540, inventory 1, file 704, pp.6-20.

(85) Ibid. p.6.

organisation, the MPLA had to be prepared for armed action based on its support from the people.<sup>86</sup>

The report included a surprisingly precise prediction: "... representatives of various US information [read: intelligence] services in Luanda are keeping UNITA as a reserve, sizing Jonas Savimbi up, and a situation cannot be excluded when the USA will give up their support of the FNLA in favour of UNITA".<sup>87</sup>

The situation was regarded as complicated enough by the Soviets, for Rostislav Ulyanovsky, Deputy Head of the International Department to enquire whether the MPLA had a "system of underground organisations".<sup>88</sup>

Moscow suggested to the MPLA leadership to establish a liaison mission in Luanda, but its representatives whined that their movement organisation had already been accused of being "pro-communist".<sup>89</sup> Meanwhile the CIA re-opened its station in Luanda in March<sup>90</sup> which according to Neto, it "mobilised armed whites" to act as provocation.<sup>91</sup>

The delegation made a number of sound conclusions, such as: "An armed conflict between the revolutionary-democratic elements [read: MPLA] and the forces of reaction in Angola looks inevitable, especially after the departure of the Portuguese army. What will be its result, whether Angola will preserve its territorial integrity – all this will finally depend on the strengthening of the MPLA's positions ..."<sup>92</sup>

Following the recommendation of the delegation<sup>93</sup> the CPSU leadership sent messages to a number of African leaders (and to the Portuguese Communist Party) to try out their position and to ascertain the prospect of broadening the front of MPLA supporters in Africa.

As to military assistance, by mid-May the supplies of arms and equipment for the whole brigade had been brought to the Soviet ports to be transported by ships to the Congolese port of Pointe-Noir,<sup>94</sup> and the MPLA did not send the expected number of fighters for training in the USSR, but was trying to organise it mostly inside Angola.

However the delays in forwarding supplies followed due to an ambivalent position of Brazzaville, and only on 4 July 1975, Neto informed Ambassador Afanasenko that the "PRC [People's Republic of Congo] allowed the MPLA to use its territory for the transport of arms, military equipment and other cargo supplied to the movement by the Soviet Union and other friendly countries ... In order to export supplies to Angola, they allotted the port and airfield at Pointe-Noire."<sup>95</sup> General "Ngongo" recalls

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(86) Ibid. p.10.

(87) Ibid. p.9.

(88) Ibid. p.14.

(89) The author's notes at the meeting in the CPSU International Committee with the delegation that came back from Angola, 13 May 1975.

(90) Ibid.

(91) Stockwell, J. *In Search of Enemies. A CIA Story*, p.52.

(92) The author's notes at the meeting in the CPSU International Department, 13 May 1975.

(93) SARF, collection 9540, inventory 1, file 704, p.18.

(94) Ibid. p.19.

(95) The author's notes at the meeting in the CPSU International Department, 13 May 1975.

that massive amounts of military supplies began coming into Pointe-Noir around August–September 1975. 96 So, the archive documents and “oral history” contradicts the claim by a former CIA officer Stockwell that “significant arms shipments” from the USSR to the MPLA began in March 1975.97

In August the MPLA Iko Carreira was back in Moscow, and again he discussed the MPLA needs in the International Department, the Ministry of Defence and the Solidarity Committee. I was glad, in particular, to inform him that the Committee had already sent five buses and ten jeeps to Point-Noir for the MPLA and was going to provide radio-telephone equipment for intra-city communications and wireless stations with a range of up to 1,000 km.98

Carreira told us that the MPLA managed to rebuff the advance of the FNLA troops and “took steps to clear the capital from excessive FNLA troops”. Now its main worry was a threat of intervention from Zaire and it tried to come to an agreement with UNITA to resist it jointly, but Savimbi hesitated99 The MPLA needed more material assistance in position to block routes for interventionist forces and expected the international public to condemn “foreign interference in Angolan affairs”. 100

It should be noted that the menace from South Africa was still underestimated at that stage, and the attention of the MPLA leaders was mostly on the threat from Zaire, though the “South African Army’s provocations” were there as well.101

Initially the South African troops movement into the Angolan territory was rather slow, they invaded it on 8 August, ostensibly to protect the Calueke Dam on the Cunene River, then by the end of the month they reached Perreira de Eca, the capital of the Cunene province. Soon they began to train FNLA and UNITA forces at Rundu in Namibia and supplied them with arms.102 Before long, South African officers commenced rearming and advising MPLA’s rivals in Angola.

US military personnel also came to Angola well before independence. A team of infantry instructors was redirected by the CIA station in Kinshasa to send them to the FNLA’s headquarters in Ambriz and to the UNITA Headquarters in Silva Porto.103

The independence date, 11 November, that was agreed to by all sides in Alvor was forthcoming, but neither the general election had been conducted, nor the transitional government was functioning. So, the Portuguese authorities had to decide what to do. Finally they decided to transfer power to “the Angolan people”, although they

(96) Record of conversation between E. Afanassenko and A. Neto, Brazzaville, 4 July 1975. RSAMH, collection 5, inventory 68, file 1962, pp.157-159. (Washington: Cold War International History Project. Bulletin 8-9).

(97) Discussion with R. Monteiro “Ngongo”, Moscow, 17 July 2002.

(98) Stockwell, J. *In Search of Enemies*, p.68.

(99) Record of the discussion with the MPLA delegation [Moscow, 19 August 1975]. SARF, collection 9540, inventory 1, file 704, p.51-62; Record of discussion with the MPLA delegation [Moscow, 21 August 1975]. *Ibid.* p.1-5. John Marcum, referring to a newspaper article, writes that the MPLA sent Carreira to Moscow in July 1975 to ask for help, “only to have the Soviets suggest that he try the Cubans”. (Marcum J., p.443). The archive documents and my notes say the opposite.

(100) *Ibid.*

(101) *Ibid.*

(102) Discussion with the MPLA delegation (G. Bires and M. Neto), Moscow, 25 September 1975.

(103) Stockwell J. p.185.



tried to find a compromise. One day in October Igor Uvarov (he returned to Luanda in August, having spent three weeks in Brazzaville, waiting for a plane) was invited by the Portuguese High Commissioner, Lionel Cardoso, who asked him to pass a message to Moscow, asking it to influence the MPLA so that the transfer of power would have “a joint nature”. He divulged to Uvarov that earlier the Portuguese troops had assisted the MPLA to “chase FNLA and UNITA units away from Luanda”, and he gave a specific argument for allowing their leaders to come to Luanda for the ceremony: in this way the two organisations could be “beheaded”.<sup>104</sup>

The Soviet support to the MPLA in 1975 was steady and growing. However, on the eve of Angola’s independence this issue acquired a broad international dimension. 1975 witnessed the shameful defeat of the US in Vietnam and demise of Washington’s influence in Ethiopia. Hence Washington’s desire to “revenge”, and “to stop the advance of communism”.

On the other hand, Moscow was involved in the talks on strategic arms with Washington, and Leonid Brezhnev’s visit to the USA was expected.<sup>105</sup> Under these circumstances the Angolan issue became a point of disagreement and uncertainty within the Soviet establishment, in fact it remains controversial even over 30 years later. In particular, Karen Brutents, former Deputy Head of the CPSU International Department writes in his memoirs that Angola became “one of the key points of the USSR and USA rivalry in the ‘third world’. In the context of its irrational logic Angola occupied a place completely disproportional to its significance and the confrontation there (just as the events in the Horn of Africa) noticeably influenced Soviet-American relations as a whole, the destinies of the détente”.<sup>106</sup>

Georgy Kornienko, who in 1975 headed the American Department in the MFA (and later was First Deputy Minister), took a similar position. He writes in his memoirs: “In the Angolan episode of the ‘Cold War’, as in most of its episodes ..., Washington said ‘A’, but in this case as well, Moscow did not refrain for a long time from saying ‘B’.”<sup>107</sup> In his opinion, the deterioration of Soviet-American relations, related to Angola in particular, interrupted the progress in the talks on strategic arms limitation and caused the postponement and then cancellation of Brezhnev’s visit.<sup>108</sup>

(104) Stockwell, J. *In Search of Enemies*, p.177. Klinghoffer, referring to American journalists, wrongly alleges that “Soviet advisors were present in Angola as early as August.” He claims Igor Uvarov “was actually a member of a Soviet military intelligence (GRU) and the director of the Soviet arms program in Angola” (*Klinghoffer. A. The Angolan War: A Study in Soviet Policy in the Third World*. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1980, p.23). It was not difficult to link up Uvarov with the Soviet military because earlier he had served at the Soviet military attaché office in Morocco, but the second allegation is utterly wrong.

(105) Discussion with I. Uvarov, Moscow, 23 October, 2003.

(106) Kornienko G. *Holodnaya voina. Svidetelstvo eyo uchastnika*. (Cold War: Testimony of a Participant). (Moscow, Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1995), p.166.

(107) Brutents, K. *Tritsats let na Staroi ploschadi*, [Thirty Years on the Old Square] (Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1998), p.204. *Staraya Ploshchad* – the Old Square – was a site of the CPSU headquarters in Moscow. It should be noticed howler, that Angola was not a part of his “domain” in 1975.

(108) Kornienko G. *Holodnaya voina. Svidetelstvo eyo uchastnika*. (Cold War: Testimony of a Participant). (Moscow, Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya, 1995), p.166.

However Vladillen Vasev, former deputy head of the Soviet diplomatic mission in Washington and later head of the Southern African Department at the ministry, believes that if it had not been Angola, Washington would have found another excuse for “cooling off” the bilateral relations.<sup>109</sup>

Furthermore, the Angolan “equation” was much more complicated than it is often seen through the prism of the “superpowers’ rivalry”. More external forces were involved and sometimes they behaved in unexpected ways. Thus, in July 1975 Mobutu accused Washington of plotting against him, expelled the US ambassador from Zaire, arrested and even sentenced to death several alleged CIA agents<sup>110</sup>. By December 1974, after the crisis in the MPLA was over, Zambia resumed its support to the movement<sup>111</sup>, however less than a year later this country was in the same camp with South African racist regime, Pretoria, in mutual support for UNITA!

Washington and Beijing became another strange couple. The self-proclaimed “defender of freedom” and the “champion of the Thirds World” were in collusion to defeat the MPLA. On 2 December 1975, in Beijing, at the meeting with Gerald Ford, the Chinese leader, Mao Zedong said: “It seems to me that the MPLA will not be successful”, Ford replied: “We certainly hope not.” The next day Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese vice-premier told Ford: “We hope that through the work of the two sides we can both bring about a better situation there”, although he was once again worried by “the relatively (sic!) complex problem”, that is “the involvement of South Africa.”

The “division of labour” was obvious. Ford asked his interlocutors: “Will you move in the north if we move in the south?” “But you should give greater help in the north too”, replied Deng. “We are in no position to help [the anti-government forces] except in the north through Zaire”, he complained. In reply Kissinger promised to “talk to Kaunda”, while Deng was to approach Mozambique, though it proved to be in vain.<sup>112</sup> All these complexities had to be taken into account by those who determined Moscow’s policy, and it was not easy to take a balanced decision. Thus, according to Kornienko the Ministry of Foreign Affairs together with the Ministry of Defence and the KGB, prepared a proposal for the Politbureau, to provide the MPLA with political support and “certain material support”, but not to get involved in the civil war in Angola “in the military sphere”, and their draft was “by and large” approved. Yet, some few days later the initiative was taken by the CPSU International Department, whose head and CPSU Central Committee Secretary, Boris Ponomarev, managed to get support from Marshal Grechko (the Defence Minister) and the KGB chairman Yury Andropov, and finally from Andrey Gromyko, the Foreign Minister to satisfy the MPLA’s requests for arms supplies.<sup>113</sup>

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(109) Ibid.

(110) Discussion with Vladillen Vasev, Moscow, 15 January 2001.

(111) Tokarev, A. *FNLA*, p.110.

(112) SARF, collection 9540, inventory 1, file 703, p.12. Record of the discussion with the delegation of the MPLA, 30 December 1974.

(113) National Security Archive, China and United States, Doc # 00398, pp.19-22.

Anatoly Dobrynin, who was the Soviet ambassador to the USA for almost a quarter of a century confirms in his memoirs that the International Department played “a leading, if not decisive role, in the Soviet involvement in the Angolan adventure (sic!) ... the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs had nothing to do with our initial involvement and looked at it with some scepticism.”<sup>114</sup>

Indeed, the differences were there, caused not so much by political factors, but more by practical experience, since it was the International Department which maintained contacts with the liberations movements. However, the changes in Moscow’s policy were caused primarily by the changing situation in Angola, and especially by the South African intervention.

The articles, published by Oleg Nazhestkin, confirm it. He recalls that he was instructed to urgently go to Luanda by Vladimir Kryuchkov, then the head of the PGU [Soviet political intelligence] and a long-time assistant to the KGB chairman Yury Andropov, “one day in October” [1975] ordered him to go to Luanda without delay”.<sup>115</sup> Before his departure he was told by the MFA and International Department’s officials to “exert influence on Neto and encourage him to reconcile with Roberto and Savimbi and to restore a tripartite coalition”.<sup>116</sup> But when he came to Brazzaville [that is a day or two later], more flexible instructions waited for him there –he just had to voice his opinion on the possibility of such a coalition and ascertain the MPLA’s attitude to it. And finally, moreover, just some hours later, before his flight to Luanda he received another directive, given “on a higher level”, to tell Neto about “the readiness of the Soviet government to recognise Angola as a sovereign state as soon as the MPLA leadership proclaims it [and], to establish diplomatic relations...”<sup>117</sup>

On 2 November, the very day he arrived in Luanda, Nazhestkin met Neto. According to him the MPLA President was glad to receive such news from Moscow,<sup>118</sup> more so, because he most probably heard rumours about so called “geopolitical arrangements” Moscow and Washington made “at the independence” of the Portuguese colonies, which allegedly “placed Mozambique in the Soviet orbit and Angola in the Western one”.<sup>119</sup>

Some months before the independence of Angola a new factor appeared that is the military involvement of Cuba.<sup>120</sup> Strangely enough, the fallacious claims that Cubans acted in Angola as Soviet “proxies” survived during the decades. It can

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(114) Ibid.

(115) Dobrynin A. *In Confidence: Moscow's Ambassador to America's Six Cold War Presidents 1962-1986* (New York: Times Books, 1995), p.362.

(116) *Azia i Africa segodnya*, no 2, 1996, p.33-34. Nazhestkin writes: “Then [before November 1975] the Soviet external [political] intelligence had no intelligence capacities directly in Angola itself” (*Novaya i noveishaya istoriya*, no 4, 2005, p.38). It is correct, but he forgot other Soviets who were present there.

(117) Ibid. p.34.

(118) Ibid.

(119) Ibid. *Azia i Africa segodnya*, No 2, 1996, p.35.

(120) Ciment J. *Angola and Mozambique: Postcolonial Wars in Southern Africa*. New York, Facts on File, 1997, p.163 (No source if this nonsense is pointed to). Even such a knowledgeable author as John Marcum wrote about this conjured “American-Soviet agreement”.. (Marcum, J *The Angolan Revolution*. Volume II, p.229).

be explained by the fact that many in the West, be them politicians, academics or journalists were simply unable to understand the nature of relations between Moscow and Havana. Even many years later Gerald Ford said “the Soviet Union was taking advantage, and letting proxy forces carry out its military desires and objectives in the African continent.”<sup>121</sup>

Till the last moment, when Cuban combat units were already on the way to Angola, Moscow was not aware of it<sup>122</sup>, though we did know about the Cuban military instructors there. However, even in this case the first contact between Soviets and Cubans in Angola was almost accidental. It was established when at the request of Neto, Uvarov went in an old Dakota plane to Henrique de Carvalho (now Saurimo) in the east of Angola to find out whether an airport there could be used for landing of transport planes from the USSR and came across two members of the Cuban military mission. Then in Luanda he met their commander Raoul (Díaz Argüelles) who was later killed in action, and met “Polo” (Leopoldo Cintra Frias).<sup>123</sup>

While the tendency to portray Cubans as “Soviet proxies” has declined, another one appeared in recent years, to counterpoise Moscow’s role in Angola to Cuba’s and in fact to belittle it. Odd Arne Westad writes: “In 1975, Fidel Castro initiated Cuban armed support for the MPLA without Moscow’s agreement or knowledge, and thereby reduced the Soviet leaders’ role for several crucial months to that of spectators to a war in which the Cubans and their Angolan allies gambled on prospective Soviet support to win”.<sup>124</sup> The first point is correct, but the “gamble”, if any, could be only on the scope of the Soviet support. Instead of being “spectators”, the Soviets were supplying the MPLA with arms and training its cadres during “several critical months” well before the Cuban military involvement. Immediately after the independence the supplies went directly to Angola, and five days later a large group of Soviet military advisors and instructors arrived there.

It was Soviet-trained personnel of the 9th Brigade, equipped by Soviet-supplied arms which together with Cubans on 10 November 1975 stopped the advance of the FNLA, Zairean troops and mercenaries in a combat at Quifangondo, just 30 km from Luanda city centre.<sup>125</sup>

General “Ngongo”, who commanded the artillery there described to me on the spot, exactly on the place where his Command Post was situated, how his six “Grad- P” rocket launchers initially tried to silence the enemy’s artillery and then by the order of the brigade commander “Ndozi” (David Moises), hit the enemy’s infantry in the grove with about 60 rockets.<sup>126</sup>

(121) These actions are in detail covered in an excellent book by Piero Gleijeses *Conflicting Missions. Washington, Havana and Africa*.

(122) Interview with Gerald Ford. Episode 16. Detente .

(123) Ciment J. *Angola and Mozambique*, p.167.

(124) Ibid.

(125) Westad, O.A. *Moscow and the Angolan Crisis, 1974-1976: A New Pattern of Intervention* (Washington: Cold War International History Project. Bulletin 8-9, p.21.)

(126) Stockwell, J. *In Search of Enemies*. p.215. He mistakenly mentioned 11 November as the date of this combat.

As for the presence of Soviets in Angola on the eve of independence, four of them were there: a civilian, Oleg Ignatyev, two General Staff officers under cover, Dubenko and Uvarov (all three of them came to Luanda for the second time) and the KGB officer Oleg Nazhestkin, mentioned above.<sup>127</sup>

Then at the last moment Ambassador Afanasenko flew in from Brazzaville instructed to take part in the ceremony, accompanied by Boris Putilin, his first secretary of the Embassy (and undercover Soviet General Staff officer.)<sup>128</sup>

However, the first group of the Soviet military destined for Angola, which was headed by Captain Evgeny Lyashenko, left Moscow ten days before the independence on 31 October 1975 by a regular Aeroflot flight and arrived in Brazzaville the next day. Their mission was very defensive, to train Angolans (and as happen later, Cubans as well) in the use of anti-aircraft portable rocket launchers “Strelas”. Having been transported to Point-Noire they were joined there by a larger group of Soviet officers headed by Colonel Vassily Trofimenko and on the same day all of them, about 40 in total, flew to Luanda by an An-12 military transport plane (though, as usual, with Aeroflot markings).<sup>129</sup>

As was always the practice in those days, the Soviet military involvement was not made public. Some months later, on 1 February 1976 Pravda, wrote: “The whole world knows that the Soviet Union looks in Angola neither for economic, military nor other advantage. Not a single Soviet man is fighting with arms in hand on Angolan soil.”<sup>130</sup> That was confirmed by Andrey Gromyko at his meeting with Henry Kissinger, when his American counterpart during a visit to Moscow spoke about the Cuban troops in Angola, Gromyko replied: “We have nothing to do with that. We have given some equipment to the legitimate government – that’s all... We have sent no troops.” At the previous meeting with Brezhnev on the same day, 22 January 1976 the Soviet leader was abrupt: “Don’t mention this word [Angola] to me. We have nothing to do with that country. I cannot talk about that country.”<sup>131</sup>

African countries were deeply divided on the issue to Angola. At the OAU emergency summit in Addis Ababa from 10 to 13 January 1976, 22 delegations voted for recognition of the People’s Republic of Angola, 22 against and two abstained. No doubt, Washington’s pressure played its role. Murtala Muhammed, head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria, said in his speech at the summit: “In the days before opening of this Session, we witnessed a flurry of diplomatic activities on the part of the United States. Not content with its clandestine support and outpouring of arms into Angola to create confusion and bloodshed, the United States President took upon himself to instruct African Heads of State and Government, by a circular

(127) Discussion with Ngongo”, Quifangondo, 21 November, 2005.

(128) Discussion with I. Uvarov, Moscow, 23 October 2003. Apparently Nazhestkin left Luanda before 11 November to report back to his superiors.

(129) Discussions with B. Putilin and A. Tokarev, Moscow, 10 and 17 November 2004.

(130) The detailed story of this mission was described in: [Colonel] Tokarev A. *Komandirovka v Angolu* (Mission to Angola), *Aziya i Afrika segodnya*, no 2, 2001, pp.36-41.

(131) *Pravda*, 1 February 1976.

letter, to insist on the withdrawal of Soviet and Cuban advisors from Angola as a precondition for the withdrawal of South African and other military adventurers. This constitutes a most intolerable presumption and a flagrant insult on the intelligence of African rulers.

We are all aware of the heroic role which the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries have played in the struggle of the African people for liberation. The Soviet Union and other Socialist countries have been our traditional suppliers of arms to resist oppression, and to fight for national liberation and human dignity. On the other hand the United States which now sheds crocodile tears over Angola has not only completely ignored the freedom fighters whom successive United States administrations branded as terrorism, she even openly supported morally and materially the fascist Portuguese Government. And we have no cause to doubt that the same successive American Administrations continue to support the apartheid regime of South Africa whom they see as the defender of Western interests on the African continent.”<sup>132</sup>

The position of Olaf Palme, the Swedish Prime Minister was also important. He published an article in *Dagens Nyheter*. Having expressed his criticism of “massive military support” to the MPLA from Moscow, he, nevertheless wrote: “It is important to remember that the war waged in Angola is not between ‘the Free World’ and ‘Communism’ [and] that it must not in a prejudiced way be viewed on the basis of the clichés of the Cold War or from the perspective of the conflict between the super powers.”<sup>133</sup>

That article was published on 4 February 1976, soon after Jose Eduardo dos Santos, the Angolan Minister of Foreign Affairs (and future President), visited Sweden. During his subsequent official visit to Moscow we discussed in particular the preparations for the International Solidarity Conference scheduled in Luanda, and Dos Santos called for broad participation, especially from the Western countries, “of more or less progressive people.”<sup>134</sup>

The success of the conference<sup>135</sup> organised in early February with practical assistance of the Soviet and GDR Solidarity Committees, facilitated the international recognition of the PRA, although, no doubt, the main reason was the success of Angolan and Cuban troops. FNLA and Zairean troops were defeated in the north,

(132) [http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/publications/DOC\\_readers/kissinger/item10.htm](http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/nsa/publications/DOC_readers/kissinger/item10.htm). Consulted on 22 September 2007.

(133) Quoted in: Wilmont, R. *Ideology and National Consciousness*. (Ibadan: Lantern Books, 1980). pp.183-184. However apparently not everybody in his government shared his views. According to South African sources, its representative paid a secret visit to Pretoria, urging it to intervene in Angola. Hardly accidental Murtala Muhammed was killed a month later in a failed coup d'état.

(134) Sellström T. *Sweden and national liberation in Southern Africa. Volume II: Solidarity and Assistance*. (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 2002), p.136-137. Earlier, in November 1975, during his visit to the USA, Palme stated that “American emphasis on Soviet support for the movement [MPLA] overlooked the fact that Sweden and other nations had supported [it] before the Soviet Union did.” (Ibid. p.135). In fact Stockholm’s direct support to MPLA began in 1971, that is, not before Moscow, but a decade later.

(135) The author’s notes about the discussion with J.E. dos Santos, Moscow, 23 January 1976.

and by the end of March the South African units had to leave the Angolan territory in disgrace. The “second war of liberation” was over.

On 8 October 1976 during his official visit to the USSR, Neto and Brezhnev signed the Treaty of Friendship and Co-operation between the two countries.

Moscow’s relations with independent Angola developed in various spheres, however the hopes for the end of the foreign intervention and civil war were in vain and therefore the co-operation in a military sphere became vital. It has been put across in detail in my recent book<sup>136</sup>, so here I will merely mention the milestones.

The assistance was provided as a rule on a credit basis, however usually the payment of debts had been postponed and finally several decades later, in the new century, only a smaller part of it was paid, now to Russia. Nevertheless, Moscow also benefited from this co-operation: Soviet naval ships could enter the Angolan ports for refuelling. Soviet surface ships and submarines could refuel there and their crews could get rest. Moreover, the port of Luanda later became a venue of the headquarters of the 30th Operational Squadron of the Soviet Navy; whose mission was to protect Soviet fishing ships in the Atlantic Ocean.<sup>137</sup> Tu-95RT naval reconnaissance aircraft could fly from Severomorsk on the Kola Peninsula to Havana, then to Luanda and give “a full ‘picture’ of the situation in the Atlantic”.<sup>138</sup>

Unfortunately the Soviet military involvement in Angola is rarely represented in a proper way. The errors (and even deliberate distortions) could be found in many “academic” and “popular” publications as well as memoirs, however this is not a place to rebuff them. To cut the story short, Moscow’s role cannot be reduced to supplies of arms and equipment, or to advising the Angolan high command. The Soviet officers trained thousands of Angolans, both in classes and in the field, and served as advisors in the combat units, sometimes down to a battalion level. Over 50 of them lost their lives in Angola, even if their names cannot be (yet?) found next to the names of the fallen Cuban heroes on the Wall of Remembrance in the Freedom Park in the capital of South Africa.

It is worth referring to the assessment of the role of the most outraging Soviet officer there, Colonel-General Konstantin Kurochkin who had been Chief Military Advisor during three years. At the farewell ceremony in June 1985 the Angolan Defence Minister Maria Tonha “Pedale” expressed the attitude of Angolan commanders him: “Words are not enough to describe all the qualities which our friend and comrade General Konstantin possesses ... His assistance was invaluable to us...”<sup>139</sup>

(136) 81 delegations from abroad took part in it. (The author’s notes about the report by A. Dzassokhov, head of the Soviet delegation, Moscow, 16 February 1976.)

(137) Shubin, V. *The Hot ‘Cold War’. The USSR in Southern Africa*. London: Pluto Press and Scotaville: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press, 2008.

(138) *40 let vmeste. 1961-2001. Materialy naucho-prakticheskoi konferentsii*. [40 years together. 1961-2001, Materials of scientific-practical conference]. (Moscow: Lean, 2002), c. 62; *Krasnaya zvezda* [Red Star], 9 September 2000. However, all these facilities were not regarded as Soviet military bases, after all Angola’s constitution (article 16) expressly prohibited “the installation of foreign military bases”. *Krasnaya zvezda* [Red Star], 9 September 2000.

(139) Ibid.

This is not to say that all advices of the Soviets were always as they should be. For example, although numerous Soviet officers were experienced in anti-guerrilla warfare (in 1985 the decision was taken that at least 30% officers should go to Angola, having served in Afghanistan), perhaps the majority of them were better skilled in “linear tactics”. Lieutenant-Colonel Daniyal Gukov, who was the adviser of a battalion commander and spent two years at Cuito-Cuanavale, says in his memoirs: “...I was able to teach my advisories everything that I knew and I learned much from them.”<sup>140</sup> The peak of armed actions against UNITA and SADF in Angola was during the “battle of Cuito Cuanavale”. The failure of their attempts to capture this town in early 1988 and the subsequent advance of Cuban, Angolan and SWAPO forces towards the Namibian border, created a propitious atmosphere at the talks which resulted in signing of the New York agreements in December 1988. The Soviet diplomats played a role of unofficial observers at these talks, and their position was very clear: “We always proceeded from the point that what is suitable for our friends will be suitable for us as well”, writes Anatoly Adamishin, the then Deputy Foreign Minister. “We will not ask for anything beyond it... And we didn’t ask ...”<sup>141</sup>

The Soviet assistance to the Angolan government continued afterwards, thus on 7 February 1989 the Soviet Communist Party Politbureau discussed “additional measures” required “not to allow the weakening of the defence capability of Angola as Cuban troops withdraw from the country”.<sup>142</sup>

The armed confrontation in Angola hostilities continued until the peace agreement was signed in Bicesse, Portugal almost two years later, on 31 May 1991. One of its consequences was the cessation of Soviet supplies to the Angolan government and the departure of the Soviets military advisors and specialists.

Colonel-General Belyaev, who was advisor of the Angolan Chief of Staff said later in the interview: “As a whole, it is difficult for me speak for the leadership and to assess it [this step]. We are military people and we were carrying out an order. Of course it was painful to see how our work of many years was collapsing. We already had a good knowledge of Angola, beginning from the theatre of operation up to local ethnic specifics ... As for the Angolans, they did not accuse us of betrayal.”<sup>143</sup>

However, Moscow’s military co-operation with Luanda was resumed in mid-1990s, when on several times Jonas Savimbi violated the agreements that UNITA had signed earlier.

## Mozambique

Moscow’ relations with anti-colonial forces in Mozambique were also established in the late 1950s. Just like Mario de Andrade, Marcelino Dos Santos, a Mozambican poet

(140) *Krasnaya zvezda*, 29 March 2001.

(141) [www.veteranangola.ru/main.vospomonan\\_ija/dan.gukov](http://www.veteranangola.ru/main.vospomonan_ija/dan.gukov). Consulted on 15 July 2009.

(142) Adamishin, A. *Beloye solntse Angoly*, p.194.

(143) RSAMH, Collection 89, inventory 10, file 20, p.2.



and a future leader of the liberation movement, who was in exile in Western Europe, took part in the Afro-Asian Writers Conference in Tashkent in October 1958.<sup>144</sup>

By the early 1960s, several nationalist organisations were established, which operated in exile, and Adelino Gwambe, General Secretary of one of them, UDENAMO came to Moscow in September 1961 at the invitation of the Soviet Solidarity Committee.<sup>145</sup> In the absence of a Soviet Embassy in Dar es Salaam prior to Tanganyika's independence, the invitation was delivered to him via the headquarters of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU).<sup>146</sup> During his visit UDENAMO leadership requested "immediate financial assistance" and organisation of military training<sup>147</sup>, however Gwambe failed to impress the Soviets. Yevsyukov, who was present at the meetings with him, writes: "UDENAMO General Secretary's visit to Moscow gave nothing to us to understand the national liberation movement in Mozambique. His inadequacy was quite evident."<sup>148</sup> Nevertheless, according to archive documents \$ 3,000 were allocated to this organization from the "International Fund" in 1961.<sup>149</sup>

Quite different was the visit by Dr Eduardo Mondlane several months later. According to "Camarada Pedro"<sup>150</sup> he described to the Soviets his plans to unite nationalist organizations and to begin proper preparation of the armed struggle, and his intentions were fully supported by them.<sup>151</sup> At the conference in Dar es Salaam on 25 June 1962, the Front for Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) was founded and Mondlane was elected its President.

Over a year later the Solidarity Committee received a letter, signed by Marcelino Dos Santos as Acting President (apparently Mondlane and Vice-President Uria Simango were absent at the moment) requesting to receive 30 persons for military training, to provide financial and material assistance for refugees and propaganda, as well as medical treatment for FRELIMO members. FRELIMO leadership also wanted to send a delegation headed by Mondlane to Moscow.<sup>152</sup>

It is not clear from the available archive documents when exactly such a delegation visited Moscow, but according to Yevsyukov, Mondlane, accompanied by Alberto Chipande, future Mozambican Minister of Defence came to Moscow soon after the armed struggle had began September 1964. The delegation discussed the issues of

(144) *Krasnaya Zvezda*, 9 September, 2000.

(145) Yevsyukov, P. *Iz vospomonanii o rabote v Mozambike [From reminiscences of the work in Mozambique]*. In: *Afrika v vospomonaniyah veteranov diplomaticheskoi sluzhby [Africa in reminiscences of veterans of diplomatic service.]* (Moscow: XXI Vek-Soglasie, 2000), p.243.

(146) P. Yevsyukov, p.37; SARF, collection 9540gs, inventory 2s, file 36, p.35.

(147) SARF, collection 9540, inventory 1, file 102, p.119. (Translation of the letter in Russian).

(148) *Ibid.* pp.121-124.

(149) *Ibid.* p.38.

(150) RSAMH, collection 89, inventory 38, file 4, p.4. In the list of the receiving parties the Mozambican organisation is named "*Demokraticheskaya partiya Mozambika*", that is "Mozambique Democratic Party", but most probably this is an error. At the request of Marcelino Dos Santos, then General Secretary of the Conference of the Nationalist Organisations of the Portuguese Colonies (CONCP), a successor of MAC, some funding was provided also to this organisation. (*Ibid.* file 8, p.4.)

(151) I could not trace it in the archive papers.

(152) P. Yevsyukov's memoirs, p.38.

material supplies, especially arms, as well as in training, in the Soviet capital, and its requests were met by the Soviets.<sup>153</sup>

Dar es Salam became the major transit point for Soviet supplies to FRELIMO and for Mozambicans coming to studies in the USSR.<sup>154</sup> The armed struggle in Mozambique was facilitated by an active support to FRELIMO, even if sometimes problems appeared. For example, once Mondlane complained to Arkady Glukhov, a Councillor of the USSR Embassy, who served as a liaison with the FRELIMO that out of ten crates with arms, sent by Moscow, Tanzanians delivered only eight.<sup>155</sup> However by and large the co-operation was productive and Yevsyukov praises the Tanzanian leadership: “I remember especially well very resolute and reasonable attitude of the Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere to the problems of the war for independence in Mozambique. Julius Nyerere was a clever and far-sighted statesman and, I think, simply a good man. Sometimes we asked him for advice and his replies were always business-like and sincere.”<sup>156</sup>

The first Soviet to come to the liberated areas of Mozambique was Bahadur Abdurazzakov, a Soviet representative in the AAPSO Secretariat in Cairo (and a future ambassador), who was present at the FRELIMO Second Congress in the Niassa province in 1968.

Eduardo Mondlane was killed on 3 February 1969 in Dar es Salaam, by an explosive device, hidden in a book. He was replaced at the top leadership of FRELIMO by the triumvirate that consisted of Uria Simango, Marcelino Dos Santos and Samora Machel, the then Front’s top military commander. Soon after, Simango came to Moscow as a head of the FRELIMO delegation.<sup>157</sup> Apart from discussions with the officials of the CPSU International Department, that Committee and the Ministry and Defence, suggested sending a group of the Soviet officers and journalists inside Mozambique,<sup>158</sup> and this proposal was realised, though later.

Soon, however, Simango got in conflict with other FRELIMO leaders, and was expelled from the organisation. In May 1970 Samora Machel was elected its President and Marcelino Dos Santos his deputy. Moscow supported the new leadership of FRELIMO.<sup>159</sup>

The personality of Machel, “a national hero and a simple man” was objectively appreciated by Yevsyukov, especially after his march with the Soviet team into the liberated areas of Mozambique [in 1973]<sup>160</sup>: “He was a talented man... a person of natural gifts, but he was lacking education, possessed by say, Eduardo Mondlane...

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(153) Ibid. file 70, p.146

(154) P.Yevsyukov’s memoirs, p.39.

(155) I visited Tropical Africa for the first time in January 1967 with a crew of an An-10 passenger plane from the OKABON, famous Independent Red Banner Special Purpose Air Brigade, with a mission to bring FRELIMO members for military training to Simferopol.

(156) Discussion with A. Glukhov, Moscow, 13 May 2003.

(157) P.Yevsyukov’s memoirs, p.9.

(158) Meanwhile another delegation, headed by Samora Machel, went to China.

(159) The author’s notes at the discussion with U. Simango and J. Chissano, Moscow, 11 August 1969.

(160) Discussion with S. Vieira and A. Panguene, Moscow, 25 May 1970.

He was resolute and capable of infecting people with his enthusiasm; he knew the crowd and knew how to influence it. He could speak to simple people and surprised experienced diplomats and politicians by his mind.”<sup>161</sup>

If initially the volume of the materials support from Moscow did not always satisfy the Mozambicans,<sup>162</sup> the assistance grew with the development of the armed struggle, in particular after Machel’s trip to the USSR in 1970, and especially after his meeting with the Chief of the General Staff, Victor Kulikov, later. Arms included RPG-7 grenade launchers, Grads, recoilless BM 10 guns and later Strela 2M, as well as more lorries, fuel, uniforms, boots and food stuff.<sup>163</sup>

The Soviets were also quite satisfied with the discussion with Armando Guebuza, incumbent President of Mozambique, who represented FRELIMO at the celebration of Vladimir Lenin’s centenary in April 1970 and presented a deep and candid assessment of the situation inside Mozambique;<sup>164</sup> and with Joachim Chissano, who represented FRELIMO at the 50th anniversary of the USSR in December 1972. In particular, Chissano, said that before launching armed actions in Manica i Safala Province “the USSR and other socialist countries had rendered FRELIMO big assistance in arms and other equipment” and underlined that modern arms were coming to FRELIMO “primarily from the USSR”.<sup>165</sup>

Financial assistance was provided to FRELIMO, thus in 1973 FRELIMO received \$ 85,000, although less than MPLA and PAIGC.<sup>166</sup> Certain limitations to the Soviet support to FRELIMO could be explained by a suspicion of Machel’s too close ties to Beijing in late 1969s and early 1970s, which probably influenced his critical approach to Moscow in those years. It is obvious from his discussion with the ANC delegation headed by Oliver Tambo in 1974. He suggested them to be vigilant toward the SACP because of its connection with Moscow. Having recognised “the decisive importance of Soviet aid to Mozambique”, Machel nevertheless went as far as stating that “the USSR and the CPSU were not genuine friends of the African people, were racist and were interested in dominating Africa”.<sup>167</sup>

A bias of Machel’s statement is evident, and it was not far from positions, taken by Beijing during “the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution”.<sup>168</sup> The close relations

(161) The visit was made on the initiative of Yevsyukov. (P.Yevsyukov’s memoirs, p.239). By the way, Arkady Glukhov in his turn writes that the visit took place in 1971 (Glukhov, A. *Nashi pervye shagi v Mozambique*, p.122).

(162) Yevsyukov, P. *Iz vospomnaniy o rabote v Mozambique*, p.231. The Soviet group was headed by Major-General Ivan Plakhin who many years headed the unit in the General Staff, responsible for support to the liberation movements. *Pravda* correspondent Oleg Ignatyev made his first trip the liberated areas of Mozambique even earlier, in 1971.

(163) Dissuasion with S. Vieira, Tete, 23 August 2008.

(164) S. Vieira to the author, 1 February 2007.

(165) Discussion with A. Guebuza, Moscow, 27 April 1970.

(166) Ibid.

(167) RSAMH, collection 89, inventory 38, file 40, p.4. There is no reference to allocations to FRELIMO in the accessible archive materials in 1960s.

(168) *Notes: Some negative factors in the contemporary Southern African situation*, Mayibuye Centre Historical Papers, Yusuf Dadoo collection. Alas, the ANC delegation included a member of the SACP Central Committee.

between China and FRELIMO's host country, Tanzania, should be taken into account as well.<sup>169</sup>

Differences between Moscow and FRELIMO in approach to the rapidly changing situation appeared after the April 1974 revolution in Portugal. That revolution began as a coup organised by the young officers, mostly veterans of wars in Africa. No doubt, the success of the liberation movement in Mozambique, where the Portuguese units were on the verge of defeat, was armed and facilitated by Soviet arms supplies. When FRELIMO began using Strelas, "Rhodesia stopped its air raids and the Portuguese [aircraft] were more or less grounded. Grad-P also was important."<sup>170</sup> In their turn, evident success of FRELIMO made the leading role of this organisation unquestionable and this fact made the position of this movement in the forthcoming talks much stronger than that of MPLA in Angola.

Under the circumstances that were prevailing in mid-1974, when the left forces were acquiring an increasingly strong influence in Lisbon, Moscow was interested in early cease-fire in Mozambique, so as not to jeopardise the democratic process in Portugal. Meanwhile FRELIMO continued its armed operations against largely demoralised Portuguese units; that was necessary to force the Portuguese right wing to accept independence for the colonies. It demanded the transfer of power to FRELIMO as the sole and legitimate representative of the Mozambican people and fixed the date of independence, using Guinea-Bissau as a precedent.<sup>171</sup>

However Moscow's assistance to FRELIMO continued, in particular in the military field. In August 1974, a group of the Soviet officers, headed by Colonel (later – Major- General) Fyodor Fedorenko, the commander of the training centre marched through the liberated areas in Northern Mozambique. They were accompanied by Sebastiao Mabote, future Mozambican Chief of General Staff, and met Alberto Chipande, future Minister of Defence, inside the country.<sup>172</sup> Having returned from Mozambique, they met Samora Machel and Joachim Chissano in Dar es Salaam.<sup>173</sup>

On 7 September 1974, FRELIMO succeeded in signing the agreement with the Portuguese authorities which ensured the installation of the Transitional Government, which was headed by Chissano. Under the circumstances FRELIMO had to be cautious. On 18 September 1974, Chissano stated that FRELIMO did not want to start a new war and did not pretend to be a reformer of South African policy: "This job belongs to the people of South Africa."<sup>174</sup> In a situation where Pretoria,

(169) And, by the way, from the clichés of Pretoria's propaganda.

(170) An Indian researcher wrote: "...if the FRELIMO has done better in respect of Chinese aid, this is, thanks to the influence in Peking [Beijing] of Tanzanian government" (Virmani, K. (ed.) *Angola and the Super Powers*. Delhi: University of Delhi, 1989, p.75).

(171) Sergio Vieira to the author, 1 February 2007. Rhodesia closely cooperated with the Portuguese colonial regime in Mozambique.

(172) S. Vieira to the author, 1 February 2007, 14 February 2007.

(173) Discussion with S. Kokin, 15 January 2007.

(174) Ibid.

together with Kaunda, was engaged in so called “détente”, its Prime-Minister Vorster also sought some *modus Vivendi* with the new government of Mozambique.

However, some assistance, albeit limited, was provided to the African National Congress from FRELIMO even in the transitional period. When our delegation of the Soviet Solidarity Committee visited Mozambique on the last day of April 1975, our Mozambican interlocutors told us that Thabo Mbeki went to Swaziland via their capital, Lourenco Marques (soon to be renamed Maputo).

The FRELIMO leadership in Mozambique, in particular Joachim Chissano and Armando Guebuza, welcomed us and provided an opportunity to travel across the country, visit 11 towns and speak at more than 30 rallies and meetings. At many of them we could see Mozambicans who studied in the USSR, mostly under the Soviet military.

Towards the end of May 1975, Moscow established a liaison mission in Mozambique accredited to the Transitional Government. It was headed by Arkady Glukhov, who after the independent proclaimed on 25 June 1975 (13 years after the date of FRELIMO foundation) became the charge d’affaires and then in November Yevsyukov came to Maputo as the first Soviet ambassador.

The fact that previously he had been working in the International Department for over 15 years and had established fruitful relations with many important party and government officials was in his favour. He writes in his memoirs: “...frankly speaking, for me personally there were no big or insurmountable difficulties to get the approval of the leadership in Moscow”.<sup>175</sup>

For example, in May 1976 he managed to organise the visit of Samora Machel to the USSR and his meeting with Leonid Brezhnev. Then in March 1977 Nikolay Podgorny, Chairman of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Council (that body was often called “a Soviet collective president”) visited Mozambique and signed a Treaty of friendship and co-operation with Machel.<sup>176</sup> The members of the delegation were impressed by the “atmosphere of high morale, friendship and sincerity” “I recall”, Yevsyukov writes, “a mass rally in the centre of the city [Maputo], where a large crowd was singing the “Internationale”.<sup>177</sup>

The Treaty was accompanied by the conclusion of several bilateral agreements as well. However, Podgorny was concerned that “...the Mozambican side turned out not to be ready to sign a document on co-operation in the military sphere”<sup>178</sup>. Maputo was worried that the right of Soviet naval ships to call on Mozambican ports, suggested by Moscow in the draft, could bring about Pretoria’s response, while no guarantee from the USSR had been assured.<sup>179</sup>

(175) Quoted in: Janke, P. *Southern Africa: End of Empire*, in Conflict Studies. London. N 52, December 1974, p.116.

(176) Yevsyukov, P. *Iz vospomonanii o rabote v Mozambique* p.224.

(177) *Ibid.* p.237.

(178) *Ibid.*

(179) *Ibid.*

In any case soon Podgorny's hosts (he visited also Tanzania, Zambia and Somali) had bad news: in May 1977 he was (rather unceremonially) retired to free his post for Leonid Brezhnev.

However military co-operation between Moscow and independent Mozambique continued, in particular, a number of top commanders.<sup>180</sup> A group of Soviet military advisors and specialists began working in Mozambique, headed initially by General A.K. Cherevko.<sup>181</sup>

The co-operation between Moscow and Maputo in this sphere was important for the national liberation movements, in particular the ANC, because all supplies to them would be covered by bilateral agreements between the USSR and the "host" country. In reality however, even the ANC did not always receive all the arms and ammunition destined for them.

The Accord on Non-Aggression and Good Neighbourliness, signed by Samora Machel and Pieter Botha in Nkomati on the Mozambican-South African border on 16 March 1984 radically changed the position of the ANC in Mozambique. Pretoria did it best, using a carrot and stick policy, to deprive the ANC of its facilities in the neighbouring Africa states. The preliminary contacts between South Africa and Mozambique already signalled the deterioration of the ANC status. In particular, the Mozambican authorities requested to withdraw a large group of the ANC activists from Maputo to its camp in Nampula, in the north of the country.

Unfortunately, contrary to the spirit of the bilateral treaty, Maputo failed to inform Moscow about its talks with Pretoria. The seriousness of the situation as far as the ANC was concerned, became clear for us, when in December 1983 the Soviet representatives requested Mozambique's consent to send some goods to Maputo for the ANC. They were of a purely civilian nature, but the host country's authorities were worried that this fact could be used by Pretoria against Mozambique. Moreover, they divulged to the Soviets that a preliminary agreement had already been reached, concerning the termination of military assistance by Mozambique to the ANC, and by South Africa to Renamo, and insisted that the ANC should limit its military actions and concentrate on political struggle. The use of "corridors" on the Mozambican border with Swaziland was restricted, and ANC activists were evicted from some houses in Maputo.

Moscow's attitude to Maputo's talks with Pretoria was rather sceptical. When the ANC delegation headed by Alfred Nzo visited Moscow at the end of October 1983 Boris Ponomarev assured them on the continuation of the Soviet support and expressed the opinion that Mozambican hopes for an end to assistance to Renamo in exchange for restriction of ANC activities were unfounded.

(180) Discussion with S. Vieira, Robben Island, 13 February 1999. In any case later Soviet Navy was welcome in Mozambican ports. Speaking at the 26th CPSU Congress in February 1981, soon after the South African raid described "an official visit to the ports of our country by Soviet naval ships" as an expression of "genuine solidarity" with the Mozambican people ... Socialist Mozambique is not alone."(*Pravda*, 1 March 1981).

(181) Matusse R. Guebuza. *A Passion for the Land*. Macmillan, Maputo, pp.197-198.

The signing of the Nkomati Accord was hailed by the Mozambican government as a great diplomatic victory. Those in Mozambique who were involved in talks with Pretoria insist that the Nkomati Accord allowed to put the actions of Mozambique and ANC “beyond the East-West confrontation”, to avoid a full-scale war with South Africa and facilitated a political settlement in the region later.<sup>182</sup>

However the reaction of the forces friendly to Mozambique, including the USSR, was rather cool, even if they refrained from the open critique of it.<sup>183</sup> The treatment of ANC members by Mozambican officials in particular, had caused resentment in the Congress and its supporters. Joe Solve was summoned by the Mozambican Minister of Security and was informed that in his absence the officials had begun searching his apartment, as well as other houses and apartments used by the ANC members.<sup>184</sup>

However even in such condition, the ANC leadership was determined to maintain friendly relations with FRELIMO, and the situation began to change slowly, mainly due to the failure of Pretoria to honour the Nkomati Accord. Soon the Mozambican media began criticising South Africa, but a real step forward in bilateral relations occurred in March 1986, during Moses Mabhida’s funeral. At the traditional hand-washing ceremony, the participants carried Oliver Tambo and Samora Machel on their shoulders. Talking to the Soviet delegates, Machel called the ANC an “elder brother” of FRELIMO.

The tragic death of Samora Machel, who was killed when his Tu-134, Soviet-made and piloted by a Soviet crew, crashed on 19 October 1986 in South Africa at Mbuzini, very close to the Mozambican border remains a matter of controversy. Pretoria put the blame for it on the crew, while Soviet and Mozambican authorities were convinced that the plane was *enticed* off its course by a decoy, installed on the South African territory<sup>185</sup>.

However, the fact that Soviet equipment and crew were involved is still being abused by those, who oppose good relations between Maputo and Moscow. Surprisingly, one of them happened to be Jacinto Soares Veloso, former minister and member of the FRELIMO Politburo. He claims in his memoirs that since Machel “betrayed the Soviet camp” in a bipolar confrontation, having made a choice in favour of “liberalisation of the economy and society” he was “doomed.”<sup>186</sup> He alleges that “ultra-radicals” from the apartheid regime and from “the East” had common interests and were involved “in the operation to eliminate Samora Machel”<sup>187</sup>. Thus the former head of the Mozambican security machinery happened to be in one company with Zambeze,

(182) Glukhov A. *Nashi pervye shagi v Mozambique*, p.125.

(183) Discussion with S. Vieira, Robben Island, 14 February 1999.

(184) This mood was demonstrated by a student from one of the Southern Africa countries who had chosen Samora as his nom de guerre when he had arrived in Moscow but asked the permission to change it after Nkomati.

(185) Among the goods seized by the Mozambican authorities were over 700 Soviet-made wristwatches which allegedly could be used as time-fuses for explosives. But in reality they were requested by ANC for a hundred of its cadres in the camp in Nampula. However due to a typing error not a hundred, but a thousand watches were sent to Mozambique.

(186) On a Soviet version of these events see: Shubin, V. *ANC: A View from Moscow*.

(187) Veloso J. *Memórias em Voo Rasante*, (Maputo, 2006), p.205.

a pro-RENAMO newspaper, which even claimed that the Soviet pilots had “false licences”!<sup>188</sup>

During the period of “perestroika” in the USSR initially the political relations between Moscow and Maputo were developing in a good way. However, the economic and political crisis in the Soviet Union on the verge of the 1990s weakened Moscow’s ability to assist Mozambique and to play a significant role in the talks on the political settlement, which in October 1992 resulted in signing of the Complete Peace Agreement between the FRELIMO government and RENAMO, in Rome.

## Guinea-Bissau

True, Guinea-Bissau is far away from the Southern Africa in a geographic sense, but in a political sense in the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s it was a part of it; one more country where the decisive struggle for independence was being carried out. Moreover, of the three armed liberation movements in the Portuguese colonies, the African Party for Independence of Guinea and Cabo Verde (PAIGC) had the most advanced relations with Moscow. To a large extent, it was due to its General Secretary Amilcar Cabral, a talented and charismatic leader.

PAIGC united liberation forces in two countries, Guinea-Bissau and Cabo-Verde, but the armed struggle was waged only in the former, while in the latter it conducted illegal political activity.

The armed actions were launched in January 1963 after several years of intensive preparation. Cabral knew that to ensure the success of the struggle, relevant conditions have to be created in advance to carry out political work among the multi-ethnic population of Guinea-Bissau in order ensure their support, to form and prepare combat units, to find allies and to guarantee their assistance in arms and training.

By that time Amilcar Cabral established friendly relations with Moscow and received assurances of all-round support.<sup>189</sup> According to the archive documents, Cabral was invited to visit Moscow by the Solidarity Committee and had intended to come in January or February 1961.<sup>190</sup> However “Camarada Pedro” writes that the visit took place in winter at the end of that year. He continues: “I came to the aircraft ladder... All passengers came down and the last person to appear on the ladder was a not entirely black man, of below average height ... I decided to go to him to ask whether he was Amilcar Cabral. “Yes”, he replied with a kind smile. My second question was what way he preferred to be addressed – “comrade” or “señor”. He replied: “Of course, comrade”.

My first acquaintance with Cabral left a surprisingly pleasant impression... he had broad and deep erudition and was able to convince people in the rightness of

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(188) Ibid. p.206.

(189) Zambeze, Maputo, 28 August 2008.

(190) Memoirs of P.Yevsukov, p.60.



his convictions and views... He respected the reasons of his interlocutor and often agreed with him.”<sup>191</sup>

Cabral paid a great attention to advanced training of his party cadres. Hundreds of PAIGC activists were coming to the USSR from military and political training. PAIGC was in a privileged position in comparison with the other liberation movements: the country was “sandwiched” between independent Guinea and Senegal and had a secure rear base, primarily in Guinea, where President Sékou Touré provided it with a firm support. All supplies from the USSR were coming to PAIGC through Conakry, and its fighters were leaving for training from Conakry.<sup>192</sup>

The first successes of PAIGC made Guinea-Bissau the most dangerous area for the Portuguese army. Adding to the difficult climate, the country was the place where the Portuguese high command was sending politically unreliable officers. It should not be a surprise, therefore, that, as Cabral informed Yevsyukov in confidence, PAIGC had secret contacts with some officers of the Portuguese command and the two sides reached certain agreements about the “rules” of war.<sup>193</sup>

Cabral did not give details of these agreements, but for Yevsyukov, a World War Two veteran, “the peculiarities of the war” in Guinea-Bissau were strange. When he, General Ivan Plakhin and another officer of the Soviet General Staff were moving through the rear of the Portuguese Army in 1972, from their boat with a noisy engine, a searchlight was moving along the canal, and they could see on its bank a brightly illuminated stronghold of the Portuguese army.<sup>194</sup>

The prestige and moral authority of Cabral was so high that the leaders of independent African countries had to treat him as their equal. According to him, it made Sékou Touré somewhat jealous, but he had to make concessions, and agreed with Cabral on some practical issues.<sup>195</sup> More complicated were relations with Leopold Sengor, President of Senegal. He was worried because the PAIGC army was much stronger than his, and several times he banned the activities of the PAIGC on his territory, and Amilcar Cabral had to visit Dakar and settled the conflicts every time. The support of Senegal was essential, because the Northern front, headed by Amilcar’s brother Luis was supplied from there<sup>196</sup>.

Cabral was not only a politician and military leader; his works written on a high academic level, such as “Revolution in Guinea” were published in several countries, including the Soviet Union. In December 1972 he was awarded Ph D (Honoris Causa) by the Academic Council of the Moscow Institute for African Studies.

(191) SARF, Collection 9540, inventory 1, file 103, pp.91-92. It is mentioned in Cabral’s letter that his paid a short visit to Moscow early as well.

(192) Memoirs of P. Yevsyukov, p.66.

(193) I recall how in early 1968 we brought by Il-18 two panneloads of them to Simpheropol for training in Perevalnoe.

(194) Memoirs of P. Yevsyukov, p.63.

(195) Ibid. p.63.

(196) Ibid. p.69.

A couple of days earlier we had a comprehensive discussion with him at the Soviet Solidarity Committee. The main reason for Cabral's visit that time was the participation in the celebration of the USSR 50th anniversary. Speaking about the PAIGC, as its leader, he expressed the feelings of internationalism, so typical for him. He emphasized not only the Soviet people's solidarity with the struggle of his party and his people, but their solidarity with the USSR as well.<sup>197</sup>

Cabral gave us a very optimistic assessment of the situation in Guinea-Bissau. In his opinion, the Portuguese already understood that they had lost that country, but they were "fundamentally interested" in Angola and Mozambique and therefore were eager to avoid a precedent. The Portuguese command intensified bombing of the liberated areas, but PAIGC was going to step up the armed actions including air defence.<sup>198</sup>

Cabral informed us that the local elections took place in the liberated areas from 1 September to 14 October 1972 in the atmosphere of enthusiasm, and that PAIGC was planning to proclaim the state of Guinea-Bissau even if its capital and some other areas were still under the Portuguese control. Thus, in his words "from the colonial country with liberated areas" Guinea-Bissau would be transformed into "a state, whose territory is partly occupied by the foreign troops."<sup>199</sup>

I strongly believe that Cabral was a deep Marxist thinker, though he perfectly understood the realities of Africa and especially of the armed liberation struggle. "When you go to Africa you have to put off your Marxist jacket and to put on a khaki shirt", he told us once.<sup>200</sup>

Amilcar Cabral cherished the idea of the unity of the peoples of Guinea and Cabo Verde. However, due to the fact that Cabo-Verdians were often used by the Portuguese as an intermediate link between them and the indigenous people of Guinea-Bissau, black Africans often looked at them with suspicion. This feeling was drawn on by the Portuguese secret service (notorious PIDE, later renamed into DGS) when they organized a plot against Cabral.

According to Yevsyukov, several times PIDE made plans for his assassination and "Camarada Pedro" more than once warned him about them.<sup>201</sup> This time the Portuguese managed to send their agents to the PAIGC headquarters and to recruit some of its members, who had a personal grudge against Cabral.

Some of the plotters studied earlier in the USSR, in particular in Poti, in Georgia as Navy officers, and having killed Cabral and captured a number of PAIGC leaders on 20 January 1973, they sailed in three Soviet-made boats for Bissau. However they were intercepted by the Soviet Navy ship, which was in the port of Conakry at the time. Anatoly Ratanov, the USSR ambassador to Guinea acted before getting the

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(197) Ibid. p.65.

(198) Discussion with A. Cabral, Moscow, 23 December 1972.

(199) Ibid. No doubt, Cabral meant the use of the *Strelas*; when PAIGC began operating them a few months later it had disastrous consequences for the Portuguese Air Force.

(200) Ibid.

(201) Ibid.

approval for Moscow and in the earlier hours of 21 January the plotters were arrested and brought ashore.<sup>202</sup>

Among the PAIGC leaders captured by them was Aristides Pereira, Cabral's deputy in the party, whose arms were wounded so severely, that he almost lost them, but Soviet doctors in Moscow Central Clinical Hospital managed to restore his ability to move his fingers.

The loss of Cabral was irreplaceable, however PAIGC managed to reach a final victory. On 24 September 1973 the Popular National Assembly, elected by the population of the liberated areas, proclaimed the independent Republic of Guinea-Bissau. It was immediately recognized by the USSR, other socialist countries, African and some Asian states. The Soviet Ambassador to Conakry was appointed a non-resident Ambassador to the new country as well, and he presented his credentials to Luis Cabral, who became the first Head of the State Council (President) of Guinea-Bissau in one of the liberated areas.

After the Portuguese revolution Guinea-Bissau was the first country, whose independence was agreed upon by the new government on 10 September 1974. However, the following decades of this country's history were tragic. Luis Cabral was overthrown in a coup in 1980, and later after 15 years of rule by Joao Bernardo Vieira "Nino", previously Prime-Minister,<sup>203</sup> the country was again plunged into a series of coups and armed conflicts.

## Zimbabwe

When two of the countries which had been united into the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland that is Malawi and Zambia became independent in 1964, the third one – Zimbabwe remained a self-governing colony of Southern Rhodesia. Refusing to give up their power, the government of the Rhodesian Front, a right-wing party of white settlers proclaimed Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) on 11 November 1965.

The UDI was universally condemned and these events encouraged the liberation forces in Zimbabwe and independent African states to take a harder line. However Moscow's contacts with the liberation movement in this country were established some years earlier.

In January 1961 a prominent leader of the National Democratic Party and its representative in Cairo Tarcissius George ("TG") Silundika, future Minister of Communications of independent Zimbabwe, visited Moscow as a guest of the Solidarity Committee.

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(202) Memoirs of P.Yevsyukov, p.67.

(203) Danilov P. *Trevozhnye mesyatsy v Konakry* [Alarming months in Conakry] *Afrika v vospominaniyah veteranov diplomaticheskoi sluzhby*, Moscow, 2001, p. 82-83.

He impressed the Soviets as “a modest and purposeful man, committed to his cause”<sup>204</sup> and his request for assistance, including funding was well received. His party was regarded as the most progressive and mass party”<sup>205</sup>, and the NDP was allocated \$8 400 in 1961<sup>206</sup>.

In fact some contacts with the NDP leader, Joshua Nkomo, were established earlier, when he met the Committee’s representatives at the AAPSO meeting in April 1960<sup>207</sup> and in July 1962 he came to Moscow as President of the Zimbabwe African People’s Union (ZAPU), formed after the banning of the NDP.<sup>208</sup>

At the discussion in the Solidarity Committee, <sup>209</sup>Nkomo claimed that the ZAPU leadership, which hoped to achieve independence by July 1963, began preparation for an armed uprising. “For these purposes ZAPU needs arms, explosives, revolvers, etc

... the party also needs money to bribe persons who guard important installations, to carry out sabotage, etc.”<sup>210</sup> The sum of 150,000 pounds he mentioned was really big in those days. <sup>211</sup>

The available archive documents do not mention allocations to Nkomo’s party in 1962, however they were provided later on a regular basis. For example, ZAPU received \$19,600 in 1963<sup>212</sup>, \$20,000 in 1965<sup>213</sup> and \$28,000 in 1966.<sup>214</sup>

Assistance of all kinds was provided by the Solidarity Committee as well, and not later than in 1961 the first group of students from Zimbabwe was admitted to Soviet universities.<sup>215</sup> Later some ZAPU members went for political training in the Institute of Social Sciences. The political support the USSR rendered to ZAPU included media transmissions in Shona and Ndebele beamed to Zimbabwe.

Later in 1963 James Chikerema, the ZAPU Vice-President requested the Soviets to train 30 persons for four months “in subversive work, for military sabotage” and three persons for six months in the manufacturing of “simple small arms”.<sup>216</sup> The first

(204) However, “Nino”’s actions later boomeranged against him: he was toppled himself in 1995 in a coup, and although he was later reelected president, he was savagely killed by soldiers in 2009.

(205) SARF, collection 9540 gs, inventory 2s, file 25, p.98.

(206) Ibid.

(207) RSAMH, collection 89, inventory 89, file 4, p.4.

(208) Discussion with J. Nkomo. Moscow, 27 May 1976.

(209) SARF, collection 9540 gs, inventory 2s, file 48, p.3. Nkomo writes in his book that he visited Moscow in 1961, but this is a mistake, unless he was there in transit to China.

(210) SARF, collection 9540 gs, inventory 2s, file 53, p.67. Apart from the Committee’s official, Yury Ivanov from the CPSU African Section and Yury Yukalov from the MFA took part in it as well.

(211) Ibid.

(212) Kenneth Kaunda was more reasonable. He requested through the Soviet ambassadors in Addis Ababa in February 1962 and then in Dar es Salaam in August “at least 30 thousand pounds” (SARF, collection 9540 gs, inventory 2s, file 58, p.85), and received 10,000 in 1962 and 30,000 in 1963. (RSAMH, Head of the CPSU Central Committee International Department, B.N. Pomonarev’s report, 3 January 1963 and *ibid.* 29 December 1963.

(213) RSAMH, Head of the CPSU Central Committee International Department, B.N. Pomonarev’s report, 29 December 1963. According to ZAPU Vice-President James Chikerema, Nkomo requested financial support in a letter to Nikita Khrushchev, in March 1963. (SARF, collection 9540gs, inventory 2s, file 70, p.102.)

(214) RSAMH, collection 89, inventory 38, file 8, p.4.

(215) Ibid. file 9, p.4.

(216) According to the official data, in four decades 599 Zimbabweans received Masters’ degrees and 17 Ph D degrees in the USSR/Russia.

two groups of ZAPU members came for training in Moscow in the summer of 1964. During a period of ten months they studied guerrilla and conventional warfare and even field medicine.<sup>217</sup>

The decision to pass to the armed struggle from political struggle was taken earlier. At the state funeral of Joshua Nkomo on 5 July 1999, President Robert Mugabe admitted that at the beginning of 1963, at the meeting chaired by Nkomo, “It was decided... that the way forward should be by transforming our political struggle into an armed guerrilla one.”<sup>218</sup>

Moreover it looks like the first group of trainees was sent for military training in China even before this meeting, much earlier, in 1962<sup>219</sup> and Nkomo writes in his memoirs that he personally smuggled some arms from Cairo to Dar es Salaam in September 1962, when “...the armed struggle had taken its first steps.”<sup>220</sup>

However the split in ZAPU in 1963 was detrimental to the development of the armed struggle. Initially the group of ZAPU members, headed by Ndabaningi Sithole and Robert Mugabe, who opposed Nkomo announced in July 1963 in Dar es Salaam the deposition of him from the presidency of the party, but having failed to achieve it, created a new body, Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU).

This situation was a challenge to Moscow. The Soviet Embassy in Dar es Salaam reported that Tanganyikans supported the break-away group and especially Mugabe, whom they regarded as “very progressive”, but stated also that the British had “apparently” sought a split in ZAPU and underlined that on the eve of the events Sithole had spent two months in the USA,<sup>221</sup> while after the split ZAPU was taking “a more progressive position” and sought “support in socialist countries.”<sup>222</sup>

Apart from this argument, the fact that ZANU soon established close contacts with China also spoke in favour of giving a priority to ZAPU, because in those days differences between the Soviet Union and China became obvious and expended.

The Soviet Union supported joint operations of ZAPU and the South African ANC in Zimbabwe in 1967 and 1968, though its failure affected the situation in ZAPU negatively and aggravated tension there.

Joshua Nkomo and several other prominent members of ZAPU by that time were in detention for several years, and the exile leadership was headed by the party Vice- President James Chikerema and Secretary-General George Nyandoro. At our meetings with them, be it in Moscow or in Lusaka, when the ZAPU Headquarters had been

(217) SARF, collection 9540 gs, inventory 2s, file 68, p.188.

(218) Discussion with P.Mpoko, Moscow, 21 March 2007. However, Nkomo writes in his book that Bobbylock Manyonga, arrested [in late 1962 or early 1963] by Rhodesian police while transporting the arms Nkomo earlier brought from Egypt, “never revealed ... that his weapons training had been acquired on a short course in the Soviet Union, as the first of many who were to go there.” (*The Story of My Life*, p.103.)

(219) Address delivered by His Excellency Cde President R.G. Mugabe at the funeral of Vice-President Dr Joshua Mqabuko Nkomo at the National Heroes Acre. Monday, 5th July, 1999, p.17.

(220) Discussion with a former ZIPRA commander.

(221) Joshua Nkomo. *The Story of My Life*, pp.102-103.

(222) SARF, collection 9540 gs, inventory 2s, file 69, p.159.

established, they complained about lack of support for their party in Africa; thus, according to Nyandoro, nobody on the continent was helping it, except Algeria.<sup>223</sup>

When Silundika came to the USSR in late September 1969, he was also very critical of the policy of African states; he called the Lusaka Manifesto, adopted by some of them in April 1969, a “reactionary and dangerous” document.<sup>224</sup> In spite of these problems the spirit of ZAPU leaders was optimistic and we could not suspect a major crisis, which incapacitated the party in the early 1970s. Unfortunately, an ethnic element was involved in the split: Chikerema and Nyandoro, both Shona, took one side and three others members of the Executive in exile – Jason Moyo, Silundika and Edward Ndlovu, all Ndebele on the other side.

It was difficult for Moscow to make a choice and it appealed for unity, but in vain. The activities of the party, including armed actions stalled and a mutiny in its camps followed. In my opinion this heavy crisis allowed Zimbabwe African National Union, a party, which split from ZAPU in 1963, to come to the forefront. More so, because some prominent ZAPU commanders, such as Rex Ngongo (Solomon Majuru), crossed to ZANU. Besides, it happened when FRELIMO, traditionally friendly to ZAPU began operations in the Tete province, adjacent to Zimbabwean border. Dumiso Dabengwa, a prominent ZAPU leader wrote later: “It was during this crisis that ZAPU lost its important and strategic contact with FRELIMO.”<sup>225</sup>

Moscow did not recognise the short-lived Front for Liberation of Zimbabwe (FROLIZI), created in October 1971 by Chikerema, Nyandoro when their attempt to establish control over ZAPU failed (they were joined by some ZANU members as well).

Thereafter the situation in ZAPU cleared and soon Moscow’s relations with this organisation were restored to the full scale. However it was not easy to resume activities after the crisis. When in January 1972 a commission headed by Lord Pearce was sent to Zimbabwe to find out whether the population supported a draft constitution negotiated between Ian Smith’s government and London, the ZAPU leadership wanted to send some fighters home to support this “rebellion”, but they had neither the means nor the funds to do so. <sup>226</sup>

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(223) Ibid. p.96.

(224) Discussion with G. Nyandoro, Moscow, 17 July 1969, discussion with J. Chikerema, Lusaka, 4 August 1969.

(225) Discussion with T.G. Silundika, Moscow, 16 October 1969. The Lusaka Manifesto on South Africa was approved by the conference of the Eastern and Central African states in Lusaka in April 1969. The signatories confirmed that the liberation of Southern Africa was their aim, while stating their readiness to normalise relations with colonial and racist regimes. They would urge the liberation movements “to desist from their armed struggle” if those regimes recognised “the principle of human equality” and the right to self-determination. The moderate tone of the Manifesto was used by collaborationists such as President Banda of Malawi to justify their policy of a so-called “dialogue” with South Africa.

(226) Bhebhe, N. and Ranger, T. *Soldiers in Zimbabwe’s Liberation War*. London: James Curry, Portsmouth: Heinemann, Harare: University of Zimbabwe Publications, 1995, p.31.

After the creation of the Joint Military Command (JMC) of ZAPU and ZANU in 1972 in order to prevent the recognition of FROLIZI by the OAU Liberation Committee both parties agreed to stop criticising each other publicly.<sup>227</sup>

Although Moscow's attitude to ZANU was restrained, from time to time we had contacts with this organisation. I remember, for example, a long discussion with Herbert Chitepo, ZANU Chairman, who headed the party in exile, during the International Conference on Southern Africa in Oslo in April 1973,<sup>228</sup> though Chitepo did not share my enthusiasm about the JMC and called for direct ties between the USSR and ZANU.<sup>229</sup>

The April 1974 Portuguese revolution made independence for Mozambique and Angola be on the agenda; John Vorster made a dramatic statement, calling: "Give South Africa six months' chance. I ask no more than this. If South Africa is given this chance, they [its critics] will be amazed at where the country stands in about six or twelve months' time."<sup>230</sup> This statement was welcomed by a number of African leaders, in particular Kenneth Kaunda, President of a "host" country for ZAPU spoke of "the voice of reason for which Africa and the whole world were waiting."<sup>231</sup>

The notion of "détente" in Southern Africa, advanced by Pretoria was dismissed by Silundika as a "misapplication of the term." Kaunda, no doubt, hoped that Vorster would put pressure on the Ian Smith regime to achieve a political settlement in Zimbabwe. Indeed Pretoria managed to ensure that both ZAPU and ZANU leaders were released from detention camps and prisons and organized the preliminary talks jointly with Zambia.

By that time the Zimbabwean liberation movement was represented by four different organisations, whose leaders signed a Unity Accord in December 1974.<sup>232</sup> Three of them were banned: ZAPU with ZIPRA (Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army), its military wing, ZANU with ZANLA (Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army), FROLIZI, which had a group of armed cadres, mostly former ZAPU members; and the legal African National Council, headed by Bishop Abel Muzorewa, which was created to campaign during the Pearce Commission and acted as a legal entity inside Zimbabwe.

The ANC delegation, which was headed by Muzorewa and included all other leaders, met Smith, in the presence of Vorster, Kaunda and the representative of the Frontline States, but the meeting was a total failure.

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(227) Discussion with E. Ndlovu, Moscow, 4 August 1972.

(228) Ibid.

(229) Its official title was UN-OAU International Conference of Experts in Support of Victims of Colonialism and Apartheid. However, the representatives of the liberation movements refused to regard themselves as victims, while most of the participants were unhappy to be reduced to the level of "experts." In any case this title reflected the lack of enthusiasm in some UN quarters for the anti-colonial and anti-racist struggle.

(230) Discussion with H. Chitepo, Oslo, 14 April 1973.

(231) Quoted in: *African Affairs*, Oxford, Vol. 39, No 316, p.430.

(232) *Sechaba*, N 5, 1975, p.16.

The Unity Accord did not survive either. Under those circumstances, the leaders of the Frontline States pushed the formation of a united military force, the Zimbabwe People's Army (ZIPA) which was officially launched in September 1975. African leaders, Samora Machel in particular, insisted that "the leader should come out of the bush; he should emerge as one of those who carry a gun." The attitude of the ZIPA Command to Moscow was positive, and at the conference held in Mozambique in 1975 it was agreed that Soviet advisors were needed for a joint force.<sup>233</sup> However, soon ZIPA disintegrated as well, partly due to the disorder within the ranks of ZANLA.

On 26 May 1976, Nkomo arrived in Moscow for the first time after his release. The Soviet Union continued to support ZAPU, even for sometime its leadership used the name of ANC, when Nkomo became its President, having "deposed" Abel Muzorewa at the congress in September 1975. During his discussions in Moscow Nkomo underlined that the ANC had been "built on the basis of ZAPU."<sup>234</sup>

By that time Moscow's relations with his party were active and versatile. Both, political and practical matters were being discussed, for example in January 1979 Silundika and Dabengwa were advised by Professor Rostislav Ulyanovsky "Don't seize the property of the white people now. Create a new government and a new army under your control, then you will see. You don't have cadres. Social changes, changes in property relations should come later. Of course you should improve the situation of the black population, but years will pass before the socialisation of property."<sup>235</sup>

During that time Nkomo visited the Ministry of Defence, the 10th Main Department of the General Staff, which was dealing with military assistance to foreign countries. Nkomo writes in his memoirs: "Once the policy of support had been decided on [by the Soviet leadership], I was passed on to a military committee [read: Ministry of Defence], and I had to justify to it every detail of my request. If I said we had 500 men, so we wanted 500 of their basic AK rifles, they would say no, 500 men means so many rifles, so many light machine-guns, so many mortars or anti-tank rockets, and I would end up with only about 300 Aks ... Only after I had studied the way armies are run was I able to deal as an equal with the Soviet military people."<sup>236</sup>

Soon after his departure from Moscow, on 30 June 1976, Nkomo wrote a letter to the CPSU Central Committee, informing them that he agreed with the governments of Angola and Zambia on the transportation of arms and other supplies for the ANC (read: ZAPU)<sup>237</sup>. So, his organization no longer depended on supplies via Tanzania, which was not too friendly to ZAPU.

(233) Sithole signed it on behalf of ZANU, although he had been "deposed" by his fellow leaders in prison, and his status became rather controversial.

(234) Discussion with a former ZIPRA commander.

(235) Discussion with J. Nkomo, Moscow, 27 May 1976.

(236) Author's notes made at the discussion of R. Ulyanovsky with T. G. Silundika and D. Dabengwa, Moscow, 19 January 1976.

(237) J. Nkomo. *The Story of My Life*, pp.174-175.



Nkomo's letter contained a long list of requests, signed by ZIPRA top commander Alfred "Nikita"<sup>238</sup> like: for a training camp for 2000 persons, for the "Zambian Front" (of 4000 persons), for fighters inside "Southern Rhodesia" and for general command and co-ordination. They included requests for 4,000 Kalashnikovs, 1650 SKS Simonov self-loading carbines, 1100 pistols, rocket-propelled grenade launchers (RPGs), Grad-Ps, "Strelas", recoilless guns, mortars, trucks, cars, a launcher, rubber boats, etc.<sup>239</sup>

The requests were received favourably and the Central Committee Secretariat instructed the Ministry of Defence and other relevant government bodies to study them and to submit their proposals in one month's time.<sup>240</sup>

Such attitude, to a large extent was ensured by friendly relations between Nkomo and the Soviet Ambassador in Lusaka Vassily Solodovnikov. By the time he arrived in Lusaka, in July 1976, Moscow's relations with Zambia were spoiled by Kaunda's efforts to bring Savimbi to power in Angola at any cost. During his visit to Washington Kaunda had suggested to President Ford to "get Savimbi in" and conduct elections in Angola only later:

The President: At dinner he [Kaunda] was very forceful on this. He said that it was important to get his man in first, and then he will win the election. I asked him if there were not going to be elections, and he said yes, and that was why it was important to put Savimbi in first and then he would win.

Secretary Kissinger: Kaunda was giving the President a lesson in political science. [Laughter].<sup>241</sup>

Kaunda "distinguished" himself by a thinly veiled insult of Moscow and Havana, when he spoke about "the plundering tiger with its deadly cubs."<sup>242</sup> Nevertheless it did not take much time for Solodovnikov to change Kaunda's attitude and to launch the co-operation between Lusaka and Moscow in a number of fields, including arms supplies provision of Soviet military specialists. His record was really outstanding. He not just established ties with Lusaka, but also to enhanced and diversified them greatly. Soon these ties included even such "sensitive" issues as a supply of arms and sending Soviet military specialists to Zambia. According to the US ambassador:

Solodovnikov, a long favourite of the American and Western European media which touted him as Moscow's Southern African wizard, leaves behind an impressive record in Zambia ... Solodovnikov can take considerable personal credit for Soviet successes in Zambia. His patient, unaggressive style coupled with an impressive understanding of Africa put him in good stead with Kaunda and the Zambian leadership.<sup>243</sup>

(238) RSAMH, collection 89, inventory 27, file 21, p.19.

(239) RSAMH, collection 89, inventory 27, file 21, p.30.

(240) Ibid. pp.20-30.

(241) Ibid. p.1.

(242) The National Security Council (2999). Minutes National Security Council Meeting. Date: Friday, 27 June 1975.

(243) Quoted in: Klinghoffer. A. *The Angolan War: A Study in Soviet Policy in the Third World*. p.51.

Indeed, his activities were closely monitored by Western, South African and South Rhodesian “special services”, which were active in Zambia in those days; one of their agents managed to install a bugging device in his residence, of course, it was detected before long but was left there to confuse the “adversaries.”

A new request was forwarded by Nkomo after the failure of the Geneva Conference on the political settlement in Zimbabwe, which began on 28 October 1976, was interrupted on 14 December “for Christmas holidays” and never reconvened again. At Nkomo’s request the CPSU International Department sent two Soviet experts, Dr Venyamin Chirkin, a prominent jurist and Ambassador Vladimir Snegirev, to Geneva to advise the ZAPU delegation on legal and constitutional matters.<sup>244</sup>

On the eve of the conference on 9 October 1976 Nkomo and Mugabe announced the formation of a joint Patriotic Front of ZAPU and ZANU and they attended the conference as a joint delegation under joint leadership, although quite probably Nkomo expected that he would play a leading role.

However, in reality both organisations worked separately, be it in their offices abroad or military units, though Moscow tried its best to get them to co-operate better, and later we were glad to hear from Silundika on this matter: “On the ZAPU- ZANU front some progress has been made – at least on paper - regarding closer links on a unitary basis – both army and political. The programme and ideology are being worked out...” in spite of “the Far East [read: Beijing] influence” on ZANU and “the Far East misdirection.”<sup>245</sup>

Soon after the failure of the Geneva conference Nkomo came again to Moscow, where in particular he discussed military matters again with the Soviet military on 4 January 1977.<sup>246</sup> Another request was received, primarily on training matters: to receive 200 activists in the USSR for military training, including 20 pilots and 20 more to be trained in “party security.”<sup>247</sup>

Besides, by that time Nkomo agreed with the authorities of Angola and Zambia on the opening of a training camp in Angola, and the transit of ZAPU fighters between the two countries.<sup>248</sup> Initially the Cubans agreed to be responsible for supplies and maintenance of the camp, but Nkomo wanted the Soviets to take over as far as those matters were concerned, as well as to send Soviet instructors there.<sup>249</sup>

The response was by and large positive and this time the relevant state bodies were instructed to consider Nkomo’s requests within just two weeks.<sup>250</sup> In July 1977 the first group of 12 Soviet officers, headed by Lieutenant-Colonel Vladimir Penin

(244) AmEmbassy Lusaka to SecState WashDC. Subj: Soviet-Zambian relations; the end of Solodovnikov era. Doc\_nbr: 1981Lusaka0149.

(245) Chirkin described his missions to Geneva and later to London in: *S tainoi missiei v Genevu and London* [With a Secret Mission to Geneva and London], In: *Afrika v vospominaniyah veteranov diplomaticheskoi sluzhby*, [Africa in Reminiscences of Veterans of Diplomatic Service] (Moscow, XXI vek-Soglasie, 2000), pp.124-133.

(246) T.G. Silundika to the author, 19 September 1977.

(247) Author’s notes at Nkomo’s discussion at the USSR Ministry of Defence, 4 January 1977.

(248) RSAMH, collection 89, inventory 27, file 34, pp.8-9.

(249) RSAMH, collection 89, inventory 27, file 34, p.7-8.

(250) Ibid. p.8. Nkomo reiterated his requests during his visit to Moscow.

arrived at the ZAPU camp, situated 18 km from Luena (formerly Vila Luso), in Eastern Angola.<sup>251</sup> In 1978 this group was replaced by another one, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Zverev.<sup>252</sup>

The Soviet military specialists stayed in the camp together with ZAPU combatants and Cuban comrades-in-arms<sup>253</sup> and shared all the hardships with them. They lived in brick buildings without any amenities; some of them lacked windowpanes and even window frames. <sup>254</sup> The short, two month course were organized and up to 2,000 ZAPU members came to Angola from Zambia in each shift. A field exercise was organized at the end of each course, which included crossing “a water obstacle”, which was essential, because in most cases ZAPU fighters had to cross the Zambezi on the way home from Zambia.

The main task of the Soviet group was to train Zimbabweans in regular warfare, which testifies that by mid-1977<sup>255</sup> the ZAPU leadership and ZIPRA command had already been planning an offensive through the border with the use of regular forces. However, due attention was also paid to guerrilla tactics.”<sup>256</sup> In 1978 Joshua Nkomo visited the camp and expressed his satisfaction with the state of affairs in the camp.<sup>257</sup> However the lack of proper air defence of the camp brought about a disaster on 26 February 1979 when the Rhodesian Air Force attacked with seven bombers (earlier supplied by London); 192 fighters lost their lives and about 1,000 were wounded<sup>258</sup>. Six Cuban instructors were killed and 13 were wounded.<sup>259</sup> A Soviet warrant officer, Grigory Skakun, a specialist on fire-range equipment, was hit by a cluster bomb containing ball bearings and died after some days.<sup>260</sup>

In the same period, on 13 July 1978,, at ZAPU’s request three Soviet military specialists, headed by Colonel Lev Kononov, arrived in Lusaka as advisors of the ZIPRA high command. According to Solodovnikov: “Outwardly, for the public, the group was assigned to Zambia’s Ministry of Defence, but it didn’t work even a single day there. In reality, the military specialists worked as councillors to the Chief Commander of the People’s Revolutionary Army, Joshua Nkomo. These people were first-class specialists in guerrilla warfare.”<sup>261</sup>

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(251) Ibid. p.1.

(252) Burenko, A. *A hard but exclusively important period of life* (sent to the author on 13 December 2006) p.1. In 1977 Burenko was captain, and now he has a title of professor and a rank of major-general.

(253) Ibid. p.4.

(254) Burenko recalls them with a feeling of gratitude, and writes about their efficiency, professionalism, honesty, jovial character and friendly attitude to the Soviets.(Ibid. p.1)

(255) Ibid. p.4

(256) That is a year before the Soviet officers came to the ZIPRA Headquarters in Zambia.

(257) Ibid. pp.1-2.

(258) Ibid.

(259) Ambassador Solodovnikov’s hand-written note on the paper *Udary rodeziiskih voisk po ob’ektam ZIPRA v Zambii* (Attacks of Rhodesian troops against ZIPRA installations in Zambia). I am indebted to Ambassador Solodovnikov for this paper. By the way, its last line contained the words “Sincerely yours. SIBANDA”, and a small picture of a handshake. Apparently SIBANDA was Colonel Kononov’s *nom de guerre*.

(260) Risquet J. *Prologue*, p.14.

(261) Burenko, A. *A hard but exclusively important period of life*, p.5.

So, unfortunately Nkomo was not exactly accurate, when in his memoirs he wrote: “...there was never any question of sending combat troops, or even advisors, from the Soviet Union or any other country to help us fight our war”<sup>262</sup>. This statement contradicts his own letter to the CPSU, in which he specially expressed appreciation for the work of Colonel Kononov’s advisory group. Equally wrong his (or his ghost writer’s?) claim that apart from a few Ghanaian instructors who served in the camps in Tanzania and two Cuban security officers, all the people at ZAPU bases were Zimbabweans<sup>263</sup>, thus “having forgotten” dozens of Soviets and Cubans who risked their lives in ZIPRA camp in Angola.<sup>264</sup>

Anyhow, the presence of the Soviet military advisors with the ZIPRA could not be hidden from the Rhodesians and their friends, and later the assessment of their role became contentious. Jakkie Cilliers, incumbent Director of the Institute for Security Studies in Pretoria, believes that a plan to launch an offensive of the regular ZIPRA forces from the territory of Zambia across the Zambezi was “crafted” by the Soviet Union<sup>265</sup>. On the contrary, Dumiso Dabengwa insists that the Soviet military advisors expressed serious reservations about the strategy drafted by the Zimbabweans themselves.<sup>266</sup> Besides, as stated above, training of regular troops began a year prior to the arrival of Kononov’s group to Lusaka. Nevertheless, I recall how at one of Nkomo’s meetings at the Soviet Ministry of Defence, most probably in early 1978, Colonel-General Georgy Skorikov, the chief of *Desyatka*, advised Nkomo not to disperse his forces but to concentrate them for decisive blows against the enemy. In any case it should be underlined that ZIPRA cadres were trained by the Soviets in both regular and guerrilla warfare.

At that period the independent African countries adjacent to Zimbabwe were under severe pressure from the Rhodesian regime. I recall that Dumiso Dabengwa during one of his visits to Moscow in 1978 was worried that even Zambia, which was closest to ZAPU, could forbid the use of its territory for the armed struggle.<sup>267</sup> Having failed to force the Patriotic Front into agreement on its terms, the racist regime opted for a so-called “internal settlement,” but with African organizations, which had already discredited themselves by collaboration with it. Abel Muzorewa became (figurehead) Prime Minister of “Zimbabwe-Rhodesia”, but the real control remained in the hands of Smith and his “securocrats”. Chikerema and Nyandoro became cabinet ministers, and this fact vindicated Moscow’s decision not to support them during a split in the ZAPU leadership.

(262) Solodovnikov, V. The Cold War in the Southern Africa: 1976-81. In: IAS Newsletter, no 4, 1998, p.2.

(263) Nkomo, J. *The Story of My Life*, p.175.

(264) Ibid.

(265) The author of the most comprehensive book so far on the history of ZAPU fares a bit better: he does mention training of ZIPRA cadres “under Cubans” in Angola, but fails to mention Soviet instructors. (Sibanda, E. *The Zimbabwe African People’s Union 1961-1967*. p.175).

(266) Quoted in: Sibanda, E. *The Zimbabwe African People’s Union 1961-1967*, p.206.

(267) Ibid.

The next visit of the ZAPU delegation, headed by Nkomo in early 1979 had a special nature. The ZAPU leader wanted to ensure the success of the planned offensive across Zambezi and Lake Kariba by acquiring MiGs from the USSR. His cadres had already begun training at the Air Force Centre in the Soviet Republic of Kirgizia; Nkomo hoped to get pilots from “friendly countries” (however not from the Soviet Union.)<sup>268</sup> The story of “Soviet MiGs for ZAPU” is rather controversial. To set the record straight, this idea was immediately met with scepticism in Moscow.<sup>269</sup> The Cuban leadership was not enthusiastic either: A Cuban Communist Party CC member Raul Valdes Vivo, who visited several African countries under orders from Fidel Castro, and informed Nkomo and Mugabe that Cuba was “unable to satisfy their request to send pilots for the repulsion of air attacks on the training camps for the Patriotic Front armed forces.”<sup>270</sup>

However, information on Nkomo’s intentions, no doubt, reached Smith’s regime, and in late 1980, when Zimbabwean airmen came home after the completion of their training in the USSR, former Rhodesian white officers asked them: “Where are your MiGs”?<sup>271</sup> For sure, the prospect of facing them with obsolete planes really worried the command of the Rhodesian Air Force and this, just like the concentration of ZIPRA heavy arms in Zambia, did make the regime more accommodating.

Western and African academics also write on this issue, again in a controversial way. For example, some believe that MiGs arrived in Zambia, but were not “uncrated”. On the other hand, Eliakim Sibanda claims that the “Russian and East German governments sabotaged the offensive by keeping ZIPRA pilots who were supposed to form a large part of the air service men”<sup>272</sup>. Moreover Sibanda, referring to an interview with Joshua Nkomo he conducted in August 1990, alleges that this took place after the ZAPU president had refused to allow “Russians, East Germans and Cubans to fly planes for ZIPRA”.<sup>273</sup> In truth, on the contrary, it was Nkomo who told us that he hoped to involve pilots from the GDR or Cuba (he did not mention the Soviets). Sibanda continues: “Nkomo went further to say he detected some racism from the Russians who did not want to see their own Caucasian group defeated by blacks”<sup>274</sup>. I just cannot believe that Nkomo said this; at least in his memoirs he spoke of his experience in the Soviet Union with distinct appreciation. I felt his sympathy again when in 1991 Nkomo visited Moscow as Vice-President of independent Zimbabwe. Besides, I never heard him using the word “Caucasians”; it is common in the USA or Canada, where Sibanda lives, but not in Africa.

In any case the story Nkomo told in his book is quite different from that of Sibanda, though it contradicts the truth as well. He writes: “...we have been assured [by the

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(268) Discussion with D. Dabengwa, Moscow, 21 June 1978.

(269) Discussion with J. Nkomo, Moscow, early 1979.

(270) The author’s personal recollection and discussion with A. Urnov, Istanbul, 4 November 2006.

(271) RSAMH, collection 5, inventory 76, file 834, pp.82-84.

(272) Discussion with a Zimbabwe Air Force high commander, Harare, 18 February 2006.

(273) Sibanda, E. *The Zimbabwe African People’s Union 1961-1967*, p.203.

(274) *Ibid.* p.232.

Soviets] that the training of our aircrews could be completed a year in advance, in time for the end of 1979”<sup>275</sup>. He even claims that “by the end of the war” ZIPRA had “the complete flying and maintenance staff for a squadron of combat aircraft, who had passed out of the Soviet training schools.”<sup>276</sup>

This is not realistic, the Soviets would not let “half-baked” students of Air Force Training Centre complete their studies a year earlier than needed, and neither at home nor in Zimbabwe could I find any proof of Nkomo’s words.

Several times I was present at Nkomo’s discussions with the Soviet military and could sense how happy he usually was to hear from them that ZAPU requests were being satisfied. One of these occasions was rather peculiar: having been informed about forthcoming supplies of uniforms (20 thousand pieces, if my memory serves me well), Nkomo asked for one set to be made “extra large”, and indeed, soon his picture in uniform appeared on the front page of the *Zimbabwe Review*, a ZAPU magazine. The volume and diversity of Soviet supplies in late 1970s was really impressive.

Once, in early 1978, at a meeting in the *Desyatka* after receiving information on the value of allocated hardware and other goods, he remained silent for a couple of minutes and then said: “This is 73 times more than we received from the OAU Liberation Committee”.

True, the equipment was sometimes not the most modern, but as a rule it was superior to armament available in Rhodesia. Besides, intensive training of ZIPRA cadres in the Soviet Union (as well as in the GDR, Cuba and some other socialist countries) and by the Soviet and Cuban officers in Africa made them staunch fighters. A British diplomat who took part in the “Witness seminar: Britain and Rhodesian Question: The Road to Settlement 1979-1980” organised by the LSE Cold War Studies Centre and Centre for Contemporary British History on 5 July 2005, recalled: “During the Lancaster House discussions when I was sent for in Salisbury, I remember a Rhodesian senior general commenting to me that some of the troops had just had a nasty shock. They were used to be being flown in by helicopter, landing and disembarking, and the guerrillas would fade away.” However, a week before when Rhodesians got out of the helicopter to engage “a group of ZIPRA forces, newly trained by the Russians ... ‘The devils didn’t run away. They stopped and fought.’ So perhaps that did influence matters in Rhodesia.”<sup>277</sup>

By mid-1979 it became clear both for the friends and for the enemies of the people of Zimbabwe, that the armed forces of the Patriotic Front – ZIPRA and ZANLA – were winning the anticolonial war. Unfortunately, however, they were not united and even now the assessment of their actions is a point of controversy. In the author’s opinion, the latter “penetrated” deeper into the African-populated areas, while the former conducted the most spectacular operations against the Rhodesian armed forces.

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(275) Ibid.

(276) Nkomo, J. *The Story of My Life*, p.197.

(277) Ibid. p.175.

The Soviet assistance at this stage of the struggle was really versatile. Aside from political and military support Moscow's co-operation with ZAPU included in particular, the assistance of highly skilled Soviet lawyers and diplomats to its delegations at the talks in Geneva, mentioned above, and at the infamous Lancaster House conference from September to December 1979.

On the eve of the general election in April 1979 and after taking the post of Prime-Minister Margaret Thatcher in her first statement hinted at the possibility of recognition of the Muzorewa-Smith government, but its failure was too clear. The liberation war continued and she used the Commonwealth Conference, held in Lusaka, to advance a new initiative: talks that would include Britain, the Muzorewa-led "government of Zimbabwe-Rhodesia", both wings of the Patriotic Front and other less significant groupings. London had to be in a hurry, in the opinion of a former ZIPRA high commander, if ZIPRA had six months more of fighting, Rhodesian forces would suffer a military defeat. For London and its allies in the West that would "threaten stability" in South Africa due to the close co-operation between ZAPU and ANC, which included the presence of its military personnel in the ranks of ZAPU's army.<sup>278</sup> Hence London's assistance on the conference and London's pressure, applied on various parties in it.

Dr Chirkin writes in his reminiscences about discussions with Nkomo and his requests: "Most of all Nkomo was interested in a supply of Soviet heavy armament, thinking that if he received such weapons, his role would be more important and his chances to become the leader of the state would grow. In this regard he referred to the mentality and perception of the African population, which had not seen such weapons before."<sup>279</sup>

Both before and during the conference, Rhodesian forces conducted numerous operations and acts of sabotage in Zambian and Mozambican territory. On 15 April 1979 when an international conference in support of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle was taking place in Lusaka, they even carried a ground attack on Nkomo's house;

fortunately he was not in. According to Colonel Kononov from 17 February to 9 December 1979 about 50 air and ground raids took place against ZAPU installations.<sup>280</sup>

These operations as well as operations against ZANLA camps in the territory of Mozambique did not manage to curtail the armed struggle, but they affected the host countries which insisted on reaching an agreement in the Lancaster House on the conditions hardly acceptable to the Patriotic Front. As a former ZIPRA commander put it: "The aim of Lancaster House was to disarm us and not to look into substantial issues."<sup>281</sup>

Indeed the Patriotic Front made serious concessions: for seven years 20 of 100 seats in Parliament were reserved for the white minority and for ten years land

(278) Witness seminar. Britain and Rhodesian Question: The Road to Settlement 1979-1980. p.77.

(279) Discussion with a former ZIPRA commander.

(280) Chirkin, V. *S taimoi missiei*, p.132.

(281) *Udary rodeziiskih voisk po ob'ektam ZIPRA v Zambii*.

ownership could not be changed. The results of the pressure were obvious; Chirkin was taken aback by the fact that “in spite of all the assurances, the [Patriotic] Front unequivocally agreed to the formula which provided a fifth of seats in parliament to the whites (while their share [of the population] was about 1/23).”<sup>282</sup>

As to the most crucial issue of land, the Front Line States pursued the Patriotic Front delegation to accept the absence of obligations on the funding of the purchase of land from white owners in the agreement and to agree that “it would be in the official speech of the British Secretary of State on behalf of Her Majesty.”<sup>283</sup> This “time-fuse bomb” exploded two decades later blowing apart both economic and political order in Zimbabwe.

Unfortunately, the Patriotic Front stood at the election in February as two separate parties. The outcome, 57 seats for ZANU-PF and just 20 for PF-ZAPU, was a shock for Joshua Nkomo, a “patriarch” of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe. Moscow was less optimistic than its Zimbabwean friends and did not exclude a ZANU victory, but the gap between the numbers of seats of the parties was too wide to expect.

With hindsight, it is clear that Moscow had to pay a price for its staunch support of Nkomo and his party and its refusal to establish proper contact with ZANU. To add insult to injury such a policy even brought about a violation of the formal protocol: when Mugabe requested a visa to spend some time in Moscow on the way from Vietnam, it was refused.

The “revenge” did come: Solodovnikov who as a Soviet representative came to Zimbabwe from Lusaka in November 1980 to negotiate the establishment of diplomatic relations writes: “The government of R. Mugabe ... was in a hurry to establish diplomatic relations with those countries that in the period of the struggle for independence of the people of Zimbabwe were openly calling ZANU leaders and its rank and file fighters terrorists, who were allies of Ian Smith’s regime and who were clandestinely supplying him with oil and weapons, used to shoot Zimbabwean refugees in the camps in Mozambique and Zambia and fighters of the PFZ [Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe], including those from ZANU.”<sup>284</sup>

The agreement on establishing diplomatic relations was reached only in February 1981 on rather unprecedented, even humiliating conditions: Moscow had to agree to cease all contact with the PF-ZAPU, a legal party and a part of Mugabe’s led government.<sup>285</sup>

The situation further deteriorated with the “discovery” of caches of Soviet-made weapons in properties belonging to PF-ZAPU in February 1982, as well as a copy of Dabengwa’s letter to Yuri Andropov, then the KGB chairman, with a request to continue the support of his party.

(282) Discussion with a former ZIPRA Commander.

(283) Chirkin, *V.S. tainoi missiei*, p.133.

(284) S. Vieira to author, 20 July 2007.

(285) *Ibid.* p.139.



So, the first practical step in the development of the relations between the ruling parties of the two countries took place only in November 1982, when Sidney Sekeremayi, then Minister of State for Defence, visited Moscow. When at the meeting at the CPSU International Department he complained about Moscow's attitude it became clear that certain forces were deliberately misinforming him and his colleagues.<sup>286</sup> In particular, he claimed that the USSR was "hiding" a prominent ZIPRA commander, Akim Ndlovu, while in reality after the "disclosure of caches", he left for a Scandinavian country.<sup>287</sup> A real breakthrough followed soon, when Nathan Shamuyarira, a prominent Zimbabwean intellectual, then Minister of Information and ZANU-PF Secretary, came to Moscow in December 1982 for the celebration of the Soviet Union's 60th anniversary.

The history for the Soviet relations with independent Zimbabwe is beyond this chapter; however one point should be mentioned. When Robert Mugabe paid an official visit to Moscow in December 1985 he established a good rapport with Gorbachev, and this resulted, in particular in Moscow's financial assistance to the preparation of the conference of the Non-Aligned Movement in Harare in 1987. Their relations became candid enough for Mugabe to inform Gorbachev at their next meeting in 1987<sup>288</sup> that Zimbabwe had begun to assist the ANC clandestinely, in crossing to South Africa.

## Namibia

If in Zimbabwe the split in the liberation movement happened several years after it began operating, the situation in Namibia (or South-West Africa, as it was still called) in this respect was complicated from the very beginning. Two organisations merged to the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) in 1960; in 1959, initially as Obamboland People's Organisation, and The South West African National Union (SWANU). Moreover, initially SWANU was more known on the international arena, for example it was accepted as a member of AAPSO, while its Headquarters in Cairo, served as an important conduit for Moscow's contacts with the liberation movements. Likewise SWANU, together with the ANC and Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), became a member of the (short-lived) South African United Front, formed in June 1960. Meanwhile, SWAPO at that time was perhaps closer to PAC and was even regarded as part of a so-called "Congo alliance", with PAC, FNLA and ZANU, because some SWAPO members were sent to Kinkuzu camp in Congo for training.<sup>289</sup> However, SWAPO took steps to establish contacts with Moscow as well. Ismail Fortune, then its General Secretary and "representative in North Africa and the

(286) Ibid. p.173. Apart from Moscow "humbly" accepting this condition, another factor could play a role: Solodovnikov in the eyes of ZANU's leaders personified Soviet relations with ZAPU, while Vdovin was accredited to Mozambique, a former rear base of ZANU.

(287) We should remember that the government of independent Zimbabwe "inherited" the intelligence apparatus of the old regime.

(288) It remains to be added that Akim Ndlovu was buried at the Heroes Acre when he died in 2009.

(289) This time Mugabe accompanied his wife Sally who took part in the World Women's Congress held in Moscow.

Middle East”, established a contact with the Solidarity Committee’s representative in Cairo and sent, via him, in August 1961 a letter to “His Excellence Minister of Defence of the USSR”. He wanted to visit the USSR to discuss military training and wanted to organise it for “Mr [Luis] Nelengani [then SWAPO’s Vice-President] and others”.<sup>290</sup>

Then another letter from Fortune came from the Soviet Embassy in Dar es Salaam, dated 2 December 1963. This time he requested material support, including arms and ammunition. He also divulged plans to begin armed action in 1965 and stressed SWAPO’s need of 100,000 pounds sterling for that purpose.<sup>291</sup> However the embassy in its covering letter suggested limiting the Soviet assistance by receiving SWAPO members “to Central Komsomol [YCL] school and analogous courses”.<sup>292</sup> Indeed, soon both Fortune and Nelengani came to Moscow to take courses in the Central Komsomol School.<sup>293</sup>

The Solidarity Committee’s plan of exchanges for 1963 envisaged a visit of a three-man SWAPO delegation to the USSR for two weeks<sup>294</sup> and the Committee’s representative in AAPSO, Latyp Maksudov, advised Moscow that Sam Nujoma should lead it while the SWAPO President had other plans at that time.<sup>295</sup>

However slowly but steadily Moscow’s attitude was turning in favour of SWAPO. So, in 1963 the Solidarity Committee planned the provision of five academic scholarships for SWAPO and four for SWANU.<sup>296</sup> Two reasons were behind it: the rise in SWAPO activities, initially political and then military as well, and the openly “pro-Chinese” stand taken by the SWANU leaders in late 1963. The SWAPO representatives naturally visited Beijing as well, but they maintained their independence, and these ties have never been an obstacle for their growing relations with Moscow, including in the military field, even if the political ties were limited mostly to contact with the Solidarity Committee and other NGOs.

On the other hand, SWAPO leadership was also cautious, perhaps relying too much on a special status of their country as (theoretically) UN-controlled territory. Thus by July 1969 Sam Nujoma had been expected to visit the USSR for two years, as well as a new group of cadres for military training.<sup>297</sup>

The relations received a real push after Sam Nujoma led a delegation to the USSR during a difficult period for SWAPO, early in October 1969. Apart from clashes in Northern Namibia, which began in August 1966, most of the action was taking place in the Caprivi Strip, on the border with Zambia, while the task of bringing war materials

(290) Sellstrom, T. *Sweden and the National Liberation in Southern Africa. Volume 1, Formation of a popular opinion (1950-1970)*: (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1999), p.271.

(291) SARF, collection 9540, inventory 1, file 102, pp.52

(292) SARF, collection 9540 gs, inventory 2c, file 11, p.161.

(293) Ibid, p.152.

(294) SARF, collection 9540 gs, inventory 2c, file 47, p.61. Fraser and Nelengani later discredited themselves by collaboration with South African authorities.

(295) SARF, collection 9540 gs, inventory 2c, p.76.

(296) Ibid, file 68, p.125.

(297) Ibid, file 65, p.40.

to the central part of the country was very difficult.<sup>298</sup> Under these circumstances the increased assistance was needed, however the SWAPO President was critical of the Liberation Committee, because it had not provided SWAPO with any goods for ten months. Moreover, he asked us, the Soviets, to avoid that OAU structure and to send supplies directly. "We can't rely on African countries", he said.<sup>299</sup>

The archive documents, accessible so far do not indicate any regular financial allocations to SWAPO, although it looks like it was provided in minimal amounts from time to time. However, soon after Nujoma's visit the Solidarity Committee suggested to the CPSU Central Committee to do it and to the best of my memory 15,000 dollars were allocated to SWAPO.

A watershed in SWAPO's activity abroad was a consultative conference, convened in Tanga, a Tanzanian town, in the last days of 1969 and first days of 1970. Delegates from many countries came, including, with our assistance, four activists, who studied in the USSR.<sup>300</sup>

One of the conference decisions was the creation of the PLAN – People's Liberation Army of Namibia. Sam Nujoma became the Commander-in Chief, assisted by Peter Nanyemba, Secretary for Defence, and Dimo Amaambo, PLAN Commander.

The political situation in Namibia changed with a massive strike of Namibian workers in 1971; moreover it affected the developments in South Africa as well, where strikes also followed pretty soon.<sup>301</sup> Besides, perhaps, the decision of the International Court of Justice, which at last rejected Pretoria's claim for Namibia, resurrected hopes for rapid transition to independence among workers, students, and religious circles.

A *leitmotiv* of SWAPO leaders' analysis of the war situation was complaints about lack of assistance from the OAU Liberation Committee, which "practically did not supply SWAPO with arms." In this period, apart from the USSR, assistance to

SWAPO was provided mostly by the GDR, other East European countries and North Korea.<sup>302</sup> With the growth of SWAPO activities in Namibia and the rise of its

international prestige Moscow political ties with this organisation were brought to a higher level, and Sam Nujoma was invited to attend the celebration of the USSR 50th anniversary in December 1972. His mood was optimistic, he believed that, having achieved its independence, Namibia will become "a gate to independent South Africa", and

Pretoria would not be in a position to assist Portugal in Angola.<sup>303</sup>

At the same time Nujoma did not have illusions about the role of the UN. "The United Nations will not help us without our armed struggle", he said.<sup>304</sup> The armed

(298) Discussion with the SWAPO delegation headed by P.Nanyemba, Moscow, 2 July 1969.

(299) Discussion with S. Nujoma, Moscow, 12 October 1969. At the next day's discussion in the Africa Institute Nujoma was more optimistic (and less overt) than at the Solidarity Committee: he did not hesitate to show on the map areas close to Windhoek, where SWAPO fighters were allegedly operating.

(300) Ibid.

(301) Two of them, Ngarikutuke [he was better known as Ernest at that time] Tjiriange and Helmut Angula became ministers in independent Namibia.

(302) Discussion with H. Kaluenja, Moscow, 11 October 1972.

(303) Discussion with H. Kaluenja, Moscow, 15 November 1972.

(304) Discussion with S. Nujoma, Moscow, 23 December 1972.

struggle was inspiring people to wage a political struggle and SWAPO was trying to create a united front of all “strata of population” in Namibia. In his opinion Pretoria had either to leave Namibia or to begin making concessions there.<sup>305</sup>

There were practical problems in organising assistance to SWAPO, for example, SWAPO did not have ammunition depots, and therefore supplies had to be brought regularly and not in advance. The issue of air defence became vital due to use of helicopters by Pretoria.

With the expansion of the struggle in various forms and the growth of the number of SWAPO members abroad, which doubled between 1971 and 1973, the needs were growing as well. Fortunately by that time the assistance from abroad grew, in particular from the Swedish SIDA and the World Council of Churches. A number of African countries - Zambia, Tanzania, Zaire, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal and Morocco

- were helpful too. The work of the Liberation Committee improved, when Hashim Mbita replaced George Magombe as its Executive Secretary in 1972.<sup>306</sup>

Besides, Beijing became closer to SWAPO as well, and the delegation headed by Sam Nujoma visited China in July 1973. According to its members, “The Chinese believe that we are pro-Soviet, we don’t know why. We told them that we want to have friendly relations with both China and the USSR, the two most important countries.”<sup>307</sup> They underlined that SWAPO’s successes on the battlefield had been achieved due to Soviet assistance in terms of supplies and training.<sup>308</sup>

Sam Nujoma flew to Simferopol to meet PLAN fighters who had undergone training in Perevalnoe and had fruitful discussions at the Training Centre Command.

The April 1974 revolution in Portugal, positively affected the situation in Namibia, just like in other countries of Southern Africa. Without delay, even prior to the independence of Angola, SWAPO managed to increase its presence in the country. Moreover, young Namibians began leaving their country via Angola to Zaire, and then to Zambia. Most of them joined PLAN, and the SWAPO leadership faced the problem of organising their training at a large scale. It was so intensive that SWAPO even wanted to slow it down to create more favourable conditions.<sup>309</sup>

This issue became a centre of discussion when a SWAPO delegation, which included Sam Nujoma Peter Nanyemba, Secretary for Defence, and Solomon Hawala, a senior PLAN commander came to Moscow in December 1974. Nujoma believed that at that time a peaceful solution for Namibia was impossible. “We can defeat Vorster,” he insisted.<sup>310</sup> PLAN urgently needed arms, training facilities, food and clothes to broaden the area of armed actions to the north-west and then to the centre of the

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(305) Ibid.

(306) Ibid.

(307) Ibid.

(308) Ibid.

(309) Ibid.

(310) Discussion with P.Nanyemba and S. Hawala, Moscow, 8 December 1974.

country. Nujoma said that SWAPO's programme was being prepared: "We believe in socialism, we want to create a socialist state, but we don't want to announce it".<sup>311</sup>

The delegation members underlined that PLAN received 75% of its arms from the Soviet Union and these proved to be superior to arms used by the SADF.<sup>312</sup> As a result of discussions, a relevant decision was taken and hundreds Namibians came to the USSR for training in Perevalnoe, at the Higher Officers Courses "Vystrel" and in the "Northern Training Centre".

For SWAPO, 1975 was a crucial year. Its leadership hoped to use the Angolan territory as a rear base, but the situation there was getting worse. On the other hand, Zambia and some other African countries had talks with Pretoria on the political settlement in Rhodesia, but the SWAPO leadership believed that they discussed the problem of Namibia as well. That of underlined to us by Hifikepunye (in those days he was better known as Lucas) Pohamba, then the CC member and representative in Dar es Salaam, when we met him in late April 1975: "We feel pressure from a number of African states, although we don't say it publicly." Pohamba was satisfied with the decisions of the meeting of the OAU Council of Ministers in Dar es Salaam in April, but worried as well that: "As usual, they will not implement them".<sup>313</sup>

When Sam Nujoma came to Moscow in October 1975, he was worried by increasing support given to South Africa by "imperialist countries" – the USA, France, West Germany and the UK. Referring to the failure of negotiations on Zimbabwe, Nujoma rejected the possibility of similar talks on Namibia. "The enemy is not sincere," he insisted. "The only solution for SWAPO is armed struggle, accompanied by political work inside the country".<sup>314</sup> He requested the Soviets to receive more members for military training, at least 200 before the New Year.

Soon, in November 1975 SWAPO fighters themselves had to fight South Africans and their new allies from Chipenda's wing of the FNLA.<sup>315</sup> Later Sam Nujoma claimed that through its actions SWAPO "contained thousands of South African troops" during the 1975-1976 war in Angola.<sup>316</sup>

This created a basis for closer co-operation between the MPLA and the Namibian liberation movement. Soon SWAPO was in a position to establish not only refugee camps, but also a network of its military structures on Angolan territory. During his next visit to Moscow, in August 1976, Sam Nujoma specially thanked the CPSU for its "bold stand in support of Angola. In response to the victory of the MPLA we intensified our struggle".<sup>317</sup>

As for SWAPO's official bilateral relations with the CPSU, these began when the former was invited for the first time to the congress of the Soviet ruling party in late

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(311) Discussion with S. Nujoma, Moscow, 10 December 1974.

(312) Ibid.

(313) Discussion with P.Nanyemba and S. Hawala, Moscow, 8 December 1974.

(314) Discussion with H. Pohamba, Dar es Salaam, 29 April 1975.

(315) Ibid.

(316) Discussion with P.Nanyemba, Moscow, 29 December 1975.

(317) Discussion with S. Nujoma, Moscow, 6 August 1976.

February 1976 and was represented there by Moses Garoeb.<sup>318</sup> The following year Nujoma himself represented SWAPO at the celebration of the 60th anniversary of the 1917 revolution<sup>319</sup>. A month earlier he had been received by Boris Ponomarev in the CC headquarters.<sup>320</sup> After the withdrawal of the South African troops from Angola, new prospects for the struggle for Namibian independence emerged, and SWAPO's international prestige grew a great deal. At the next CPSU congress in 1981 Nujoma himself led the SWAPO delegation.<sup>321</sup>

However, the prospects of early achievement of independence made some elements in it impatient and power-hungry. To attract followers they used the fact that the SWAPO leadership was in pains to accommodate hundreds and later thousands Namibians, who have left the country and played upon their genuine grievances. The most prominent member of this group was Andreas Shipanga who was a member of SWAPO Executive and Secretary for Information.

Some months later Shipanga and his supporters, then in exile in Sweden, founded the so-called SWAPO-Democrats. Later they returned to Namibia with the “blessing” of Pretoria, and Shipanga got a ministerial post in the so-called “transitional government” in 1985 and even chaired it.

An enlarged meeting of the SWAPO Central Committee in late July – early August 1976 adopted a new programme for the organisation, which mentioned “scientific socialism” as the basis for the creation of a classless society in Namibia.

When the SWAPO President visited Moscow soon after this meeting, he spoke about “imperialists, especially West Germany”, who “spent money in Lusaka to destroy” SWAPO, while a group of “internal leaders”, recommended by Pretoria visited Washington as the guests of the Department of State.<sup>322</sup> Under these circumstances Nujoma asked Moscow to apply, if necessary, a veto in the Security Council to prevent the recognition of the “puppet” government in Namibia.<sup>323</sup>

I accompanied Nujoma and his colleagues to the General Staff when he met the head of “*Desyatka*”, three-star Air Force General Georgy Skorikov.<sup>324</sup> The SWAPO President described Namibia as an “imperialist base” in Southern Africa, and explained the need for intensification of the armed struggle and made new requests to the USSR, including the supply of heavy weapons, such as tanks and APCs, as well as anti-aircraft guns and “*Strelas*”.

In his opinion, Washington and Pretoria wanted by all means to prevent the formation of progressive governments in Namibia and Zimbabwe. Indeed George Schultz, the US Secretary of State in Reagan's administration later confessed: “We were not ready to see a new nation [Namibia] created only to become enrolled in a

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(318) Ibid.

(319) *Pravda*, 2 March 1976.

(320) Ibid. 5 November 1976.

(321) Ibid. 10 October 1976.

(322) *Pravda*, 5 March 1981.

(323) Discussion with S. Nujoma, Moscow, 6 August 1976.

(324) Ibid.

Soviet camp”<sup>325</sup>. Of course, Moscow had no plans to “enrol” Namibia into “a Soviet camp”; however, and this is more important, Schultz words confirm that Washington was eager to prolong the sufferings of the Namibian people under Pretoria’s rule rather than to allow it to make its own choices.

At that meeting Sam Nujoma, for the first time, requested for Soviet military instructors be sent to train SWAPO fighters in Angola; however, the head of *Desyatka* was initially cautious: “This [the question of Soviet instructors] is a big political question. Personally I would refrain from sending them, but you should discuss it with the Central Committee. Angola must have enough time to strengthen itself”. He continued: “We shall train your cadres but, frankly speaking, hardly for tanks or aircraft. The experience of the struggle of the MPLA, FRELIMO, and PAIGC shows that successful action was taken by well-trained light mobile units.” Nevertheless Nujoma explained that SWAPO wanted to train the personnel for a future regular army of independent Namibia<sup>326</sup> and this argument worked.

The next year the first group of 16 Soviet instructors headed by “Comrade Yury” [Colonel Zaputryaev] began training Namibians in Lubango, in South Angola and during his next visit to Moscow Nujoma requested at least seven more to be sent in 1978.<sup>327</sup>

By that time five Western members of the UN Security Council formed a so called “contact group”, following the adoption in 1976 of the Security Council Resolution 435 for settling the Namibian problem. Moscow was sceptical about a number of its clauses, but abstained and did not use veto, because African states agreed to it. Most probably SWAPO was reluctant to do it; at least its President called the group activities a “rescue operation” for Pretoria. “If the political solution fails we shall act and take over the country”, he said.<sup>328</sup>

The cooperation between Moscow and SWAPO intensified, but from time to time some problems arose, often from outside these two parties. Thus, among a very limited number of accessible archive documents, there are minutes of the discussion at the CPSU Politbureau on 18 October 1979, where the situation in SWAPO was mentioned.

The issue was put forward by Raul Castro at his meeting with the Soviet ambassador. He “remarked that Soviet comrades assisted SWAPO with arms but the SWAPO men definitely did not fight and did not want to fight. One then wonders why we should help them with weapons. Briefly, there are a number of very important principal questions”, said Mikhail Suslov, who chaired the meeting, “which we should consider... we should order the Ministry of Defence and the International Department of the CC to consider the questions advanced in these telegrams, taking

(325) Later Skorikov was appointed Chief of the Soviet Air Staff and promoted to the rank of Marshal of Aviation.

(326) Crocker, C. *High Noon in Southern Africa. Making Peace in a Rough Neighbourhood*, p.12.

(327) The author’s notes at the discussion of S. Nujoma with G. Skorikov, Moscow, 10 August 1976.

(328) Ibid.

into account the exchange of opinions that took place at the meeting of the Politburo; the proposals will be forwarded to the CC.”<sup>329</sup>

Raul Castro’s assessment of SWAPO’s action was hardly fair. On the opposite the PLAN units, based in Angola, were active at that time in attacking targets across the Namibian border. In any case the Soviet assistance, both in arms and training intensified and the size of the Soviet team in Lubango was broadened; Colonel Nikolay Kurushkin (later Major-General and Commander of the “Northern Training Centre”) replaced “Comrade Yury” as its head in 1979.

Unfortunately some scepticism account PLAN’s combat capabilities were expressed by the Cuban command later as well. When Kurochkin suggested in July 1983 to transfer 20 tanks and 30 APCs to the SWAPO brigade to be used as a reserve in the case of a new South African aggression, “Polo” alleged that SWAPO operations showed a big danger of losing this hardware owing to the weak combat capacity and low morale.<sup>330</sup> “General Konstantin”’s opinion was opposite; he was quite impressed by the state of PLAN regular brigade and liked its “high revolutionary spirit, organisation and discipline”.<sup>331</sup>

Initially Kurochkin resisted plans to use SWAPO units in fighting UNITA (as part of actions in the southern part of Angola), because he considered them as a basis of the future Namibian army<sup>332</sup>, but in mid-1983, when the military situation deteriorated, he himself advised dos Santos to approach Nujoma and deploy a Namibian brigade in fighting in central Angola as well.<sup>333</sup>

Having involved themselves in the talks with Pretoria, the Angolan leadership naturally first and foremost wanted to ensure the SADF’s withdrawal from their country, but also hoped to open prospects for a political settlement in Namibia. Although these talks (and the agreements signed by the two sides on 16 February 1984 in Lusaka) were quite different from the Nkomati Accord, they worried the SWAPO leadership. Moscow did its best to support the unity between Angola and SWAPO and a working visit to Angola, in January 1984, by Andrey Urnov, who succeeded Manchkhya as Head of the African Section of the International Department, and I, was a part of these efforts.

We did our best to encourage both sides – Angolans and Namibians – to strengthen their strategic alliance and our discussions were fruitful. In Luanda Afonso van Dunem “Mbinda”, MPLA International Secretary (and future Minister of Foreign Affairs) confirmed that Luanda would reject any idea of a non-aggression pact with Pretoria<sup>334</sup>. Then we flew to Lubango to meet Sam Nujoma. As I have already mentioned earlier, his most outstanding character was the ability to remain in control under any circumstances. This time he was also calm and never revealed his worries;

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(329) Ibid.

(330) RSAMH, collection 89, inventory 25, file 6, p.1.

(331) K. Kurochkin’s notebook, 2, pp.42, 45.

(332) Ibid. p.47.

(333) K. Kurochkin’s notebook 2, p.50.

(334) Discussion with K. Kurochkin, Moscow, 21 September 2001.



and only when he and Urnov descended into a dug-out in a PLAN camp did he share his worries with the International Department representative.

Nujoma came to Moscow in March 1984, soon after our visit and Lusaka agreements between Angola and RSA and some months before another conference in Lusaka. It was chaired by Kaunda and Pretoria's "Administrator-General of SWA", van Niekerk. SWAPO leadership was sceptical about it, even though it gave them an opportunity to meet the "internal" leaders of their organisation. They proved to be right, because the position taken by Pretoria's representatives and their puppets (Nujoma used to call them "black Boers") shattered any hope for a prompt implementation of the "UN Plan".

Not long before the conference in Lusaka, trying to cause a split in SWAPO, Pretoria released Andimba Toivo ya Toivo, the founder of the Ovamboland Peoples Congress, a forerunner of OPO and SWAPO who in 1968 had been sentenced to 20 years imprisonment. Their plans failed, and Toivo was elected SWAPO Secretary-General. Soon, being in Moscow, he visited one of the training facilities of the "Northern Centre", reserved for PLAN fighters. The class-rooms full of various arms and equipment deeply impressed Toivo, who may times repeated: "Jes [Jesus]..., Jes ..."

Like in other cases, Moscow's co-operation with SWAPO should not be reduced to the military field only. Hundreds of Namibians came to Soviet universities and dozens to the Institute of Social Sciences, including Hifikepunye Pohamba, who succeeded Sam Nujoma as President of Namibia in 2006.

The last visit of a top-level SWAPO delegation to the USSR before Namibia's independence took place in April 1988 on the invitation of "the Soviet leadership."<sup>335</sup> This formula was intended to underline that the bilateral relations went beyond inter-party contact and acquired an element of inter-state relations. Moreover, the CPSU Politburo entrusted Gorbachev to meet Nujoma, but, he, having noticeably lost interest in national liberation struggle by that time, transferred this mission to Andrey Gromyko, then the Chair of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

The official TASS report of the visit was published under the title "SWAPO leadership in the Kremlin".<sup>336</sup> Indeed, the delegation included, apart from the SWAPO President, Teo-Ben Gurirab, International Secretary, Hidipo Hamutenya, Secretary for Information, and Peter Mueshahange, Secretary for Defence and had an opportunity to discuss with various Soviet structures both the prospects of a political settlement in Namibia and Soviet political and practical assistance to SWAPO.

Nujoma, in particular, took part in the official opening of the SWAPO Mission in Moscow,<sup>337</sup> whose head was Fillemon Malima, former Commissar of PLAN and future Namibian Minister of Defence. Like the ANC mission (the decisions to open them were taken simultaneously in early 1987), this mission was accredited to the

(335) Discussion with A. van Dunem, Luanda, 24 January 1984.

(336) *Izvestia*, 17 April 1988.

(337) *Pravda*, 21 April 1988.

Solidarity Committee, but had all the attributes of diplomatic representation, from immunity to the right to hoist the SWAPO flag on the premises and use it on the official car.

SWAPO welcomed the December 1988 New York agreements mentioned earlier, though its leadership was hardly satisfied with the limited role the organisation had in their drafting. True, it had been consulted both by Angolans and Cubans, as well by Soviet “unofficial observers”, but some of the provisions, such as the concentration of PLAN on Angolan territory, were a deviation from the original UN plan.

Besides, the beginning of its implementation was marred by differences between the Soviets and SWAPO, which in this case was supported by African countries and other members of the Non-Aligned Movement. Soviet diplomats, just as representatives of other permanent members of the Security Council – China, the UK and France - agreed to the American proposal to cut down the number of UN troops to be deployed in Namibia in the pre-election period for a financial reason; the USSR, Ukraine and Belarus (these two Soviet republics were also UN members) were making a large contribution to the budget of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG).

The agreement was reached in a wrong way, behind the backs of Havana and SWAPO. Cuban delegates, for example, were first informed of the arrangements by the Americans and not by the Soviets. This decision, which caused political complications for the USSR, was taken by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Eduard Shevardnadze, acting practically single-handedly. Unfortunately, this practice of substituting the collective leadership with the decisions of one person, or at best by an agreement between Shevardnadze and Gorbachev soon became routine. Only later, to be on the safe side, did Shevardnadze seek and receive the approval of the CC. However, when the wave of criticism grew, the “Silver Fox”, as Shevardnadze became known, sent another memorandum, suggesting concessions. This in turn became obsolete when quite soon a compromise was reached in the UN.

Subsequent events showed the reduced strength of the UNTAG units did not harm its functioning, especially since the number of UN police officers was increased, but the delay caused by lengthy discussions on the issue prevented their deployment on time and on 1 April, the day when the implementation of the UN plan began, the UN machinery, headed by Marti Ahtisaari, Special Representative of its Secretary-General, was not yet in place in Northern Namibia.

That day witnessed bloodshed in the areas close to the Angolan border. Hundreds of PLAN fighters crossed it with peaceful intentions, looking for assembly points run by UNTAG.<sup>338</sup> According to a *Pravda* correspondent in Windhoek about 1,000 UNTAG troops who had already arrived in Namibia, but no monitors had been dispatched to the north of the country.<sup>339</sup> The South African *Weekly Mail* published

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(338) Ibid. 20 April 1988.

(339) Some SWAPO forces present in Namibia before that date as well; hardly accidentally it was underlined to me by Sam Nujoma when I met him in Lisbon a bit earlier (Discussion with S. Nujoma, Lisbon, 19 March 1989).

a similar story: “On a 300 km front, there was just one UN officer.”<sup>340</sup> “UN to blame. Bloodshed could have been avoided if Ahtisaari had acted”, summarised the tragedy *The Namibian*<sup>341</sup>. Moreover, Ahtisaari without proper consultations with his superiors in New York allowed SADF units, confined to base in terms of resolution 435 to attack PLAN soldiers.<sup>342</sup>

It took several weeks to resume the process of settlement; the SWAPO leadership agreed to a compromise and ordered its fighters to move to Angola.

The November 1989 general elections provided an opportunity for me to visit Namibia for the first time, although the South Africa authorities tried to stop me and my colleagues at Windhoek airport, even though the issue had been negotiated well in advance and guaranteed by the South African missions in New York and in Windhoek. As international observers we went to the town of Gobabis to attend the last SWAPO election rally, met representatives of various parties, observed the election procedures, saw mile-long queues at the polling stations in the African township of Katatura, and had a comprehensive discussion with Nujoma on 7 November, after he had voted.

SWAPO convincingly won election and pursued a policy of national reconciliation, which allowed unanimous adoption of the Constitution and unanimous election of Sam Nujoma to the post of President of the Republic of Namibia, proclaimed on 21 March 1990.

## South Africa

South Africa was the last country in the Southern African region to achieve genuine independence. On the other hand, the Pretoria regime was involved militarily and otherwise in every country of the region where the armed struggle was taking place. However, since I described in detail Moscow’s relations with the African National Congress and its allies in my book,<sup>343</sup> here I will concentrate on the most important milestones.

ANC was the first national organisation in the region to establish contact with Moscow, while Soviet Union’s relations with its current ally, South African Communist Party had been established even earlier. Over 80 years ago, in November 1927, Josiah Gumede, came to the USSR, when the 10th anniversary of the 1917 revolution was celebrated.

After the Second World War some prominent South Africans, including Walter Sisulu, then ANC Secretary General, Duma Nokwe, Brian Bunting and Ruth First visited Moscow. However, regular bilateral ties were resumed only in July 1960, soon

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(340) *Pravda*, 7 April 1989.

(341) *Weekly Mail*, Johannesburg, April 7 to April 13, 1989.

(342) *The Namibian*, Windhoek, 5 April 1989.

(343) Ahtisaari’s role in the Namibian settlement was highlighted in his native Finland and helped him to become its President. After the retirement he again got involved in conflict settlement, and again in a controversial way; thus he drafted a plan of Kosovo independence, which contradicted the UN Security Council resolution. Therefore his Nobel Peace prize was regarded by many as an insult.

after the Sharpeville massacre and the banning of the ANC (the Communist Party had been banned ten years earlier) when SACP Chairman Dr Yusuf Dadoo, who was also a prominent leader of the South African Indian Congress and the Congress Alliance<sup>344</sup>, and Vella Pillayi, SACP representative in Western Europe, came to Moscow and had meetings at the CPSU headquarters.

In particular they discussed “forms of fraternal assistance from the CPSU and workers’ parties of the Socialist Countries”<sup>345</sup> and that resulted in allocation of \$30,000 from the “International Trade Union Fund” at the end of 1960.<sup>346</sup> This money was provided to the SACP, but was used by the ANC underground as well. The same applies to much bigger allocations of \$50,000 in 1961<sup>347</sup> and \$112,445 in 1962.<sup>348</sup>

When Yusuf Dadoo came to Moscow again in October 1961 together with Moses Kotane, SACP General Secretary and a prominent leader of the ANC to attend the 22nd CPSU Congress, they discussed with the newly elected CPSU International

Secretary, Boris Ponomarev and other Soviet interlocutors the issue of “using violence” for the first time. In particular they mentioned training cadres in preparation for sabotage.<sup>349</sup> In response, the Soviets underlined the need of the combination of all forms of struggle. An official reply, approved by the CPSU CC Secretariat read:

“Taking into account the situation, we agree with the opinion expressed by comrades Kotane and Dadoo. At the same time the intention of the SACP to take a course of armed form of struggle, places great responsibility on the Party. It is necessary not to counterpoise one form of struggle against the others but to combine all these forms skilfully. The armed struggle is a struggle of the broad people’s masses”.<sup>350</sup> Thus Moscow respected and backed up the decision to use “violence” but emphasised the priority of political

work.

As to the training military of instructors, Moscow initially agreed to render its service “using for this in particular the facilities of some friendly African countries, for example Guinea and Ghana,”<sup>351</sup> where Soviet military were present. However it proved to be too difficult to organise this and in mid-1963 the first groups of MK personnel, which included such persons as Chris Hani, future Chief of Staff of Umkhonto, Archibald Sibeko (Zola Zembe), a prominent commander, and Lambert Moloi, future Lieutenant General of the new South African National Defence Force, came to Moscow in the “Northern Training Centre”. Hani, who studied for ten months “in the environs of Moscow”, said later: “How can the working class forget the

(344) Shubin, V. *ANC: a View from Moscow*, second revised edition, Jacana, Johannesburg, 2008.

(345) The Congress Alliance consisted of the African National Congress, South African Indian Congress, South African Coloured People’s Congress, Congress of [white] Democrats and South African Congress of Trade-Unions.

(346) Dadoo and Pillay, ‘The Situation in the South African Communist Party’. [Moscow, 1960] p.6.

(347) RSAMH, collection 89, inventory 38, file 3, p.6.

(348) Ibid. file 4, p.3-5.

(349) Ibid. file 5, p.5-6.

(350) Kotane did not mention in Moscow that the first operations of Umkhonto would start on 16 December 1961, in two months’ time; most probably such a decision was taken after his departure from South Africa.

(351) RSAMH, Decisions taken by the instruction of the Secretaries of the CPSU Central Committee without recording in the minutes, N 478, 28 November 1961.

Soviet Union? I went to Moscow when I was 21 for military training. I was accepted there and treated wonderfully”<sup>352</sup>. Archibald Sibeko in his turn writes: “We were taught military strategy and tactics, topography, drilling, use of firearms and guerrilla warfare. We also covered politics, with heavy emphasis on skills needed [for] the construction and use of explosives, vehicle maintenance, feeding a mobile army and first aid in the field; everything necessary for survival under guerrilla conditions”.<sup>353</sup> Having re-established contacts with the SACP, Moscow was interested in direct ties with the ANC as well. Meanwhile Oliver Tambo, then ANC Deputy President and Head of the External Mission, was doing his best to receive a meaningful support from the West, but in vain. The capacity of the independent African countries was limited as well. Having travelled with Tambo to several of them, in 1962, Nelson Mandela received in cash or in pledges just about 25,000 pounds. “Money collecting is a job which requires a lot of time. You must be prepared to wait. A visit to socialist countries has become imperative”<sup>354</sup>, he wrote to his colleagues.

The first visit by Oliver Tambo, who was accompanied by Moses Kotane, to the Soviet Union, took place in 1963. On 5 April, at the meeting with Boris Ponomarev, Tambo informed the Soviets that the ANC urgently needed 250,000 pounds sterling for its activities and hoped to receive a bulk of it from Moscow. The Soviets were indeed helpful: \$300,000, that is, over 40% of the ANC’s needs, was allocated to it in the same year<sup>355</sup>.

Another issue Tambo raised in Moscow in 1963 was the military training, in the USSR, of a large number of MK fighters, because only a limited number of fighters could be trained in South Africa or in independent African countries. That request was also met, and a military college in Odessa was designated to receive hundreds of them<sup>356</sup>. In November 1963, MK members began arriving there<sup>357</sup> and in February they were joined by a team of MK leaders, including Joe Modise (his nom de guerre was Thabo More) as a commander of the group and Moses Mabhida as its commissar.<sup>358</sup>

Soon after, another specialised centre was established in Perevalnoye in the Crimea and during the next two decades this institution together with the Northern Training Centre trained many hundreds of the MK members. Later, in the second half of the 1980s, in anticipation of radical changes in South Africa and in particular in its armed forces, training of officers for regular army, navy and air force also began in a number of Soviet cities, from Minsk in Belarus to Frunze in Central Asia,

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(352) Ibid.

(353) Star, Johannesburg, 11 December 1991.

(354) *Freedom in our Lifetime* by Archie Sibeko (Zola Zembe) with Joyce Leeson, <http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/congress/sactu/zzi.htm>, consulted 15 September 2007.

(355) Quoted in: Strydom L. *Rivonia Unmasked!* (Johannesburg: Voortrekkerpers, 1965), p.108.

(356) RSAMH, collection 89, inventory 38, file 6, p.11-12. Meanwhile the SACP’s allocation was reduced to \$56,000 in 1963, and this confirms that earlier a good part of allocations was practically meant for the ANC and MK.

(357) All in all 328 Umkhonto fighters were trained in Odessa in two groups.

(358) Discussion with A. Makarov, Pretoria, 21 November 1993.

In response to the ANC request, the supply of small arms and explosives, followed by machine-guns, anti-tank, recoilless and anti-aircraft guns began as well. Like in the case of other liberation movements, with the consent of independent African states, the Soviet supplies were sent to their defence forces in the hope that they would actually reach MK.

The training of hundreds of fighters in the USSR and elsewhere was successfully accomplished by late 1960s, but the ANC leadership faced major obstacles in sending them back to South Africa, and furthermore, even in keeping them on the African continent. The report presented to the ANC National Executive Committee session in 1971 read: “In July 1969 our headquarters received a notice requiring that the ANC vacate its military cadres from the Kongwa Camp [in Tanzania] within a period of 14 days. The reason given for this unprecedented notice was that our cadres in Kongwa had stayed so long that they had now become a security risk to the country. In other words this meant the liquidation of Umkhonto we Sizwe.” So, they were sent on “refresher courses” and later “we were able to obtain permission for their return to Kongwa”.<sup>359</sup>

At the ANC Consultative Conference in Kabwe (Zambia) in 1985, Oliver Tambo was more forthright: “In 1969 as a result of complications that our movement faced in this region, we had to evacuate [most of] our army to the Soviet Union at very short notice.”<sup>360</sup>

Indeed, Moscow came to the rescue when not a single African country was ready to replace Tanzania as a base for the MK fighters, and moreover, when a year later it became clear that the return of MK fighters to Africa would be further delayed for more than a year, agreed to extend the course of “re-training” them.<sup>361</sup>

These actions confirmed the words of Soviet Prime-Minister and CPSU Politbureau member Alexey Kosygin who assured the SACP delegation, led by its Chairman John Marks and in June 1969 of Moscow’s “total support” and invited them “to ask for any support” which may be required.<sup>362</sup>

The ANC leadership made several attempts to send MK cadres (as a rule trained in the Soviet Union) home via Mozambique in and via Zimbabwe, but all of them failed. Then they tried to use a sea route and following continual requests Moscow agreed to support the plan<sup>363</sup>, which included training of personnel to find out sites for landing,

(359) Ronnie Kasrils described his and his comrades’ experience in Odessa in his *Armed and Dangerous. From Undercover Struggle to Freedom*. (Johannesburg and Cape Town. Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2003,) pp 65-72. See also the author’s *ANC: a View from Moscow*.

(360) MCHP, ANC Lusaka Collection. African National Congress National Consultative Conference. President’s Statement, p.19.

(361) MCHP, ANC Lusaka Collection. African National Congress National Consultative Conference. President’s Statement, p.19.

(362) The Decision of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee P 135/19, 1 September 1969, referred to in: RSAMH, Minutes of the Secretariat, N 103, item 24g, 20 July 1970.

(363) MCHP, ANC London Collection, Report of the work of the delegation of the SACP to the International Conference of Communist and Workers’ Parties. Moscow/1969, p.2.

financial assistance in acquiring a vessel<sup>364</sup>, supplying the hardware and training the landing party. Alas, “Operation J”, as this project was called, failed.

More successful was Chris Hani, a military and political leader of the ANC and Assistant General Secretary at the SACP Central Committee who managed to “penetrate” into South Africa and then into Lesotho in 1974. Moscow was not involved in this operation, but Hani’s second round of studies in the “Northern Training Centre” not long before it was very important for its accomplishment. He said later: “We had undergone a course in the Soviet Union on the principles of forming an underground movement. That was our training: the formation of the underground movement, then the building of guerrilla detachments. The Soviets put a lot of emphasis on the building of these underground structures, comprising in the beginning of very few people.”<sup>365</sup>

The April 1974 Portuguese revolution, followed by the Soweto uprising on 16 June 1976 radically changed the situation and prompted hundreds and then thousands of young South Africans to leave the country to join liberation movements. Following a request of the ANC leadership, again Moscow increased the number of MK cadres for training in the USSR; 140 of them studied in 1976 - 1978.<sup>366</sup> However, the Soviet assistance to the ANC was not limited to the military field. Moscow provided reliable political and diplomatic support to the ANC at the UN, through other international organisations and in bilateral contacts. Besides, about 200 South Africans in total, graduated in the USSR, mostly with Masters’ degrees, and 200 more studied for shorter time at the Institute of Social Sciences or the Komsomol School.

A new element in bilateral co-operation appeared when during his visit to Moscow, in October 1978, Tambo asked for Soviet assistance with the training of MK cadres in Angola.<sup>367</sup> The first group of Soviet officers, initially quite small, was headed by Navy Captain Vyacheslav Shiryaev, who under his “nom de guerre”, “Comrade Ivan”, became a well-known figure in ANC circles.<sup>368</sup> By late 1980s, its size reached about 30 persons; and altogether more than 200 Soviet advisors, specialists and interpreters shared the service in Angola with their ANC comrades.<sup>369</sup> Among them were infantry officers, engineers, experts in MCW (“military combat work”), that is building of

(364) The decision of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee P 58/52 of 18 October 1967, item 1, referred to in: RSAMH, Minutes of the Secretariat, N 103, item 24g, 20 July 1970; the decision of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee P 183/13 of 20 October 1970 and the order of the USSR Council of Ministers 2217s of 20 October 1970, referred to in: RSAMH, Minutes of the Secretariat, N 103, item 24g, 20 July 1970 as proof of fulfilment of the last-mentioned.

(365) 75 000 pounds were allocated for the purchase of the ship.(SACP to CPSU, 6 September 1970. Referred to in: Maloka, E. *The South African Communist Party in exile*, p.29).

(366) *Echo*, 21 February 1990.

(367) *Brief Report of the Revolutionary Council*, p.6.

(368) According to an ANC document, the initiative to involve the Soviets came originally from Jorge Risquet who at that stage headed the Cuban contingent in Angola (*Brief Report of the Revolutionary Council. April 1979*, p.5-6).

(369) Shiryaev, V.F. *Menya zvali tovarishch Ivan*. [They called me Comrade Ivan]. In: *VVITKU VMF. Vospominaniya vypusnikov 1961 goda*. [Red Banner Higher Naval Engineering and Technical College. Reminiscences of graduates of 1961] (Moscow, 2005), pp.88-92.

an armed underground), hand-to-hand fighting, automobiles, communications and communications equipment repair, medicine, etc.

The Angolan leadership maintained very warm relations with the ANC. “Comrade Ivan” recalls: “... the attitude of the Angolan government and people to South African patriots was more than friendly. Under the state of civil war and practically full economic dislocation, Angola was nevertheless looking for opportunities to do what it could to help the ANC. The goodwill of the Angolans extended to the Soviet military specialists attached to the ANC.”<sup>370</sup>

From 1963 to 1990 the total value of Soviet military supplies to the ANC via Tanzania, Angola, Mozambique and Zambia was about 36 million Roubles, but it would be misleading to convert this sum into any foreign currency, because prices of hardware were very low in the USSR; the list of equipment speaks for itself: several thousand AK-47s of various modifications, 3,362 Simonov self-loading carbines (SKS), 6,000 pistols, 275 grenade-launchers, 90 Grad-P missile launchers, over 40

*Strela 2M* anti-aircraft missile launchers, 20 *Malyutka* anti-tank rocket launchers, over 60 mortars, among others.<sup>371</sup>

Over 2000 South Africans underwent military training in the USSR, and their experience, no doubt, encouraged non-racialism in the ranks of the ANC through fraternal relations, which developed between “white” Soviets and “black” members of the liberation movement.

The training of MK cadres both in Angola and in the USSR was organised in the second half of the 1980s in two major fields: in guerrilla and conventional warfare with the balance between them changing from time to time. As a result of a request by Oliver Tambo, forwarded to me when I visited him in hospital in the GDR, in August 1986, the annual intake of MK cadres for training in “the Northern Training Centre” in the MCW was officially increased to 60, and in practice it was even higher. As for conventional training, the MK command believed that this knowledge would be needed for the new armed forces of South Africa: Army, Air Force and Navy. The first group of cadets arrived in Perevalnoe for a three-year course for motorised infantry officers and from 1987 full-course training (up to five years) of South Africans began in several fields, including helicopter and jet pilots, aircraft engineers and naval officers.

Moscow began looking for contact with the growing legal opposition in South Africa simultaneously with increased support for the ANC. Beginning in 1985, in consultation with the ANC, the Soviet NGOs and academic bodies began establishing contact with legal democratic forces in South Africa. A “pilgrimage” to Moscow by anti-apartheid figures from South Africa began. Bishop Tutu came in June 1988 for the celebration of the Millennium of the Russian Orthodox Church, followed by Alex and Jenny Boraine from the Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa

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(370) *Segodnya*, Moscow, no 5, 1993.

(371) V. Shiryayev to the author, 2 April 2003.



(IDASA), prominent journalist Alistair Sparks, Frederick van Zyl Slabbert, and many others.

At the same time Moscow's bilateral contacts with Pretoria were scarce, and as a rule, they were confined to talks about the release of the Soviets captured in Angola or warning the South Africa authorities. The only meeting of a different nature took place on Pretoria's initiative in August 1984 in Vienna. Sergey Sinitsyn, then a Deputy Head of the MFA Third African Department who led the Soviet delegation, wrote much later: "In the summer of 1984, through contact with 'close neighbours' (KGB)<sup>372</sup> who were dealing with the issue of setting our people free, South African officials informed Moscow about their wish to organise a confidential meeting at working level on the problems of the situation in Southern Africa ... After a comprehensive interdepartmental discussion and getting the consent of the Old Square<sup>373</sup> (though without participation of its representative in the [forthcoming] meeting), it was decided to agree to their proposal."<sup>374</sup>

According to Sinitsyn, the South Africa team, led by Neil Barnard, head of the National Intelligence Service, tried to convince the Soviets that Pretoria was conducting foreign policy independently from any superpower, but at the same time expected Moscow to influence its friendly countries and forces to stop their "hostile actions towards South Africa" and so assist the process of "peace and dialogue"<sup>375</sup>. In particular, it was against "the radical forces" in Namibia, namely SWAPO coming to power in Namibia.<sup>376</sup>

In exchange the South Africans underlined the possibility of co-operation between the two countries in several fields, especially in control over a number of strategic mineral resources<sup>377</sup>, but the Soviets rejected the idea of this "exchange".

The first years of "perestroika", up to late 1988 witnessed the rapid broadening of Moscow's relations with the ANC and SACP. Its peak was the meeting between Tambo and Gorbachev, which took place in the Kremlin on 4 November 1986, and the Soviet leader was still honest in his dealings with the ANC: having informed Tambo about attempts of P.W. Botha to contact Moscow "through a third, even a fourth, party"; he assured him that any step in this direction would be taken in consultation with the Congress.<sup>378</sup>

The common position of the two parties was expressed in the official press release. Three major conditions were forwarded to ensure the political settlement in Southern

(372) *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, Moscow, 8 August 1992.

(373) The term "close neighbours" originated from the fact that before moving to the Smolenskaya Square in the mid-1950s the Soviet People's Commissariat (later Ministry) of Foreign Affairs for several decades occupied a building close to the Security and Intelligence headquarters, while the Department of Military Intelligence, situated further apart, became known as "distant neighbours."

(374) The CPSU Central Committee machinery was located at the Old Square, not far from the Kremlin.

(375) Sinitsyn, S. *Vensky "vals" s burami*. [Vienna waltz with the Boers] - *Afrika v vospominaniyah veteranov diplomaticheskoi sluzhby*, Moscow, 2002, p.184.

(376) *Ibid.* p.187-188.

(377) *Ibid.* pp.192-193.

(378) *Ibid.* p.197.

Africa: an end to Pretoria's acts of aggression against independent African states, the granting of independence to Namibia in accordance with UN resolutions and the removal of the apartheid regime in South Africa as "the primary cause of the conflict situation in the region"<sup>379</sup>, and later all these goals were achieved.

Nowadays, after the "collapse" of the Soviet Union, brought about mostly by Gorbachev's actions (and inactions) the very term "perestroika" acquired negative meaning for most of the Russian citizens. However, I believe this period should be divided into two. The positive tendencies prevailed initially, but beginning from 1988 Gorbachev's slogan "More socialism, more democracy!" in practice began meaning the opposite: his more authoritarian rule and restoration of capitalism.

This division can be applied to the state of Moscow's relations with the ANC as well. Stephen Ellis, a British academic and his renegade co-author claimed that at Gorbachev – Reagan summit in Reykjavik in October 1986 Moscow "committed itself to withdraw its forces or to refrain from seeking the overthrow of the existing order [in South Africa], leaving the field to the USA and its allies on the ground" and that South Africa was included there "in the category of countries where the USSR would henceforth refrain from aggression". They alleged that Moscow promised no longer to "throw its weight behind the effort by the ANC and the SACP to ferment a revolution in South Africa."<sup>380</sup> In reality however at that time Moscow's support to "a revolution in South Africa" was growing. Moreover, as the published transcript of the summit meeting shows, South Africa had not been mentioned in the Gorbachev- Reagan discussions at all!<sup>381</sup>

One of the results of Tambo's visit to Moscow in November 1986 was the opening of the official ANC mission in the USSR. It enjoyed all diplomatic privileges, even though it was accredited to a non-governmental organisation, the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, and was financed by the non-governmental Soviet Peace Fund. As in the case of SWAPO the privileges included all diplomatic privileges.<sup>382</sup> Unfortunately however, the ANC did not use its mission to its full capacity.

The rise of the liberation struggle in South Africa and the growing recognition of the role of the ANC as its leader created an atmosphere where negotiations on a political settlement, on the eradication of apartheid by peaceful means, were becoming feasible. Multi-faceted support to the ANC from the USSR facilitated it, as well as a general relaxation of international tension, which made it difficult for Pretoria to use the bogey of a "total communist onslaught".

The approach to the political settlement was discussed in detail at the confidential tripartite consultations involving the USSR, the ANC and Cuba representatives in

(379) The author's notes at the discussion of O. Tambo with M. Gorbachev, Moscow, 4 November 1986. *Pravda*, 5 November 1986.

(380) Ellis, S. and Sechaba, T. *Comrades*, p.182.

(381) *Mirovaya ekonomika imezhdunarodnye otnosheniya* (World Economy and International Relations), Moscow, 1993, no 4,5,7,8.

(382) MCHP, ANC Lusaka Collection. Rules governing the privileges and immunities granted to the Mission of the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa.

Moscow in September 1987. Tambo, Dobrynin and Risquet led their delegations accordingly and a common position on all major issues was confirmed.

The Soviet position on the most important international issues, including the support of the liberation struggle was reconfirmed in a confidential message the CPSU CC sent to friendly organisations, including the ANC and SACP after the third Gorbachev-Reagan summit in December 1987: “While discussing the problems of regional conflicts and other issues with the Americans we stressed the point that our aspiration for a dialogue with the USA should by no means be construed in such a way that we give up solidarity with the liberation struggle of the people or ignore the interests of developing countries. Never and under no circumstances shall we deviate from the course of supporting the right of nations to independent development, never shall we go for any accord with the Americans at the expense of or to prejudice the people of developing countries. For us, solidarity with those who struggle for national liberation, against imperialism and neo-colonialism, remains a permanent factor that is not influenced by temporary changes.”<sup>383</sup>

The tripartite meeting, mentioned above, for us in the International Department signalled also the beginning of our involvement in Operation Vula, headed by Oliver Tambo, which was aimed at the creation of a new underground network inside South Africa. Oliver Tambo told me in confidence that Mac Maharaj (a future minister) and Sphiwe Nyanda (later Chief of the SANDF and incumbent minister) will go to South Africa to lead the armed underground machinery there. Initially Moscow’s assistance was needed just to support their “legends”. Nyanda later wrote me: “The Moscow visit of [July] 1988 was the final leg of my preparation to infiltrate South Africa. It afforded me the opportunity to brush up on my disguises and gain more confidence on these. More identities were added to existing ones, enabling me to shed some of them as I advanced from Moscow to Schipol (Holland) to Nairobi (Kenya) and to Matsapa (Swaziland), thus breaking the trail and preparing for safe infiltration into South Africa ... From an operational point of view, the Moscow leg was probably the most important for my cover story.

Without exception, those who were not privy to the information believed I was in the Soviet Union for [military] studies. The enemy therefore never expected me to be right on its doorstep!”<sup>384</sup>

Unfortunately at that very time, when Moscow’s relations with the ANC reached the higher level, some “clouds” appear on a horizon. At an academic conference, held in Moscow in June 1986 Professor Gleb Starushenko, speaking in his personal capacity

(383) MCHP, ANC Lusaka Connection. Our assessment of the outcome of the Washington summit between General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Comrade M.S. Gorbachev and US President R. Reagan.

(384) Sphiwe Nyanda to Vladimir Shubin, 10 December 2002. For more on the Soviet role see: *ANC: A View from Moscow*. One episode is worth mentioning here: on 11 and 12 July 1989, at a time when Pretoria and Western propaganda were claiming that the USSR had “dropped” the ANC, Moscow was still the safest place for Oliver Tambo and other ANC leaders to meet Mac Maharaj, the head of their underground machinery.

called for “comprehensive guarantees for the white population” in South Africa.<sup>385</sup> Such initiative was quite acceptable in the spirit of “perestroika”, even if it contained such bizarre proposals as the creation of a chamber in a future parliament “possessing the right of veto, on the basis of equal representation of four communities.”<sup>386</sup> However, the people whom we used to call “art experts in civilian clothes” in the West and in South Africa regarded his words as virtually “new Kremlin’s position”. They believed that Gorbachev was using Starushenko and his like “as vehicles to introduce new ideas.”<sup>387</sup>

The situation was clarified when Oliver Tambo headed the ANC delegation to Moscow in March 1989. However, this time Tambo’s counterpart in the Kremlin top was not Gorbachev, but Anatoly Lukyanov, his first deputy in the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet. Technically Gorbachev was “out of Moscow” at that time, but the main reason was that it became rather difficult for us to involve him in African affairs.

At the meeting with Lukyanov Tambo expressed certain worry about Moscow’s stand; he underlined, that it should “be part of the solution of the problem; the South African situation should not remain only the concern of the US, UK and other Western states.”<sup>388</sup>

Lukyanov’s approach was very clear: he underlined “the settlement of regional conflicts” did not mean the sacrifice of the struggle for national and social liberation, for the eradication of apartheid. He confirmed that in the matters concerning South Africa, including its contacts with legal anti-apartheid opposition Moscow followed recommendations of the ANC.<sup>389</sup>

However soon the situation did change, and not in favour of the liberation movements. It was manifested by the speech of Edward Shevardnadze, then Gorbachev’s closest ally at the UN General Assembly in September 1989, in which he pledged “to oppose ... resolutely all kinds of violence, no matter what had caused or motivated it”<sup>390</sup>, which meant opposing any resolute action against the racist regime in South Africa.<sup>391</sup> However, Shevardnadze, an opportunist by his nature knew how to adapt his language to various circumstances. At his meeting with Alfred Nzo, Joe Slovo, and Thabo Mbeki in Lusaka on 20 March 1990 (he was there in transit to Windhoek for Namibia’s independence celebration) he said: “We are ready to work with you in your revolutionary work.”<sup>392</sup> In his turn Mbeki underlined: “The USSR

(385) Starushenko, G. *Problems of Struggle against Racism, Apartheid and Colonialism in South Africa*. (Moscow: Africa Institute, 1986), p.12.

(386) Ibid.

(387) *Soviet Review*. Stellenbosch, N 4, 1987, p.30. Goncharov gave an interview in 1987 in Harare to *Work in Progress* magazine; just like Starushenko’s presentation it also contained factual mistakes and wrong judgements.

(388) The author’s notes at the discussion of O. Tambo with A. Lukyanov, Moscow, 11 March 1989.

(389) Ibid.

(390) *Izvestia*, 27 September 1989.

(391) A bitter irony is that two years later, in early 1992, Shevardnadze was installed as the leader of his native Georgia by the insurgents, many of them with a criminal record, who had won a short civil war.

(392) MCHP, ANC Lusaka Collection, Report on the ANC Meeting with the Soviet Minister Foreign. 20.3.90 at 9.00 hrs. p.6.

should continue to be seen not to begin establishing links with a system on its way out ... We wouldn't want a negative perception of the USSR among our people.”<sup>393</sup>

After the unbanning of the ANC, SACP, and a number of other organisations in February 1990 the ANC Headquarters was transferred from Lusaka to Johannesburg, and a new channel of communication became essential for Moscow. So, an agreement to open a Soviet liaison mission in Pretoria and a South African mission in Moscow, attached to the embassies of Austria as sections of interest was signed on 26 February 1991. It should be underlined that the missions were deprived of the right to use the national flag, emblem and other state symbols<sup>394</sup> that is the diplomatic status of the South African mission in Moscow was lower than that of the ANC office. Moreover, the statement of the Soviet MFA clearly stated: “The creation of the sections of interest does not mean the establishment of diplomatic or consular relations.”<sup>395</sup>

However, further “erosion” of the Soviet position on South Africa worried the leadership of the liberation movement: “It is a pity that there are some forces in the Soviet Union that are in a hurry to have all kinds of links with South Africa... For the moment, given the support that we have received from the Soviet Union, for all these years, it would be a tragedy if it should be soured by hurried moves.”<sup>396</sup>

As soon as Nelson Mandela was released from prison on 11 February 1990 an invitation “on behalf of the USSR leadership”, signed by Gorbachev was sent to him however, rather unexpectedly his visit became a problem in Moscow's relations with the ANC. Though the reasons for numerous delays of the visit looked purely technical, in reality they reflected further negative changes Gorbachev's policy. Anatoly Chernyaev, then his assistant for international affairs wrote in his memoirs: “Gorbachev had a rather good nose for people who had no prospects and were ‘useless to us’ ... He ‘froze’ his meeting with Mandela, though both academics and Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials (true, with some resistance on my part) more than once argued wordily that it had to be done: that one [Mandela] travelled all over the world, everywhere – at the highest level – and yet could not come to Moscow! Gorbachev did not believe that by supporting the ANC and supplying it with arms we were assisting the correct process in South Africa. He did not stop it ‘automatically’; he had no time to do it. And he realised that it was one thing to receive Mandela in Washington and another thing to do the same in ‘red’ Moscow, suspected of the expansion of communism.”<sup>397</sup>

I believe nobody could suspect Gorbachev was “expanding communism” in the last years of his “reign”, but it was he who firmly supported the ANC when Moscow really was still “red”.

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(393) Ibid. p.4.

(394) *Pravda*, 28 February 1991.

(395) Ibid.

(396) E. Pahad to the author, 2 January 1991.

(397) Chernyaev, A. *Shest Let s Gorbachevym [Six Years with Gorbachev]*, (Moscow: Progress - Kultura, 1993), p.195.

I could feel Mandela's worries when my colleagues and me on 3 July 1991 in Durban during the first legal National Conference of the ANC. "Gorbachev must have had a good reason to do it" 398, Mandela commented. Mandela highly appreciated the role of the Soviet Union: "Without your support we would not be where we are now."

Stormy events in Moscow the next month, August 1991, when a "very strange coup"<sup>399</sup>, organised by a group of people who were close to Gorbachev was followed by a "counter-coup" led by Boris Yeltsin, resulting in the banning of the CPSU and then the "collapse" of the USSR in December. The new "rulers" of Russia did their best to distance themselves from the ANC. While the Umkhonto cadres were sent away, and Pik Botha was visiting Moscow in February 1992, Yeltsin's notorious Minister of Foreign Affairs, Andrey Kozyrev, signed an agreement on the establishment of diplomatic relations with South Africa in Pretoria. Then, instead of Mandela, Yeltsin welcomed de Klerk in the Kremlin in late May 1992 and even informed him that "Mandela would not be received as the ANC President in Moscow but would be visiting the Russian capital as an international figure, a fighter for human rights".<sup>400</sup> No surprise, these assurances made Pretoria more uncompromising at the talks on the political settlement and delayed democratisation of South Africa.

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(398) Discussion with N. Mandela, Durban, 3 July 1991.

(399) I used this expression in the article published under a pen name "Mkhulu" in *the African Communist*, no 128, 1st quarter 1992.

(400) *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, Moscow, 2 June 1992.

# 9.3

## **Western Europe, Southern Africa, and Transnational Solidarity Networks, 1960-1994**

**William Minter and Richard Hengeveld**

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## Introduction

At the midpoint of the 20th century, colonial powers still ruled almost the entire African continent. Apartheid prevailed in South Africa, and segregation in the United States. Within two decades, most African states gained their independence; but both the white-minority rule in Southern Africa and racial inequality in the United States continued, confirming W.E.B. Du Bois's famous 1903 prophecy that "the problem of the 20th century is the problem of the color line." Europe, as the continent of origin of modern colonialism, was intimately linked to these struggles, despite the geographical distance.

The second half of the 20th century was the era of the Cold War, featuring the bipolar confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union. For most political leaders and the wider public in North America and Europe, this conflict was the primary reality defining global politics. Yet for countries seeking freedom from colonialism and racism, the Cold War was far from central. For those in the West involved in and influenced by movements in the "Third World," the struggle in Southern Africa decisively illustrated the folly of applying a Cold War lens regardless of realities on the ground.

At its height, the cause that peaked in the anti-apartheid movement achieved its most dramatic victory with the fall of apartheid in South Africa. Yet this movement was never concerned with only South Africa. Around the world, anti-apartheid activists saw apartheid as tied to their own particular experiences of injustice. In every country—the United States, Cuba, the Netherlands, India, and elsewhere—activists saw their commitment to abolish apartheid as linked to their visions for the future of their own country and the world. Solidarity with Southern African liberation struggles had a profound transnational resonance, precisely because overcoming it was intertwined with other national and personal experiences of injustice and hope for liberation.

Of course, the most decisive role in achieving Southern Africa's political freedom was played by the people of Southern Africa, but the process involved the entire continent and engaged large numbers of activists outside Africa as well. International institutions provided support, and sympathetic governments offered financial resources; in Western Europe, notably Sweden, and, to a lesser extent, Norway, Denmark, and the Netherlands. Cuban troops and military support from the Soviet Union and its allies were crucial in checking apartheid South Africa's military power in the region. The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, as well as Yugoslavia, China, Cuba, and Vietnam, provided reliable diplomatic support in both governmental and non-governmental international arenas.

This chapter is focused on the role played by solidarity movements and solidarity actions in Western Europe, excluding the Nordic countries.<sup>1</sup> In the most complete overview of international solidarity with South Africa, by the South African Democracy Education Trust,<sup>2</sup> chapters on Western European countries account for

almost 500 of the total 1400 pages. In particular, the British involvement in the anti-apartheid struggle already features in a significant number of books and memoirs.<sup>3</sup> And several organizations have compiled substantial listings of relevant archives and other sources.<sup>4</sup>

Strikingly, however, there is no comprehensive overview of international solidarity with liberation struggles for any of the Southern African countries other than South Africa. Nor are there more than scattered accounts of the anti-apartheid and broader solidarity movements in European countries other than Great Britain and, to a lesser extent, the Netherlands. This chapter therefore cannot provide a summary of a mature body of research. Rather it is an attempt to sketch an overview, a guide to existing sources, and pointers to opportunities for more in-depth investigation. Our emphasis is on the transnational networks linking the struggles in Southern African countries with exiles and supporters in Western Europe, networks that also had their ramifications in independent Africa and throughout the world.

Given that almost all the studies this chapter relies on focus on only one specific national context, the comparisons between movements in the different countries and suggestions on the possible causes of their different characteristics should be regarded as plausible hypotheses rather than as confirmed conclusions. Further investigation of such comparisons, we are convinced, could prove fruitful for understanding not only this particular history but also factors influencing the development of solidarity movements more generally.

### **Variations: Transnational Contexts and National Histories**

In some senses the 20th-century history of every African country is intrinsically transnational history, with the colonial context making it particularly difficult to untangle “internal” and “external” factors. The decolonization process involved interaction between the colonizer and the colonized, as well as mutual influences among those colonized by the same power. It was also shaped by the evolution of global norms and institutions, interactions between different colonial powers, and Cold War competition.

Those African countries that turned to armed struggle to achieve political rights had particularly wide connections. These included Algeria (1954-1962), Eritrea (1961-1993), and Western Sahara (1973-). Each of these had significant transnational linkages: witness, for example, the impact of the thinking of Caribbean emigré Frantz

Fanon and of the film *Battle for Algiers*. Most prominent, however, were the territories under white-minority or Portuguese colonial rule that defied the trend towards peaceful decolonization in the 1960s. Concentrated in Southern Africa, they included South Africa; South West Africa (Namibia) under South African occupation; Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), ruled by a white-settler regime which declared independence from British rule in 1965; and the Portuguese colonies of Angola, Mozambique, and, in West Africa, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde.<sup>5</sup>

## Periodization

The pace and focus of solidarity in Western Europe, as in other parts of the world, was primarily determined by the development of the struggle within Southern Africa. In the period following World War II, it was the Defiance Campaign against Unjust Laws launched by the African National Congress (ANC) and allies in 1952,<sup>6</sup> followed by the Treason Trial from 1956 to 1961, that first evoked organized international support, primarily in England and the United States. The Sharpeville Massacre in 1960 focused world attention on South Africa, as did the decision to give the 1960 Nobel Peace Prize to ANC leader Chief Albert Luthuli.<sup>7</sup>

From the point of view of solidarity, the period from 1960 to 1994 can be most conveniently divided into two by the years 1975-1976, which saw both the fall of Portuguese colonialism and the Soweto student uprising in South Africa. From 1960 to 1975, with the region dominated by the “unholy alliance” of South Africa, Rhodesia, and Portugal, and the South African struggle muted by imprisonment and repression, activists focused on solidarity with liberation movements in Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau, as well as denunciation of white-minority rule in South Africa, South West Africa (Namibia), and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). Other British-ruled territories in Southern Africa gained independence in the 1960s with peaceful decolonization scenarios resembling their predecessors elsewhere in the British Empire.<sup>8</sup>

The Belgian Congo, in contrast, was born into conflict, quickly becoming the scene of the first major Cold War confrontation in Africa, complicated by the involvement of both European and Southern African mercenaries. For the first half of the 1960s, the “Congo Crisis” gained far more international attention than did apartheid or white-minority rule in the countries further south.<sup>9</sup> This period of the 1960s and the early 1970s coincided with international mobilization against the war in Vietnam, with the radicalization associated with “1968,” with the height of the civil rights movement and “Black Power” in the United States, and with the first decade of independence for most African countries. The independence of Angola and Mozambique in 1975, followed by the defeat of South Africa’s intervention in Angola, formed the immediate backdrop to the Soweto uprising in mid-1976, which in turn marked the beginning of a new stage of struggle in South Africa. It also marked the beginning of the transformation of the relatively low-profile international movement for solidarity with African liberation into an interconnected “anti-apartheid” movement that eventually mobilized millions of supporters in almost every country in the world.

Thus there was a significant difference, in terms of media attention, the number of people involved, and therefore the character of the movement, between the “anti-apartheid movement,” focused on South Africa, and solidarity movements or actions focused on other Southern African countries or on the region. In aggregate, the height and extent of the “anti-apartheid movement” focus was much greater, particularly in the period 1976-1994. It also had the longer duration, arguably beginning in the 1950s with the Defiance Campaign. But in the period from 1964 to 1976, international solidarity movement actions against Portuguese colonialism, and for liberation in

Zimbabwe and Namibia were possibly just as significant as those focused on South Africa itself.

Internationally, the second period opened with the end of the Vietnam war (1975) and the fall of the Shah in Iran (1979), followed by the election of Margaret Thatcher in Britain (1979) and Ronald Reagan in the United States (1980). In the period of global right-wing advances in the 1980s, the anti-apartheid movement was a notable example of a contrary trend. Globally, this period closes not only with the end of the apartheid regime, but also the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) and the end of the Soviet Union (1991).

### **Global Context**

The narrative to address fundamental questions, such as:

- How have the popular aspirations and expectations been incorporated into the post-liberation national agendas?
- What have these processes represented to the leadership, participants, and common citizens?
- How can the forged sense of belonging and community of purpose that helped sustain the struggle for liberation be transmitted to the new generations?<sup>10</sup>

Parallel questions apply for international solidarity with Southern Africa liberation. Thus one must deal with aspirations and expectations on both the African and European sides. This, in turn, means putting liberation within Southern Africa within the global context of struggles for achievement of human rights, both political rights and the broader economic and social goals also included in such historic documents as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and South Africa's Freedom Charter (1955).

The understanding of solidarity is both political and personal. In contrast to charitable appeals, solidarity relies on references to common struggles and common values. So when people outside Southern Africa participated in supporting liberation struggles there, they were also acting to affirm their own values based on their own national and personal values, on their understandings of universal standards of justice and injustice, and their membership in international networks committed to those values. Their movements were linked to diverse earlier histories of solidarity, such as the 1930s support for the Spanish Republic, anti-fascist unity during World War II, and the long history of Pan-Africanist and anti-colonial networks that stretched across oceans and around the world.

Support for liberation in Southern Africa brought together broad fronts of allies, both within Southern African countries and in Europe, comparable in many ways to the broad front against Nazism during World War II. Unity came primarily from the common goal of defeating obvious enemies—the colonial and white-minority regimes. Those involved came from different backgrounds, had different understandings of their involvement, and were connected to different bilateral and

international networks. These differences were not fixed, and evolved both as a result of events, the inspiration of the struggle in Southern Africa, and new links built up as a result of solidarity action. But the extent of common ground about the desired shape of a future society remained to be a problem.

The mix of backgrounds and perspectives in part differed by place, both the country of the solidarity activist and the location of their primary ties within Southern Africa. But probably even more significant were broader currents which crossed country and continental boundaries. These diverse networks reflected the involvement of activists in common experiences of racial inequality, colonialism and anti-colonialism, Christian missions and the ecumenical movement, the international peace and human rights movements, as well as left and liberal party internationals (socialists, communists, and others). The U.S. civil rights movement was a fundamental reference point for both black and white activists in the United States, as well as highly visible on the international stage. Around the world the context was set by the anti-colonial struggle in Asia and Africa, "Third World" revolutions such as those of Cuba and Vietnam, the youth and student mobilization symbolized by the year 1968, and the anti-Vietnam war mobilization.

One issue common to all groups involved, as to the movements in Southern Africa itself, was the need to focus on the immediate objective of achieving basic political rights, at the risk of obscuring the fact that this achievement held no guarantee of achieving the popular aspirations vested in it. Before Ghana's independence, Kwame Nkrumah famously remarked, "Seek ye first the political kingdom, and all things shall be added unto you." But the experience of the first wave of African independent states made it clear that those seeking liberation in Southern Africa should also listen to Amilcar Cabral's cautionary statement:

Always bear in mind that the people are not fighting for ideas, for the things in anyone's head. They are fighting to win material benefits, to live better and in peace, to see their lives go forward, to guarantee the future of their children.

In practice resolving the relationship between the struggles for national liberation and other social justice issues, such as gender equality, class and economic systems, and the appropriate paths for achieving popular aspirations, was put aside in the interest of the common goals of national independence and ending political apartheid. Common to all solidarity activists, however, was an understanding that the movement for liberation in Southern Africa was tied to universal ideals, and linked to other struggles for justice on other continents, including within European countries themselves.

Common also was a process of radicalization, in which discovery of the multiple links to colonialism and apartheid put solidarity groups into confrontation with vested interests and entrenched biases in their own societies. This process paralleled and interacted with simultaneous trends in European countries as well as global movements such as opposition to the war in Vietnam, and solidarity with other struggles in Latin America, the Middle East, and elsewhere. The national liberation movements

in Mozambique and South Africa in particular had particularly strong influence in evoking not only solidarity but inspiration among their international supporters.

Yet the sober fact is that Southern African countries achieving independence through the liberation struggle were to experience the same sequence of high popular hopes and subsequent disappointments as did African states achieving independence through other means. Whether in Southern Africa or elsewhere in the world, achievement of the “political kingdom” in the 20th century instead set the stage for new, and perhaps even more difficult, struggles. The implications for solidarity were that there would be no automatic transfer of the ties of past struggles into the “post-apartheid” era. New ties of solidarity would have to be based on new understandings of common struggle that went beyond the achievement of basic political rights.

### **National Variations**

Movements in different European countries were responding to the same Southern African events, embedded in the same global contexts, and confronted with similar issues of building a common front against colonialism and apartheid. But the shape and the impact of the solidarity and anti-apartheid movements were also determined by specific national histories and circumstances, including the placement of each country within multiple transnational networks. In theory one might approach this history as a sum of bilateral relationships. But that is both impractical and misleading. Depending on how many countries one counts as in “Western Europe” and “Southern Africa” (and those boundaries differ by different historical periods and definitions), a bilateral matrix could include more than 300 country-pairs. And such an analysis might easily miss the decisive impact of mutual influence between movements in different countries, as well as of transnational networks, both governmental and non-governmental.

Our initial approach to making sense of this complexity is to first group Western European countries by their previous historical connections to Southern Africa, which we argue is one important factor influencing the differential impact of the solidarity movements. In the course of descriptions of movements in each country, necessarily brief, we draw out other relevant factors and historical contingencies, review the status of research to date, and suggest topics in need of further investigation.

The remainder of the chapter is thus divided into the following sections:

- First, those countries that were still colonial powers in the region during this period, namely the United Kingdom and Portugal. Deep historical ties as well as current vested interests set distinct contexts for solidarity movements in these countries.
- Secondly, other European countries with past colonial ties in the white-dominated Southern African region, that is, the Netherlands and Germany. For both elites and solidarity movements in these countries, their relationship with Southern Africa was influenced by these historical ties, among other factors.
- Thirdly, other European countries, that is, those with no direct history of colonial possessions in the Southern African region. This is a very diverse group, with

a wide range of different relationships to Southern Africa and development of solidarity movements. Here one includes, for example, France, Italy, and Spain, with colonial histories in other parts of Africa, as well as countries having no such histories, such as Ireland, Switzerland, Austria, Greece, and Cyprus. Although the Congo is part of the southern as well as central African region, the pattern of solidarity seems to correspond best with its more prominent Central African position. We have therefore also grouped Belgium here. Comparisons within this group, as well as with the Nordic countries, with high levels of solidarity in this period despite the lack of a colonial presence, can give clues about other factors affecting the development of solidarity and anti-apartheid movements.

- Finally, transnational networks with headquarters or other significant presence in Western Europe. These networks, both formal organizations and coalitions as well as informal channels of communication through “like-minded” groups, are important enough to consider separately, in addition to the specifically national groups. They include church networks, trade union networks, networks of Africa solidarity groups, and political networks such as those linking Communist parties, Socialist parties, or Western European parliamentarians concerned with Southern Africa.

In the conclusion we will return to an analysis of the diverse factors influencing the differential involvement of solidarity in different countries and networks, as well as the current issues of interpreting these movements and their current relevance.

## Colonial Powers in the Region

In 1960, the entire Southern African region was under white-minority or colonial rule. For the two remaining powers, Great Britain and Portugal, this period marked the end of the empire. But solidarity with Southern Africa in the two countries was shaped by radically different national contexts. Great Britain was at the centre of world-wide anti-apartheid networks. For Portugal, in contrast, its African wars were closely intertwined with the fate of its own dictatorship. For the Portuguese, the domestic impact of African liberation thus overshadowed any other transnational solidarity connections.

### Great Britain

On February 3, 1960, British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, speaking to the South African parliament in Cape Town, told his listeners: “The wind of change is blowing through this continent. Whether we like it or not, this growth of national consciousness is a political fact.” Macmillan was concluding a tour of British territories on the continent, and reaffirming the policy of gradual decolonization already begun with Sudan and Ghana. In the next few years that policy would lead to independence for the countries from Kenya south to Zambia, and even for the three territories most dependent on South Africa: Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland.

Yet Britain, which had gained the “lion’s share” of Southern Africa during the 19th and 20th centuries, still had an enormous weight of vested interests in the region, cemented by dense ties of “kith and kin.” Colonial Portugal was also Britain’s “oldest ally,” while British economic interests were strong in Mozambique, if not in Angola. Formal allegiance of the white-minority regimes in the region to Britain was dissolved by South Africa’s expulsion from the Commonwealth in 1961 and Rhodesia’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965. But in the following decades resistance to the “wind of change” remained strong in London as well as in Pretoria and Salisbury.<sup>11</sup>

London was a prime location for both supporters and opponents of liberation in Southern Africa. The impact of the British anti-apartheid movement, embodied both in the formal Anti-Apartheid Movement and in a range of related organizations and networks, can be measured only in part by its effects inside the borders of the United Kingdom. The sun may have set on the British Empire, but London remained both the centre of the Commonwealth and of communication circuits for the English-speaking world. For global solidarity with Southern African liberation, as for world-wide public opinion, Great Britain was probably the most important single source of information and analysis, although the development of movement strategies benefited from innovations from many different countries.<sup>12</sup>

British ties with South Africa as well as Rhodesia were particularly strong. As late as 1969, over 50,000 white Rhodesians had been born in Britain, some 23% of the white population (Angola Comité et al., 1975). In the 1950s and 1960s it was still easy for white South Africans to get a British passport. Even after South Africa was expelled from the Commonwealth in 1961, the flow of white migrants between South Africa and Britain continued and even increased.<sup>13</sup> Britain also hosted non-white as well as white political refugees and exiles from South Africa, but these were far outnumbered by “non-political” white immigrants. While South Africa’s racial system gained the invidious label of “apartheid” only after the Afrikaner-led Nationalist Party came to power in 1948 on a platform of intensifying racial separation, the fundamental system of white-minority rule had been established under British rule. English-speaking South Africans continued to dominate the South African economy, along with foreign investors, with British companies prominent and well-entrenched. There was thus a fundamental ambivalence in Great Britain when it came to condemnations of apartheid, which easily scapegoated the Afrikaner regime while eliding British responsibility.

Those close ties, however, also set the context for knowledge of the realities of Southern Africa and for solidarity with the liberation struggle. Global as well as British public opinion was partly shaped by African voices such as those of Albert Luthuli, Miriam Makeba, Julius Nyerere, Seretse Khama, Kenneth Kaunda, and Nelson Mandela.<sup>14</sup> Arguably even more influential, however, and certainly more numerous, were the writings of British and English-speaking white South African writers and journalists. Michael Scott (British) and Ruth First (South African)



published two of the most influential early books on Namibia.<sup>15</sup> Alan Paton (South African) and Trevor Huddleston (British) wrote the two books on South Africa most widely read in the 1950s and 1960s: *Cry, the Beloved Country* and *Naught for Your Comfort*.<sup>16</sup> The prominent British historian of Africa Basil Davidson, beginning with *Report from Southern Africa* in 1952, covered African liberation struggles as well as earlier African history; his books on Guinea-Bissau and Angola brought the struggles against Portuguese colonialism to broader world-wide attention.

The list could easily be expanded: Canon John Collins (British), Ronald Segal (South African, who escaped South Africa with Oliver Tambo and later directed the Penguin African Library series),<sup>17</sup> journalists Anthony Sampson (British), Colin and Margaret Legum (South African) and Donald Woods (South African), Bishop Ambrose Reeves (British), writer Mary Benson (South African), British anti-apartheid activist and politician Peter Hain (born in Kenya and raised in South Africa), and South African activist Helen Joseph (born in Britain). Less prominent to the public eye, but central to the strategy and day-to-day organizing of solidarity in Great Britain, were South Africans of all races, from Oliver Tambo who directed the ANC in exile to a host of others including Rosalynde Ainslie, Phyllis Altman, Yusuf Dadoo, Ethel de Keyser, Frene Ginwala, Alex and Girlie Hepple, Rica Hodgson, Horst Kleinschmidt, Tennyson Makiwane, Abdul Minty, Vella Pillay, Reg September, and Ben Turok.

In organizational terms, the two dominant groups were the Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM) and the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa (IDAF, or IDAFSA). Despite rivalries between the two, and the complexities of relating to other smaller organizations and coalitions, there was for the most part a common understanding of complementary roles and willingness to collaborate in major campaigns.<sup>18</sup> The Anti-Apartheid Movement was formally created in 1961, growing out of an earlier Boycott Movement Committee set up in 1959-1960; in 1994 it took on a post-apartheid identity as Action for Southern Africa (ACTSA). IDAFSA initially grew out of the work of Christian Action in support for the Defence and Aid Fund in South Africa during the Treason Trial from 1956-1961. It became the major international organization supporting political prisoners in Southern Africa, including the entire region in its mandate from the start and continuing in that role until its formal closure at the end of 1991.

In addition to its role in support for political prisoners, IDAFSA was also the principal publisher of pamphlets and books not only on South Africa but also on the other countries in Southern Africa. Along with Heinemann, Penguin, and Zed Books (founded in 1975 and headed by South African exile Rob Molteno), and United Nations units focusing on apartheid, Namibia, and decolonization, IDAFSA produced a steady flow of documented research and popular educational material, which was used by anti-apartheid and solidarity groups around the world.

As noted earlier, both the AAM and IDAFSA have been the focus of significant research and writing.<sup>19</sup> But there were also other organizations that were part of the broader anti-apartheid and solidarity movement, the histories of which have not

been researched in any detail. IDAFSA's parent organization, Christian Action, was often a partner in campaigns. The Movement for Colonial Freedom (MCF), founded in 1954 and led by MP Fenner Brockway, actively campaigned against colonialism and racism.<sup>20</sup> The Africa Bureau, founded by Anglican priest Michael Scott in 1952, continued in existence until 1978.<sup>21</sup> Both the MCF and the Africa Bureau had a broader mandate than South Africa, playing significant roles, for example, in opposition to British support for the white-dominated Central African Federation from 1953 to 1963.<sup>22</sup> The Committee of African Organisations, based in London, was instrumental in the founding of the Anti-Apartheid Movement. And groups focused on specific issues or geographical areas included, for example, End Loans to Southern Africa (ELTSA, 1974-1994);<sup>23</sup> South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee (SAN-ROC), based in London from 1966 to 1990;<sup>24</sup> Stop the Seventy Tour; the Committee on South African War Resistance (COSAWR); the Committee for Freedom in Mozambique, Angola, and Guiné (CFMAG); and the Namibia Support Committee (NSC).

There is neither space nor justification for recounting here the narrative of British anti-apartheid actions nor do we offer a new interpretation of this history. However, we hope it may be useful to future researchers to single out some of the themes that strike us as worth deeper investigation. We focus first on the strategic questions confronted by the movement in the two distinct periods 1960-1975/76 and 1975/76 to 1994, and then on the question of two distinct but interrelated spheres of influence, i.e., national and transnational.

With strong contacts within the Labour Party and the Liberal Party, as well as with a small group within the Conservative Party, the AAM had strong initial expectations of being able to influence British government policy. Those expectations were decisively dashed during the first period of Labour Party rule, from 1964 to 1970, an experience to be confirmed in 1974 to 1979 as well. This led to the realization that a "lobbying" approach by itself would have little impact on government policy, and an ongoing debate about how to build a more powerful grassroots movement that could demand action. Under both Conservative and Labour governments, however, the AAM continued to regard access to government, lobbying both with officials and through parliament, as a critical element of its strategy, to be combined with public campaigning critical of government policy, mobilization of specific constituencies, and direct protest action. The AAM, moreover, remained wary about the potential of direct action to alienate mainstream British opinion, most often deferring to other allied organizations to take the lead (e.g., the Stop the Seventy Tour) or, in some cases, opposing actions by groups it saw as too extreme (e.g., the demonstrations outside the South African Embassy by the City of London Anti-Apartheid Group).<sup>25</sup>

In comparison with movements in most other Western countries, the British movement seems to have been less influenced by broader radical social movement currents. In the United States, for example, the anti-apartheid movement was inextricably linked with the civil rights movement. In Britain, the movement did not make explicit links with issues of domestic racism and policies towards "non-white"

immigration. On the European continent, the initiative for solidarity with Southern Africa often came from activists with experience in the anti-Vietnam war movement, and was seen as part of a broader “Third World” solidarity movement. In Britain, the anti-apartheid movement kept its distance from the vocal movement against the Vietnam war,<sup>26</sup> and tended to stress the uniqueness of the struggle against apartheid rather than its commonality with struggles in other countries. These options were clearly strategic choices by movement leaders, with the aim of keeping the focus on the primary objective of toppling South African apartheid. It remains unclear to what extent the visible disconnect and lack of formal organizational ties may obscure links that did exist at the personal and grassroots levels.

After the conviction of Nelson Mandela and the other Rivonia trialists, resistance inside South Africa was at a low ebb. And Britain’s responsibility for white-minority rule in Rhodesia took a high profile after Ian Smith’s Unilateral Declaration of Independence in 1965. Thus, in the period after 1965, events forced the movement to give greater attention to other countries in Southern Africa. In addition, the search for more effective ways to engage public attention led to a greater emphasis on direct action and student mobilization, both in the sports arena and in targeting specific companies with interests in Southern Africa.

In taking a broader Southern African perspective, IDAFSA publications provided a comprehensive coverage of issues for Zimbabwe (Rhodesia) and Namibia (South West Africa) as well as Portuguese colonialism. In terms of campaigning, the AAM itself gave major attention to Rhodesia. From 1965 until Zimbabwe’s independence in 1980, notes Christabel Gurney, the AAM “spent as much of its energy and resources campaigning on Rhodesia/Zimbabwe as on South Africa itself” (Gurney, 2008, 280). It also worked with independent organizations focusing on Namibia<sup>27</sup> and on the Portuguese colonies,<sup>28</sup> and in the 1980s gave significant attention to South Africa’s regional wars.<sup>29</sup>

There is as yet no published study of the British movement for solidarity with liberation movements in Portuguese-speaking Africa, which took organizational form less than a decade before the overthrow of Portuguese colonialism.<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless, working closely with the Anti-Apartheid Movement and with similar organizations in other Western countries, CFMAG was able to focus public attention on the involvement of NATO countries with Portugal’s colonial wars. The writings of Eduardo Mondlane, Amilcar Cabral, and Samora Machel, as well as books by Basil Davidson on Angola and Guinea-Bissau, were widely circulated among those engaged with South Africa or other African issues.<sup>31</sup> Portuguese leader Marcelo Caetano’s visit to Britain in July 1973, celebrating the 600th anniversary of the Anglo-Portuguese alliance, was met with over 10,000 demonstrators, while the massacre by Portuguese troops at Wiriyamu in Mozambique was exposed to English-speaking readers by Catholic priest Adrian Hastings.<sup>32</sup>

Even in this period, however, it was apartheid South Africa that was best known and could evoke the largest response from British activists. The AAM found that

consumer boycotts were difficult to sustain. Lobbying for economic sanctions had little chance of overcoming resistance from the British political establishment as well as trade union concern over employment losses. But by the end of the decade, effective handles for popular mobilization, allowing for a range of actions from pamphleteering to direct action, were found in the sports boycott and in targeting specific companies involved in Southern Africa.

Both of these strategies combined impact within Great Britain and transnational links with activist groups in other countries that multiplied the effect. The international sports boycott initiated by the South African Non-Racial Olympic Committee gained early successes in Olympic sports and in football (soccer). In the United States and in Sweden, tennis evoked large demonstrations. But the greatest mass impact was in sports with followings concentrated in South Africa, Britain, and the British Commonwealth, namely cricket and rugby. The 1969-1970 South African rugby tour of Britain was met with nation-wide demonstrations, and the 1970 cricket tour was canceled.<sup>33</sup> This also set the stage for later parallel large-scale actions in Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand.

The AAM's first major targeted divestment campaign focused on Barclays Bank, initially as part of the international campaign to block European investment in the Cahora Bassa hydroelectric project in Mozambique, but quickly expanding to include the bank's prominent role in South Africa.<sup>34</sup> The campaign, providing easily understandable ways for student groups, churches, and others to protest by withdrawing funds and by picketing, had significant impact. Barclays withdrew from the Cahora Bassa scheme in 1972, and eventually, in 1986 decided to withdraw from South Africa.

The same strategy was used, most often in collaboration with parallel campaigns in other countries, targeting a number of other prominent companies. With the church-based ELTSA, banks making loans to South Africa were the focus. The Campaign Against Namibian Uranium Contracts (CANUC) targeted the British company RTZ. And a large-scale multinational campaign targeted the Dutch-British oil giant Shell, both for its violations of the oil embargo against Rhodesia and for its major role in South Africa, including the supply of petroleum used by the South African military.<sup>35</sup> A wide range of other British companies were also targeted for exposure and, as in other Western countries, lists were maintained of those involved in South Africa and Namibia. Activists gave particular attention to companies involved in supplying arms or "dual-use" material useful to the South Africa security forces, linking with the World Campaign against Military and Nuclear Collaboration with South Africa.<sup>36</sup>

While the effects of all these activities on British government policy were limited by the weight of vested interests, evaluating the full impact of anti-apartheid organizations also requires attention to their transnational links and effects, which are difficult to isolate from the impact of other institutions, including governmental, intergovernmental, and non-governmental organizations. London was prominent as

the centre for information on financial and other business ties with Southern Africa. Moreover, although the ANC and SWAPO headquarters were located in sympathetic African countries, the London offices took the lead in coordinating European contacts. Probably the most prominent single campaign was the campaign to free Nelson Mandela, which was spearheaded by the British AAM in close collaboration with the ANC, the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid, and anti-apartheid groups in other countries.<sup>37</sup>

In a later section we will consider the relationships among solidarity and anti-apartheid groups in Western Europe as well as with international non-governmental organizations. But the close relationship of British organizations such as AAM and IDAFSA with intergovernmental organizations is also important to note, as a particularly striking illustration of a more general phenomenon going beyond an analysis of transnational civil society. The personal and institutional ties of movement groups with both the United Nations secretariat and the Commonwealth were arguably one of the fundamental features of this transnational movement. Often noted in passing, such links warrant more systematic examination not only for the history of Southern African liberation, but for the conceptual distinctions between “state” and “civil society” and the parallel implications for contemporary movements such as the campaign to ban landmines, AIDS activism, and the emerging climate change movement.

AAM activists maintained close personal ties, and regularly exchanged information with the UN’s Special Committee against Apartheid and its energetic staff person E.S. Reddy, who facilitated links both with sympathetic UN member states and with anti-apartheid groups around the world. The Commonwealth Secretariat in London was another intergovernmental agency supportive of liberation in Southern Africa, particularly under Shridath Ramphal from Guyana, who served as Commonwealth secretary-general from 1975 to 1990. While Commonwealth pressure was rarely a decisive factor for British government policy, Southern African spokespersons such as Julius Nyerere, Kenneth Kuanda, and Seretse Khama could not be dismissed easily, given the supporting weight of India, of other African and Asian states, and the Caribbean as well.

A more general issue raised by the British experience but also applicable to other countries, is the post-apartheid effect of the strong emphasis on the priority goal of overcoming political apartheid, while sidelining questions of post-apartheid transformation. This is related to the parallel question of abuses by the liberation movements during the struggle, i.e., the extent to which solidarity movements practiced uncritical rather than critical solidarity. Given the general character of these issues, we will return to them in the conclusion.

## **Portugal**

Among European colonial powers, Portugal’s decolonization and post-colonial experience was unique, a striking contrast to the British pattern of planned

transition to independence and use of “soft power” to preserve British economic interests. Portugal’s “ultra-colonialism,” which analysts have tied to the country’s own underdevelopment and dependence on other European powers, meant that Portugal lagged in replacing brute force with economic incentives. Alone among colonial powers, it explicitly rejected the “wind of change” of African independence, clinging to the fiction that Angola, Mozambique, and its smaller African possessions were integral parts of Portugal. Ruled by the dictator António Salazar from 1932 to 1968, and by his successor Marcelo Caetano until April 1974, Portugal was a police state in which supporting African independence was regarded as treason. The “500 years” of imperial history, moreover, was central to the formation of Portuguese national identity.<sup>38</sup>

Internal opposition to Portuguese colonialism therefore implied calling not just for policy changes but for overthrow of the dictatorship. The most sustained opposition came from the Portuguese Communist Party, underground and in exile, that had close relationships with the African liberation movements and in the 1970s also sponsored sabotage actions by *Acção Revolucionária Armada* (ARA). The most prominent non-communist opposition leader was Mário Soares, who left the PCP in 1951. Soares, who also took a strong anti-colonial stand, was the founder of the Socialist Party in 1973, and served as a minister of foreign affairs in the critical first year after the April 25, 1974 coup.<sup>39</sup>

It was the response of the Portuguese military to stalemate in the colonial wars, however, that gave the decisive blow to the Portuguese dictatorship.<sup>40</sup> Although Portuguese counter-insurgency efforts, bolstered by divisions among Angolan nationalists, had been largely successful in Angola, the PAIGC in Guinea-Bissau and FRELIMO in Mozambique were imposing a rising burden on the Portuguese colonial army in the early 1970s. Along with the MPLA in Angola, the two movements were crystal clear in insisting that they regarded the Portuguese people not as enemies but as potential allies against the common enemy of the dictatorship, a stance that bore fruit in Portuguese disaffection with the war. Despite complex internal conflicts in the post-coup governments in Portugal, all Portugal’s African colonies became independent countries by the end of 1975. With the exception of Angola, the transition was relatively peacefully managed by the liberation movements and sympathetic Portuguese officers in the Armed Forces Movement.<sup>41</sup> In Angola, in contrast, internal divisions opened the door for external intervention both by Angola’s neighbours and by global Cold War actors.<sup>42</sup>

More than 30 years later, the interpretation of the Portuguese colonial wars and of decolonization is still contentious. Africa quickly lost its prominence in Portuguese national debate, with a turn towards Europe culminating in Portuguese membership in the European Union in 1986. Although successive Portuguese governments sought pragmatic economic and cultural relationships with their former colonies, there was only limited involvement of civil society groups with any part of Africa, not even

with Lusophone Africa. It was only in literature that the colonial experience and decolonization seemed to continue to haunt the Portuguese nation (Moutinho, 2008).

Even among the approximately half a million *retornados* who left Angola and Mozambique to return to Portugal, the level of continued involvement with Africa was not high. Although the *retornados* represented some 95% of the white population of Angola and 87% of the white population of Mozambique (based on data for 1973), some 60% of those returning had been born in Portugal, and almost all the families had emigrated to the colonies in the 1950s or later.<sup>43</sup> Smaller numbers of Portuguese settlers left Mozambique and Angola for South Africa, joining Portuguese-speaking emigrants already resident there.<sup>44</sup> Most of those who remained in Angola and Mozambique considered themselves Angolans or Mozambicans rather than Portuguese. Those who left were divided in their political views, but included only a few who were politically active either in South Africa or in Portugal with respect to

Angola or Mozambique.

In the period after 1976, Portuguese governments, under socialist as well as more conservative governments, consistently rejected sanctions against South Africa, justifying close relations by the interests of Portuguese emigrants in South Africa. The country also became an important transit point for weapons shipments to South Africa. A small Portuguese anti-apartheid movement had little success in influencing Portuguese public opinion or government policy, although it did participate in international campaigns, and hosted international conferences on Southern Africa in 1977 and 1983.<sup>45</sup>

The Portuguese organization CIDAC (originally Centro de Informação e Documentação Anti-Colonial and later renamed Centro de Informação e Documentação Amílcar Cabral), founded in 1974 by Luís Moita, nevertheless played a significant role in organizing solidarity and development aid for the former Portuguese colonies. Its activities included language training for “cooperantes” going to Africa from other European countries as well as providing information to the Portuguese public about African and other Third World issues. On the other hand, despite repeated protests from the governments of Angola and Mozambique, Portugal was also a base in Europe for the operations of UNITA in Angola and RENAMO in Mozambique.<sup>46</sup>

## Countries with Colonial History in Southern Africa

Both the Netherlands and Germany have deep historical connections with the white-settler countries of Southern Africa, with links of “kith and kin” and cultural knowledge similar to that of Great Britain. But by the 1960s their colonial presence was far in the past. The Netherlands surrendered control of the Cape Colony to the British in 1806. Germany lost control of South West Africa (Namibia) in 1915, in the course of World War I, handing over control to South African troops. In both

countries, the historical links added to the density of links to Southern Africa. But the development of solidarity networks, it seems, was driven more by contemporary contexts of the late 20th century.

### **The Netherlands**

Although preceded in the region by the Portuguese, the Dutch were the first Europeans to colonize the territory now making up South Africa. The Dutch language was the major ingredient in the origin of Afrikaans, now spoken by approximately 60% of white South Africans and 80% of “Coloured” (mixed-race) South Africans, and as many as 10% of Namibians. Although other European immigrants, such as from Germany, France, or Belgium, were assimilated into the Afrikaans-speaking population, the closest European cultural and religious ties of the Afrikaners continued to be with the Netherlands. Afrikaans evolved into a distinct language, but it remained largely mutually understandable with Dutch.

The context for Dutch solidarity with Southern Africa was set by more recent national history as well as by more remote historical connections. The resistance to Nazi occupation during World War II was a powerful recent memory, a logical analogy to the legitimacy of armed struggle against colonialism and apartheid. After World War II, when Dutch-controlled Indonesia was occupied by Japan, the Netherlands attempted to reoccupy that country. The outcome of the ensuing war, which only ended in 1949 with Dutch recognition of Indonesian sovereignty, was more influenced by Dutch weakness than by internal opposition. While there was opposition to the war, including strikes by trade unions linked to the Communist Party, this seemed to have little carry-over into later Third World solidarity.<sup>47</sup>

Instead, it was Algeria’s war of independence that first sparked Dutch solidarity activist groups.<sup>48</sup> Including pacifists, anarchists, and other progressives from Roman Catholic, Protestant, and secular backgrounds, these groups mobilized against France’s ‘dirty war’ in Algeria, a decade before similar larger-scale protests against the

U.S. intervention in Vietnam. The Algerian war, from the first skirmishes in 1954 until Algerian independence in 1962, was covered extensively by Dutch media, in line with a long-standing Dutch orientation to France.

As elsewhere in Europe and beyond, Algeria’s war was prominent in a new transnational focus on the “Third World.”<sup>49</sup> And, although the first Dutch anti-apartheid organization, the Comité Zuid-Afrika (CZA), was formed in 1957, it was the Portuguese colonial wars that first evoked significant mobilization from Dutch activists, including key activists such as Sietse Bosgra who had previously been involved in support for the Algerian National Liberation Front (FLN).<sup>50</sup> The Angola Committee was formed in 1961, shortly after the beginning of armed struggle in Angola in February and March of that year.

In the 1960s, the CZA and the Defense and Aid Fund Netherlands (founded in 1965) were joined by younger activists and new groups. The Angola Comité, focused, despite the name, not only on Angola but also on the other Portuguese colonies. In



the 1970s new organizations focused on South Africa were formed, including Boycot Outspan Aktie (BOA, 1970), Working Group Kairos (1970), and the Anti-Apartheid Beweging Nederland (AABN, 1971). Notably, both BOA and AABN were founded by South African exiles, BOA by Esau du Plessis and AABN by Berend Schuitema. In 1976, the Angola Comité expanded its work and was renamed the Komitee Zuidelijk Afrika (KZA, often referred to in English as the Holland Committee on Southern Africa).<sup>51</sup>

On balance, the efforts of these groups were more complementary than competitive. Sometimes they collaborated in joint campaigns or events; somewhat more often there was a tacit division of labour; even so rivalries were sometimes bitterly felt and put in the background only with difficulty.<sup>52</sup> The strongest ties in Southern Africa were with FRELIMO and the ANC, although there were smaller groups which supported the PAC in South Africa, and the major groups were involved in solidarity work for Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Namibia, and Zimbabwe as well. In the period before 1976, it was the Portuguese-speaking countries that were the most sustained focus of attention. Actions on South Africa, often linked to Zimbabwe or Namibia as well, expanded in the early 1970s and became the primary focus after 1976. The extent of public engagement was very large; in proportion to the country's population, as in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, it was undoubtedly greater than that in larger Western countries such as Great Britain, the United States, or Canada.

After early support for defendants in the South African Treason Trial and protests following the Sharpeville massacre in 1960, it was an action by the Angola Comité that most dramatically caught Dutch public attention, when a well-organized demonstration against the presence of a Portuguese band at a NATO military music festival in Amsterdam in July 1963 was dispersed with brutal beatings by police. Over the following years, the committee used creative public actions and well-researched publications to focus attention on the collaboration of Dutch and other NATO governments with Portugal's colonial wars. Long-term Dutch Foreign Minister Joseph Luns, who served in that post from 1952 to 1971, and then became Secretary-General of NATO from 1971 to 1984, was a vocal supporter of Portuguese colonialism, and served as a highly visible target of criticism. But even more sympathetic Dutch government officials hesitated to damage relations with a NATO ally, opposing sanctions against Portugal as they had refrained from criticism of France in the case of the war in Algeria.

In contrast, the Dutch government was open to incremental action to provide support to humanitarian and educational projects of the liberation movements. Despite continuing scepticism about government hypocrisy and continued involvement in mobilizing popular protests from the outside, solidarity groups also took advantage of these openings, at the advice of the liberation movements themselves. FRELIMO in particular was insistent in arguing that their supporters should seek support across political boundaries rather than confining their efforts to "natural allies." Angola Comité founder Sietse Bosgra notes that FRELIMO convinced

them to reach out more actively for responses from mainstream Dutch society. “Until then,” Bosgra says, “we were more inclined simply to protest. FRELIMO taught us—it sometimes amounted to an instruction—to assess with more optimism the chances to get things done for them in the Netherlands.”<sup>53</sup>

In order to focus on more pragmatic fundraising, after talks with FRELIMO, Dutch activists set up the Eduardo Mondlane Foundation as an independent organization. The Foundation was able to channel both government and non-government support to FRELIMO’s non-military programs. Dutch government support for movements against Portuguese colonialism began in 1970, setting a precedent for similar aid to other African liberation movements. That same year a fund for government support to public education on Third World issues was established, which soon began to provide subsidies to the KZA and other groups focused on Southern Africa. This support for liberation movements and for solidarity groups gained sufficient support across party lines to continue despite changes in government. In the Netherlands, as in the Nordic countries, solidarity groups thus gained sustained institutional capacity even while they criticized their own governments for failures to take more decisive action to sever links with the apartheid system and its allies.

At the same time, the Angola Comité continued to mobilize against European support for Portugal’s wars, targeting not only the Dutch government but other Western corporate and military involvement. Its actions included arranging support for Portuguese draft resisters fleeing their country; publishing and widely disseminating multiple editions in Dutch, English, and Portuguese of a report on “Portugal and NATO” (Bosgra and Van Krimpen, 1969); and organizing public campaigns in the Netherlands, most notably a successful boycott of Angolan coffee.

The coffee boycott, from 1970 to 1973, broke new ground, targeting large Dutch coffee roasters and distributors. The public impact was visible even before the formal boycott began, as some distributors responded by pledging to stop imports. It was a textbook example of how a small group of effectively organized activists was capable of achieving results with amazing speed. The committee worked with thousands of local Third World activists; political parties, unions, and churches, evoking a flood of statements of support. Posters juxtaposing “Koffie voor Nederland, bloed van Angola,” made the link between coffee and slaughter indelible, using, for example, the photo of a severed head of an African on a stack of coffee beans on an Angolan plantation.<sup>54</sup> Dutch coffee imports from Angola dropped to a small fraction of pre-boycott levels. Parliament forced the centre-right government to support UN resolutions against Portuguese colonialism in 1971-1972. However, the government still refused to raise the issue within NATO. Even the new Labour-led Den Uyl administration (1973-1977) fostered “critical dialogue” with Portugal, rejected sanctions, and declined to recognize Guinea-Bissau’s declaration of independence in 1973. After independence of the Portuguese colonies in 1975, however, the Netherlands provided particularly strong support to Mozambique, and maintained good relations with Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde as well.

The major focus in the subsequent period, however, turned to South Africa, with anti-apartheid actions beginning to take off in the early 1970s and reaching new heights in the years from 1976 to 1990. In 1977, KZA, together with Kairos and BOA, launched the monthly magazine *Amandla*, which later included groups from Flemish-speaking Belgium as well. The AABN, which enjoyed particularly close ties to the Dutch and South African Communist parties, kept its own separate publication and often focused on its own campaigns. Organizational rivalries did not prevent broader collaboration, such as a joint publication of the AABN with *Amandla* for the 75th anniversary of the ANC in 1987. National consultations and numerous actions by local organizations drew on the resources of all the national organizations, and supporters of all groups came together for a huge national demonstration in June 1988. Municipalities engaged in anti-apartheid action joined forces in 1988 forming Local Authorities Against Apartheid (LOTA).

Among distinctive emphases of particular Dutch groups and of the broader Dutch movement, several warrant separate discussion, even if necessarily brief. As indicated by its name, Boycot Outspan Aktie focused on campaigning against imports of South African oranges. Its iconic image “Don’t squeeze a South African dry” became one of the most well-known symbols of Dutch anti-apartheid. In less than ten years

the popular Outspan brand of “blood oranges” was totally driven off the shelves. In later years BOA increasingly stressed the links between apartheid, colonialism and Dutch domestic racism. This consumer boycott strategy gained momentum from its links with KZA’s boycott of Angolan coffee, and was later echoed by broad coalition campaigns against South African Krugerrand (1984) and South African fruit (1985-1986).

Kairos, originally founded to support C.F. Beyers Naudé’s Christian Institute in South Africa, maintained close links with South Africa, Dutch, and international church groups, regularly hosting Naudé, Allan Boesak, and other religious opponents of apartheid. Like the World Council of Churches and linked church groups in other countries, it also focused on campaigns aimed at particular companies involved in South Africa, such as the Shell boycott. Defence and Aid Fund Netherlands, which continued until 1991, focused on the relatively low-profile work of support for political prisoners.

Among the initiatives spearheaded by the AABN were large-scale Dutch and international gatherings featuring South African culture (“Culture in Another South Africa”) and the clandestine involvement of its leader Conny Braam and a number of other Dutch activists in support for the military operations of the ANC. These were, of course, concealed at the time from all but those actually involved in each operation.<sup>55</sup> The exception was the story of Klaas de Jonge and Hélène Passtoors who were captured and imprisoned in South Africa.<sup>56</sup> Dutch “cooperantes” in Zimbabwe as a part of KZA’s development program there were also involved in smuggling weapons into South Africa for the ANC, but none of them were captured.<sup>57</sup>

Probably the most high-profile and sustained Dutch anti-apartheid campaign targeted the Dutch-British multinational giant oil company Royal Dutch Shell. The primary focus was on oil links with South Africa, but the campaign also highlighted the failure of the Dutch government to enforce its formal sanctions imposed on Rhodesia after the white-minority unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) in that country in 1965. In 1973, the AABN exposed such violations with an exposé of Dutch imports of Rhodesian tobacco. When strategic petroleum supplies to Rhodesia were also exposed, however, that tied directly into the campaign against Shell.

The first step in this campaign in 1973 came from Working Group Kairos, which decided to focus on Shell after a World Council of Churches appeal for companies to withdraw from South Africa. Beginning with dialogue and research, the group issued a report in 1976 on Shell's Southern African operations, which was translated into English. Links were made with researchers such as Martin Bailey and Bernard Rivers, who helped expose Shell and British Petroleum's schemes to evade oil embargo on Rhodesia, via South Africa. From dialogue, activists moved to the demand that Shell withdraw from South Africa entirely. The campaign was joined by KZA, as well as by the Roman Catholic Pax Christi and the largest Dutch development organization, Novib. "Shell helps apartheid terror in South Africa" and "No more oil to South Africa" were slogans of the joint campaign in the phase that began in 1977.<sup>58</sup> The Dutch parliament also launched an investigation into violations of Rhodesian sanctions.

To support the international oil embargo campaign, KZA and Kairos in 1980 founded the Shipping Research Bureau under the auspices of the UN Special Committee against Apartheid, with which it was to cooperate closely over the years. This unique Amsterdam-based research institution, with financial support from the Swedish and Norwegian governments and the World Council of Churches, among others, became the pivotal node in a world-wide network of researchers and activists. Among the successful campaigns for national embargo legislation fed by its findings were those in Denmark and Norway, both countries with their own access to North Sea oil and large tanker fleets accounting for a considerable share of oil transports to the apartheid state.

In the Netherlands itself, the campaign for oil sanctions became a hot political issue under the Centre-Right government that was in office from 1977 to 1980. In June 1980, a two-thirds parliamentary majority including members of the government party voted for an oil embargo. But the cabinet refused to implement the policy, and a no-confidence vote on the issue failed by two votes.<sup>59</sup> After this campaign setback, and the independence of Zimbabwe that year, the Shell campaign took a lower profile for several years, to be revived with much greater international support in 1985.

The basis for the expanded Shell campaign was laid in May 1985 in Frankfurt (West Germany), at a WCC workshop with church, anti-apartheid organizations, and trade unions. The ANC, SWAPO, and the United Nations stressed the strategic significance of oil to the apartheid regime. Danish, British, and Australian unions joined in "Maritime Unions against Apartheid." Churches and trade unions in the United

States actively pushed a parallel campaign against Shell. In the Netherlands, although actions by municipalities were overruled by the central government, churches and other non-governmental groups terminated heating oil contracts, and sold their shares in Shell stock. At its height the campaign spanned some fifteen countries all over the world; KZA printed Shell campaign posters in ten different languages. There were also physical attacks on Shell petrol stations, by RaRa and other violent groups not tied to the mainstream anti-apartheid movement.

The effect on Shell was significant, although it still refused to withdraw from its operations in South Africa. Shell leaders issued prominent calls for the South African government to begin negotiations with the ANC, and placed full-page advertisements calling for a democratic and non-racial South Africa, as well as increasing spending for its social responsibility programs. The threat to their business, company leaders were persuaded, required fundamental political change in South Africa.

Over the decade following the independence of Zimbabwe in 1980, heightened internal struggle in South Africa and Namibia was accompanied by rapid escalation of South African counterinsurgency in Namibia and of South African military intervention in other neighbouring countries.<sup>60</sup> This development was much less visible to world media than the drama in South Africa itself, which was often shown on television and benefited from prominent media-accessible spokespersons such as Nobel Prize winner Bishop Desmond Tutu. In the Netherlands, previously close ties with Angola and Mozambique, strong links to Namibia, and the presence of government-funded “cooperantes” in Mozambique and Zimbabwe, aided the movement in making the connections for their supporters between the anti-apartheid cause and the wider regional struggle.<sup>61</sup>

For the KZA, a focus on Namibia was a logical follow-up from previous involvement in Angola, as that country became the rear base for SWAPO’s guerrilla war and the target of repeated South African attacks. Similarly, for the AABN, supporting SWAPO in Namibia was seen as parallel to its ongoing support for the ANC in South Africa. And Kairos became a key centre for information and campaigning on Namibia after it was joined in 1976 by South African exile David de Beer, who had been assistant to Bishop Colin Winter in Namibia and expelled from that country in 1972.

A conference on Namibia’s independence struggle, along with a delegation of SWAPO women, was organized by the AABN in 1975. In 1976, Kairos, the KZA, and other groups, in response to a call from the World Council of Churches and the Lutheran World Federation, organized a campaign under the slogan “Free Namibia – Support SWAPO.” Novib, the largest Dutch development organisation,<sup>62</sup> began supporting SWAPO financially in 1976, and later joined the joint campaign. Dutch groups also targeted Dutch enrichment of Namibian uranium, in violation of UN sanctions, exposing government duplicity.

Dutch groups were involved in opposing South Africa’s war through a number of related campaigns. The AABN was particularly active on the arms embargo, exposing the involvement of Dutch companies such as Philips and Fokker in the export of

military communications equipment and aircraft. In 1979 a Dutch branch was founded of the Committee of South African War Resisters (COSAWR), which had been launched in London the previous year. As part of a joint campaign by the major groups, the AABN organized a large public hearing in 1983 exposing South Africa's aggression against neighbouring states.

Among the reasons for high awareness in the Netherlands of South Africa's regional wars was that, as also in the Nordic countries, solidarity movements were linked both to material support from their governments for the liberation movements and for the independent countries in the region. Southern Africa was therefore part not only of the anti-apartheid cause but of the African component of the broader "Third World" movement.

This was visible, for example, in the case of Tanzania, as Fair Trade shops already in the early 1970s sold coffee from Tanzania, a vehicle for awareness-raising on the then popular "Ujamaa" model and a mirror image of the Angolan coffee boycott. The Tanzanian form of socialism was widely seen in the Netherlands as an alternative for development, a middle road between capitalism and Socialist Bloc state planning. When the progressive Social Democrat Jan Pronk became Minister of Development Assistance in 1973, Tanzania as well as Mozambique became the focus countries for official Dutch bilateral development aid.<sup>63</sup> A Tanzania Committee and a Zambia Working Group were among many examples of single-country solidarity groups, which also included countries outside Africa such as Indonesia, Surinam, Cuba, and Vietnam. Tanzania was also important as the site of the ANC-Holland Solidarity Hospital, Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College and Radio Freedom training studio, all in Mazimbu. Dutch groups sent teachers and as raised financial support as well.

The Dutch government supported such assistance as part of a broad program of "humanitarian" assistance, while still refusing to adopt sanctions, tighten the arms embargo against South Africa, or give direct aid to the ANC as such, which might be interpreted as supporting its armed struggle. At the request of the ANC, these funds were channelled through KZA, which bought the necessary goods after consulting the liberation movement.

By far the closest relationships were built with independent Mozambique, with the Mondlane Foundation playing an important role. But other organizations, including local governments, also developed links. In 1987, Amsterdam's municipal port services started a project to help rebuilding the Mozambican port of Beira, formalized into an official Amsterdam-Beira twin-city relationship in 1993.<sup>64</sup>

Building greater links with the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), which was founded in 1980, was also a priority for the European Community. European anti-apartheid groups supported this policy, while continuing to lobby for stronger sanctions. Dutch, Belgian, and British groups played particularly active roles in trying to monitor and influence the complex European Community bureaucracy.

Despite the close connection with the liberation movements, the Netherlands was one of the countries in which questions were raised about the meaning of “critical solidarity,” that is, the obligation of supporters not to turn a blind eye to abuses and mistakes of their African partners. This is a subject to which we will return in the concluding section, but it is worth noting here one general point as well as two specific and differing cases: Mozambique and Namibia. Just as solidarity activists in other countries, Dutch groups were reluctant to air doubts publicly given the overwhelming priority of defeating the apartheid regime, and its clear responsibility for sowing internal divisions as well as mounting direct attacks on its opponents.

By the end of the 1980s, however, more questions were being asked. In 1989, the Eduardo Mondlane Foundation published an analysis on “Mozambique, Socialism and Solidarity,” with editions in Dutch and Portuguese.<sup>65</sup> The same year, a planned broad coalition to support SWAPO lost support from Novib after revelations, in the press, of torture and killing of prisoners by SWAPO, in its camps in Angola, which elicited an outright condemnation in stronger terms from the AABN, than from the other groups.<sup>66</sup> In the period from Nelson Mandela’s release in 1990 to South Africa’s first free elections in 1994, however, such questions were a minor note for the anti-apartheid movement. Support for SWAPO and for the ANC remained strong.

### **Federal Republic of Germany**

After a visit to apartheid South Africa in 1974, West German Federal Bank President Klasen dismissively rejected criticism from the Mainz Southern Africa Working Group (MAKSA), saying that being on the spot, one sees matters differently. Such a sentiment, even more firmly entrenched in German elite circles than in other Western countries, was quickly countered by the group, who noted that their members had a cumulative total of 164 years of experience living in South Africa and Namibia.<sup>67</sup> But the solidarity movement in the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) faced considerable obstacles. It faced a political climate that was rooted both in racial bias in favour of the South African regime, as among elites in other Western countries as well, and particularly strong Cold War competition with the German Democratic Republic (East Germany).<sup>68</sup>

This had two kinds of consequences for the solidarity movement in West Germany. On the one hand, defenders of West German ties with the white-minority regimes cited against them the support given by East Germany to the liberation movements. Secondly, there were significant restrictions on ties with parallel solidarity efforts in East Germany, and scant time to build a common movement after the fall of the Berlin Wall and absorption of East Germany into the German Federal Republic.<sup>69</sup>

Despite Germany’s loss of control over South West Africa (Namibia) and German East Africa (Tanganyika) as a result of World War I, German settlers continued to live in Namibia, with some 20,000 Namibians still speaking German as their mother tongue as of the 2001 census. German settlers and business interests also built a strong presence in South Africa in the period of economic expansion after World War

II. West German policy in the decades from 1960 to independence was influenced by these ties, as well as by the strategies of Germany's Western partners. Among the countervailing influences were the ties built by German missionaries in independent Africa, particularly in Tanzania, as well as in South Africa and Namibia.<sup>70</sup>

A less tangible influence was consciousness about the German past, including both the colonial wars and the Nazi era. Public awareness of the links between these two periods was limited, but anti-apartheid activists in both East and West Germany did make the connections. The pro-Nazi past of South Africa's apartheid ideologists was a consistent theme. For those concerned with Namibia, Horst Drechsler's 1966 study of the Herero and Nama wars (1904-1907) highlighted Germany's genocidal counterinsurgency policy.<sup>71</sup>

West German solidarity actions on Southern Africa first took shape in the late 1960s and early 1970s, bringing together two currents, one from the 1960s student movement and the other from church people with connections to Southern Africa.<sup>72</sup>

The German student movement and "New Left" of the 1960s included a substantial internationalist component, including not only opposition to the U.S. war in Vietnam but a broader "Third World" emphasis. As in other European countries, the war in

Algeria was an early focus of attention.<sup>73</sup> Sources of inspiration also included Che

Guevara and Frantz Fanon (*The Wretched of the Earth* was translated into German in 1966). Amílcar Cabral of Guinea-Bissau was also widely quoted, with two of his essays published in a German-language pamphlet in 1968 (Cabral, 1968).

South African students studying in Germany also made an impression. Thus, the arrest in 1963 and subsequent detention on Robben Island of a former student at Tübingen, Neville Alexander, sparked a solidarity campaign for his release among West German students. It was the campaign against Portuguese colonialism, however, that first led to wider student mobilization. In 1969 the Projektgruppe Afrika in Berlin published a book on the freedom struggles in Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique. Several groups were involved in campaigns against German military ties with Portugal and German investment in the Cahora Bassa dam project in Mozambique.

As in other countries, the development of the "New Left" in the late 1960s and early 1970s involved intense ideological disputes and fragmentation into many competing groups. In relation to Southern Africa, these included, among others, groups with a Maoist orientation which organized support for ZANU in Zimbabwe and the PAC in South Africa. Some of these groups had significant if not necessarily long-term success in organizing public solidarity gatherings and raising financial support for the movements.

At the same time as development of the student movement, the German churches were faced with growing demands for action on Southern Africa, coming from the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Lutheran World Federation, African churches, and activists within the German churches themselves. Thus the WCC was active in disseminating information on the Cahora Bassa campaign. Significantly,



veterans of the student movement who continued to focus on Southern Africa and activists within the churches came together to form the core of what would be the major organizations for the next period focusing primarily on South Africa. While ideological disputes and disagreements did not disappear within these new organizations, key activists were committed to putting the need for common action for African liberation above such divisions.

Particularly important to action within the churches, as well as the broader anti-apartheid movement, were Germans with close connections to South Africa. One prominent example is Wolfram Kistner, who was born to German missionary parents in South Africa. Kistner served as a pastor in Germany from 1969-1972, before returning to South Africa. He later became a leading staff member of the South African Council of Churches during the key period 1976-1988.<sup>74</sup>

Among other actions, activists targeted their criticism on the churches themselves, particularly the dominant German Evangelical Church (EKD) for its silence and complicity with apartheid. The most successful action within the churches was the boycott of South African fruit led by German churchwomen, which was probably the most high profile anti-apartheid action in West Germany.<sup>75</sup> But church leaders were slow to respond, citing their doubts both about economic disengagement with South Africa and about the decision of the liberation movements to turn to armed struggle. Although the Synod of the EKD decided to support the WCC providing funds to Southern African liberation movements, conservative voices within the church continued to echo South African government opposition to these actions. The EKD eventually decided to support sanctions in 1986, following a 1985 decision by the South African Council of Churches (SACC) to express similar support.<sup>76</sup>

Individual church activists, local congregations, and local anti-apartheid groups, however, took their own initiatives as well, joining in actions such as closing accounts with German banks involved in loans to South Africa. One such local group coalesced into the Mainz Southern Africa Working Group (MAKSA) in 1972. Similar groups, including church activists and others, were formed in other German cities, establishing a formal alliance that grew into the German Anti-Apartheid Movement (Anti-Apartheid Bewegung, AAB) in 1974.<sup>77</sup> This also brought in earlier similar groupings such as the AGM-Komitee, focused on Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique. Despite the name, the AAB campaigned not only on South Africa, but on other countries in Southern Africa.

Although the AAB supported Southern African liberation movements, most closely ZAPU, SWAPO, and the ANC despite differences on this point within the organization at times, its primary focus was to expose and campaign against the collaboration of the West German government and economic interests with apartheid. It highlighted the hypocrisy of rhetorical condemnation of apartheid and the practical support these institutions provided to apartheid's survival. Unlike movements in the Nordic countries and the Netherlands, it did not receive government support, but relied on individual and church support. Like solidarity groups in other countries, it built

coalitions with sympathetic non-governmental organizations, churches, political party groups, and trade unions. And it worked with local groups, which often took their own initiatives.<sup>78</sup>

Generally allied and working closely with the AAB, an earlier organization that emerged within the same milieu focused specifically on the task of public education about Southern Africa. The Information Service on Southern Africa (ISSA) was founded in 1971, in order to provide an alternative to the failure of the West German media to provide regular and reliable information on Southern Africa. Given its focus on information, ISSA declined to support particular liberation movements, resulting in some disagreement with AAB which was co-publisher of the ISSA magazine, *informationsdienst südliches afrika*, from 1976 to 1986. That magazine, still published today by ISSA under the title *Afrika Süd* (<http://www.issa-bonn.org/afsued.htm>), became an indispensable support for action-oriented campaigns.

Among the most prominent campaigns were (1) the campaign to boycott South African fruit, first launched by the AAB and later much more widely propagated by the Evangelische Frauenarbeit in Deutschland, the women's federation of the German Evangelical Church; (2) the campaign against German nuclear ties with South Africa, which featured sensational revelations of secret collaboration agreements, and (3) German participation in the international campaign against bank loans to South Africa, which met with stubborn resistance by the German banks.

The fruit boycott was particularly notable. Paralleling similar campaigns in the Netherlands, Ireland, France, and Belgium, it was unique in the high-profile role taken by churchwomen. Their involvement was sparked by the 1976 banning of the South African Domestic Workers Union in South Africa, with which they also had relations. It had significant impact in raising consciousness about apartheid, despite opposition by conservative church leaders, who refused to provide financial support for the campaign.

The campaign against German nuclear ties with South Africa was sparked in 1975 when the AAB obtained secret correspondence of the South African embassy confirming the involvement of German firms with the approval of the German government. Although the government denied the authenticity of the documents, they were widely disseminated both in Germany and internationally, and had significant impact on the reputation of West Germany in Africa.<sup>79</sup> The link was widely publicized by the ANC, as well as by East Germany. But even while the West German government contended that it observed the mandatory arms embargo against South Africa, these and other economic links strategic for South Africa's military industry continued.

Social Democratic governments from 1969 to 1982, headed by chancellors Willy Brandt and Helmut Schmidt, were more open to criticizing South Africa and to supporting negotiation for the independence of Namibia than the Christian Democratic governments that preceded and followed them. But the failure of the solidarity movement to force consistent action against Pretoria provides evidence

of the ongoing weight of vested interests and conservative thinking in German public life.

Veterans of the German anti-apartheid movement continue to raise these issues today, and to call for their fellow citizens to engage honestly with their history, including not only the Nazi past but also the history of colonialism in Africa. In the 1960s and 1970s, students in Hamburg and in Göttingen campaigned against war memorials to German soldiers killed in action in Namibia. Protests were renewed in 2004 on the 100th anniversary of the genocide of the Herero people in Namibia.<sup>80</sup> In Germany, as in other countries, contending movement activists, in understanding of the past is still relevant to addressing current issues of Western relations with Africa.

## Other Western European Countries

The remaining Western European countries have little in common, apart from the lack of colonial history in the Southern African region. Ireland was linked to South Africa by its common history as a British possession, and by more than a century of Irish immigration to South Africa. France, Italy, and Spain had African colonies, but ones far removed from geographical proximity or economic links to Southern Africa. Belgium's colonies, including the giant Congo, were generally placed in central rather than southern Africa, despite the close political and economic ties of the Congo with the Southern Africa region. Among countries with no African colonial history, only Switzerland and the Nordic countries had significant historical ties with the region, principally through Protestant missions. Austria had few Southern African ties of any kind, and Greece and Cyprus even less.

The development of anti-apartheid solidarity displayed a range of variation roughly but not precisely corresponding to these differences, relatively strong in Ireland, Switzerland, and Italy, weaker in Belgium, France, and Austria, and almost invisible in Luxembourg, Spain, Greece, and Cyprus.

### Ireland

The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement (IAAM), founded in 1964, largely paralleled that in Great Britain. From the start, it also sought to win prominent supporters from all political parties. This strategy, which also took inspiration in Ireland's own anti-colonial history, was highly successful. Although many Irish, like the British, had links with "kith and kin" in Southern Africa, Ireland lacked Britain's massive weight of vested interests in the political economy of white-minority rule.<sup>81</sup>

As in Great Britain, the Irish movement, which included Northern Ireland as well as the Republic of Ireland, organized sports boycotts, campaigns to support political prisoners, and actions targeting Irish economic links to South Africa. Sports probably evoked the widest attention and support, notably with mobilization against the 1965 tour of the South African rugby team and, on a larger scale, against the 1970 rugby tour. As in Great Britain, the movement won cancellation of a planned 1970 cricket tour to Ireland. Consumer boycotts were more difficult to organize. In

1984, however, the Dunnes strike, by grocery workers who refused to handle South African grapefruit, lasted for 18 months and gained wide support. Public pressure eventually led to a government ban, in mid-1986, on imports of South African fruit and similar products.

Like the British movement, the IAAM maintained a tight focus on South Africa, stressing the unique character of apartheid and declining to make explicit links to other issues. With the exception of Namibia, the Irish movement paid relatively little attention even to other countries in Southern Africa.

Despite the broad resonance of its message, the movement found that the Irish state most often followed the common European pattern of reluctance to move from rhetoric to substantive sanctions against apartheid. Nevertheless, activists were well aware that the impact of anti-apartheid actions was international as well as national. The Irish movement, and Kader Asmal in particular, were active participants in conferences to coordinate action at European and global levels.

### **Italy and France**

Like Great Britain and Germany, both Italy and France were also leading European powers with significant economic and military links to colonial Portugal and apartheid South Africa. In all cases, vested interests were highly resistant to real policy change. The level of public mobilization on these issues, however, varied more widely than did the effect on state policies. In Great Britain, apartheid became a high-profile issue both at the national level and around the country. In Germany, local groups mobilized in a large number of cities and universities. Italian and French activist groups, lacking even the advantage of a history of national missionary connections to the region, were much more hard-pressed to make the anti-apartheid message heard outside a core of activists. Nevertheless, there was significantly greater success in Italy than in France in this regard, as activists of different political traditions adopted a spirit of collaboration on African solidarity issues.

In Italy, activists in Milan, Bologna, Rome, and especially Reggio Emilia, built a strong movement for support to the liberation movements in Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and especially Mozambique. PAIGC and FRELIMO prioritized building relationships in Italy, with FRELIMO's Oscar Monteiro being particularly active from his base in Algiers.<sup>82</sup> Building on previous Italian solidarity activism on Algeria and Vietnam, activists built a movement that included both material support and broader political action. Medical doctors Silvio Pampiglione and Giuseppe Sancini fostered strong links between medical institutions in Reggio Emilia, where the Italian Communist Party led the government, and FRELIMO's medical programs in Tanzania and liberated areas of Mozambique. Parallel links were established between other Italian cities and FRELIMO's educational programs, as well as to the medical programs of PAIGC and MPLA. One of the key organizations involved was the Movimento Liberazione e Sviluppo (MOLISV), founded in Milan in 1971 and moved to Rome in 1978. Support for the ANC and SWAPO grew as well, spurred by the UN's International Year

against Apartheid in 1978 and, later, by the formation of the National Coordination Movement against Apartheid in 1985.

These relationships also bore fruit in several high-profile international solidarity conferences, in Rome in 1970, in Reggio Emilia in 1973, and again in Rome in 1982. The 1970 Rome conference was notable in that it provided an opportunity for liberation leaders from Angola, Mozambique, and Guinea-Bissau to gain an audience with the Pope. This was a major blow to the morale of the Portuguese colonial state, which could generally rely on approval from the Portuguese hierarchy of their official Roman Catholic church.

The Italian Communist Party took a leading role in these solidarity actions, as in later anti-apartheid actions following the establishment of an ANC office in Italy in 1977. But there was also significant active involvement by activists from the Italian Socialist Party, by independent leftists, and by progressive Christian groups, including Protestants as well as Catholics.

France, like Great Britain, had granted independence to its African territories in the early 1960s. Unlike Commonwealth Africa, however, the majority of France's ex-colonies in sub-Saharan Africa did not become vocal advocates of liberation in Southern Africa. Receptive to Pretoria's efforts to promote dialogue in the 1960s and 1970s, Francophone Africa joined in supporting the sports boycott of South Africa, but lagged in even nominal backing for the Organization of African Unity's calls for sanctions.

From 1981 to 1994, France was governed by President François Mitterand, a Socialist, who also enjoyed a parliamentary majority for all but two years (1986 to 1988). At times his coalition also included the French Communist Party. Mitterand pledged that France, South Africa's leading military supplier, would implement the mandatory UN arms embargo (passed in 1977). In 1985 the government decided to stop new investment in South Africa. The following year it stopped government imports of South African coal. The ANC and SWAPO were allowed to open offices in Paris in 1981.

Although the arms embargo and other sanctions were only inconsistently implemented,<sup>83</sup> by some measures French action against apartheid went further than that of Britain, Germany, or Italy. But it still fell far short of that demanded by solidarity activists. And, judged by the limited sources now available, the movement in France had much less public visibility and impact on public opinion than its counterparts in Britain, the Netherlands, or Germany. In notable contrast to Italy, French communists and non-communist progressives failed to coordinate their separate organizing efforts to support liberation, even though they did both provide support for Dulcie September, the energetic ANC representative in Paris from 1981 until her assassination by South African agents in 1988.<sup>84</sup>

The French Communist Party, notably less open to collaboration with other progressive forces than its Italian counterpart, was the principal force behind two umbrella solidarity organizations: the *Mouvement contre le Racisme et pour l'Amitié*

entre les Peuples (MRAP, founded 1949), and the Association Française pour l’Amitié et la Solidarité avec les Peuples d’Afrique (AFASPA, founded 1975), as well as Rencontre Nationale contre l’Apartheid (RNCA, founded 1986). In contrast the French Mouvement Anti-Apartheid (MAA), which started as a French outgrowth of the Dutch Boycott Outspan Action, brought together socialist and other non-communist progressives.<sup>85</sup> “There was,” recall members of both RNCA and MAA, “little contact and cooperation between the two organizations and currents” (Bosgra, Dérens and Marchand, 2009, 671).

While the impact in France itself is uncertain,<sup>86</sup> it is important also to note that France and French-language publications did play a significant role in the diffusion of information about the liberation struggles in Southern Africa in the Francophone world. The movements against Portuguese colonialism were a particular focus, with French translations of the writings of Amílcar Cabral and other works on Guinea-Bissau and Angola. The magazine *AfriqueAsie* (originally *Africasia*), was founded in 1969 by radical journalist Simon Malley, who was born in Syria, but lived most of his life in Paris. Malley was well-informed on all matters relating to Third World struggles, and the magazine gave close coverage to South Africa’s wars against Angola and Mozambique.

## Belgium

Belgium’s policy toward Southern Africa—and the context for solidarity organizations—was significantly shaped by two factors. These were the recent experience of decolonization of the Congo, and the domestic political context, which featured a widening divide between the French-speaking and Flemish-speaking (Dutch-speaking) sections of the population.

The Congo, Belgium’s largest and richest colony, started its colonial period as King Leopold’s private domain. It was notorious for atrocities that attracted international protest in that period, and the history of violence continued into the period following a suddenly decided independence in 1960. Cold War intervention in the 1960s and again in the 1970s linked the country closely to its southern neighbours. Belgium, France, and the United States were all involved in supporting the dictatorship of Mobutu Sese Seko, which followed the assassination of Congo’s first prime minister, Patrice Lumumba.<sup>87</sup>

The decolonization of the Congo was a traumatic experience for Belgium. Tens of thousands of former civil servants and settlers returned to Belgium or moved to South Africa or other African countries. Belgian relations with its former colony were both contentious and close, dominating the political climate for relations with Africa. The openings for public discussion on other issues were limited.

The potential for solidarity action was also shaped by domestic politics. In the Dutch-speaking part of the country, Flanders, there were strong pro-apartheid sentiments among key industrialists, intelligentsia, and key political parties (except for Social Democrat and Communist parties). The most influential political party for

the entire period was the Christian Social Democrat Party, generally conservative although its French-speaking wing was more open to criticism of apartheid.

In this context, progressive opposition groups had difficulty evoking a broad popular movement. Solidarity actions with the Congo, linked to Congolese political exiles and led by the Zaire Committee, had only sporadic links with the groups that mobilized around Southern Africa and apartheid. The groups focused on Southern Africa felt the need to highlight the distinct issues raised by apartheid, without making an explicit link to the debate on Zaire. They were in turn divided into allied but separately organized groups based primarily in either the French-speaking or Flemish-speaking communities.<sup>88</sup>

Belgium's first Southern Africa support group, the Brussels-based Committee against Colonialism and Apartheid (CCCA, 1969), was founded by both French and Flemish (Dutch) speakers, but its main constituency was among French-speaking Belgians. There were personal links with a longer-standing anti-colonial tradition, including protests against the French war in Algeria. In contrast, the Flemish Angola Committee (1971; after 1975: Action Committee on Southern Africa, AKZA) and the Flemish branch of the Dutch Boycott Outspan Action resembled their Dutch counterparts, with links to student protest and Third World currents of the 1960s, including opposition to the war in Vietnam. AKZA, BOA and CCCA mobilized financial, material and political support for the liberation movements, hosting visits by movement leaders from Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Angola, Namibia, and South Africa. They organized campaigns against South African attacks on the Frontline States and against South African occupation of Namibia. A symbolic victory was won in 1984, when the Université Libre de Bruxelles awarded Nelson Mandela an honorary doctorate on its 150th anniversary.

Belgian groups also campaigned for government sanctions against South Africa, with very limited success. The period 1977-1980, when the Socialist Henri Simonet occupied the post of Foreign Minister, offered a partly more positive picture. At that time a long-standing cultural treaty with apartheid South Africa was suspended, new state loans to South Africa stopped, and Belgium's contribution to the UN Fund for the victims of apartheid was stepped up.<sup>89</sup> Even then, economic links with the apartheid state remained strong. Antwerp, Europe's diamond capital, marketed South African diamonds. The port of Ghent, not only imported South African coal for Belgium, but was also used as a channel for South African coal to other European nations. In 1978, Belgian electricity companies signed a new contract for the import of uranium from South Africa.

The position of Brussels as a de facto European Community capital, from the 1950s, provided another arena for action by Belgian solidarity groups, supported by their counterparts in other EC member countries. Brussels was the centre for strong South African government and other pro-apartheid lobbying. But it also attracted representative offices for the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations Information Centre, and the organization of African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP)

states. The African National Congress opened an office in Brussels in 1980, and Belgian groups hosted a series of international solidarity conferences on Southern Africa in the 1970s and 1980s.<sup>90</sup>

Belgian groups maintained close relations with anti-apartheid groups in other countries. AKZA and the Flemish BOA published a joint edition of *Amandla* with Dutch groups from 1982 to 1992. And both French-speaking and Flemish-speaking groups worked with the Liaison Group of European Anti-Apartheid Movements in actions aimed at European Community policies.<sup>91</sup>

These international connections also indirectly increased the impact of anti-apartheid voices within Belgium, particularly by linking sympathetic parliamentarians on Southern African issues. A West European parliamentarians' conference on oil sanctions in 1981 was one of the steps that led up to the founding of the Association of Western European Parliamentarians for Action against Apartheid (AWEPA) in 1984. A Belgian branch of AWEPA was founded the following year, headed by Flemish Christian-Democrat Luc Dhoore. While the impact on policy was still limited, AWEPA members were able to repeatedly raise public questions about Belgian relations with South Africa.

### **Switzerland and Austria**

At first glance, Switzerland would seem to be an unlikely site for an active anti-apartheid movement. With a national emphasis on putting business first, Switzerland's traditional neutrality kept it out of the United Nations (until 2002) and the government consistently rejected international obligations to bring foreign policy into compliance with human rights standards. But while these realities limited the capacity of the movement to affect national policy, there were several countervailing factors that fostered an energetic movement in both the French-speaking and German-speaking parts of the country. In the post-apartheid period, Swiss activists and other researchers have been among the most persistent anywhere in demanding the exposure of their country's historical links with the apartheid system.<sup>92</sup>

Those factors included a diverse set of transnational networks engaged in Southern Africa to which Swiss activists had access. The International Labor Organization (ILO) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) were both based in Geneva, as were the World Council of Churches (WCC) and the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). In addition to informal contacts with staff of these organizations, Swiss organizations could also profit from a steady stream of visitors and of conferences related to Southern Africa.<sup>93</sup> The Swiss Reformed Church mission in northwestern South Africa and southern Mozambique had a significant impact on knowledge about Africa in Europe as well as on the development of nationalism in Mozambique.<sup>94</sup> While this mission's contacts were primarily in French-speaking Switzerland, solidarity activists in German-speaking Switzerland had the compensating advantage of close ties with both church and student groups across the border in Germany.<sup>95</sup>



The Swiss Anti-Apartheid Movement (MAAS) was founded in 1964, originally as the Geneva Anti-Apartheid Movement (MAAG). A Swiss-German affiliate was founded in 1974. There were also other Swiss activist and research groups focused on international solidarity, including Portugal and Portuguese Africa as well as Namibia, South Africa, and human rights and development more generally.

These included the Berne Declaration, founded in 1968, and the Centre Europe-Tiers Monde (CETIM), founded in 1970. Both addressed their publications, in French, German, and English, to an international as well as to the Swiss public. Among the most prominent activists on Africa and other international issues was Jean Ziegler, sociology professor and author, who also served in the Swiss parliament for 18 years between 1967 and 1999. The role of transnational links was clearly apparent in one of the major anti-apartheid campaigns in Switzerland, the one against bank loans to South Africa. Swiss banks were particularly prominent in their consistent support for South Africa, though loans, through handling marketing of South African gold, and in negotiations for restructuring of South Africa's debt in 1987, spearheaded by former Swiss National Bank president Fritz Leutwiler. International campaigns against bank loans to South Africa, initiated in the United States in the 1960s and taken up by the World Council of Churches and movements in Britain, Netherlands, and other countries in the 1970s, were also fuelled by research distributed by the UN Special Committee against Apartheid. In 1981, MAAS hosted in Zürich an international conference on bank loans to South Africa, following on a similar gathering by End Loans to South Africa in London and joint protests by the WCC and MAAS. Over the period 1986 to 1992, a sustained national campaign targeted Swiss banks with weekly picket lines. Despite the failure to shift bank or government policy, this visible public protest added to the cumulative international pressure on South Africa's financial standing.

Without significant pre-existing networks between Southern Africa and Austria, that country was relatively a late-comer to the anti-apartheid movement, and there appears to have been little involvement in solidarity against Portuguese colonialism or the Rhodesian minority regime.<sup>96</sup> It was the Soweto student revolt that brought together activists to form the Anti-Apartheid Movement in 1976, including some who had been previously in contact with the activities of the World Council of Churches or the World Peace Council. The movement focused on public education about apartheid, on campaigns for sanctions against South Africa, and on raising material support for the ANC and SWAPO. Its impact on public policy was facilitated by the majority status of the Social Democratic Party from 1970 to 1986, particularly under Bruno Kreisky from 1970 to 1983.

Thus Kreisky opposed a planned Austrian involvement in the Saldanha steel project in South Africa in 1975, a plan that was eventually dropped after public controversy. AAM fundraising for the ANC school at Mazimbu in Tanzania and for a SWAPO agricultural project in Zambia included successful requests for Austrian government funding. The movement also won support for sanctions from trade unions and Catholic as well as Protestant church leaders, and in 1986 the Austrian government (not a

member of the European Community), adopted similar limited economic sanctions on the EC model. Progress towards more comprehensive sanctions was blocked, however, and the prospects further reduced when the Social Democrats formed a coalition government with the Conservatives after the 1986 parliamentary elections.

## International Organizations and Transnational Networks

Most studies of international solidarity with Southern Africa have focused on single countries. Yet our review of Western European countries above clearly shows the importance of transnational networks that run not only between Africa and Europe but also in more complicated interwoven strands. Such networks are difficult to study, given that they consist not only of formal organizations but also informal personal connections. The brief survey that follows provides multiple indications of where further scholarly investigation is needed, particularly giving attention to international networks with a substantial presence in Western European countries.

### Church Networks<sup>97</sup>

The best researched and most frequently noted case is the World Council of Churches (WCC) Programme to Combat Racism (PCR), although even this lacks more than a cursory mention in the two-part SADET volume (SADET, 2008). Closely connected both with the South African Council of Churches (founded 1936)<sup>98</sup> and the All Africa Conference of Churches (founded 1963), the WCC (founded 1948) had strong roots in the Protestant missionary enterprise. Racism and the racial situation in South Africa in particular were on the organization's agenda from its earliest years, crystallizing in the formation of the PCR in 1969. By that time, 103 out of the WCC's 253 member churches were from Third World countries, 41 of them from Africa.<sup>99</sup>

WCC initiatives were deeply influenced by Southern African leaders such as Z.K. Matthews of the ANC, who served on the WCC staff from 1961 to 1996, Eduardo Mondlane, José Chipenda, Oliver Tambo, and Beyers Naudé. The PCR provided financial support not only for the liberation movements themselves but also for many of the solidarity groups in other countries. Equally if not more significantly, its actions in terms of support for liberation movements and engagement in campaigns against economic ties with South Africa attracted public attention, gave legitimacy, and encouraged local and national solidarity activists working to mobilize within the churches, which were most often ambivalent about taking strong action in support of liberation. As already noted, the WCC headquarters in Geneva had a particularly close relationship with Swiss activists. Its worldwide connections, manifested in direct contacts at conferences and through visits, were an ongoing stimulus to activism, even in countries where the general level of consciousness about Africa was not high. Even less known, beyond the circles of those who were directly involved, was the similar function played by international organizations linking specific religious

traditions within the Protestant churches. South African religious leaders, who increasingly took active roles in the anti-apartheid struggle were in constant communication with their counterparts within their own traditions. While they often spoke to wider audiences, including the ecumenical networks of the WCC, they found particularly good access within their own denominational networks. In addition to the connections in Britain of prominent Anglicans such as Bishop Desmond Tutu, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC), both headquartered in Geneva, facilitated the anti-apartheid activism in countries with strong Lutheran and Reformed churches. Within Europe, Lutheran churches played particularly important roles in the Nordic countries and in Germany, with strong ties to Namibian church leaders. While South African Lutherans were less prominent internationally, there were anti-apartheid leaders such as Bishop Simon Farisani, whose account of his torture in 1977 was well-known even before it was published in book form in the 1980s.<sup>100</sup> Prominent South African anti-apartheid activists, most notably Beyers Naudé and Allan Boesak, were highly visible even beyond the circles of their own Reformed church networks. But their words had particularly resonance in Reformed churches, which had their deepest roots in Switzerland, the Netherlands, and Scotland.

Networks linking European Catholics with anti-apartheid Catholics in South Africa ran not only through Rome, but through links established through missionary connections and the rise of liberation theology in Latin America and worldwide.<sup>101</sup> Prominent figures such as Archbishop Denis Hurley of Durban, Father Smangaliso Mkhathshwa and Sister Bernard Ncube of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, Colin Collins of the University Christian Movement, liberation theologian Albert Nolan of the Dominican order, and others had multiple contacts in Europe. The scope of such ties received its greatest boost with the Vatican II process, involving thousands of Catholic clergy from around the world from 1962 to 1965. The English branch of the Dominican (Blackfriars) order had particularly close links with South Africa. It was responsible for St. Peter's Seminary, which trained black clergy, many of whom became anti-apartheid activists. In the 1970s and 1980s, the Catholic Institute of International Relations (CIIR), in London, became a key node for research and education, supporting progressive change in Southern Africa as well as in Latin America and Asia.

### **Trade Union Networks**

Although trade unions were an important component of anti-apartheid support networks for all the countries discussed above, the significance of initiatives by international trade union organizations is far less clear.<sup>102</sup> We suspect that which unions and trade unionists became most actively involved, was influenced primarily by the national and local efforts of anti-apartheid organizations; although we are not aware of a systematic investigation to verify this hypothesis.

Among international organizations, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), and the Workers' Group in the International Labour Organization (ILO)<sup>103</sup> all took strong stands against apartheid, including support for mandatory sanctions. Beginning in 1964, the ILO prepared annual reports on the situation of workers under apartheid; in 1973, with the Special Committee on Apartheid, it convened an International Trade Union Conference against Apartheid. In Western Europe, ICFTU member unions were in general stronger than the Communist Party-affiliated unions in the WFTU. Although the exiled South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) was a member of WFTU, and strongly linked to the South African Communist Party, it sought support within ICFTU unions as well.

Cold War rivalries between the two opposed international federations were only one of the complicating factors that made international trade union cooperation against apartheid much more an ad-hoc and decentralized phenomenon than one tied to any one coordinating entity. The U.S. AFL-CIO, with international operations closely tied over much of this period to the CIA, left the ICFTU in 1969, only to re-join it in 1982.<sup>104</sup> Unions in countries with significant exports to South Africa were hesitant about the potential impact of sanctions on jobs. And until the formation of the Congress of South African Unions (COSATU) in 1985, there was considerable uncertainty about what unions in South Africa should get support from international anti-apartheid forces. SACTU in exile had little influence inside South Africa, and the stances towards the role of political versus workplace issues among the new black unions that emerged in the 1970s were the subject of intense debate.

Nevertheless, even before the formation of COSATU, ties between new South African unions and international activists expanded in parallel with the growing strength of the unions in South Africa, involving not only bilateral ties with unions in similar industries but also with the industry-specific international federations, such as the International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM), the International Metalworkers' Federation, and the International Transport Workers' Federation.<sup>105</sup>

### **Ideological and Party Networks**

There can be no doubt that members of leftist political parties in Western Europe, particularly Communist Parties linked to the Soviet Union and Social-Democratic parties in the Socialist International, provided strong support for the anti-apartheid cause.<sup>106</sup> It is more difficult to tease out how much was channelled through individual participation in Southern Africa solidarity organizations and how much through initiatives by party officials. It seems clear, however, that international coordination was far less important than were bilateral links to Southern African movements. Conferences and inter-party visits provided opportunities for exchange of information and views, facilitating the formation of common positions on such issues as support for the African National Congress and for sanctions. But formal international

organizations such as the World Peace Council and the Socialist International did not take on coordination of major international campaigns.

Despite stereotypes of subordination to the Soviet Union, even the most pro-Moscow Communist parties, such as the Portuguese Communist Party and the South African Communist Party (SACP) itself, charted their own course on strategies for the liberation in Southern Africa. Soviet Africa analysts not only supported the SACP strategy of alliance with the ANC, they also encouraged broad collaboration with non-communist progressive groups in the international solidarity movement, acknowledging that the details would depend largely on the conditions in each country.<sup>107</sup> The most prominent international solidarity organization with predominantly communist membership was the World Peace Council, which helped organize solidarity conferences such as in Khartoum in 1969, Rome in 1970, and Lisbon in 1977. These same networks also facilitated links with groups such as the Afro Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization (AAPSO), founded in 1957 and headquartered in Cairo; the Cuba-based Organization of Solidarity with the People of Asia, Africa and Latin America (OSPAAL), founded in 1966; and the International Committee Against Apartheid, Racism and Colonialism in Southern Africa (ICSA), founded at a conference in Lisbon in 1977 and involving both communist and social democratic public figures.

The wide spectrum of policies within the Socialist International (SI), from the strong support for Southern African liberation spearheaded by Olof Palme of Sweden to the highly ambivalent policies of the Labour Party in Britain and the German Social Democratic Party, had significant impact on the governments of Western Europe, depending on electoral developments in each country. The parties were under pressure from anti-apartheid movements in their countries, as well as from leading African members of the Socialist International such as President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, who hosted a well-attended SI conference on Southern Africa in Arusha in 1984, including leaders of the liberation movements and the Frontline States. But while Sweden and Tanzania exemplified the active engagement of the SI, international momentum had little influence in policy debates in the Social Democratic parties of the larger European countries such as Britain, Germany, and France.<sup>108</sup>

### **Southern Africa Solidarity Networks within Western Europe**

As noted above in the country sections, activists regularly sought to strengthen solidarity campaigns by making links across borders. This was in part a natural outcome of parallel contacts initiated by liberation movements, particularly the systematic efforts that were central to the strategies of FRELIMO and the ANC. Campaigns on political prisoners, spearheaded by organizations in Great Britain, sought partners in every country where there were activists to respond. Campaigns against economic targets sought to build coalitions including the countries where the target companies were most engaged. Thus the campaign against the Cahora Bassa dam in Mozambique, initiated by FRELIMO, had its first significant success

in Sweden, where a multi-year campaign forced the withdrawal of ASEA from the ZAMCO consortium. Activists also mobilized against the project in France, Germany, Great Britain, and Italy, and later in Canada and the United States, coordinated with diplomatic pressure led by President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia. Although the project advanced, the campaign both forced the cancellation of some contracts and, more significantly, focused political attention on the Portuguese colonial wars.

Other campaigns which engaged multinational activist coalitions, already discussed, were the campaigns against Shell and that focused on bank loans to South Africa. Activist researchers on both sides of the Atlantic monitored new loans to South Africa, and the information was quickly disseminated to activists in the relevant countries. The European Campaign on South African Aggression Against Mozambique and Angola hosted a large conference in Bonn in 1988.<sup>109</sup>

Formal liaison among anti-apartheid groups became more urgent in the 1980s, as European Community policies took on more prominence, with the least common denominator of European action serving as an excuse for procrastination and evasion on sanctions against South Africa.<sup>110</sup> The Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement took the initiative in 1979 to convene an initial gathering, preceding the Irish presidency of the EC. But the formal establishment of a Liaison Group that met every six months, coinciding with the transfer of EC presidency to a new country, provided regular opportunities for planning common strategies. Movements in Belgium, the Netherlands, and Great Britain played the most active role in the coordination of the group.

Particularly significant in impact at the level of Western Europe, however, were two other separate initiatives, one focused on the EC bureaucracy and the other on Western European parliamentarians. In both cases, the initiative came from groups in the Netherlands.<sup>111</sup>

When, in September 1985, the EC announced a Special Programme for the Victims of Apartheid, activists were well aware that the measure was aimed at reducing pressure for sanctions. Nevertheless, it was an opportunity to channel support to genuine opponents of apartheid. In consultation with anti-apartheid forces in South Africa and Namibia, the Dutch KZA took the initiative to set up principles that would bar support for groups linked to the apartheid state, as well as procedures for accountable selection of projects to be supported. Over five years, beginning in 1985, over €100 million was dispersed to some 200 projects, distributed through the South African Council of Churches, the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, and a new Kagiso Trust supported by secular progressive European NGOs.

The second initiative was the Association of West European Parliamentarians for Action against Apartheid (AWEPAA), today AWEPA (Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa). This grew initially from conferences hosted in Brussels and the Hague in 1981 and 1982, with Dutch Christian Democrat spokesperson for foreign policy Jan Nico Scholten taking the leading role. The group was formally launched in Copenhagen in 1984, and grew to over 1,000 members by the early 1990s,

bringing in members of national parliaments and the European Parliament across Party lines. AWEPA organized systematically in favour of sanctions and wider support for the liberation in Southern Africa, as well as placing a particular emphasis on support for the Frontline States. It sent observer delegations to Southern Africa beginning with the Namibian elections in 1989, and has continued to be active in the post-apartheid period, with regular monitoring of elections and other contacts with Southern Africa.

## Observations and Questions

This brief and broad survey of movements in 10 Western European countries (plus a handful of international networks with a European presence) is hardly sufficient to serve as a basis for “conclusions,” as this section might more conventionally be titled. Nevertheless, there are a number of observations to be made and questions to be posed that we hope will be of interest to readers and useful to future researchers.

### Comparative Observations

While there is scope for new empirical work on specific countries, organizations, and campaigns, we hope that researchers will also begin to pay more attention to the scope for comparative analysis. Exploring commonalities and differences among movements can both highlight the distinctiveness of national experiences and provide cases for exploring the factors responsible for development of transnational solidarity. To cite only a few possible research projects, one might compare the boycott campaigns against South African fruit in different European countries, explore the differences between national movements in Italy and France, or look at how different national movements approached coalition-building within their own ranks as well as with outside constituencies.

Observations that might be advanced as hypotheses from the survey above include:

- Among Southern African liberation movements, FRELIMO and the African National Congress, followed by SWAPO, placed the most sustained strategic emphasis on cultivating international solidarity, with visible results in the countries they targeted.
- In every country surveyed, except Ireland and Austria, there were two or more distinct organizations that played on-going leadership roles.
- In every country surveyed, except France, the different solidarity and anti-apartheid organizations most often found workable ways for division of labour and collaboration, despite organizational rivalries.
- In every country surveyed, without exception, the movement had measurable impact on public opinion and government policy, but in no case did national governments and businesses make a consistent break with their ties with the colonial and white-minority regimes. Among countries surveyed, the Netherlands was the only one in which support for liberation movements and for the solidarity

organizations became a cross-party government commitment, in a pattern resembling that in the Nordic countries.

- There was no central coordination of movement activities, either by direction from liberation movements or by any national or international organization. There was, nevertheless, a dense network of ties allowing for development of common overall strategies and complementary actions.
- While past colonial ties contributed to the level of awareness and density of networks linking movements to Southern Africa, so too did other historical missionary connections, reinforced by international church alliances.
- While South Africa became the overwhelming focus in all the countries surveyed in the period following 1975-1976, there was overall, a difference in emphasis between movements, with those on the European continent, particularly the Netherlands, more inclined to place the “anti-apartheid” message within a broader “Third World” and “Southern Africa” solidarity framework.<sup>112</sup>

## Unanswered Questions:

### Critical Solidarity and the Future of Solidarity

The history of liberation struggles in Southern Africa, and thus the history of solidarity with those struggles, leaves a host of unanswered questions—empirical, analytical, and ethical—that are unlikely to be resolved quickly. The scale of human suffering that is still largely anonymous, particularly the less publicized toll of South Africa’s war machine on neighbouring countries, is comparable to that suffered by Western Europe itself during the course of World War II. As in all wars, even the most just, no linear narrative can encompass the range of ambiguous choices made for survival or justified at the time by the demands of the struggle. In South Africa, the results of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission are far from conclusive, having delved only superficially into the regional wars. Elsewhere in the region, comparable initiatives were ruled out as inconsistent with the need for national reconciliation.

There can be no doubt that international solidarity groups in Western Europe, as elsewhere, were reluctant to explore human rights abuses committed by liberation movements and post-liberation governments, given the overwhelming need to defeat the common enemy of apartheid, which was without doubt guilty of far greater offenses. In each country there are outstanding events that are still sensitive touchpoints,<sup>113</sup> which are difficult to address because of possible political implications for parties now in power. There may be legitimate debate as to whether silence about such events was justified at the time. Even now, one can understand reluctance to allow them to be used to rationalize a moral equivalence between apartheid and its opponents. But both participants and historians should recognize that this is also part of the history that cannot be wished away.

But the single-minded focus on political liberation, from colonialism or from apartheid, also raises other questions. On the one hand, the clear objective—



overcoming the explicit denial of political rights by brutal colonial and racial regimes—made it possible to build broad fronts of support in almost every country. Without such a focus, it is unlikely that the international solidarity movement would have had more than a fraction of the impact that it did, thus allowing the apartheid regime to survive for a longer time. But this tight focus also created a disjuncture between the most widely promoted “anti-apartheid” discourse and the hopes and expectations of large numbers of the most committed activists, who shared with many movement leaders a commitment to socialist transformation following political freedom.<sup>114</sup>

It is not clear what fraction of international solidarity activists hoped for explicitly socialist success stories in liberated Southern African countries, or how firmly liberation movement leaders themselves held to the views implied by the socialist label in movement platforms. But there can be no doubt that for each country international activists shared with local people high hopes for change as colonial and white-minority rule came to an end. One need not be cynical, nor be confident of explaining the reasons why, to recognize that, decades later, those hopes are far from being fulfilled.

Whether in Southern Africa, Europe, or elsewhere in the world, the context for solidarity in the 21st century is vastly different than in the anti-colonial and anti-apartheid era. Inequalities and injustices, both within and between countries, are still deeply entrenched, and even widening, although the strict correspondences between race, political rights, and economic privilege embodied in apartheid no longer hold sway. Building cohesive movements for liberation that includes economic and social justice as well as political rights is a daunting challenge within any single country or continent. Global inequality between rich and poor amounts to what some have called “global apartheid,”<sup>115</sup> and those injustices are linked to similar patterns within countries. But neither the causes nor solutions are easily defined in ways that evoke a sustained movement for common goals comparable to the anti-colonial and anti-apartheid causes.

There are several points that seem worth making briefly, however, if only as starting points for further reflection.

- With the density and speed of international communications networks continuing to accelerate, demands for international solidarity will continue to come from pro-democracy campaigners fighting abuses of political and military power in individual countries, including African countries. As in the anti-apartheid era, such solidarity will depend on networks that involve activists and organizations both on the African continent and elsewhere. The scale of the impact will vary directly with the capacity to build consensus among activists in the country, those in increasingly widely dispersed diaspora communities, and others drawn to the cause by commitment to common human rights.
- Changes in political systems and election of new leaders, whether in Africa or in any country in the world, are no guarantee that structural inequalities and injustices will be addressed. There is no substitute for continued public scrutiny

and popular mobilization, both on national issues and on issues that more and more cut across national boundaries and require coordinated international action.

- There are visible examples of the legacy of the anti-apartheid movement and the kind of international solidarity networks that composed it in the international AIDS activist movement, the World Social Forums, and, possibly, in an incipient movement to meet the threat of climate change.
- There are, however, also threatening signs of “anti-solidarity” movements gaining strength as inequalities grow, most ominously the xenophobia against immigrants visible not only in Europe and the Americas, but also in Africa.
- Whatever its limitations, international solidarity with Southern Africa reflected a creative interplay between activists operating on the “inside” of governments and international organizations and transnational networks built from the “outside” by liberation movements and their supporters. While specific tactics and strategies of the movement may have limited applicability today, that fundamental principle is likely to be just as essential in the coming years.

## Notes

- 1 Another chapter in this volume, by Håkan Thörn, focuses specifically on the Nordic countries, which are also those whose involvement in this history has to date been most fully documented. The most comprehensive single account focuses on Sweden (Sellström 1999, 2002), part of a six-volume series from the Nordic Africa Institute. For additional references see the chapter by Thörn and the website <http://www.liberationafrica.se>.
- 2 See South African Democracy Education Trust (2008), also abbreviated as SADET (2008) in the reference list. Note that the two parts of Volume 3 only cover solidarity with South Africa from outside Africa. There is an additional volume to come focused on African countries.
- 3 The major studies include Fieldhouse (2004), Gurney (2008), Cook (2008), Herbstein (2004), and Thörn (2006). For additional references see footnotes in section on Great Britain below.
- 4 For listings of relevant archives, as well as much primary documentation, see the African Activist Archive at Michigan State University (<http://africanactivist.msu.edu>) and the Nelson Mandela Foundation. (<http://www.nelsonmandela.org/index.php/aama>). A search focusing on documents with full-text available on-line is available on the No Easy Victories website (<http://www.noeasyvictories.org/search/smartsearch1.php>).
- 5 São Tomé and Príncipe, the other Portuguese colony in Africa, gained little international attention, although it was also to gain independence in 1975.
- 6 <http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/struggles/defiance.html>.
- 7 The prize was awarded a year later, in 1961.

- 8 In 1964, Southern Rhodesia's former partners in the Central African Federation gained their independence under majority rule, Northern Rhodesia becoming Zambia and Nyasaland Malawi. The "High Commission Territories" of Bechuanaland and Basutoland became Botswana and Lesotho in 1966, followed by Swaziland in 1968.
- 9 See Minter (1986), 139-153 for a summary analysis.
- 10 Hashim Mbita Project Concept Paper.
- 11 For an overview of Britain's dominant role in Southern Africa at the beginning of the 20th century, see Minter (1986), 3-36. For the broader context, an excellent summary is Porter (2004). Hyam and Henshaw (2003) provide a detailed account of the relations between Britain and South Africa in the 20th century.
- 12 "Divestment" strategies targeting specific companies, for example, were pioneered in the United States, while the Nordic countries and the Netherlands took the lead in providing non-military material and financial support to liberation movements.
- 13 See Angola Comité et al. (1975), Israel (1999). In 1970 alone, for example, there were over 20,000 British immigrants to South Africa and some 3,000 South African immigrants to Britain.
- 14 Mandela's *No Easy Walk to Freedom*, including his famous speech at the Rivonia Trial, was first published in 1965 in the Heinemann African Writers Series. That influential series was founded by British publisher Alan Hill. Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe served as series editor for the first decade.
- 15 Scott (1958), First (1963).
- 16 Paton (1948) and Huddleston (1956).
- 17 Segal also convened a pioneering conference on economic sanctions in London in 1964 (Segal, 1964).
- 18 Since the organizational histories of these two groups have been extensively documented by works already cited, this section of the current chapter is intentionally very brief. A finding aid for the archives of the Anti-Apartheid Movement, stored at Oxford, is available at <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/rhl/aam/aam.html>. A selection of documents is available in the Aluka digital library (<http://www.aluka.org>). The main archives of IDAFSA are stored at the University of the Western Cape-Robben Island Mayibuye Archive, with additional material on Namibia at the National Archives of Namibia.
- 19 In addition to the major works cited above, see Collins (1992), Honoré (1988), Denniston (1999), Hyam and Henshaw (2003, 307-342), Yates and Chester (2006), and Gurney (2009).
- 20 Renamed "Liberation" in 1970, it continues in existence today. Its archives from 1954 to 1995 are held at the School of Oriental and African Studies (<http://www.aim25.ac.uk/cats/19/75.htm>).

- 21 The papers of the Africa Bureau are held at Oxford (<http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/dept/scwmss/wmss/online/blcas/african-bureau.html>). The Central African Federation, composed of Nyasaland (now Malawi), Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), and Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) was an initiative intended to balance the roles of white settlers and Africans in the three countries.
- 22 In 1994, ELTSA was transformed into the Southern Africa Economic Research Unit (SAERU) to address the economic legacies of apartheid and encourage financial assistance to the region. <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/rhl/eltsa/eltsa.html>.
- 23 On the sports boycott, see de Broglio (1970), Hain (1971), Minty (1971), and Lapchick (1977).
- 24 For a summary of the issues, see in particular Fieldhouse (2005), Chapter 14.
- 25 Tellingly, the index to more than the more 500 pages of Fieldhouse (2005), contains no entry for Vietnam nor for Conservative anti-immigration campaigner Enoch Powell.
- 26 Friends of Namibia was founded in 1969, becoming the Namibia Support Committee in 1974. The most substantive study of their work, showing both the collaboration with the AAM and the distinctive emphasis on the strategic importance of Namibia, is Saunders (2009). See also Vigne (2004) and Fieldhouse (2005, 141-149). The Namibia Support Committee worked closely with Peter Katjavivi, who was the London representative of SWAPO from 1968 to 1976, as well as with his successors.
- 27 The Committee for Freedom in Mozambique was founded in 1968 after a visit to Britain by FRELIMO President Eduardo Mondlane. It soon became the Committee for Freedom in Mozambique, Angola and Guiné (CFMAG). After the independence of the Portuguese colonies, it was succeeded by the Mozambique, Angola and Guiné Information Centre (MAGIC) and the Mozambique Angola Committee. Six boxes of papers of CFMAG are at Bishopsgates Institute in London (<http://www.bishopsgate.org.uk/content.asp?CategoryID=1428>).
- 28 See, for example, Cawthra (1986).
- 29 Saunders (2009) on Namibia provides a useful model that can and should be emulated by some scholar focusing on this parallel solidarity current.
- 30 See Mondlane (1969), Cabral (1969, 1971), Machel (1974), Davidson (1969, 1972).
- 31 See Hastings (1974), Committee for Freedom in Mozambique, Angola and Guiné (1973).
- 32 In addition to Hain (1971) and Minty (1971), see the summary in Gurney (2008, 287-290).
- 33 See World Council of Churches (1971). The boycott of Barclays began in 1969. “Cahora Bassa” is the Mozambican spelling; in Europe the name was most often spelled “Cabora Bassa.”

- 34 See Hengeveld and Rodenburg (1995), as well as the discussion below in the Netherlands section. The papers of the British Oil Working Group, created in 1980 by War on Want, the Methodist Church Overseas Division and the United Reform Church, administered from 1981 by Christian Concern for Southern Africa, and renamed Embargo in 1985 under the umbrella of ELTSA, are held at Oxford <http://www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/rhl/eltsa/eltsa.html>.
- 35 1979-1994. Founded and headed by Abdul Minty, Honourary Secretary of the British Anti-Apartheid Movement.
- 36 See Reddy (1988), Klein (2004).
- 37 Newitt (1981) provides an overview of the history of Portuguese colonialism in Africa. Anderson (1962) introduced the concept of “ultra-colonialism.” Castro (1978), first published in exile in 1962, is the classic study by a Portuguese Marxist economist. For an analysis of the last phase of Portuguese colonialism, from 1961 to 1975, see Clarence-Smith (1985, 192-225).
- 38 Antunes (1980, 65-123) has a very clear overview of the evolution of anti-colonial opposition in Portugal. The classic statement of the PCP position is Cunhal (1974). Soares (1972) gives his own account of the opposition years.
- 39 The Armed Forces Movement was formed by middle-level officers, but General António de Spínola, who had proposed colonial reforms without independence in his book *Portugal and the Future* (1974), was also one of the top leaders until September 1974.
- 40 Still useful as summary accounts are Maxwell (1982) and Antunes (1960, 1990). Macqueen (1997) provides much more extensive detail on the process, informed by access to several key Portuguese participants. Guerra (1996) incorporates African as well as Portuguese sources, based on an extensive range of interviews.
- 41 For a brief summary of this period in Angola, see Minter (1986, 262-271). Heimer (1979) provides a well-informed comprehensive account that still holds up well. A more recent study with additional sources is Gleijeses (2002, 230-372).
- 42 For statistics, see Pires et al. (1984).
- 43 The numbers given vary widely, from 49,000 up to a highly implausible 300,000, or even 600,000, as Portuguese President Mário Soares reportedly claimed (Bosgra, 2008d, 717). The South African census for 1996 counted 87,000 whites speaking all “other languages,” including Portuguese.
- 44 See Bosgra (2008d) for a brief account.
- 45 See Conchiglia (1990) and Nilsson (1990) for reports on this as well as on UNITA and RENAMO networks in other European countries.
- 46 This poses the interesting research question of explaining why that connection was not more prominent.
- 47 See Pas (2008).

- 48 The term Tiers Monde was coined by a French scholar in 1952 (Sauvy, 1952). On the Third World movement in the Netherlands, see Beerends (1993) and Kuitenbrouwer (1994).
- 49 Despite its position at the other end of the continent, Algeria was a key node in contact between Southern African liberation movements and Europe. Algeria also provided military training for FRELIMO, MPLA, PAIGC, and the ANC.
- 50 For an overview focusing on South Africa, see Bosgra (2008b). Hengeveld (2009), a web dossier, covers Dutch anti-apartheid and other Southern Africa solidarity actions. Additional sources with more detail include Buijs (1995), Edelenbos (1991), Klein (2001), Luirink et.al. (1990), Posthumus (1998), Rozenburg (1986), Spinder (1995), Van Aurich (1994), Van Beurden and Huinder (1996), and Van Lakerveld (1994). On Mozambique in particular, see Bosgra and Schuddeboom (2005) and Van Driel (2005). On Namibia, see Hendrix (2006). An on-line guide to additional sources and Dutch anti-apartheid archives, as well as full text of some reports, is available at <http://www.iisg.nl/collections/anti-apartheid/background.php>. A selection of documents from the Dutch movements is available in the Aluka digital library (<http://www.aluka.org>).
- 51 See Bosgra (2008b) for a description of some of the differences between AABN and the other groups, from a veteran leader of KZA. Other sources include Van Beurden and Huinder (1996, 141ff), and, for brief references only, Van Aurich et al. (1994) and an account in the AABN magazine's final edition (Luirink, 1994). In 1997, the AABN and KZA, together with the Eduardo Mondlane Foundation, merged into one organization, the Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa (NiZA).
- 52 Van Beurden and Huinder (1996, 70).
- 53 The photo is reproduced in <http://www.iisg.nl/collections/anti-apartheid/history/jaren70-1.php>, as is the similar image with the BOA slogan "Don't squeeze a South African dry."
- 54 The story of Braam's involvement in the "Vula" operation is detailed in her book *Operation Vula* (Braam, 2004; original Dutch edition 1992); see also <http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/vula.html>.
- 55 De Jonge's spectacular escape, abduction by South African police at the door of the Dutch Embassy in Pretoria, and subsequent sanctuary for two years in the embassy, is told in De Jonge (1987).
- 56 Van Beurden and Huinder (1996, 136-139).
- 57 See Hengeveld and Rodenburg (1995); Bailey (1979, 1980).
- 58 A central role in the parliamentary sanctions debate was played by Jan Nico Scholten MP, who went on to found AWEPEA, the Netherlands-based West European parliamentarians' network on Southern Africa.
- 59 For overviews, see Hanlon (1986), Johnson and Martin (1989), and Minter (1994).

- 60 This was also true in the Nordic countries. Communicating a “regional” perspective to the public was much more difficult elsewhere, where activists lacked resources for broader public education to deepen the “anti-apartheid” message.
- 61 The National Organization for International Assistance, now Oxfam Novib, was founded in 1956. It was the first sustained organizational embodiment of the Third World movement in the Netherlands.
- 62 Tanzania kept this status under successive governments. For a critical evaluation, see Hoebink (1988).
- 63 See Bosgra and Schuddeboom (2005), Van Driel (2005).
- 64 Halkes and Oppewal (1989).
- 65 See Hendrix (2006, 77-79), Bosgra (2008b, 619-620) and Luirink (1994, 6).
- 66 Bacia and Leidig (2008, 26-27). Former German missionaries in Southern Africa were prominent in MAKSA.
- 67 For more background on this competition, see Wellmer (2008), Schleicher (2008), and Winrow (1990).
- 68 Since this chapter is confined to Western Europe, and solidarity from Eastern Europe is addressed in a separate chapter, these ties are not addressed here. However, it is important to note that the links between solidarity in the two countries went not only through the small West German Communist Party, but also through Southern Africa solidarity actions by churches on both sides of the Cold War divide. For additional background on this, see Engel and Schleicher (1998), Schleicher and Schleicher (1998), Schleicher (1999), and Schleicher (2008).
- 69 See Köhler (2002). Even in the period of German colonial control, missionaries were often among the critics of the colonial regime. And German missionary presence also expanded, for example, in Tanganyika, after Germany lost its colonies.
- 70 Drechsler (1986a, b4). In 2004, 100 years later, Germany finally offered a formal apology. Among other connections, Nazi leader Herman Göring was the son of the first German Governor-General of Namibia.
- 71 The major sources for the following summary include Wenzel (1994), Kössler and Melber (2002), Bacia and Leidig (2008), and Wellmer (2008).
- 72 Leggewie (1984).
- 73 See below, under international networks, on the WCC Programme to Combat Racism, formed in 1969, and on the Lutheran World Federation. For the German churches, see Köhler (2002) for a brief account and Hermann (2006) for an extensive study.
- 74 See brief discussion below. The campaign is documented in several sources, including Stelck (1980), Schmidt-Biesalski (1993), and Bacia and Leidig (2008),

- who use the campaign's slogan for the title of their book. See Kössler (2009) for a critical review of Bacia and Leidig.
- 75 Although the SACC leadership previously hinted at support, they faced penalties under South African law for open advocacy of sanctions.
- 76 Bacia and Leidig (2008, Anhang 4, 348-349). The AAB continues in existence today as Koordination Südliches Afrika (<http://www.kosa.org>). There is also an alliance of church groups focused on Southern Africa, Kirchliche Arbeitsstelle Südliches Afrika (KASA, <http://www.woek-web.de>), which is one of the member groups of KOSA.
- 77 In addition to sources already mentioned, Wick (1991) is a short critical reflection on the movement by a participant.
- 78 The story is told in detail in Cervenka and Rogers (1978).
- 79 See Kneifel (2004) and Zeller (2007).
- 80 The basic source on the IAAM, with co-authors including its two most prominent leaders, is Asmal, Asmal, and Alberts (2008). The IAAM archives are housed at the UWC-Robben Island Mayibuye Centre. Prominent South African anti-apartheid activists of Irish immigrant parentage include Michael Harmel of the South African Communist Party and Archbishop Denis Hurley of Durban.
- 81 For Italian solidarity against Portuguese colonialism, and the Reggio Emilia experience in particular, see Lanzafame and Podaliri (2004) and *Lega per le autonomie e i poteri locali* (1973). Italian anti-apartheid activism is summarized in Fiamingo (2004, 2008). Passerini (1970) is an early Italian analysis of Portuguese colonialism and the liberation struggle in Mozambique.
- 82 For example, "relabelled" South African coal was imported through Belgium.
- 83 Dérens (2006) includes very little detail even about the movement of which she herself was a leader. Bosgra, Dérens, and Marchand (2008) is the only overview to date that has come to our attention.
- 84 See Bosgra, Dérens, and Marchand (2008) and Du Plessis (2009). RNCA is still in existence, under the name *Rencontre Nationale avec le Peuple d'Afrique du Sud* (<http://renapas.rezo.net>), as is MRAP. The archives of MAA are held at CAMT, Roubaix ([http://www.codhos.asso.fr/dossier/dossiers.php?id\\_dossier=23](http://www.codhos.asso.fr/dossier/dossiers.php?id_dossier=23)).
- 85 We are aware of no systematic study of French solidarity against Portuguese colonialism or with Southern Africa more generally, apart from South Africa.
- 86 Hochschild (1998) is the classic study of the Congo Free State under King Leopold and the international protest against it. The classic book on the assassination of Patrice Lumumba is De Witte (2001). For an authoritative summary of the regime of Mobutu Sese Seko, see Braeckmann (1992). For an overview of the history of the Congo, see Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002). On Belgian relations with Zaire, see Villers (1995).



- 87 See, both on Belgian policy and on the two solidarity currents, Pierson-Mathy (2008) and Vanheukelom (2008). Both essays concentrate primarily on South Africa.
- 88 Simonet's successors soon eliminated this support, replacing it with support for the SADCC countries (Pierson-Mathy, 2008, 646).
- 89 These included international conferences on Namibia in 1972 and 1986; the International Trade Union Conference on Southern Africa in 1976, co-organized by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, headquartered in Brussels; and the first session of the International Commission of Inquiry into the Crimes of Apartheid and Racist Regimes in Southern Africa in 1979.
- 90 See the section on international networks below.
- 91 For an overview see Leuenberger (2008). Although many details remain obscure due to failure of Swiss government and businesses to release relevant sources, there is extensive recent documentation on the relationships between Switzerland and South Africa during this period, as mandated by the Swiss parliament. See [http://www.snf.ch/NFP\\_archive/NFP42+](http://www.snf.ch/NFP_archive/NFP42+) and, for critical commentary, the website of the Swiss Apartheid Debt and Reparations Campaign (<http://www.apartheid-reparations.ch>). An extensive set of parliamentary statements is available at <http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/fr/home/doc/parvor/safind/parhis.html>.
- 92 See, for instance, the conferences listed on the ANC website (<http://www.anc.org.za/un/conf.html>).
- 93 See Harries (2007) and Jeannerat, Morier-Genoud, and Péclard (2004). There is a 6-page summary of Jennerat et al. available at [http://www.snf.ch/NFP\\_archive/NFP42+/Harries\\_E.doc](http://www.snf.ch/NFP_archive/NFP42+/Harries_E.doc).
- 94 Because of its international connections, Switzerland was also a useful contact point for South African intelligence and economic networks. Craig Williamson was placed in the international organization International University Exchange Fund (IUEF). See the account in Sellström (2002, 563-578).
- 95 For a summary and references to other sources, see Sauer (2008).
- 96 For overviews of the history of Christian churches in South Africa, including their responses to apartheid in the period of this study, see Hope and Young (1981) and Elphick and Davenport (1997).
- 97 For a summary history, see <http://www.sacc.org.za/about/celebrate0.html>.
- 98 For an overview of the PCR, see Adler (1974), Sjollemma (1982), and Webb (1994). On European churches in particular, see Webb (1994, 69-83). A doctoral dissertation on the PCR and South Africa, based on the WCC archives is being completed by Thembeke Mufamadi.
- 99 See Farisani (1987). The book was also published in German, Dutch, and French. The German edition appeared first, in 1985.

- 100 See Bulletin of Contextual Theology (1997).
- 101 Trade union action was primarily concentrated on South Africa, and to a lesser extent on Namibia, reflecting the prominent role of unions in those countries.
- 102 The ILO, as a tripartite UN agency, includes representatives of governments, employers, and workers.
- 103 For an account of the impact of international rivalries on support for South African unions, see Southall (1995).
- 104 See also the mention in the Netherlands section above of the Maritime Workers and the oil embargo (Hengeveld and Rodenburg, 1995, 296-305).
- 105 Maoist and Trotskyist groups in Western Europe also sometimes focused on Southern Africa, with Maoist groups most often supporting groups not supported by the Soviet Union, such as the PAC in South Africa, ZANU in Zimbabwe, and UNITA in Angola. Trotskyist groups mobilized in the 1960s in support of South African political prisoner Dr Neville Alexander. South African Trotskyist Baruch Hirson, exiled in London, published incisive independent analysis of the struggle in South Africa, though his books and the journal *Searchlight South Africa*. But neither ideological grouping mounted sustained large-scale campaigns on Southern Africa.
- 106 See Bushin (1989, 147-158), which discusses cooperation between Communist and Social-Democratic parties on Southern Africa. This was written by Vladimir Shubin, who has in recent years provided meticulous and nuanced accounts of Soviet support for Southern Africa liberation (Shubin, 2008a, 2008b).
- 107 See Bushin (1989).
- 108 Conference documentation, including extensive clippings from the European press, was published in European Campaign on South African Aggression Against Mozambique and Angola (1988).
- 109 See Bosgra (2008a, 2008c).
- 110 See Bosgra (2008b, 562-264), Sluiter (1997), Sluiter and Bosgra (2008). 111 Austria would seem to be an exception to this general observation.
- 112 These include torture and execution of alleged “traitors” in military camps of SWAPO and the ANC; the Angolan government’s brutal reprisals for the attempted coup of May 1977; the extra-judicial execution of Uria Simango and other political prisoners in Mozambique in 1983; and the violent repression in Matabeleland in Zimbabwe in the early 1980s.
- 113 Evaluations of such hopes and expectations are inevitably subjective and subject to distortions of memory. We know of no study that has tried to make a systematic evaluation of the views among movement participants, which clearly varied significantly as well as changed over time.

114 See, among others, Alexander (1996), Booker and Minter (2001), and Adebajo (2009).

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# 9.4

## **The Contribution of the Commonwealth Towards the Liberation Struggle of Southern Africa**

**By Moses Anafu**

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## Introduction

Between the expulsion of South Africa from the Commonwealth in 1961 and the ending of apartheid in that country in 1994, Southern Africa became an all consuming preoccupation of the association. A backward Portuguese colonialism in Angola and in Mozambique; white minority settler rule in Rhodesia; South Africa's occupation of Namibia long after the revocation of the mandate and apartheid in South Africa itself - these were the constituent elements of the Southern Africa issue. For the Commonwealth however these were distinctions without much of a difference; for in one way or another they were all various forms of denial of the fundamental equality of all human beings and the right to liberty. It was the egregious inequalities based on race and enshrined in law which brought the Commonwealth into irreducible conflict with the minority regimes of Southern Africa., beginning in 1961 with South Africa itself, the country which Commonwealth leaders were later to describe in 1977 as the one country playing "a central role in perpetuating the problems of Southern Africa which are interrelated"<sup>1</sup>. 1961 marked the beginning of collective Commonwealth involvement in the thirty year crisis of Southern Africa. The occasion was South Africa's express wish to remain in the Commonwealth when it became a republic in 1961.

## I

### The Expulsion of South Africa

At the May 1960 Meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers, as Heads of Government Meetings were then styled, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana informed his colleagues of his Government's intention to introduce a republican constitution in Ghana by July 1960 and of Ghana's desire to continue its membership of the Commonwealth thereafter. Nkrumah was assured by the Meeting "that the present relations between their countries and Ghana would remain unaffected by this constitutional change and they declared that their Governments would accept and recognise Ghana's continued membership of the Commonwealth"<sup>2</sup>.

Eric Louw, South Africa's Minister of External Affairs, also informed the Meeting that the Union Government also intended to hold a referendum on the subject of South Africa becoming a republic within the Commonwealth. The reaction of the Meeting to the two statements could not have been more different. After telling Eric Louw that the choice between the monarchy and a republic was entirely the responsibility of the country concerned, the Prime Ministers went on to make the following demand of the South African Government:

in the event of South Africa deciding to become a republic and if the desire was subsequently to request to remain a member of the Commonwealth, the Meeting suggested that the South African Government should then ask for the consent of the other Commonwealth Governments either at a Meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers or, if this were not practicable, by correspondence.<sup>3</sup>

India and soon after Pakistan, had both become republics within the Commonwealth, without any conditionality. Then at that very Meeting a future republican Ghana had just been waved through with all goodwill. Why was South Africa which had been a member of the Commonwealth since 1910 to be treated differently? At issue was South Africa's apartheid system which the new Commonwealth found exceptionally repugnant.

By 1960, the old Dominion Commonwealth knit together by ties of kinship and a common "inheritance of loyalties and ideals"<sup>4</sup> had begun to give way to the multiracial Commonwealth of Nations sworn to the equality of all human beings regardless of colour, race or creed. The passions and aspirations animating this new Commonwealth were also different; and this was what Kwame Nkrumah, Pandit Nehru and Tunku Abdul Rahman of Malaya strove to impress upon their colleagues. Throughout the Meeting, Nkrumah later said "our discussions were permeated again and again by the urgent need for a serious re-examination of the whole basis of the Commonwealth Association in the wider context of Africa's political and economic aspirations."<sup>5</sup> In fact Nkrumah staked the survival of the Commonwealth on its ability to advance these political and economic aspirations:

We made it quite clear that the survival of the Commonwealth as we know it today will depend on the extent to which the Commonwealth is able and prepared to adapt itself more effectively to its multiracial character.<sup>6</sup>

Outside the meeting room in Marlborough House, the language was less restrained:

Fascists", Nkrumah said, was "the only word that can aptly describe a government which is planned on the basis of race and colour and which denies the vast majority of the people any say in the government of the country or in the manner in which they should be governed.<sup>7</sup>

Nkrumah went further to say "I regard the present South African Government as an alien government temporarily functioning on African soil"<sup>8</sup>.

Nkrumah had particularly well founded reasons for losing his patience with the South African Government. Following Ghana's independence in March 1957, he had written to the Government offering to establish full diplomatic relations with Pretoria, including the exchange of resident High Commissioners. The South African Government turned down the offer. Undeterred, Nkrumah left the offer on the table. Then in April 1958, he again invited the South African government to the first Conference of Independent African States, which was held in Accra. The South African Government said that it would attend the conference only if the colonial powers in Africa - Britain, France and Portugal were also invited, a condition that would have turned the purpose of the conference on its head. Nkrumah had set out to wean away South Africa from apartheid through a form of constructive engagement and was clearly making no headway.

Nkrumah's overtures - the offer to exchange ambassadors and the invitation to the Accra conference of Independent African States, were rare and historic opportunities

which, taken at the flood, would have begun South Africa's incorporation into the emerging community of independent African states; it would have obviated Pretoria's subsequent isolation and obloquy and opened up a whole continental market for its products and imports. Pretoria could hardly have failed to see the opportunities. Why then were these overtures turned down? The reason was to protect the purity and integrity of the apartheid system. Sir Robert Menzies, then Prime Minister of Australia was among the most sympathetic of Commonwealth leaders towards South Africa and it was to Sir Robert that Dr Verwoerd revealed the reasons for refusing diplomatic relations with the rising non-white developing world.

Diplomatic representatives from non-white countries, Dr Verwoerd explained to Sir Robert, would present practical problems to South Africa because it would mean treating them differently from South Africa's black population and this would not be practical:

If in South Africa all non-whites from outside the country were to be dealt with as White visitors would be, then there would be no justification or possibility for dealing differently with the non-white inhabitants of the country. Due to the latter's numbers this would mean a swamping by non-whites of everything the White man has developed. Full social integration would necessarily follow and the White man would not be able to preserve anything for himself, including political control.<sup>9</sup>

On the specific issue on the diplomatic relations with Ghana, Nkrumah himself was seen as the problem:

“You mention the case of Nkrumah. It must not be forgotten, however, that before there was any talk of representation, he had made it known that Ghana would do everything in its power to aid Black men everywhere in Africa, including South Africa, to take over the reins of government. Apart from all other considerations, it could not be expected that we would receive a mission which could easily become the centre of agitation where those would foregather, White and non-white, who wish to create a multiracial or Bantu government here.”<sup>10</sup>

Finally, consorting with Africa generally carried the risk of Communism:

...nearly all these African States at times play hard and fast with the Communist countries and call themselves uncommitted and neutral in order to play off the Western nations against Russia in order to get the most they can. South Africa with a large and susceptible non-white population must keep such influences and examples as far away as possible. Who can guarantee that Moscow-educated or inspired Black men would not be on such missions.<sup>11</sup>

A splendidly isolated South Africa, keeping at bay independent Africa and practising its own version of scientific racism but enjoying the benefits of Commonwealth fellowship: these were the terms on which South Africa wanted to remain in the Commonwealth as a republic. But if this proved impracticable, the regime would establish the republic outside the Commonwealth. And if it was compelled to take this course it would not be much of a loss anyway as the:

Non-white members would gradually dominate [the Commonwealth] by weight of numbers or due to the fact that the others wished to appease them for whatever reasons. This would prove a threat to South Africa and her White citizens even if she was to remain a monarchy.<sup>12</sup>

The lines were now drawn. The Commonwealth saw apartheid as a threat to its very essence while South Africa saw in its multiracialism a “threat to South Africa and her white citizens”. Some Commonwealth leaders had hoped that by keeping South Africa within the family association it could in time be educated out of its outmoded racial policies. Harold Macmillan, then Prime Minister of Britain was one such person. Others, like Nkrumah even though irreconcilably against apartheid, was nonetheless remained opposed to any move to expel South Africa “because this would mean penalising the majority of [the] inhabitants of South Africa for the misdeeds of its government.”<sup>13</sup> But by the time of the London Meeting of March 1961, any lingering hopes of persuading South Africa by example or exhortation to give up apartheid had all been dispelled and dispelled by the regime itself. From outside the Meeting room, Julius Nyerere, whose country had not yet attained independence but was shortly to do so, warned in an article in the *London Observer*<sup>14</sup> that to keep South Africa in was to keep his country out.

Clearly there was no way South Africa could remain in the new multiracial Commonwealth as a republic. Accordingly on 13 March 1961, Commonwealth leaders issued a special communiqué on South Africa. In brief, it said that there had been a discussion of South Africa’s racial policy and in the light of the views expressed, the Prime Minister of South Africa “had decided to withdraw his application for South Africa’s continuing membership of the Commonwealth as a republic”<sup>15</sup>. In these polite terms, South Africa’s membership of the Commonwealth came to an end.

Canada’s Prime Minister, John Diefenbaker, had thrown his Government’s weight against apartheid South Africa and this was to prove a major force in the Commonwealth’s subsequent campaign to isolate South Africa in the community of nations and to complete the de-legitimisation of the apartheid regime in the wider world. Isolation and increasing lack of legitimacy were in turn to bring about the eventual imposition of sanctions against the regime.

It has been necessary to recapitulate, at some length the background events leading to South Africa’s expulsion from the Commonwealth, partly because it is largely unknown to most people, especially the rising generation; but also by way of explaining why over the ensuing three decades the Commonwealth was to play such a major part in bringing the related issues of Southern Africa to world attention, eventually to the ending of the minority rule, regime in Zimbabwe, the occupation of Namibia and ultimately the ending of apartheid in South Africa itself.



## II

### **Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) in Rhodesia**

In November 1965, and four years after the expulsion of South Africa from the Commonwealth, Ian Smith unilaterally declared Rhodesia independent, clearly aiming to replicate another racist minority regime in the region on the South African pattern. On the face of it, a white minority regime based on a white population of less than half a million people but aiming to corral and control a black population of some five million seemed improbable. Furthermore, no one who understood the world of 1960's, and in particular the trend of events on the African continent at the time would have proceeded to declare UDI let alone to prophesy as Ian Smith did, that it would be "a nine day wonder"<sup>16</sup>. Ian Smith's reputed parochialism might have betrayed him in the timing but the event itself was the culmination of a process of constitutional development in Rhodesia which went back to the beginning of the 1920s.

In the history of British colonial rule in Africa, Rhodesia was conceded a measure of exceptionalism almost unique. Following the end of Company rule, Rhodesia became a self-governing colony with its own Responsible Government and legislature. The head of the executive was styled Prime Minister and both executive and legislature were in theory subordinated to the United Kingdom Parliament. Legal appeals lay to the Privy Council and the Native Affairs Department which was responsible for African affairs was protected from local white interference. In practice, the Westminster Parliament never exercised its right to legislate for Rhodesia nor "did the British Government use its power to issue Orders-in-Council or proclamations."<sup>17</sup> In fact, a convention had evolved under which the British Parliament "never legislated for Southern Rhodesia except by agreement with or at the request of the Southern Rhodesian Government"<sup>18</sup>. Lord Blake, the historian of Rhodesia, sums up the resulting situation as follows: "The existence of this convention was one of several features which made Southern Rhodesia's status far closer to that of a self-governing dominion than even a Crown Colony." Against this background, it was hardly surprising that Southern Rhodesia should have come under the Dominion Office, rather than the Colonial Office. Rhodesia's relations with the British Government were later to be conducted through the Commonwealth Relations Office and the two countries maintained High Commissioners in the respective capitals. Rhodesian Prime Ministers were usually invited to Meetings of Commonwealth Prime Ministers, a practice which had begun in 1932 and was to continue until the eve of UDI. These conventions and practices taken together appeared to make Rhodesia's constitutional status "only just short of that of the fully independent member state of the Commonwealth"<sup>19</sup>. There was only one step to full independence and Rhodesia's white community decided to take that step on their own.

In April 1964 Ian Smith replaced Winston Field as Prime Minister of Rhodesia. Smith brought to office none of the qualities which the situation demanded. He had neither vision, nor imagination nor flexibility. He knew little and cared even less

about what was happening in the wider Africa and in so far as he knows anything at all about Africa it was about white South Africa. According to Lord Blake, white Rhodesia, Ian Smith had “always been an implacable opponent of African claims to equality”<sup>20</sup>. Not surprisingly, he was to boast that he did not expect black majority rule in his lifetime. On 11 November 1965, 19 months after coming into office, he proceeded to declare unilateral independence, presenting the Commonwealth with what was to prove its most serious and protracted crisis of decolonisation.

The seizure of power by the white minority in Rhodesia was what most Commonwealth leaders had feared all along and at the London Meeting of July 1964 they had laid down an agreed course of action in the event of Rhodesia proceeding to independence unilaterally. First, they agreed that as in the case of other British colonies proceeding to independence, “the existence of sufficiently representative institutions would be a condition for the grant of independence to Southern Rhodesia.”<sup>21</sup> They had then agreed not to recognise any unilateral declaration of independence. An Independence Conference would have to be convened to which the leaders of all parties in Southern Rhodesia should be free to attend and the object of such a Conference would be to agree “the steps by which Southern Rhodesia might proceed to independence within the Commonwealth at the earliest practicable time on the basis of majority rule.”<sup>22</sup> In the meantime, to reduce tensions and prepare the way for such a Conference the Meeting appealed for the release of all detained African leaders. The Prime Minister of Britain at the time undertook to “give careful consideration to all views expressed by other Commonwealth Prime Ministers” but pointing out at the same time that while it was for the British Parliament to decide on independence “the Government of Southern Rhodesia was constitutionally responsible for the internal affairs for that territory.”<sup>23</sup> This doctrine of an internally self-governing Rhodesia was to hobble Commonwealth efforts to resolve the issue in years to come.

Four and a half month before UDI, another Commonwealth Meeting had been convened in June 1965. This Meeting was told by the British Government that central to its proposals for a settlement in Rhodesia was the principle of “unimpeded progress to majority rule”; an immediate improvement in the political status of the African population and the elimination of racial discrimination. These were three of the Five Principles which were to form the British Government’s proposals for a settlement. The call for a constitutional conference to agree the steps leading to independence; the need for the release of African leaders in detention or restriction were all restated. If the Rhodesian government refused to attend the envisaged constitutional Conference, the Meeting decided that the British Government should in those circumstances introduce legislation, suspending the 1961 constitution and appointing an interim government to prepare the way for free elections. The British Government declared itself ready to promote a Conference to ensure Rhodesia’s progress to independence on a basis acceptable to the people of the territory as a whole if its discussion with the Rhodesian Government were not tending satisfactorily in that direction.

## **UDI and Commonwealth Response**

While the British Government and the Commonwealth were working towards an acceptable constitutional settlement, Ian Smith proceeded to declare UDI on 11 November 1965. In response an emergency Meeting of Commonwealth leaders was held in Lagos, Nigeria, in January 1966 at the invitation of the Government of Nigeria. It was the first meeting called to deal with a single political issue and was devoted entirely to Rhodesia.

“Rebellion” was how Commonwealth leaders described UDI and ending it was the Meeting’s priority objective. The UN Security Council had taken the lead by imposing sanctions on the illegal regime in November 1965; and, following that lead, the Meeting urged all Commonwealth Governments to adopt the Security Council measures. The use of force was discussed at some length and it was decided that it could not be precluded if that proved necessary to restore law and order in Rhodesia. Also, Harold Wilson’s statement to the Meeting that “on the expert advice available to him the cumulative effects of the economic and financial sanctions might well bring the rebellion to an end within a matter of weeks rather than months”<sup>24</sup> would have made any serious consideration of the use of force seem rather premature.

The other component element of the package of measures agreed in Lagos was the mobilisation of Commonwealth and wider international assistance to Zambia, whose economy stood the greatest risk of disruption by the Rhodesian crisis. Finally the Meeting decided by way of assistance to a future lawfully constituted Government in Rhodesia to establish a special Commonwealth programme to help accelerate the training of Rhodesian Africans, including the early establishment of an administrative training centre in Rhodesia.

Two continuing committees were set up at Lagos. The first was the Sanctions Committee with a remit to review regularly the effect of sanctions as well as the special needs which might arise in the context of the declared commitment to come to the assistance of Zambia. All Commonwealth Governments were to be represented on this Committee which was to meet periodically in London with the Secretary General. The Sanctions Committee was also mandated to recommend a meeting of Commonwealth leaders if it considered such a step necessary on the Rhodesian question and related issues. The second committee was to co-ordinate the special programme of assistance in training Rhodesian Africans. The meeting ended by placing the Rhodesian issue in its worldwide context, expressing “the hope that a just solution to the Rhodesian question would light a ray of hope for men and women of all races throughout the world for a future giving assurance of greater harmony between nations and recognition to the dignity of man.”

The Lagos meeting was well attended but there were two important absentees; Nyerere and Nkrumah. Both boycotted the meeting for broadly the same reasons. If the Rhodesian situation was a rebellion as all Commonwealth Governments were agreed, then they believed that it ought to be treated in the same way that Britain

had treated other rebellions at different times in its colonial empire. Secondly the two leaders had serious doubts about sanctions biting with rapidity and bringing down the rebel regime “in a matter of weeks rather than months” as Harold Wilson had said. Both Nkrumah and Nyerere intended to take matters further.

On 3 December 1966, Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) met in Addis Ababa and passed a resolution calling on African countries to break relations and “links” with Britain if by 15 December the British Government had not ended the Rhodesian rebellion. On the basis of the OAU ministerial decision, Ghana and Tanzania proceeded to break off diplomatic relations with Britain when the deadline expired. It marked a fundamental difference of approach within the Commonwealth to the Rhodesian issue.

In September 1966, there was another Commonwealth Meeting in London at which the Rhodesian issue again took centre stage. At that meeting the British Government outlined the steps it envisaged to lead to majority rule in Rhodesia. After the end of the illegal regime, an interim legal Government would be appointed with which the British Government would negotiate a settlement on the basis of the Five Principles plus a new principle providing against the majority oppressing the minority and the minority oppressing the majority. The constitution negotiated with the interim government would then be submitted to the people of Rhodesia for approval. In all this the British Parliament would need to be satisfied that this test of acceptability was both “fair and free and would be acceptable to the general world community.” The British Government would not grant independence before majority rule unless the people of Rhodesia as a whole were shown to be in favour of it.<sup>25</sup>

The substance of the British Government’s statement was uncontroversial; in fact, it could even be said to be common ground among Commonwealth Governments. What continued to divide them was the issue of sanctions. The Meeting had before it the report of the Sanctions Committee established at the earlier Lagos Meeting and that report made it clear that at their present level, sanctions were unlikely “to achieve the desired political objectives within an acceptable period of time”. In the light of the Committee’s report, “most [Commonwealth leaders] were convinced that mandatory sanctions of a general and comprehensive character should be applied under Chapter VII, Articles 41 and 42 of the United Nations Charter and should cover both exports and imports.” Others favoured sanctions on selected commodities important to the economy of Rhodesia. On Rhodesia therefore, the discussions of the Meeting ended once more agreeing on objectives but differing on means. On assistance to Zambia which had also been agreed at Lagos, the Meeting again “agree unanimously that assistance should be given to Zambia to produce a more complete cut-off of trade with Rhodesia and to assist her to withstand any serious effect on her economy resulting there from.”<sup>26</sup>

There was another Southern African issue on which differences of approach surfaced at the Meeting. This was South West Africa (Namibia). The question of South Africa’s continued occupation of the territory had come before the International Court of

Justice; but the Court had not pronounced on the merits of the case. Nevertheless, most Commonwealth leaders thought it necessary that the United Nations should now revoke the mandate over the territory and take over responsibility for its administration until such time as it achieved independence<sup>27</sup>. This was the first time since the expulsion of South Africa that the collective Commonwealth was showing concerned interest in the future of Namibia. That interest would become more sustained from 1975 onwards.

### **Continuing Impasse over Rhodesia**

The next Commonwealth Summit did not take place until 1969, when once more Rhodesia dominated the discussions. For the first time Commonwealth leaders considered it necessary to spell out in their concluding statement “the several reasons why Rhodesia was so important in Commonwealth consultations”. There was the fact that the legal authority and the government with responsibility for working out the terms on which Rhodesia would be brought to independence was a member country of the Commonwealth - Britain. Then the efforts of neighbouring Commonwealth countries to establish non-racial societies and prosperous economies were jeopardised by the growing threat of race conflicts within the region. But:

The overriding reason was that problems such as this involved principles of racial justice and equality and the right of all peoples to self-determination which are embodied in the United Nations Charter and in the Declaration of Human Rights. These matters went to the heart of the Commonwealth relationship and were therefore of deep concern to all Commonwealth members.<sup>28</sup>

This need to spell out what was obvious to all Commonwealth governments has to be read in the context of a number of developments which had preceded the Meeting. In November 1968, the British Government resumed talks with the Smith regime on the basis of the five principles but failed to reach agreement. In a statement of 18 November to the House of Commons, George Thomson, the British Minister who had been negotiating in Rhodesia with Ian Smith and his colleagues said that the points of objection raised by the Rhodesian regime indicated “that the regime are not at this stage ready to commit themselves to the necessity of accepting majority rule except in an impossible, remote and indefinite future.”<sup>29</sup> This stand by the Rhodesians was confirmed by Ian Smith’s subsequent speeches in May 1969 which displayed, according to official British sources, “an hostility to majority rule at any time.”<sup>30</sup> Nevertheless the British Government decided to leave its proposals “on the table for consideration, for discussion and [...] for acceptance when reflection in Rhodesia has brought wiser council”.

The constitutional proposals drawn up on HMS Fearless were unacceptable as the basis of a constitutional settlement to most Commonwealth governments on a number of grounds; but particularly unacceptable was the prospect of transferring sovereignty to a racial minority through an agreement reached with that minority.

With the precedent of South Africa in 1910 a living memory, Commonwealth leaders were insisting on the NIBMR (no independence before majority rule) formula.

Then within Rhodesia itself the white electorate had endorsed proposals for a republican form of government to come into effect early in 1970. Clearly the regime appeared to be consolidating its illegal independence. The selected sanctions in force appeared to be no more than pin pricks applied, in the words of Arnold Smith, “like a course of inoculations”<sup>31</sup> In the circumstances “some” Head of Government renewed the call on Britain to use force against the rebel regime, with the British government responding that the use of force would be “wrong and impracticable”<sup>32</sup>. It was not clear from the British statement whether it was the “wrongness” of the use of force or its “impracticability” that precluded this course of action. To the related call for Britain to withdraw the Fearless Proposals, the Prime Minister said that he could not withdraw them as it would be right to give the people of Rhodesia as a whole an opportunity to decide for themselves whether or not they accepted a settlement on the basis of the Six Principles. In that event, he would consult his Commonwealth colleagues about NIBMR commitments. He went further: a settlement based on the Six Principles “would not be possible if it were shown that there could be no genuine test of its acceptability in present circumstances in Rhodesia.”<sup>33</sup>

From the Report of the Sanctions Committee, Heads of Government could only agree that mandatory sanctions were having “some effect”. This was not what they had been lead to expect, and it was now clear that on the Rhodesian Issue, the Commonwealth was in for a long haul, not a speedy end to the rebellion.

### **The Pearce Commission**

The test of acceptability of any settlement proposals by the British Government which had featured so prominently in the discussion of the 1969 Meeting was to be resolved by the incoming Conservative Government in Britain. In June 1970 Edward Heath led the Conservative Party to victory in the general election and his initial pronouncements on the Rhodesian issue were far from reassuring to most Commonwealth Governments. He committed his Government “to seek a just and sensible solution to the Rhodesian problem in accordance with the Five Principles.”<sup>34</sup> The case for the settlement he sought rested on two considerations. The new British Government argued that while sanctions and international ostracism were “having some effect on the economic situation in Rhodesia these measures had not brought about, nor seemed likely to bring about, the political changes that were confidently expected at the outset.”<sup>35</sup> The statement went on:

Moreover, it was evident that the prospects for the African population as a whole could only deteriorate if the present situation remains unchanged. The economic, social and political advance of the Africans could take place only after a return to economic normality and the restoration of conditions in which orderly change would be possible.<sup>36</sup>

In other words the Conservative Government was endeavouring to reach a settlement on the same basis on which the Labour Government had striven unsuccessfully to reach agreement. What caused some alarm in Commonwealth circles was what Edward Heath told Secretary-General Arnold Smith in September 1970. According to Arnold Smith, Edward Heath said that: "His Conservatives had never said they accepted NIBMAR or mandatory sanctions and he did not expect a Commonwealth Meeting to discuss these matters of British policy, anymore than he would question the Tanzanians about the Chinese presence in their country."<sup>37</sup> If Edward Heath's "just and sensible solution" rejected NIMBR, then he was clearly headed for a conflict with the majority of Commonwealth Governments which strongly supported NIBMAR as the only effective guarantee against a repetition of the South African settlement. The issue which actually did bring Edward Heath into conflict with other Commonwealth leaders was the British Government's declared intention to resume the sale of arms to South Africa.

Early in July 1970, Edward Heath had written to Commonwealth Governments on the issue of the Simonstown Agreement with South Africa which went back to 1953 and in which Britain has undertaken to supply anti-submarine frigates to South Africa and to co-operate with the South Africans in the defence of the sea route around the Cape. The British Government alleged continuing massive Soviet military build-up in the Mediterranean and elsewhere to the east. In Commonwealth Africa and indeed in most of the developing Commonwealth not committed to military blocs, the prospect of arming South Africa raised deep concerns. The British Government argued that the arms it envisaged selling were for external defence only and would have no role in strengthening apartheid internally. This reasoning appeared curious; for, how South Africa could be strengthened externally without thereby making apartheid more secure internally. If it was a partnership to protect British interests, then, as President Obote told the Britain had "engaged the wrong policeman"<sup>38</sup>. A major Commonwealth crisis threatened and was only diffused at the Singapore Heads of Government Meeting in January 1971. The Declaration of Commonwealth Principles which that Meeting issued - the first of its kind - described "racial prejudice" as a dangerous sickness threatening the healthy development of the human race and racial discrimination as an unmitigated evil of society"<sup>39</sup>. The closed door discussion and the Declarations had gone a considerable way to relax the tensions that the projected arms sale to South Africa had generated. What the Singapore Declaration did was to recall Commonwealth leaders to the common values that united them beyond the difficulties and differences of the moment. Other subsequent declarations were to expand various aspects of the Singapore documents.

### III

With the crisis over the proposed sale of arms to South Africa averted, the British Government again turned its attention to the Rhodesian issue. The Government had negotiated a set of "proposals" with the Smith regime to serve as the basis of a

settlement if they were shown to be acceptable to the people of Rhodesia as a whole. But the so-called proposals were no more than amendments to the rebel regime's own constitution of 1969. Furthermore, not only had the African majority taken no part in drawing them up, they addressed none of the issues at the heart of the Rhodesian crisis. They made no reference to a date for the introduction of majority rule neither did they address the issue of racial discrimination in any meaningful sense. But despite stiff opposition from the regime, the British Government did insist on the acceptability of the proposals to the African majority as a precondition for their implementation. And to carry out the test of acceptability, the Government appointed a Commission under the Chairmanship of Lord Pearce, a High Court judge. The Commission was "to ascertain by direct contact with all sections of the population whether the people of Rhodesia as a whole regard these proposals as acceptable as a basis for independence"<sup>40</sup>. The Commission arrived in Rhodesia on 17 January 1972. Not having had a hand in drawing up the so-called proposals, the clause on acceptability was seen by the African majority as their way out of the situation and seized it with both hands. An umbrella organisation, the African National Council (ANC), was formed in December 1971 under the leadership of Bishop Abel Muzorewa. It was not a coalition of political parties but "a spontaneous grass root reaction" to the settlement proposals; and the ANC found the proposals unacceptable. In the first place the proposals had been negotiated with the Rhodesian authorities and arrived at without any consultation what so ever with the African majority. That majority had always regarded the regime as one characterised by "lawlessness" from its inception of and the Republican constitution of 1969 was the high water mark of this lawlessness. The ANC could not therefore "accept a settlement whose result, directly or indirectly, is the legalisation of UDI and the Republican Constitution"<sup>41</sup>. Secondly, the content of the proposals did not amount to "any significant amendment of the 1969 constitution". Finally, "this is the first and last chance for the African people to pass a verdict on white minority rule. Our rejection of these proposals is unanimous"<sup>42</sup>.

In May 1972 after three and a half months in Rhodesia, consulting all shades of opinion, the Pearce Commission reported its findings and conclusions to the British Government in the following terms:

We are satisfied on our evidence that the proposals are acceptable to the great majority of Europeans. We are equally satisfied after considering all our evidence including that on intimidation, that the majority of Africans rejected the proposals. In our opinion the people of Rhodesia as a whole do not regard the proposals as acceptable as a basis for independence.<sup>43</sup>

The Pearce Commission had clarified the issue and the African majority had demonstrated incontestably its opposition to UDI, however repackaged. And in the wake of the Pearce Commission, the British Government withdrew its settlement proposals and declared that "it would not countenance any settlement without the support of the African majority"<sup>44</sup>. The Government was also now prepared to convene a constitutional conference providing there were "certain conditions" to



make such a conference effective. These conditions would be created by the Africans themselves.

Of course the Commonwealth had no part to play either in the formulation of the proposals or in the work of the Commission, but it had maintained a vigilant interest in the evolution and development of the initiative and its outcome was to strengthen enormously the hand of the Commonwealth in insisting on majority rule before the transfer of power. At about this time too, the armed struggle Zimbabwe had started in earnest. In December 1972, there was a significant escalation of the war in the north east of the country, taking in white farming areas. This came on top of a slump in white immigration into Rhodesia and a declining tourist industry, the third largest foreign exchange earner.<sup>45</sup> In 1973 the guerrilla fighters opened a second front from Zambia. In March of the same year leaders of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) signed an agreement in Lusaka providing for the establishment of a joint military command within two months<sup>46</sup>.

Then came dramatic developments which marked the beginning of the transformation of the situation in the region. In April 1974 the Portuguese Government fell in a military coup leading to the independence of Angola and Mozambique the following year. In his report to Commonwealth Heads of Government, Arnold Smith likened the effects of the Portuguese coup in Southern Africa to those of an earthquake<sup>47</sup>. The prospects for a settlement in Rhodesia now looked brighter ever before and it was for Commonwealth diplomacy to make the most of the opportunities thrown up by these seismic changes in the region.

In the “encampment of white-ruled Southern Africa”, to borrow a phrase from Ruth First<sup>48</sup>, Portuguese Mozambique played a critical role in sustaining the UDI regime in Rhodesia second only to apartheid South Africa. Mozambique’s transport facilities, including the ports of Beira and Maputo, provided the most cost-effective means for Rhodesia’s imports and exports, thereby helping the regime to evade sanctions with relative ease. Accordingly the first care of the Commonwealth Secretary-General in the altered strategic situation was to ensure that Mozambique would impose a blockade in accordance with Commonwealth and United Nations policy. Arnold Smith raised the issue with Samora Machel and his senior colleagues in July 1974 and received a conditional answer. Machel pointed to Mozambique’s dependence on Rhodesia for food imports and on Rhodesian transit payments for the use of the country’s transport facilities. Mozambique also needed “technical assistance, and significant capital assistance, to replace earnings from Rhodesian transit payments.”<sup>49</sup> Subject to these conditions, “he would do all he could to help”<sup>50</sup>. The Commonwealth Sanctions Committee had met earlier in May 1974 and had also emphasised the centrality of Mozambique in the context of the intensification of sanctions “if Mr Ian Smith proved intractable”<sup>51</sup>. This was the background against which Commonwealth leaders met at Kingston, Jamaica, in May 1975.

The discussion on the issues of Southern Africa at Kingston was positive and characterised by a degree of unanimity which had not been apparent for some time at earlier Meetings. Heads of Government agreed that the imminent independence of Angola and Mozambique “had radically altered the balance of forces in the area”<sup>52</sup>; they paid tribute to the liberation movement and reaffirmed “total support for the struggle of the people of Zimbabwe for independence on the basis of majority rule”<sup>53</sup>. The preferred route to a settlement remained that of peaceful negotiations but they recognised “the inevitability of intensified armed struggle should peaceful avenues be blocked” by the illegal regime<sup>54</sup>. In that event, the moral responsibilities [...] would lie with the minority government and those who had chosen to sustain it. On the question of assistance to Mozambique to enable its new Government to apply sanctions, Commonwealth leaders said that they would not only take immediate practical steps to assist an independent Mozambique to apply sanctions, they were also “unanimously in favour of providing immediate financial assistance to the new government of Mozambique”, in addition to endorsing a recommendation for a Commonwealth initiative at the United Nations to establish a programme for Mozambique, under the terms of the Charter.<sup>55</sup>

In another important sense, Kingston marked a departure. At the invitation of Commonwealth leaders, Bishop Muzorewa and Sam Nujoma, the leader of Namibian resistance movement, SWAPO, addressed the Meeting which sat informally for that purpose. It was on that occasion that Commonwealth leaders said they “looked forward to the time when the Government and people of Namibia might be welcomed into the Commonwealth if that were their wish”<sup>56</sup>. It was also agreed at Kingston that Commonwealth multilateral assistance should be made available to help in the developmental and training needs of the people of Namibia. Finally, the meeting elected Shridath Ramphal of Guyana Commonwealth Secretary-General in succession to Arnold Smith. Under Ramphal’s Secretary-Generalship the Commonwealth entered what was probably its most difficult and testing time in the struggle against racist minority rule in Southern Africa.

Meanwhile, the collapse of Portuguese power in Angola and Mozambique and the escalation and intensification of the armed struggle in Rhodesia brought the United States into the Southern African situation in the person of Dr Henry Kissinger. Dr Kissinger arrived in April 1976 with a package of proposals which envisaged “a rapid, just and African solution to the issue of Rhodesia”<sup>57</sup>, including a two year transition period leading to majority rule. The US proposals formed the basis of the Geneva talks involving all the Rhodesian parties. The talks lasted from October to December and were chaired by Ivor Richards, then Britain’s Permanent Representative at the United Nations. The talks broke down without agreement on what was the most important item of its agenda, the formation of an interim government. Throughout the duration of the talks the Commonwealth Secretariat maintained a team of six legal experts to support each of the African delegations in addition to a senior Secretariat official with supporting staff<sup>58</sup>.

Following the breakdown of the Geneva talks and in a bid to outflank Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo, the two leaders with guerrilla armies, Ian Smith suggested an “internal settlement” based on political forces within the country. This appealed to those leaders who had no guerrilla armies and who therefore saw opportunities in the Smith proposal. Accordingly, in March 1978, an internal settlement was signed and a Transitional Government was established headed by an Executive Council in which Ian Smith was joined by Bishop Muzorewa, Ndabaningi Sithole and Chief Jeremiah Chirau. On the strength of this so-called settlement, Ian Smith and his black collaborators began to call for the lifting of sanctions and the recognition of the transitional government. This call was subsequently taken up and amplified in the wider world by the long standing supporters of UDI especially in Britain and North America.

The so called constitution drawn up to underpin the Transitional Government met none of the criteria of what had now become the internationally agreed basis for a settlement in Rhodesia. The Legal Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat produced an analysis of this constitution and concluded that it stood “revealed as a carefully contrived subterfuge for sustaining a wholly antidemocratic regime”.<sup>59</sup> But it was left to Secretary General Ramphal to point out that in no sense had the internal settlement settled anything that mattered.

the ‘internal settlement’ constitution and all that flows from it [...] are a variation on the same theme; they promise neither majority rule in the real meaning of the term, nor any diminution of the armed struggle. It is not merely a matter of questionable elections; but that neither the principle nor the intention of majority rule - or even of unimpeded progress towards it - finds reflection in the arrangement pertaining to them.<sup>60</sup>

Within the Commonwealth there were no illusions about the so called internal settlement bringing the war to an end. It was seen as no more than “a tactic for buying time and preserving the reality of minority rule within a new façade.”<sup>61</sup> But while the regime of Ian Smith might still be there through contrivance, it was now “tenaciously clinging to an illegal power that daily grows less credible and constantly shifting footholds as an inevitable end draws nearer.”<sup>62</sup> The internal settlement was to be Ian Smith’s last foothold.

In June 1977 when Heads of Government met in London, their assessment was that the independence of Angola and Mozambique “had great strengthened the cause of liberation throughout the entire region”.<sup>63</sup> In March 1976, newly independent Mozambique had closed its border with Rhodesia. Under growing international ostracism apartheid South Africa had resorted to furtive diplomacy and the suborning of sportsmen through financial inducements in order to break out of its isolation. Yet the big picture remained one of continuing crisis. Indeed, as Heads of Government themselves put it, “events had moved into a phase of acute crisis”<sup>64</sup> The rebel regime in Rhodesia, in its increasing desperation, had taken to violating the territorial integrity of its neighbours, including attacking and occupying territory. South Africa continued to support Ian Smith with economic assistance, the provision of military equipment

and the supply of petroleum and petroleum products which enabled Rhodesia to keep its war machine in fighting order. Within South Africa itself, there had been the Soweto uprising the previous year, resulting in another massacre and the exodus of thousands of young people to neighbouring countries. Commonwealth leaders agreed that these developments warranted “the most effective action” to ensure the speedy liberation of the oppressed peoples of Southern Africa”<sup>65</sup>.

To give effect to the conclusions of the Meeting a number of decisions were taken, beginning with Zimbabwe. Once more, the Meeting agreed that the independence of Zimbabwe had to be achieved on the basis of majority rule, and called for maximum pressure on the Smith regime, including the armed struggle.”<sup>66</sup> The removal of the Smith regime would also have to be part of any genuine settlement. On the durability of that regime, the Commonwealth Sanctions Committee had reported that massive evasions of sanctions continued to take place which enabled the Rhodesian economy to survive and in some sectors to expand. The breach of sanctions was a “crucial factor in the survival of the illegal regime”<sup>67</sup>. The Meeting requested the Sanctions Committee to undertake an urgent study on the evasion of sanctions by the regime and to make recommendations on necessary action. The other study mandated by the London Meeting was on the economic cost to the Front-Line States resulting from the various practical measures each of them had taken to support the liberation struggle. The object of such a study was to assist in the mobilisation of international support for the Front-Line States. The third major initiative to come out of the Meeting was the Gleneagles Agreement on Apartheid in Sport.

The Commonwealth study on the busting of sanctions by Rhodesia coincided with a decision by the British Government to appoint Mr T. H. Bingham QC to conduct an investigation to establish the facts concerning the operations whereby supplies of petroleum and petroleum products had been reaching Rhodesia since 17 December 1965<sup>68</sup>. It was therefore decided that to proceed with a parallel Commonwealth investigation of a similar nature would merely duplicate the British effort. The findings of the Bingham report would serve the same purpose.

Bingham revealed that through “swap” arrangements and other devious ways Rhodesia was able to receive more than half of its oil need either through Mozambique or direct from South Africa. Two British companies, British Petroleum (BP) and Shell Oil, were major players in helping Rhodesia to evade sanctions. The report said that:

At the time of UDI total consumption of all petroleum products in Rhodesia was running at an annual rate of about 410,000 tonnes. The total fell after UDI but was restored to the old level by about 1969 and thereafter increased until it now [1978] stands at about 800,000.<sup>69</sup>

A legitimate inference from the findings of the Bingham report suggested that successive British Governments had condoned infringements of sanctions against Rhodesia over a ten year-period by BP and Shell Oil<sup>70</sup>. In the light of Bingham’s revelations the Commonwealth Sanctions Committee decided that if South Africa failed to provide guarantees that it would prevent the export of oil and petroleum

products to Rhodesia, Commonwealth Governments should approach the Security Council with a request for oil sanctions against South Africa itself 71. What made this recommendation particularly significant was that “it signalled the first collective move by Commonwealth Governments towards international sanctions against South Africa.”72

The study on the burden of the liberation struggle on the Front-Line States was the first audit of its kind and it showed that already the cost of supporting the liberation struggle in Southern Africa was putting the economies of the Front-Line States under enormous strain. First there were those investments which they were forced to make “prematurely or on a scale which would not have been necessary if conditions had been normal”73. These included new hydro-electric sources in Zambia, a thermal power station in Botswana and the construction of new transport links. Then, there were the extra costs incurred in diversifying trade away from Rhodesia and South Africa. Imports from “these cheapest sources of supply have had to be replaced by higher costs imports”74. The uncertainty inherent in the regional situation played havoc with economic planning generally.

“Do they take the risk of making large investments now only to find them useless in twelve months’ time or do they postpone the investment decision only to find that the struggle is long drawn out and that their economy is seriously affected by the absence of the investment?”75

Certain natural resources could only be developed, managed and exploited effectively on a regional basis. Irrigation, flood control and power generation necessitated a regional approach to the use of the rivers which flow through both Front-Line States and those territories where unacceptable regimes persisted. Finally, private investment, both domestic and foreign would be reluctant to invest where there was the prospect of escalating violence and instability76. The responses to these and other challenges varied from Front-Line State to Front-Line State depending on location and special circumstances.

**Tanzania** had already led the way. Following UDI in Rhodesia, Zambia had to find alternative transport for its exports and imports. Tanzania contributed half the US\$500m required to build the Tan-Zam railway; a third of the US\$36m to lay the oil pipeline from Zambia to the Port of Dare es Salaam. These expenses were in addition to the cost of upgrading the highway linking the two countries - the “Hell Run”77. Tanzania was also the base of Frelimo guerrilla fighters as well as a major source of refuge for Mozambicans fleeing from the war. By 1977 therefore Tanzania was already bearing “a significant burden” as a result of the armed struggle and the reprisals from the racist minority regimes78.

**Zambia’s** economy, already “disastrously effected by the fall in the price of copper”, had for over ten years, faced major dislocations and additional costs resulting from its principled refusal to collaborate with the illegal regime in Rhodesia.” The escalation of the conflict in Rhodesia had by 1977 imposed “additional burdens [...] that endangered both its international financial and [its] budgetary viability.”79

**Botswana** risked “being swamped by the spill over of the struggle in Zimbabwe”. The creation of the Botswana Defence Force, necessitated by the Rhodesian crisis and the deteriorating situation in South Africa and the need to maintain essential transport facilities had “imposed financial and human burdens out of all proportion to what this tiny economy could support, even if it did not face other economic difficulties.”<sup>80</sup>

**Mozambique**, fresh from its own war of liberation, had “reconstruction requirements which would have been daunting even in a situation of external tranquilly”. As it was, the lost earnings arising from the imposition of sanctions against Rhodesia and the consequences of the numerous acts of aggression by the rebel regime’s armed forces had made it “extremely difficult to deal with the major task of reconstruction”. The study concluded that “in the case of Zambia, Botswana and Mozambique the outcome of the Rhodesian problem could arguably affect their very survival”.<sup>81</sup>

The last major initiative from the 1977 summit was on apartheid in sport. South Africa’s isolation which began with its expulsion from the Commonwealth in 1961 had by the mid 1970s become a real problem for the apartheid regime. This was particularly so in international sport, which mattered in a special way to South Africa. Not only was the country one of the most sports-minded in the world in its increasing international isolation it needed sporting contacts with the world for a further political reason. As Donald Woods, himself an eminent South African journalist was to put it, “the image of a peaceful crowd watching a cricket Test suggests wider stabilities and gentleness and it demonstrates international acceptability.”<sup>82</sup> If these contacts could no longer be fostered in the old way, the regime would go out of its way to encourage so-called “rebel” tours through buying sports men. To prevent Pretoria from breaking out of isolation through sport Heads of Government issued the Commonwealth Statement on Apartheid in Sport which came to be popularly known as the Gleneagles Agreement of 1977. The operative paragraph of the Agreement committed all Commonwealth governments:

vigorously to combat the evil of apartheid by withholding any form of support for, and by taking every practical step to discourage contact or competition by, their nationals with sporting organisations, teams or sportsmen from South Africa or from any other country where sports are organised on the basis of race, colour or ethnic origin.<sup>83</sup>

The “harmonious development of Commonwealth sport” necessitated the effective fulfilment of these commitments and success in this matter might enable the peoples and governments of the Commonwealth “to give a lead to the world.”<sup>84</sup> In the succeeding years the Gleneagles Agreement became the inspiration and the banner for international campaigns against sporting contact with South Africa, with considerable success.

## IV

If the independence of Angola and Mozambique had greatly strengthened the cause of liberation in Southern Africa, it had also in the process thrown into even sharper relief what remained to be done; and the unfinished business of liberation consisted essentially of bringing colonial freedom to Rhodesia and Namibia and ending apartheid in South Africa itself. In his report of 1977 to Commonwealth Heads of Government, the Secretary-General had said that the illegal regime in Rhodesia had now come to a “perilous pass”<sup>85</sup>. By the following year, the position of the regime had become even more perilous. As an effective government, the internal settlement regime hardly got off the ground. It had no internal cohesion and dissensions within its constituent parties marked every step of its unsteady progress. Effective power remained in white hands, to the frustration and embarrassment of the regimes black collaborators. But more important the internal settlement regime had proved to be incapable of ending the war.

Towards the end of August 1978, it was estimated that one in every six Africans had been displaced by the war. More than half a million had been uprooted from their homes and were living behind barbed wire in 270 protected villages. An even larger number, estimated at about 750,000 had left their villages to seek sanctuary in shanty towns on the outskirts of the cities especially Bulawayo and Salisbury (Harare) whose populations had in the result doubled. A further 228,000 “or about the same number as the white community as a whole” were refugees in neighbouring countries. The regime had practically lost control of the rural areas where people no longer paid taxes, the councils no longer functioned and where the writ of government did not run.<sup>86</sup> This was the situation inside Rhodesia when Commonwealth leaders met at Lusaka at the beginning of August 1979. The Meeting turned out to be the turning point in the Commonwealth’s handling of the Rhodesian issue.

The Lusaka Accord agreed at the Meeting laid down the basis of a settlement and the steps to take Rhodesia to legal independence as Zimbabwe. In the main points of the document, Heads of Government:

- confirmed that they were wholly committed to genuine black majority rule for the people of Zimbabwe;
- fully accepted that it was the constitutional responsibility of the British Government to grant legal independence to Zimbabwe on the basis of majority rule;
- recognised that the search for a lasting settlement had to involve all parties to the conflict;
- accepted that independence on the basis of majority rule required the adopting of a democratic constitution, including appropriate safeguards for minorities;
- acknowledged that the government formed under such an independence constitution had to be chosen through free and fair elections properly supervised under British Government authority and with Commonwealth observers;

- welcomed the British Government's indication that an appropriate procedure for advancing towards these objectives would be for them to call a constitutional conference to which all the parties would be invited; and
- consequently accepted that it had to be a major objective to bring about a cessation of hostilities and an end to sanctions as part of the process of implementation of a lasting settlement.<sup>87</sup>

Clearly the outcome of the Meeting was a success but it was not without its tensions and disagreements. Early in the life of Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Government, she had given clear indications of wanting to recognise the internal settlement regime of Ian Smith and Bishop Muzorewa and had only been held back by wiser counsel. She had then gone to Lusaka determined to stand immovably on the constitutional position that it was the only the British Government that had the responsibility to bring Rhodesia to independence. She tended to see the Commonwealth's collective efforts as no more than interference which she was determined to resist. Other difficulties were to arise later.

In the composition of the Observer Group to the elections, the expressed preference of the British Government was for individual national teams representing individual Commonwealth Governments, not a collective Commonwealth Group. This would have meant eliminating at a stroke all those Commonwealth Governments that might not have been in a position to separate national teams. But more important, it would have detracted from a collective Commonwealth presence representing the collective Commonwealth and speaking with one voice. This was substantially Secretary-General Ramphal's position and it was what prevailed. But in spite of these differences what mattered in the end was that at Lusaka the Commonwealth had finally emerged with an agreement to end what was probably the world longest running constitutional crisis.

### **Lancaster House Conference**

On 10 September 1979 the British Government convened the Constitutional Conference provided for in the Lusaka Accord at Lancaster House, the venue of many previous constitutional conferences taking colonial territories to independence. It was attended by the representatives of all the Rhodesian parties, grouped into two delegations: the Patriotic Front of Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo and the Muzorewa-Smith alliance. The Conference opened and proceeded to the end on 21 December without a ceasefire. In fact in many parts of the country the fighting had intensified. Martial Law, proclaimed by the illegal regime, remained in force. Between the various Rhodesian parties attending, there was a degree of mutual suspicion and mistrust verging on loathing. The British Government saw the conference as yet another decolonisation exercise in a series going back many years and in which Britain had no lack of experience.<sup>88</sup> The Patriotic Front on the other hand saw it



first and foremost as a peace conference to end the war and only secondarily as a constitutional conference.

And although the Lusaka Accord had been the result of a collective Commonwealth effort the British Government excluded the Commonwealth from the Lancaster House proceedings.<sup>89</sup> The Government knew only too well that the Commonwealth would have an important role in making any agreement that came out of the negotiations acceptable not only within the Commonwealth but in Africa and the wider world. Yet it insisted on an exclusive role in the management of the conference and not even an observer status was conceded to either the collective Commonwealth or its Secretary-General. All the same the Commonwealth and especially the Secretary General were to play a facilitating role without which the conference might have collapsed at certain critical stages. Secretary General Ramphal took the view that the Commonwealth had a duty to hold the ring and to prevent walk-outs. Every week and for the duration of the conference, Commonwealth High Commissioners met at Marlborough House to be briefed by officials of the British Government close to the negotiations and representatives of the Patriotic Front on the progress of the talks. These meetings were unofficial in nature but they enabled Commonwealth Governments to be informed of progress and to ensure that the negotiations were conducted in accordance with the spirit of the Lusaka Accord. The Governments of the Front-Line States maintained special representatives in London to be their eyes and ears at Lancaster House. The Secretary-General kept in close contact with these special envoys, representing as they did, the governments with the most influence and leverage with the Patriotic Front leaders. When necessary the Secretary-General contacted the leaders of the Frontline States directly as happened in the crisis over the land issue.

The proposals put forward by the British Government contained a clause which said that when land was acquired to promote the public benefit or for purposes of resettlement, its acquisition would be lawful only on condition that the law provided for the prompt payment of adequate compensation and where the acquisition was contested, a court order had first have to be obtained.<sup>90</sup> The Patriotic Front found this constitutional proposal particularly objectionable. They argued that when the white settlers seized the land, they had paid no compensation to the original owners, many of whom were still alive and who had in fact sent their sons and grandsons to the war to reclaim the land taken away from them by force of arms. In the view of the Patriotic Front, the land issue was at the heart of the war and a settlement which did not return the land to its original, rightful owners, would make no sense to the people of Zimbabwe. The prompt compensation which the draft constitutional proposal demanded would also precipitate the incoming government into debt before it had had a chance of settling in. In any case where would the money for these compensations come from? In the end it took the intervention of the leaders of the Frontline States and the Secretary General to diffuse the crisis. President Nyerere pointed out that the land issue, although clearly important was not a constitutional matter; it was a policy

matter which could and should be resolved after independence. President Nyerere's intervention, took the steam out of the crisis. The other major intervention which reassured the Patriotic Front leaders on the land issue was an initiative involving the United States Administration and some European Union Governments which pledged contributions to a fund to pay for land needed for resettlement of the landless. Secretary Ramphal was the moving spirit behind this particular initiative.

There were other reissues of friction which threatened the conference. One of these stemmed from differences over the ceasefire arrangements involving the encampment of more than 20,000 Patriotic Front guerrillas at 1 designated assembly points. Again, Commonwealth intervention averted the untoward and the Lancaster House conference ended successful on 21 December 1979. After 14 years of UDI and seven years of war Rhodesia finally had an agreed constitution to take it to independence.

In the proposal for the pre-independence arrangements, the British Government had rightly taken the view that against the background of a war and the certain difficulties of a ceasefire an interim period "must not be excessively protracted", for the longer the interim period "the greater will be the period of political uncertainty and the greater the risk of a breakdown of the ceasefire."<sup>91</sup> Speed was therefore of the essence in implementing the Lancaster House arrangements.

The ceasefire arrangements had provided for a monitoring force "to assess and monitor impartially" all stages of the ceasefire and a Commonwealth Monitoring Force (CMF) was a constituent element of this monitoring machinery which the Secretary-General proceeded to put together. At full strength, the CMF totalled 1300 men drawn from Britain, Australia, Fiji, Kenya and New Zealand and they began arriving in Rhodesia between 20 and 26 December 1979. The Force was deployed in units of 16 at the assembly and rendezvous points and at designated border crossing points used by returning exiles from neighbouring Botswana, Mozambique and Zambia.

The culmination of the transitional arrangements was of course the holding of free and fair elections, properly supervised under British Government authority and with Commonwealth observers as provided for by the Accord. The group which the Secretary-General eventually put together consisted of 63 observers, up to that point the largest observer group ever sent by the Commonwealth. A distinguished Indian diplomat, Ambassador Rajeshwar Dayal, was appointed the Groups Chairman to observe, according to its terms of reference, "all relevant aspects of the organisation and conduct of the elections and to decide on the basis of their impartial judgement whether in the context of the Lusaka Accord and the Lancaster House Conference the elections were free and fair".<sup>92</sup>

The Rhodesian elections were no ordinary elections, and the Observer Group was not an ordinary one either. As Secretary General Ramphal told the Group on the eve of its departure for Salisbury, "Rhodesia as a country is *sui generis*; as an election it is not much different"<sup>93</sup>. In that regard, what was for judgement, given all these highly unusual elements, was whether enough had been done to produce a result based on

a free and fair election. Explaining the special role of the Commonwealth Observer Group Secretary-General Ramphal went on as follows:

The fact that these elections will be observed by you on behalf of some forty countries - whoever else may be observing all or part of them - must itself be a factor that cannot be discounted by anyone. In a sense, merely by going, you assist the process of making this election free and fair and become something of a custodian, if only by exercise of a constraining influence.<sup>94</sup>

The Group arrived in Rhodesia on 24 January 1980 and immediately began travelling extensively within the country, covering by the end more than 125,000km. They observed polling in 409 out of 657 polling stations and were present in all parts of the counting while many hundreds of thousands cast their votes. In the result, the Group “acquired a unique position for assessing developments, the election campaign and the actual conduct of the poll”.<sup>95</sup> In the interim report which the Group issued at the close of the poll on 2 March, they recognised limitations and deficiencies in the exercise but said that it would be “unrealistic and misleading to apply conventional yardsticks in assessing a situation which is as unique and unparalleled as that in Rhodesia”<sup>96</sup>. And taking all the relevant factors into account the group was of the view, while the counting of the votes was still in progress that the organisational aspects of the elections including the arrangements for the polling had on the whole, been carried out efficiently and fairly. This interim verdict was confirmed in the Group’s detailed and final report in the following terms:

Taken as a whole it is our considered and unanimous view that the election offered an adequate opportunity to the parties to seek the favour of the electorate and sufficient freedom to the voters to exercise their franchise according to their convictions. We therefore reaffirm the conclusion of our interim report that the election was a valid and democratic expression of the wishes of the people of Zimbabwe.<sup>97</sup>

On 17th April 1980, Rhodesia became independent as Zimbabwe and took its place in honour and dignity within the Commonwealth.

## V

### **Namibia and Apartheid South Africa**

The independence of Zimbabwe marked another major change in the evolving situation in Southern Africa. The frontier of freedom had moved further south and the Front-Line States as the Secretary General said in his report of 1981 had been freed of the burden of the struggle in that part of the region. But as he also pointed out, “the living evidence of non-racialism within Zimbabwe” appeared to have brought no enlightenment to South Africa:

its control of Namibia, whatever the euphemism used to describe it is colonialism pure and simple; South Africa’s sustained stance delays the transfer of power to the people of Namibia. Its belief that Western opposition to its policies will be diluted only makes the situation more dangerous.<sup>98</sup>

Apartheid had been universally condemned but it had also become abundantly clear that condemnation alone would not bring about change in South Africa. Governments with influence and leverage on the regime continued to plead a preference for persuasion. Such a position amounted to pardoning apartheid. The Secretary General went on:

This appearance of pardoning apartheid is becoming harder to dispel by mere declaration to the contrary. If South Africa remains un-persuaded, it should not occasion surprise that the call for the world to move beyond condemnation becomes stronger.<sup>99</sup>

The Secretary General was setting out in this report to the Melbourne Heads of Government Meeting of 1981 what was to form part of the agenda for the Commonwealth for the 1980s: concerted international pressure to release Namibia from South African grip and to bring about the end of apartheid in South Africa itself. Concerted international pressure by way of the sports boycott pioneered by the Gleneagles Agreement of 1977 was already beginning to prove effective. Gleneagles was in the process of bringing the regime to bay, even to something of a quarantine, at least in the field of sports. To relax these pressures “in response to largely cosmetic changes” in South Africa, would, according to the Secretary General be to withdraw the pressure just as it is beginning to be felt<sup>100</sup>. The Secretary-General’s call for increased and co-ordinated international pressure on South Africa was made in the light of developments both in South Africa itself and in the region.

Far from the “living evidence of non-racialism” in the new Zimbabwe inducing enlightenment in South Africa, it appeared to have stimulated a reaction of an even deeper dye within the ruling circles of the apartheid state. After Zimbabwe’s independence, Pretoria began to pursue two simultaneous policy lines. The first was economic in nature and designed to inveigle its neighbours into a so-called Constellation of Southern African States (CONSAS), a co-prosperity arrangement, apartheid style. It never got off the ground; for in 1980, South Africa’s neighbours came together in the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), now the Southern African Development Community (SADC), with the declared objective of reducing their dependence on South Africa. The “carrot” policy of the apartheid regime had clearly failed. It then resorted to the “stick”, already an integral feature of its Total Strategy policy. And between 1980 and 1982, South Africa launched a concerted offensive against its neighbours “involving direct incursions as well as sabotage, assassinations, kidnappings, bombings and espionage, particularly against the newly independent state of Zimbabwe”.<sup>101</sup> The alternation of stick and carrot, “thump and talk”, as the South African press described it - in brief naked aggression against its neighbours was now the regimes preferred approach. It marked the beginning of South Africa’s heightened campaign of destabilization against the majority rule of the region.

For the internal situation, the regime devised a different approach aimed as much at deceiving the international community as widening the base of support for the

apartheid system through the co-optation of the Indian and Coloured communities as junior partners in the system. At the end of July 1982 P W Botha, then Prime Minister of South Africa, unveiled a package of constitutional proposals at a special congress of the ruling National Party. Under the proposed new dispensation there was to be a single Parliament with three separate chambers for White, Coloured and Indian representatives. In August 1984 the regime began to implement these proposals. In response, black South Africa rose in revolt. In the Townships of the Vaal Triangle, the industrial heartland of the country, rioting broke out. At about the same time, as many as 220,000 black pupils began a boycott of schools in protest against the inferior Bantu education which white rule had foisted on black South Africans for generations. By the beginning of October 1984, the situation in the Townships had spun out of control. A combined force of 7,000 troops and police was sent to seal off the Townships of the Transvaal. Hundreds of people were arrested and tried in special courts set up for the purpose. The black councils set up in the Townships under the “reformed” apartheid system collapsed spectacularly as the councillors resigned and fled from the Townships under pressure<sup>102</sup>. It was a generalised rising tide of anger against apartheid. Apartheid had entered a phase of permanent crisis; it would also be its terminal crisis. This was the background to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in October 1985 at Nassau in The Bahamas.

The mood of the Meeting was one of anger and frustration matched with a determination to impose economic sanctions against Pretoria. Over the years, successive Commonwealth Meetings had entertained the hope that the combination of isolation, the example of the multi-racial societies emerging in Southern Africa and elsewhere on the continent as well as the opportunities which would lie open to a post-apartheid South Africa reconciled with the rest of Africa would bring the regime to see the error of its ways. But clearly not only had this hope not been realised, it was also now apparent that the international community would have to take effective practical measures to compel South Africa to abandon its suicidal course. On top of the crimes of apartheid, South Africa’s record on Namibia had also been one of consistent bad faith.

In his report to the Nassau Meeting, Secretary-General Ramphal said that while “it may be unrealistic to expect a complete economic boycott of South Africa to be imposed at one stroke”, it would be “even more unwise and wholly unworthy not to apply sanctions of any kind”. Ramphal went on:

It is irrefutable that the conjunction of a rising tide of anger within South Africa and a rising demand outside for economic sanctions is making Pretoria pause. These pressures must be sustained if we are to ensure that it is a pause to recant not to regroup. Collective Commonwealth action at Nassau can help to make it so.<sup>103</sup>

But at Nassau, Mrs Thatcher emerged as the one Commonwealth leader who wanted South Africa to be given another chance. She claimed that she had it from reliable South African sources that P W Botha was now prepared to negotiate and if that was the case the Commonwealth ought to test the sincerity of that claim before embarking

on sanctions. The majority of Commonwealth leaders received the information with scepticism but found a way of accommodating it within the framework of the Commonwealth Accord on Southern Africa which they reached at the end of their discussion of the situation in the region. In the Accord, Heads of Government, said that reliance on the range of pressures adopted so far had not resulted in the fundamental changes in South Africa they had sought over many years. The growing crisis and the intensified repression unleashed by the regime meant that apartheid had to be dismantled now if a greater tragedy was to be averted. Concerted pressure had to be brought to bear to achieve this objective. The first part of the Accord therefore set out five “urgent practical steps” which the meeting called on the authorities in Pretoria to take “in a genuine manner and as a matter of urgency.”<sup>104</sup>

- “(a) Declare that the system of apartheid will be dismantled and specific and meaningful action taken in fulfilment of that intent.
- (b) terminate the existing state of emergency
- (c) release immediately and unconditionally Nelson Mandela and all others imprisoned and detained for their opposition to apartheid
- (d) establish political freedom and specifically lift the existing ban on the African National Congress and other political parties
- (e) initiate, in the context of a suspension of violence on all sides, a process of dialogue across lines of colour, politics and religion with a view to establishing a non-racial and representative government.”<sup>105</sup>

The second part of the Accord consisted of a number of measures aimed at “impressing on the authorities in Pretoria, the compelling urgency of dismantling apartheid and erecting the structures of democracy in South Africa.”<sup>106</sup> The Commonwealth would do all it could to assist the process of dialogue “while recognising that the forms of political settlement in South Africa are for the people of that country - all the people - to determine.”<sup>107</sup>

To promote the process of dialogue, Heads of Government decided to establish a small group of eminent Commonwealth persons “to encourage through all practicable ways the evolution of that necessary process of political dialogue.”<sup>108</sup> This was what became known as the Eminent Persons Group (EPG). The President of Zambia and the Prime Ministers of Australia, the Bahamas, Canada, India, the United Kingdom and Zimbabwe were to develop with the Secretary General the “modalities of this effort to assist the process of political dialogue in South Africa.”<sup>109</sup>

In the meantime the Meeting agreed a set of economic measures to be applied immediately to bring home to the regime the seriousness of the resolve to achieve an immediate dismantling of apartheid. These were:

- “(a) a ban on all new government loans to the Government of South Africa and its agencies
- (b) a readiness to take unilaterally what action may be possible to preclude the import of Krugerrands

- (c) no Government funding for trade missions to South Africa or for participation in exhibitions and trade fairs in South Africa
- (d) a ban on the sale and export of computer equipment capable of use by South African military forces, police or security forces
- (e) a ban on new contracts for the sale and export of nuclear goods, materials and technology to South Africa
- (f) a ban on the sale and export of oil to South Africa
- (g) a strict a rigorously controlled embargo on imports of arms, ammunition, military vehicles and paramilitary equipment from South Africa
- (h) an embargo on all military cooperation with South Africa; and
- (i) discouragement of all cultural and scientific events except where these contribute towards the ending of apartheid or have no possible role in promoting it".<sup>110</sup>

The seven Heads of Government requested to work out the modalities of the EPG Mission with the Secretary-General were to meet within 6 months to review the situation; and if in their opinion adequate progress had not been made, Heads of Government agreed to consider the adoption of further measures. In that event, some Heads of Government would consider the following steps among others:

- “(a) a ban on air links with South Africa
- (b) a ban on new investment or reinvestment of profits earned in South Africa
- (c) a ban on the import of agriculture products forms South Africa
- (d) the termination of double taxation agreements with South Africa
- (e) the termination of all government assistance to investment in, and trade with, South Africa;
- (f) a ban on all government procurement in South Africa
- (g) a ban on government contract with majority owned South African companies;
- (h) a ban on the promotion of tourism in South Africa”.<sup>111</sup>

Finally, Heads of Government agreed that “should all of the above measures fail to produce the desired results within a reasonable period of time, further effective measures would have to be considered.”<sup>112</sup> The only Government that did not subscribe to any of these measures was the British Government.

The other consideration behind the Nassau measures was Namibia. In his report to the Meeting, Secretary-General Ramphal had placed Namibia squarely and prominently in the context of South Africa’s continuing defiance of the international community. He wrote:

Nineteen years have passed since the United Nations terminated the mandate over Namibia given by the League of Nations to South Africa; fourteen years since the International Court of Justice ruled that South Africa was in illegal occupation of Namibia and seven since the UN Security Council unanimously agreed a plan for Namibia’s independence in Resolution 435.<sup>113</sup>

Yet, year in year out, the apartheid regime had thwarted progress. The defiance of the international community over Namibia was only part of a wider defiance of world opinion by the regime which could only be ended by economic pressures of the kind which the Meeting was considering. On this view, any setback for apartheid in South Africa would be an advance for freedom in Namibia. And so the Meeting decided that the action envisaged in the Accord on Southern Africa “should be directed equally towards ensuring South Africa’s compliance with the wishes of the international community on the question of Namibia.”<sup>114</sup>

### **The EPG Mission**

The Eminent Persons Group which the Secretary General constituted to encourage the evolution of political dialogue in South Africa comprised Malcolm Fraser, former Prime Minister of Australia; General Olusegun Obasanjo, former Head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria; Lord Barber, former Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Heath Government in Britain; Dame Nita Barrow of the World Council of Churches from The Bahamas; Mr John Malecela, former Prime Minister of Tanzania; Sardar Swaran Singh, former Foreign Minister of India; and the Most Reverend Edward Scott, one time Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada. The Group took the Accord as the frame of reference for its work.

The Group arrived in South Africa in the middle of February and between that date and the middle of May, they undertook very wide ranging consultations which included member of the South African Government; representatives of political parties, including the ANC and the PAC; church and civil society organisations; trade unions and business houses and governments of the Front-Line States. The Group also met Nelson Mandela in Polls Moor Prison.

On the basis of these wide ranging consultations the Group produced a set of proposals embodied in a Possible Negotiating Concept for the consideration of the Government and the parties. The Concept asked of the government the following:

- “(a) Removal of the military from the Townships, providing for freedom of assembly and discussion and suspension of detention without trial
- (b) The release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners and detainees
- (c) the un-banning of the ANC and PAC and the permitting of normal political activity.”<sup>115</sup>

And on the part of the ANC and others, “entering into negotiations and suspending violence”.<sup>116</sup>

Of late Pretoria had made a great parade of its reform programme and a commitment to persevere with it whatever the difficulties, even claiming to be “reconciled to the eventual disappearance of white domination”.<sup>117</sup> The Negotiating Concept had in effect put the Government’s own declaration to end apartheid to the test, even driven it into a corner, and to get out of that corner the Government responded by bombing three neighbouring Commonwealth countries on 19 May - Botswana, Zambia and



Zimbabwe, even while the Group was meeting senior members of the Government. The attack on these countries effectively brought the EPG Mission to an end.

At the beginning of June 1986, the Group reported its findings to Commonwealth Government through the seven Heads appointed at Nassau to follow through its work. The report of the Group said that none of the five steps which Commonwealth leaders had called upon the authorities in Pretoria to take “in a genuine manner and as a matter of urgency” had been taken. Pretoria had been required to declare that the system of apartheid would be dismantled and specific and meaningful action taken in fulfilment of that intent. The Group’s report said that having examined the Government’s program of reform, it was “forced to conclude that at present there is no genuine intention on the part of the South African Government to dismantle apartheid”. On the termination of the existing state of emergency, the Group found that although the ban had been technically lifted, substantive powers remained broadly in force under the ordinary laws of the land which were being further strengthened in this direction. Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners remained in prison. Political freedom was far from being established; if anything it was being rigorously curtailed and the political parties remained banned. Finally the cycle of violence and counter-violence had spiralled and there was no present prospect of a process of dialogue leading to the establishment of a non-racial and representative government. Overall, the Group said “the concrete and adequate progress looked for in the Nassau Accord towards the objective of ‘dismantling and erecting the structures of democracy in South Africa’ has not materialised”.<sup>117</sup> The Group concluded that under the circumstances, the certain prospect for all the people of South Africa of the region as a whole was “one of an even sharper decline into violence and bloodshed with all its attendant human cost”.<sup>118</sup>

As to what further measures the Commonwealth should take to avert the threatening bloodbath, the group said this:

It is not whether such measures will compel change, it is already the case that their absence and Pretoria’s belief that they need not be feared, defers change. Is the Commonwealth to stand by and allow the violence to spiral? Or will it take concerted action of an authentic kind? Such action may offer the last opportunity to avert what could be the worst bloodbath since the Second World War.<sup>119</sup>

The report was a unanimous document.

At the beginning of August, the Review Group of six Heads of Government met in London to consider the EPG report. They described it as “a positive and enduring contribution to the efforts to end apartheid and establish a non-racial and representative government in South Africa”.<sup>120</sup>

But they received the Group’s findings “with disappointment”. None of the five steps which the Nassau meeting had called upon the South African Government to take had been taken and the adequate concrete progress which they had expected had clearly not materialised. In the circumstances, the Commonwealth had to consider further measures, for the “adoption of further substantial economic measures against South

Africa is a moral and political imperative to which a positive response can no longer be deferred".<sup>121</sup> Accordingly, in addition to the measures agreed at Nassau, the Review Group recommended the following measures to the rest of the Commonwealth and the wider international community for urgent adoption and implementation:

- (i) " a ban on all new bank loans to South Africa, whether to the public or private sectors"
- (ii) a ban on the import of uranium, coal, iron and steel from South Africa; and
- (iii) the withdrawal of consular facilities in South Africa except for our own nationals and nationals of third countries to whom we render consular services".<sup>122</sup>

The Review Group felt that a lot more still needed to be done by way of widening sanctions:

We will, therefore immediately embark on intensive consultations within the international community with a view to securing concerted international action in the coming months, our emphasis being on those countries that presently sustain a significant level of economic relations with South Africa.<sup>123</sup>

And if in a reasonable time, these further measures had not had the desired effect, the six Heads of Government on behalf of the rest of the Commonwealth agreed that "still further effective measures will have to be considered".<sup>124</sup> Such was the strength of the resolve of the Commonwealth on the matter.

In all this, the only dissenting voice continued to be that of the British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher. She had refused to go along with the consensus of the Nassau Meeting imposing the first lot of sanctions on South Africa and at the London Review Meeting had only agreed to a voluntary ban on new investment in South Africa and on the promotion of tourism plus a readiness to accept and implement any EEC decision to ban the import of coal, iron and steel and of gold coins from South Africa.<sup>125</sup> Thereafter, Britain was to remain outside all the other subsequent measures which the Commonwealth was to take against Pretoria. Yet in the Commonwealth, Britain had the biggest volume of trade in South Africa. For this reason, the Government's decision to abstain from sanctions derogated considerably from their moral and economic impact of sanctions. All the same, the Nassau Meeting and the subsequent Review Meeting and everything that flowed therefrom marked a watershed in the Commonwealth's handling of the South African issue. The clear overwhelming consensus now favoured sanctions as the only remaining effective means of bringing about peaceful change in South Africa. The regime might still be in place, but it was fast losing its old monolithic unity and as the Secretary General put it, the very fact that Afrikanerdom now felt obliged to pronounce apartheid 'outmoded' had to be seen as a point of departure; "even lip-service to the principle of change is evidence that pressure has its effect".<sup>126</sup> More than ever, Pretoria now stood "in greater isolation and ignominy".<sup>127</sup> Increasing and widening pressures against apartheid were to be the watch words of the Vancouver Heads of Government Meeting of 1987.

In the view of Heads of Government there was another development justifying increased pressure on Pretoria. In addition to the rapidly deteriorating internal situation in South Africa and the blocking of Namibia's independence, South Africa had, in the words of the Secretary-General, "opened apartheid's third front through systematic acts of aggression, subversion and destabilisation against its neighbours."<sup>128</sup> A real regional war was in the making and the apartheid regime was prosecuting it on the assumption that apartheid could survive in South Africa if the rest of Southern Africa was made so impotent as to be unable to assist in the struggle against it. And the main targets for attack remained Zimbabwe, Botswana, Zambia and more directly, Mozambique. In 1987-88 the cost of this de-stabilisation to the Front-Line States was estimated at between \$4 billion and \$5 billion.<sup>129</sup> The Frontline States needed Commonwealth and wider international assistance to resist this aggression.

The next Commonwealth Summit was held at Vancouver, Canada in October 1987 and the Okanagan Statement and Programme of Action on Southern Africa was the outcome of the discussion at the Meeting. In the assessment of Heads of Government, the situation in the region had "seriously deteriorated" since Nassau. Repressive measures had been intensified within South Africa and the toll resulting from Pretoria's acts of war had continued to rise. The Commonwealth had a continuing obligation in the face of these developments to make an effective contribution both to end apartheid and to relieve South Africa's neighbours of the burden which the situation imposed on them. On Commonwealth response to the internal situation Heads of Government, with the exception of Britain, believed that since economic and other sanctions had had a significant effect on South Africa, "their wider, tighter, and more intensive application must remain an essential part of the international community's response to apartheid."<sup>130</sup> In the best of all possible worlds, the quickest route to end apartheid would have been through comprehensive and mandatory sanctions imposed under the authority of the Security Council. But in the absence of the necessary international consensus to this effect, the next best option in the view of Commonwealth leaders was "to secure the universal adoption of the measures now adopted by most Commonwealth and other countries, including the United States and the Nordic countries."<sup>131</sup> Commonwealth efforts would be bent to this end pending the outturn of events. Again, with the exception of Britain and in the context of widening and tightening sanctions, the Meeting commissioned a study on South Africa's relations with the international financial system to provide for a "better understanding of developments and possibilities in this sphere."<sup>132</sup> South Africa's neighbours needed and deserved increased international support to resist Pretoria's policy of destabilisation and destruction; and in view of present trends, if that assistance was to be effective, it had to include addressing the security needs of the Front-Line States to enable the region to advance disengagement from the South African economy and to provide for its security against South African aggression. Mozambique was key in all this. The Meeting therefore decided to establish a special Commonwealth fund to provide technical assistance to that country.

The long running stalemate over the independence of Namibia under Resolution 435 had by 1987 also “assumed the proportions of a stalemate.”<sup>133</sup> By then the apartheid regime, with the support of the Regan Administration in the United States, was insisting on the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola as a precondition for Namibia’s progress to independence. This so called linkage was dismissed by Heads of Government who remained “unanimously convinced of the view that Resolution 435 provided the only basis for an internationally acceptable settlement of the Namibian question”<sup>134</sup> Linkage only provided an opening for South Africa to continue to frustrate progress on the matter and if South Africa continued on this path, “the adoption of appropriate measures under the Charter of the United Nations would have to be considered.”<sup>135</sup>

Up to this point, Commonwealth support to the victims and opponents of apartheid within South Africa had been given at a remove, as it were. At Vancouver, Commonwealth leaders decided to “reach into South Africa” and to give support to the victims and opponents of apartheid within the country. Such support was to take the form of providing educational opportunities to young South Africans through an expansion of the Nassau Fellowships Programme; humanitarian and legal assistance to detainees and their families; increased support to the trade union movement now in the forefront of the push to end apartheid; the organisation of conferences on the future of South Africa; visits and the publication of studies related to ending apartheid. Finally, out of their discussions at Vancouver, Heads of Government, again with only Britain dissenting, established the Committee of Foreign Ministers on Southern Africa (CFMSA) to replace the London based Commonwealth Committee on Southern Africa (CCSA) which had been a committee on High Commissioners. The Chairman of the CFMSA was the Secretary of State for the Internal Affairs of Canada and the full membership included the Foreign Ministers of Australia, Guyana, India, Nigeria, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In the gloss of the Secretary General, the function of the committee was “to sharpen the focus of Commonwealth sanctions and to sustain the political momentum behind the drive to end apartheid.”<sup>136</sup> The establishment of the Ministerial Committee was “a major evolution of Commonwealth practice and a measure of the Commonwealth’s determination not to let up on apartheid.”<sup>137</sup> It was also an indication that the end of apartheid was now realistically in prospect.

## VI

On 15 October 1989, on the very eve of the Kuala Lumpur Heads of Government Meeting, President F. W. de Klerk who had by now replaced P. W. Botha as State President released unconditionally eight long term political prisoners including Walter Sisule. The Government also began to allow the holding of political rallies by the black South Africans, resulting in a palpable relaxation of the tension which had gripped the country since the beginning of the decade. There was talk of the release of more political prisoners and even of the beginning of negotiations between the Government and the representatives of the black majority, providing the

Government moved to create the necessary conducive climate, including ending the state of emergency.

It was a time of expectations but also one of caution. Apart from the continuing state of emergency, the ANC, the PAC and many other organisations remained banned and the pillars of apartheid had still to be dismantled. Against such a background the question in front of Heads of Government at Kuala Lumpur was what to do to propel the new Government in South Africa in the direction of negotiations with the acknowledged representatives of the black majority. Britain apart, all other Commonwealth Governments took the view that such progress as had been made thus far had been possible only through the pressure of sanctions.

The documentation prepared for the Meeting bore this out. One was a report on South Africa's international financial links prepared by an Inter-Governmental Group of Officials; the other was on the Evaluation of the Application and Impact of Sanctions Against South Africa by a group of international experts. The Evaluation Report said that it was "not sufficient simply to condemn apartheid and tinker with existing sanctions. New and effective measures are essential to force the Pretoria regime to negotiate an end to apartheid..."<sup>138</sup> The financial links report said that the South African economy was in a "trap" because foreign banks were uninterested in new lending; many capital exporting economies had banned new investment in South Africa and potential investors had been put off by the political uncertainty.<sup>139</sup> Since sanctions were clearly beginning to bite effectively, Heads of Government took the view that "this was not the time to consider any relaxation of existing sanctions and pressures; that would have to await evidence of clear and irreversible change."<sup>140</sup>

All existing measures were therefore to be maintained and new forms of pressures developed. These were to include intensifying and extending financial sanctions, calling on all relevant banks and financial institutions to impose tougher conditions on day-to-day trade financing, specifically through reducing the maximum credit terms to 90 days; and by calling on relevant governments to take South Africa "off cover" with official government agencies for trade, credit and insurance purposes. The Meeting also agreed to establish an independent agency to review and report on South Africa's international financial links on a regular basis, gathering and publishing factual information on financial flows to and policies towards South Africa.

The other decisions taken at the earlier Vancouver Meeting to support the victims of apartheid within South Africa, namely, the provision of educational opportunities legal and humanitarian assistance to detainees and their families, support for the trade union movement and economic and social development projects, including low cost housing were all reaffirmed.

In 1985 Donald Woods, the South African journalist referred to earlier, had produced a study commissioned by the Secretariat entitled *Apartheid - the Propaganda and the Reality*.<sup>141</sup> According to Woods, South African propaganda no longer attempted to justify apartheid. Instead it claimed to have recognised its mistake and was trying to reform and ultimately to dismantle its institutionalised racism. In the circumstances

it needed patience and understanding from friends to continue on this path. The main thrust of the propaganda was also aimed specifically at Britain and the United States because these two countries were regarded in South Africa as vital to the continued control of the black majority by the white minority for only the veto power of Britain and the United States in the Security Council protected South Africa from mandatory economic sanctions: “the action South Africa fears most”.<sup>142</sup> The study went on to outline the main propaganda claims of the regime with matching rebuttals. A Working Party was appointed at Vancouver and entrusted to develop a strategy to counter apartheid propaganda and censorship as an initiative of continuing high priority.<sup>143</sup>

If developments in South Africa itself still left doubts about the regime’s good faith, the unfolding events in Namibia might be “the true gauge of genuine change in Southern Africa”.<sup>144</sup> For by the time of the Kuala Lumpur Meeting, the first stages of the implementation of Resolution 435 were supposed to be ending and to be followed by elections at the beginning of November. On the way there had been difficulties which made it, in the view of the Secretary General even more necessary for the United Nations to be more activist in the cause of freedom through free and fair elections and for the Commonwealth and its member states to be “vigilant on its own account and vigorous in encouraging and assisting the United Nations in this crucial test of its capacity to superintend the enactment of international resolve.”<sup>145</sup> SWAPO had recently expressed Namibia’s intention to seek Commonwealth membership on the attainment of independence. According to the Secretary General Namibia’s impending membership placed on the Commonwealth “a special obligation to Namibia which will remain un-discharged even on independence, when the needs of nation-building will call for continuing Commonwealth assistance.”<sup>146</sup>

In September 1989 a Commonwealth mission visited Namibia to report on the state of the arrangements for the elections. The mission’s report stressed the need for close vigilance in the transition period to ensure that Namibia was not stripped of its assets and skills. It went on to identify a number of areas in which Namibia would need immediate assistance:

- a crash training programme for Government officials as well as people from private sector institutions;
- assistance to small businesses and farmers affected by the war in the north;
- restructuring and re-training of the police and security forces; and safeguarding and protecting Namibia’s fishing industry.<sup>147</sup>

The group’s report was forwarded to the Kuala Lumpur Meeting. The Meeting decided that any steps by South Africa to destabilise and independent Namibia would call into question its declarations of good faith in this and other matters. It also requested the Secretary-General to send a team of experts to Namibia soon after the elections to advise on possible Commonwealth assistance.<sup>148</sup> In the wider Southern Africa region South Africa’s campaign of aggression and destabilisation had been taken to

new heights with Mozambique continuing to bear the brunt of this aggression. The Mozambique National Resistance Movement (MNR), Pretoria's chosen instrument for the destruction of the country, targeted civilians, using mass terror to frighten the population into submission and eventually to make large areas of the country ungovernable.<sup>149</sup> The *Destabilisation Report* prepared by Phyllis Johnson and David Martin at the request of the ministerial committee said that estimates of the costs to South Africa's neighbours of destabilisation now began conservatively at \$45 billion to the end of 1988 and even then some of the costs were still to come in.<sup>150</sup> Some 1.5 million people had perished since 1981 with some 4 million displaced. A combination of the worsening internal situation in South Africa and the emerging regional war only re-enforced the view now accepted by all Commonwealth Governments, with the exception of Britain, that only sanctions could end apartheid. Any other course would only prolong the tragedy. At the beginning of February 1990 the first unmistakable signs of the ending of apartheid appeared.

### **The Ending of Apartheid**

In an address to Parliament on 2 February 1990, President F. W. de Klerk announced the imminent release of Nelson Mandela and the remaining political prisoners, the un-banning of the ANC, the PAC and the South African Communist Party (SACP); the lifting of the restrictions on the media and the repeal of the Separates Amenities Act. President De Klerk said that the time for negotiations had arrived and invited representative black leaders to "walk through the open door and take their places at the negotiating table"; for "only a negotiated understanding between the representative leaders of the entire population can ensure peace." For its part, the Government now sought agreement on "a totally new, just, constitutional system in which every inhabitant will enjoy equal rights, treatment and opportunities in every sphere of endeavour: constitutional, social and economic."<sup>151</sup>

On 11 February Nelson Mandela was released from Victor Verster Prison and on 27th February, the first round of preliminary talks between the Government and the ANC to remove obstacles to future negotiations was held. On 17 May the CFMSA met in Abuja, Nigeria. The Committee reviewed these developments which portended important changes but concluded that any move to lift sanctions would be premature. At the invitation of the Committee Nelson Mandela also addressed the meeting. All these climactic developments together formed the back drop to the Harare Heads of Government Meeting of October 1991.

In the debate on South Africa Heads of Government described the events that had taken place in the country over the past 20 months as "important changes" which "had brought into sight the goal of the eradication of apartheid and the establishment of a non-racial democracy in a united and non-fragmented South Africa".<sup>152</sup> But once more they attributed these "important changes" to the effectiveness of sanctions and pressures which the Commonwealth had advocated and pioneered over the years. And having brought the process so far, only the maintenance of this pressure could

“assure a successful outcome to the conflict in South Africa.”<sup>153</sup> Consequently, rather than end sanctions in one fell swoop the decision was taken to link the lifting of sanctions to “real and practical steps to end apartheid.”<sup>154</sup> This was “the programmed management approach”, first elaborated by the ministerial committee.

In respect of the different categories of sanctions, Heads of Government decided to proceed as follows:

- (i) *The arms embargo* should remain in force until a post-apartheid South African government was firmly established.
- (ii) *Financial sanctions*, “the most demonstrably effective of all sanctions”, including lending by the IMF and World Bank should be lifted only when agreement was reached on the text of a new democratic constitution.
- (iii) *Other economic sanctions*, including trade and investment, were to be lifted when appropriate transitional mechanisms had been agreed enabling all the parties to participate fully and effectively in negotiations.
- (iv) *People to people sanctions* - consular and visa restrictions, cultural and scientific boycotts, restriction on tourism promotion and the ban on direct air links were to be lifted immediately “in view of progress made in overcoming obstacles to negotiations and a need to give external support and encouragement to democratic anti-apartheid organisations in South Africa and to permit free interaction with them.”<sup>155</sup> The ban on South African Airways (SAA) and other South African airlines would be lifted on condition that they preceded with appropriate affirmative action programmes.<sup>156</sup>

The British Government dissented on the timescale for lifting economic and financial sanctions but supported the maintenance of the arms embargo and the lifting of people to people sanctions. On the sports boycott the Meeting decided that the lifting of the existing restrictions in respect of a particular sport would also depend on the fulfilment of the following conditions:

- (i) the formal endorsement of the achievement of unity by the appropriate representative non-racial sporting organisation in South Africa;
- (ii) re-admittance to the relevant international governing body;
- (iii) agreement of the appropriate non-racial sporting organisation within South Africa to resume international competition.<sup>157</sup>

Heads of Government then decided to request the Secretary General to visit South Africa at the earliest possible opportunity in order to explore with the principal parties concerned ways in which the Commonwealth might assist the negotiating process. <sup>158</sup>

The Committee of Foreign Ministers had earlier commissioned a study on the human resource needs of a post-apartheid South Africa. The study identified, among other things, the priority areas “strategically relevant to social transformation in the transition period [...] those occupational positions which would play a crucial



administrative and catalytic role in transforming and replacing the existing central and local government structures.” These comprised:

- public administration, particularly central services such as economic and fiscal management, legal and judicial services, the police, army and security services and
- local government institutions
- Other priority areas for support in the transition period identified by the report were:
  - non-governmental and community based organisations;
  - trade unions;
  - training of teachers;
  - support for returning exiles and released political prisoners; and
  - key professional positions in the private sector.<sup>159</sup>

The short term training programme was “the most urgent for a transition to a democratic South Africa” and the report estimated its cost at £60million covering some 18,000 trainees.<sup>160</sup> The report also recommended an Enhanced Commonwealth Programme to assist with the implementation of its recommendations.<sup>161</sup>

Heads of Government agreed with the Expert Group that the education and training of the disadvantaged majority to occupy strategic positions in the transition period and beyond would be crucial to progress and decided that Commonwealth assistance in this regard would be on both a bilateral as well a multilateral basis and authorised an immediate start to be made to support training and placements within South Africa as well as continuing placements outside. The Meeting asked the Secretary General to bring the report to the attention of the wider international community and to explore with the United Nations the possibility of jointly convening an international donors’ conference on its substance.<sup>162</sup>

Namibia had finally achieved its independence under Resolution 435 in March 1990 and the Harare Meeting was the first Commonwealth summit where Namibia was represented by its democratically elected president, Sam Nujoma. Another major Commonwealth objective had been achieved in Namibia’s independence and another flash point extinguished in the region. At the beginning of the Meeting Heads of Government had also elected Chief Emeka Anyaoku of Nigeria as the next Secretary- General to take over from Shridath Ramphal who had been in the position since 1975.

### **Commonwealth Assistance to the Negotiations in South Africa**

Within a week of the conclusion of the Harare Meeting, Chief Anyaoku arrived in South Africa to explore with the parties how the Commonwealth might assist to advance the negotiations. On 1 November he met President de Klerk. This was followed by meetings with Nelson Mandela, Chief Buthelezi of the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), Clarence Makwetu of the PAC, General Constand Viljoen of the white Conservative Party and other representatives of South African civil

society organisations. All welcomed Commonwealth assistance in facilitating the negotiations and the transition generally.

On his return to London, the Secretary General reported the outcome of his visit to Heads of Government. He “confirmed the pragmatic sincerity of the South African Government on the one hand and the commitment of the parties to a negotiated settlement on the other.”<sup>163</sup> But he also warned of the dangers which threatened the process, in particular the hostility of elements of the white community to the impending changes:

My overall assessment was that while a real opportunity existed for negotiations which the Commonwealth should do all it could to facilitate and advance, it had to continue to match the relaxation of sanctions and other pressures to practical progress in the destruction of apartheid.<sup>164</sup>

This was the agreed approach at Harare and the Secretary-General’s report on his talks with South Africa’s main political leaders further confirmed the wisdom of this procedure on the matter of the lifting of sanctions. It became the basis of Commonwealth assistance to the negotiations.

In December 1991 the parties convened the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA I) to mark the beginning of substantive negotiations. The Co-Chairmen of the Convention wrote to the Secretary-General requesting observers at its inauguration. The Secretary-General decided to constitute a team which would do more than passively observe the proceedings. He decided on a “team of suitably eminent Commonwealth personalities whose presence would reflect the importance which the Commonwealth attached to the Convention [...] a team of experienced people whose distinction would add credibility to the negotiations and on whose experience the negotiating parties could draw.”<sup>165</sup> The team included the Rev. Canaan Banana, Former President of Zimbabwe, the Rt. Hon. Justice Telford Georges, former Chief Justice of The Bahamas; the then Sir Geoffrey (now Lord) Howe, former Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary of Britain; Tam Sri Ghazali Shafie, Former Foreign Minister of Malaysia; Sri Dinesh Singh, former Minister of External Affairs of India; and Sir Ninian Stephen, one time Governor General of Australia.

In their report to the Secretary General, the Group described CODESA as a “milestone” in South Africa’s political evolution which augured well for the future; but there were also matters of concern, in particular the boycott of the Convention by some of the parties - the PAC, IFP and the white Conservative Party. Another cause for concern was the growing violence which the Group described as an “intractable problem fuelling, suspicion and mistrust.”<sup>166</sup> The Group therefore recommended close and continuing Commonwealth and wider international involvement to safeguard the process.

The negotiating parties at CODESA I had appointed five Working Parties to deal with various subjects relating to the negotiations. These included the creation of a climate for free political activity; general constitutional principles; transitional arrangements, including the terms for the formation of the interim government;

the future of the homelands and the time frames for the implementation of the agreements reached. The working parties were to report to CODESA II in May 1992.

The Secretary-General represented the Commonwealth himself at CODESA II. It was expected that at CODESA II, agreement would be reached on the transitional arrangements but in the event, this did not materialise. But more disturbing was the escalating violence which had dogged the process from the beginning and which was now threatening and overshadowing it. The Secretary-General raised this issue with President de Klerk, Nelson Mandela and the other political leaders and with their support he developed a proposal for Commonwealth assistance to stem the violence. The substance of the proposal was subsequently incorporated into a Security Council Resolution which authorised the sending of international observers from the UN, the Commonwealth, the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the European Union to South Africa. These teams of observers were to work in close co-operation with the local peace committees set up under the National Peace Accord to end the violence.

Between October 1992 and the elections in April 1994, the Secretary-General sent three Commonwealth Observer Missions to South Africa (COMSA). Kwa Zulu-Natal was the province worst hit by the violence. Many parts of the province, especially the rural areas became no go areas for the ANC and despite the National Peace Accord and several attempts at reconciliation locally, free political activity was

impractical. Merely observing the violence would have served no useful purpose. The COMSA group in Natal decided to interpret its mandate proactively and began by helping to establish peace committees where they did not exist and where they existed only on paper to strengthen them. The next step was to bring the

ANC and IFP, the two principal antagonists in the province into dialogue, invariably leading to reconciliation and joint peace initiatives. Internally displaced people were thus enabled to return home and reconstruction of destroyed houses began unusually with money raised by the parties from local business houses.

COMSA was followed by another group of thirty-three Commonwealth military and police officers who trained the first mixed team of South African Defence Force soldiers and those of the liberation movements. This integrated force was to play an important part in

staunching the violence.<sup>167</sup>

### **Further Lifting of Sanctions**

In February 1993 the Government and the ANC reached agreement for multi-party elections to be held by April 1994. And on 23 September parliament passed a bill providing for the establishment of a Transitional Executive Council (TEC) to work with the Government of President de Klerk in the run up to the elections in April. The following day Nelson Mandela declared that “the countdown to democracy” had begun and called on the international community “to end economic sanctions you imposed and which have brought us to the point where the transition to democracy has now been enshrined in law.”<sup>168</sup> Within hours of Mandela’s statement, the US Senate approved legislation lifting the remaining US sanctions. On 29 September

the OAU followed suit with the immediate lifting of economic sanctions. Such was the trend of events when Commonwealth Heads of Government met in Cyprus in October. They agreed that the establishment of the TEC and the decision on 27 April 1994 as the date for elections “marked a point of irreversibility in the transition and brought into sight the ending of apartheid.”<sup>169</sup> The Harare conditions for the lifting of trade, investment and financial sanctions had thus been met. In keeping with the wishes of the black majority the arms embargo would however continue until a new post-apartheid South African Government “was firmly established with full democratic control and accountability.”<sup>170</sup>

But while a decisive breakthrough had undoubtedly been made in the negotiations, the continuing fragility of the process as shown by the extreme right wing opposition to the establishment of the TEC underlined the need to continue to safeguard it. Commonwealth leaders therefore decided that COMSA which “had made an important and widely acknowledged contribution” should remain in the country until after the April 1994 elections. The continuing violence was one of the difficulties in the way of free and fair elections and this necessitated “a sizeable international observer presence [...] indispensable if confidence in the process was to be assured and the people of South Africa enabled to cast a valid ballot”.<sup>171</sup> A Commonwealth Election Observer Group was to be “an important component of that wider international presence.”<sup>172</sup> Other decisions taken in Cyprus included the provision of technical assistance and training to promote police/community relations and support for the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), the Independent Media Commission (IMC), the Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) The International Donors Conference to be hosted jointly by the Commonwealth and the UN, based on the findings of the Expert Group on human resource needs of a post-apartheid South Africa was also discussed with an appeal to governments and donor agencies to support the initiative in view of its importance for the success of the new South Africa.<sup>173</sup>

### **The Commonwealth Observer Group**

At the beginning of April 1994, the Secretary-General constituted an observer group for the elections as mandated by the Cyprus Meeting. In many respects, it was unlike any other previous Commonwealth observer group. In the first place, it was the largest group ever sent by the Commonwealth to observe an election anywhere. All told, this group numbered some 104 observers, men and women, drawn from all parts of the Commonwealth and therefore a fully representative Commonwealth team in a very real sense. Then, the South African election itself was not normal, regular election either. It was the first democratic, non-racial election to be held in the history of the country. The institutions which need to be in place for a credible democratic election, most especially an independent electoral commission, was put in place practically on the eve of the election. Voter education, elsewhere largely the responsibility of the political parties, was largely inadequate. All the truly representative parties of the

black majority had been banned for decades, only starting to return to the country in 1990. The foreign and local NGOs which stepped into the breach could only do so much in the available time to remedy the situation. The media, crucial for a free and fair election anywhere was in South Africa further limited in reach and impact by the fact of widespread illiteracy among black South Africans, itself the direct result of the apartheid system. The South African Police, trained for years to repress the black majority, looked upon the transition with fear and foreboding and this attitude went a long way to facilitate the violence which threatened to upset the transition. These were some of the challenges which all concerned, including the Commonwealth Observer Group had to contend with.

According to its terms of reference, the Group was “to consider the various factors impinging on the credibility of the electoral process as a whole and to determine in its own judgment whether the conditions exist for a free expression of will by the electors and if the result of the election reflects the wishes of the people.”<sup>174</sup> The leader of the Group was Michael Manley, former Prime Minister of Jamaica.

Members of the group started arriving in South Africa at the beginning of April. By 9 April, most had arrived in Johannesburg where they spent the first week on a series of briefings and meetings. They met leaders of the main political parties, officials of the IEC, the IMC, the South African Police, the Human Rights Commission (HRC), Churches and other interested groups.

On 16 April the Group divided into 51 teams and deployed to all nine provinces. The first three days in the provincial centres were taken up with more meetings before being further deployed throughout the country to observe the final stages of the campaign, preparations for the elections and voting and subsequent counting days. They covered major cities, large townships, rural communities and the so called ‘homelands’; In the process they met with local electoral officials, candidates, party activists, peace monitors, local community leaders and UN co-coordinators.

They also attended party rallies, observed voter education exercises and monitored the preparations for the elections. In all, the Group covered 120 districts before polling days, visited over 700 polling stations during the poll, many of them more than once. In their report to the Secretary-General the Group concluded that the “elections represented a free and clear expression of the will of the South African people”; “the result of a credible democratic exercise which was substantially fair.”<sup>175</sup>

In authorising the presence of an observer group at the elections, Commonwealth leaders had said that they “looked forward to welcoming a non-racial and democratic South Africa back into the Commonwealth at the earliest possible opportunity.”<sup>176</sup> On 20 July 1994, at a ceremony in Marlborough House, the Secretary General, Chief Anyaoku, formally welcomed South Africa back into the Commonwealth.

It was the issue of apartheid in South Africa which first brought the Commonwealth into the affairs of the region. In opposing apartheid and eventually expelling South Africa from membership the Commonwealth saw itself as doing no more than remaining true to its declared ethic of non-racialism and commitment to the equality

of all human beings. In time it came to see its involvement as a mission. With the ending of apartheid that mission was finally fully discharged.

## Conclusion

The remit of this essay has been to set forth the contribution of the Commonwealth to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. That has been done and by any yardstick it stands revealed as an outstanding contribution, speaking for itself and calling for no gloss. The question that remains to be asked is: was it all one-sided? Or did Southern Africa in the course of the engagement also contribute to the development of the Commonwealth and if so in what way?

Before the intervention in Southern Africa, the modern Commonwealth was still largely *in statu nascendi*. The whiff of Anglo-centricity still clung to the association. Its horizons were still remarkably narrow. It made little impact in the consciousness of the citizenry of its member countries; and in international politics and diplomacy,

it was still an untried entity. Its only foray into the politics of the emerging developing world was Sir Robert Menzies's mission to Egypt in 1956 to mediate between the British Government and Gamal Abdul and Nasser over the Suez crisis and that was a disaster.

It was Southern Africa that enabled the Commonwealth to begin the process of self-transformation which was to take it from the margins to the centre of world diplomacy. It was in the context of Southern Africa that the Commonwealth began to familiarise itself with passions and aspirations of the post-colonial world. Without this intimate knowledge the Commonwealth would not have realised its potential for service both to its member states and to the wider world community. Today the world is up against a recrudescing xenophobia and intolerance. The Commonwealth is in the forefront of a concerted world resistance to this new danger only because of its experience in Southern Africa. On the issue of equity in international economic relations, the Commonwealth also speaks with unique authority because the Southern African issues were about inequality between human beings, political and economic, on the basis of race and enshrined in law. The various Expert Group reports on aspects of the international economic system which the Commonwealth has been producing since the 1970s would hardly have been possible or credible without the insights gained over a generation of engagement in Southern Africa.

The Commonwealth rightly prides itself in being as much an association of peoples as one of governments. Nowhere is this the case more than in Africa where the Commonwealth is commonly referred to simply as the 'Club'. Nothing better reflects the standing of the Commonwealth within Africa than the fact that since 1995, three African countries outside the traditional sources of recruitment have acceded to Commonwealth membership – Cameroon, Mozambique and Rwanda. And others have put out feelers about the possibility of joining the association. The credibility which makes for this esteem of the Commonwealth would have been inconceivable without the involvement of the Commonwealth in the region. In sum, as a result of

the Commonwealth's contribution to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, it has emerged truer to its own values, immeasurably strengthened in its internal unity and a credible instrument to world peace and development. That is the measure of the dividend paid to the Commonwealth for its principled support for the cause of freedom and justice in Southern Africa.

## Endnotes

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- 3 *Ibid*
- 4 *Ibid*
- 5 Kwame Nkrumah, *Selected Speeches* (Accra 1979) pp. 70 – 71
- 6 *Ibid*
- 7 *Ibid*
- 8 *Ibid*
- 9 Sir Robert Menzies, *Afternoon Light* (London 1967) pp. 206 -7
- 10 *Ibid*
- 11 *Ibid*
- 12 *Ibid*
- 13 Kwame Nkrumah, *Selected Speeches*, pp.71
- 14 Julius Nyerere, *The Commonwealth, South Africa and Tanganyika*, *The Observer*, 7th March 1961, now included in his collective speech and articles, *Freedom and Unity* (OUP 1967), pp. 108 - 113
- 15 *Commonwealth at the Summit*, Volume 1, pp. 67
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- 17 *Ibid*
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- 19 Sir Roy Welensky, *Welensky's 4000 Days* (London 1964), pp. 369; Menzies, *Afternoon Light*, pp. 216. Rhodesian Prime Ministers attended Commonwealth Prime Ministers Meetings only as an act of courtesy. Yet, Harold Wilson was to tell the Lagos Meeting that Rhodesian Prime Ministers had sat at these Meetings on equal terms with other Prime Ministers.
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 50 *Ibid*  
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 52 *The Commonwealth at the Summit 1975*, pp.174 - 5  
 53 *Ibid*  
 54 *Ibid*  
 55 *Ibid*  
 56 *Ibid*  
 57 Richard Brown, *Rhodesia: Recent History*, cit pp. 697-8  
 58 Arnold Smith, *Stiches in Time*, pp, 230  
 59 *Ibid*  
 60 *Report of the Commonwealth Secretary-General 1979* (London Commonwealth Secretariat 1979) pp.4  
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 74 *Ibid*  
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 77 P. Johnson and D. Martin, *Apartheid Terrorism. The Destabilisation Report* (London Commonwealth Secretariat 1989) pp. 154-7  
 78 *The Front-Line States. The Burden of the Liberation* pp. 9  
 79 *Ibid*  
 80 *Ibid*  
 81 *Ibid*  
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 88 Cmnd 7802 (1979). For the statement by Lord Carrington, Chairman of the Conference and the leaders of the two Rhodesian delegations outlining their respective positions, reference Cmnd 7802.  
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- 130 *The Commonwealth at the Summit Volume 2* (London Commonwealth Secretariat 1997) pp. 7 - 12
- 131 *Ibid*
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# 9.5

## **India, Yugoslavia, Indonesia and Sri Lanka under NAM: Contribution in Southern Africa Liberation Struggle**

**Dr Suresh Kumar**

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## Introduction

One of the important features of the International politics in the Post Second World War period was referred to the liberation struggles in Southern Africa. The anti colonial liberation movements of this region received a broader support of individual countries and international organizations. The active support from former Soviet Union and its East European allies and Latin American countries were actively supporting liberation movements such as the African National Congress (ANC) of South Africa, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), a faction of the Patriotic Front (PF) of Zimbabwe, South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) of Namibia, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the Front for the National Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO). Besides, International Organisations like the United Nations (UN), regional organizations like the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and major movements like the Non- Aligned Movement (NAM) were also shaping the political path of these struggles.

It is not a single action which can be completed and have that completion celebrated annually. And for Africa, liberation has four aspects or stages: first its freedom from colonialism and racist minority rule; second is freedom from external economic domination; third is freedom from poverty and from injustice and oppression imposed upon Africans by Africans. And fourth is mental freedom-an end to the mental subjugation which makes Africans look up other people or other nations as inherently superior, and their experience as being automatically transferable to Africa's needs and aspirations. But the Hashim Mbita Project highlights the role of NAM (Here India, Indonesia, former Czechoslovakia and Sri Lanka) in the history of liberation struggle that ended with the independence of South Africa on 27 April 1994. Mahatma Gandhi, started anti-racial movement in South Africa in the history of its liberation struggle. This was the beginning of support to African Liberation movement, which was led by Indian National Congress in pre-independent India. The indentured labour from India to different parts of Southern Africa was the source of information for the national leaders of India. The role of India will be discussed in the two parts such as the pre-independent India and India after independence.

## Pre-Independent India and Liberation of Southern Africa

The documents of Indian freedom struggle shares the broader solidarity with the anti-colonial struggle of Southern Africa. Indian National Congress led the movement of India's freedom struggle and had the first hand experience of Mahatma Gandhi fight against racism in South Africa. Along with it, the different committees of Congress were aware of Africa's anti-colonial struggle. **Jawaharlal Nehru**, Joint Secretary, U.P. South Africa Committee wrote a letter to Sir Sita Ram on 25 June

1914 stated that, "At a meeting of the U.P. South Africa Committee held on the 17th of May 1914 it was resolved to inform the donors that the money contributed by them to

the U.P. South Africa Relief Fund (**A relief fund started by the Congress in 1909, at Gokhale's instance, in aid of Gandhi's passive resistance campaign in South Africa. In 1913 Jawaharlal became Joint Secretary of the U.P. branch**) after December 22,

1913, being not required now for the relief of passive resisters in South Africa, was held by the Committee in their hands subject to the instructions of the donors. I enclose a stamped post card for your reply. Please fill it in and return it to me at your early convenience (**Sita Ram. 1914: 103**).” It showed the real commitment of Indian leadership supporting Southern Africa liberation movement. Jawaharlal Nehru wrote a letter to his father from Berlin on 16.11.1926 and highlighted, “The Trade Union Congress in India has promised to send representatives, so also the South African Indian Congress. Andrews perhaps is coming on behalf of one of these bodies. The Congress at Brussels is likely to be a very representative one and it would be highly desirable to have some representatives of the Indian National Congress, for after all the most menacing imperialism of the day is the British imperialism in India (Letter to Motilal Nehru. 1926: 250).” Similarly, Nehru put report on the Brussels Congress on 19 Feb.1927 and mentions, “Egypt, Persia, Syria, Dutch East Indies, Amman, Korea, Morocco, French North Africa, South Africa, USA, Mexico and states of Central and South America were some of the countries represented and Indian National Congress (INC) was officially represented made the Indian representation important and weighty (**Report on the Brussels Congress. 1927: 279**).”

Nehru spoke on *A Foreign Policy for India* in Montana, Switzerland on 13th September 1927 highlights, “What does the British Commonwealth stand for today? In its domestic policy we see colour and racial prejudice and the doctrine that the white man must be supreme even in countries where he forms a small minority. South Africa appeases the most flagrant example of this, but Canada and Australia are equally strong believes in this doctrine. In Kenya and the adjacent territories it is now proposed to create a new Federation or dominion with all the power in the hands of a few white settlers, who can do what they will to the large members of Indian and the overwhelming African population. Can India associate herself with this group and be a party to colour bar legislation and the exploitation and humiliation of her own

sons and the races of Africa (**Lecture of J. Nehru. 1927: 356**)?” Further he said, “An Indian who goes to other countries must cooperate with the people of that country and win for himself a position by friendship and service. In Kenya, for example, there are many Indians, fellow-sufferers with the African under the domination of a few white settlers. The Indian should co-operate with the Africans and help them as far as possible and not claim a special position for themselves, which is denied to the

indigenous inhabitants of the country (**Lecture of J. Nehru: 362**).”

Nehru further wrote in the note for the working Committee, (League against Imperialism), 1928, “The South African delegates have undertaken to form a branch of the League in South Africa in collaboration with the advanced wing of the white workers, the Negro Workers, the Negro Congress and the South African Indian Congress. This branch will specially work against all colour legislation and

discrimination. So far there has not been much Co-operation between these different organizations and each one of them has had to fight its battle singly. The white workers have of course not only helped but have been the partisans of the colour discrimination policy. It will therefore be a great gain if the League succeeds in bringing about same cooperation and especially in association at least the advanced white workers with the oppressed races in South Africa. A recent agreement between the Government of South Africa and India has apparently been approved in India. I am unable to express an opinion on it, though it does not seem to me to go very far. But in any event it would be foolish to imagine that the troubles of Indian settlers in South Africa are

over and the help of the other communities should be very welcome. Probably some organization will also be formed in North Africa (**Note for the CWC. 1928: 300-01**)."

Nehru did not support any ill-motive activities of Indian communities in Africa. The reply to Mr. U.K. Oza, Editor, "Democrat", P.O. Box No. 97, Jinja (Uganda) on 6 December 1928, Nehru clearly said, "I am sorry to learn that some Indians have created an impression in the minds of the natives of the country that Indians are against their aspirations. This is very unfortunate. I think it should be made perfectly clear to all concerned in East Africa that Indians have not gone there to injure the interests of the inhabitants of the country in any way. If necessary the Indians ought to be prepared to take a back place so far as the natives of the country are concerned. On no account must there be rivalry between the two. I am glad you emphasized this before the native chiefs. You can certainly assure the Chief Justice and other native chiefs that this is the attitude of Indian nationalist leaders. They must not be led away by what a few Indians may say or do. Indians who go to foreign countries go there not to exploit the inhabitants of those countries but to live in co-operation with them for the mutual advantage of both. We go on these terms abroad and we expect others to come on the same terms to India. We want no one to come to India to exploit us. I shall be very glad if the greatest emphasis is laid on this position and every assurance

e is given to the native chiefs (**Letter to Mr. U.K. Oza. 1928**)." Nehru as General Secretary, A.I.C.C. consistently attacked on imperialism and shared it by writing a letter to B. Weinbren, Chairman, South African Federation of Non-European Trade Union, Johannesburg, and January 22nd, 1929. Nehru wrote, "In our struggle against imperialism in all its manifestations. It is a great consolation to us that our comrades from thousand of miles away are with us. We are fully aware of the difficulties against which you have to center in South Africa and we watch your efforts to overcome them with the liveliest sympathy. We feel that imperialism in India has been the bulwark of imperialism in many other parts of the world. A free India would help greatly in

freeing the other oppressed races of the world (**Letter to B. Weinbren. 1929: 89-90**)." Along with it, Nehru wrote an article on *The Imperialist Danger* in The

Tribune on 24th July 1929 mentioned, "If the League against Imperialism had not done any other work, it would still have justified its formation. But during the year of its existence it has already brought nearer together the various peoples of Asia and Africa struggling for freedom, and it has made them realize in some measure that

there is a bond between them and the worker of the west (**J. Nehru. 24th July 1929: 154**)." Nehru saw the Indian human resource was misused by the British colonialism. Nehru Presidential Address at Punjab Provincial Conference in Amritsar on 11th

April 1928, and says, "We are told that we are not capable of defending our country against the foreign invasion, but our soldiers are capable enough of defending the British Empire, in Europe, in Asia and in Africa. You know how our man-power and our wealth were exploited by the British during the last war (**Presidential Address of J. Nehru. 1928: 229**)." Defending commonwealth bandwagon and practicing

imperialistic philosophy, Nehru Presidential address straightforward said in Lahore on 29th December 1929, "The British Empire cannot be a true Commonwealth so long as imperialism in its basis and the exploitation of other races its chief mean of sustenance. The Union of South Africa is not a very happy member of the family, nor is the Irish Free State a willing one. Egypt tariffs away. India could never be an equal member of the Commonwealth unless imperialism and all it implies is discarded

(**Presidential Address of J. Nehru. Lahore. 1929: 190**)." The pre-independent India faced the communal divide and rule politics spread by British colonialist. The colonialist adopted the similar politics of division in African continent as well. Nehru wrote to Mahatma Gandhi during Round Table Conference, in Allahabad on Sept. 1st, 1931 giving the reference of Egypt, "There is a newspaper cutting giving an article from an Egyptian paper (It stated that the settlement of the minority problem in Egypt was based on trust and goodwill of Muslims and Christians and not on reservations and safeguards). The example of Egypt has often been thrust upon us.

It is well that we should know what it was (**Letter to Mahatma Gandhi. 1931: 29**)." Along with it, Nehru wrote to Sir Mohammed Iqbal on 11th December 1933 and mention, "Today in India there is also lately no cultural or racial difference between the Muslim and Hindu man. — As a matter of fact this question has only a historical and academic interest because modern industrial conditions and rapid transport and frequent intercourse between different peoples are resulting in developing an international type of Culture and obliterating to large extent national and cultural boundaries. Does Sir Mohammed Iqbal approve of what is taking place in Central Asia, Turkey, Egypt and Persia (**Letter to Sir Mohammed Iqbal. 1933: 173**)?" Nehru wrote on *Our Literature* in Almora District Jail, 28 July 1935 mentions, "It has also

become necessary that we read and know about the present state of other countries — the European Countries, Russia, America, China, Japan, Egypt and many others. It is impossible to understand the present state of affairs without knowledge of the past. All questions we face today have their roots in the past. So the knowledge of history becomes necessary, and not merely the history of a nation or two but of the whole

world (**Prison Memoirs of Nehru. 1935: 440-41**)."

Jawaharlal Nehru on the Political trip to Europe, revealed the colonial administration in Africa by addressing to Press on *India and the World* and Nehru, "Events in the deserts and waste lands of East Africa echo in distant chancelleries and cast their heavy shadow over Europe; a shot fired in eastern Siberia may set the world on fire



(**Address to Press. 1936: 52-53**)." He added, "The British great idea of Middle Eastern Empire did not materialize after the Great War, but, even so, England managed to keep a fair measure of control over the land route to India. It is that governing policy which has induced England suddenly to become a Champion of the League of Nations in

Ethiopia (**Address to Press. 1936: 53-54**)." He further said, "Some people imagine that India may develop into a free dominion of the British group of nations like Canada or Australia. The Drift is greatest in the case of Ireland, partly for historical reasons and South Africa. In South Africa, the Minister of Defense warned on 5 February 1935 that attempts to "rashly commit South Africa in Overseas War" would lead to Civil War (**Address to Press. 1936: 55**)." But Nehru answered it affirmatively and said, "Our struggle was but part of a far wider struggle for freedom, and the forces that moved us were moving millions of people all over the world and Driving them into action. All Asia was astir from the Mediterranean to the far East, from the Islamic West to the Buddhist East; Africa responded to the new spirit, Europe, broken up by the war, was

struggling to find a new equilibrium (**Address to Press. 1936: 172**)."

The problem of Tanzania and colonial rule was on the same line as compare to other countries. Nehru Statement to the press highlighted that "For some years past the problem of Indians settled in Zanzibar has been before the country. The British Government of the colony, supported by the Colonial Office in London, has been devising laws and regulations which crush Indian trade and will ruin the Indian Community in Zanzibar. Our Countrymen there refused tamely to this process of squeezing out, and they protested with all their might. They looked to India for sympathy and help in their trials, and they did not look in vain. The people of India responded to that call and at innumerable meetings expressed their solidarity with their countrymen in Zanzibar. The Congress gave emphatic expression to this feeling and passed numerous resolutions in support of the cause of Indians in Zanzibar. Even the Government of India appeared to sympathize and considered the proposed legislation as a menace to Indian interests and a breach of previous agreements. But the wheels of the Imperial Government and the Colonial Office moved on, regardless of Indian interests, and the legislation was passed with minor variations (*As the clove growers association's monopoly of the trade was being resented by Indian traders, the Government of India protested to the British Government against the proposed legislation guaranteeing the association's monopoly. As a result, some concessions were obtained, but these being inadequate, the Zanzibar Indians appealed to the Congress for help. The Congress, supporting their demands, called upon Indian traders to boycott clove imports from Zanzibar*) (**Address to Press. 28 August 1937: 714-15**)."

Nehru further added, "Ruin faces the 15,000 Indians in Zanzibar and they have resolved not to submit to this usurpation of their rights. A month ago they started their campaign of passive resistance against these measures and they are carrying on their peaceful and gallant struggle. They have voluntarily gone out of the port trade in cloves in which they have been traditionally engaged. The Working Committee of the Congress, at its last meeting, called upon the people of India to help their countrymen

in every way and demanded an embargo on the entry of cloves into India. Further they asked the people to boycott cloves so long as this problem was not settled to the satisfaction of Indian interests. This was the least that our people could do to help our countrymen abroad in their hour of trial. The Government of India meanwhile has veered round from its old position and has become an apologist of the new legislation in Zanzibar which creates a clove monopoly. Probably it had to do so because of pressure from the imperial government, of which it is a subordinate branch. But it is surprising to find that certain elected members of the Central Assembly should have also forsaken the Zanzibar Indians and helped the Government in opposing the demand for an embargo. The arguments advanced by them showed an astonishing and pro-imperialist bent of mind (*For instance, Jinnah, expressing his doubt whether the government deserved to be censured, said in the Central Assembly on 23 August 1937 that so far as he had followed it, the scheme "is at any rate intended to safeguard the interests of the Indians fairly without in any way prejudicing the objective, namely, that the relief must be given to the growers as far as possible..."*). Those who oppose India's struggle for freedom, thereby supporting British imperialism in India, usually support this imperialism abroad also, even at the cost of Indian interests. It is utterly wrong to say that our struggle in Zanzibar is to protect Indian vested interests as against the interests of the people of the country. The Congress holds by the principle that in every country the interests of the people of that country must be dominant and must have first consideration. We apply that principle to India and therefore we cannot tolerate any foreign interests imposing their will on us. We apply that principle to other countries also and we would willingly put an end to Indian interests there if they conflict with those of the people of the country. But we are not prepared to submit to, and we shall fight, any attempt to injure Indian interests for the advancement of British imperialism. In Zanzibar it is this imperialism that is functioning and it is in its interests that the changes have been made. An anti-Indian clove monopoly has been established to enrich the British monopolist at the expense of the Indian small trader. The Zanzibar distillery, which is an imperialist British concern, is in a position to buy from the monopolist association clove stems at half the rate that would otherwise have been obtainable in a free foreign market (**Address to Press. 28 August 1937: 715-16.**)”

Secondly, it is notorious that Britain's colonial administration, as that of India, is exceedingly expensive, extravagant and top-heavy. To keep this running and to find money for it, the people are heavily taxed. The burden falls especially on the poor. In many African colonies the iniquitous 'hut-tax' or a 'poll-tax' is imposed on the poorest

to enable the administration to pay heavy salaries and allowances to its officials who are usually British. Sir George Maxwell, (1871-1959); *a British served in Malaya for several years and retired as Chief Secretary in 1926; was later Vice-Chairman of the slavery Committee of the League of Nations.*) a distinguished public servant of Malaya, has recently pointed out the scandal of these expensive and over-staffed

administrations run at the cost of impoverishing the already poor and of stinting

the barest expenditure on public works, public health, education and other essential public services. He gives many startling figures from Malaya and Africa. One colony with a total population of 3,001 (men, women and children) maintains a heavily paid Governor and Commander-in-Chief and numerous officials. But we need not cross the seas for such instances; we have remarkable examples in our own country.

Nehru remarked, "Zanzibar has put up with such an expensive over-staffed British administration. Like Topsy, it "grewed". Fattening on the prosperity of the clove trade, which had been built up by Indian industry. Every boom period was taken advantage of to add to the number or emoluments of the army administrators. Then came the slump and it was not so easy for the unhappy country to shoulder this heavy burden. Instead of reducing the number of big officials and the amounts paid to them in salaries and allowances and thus making the administration fit in to some extent with the necessities and realities, fresh sources of revenue – not for public works or education – but to keep the administration running in the old way were anxiously sought after. Further taxation was out of the question- and so this device of collaring the profits of the clove, trade and running the administration with their help. These profits, which would have been spread out over a large number of traders, were diverted, by the creation of a monopoly, to the administrative machine as well as to British imperialist concerns. Recently, a new burden has been undertaken by the Zanzibar Government for the honour and glory of British imperialism. The recurring cost of a naval coastal defence unit, or part of the cost, will fall on Zanzibar (**Address to Press. 28 August 1937: 716-17**)."

Thirdly, the political rule of the British over the colonies is perpetuated by this strategy of creating conflict on other issues and of diverting the attention of the Arab and African inhabitants from the fundamental anti-imperialist issue. Anti-Indian feelings are sought to be raised and the real imperialist exploiter hides behind this screen and carries on merrily with his work of exploitation. Nehru reopened it and said, "This clove monopoly, it is obvious, has little to do with the interests of the African and Arab growers of clove. The monopoly is bound to hurt them in the long run. A monopoly by an independent national state might have some virtue in it; monopoly by a socialist state would inevitably benefit the growers as they would be the owners and beneficiaries of the monopoly. But a monopoly by an imperialist government in a subject country can only benefit that government and the imperialism it represents." "The issue is thus quite clear for all who wish to understand it. The Zanzibar Indians are the victims of British imperialist policy, and their cause of all of us in India. For us it is a national question of grave import and no communal considerations affect it. Yet it is interesting to remember that the Indian merchants in Zanzibar, who are suffering from this new legislation and are fighting against it, are Muslims. Some of the Muslim members of the Central Assembly, who have constituted themselves as the guardians of Muslim interests and who voted recently with the government and against the interests of Zanzibar Indian Muslims, might well ponder over this fact."

“The problem has a larger significance for it affects all Indians overseas as well as the national status of India. India cannot tolerate the humiliation and injury of her children abroad, and when they call us for succor, can we remain silent? Wherever they live or carry on business they are subjected to ignominy and discrimination, and constant conflicts arise. Today we cannot give them adequate and direct aid, but the time will come when the long arm of India will reach them and will be strong enough to protect them. But even today we are not so weak as to watch helplessly the ruin of our countrymen (**Address to Press. 28 August 1937: 717-18**).”

The result of this brave resistance of Zanzibar Indians will have far-reaching consequences. If they win, they will increase the status of Indians abroad and all our countrymen overseas will be stronger to face the difficulties that encompass them. If they lose, it is not they only that lose, but India loses, and all her children abroad, wherever they might be, will sink in their helplessness. Zanzibar Indians occupy a strategic position among overseas Indians in the British colonies. They are a strong community which has played and is playing a decisive role in the economic life of the country. It is not easy to ignore them or suppose them, and if we help them they can win.

Nehru clearly stated, “What can we do to help them? We had asked for an Official embargo on cloves but the British Government, unhappily supported by some of our own countrymen, has refused to have this. Let us then have an unofficial embargo and boycott cloves and stop their import into India. This is a big enough weapon to paralyze the clove business of Zanzibar, for India is the biggest purchaser and consumer of cloves. Already, this has had a marked effect in Zanzibar where the price of cloves has fallen greatly and the government there is gravely embarrassed. We must organize efficiently this unofficial embargo and show to our alien government that the people of India can act effectively despite its opposition.”

“The Working Committee of the Congress has given the lead and I appeal to my countrymen to follow it. I appeal to the merchants not to import or deal in cloves. I appeal to all consumers to give up the use of cloves till this struggle ends satisfactorily for us. It is a small sacrifice but the cause for which we work is a big one. And let us remember that meanwhile our countrymen in Zanzibar are bravely carrying on their campaign of passive resistance (**Address to Press. 28 August 1937: 718**).” Along with it, *The Hindustan Times*, published this news under the heading *Formation of Clove Boycott Committees*, 13 September 1937 that stated, “It is time to take effective steps to bring about the boycott of cloves in India to help our countrymen in Zanzibar. For this purpose, I have appointed today a committee in consultation with the leading merchants of Bombay and other colleagues. This Committee is a strong Committee, strong from the Congress point of view and strong in its inclusion of leading merchants dealing in the trade of cloves. The strength of this committee is a measure of the earnestness with which we are going to deal with this problem. This Committee is meant for all India, but to make it effective and workable it consists of Bombay men only so far. I hope it will co-opt leading merchants of Calcutta, Madras and elsewhere.

I hope also the clove boycott Committees consisting of businessmen and others will be formed in Calcutta and Madras by provincial Congress Committees in cooperation with the local merchants and in consultation with the Central Committee. We must carry on this boycott throughout and there are going to be no half-hearted measures

in this respect (**The Hindustan Times. 1937: 723**). Further it stated, "I congratulate the merchants on their patriotic attitude and decision. I send greetings to our countrymen in Zanzibar and assure them again of our fullest support. Indians in Zanzibar have called for help, we have heard that call and they will hear our answer which will be an answer of action (**The Hindustan Times. 1937: 724**)."

Nehru in his message to the Natal Indian Congress on 5 June 1939 stated that 'and now in the Union of South Africa the pledged word of the Union Government has been deliberately broken and an attempt is being made to segregate Indians. Political rights had been denied us for long; now even human rights are being withheld. This is the empire to which we have the misfortune to be tied. The sooner this empire ends, the better for humanity; the sooner we cut away from it, the better for us. India is weak today and cannot do much for her children abroad, but she does not forget them, and every insult to them is humiliation and sorrow for her. And a day will come when her strength will compel justice for them. Even today in her weakness the will of her people cannot be ultimately ignored. To our countrymen in South Africa, I say that we are with you in every act of courage that you perform in honour of India and her dear name. It is never right to submit to evil and national humiliation, and every attempt to impose these must be resisted, whatever the consequences. Dead nations submit to dishonour, but we are a living and a proud people and I would rather say

that we faced extinction than submitted to dishonour (**Message to the Natal Indian Congress. 1939**).' Replying to one Cable to the President, Indian Congress, Durban

from Bombay on 29.08.1940 Nehru wrote, "Your cable received late. Indians cannot accept any position regarding racial inferiority and segregation. You must demand full citizenship rights (**Cable to the President. 1940: 234**)."

## Indians During Colonialism in Africa

Nearly 60 different laws had been enacted in South Africa restricting the liberty and the economic and social development of the 2, 50,000 Indian settlers. The Peggings Act established separate areas for Indians, outside which they might neither reside nor occupy nor acquire ownership of landed property. Nehru wrote, “My greetings and good wishes to Indians in South Africa. I have followed with deep anxiety the troubles and racial barriers and disabilities imposed upon them. Not knowing all the facts, I am unable to say much at this stage. But one can never accept anywhere in the world a status of inferiority. No Indian worthy of his country can thus demean

himself and his motherland (**Message to South Africa Indians. 1945: 434**).

Nehru spoke on *Independence in Three Years* at Allahabad, 2 October 1945, “I have also received a letter from Africa in which it is stated that the Africans are watching India’s struggle for freedom, which they wish to follow. Their fight for their independence on the lines of the Congress indicates that the question of the independence of India has got more significance. It implies that the Congress, in fighting for independence, is also fighting for the independence of other slave countries. Therefore, India will have to persist in fighting, not only for the freedom of its own, but for the greater responsibility of taking up the struggle of other countries (**Address of J. Nehru. 1945: 209**).” A letter written to Mr. Charles Onyeama from Nigeria on 14 May 1946 mentioned, “I was glad to get your letter. You will forgive me if I write briefly as I am full up with work here. But I want to tell you that, engrossed as we are in the future of India, we do not forget the people of Africa. We shall help them and stand by them whenever occasion arises. Your question about nonviolence may be answered in many ways. But perhaps the most effective way is to say that you can only use guns when you have them. Also that bigger guns prevail and so you must

take care to have the biggest guns. Normally the biggest gun or the latest weapon of offence is not available to the people (**Letter to Mr. Charles Onyeama. Nigeria. 1946: 530**).” Nehru conveyed the message to a visiting South African Indian delegation on 3 June 1946 and stated, “Indian does not intend to recognize or submit to the

theory and practice of racial arrogance and discrimination, and would not tolerate the subjection of Indians abroad to any indignity. The time has come when the theory and practice of racial arrogance and discrimination must be challenged. It is true that at the present moment we are not strong enough as a nation, or as a people, to put an end to racial discrimination and national indignity. But the time is coming soon when we may be strong enough. Whether we are strong enough or not, once thing, however, should be certain – that we prefer any consequences to submission to this evil. The issue of Indians in South Africa has become a world issue. It is up to the Indians there to realize this fact, and act worthily on the world stage, which they occupy in this matter. They have not only their own dignity and interest to safeguard, but have the honour of India in their keeping. That is not a light obligation. Let no man, woman or child, who claims to be Indian, forget this privilege and obligation

at any time. Let him remember that the day is coming when the strong arm and stout heart of India will protect her children, wherever they might be. South African Indians should not claim anything which might be against the rights and dignity of the African people, as claims should be based on the broader foundation of racial and international equality. We must remember in this matter we do not stand alone. The whole of Asia and Africa will stand with us, and we shall stand with them (**Message to a visiting South African Indian Delegation. 1946: 542**)." Nehru statements on food

for Indians in Mauritius on 17 June 1946 in Hindustan Times, highlighted, "Though there may be distress in India we cannot forget our countrymen abroad and any appeal from them to the mother country must always have a hearing. Our people in Mauritius have especially suffered from the lack of the food they were used to. On their behalf, a request which is modest enough has been made for 2,000 tons of pulses. (*An Indian member of the Mauritius Legislative Council came to India early in 1946 to urge the Government of India for 2000 tons of pulses to help restore a balanced diet for Indians in Mauritius.*) They have avoided asking for rice and wheat which are so badly needed here. What the situation in India is as regards pulses I do not know.

But if it is at all possible I hope this request of theirs will be agreed to and pulses sent to Mauritius (**Statements on food for Indians in Mauritius. 17 June 1946: 543**)."

Similarly, Nehru replying to a cable of the Secretary of the Natal Indian Congress telling of the struggle in South Africa on 18 July 1946 that stated, "We are watching with anxious interest and deep admiration our country-men's heroic struggle in South Africa. (*In protest against the segregation law Indians in Durban started a satyagraha in June 1946 by establishing tented camps in the European residential zone. On 24 June 1946, 99 passive resisters were arrested. We shall be with you to the end. Jai Hind*). Some Allied fighter planes have also cooperated with the Dutch. It is well

for us to remember that, while we are inevitably concerned with our own struggle for independence, our brothers and sisters in Indonesia are fighting to retain their independence and to protect their new-born Republic. The 17th of August is the Independence Day of Indonesia and I am sure that on that day large numbers of people in India would like to end their greetings and good wishes to the people, of Indonesia and to express their solidarity in the cause of Asian Freedom from the East, South-East and West of this great continent becomes ever more evident. In order to ensure this unity and to develop closer relations between the different countries of Asia it has been proposed to hold a conference of representatives from Asian countries in January or February next. Meanwhile, our thoughts go to Java and all other places in Asia where the struggle for freedom is going on today (**Cable of the Secretary. 1946**)."

The Congress Working Committee in its meeting in Wardha passed a resolution on the issues of restrictions on immigration in East Africa (Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika) and stated that 'the Working Committee having heard Mr. R.B. Pandya on behalf of the East African Indian National Congress and Mr. Harichand M. Shah on behalf of the Africa and Overseas Merchants Chamber, on the attempts made

by the Governments of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika to introduce anti-Indian immigration legislation, express their deep concern over the situation developing in these territories. (*The bill aimed at making permanent the immigration restrictions imposed under cover of shortage of food and housing as a temporary war-measure. The bill also stated that an immigration permit might be refused if it was sought for employment which a suitably qualified resident could take up. Permits required capital sums from the immigrants seeking to start business on their own account.*). In view of the assurances given by the East African Governments to the Government of India that defence regulations restricting immigration were a temporary measure to meet certain wartime needs, the Working Committee take a very grave view of the refusal of these Governments to withdraw these regulations as promised, and ask the Government of India to take appropriate measures to secure without delay the fulfillment of these promises by the Government concerned. The Working Committee can see no justification whatsoever for the introduction of the immigration restriction bill in the present state of the political, economic and social development of the East African territories and their inhabitants, and is emphatically of opinion that the British Colonial Office should restore pre-war conditions as regards immigration by withdrawing wartime regulations and should prevent the anti-Indian policy of the European inhabitants from being given sanction and legislative shape. Indians were in East Africa long before any British set foot on that soil and they could point to as many generations of useful industry on the coast as well as inland as the white settlers could count years of residence. In consideration of this history of colonization and opening up of East African territories, Mr. Winston Churchill came to the conclusion and wrote in his book many years ago that no government with a scrap of respect for honest dealing between man and man could introduce a policy of keeping Indians out of East Africa. The Committee are also of opinion that any step to bring about the economic union of the three East African territories should include the provision for equal representation as proposed by the British Colonial Office and should not yield to the pressure of the European population to abandon this provision. The Committee are also of opinion that any step to bring about the economic union of the three East African territories should include the provision for equal representation as proposed by the British Colonial Office and should not yield to the pressure of the European population to abandon this provision. The Committee reiterates the protest against the reservation of the best part of the land, the Highlands, for white men, by excluding even the Africans to whom the soil of their own country must belong. The Committee wish all success to the delegation (*The Government of India had deputed Maharaj Singh, K. Sarwar Hasan and C.S. Jha to East Africa to examine the extent to which Indian interests would be affected by the proposed Immigration Restriction Bill.*) going to East Africa under the leadership of Rajah Sir Maharaj Singh to study the situation on the advisability of dropping their proposed anti-Indian immigration legislation which is now being precipitated, in view of developments in India, and hope that they will be able to convince the East African Governments that any anti-Indian



policy encouraged in East Africa will be an intolerable addition to the insults and provocations which are aimed at India and which undoubtedly serve to postpone the day of realization of true world peace and security. The Working Committee have noted with pleasure that cordial relations prevail between the Africans and Indians, and trust that there will be continued cooperation between the two for their mutual advancement, and for the removal of the disabilities which are sought to be imposed upon both of them by the white settlers (**Restrictions on Immigration to East Africa: 1946: 181**).’ This message was spread among the Indian masses living in the country

and East Africa and stated, “My good wishes to our countrymen and countrywomen in East Africa and through them to the Africans. The Congress Working Committee have already expressed their opinion on the position of Indians in East Africa and the attempts being made to prevent further immigration of Indians there and otherwise to discriminate against our people.(*see preceding item*). Nowhere in the world can we accept a lower status for our people than the status of others. Nowhere will we approve of racialism or the suppression of one people or race by another. Indians abroad must always remember that they have the honour of India in their keeping. That is a great privilege and responsibility. That honour involves fair and friendly dealings with the people of the country they go to. It involves also non-submission to wrong and injustice (**Goodwill to East Africa. 1946**).

Along with it, Congress put its position on before the Peace Conference in the media clearly and mentioned that India is naturally interested not only in the problems of some of the African territories but in the wider and more vital problem of ensuring peace and security. An Indian delegate will have to express India’s viewpoint on this more basic problem also. For the present, however, the party feel that no steps need be taken regarding the choice of fresh delegates. The interim government can consider the situation then existing and decide this matter. Similarly, the issue came before the General Assembly of U.N.O. regarding some provisional arrangements that have been made for the representation of India at the forthcoming meeting in America at which the South African Indian question is likely to come up for consideration. It was suggested some names too which included Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai A till lately the Agent General in South Africa. However, it was said that Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar might be induced to go more specially for a meeting of the section over which he has been presiding. In South Africa Indian gallantly fought not only for the rights of Indians but of all people and races under subjection. The Indian Community in South Africa organized passive resistance on 13 June 1946 in protest against the Ariatic Land Tenure and Indian Representation Bill which became law from 3 June 1946. There were about 200,000 Indians in South Africa.

Nehru wrote on the conditions of the Afro-Asian countries and highlighted that, “The problem of the colonies and dependent countries thus is a vital part of the world problem, and an attempt to isolate it results in other problems becoming for more difficult to solution. Behind that problem today lie the passion and hunger for freedom, equality and better living condition which consume hundreds of millions

of people in Asia and Africa. That passion cannot be ignored, for anything that drives vast number of human beings in a powerful factor in the dynamics of today (**Nehru. Colonialism Must Go. 1946: 509**) We want to raise our own standards to the

highest level. But it is obvious that high standards in Asian and African Countries cannot be allowed. If the people of any Country can maintain high standards by their own productive efforts they are welcome to do so, but such standards must not be at the expense of starvation and misery elsewhere (**Nehru. Colonialism Must Go: 511**)----- It is also realized that there should be no monopolies in materials or markets or in the natural resources of the World. These should be shared equitably for the advantage of all. But it must be remembered that the peoples of Asia and Africa have been exploited and deprived of their natural riches and resources for many generations, and others have profited enormously by these one-sided transactions. It has to be remembered that this had resulted in terrible poverty and backward conditions. The balance has to be righted (**Nehru. Colonialism Must Go. 1946: 512**).” In certain parts of Africa it may perhaps not be immediately possible to establish independent state of the kind mentioned above. Even so, independence in

the near future should be aimed at and a large measure of it granted immediately, with suitable provision for rapid advance in education, commerce and allied fields”. (**Nehru. Colonialism Must Go: 512**).

Nehru interview on Free India’s Foreign Policy to the Press in Bombay on 15 March 1946, mentioned, “Obviously India will be attracted more to those Countries which support its cause of independence and progress. Its general policy is sure to be one of promoting World peace, preventing aggression anywhere, and helping, in so far as possible, in the attainment of freedom by the subject Countries of Asia and Africa

(**Press Interview on Free. 1946: 525**).”

Then there is the old question which was recently before the United Nations, the question of Indians in South Africa, which again has raised very vital issues not only for India, but for the whole world, because it raises the vital issue of racialism. “We are intimately concerned with those people of Indian origin who settled down in South Africa and who have become South African citizens. They being South African citizens we have nothing to do with them politically, although culturally we are connected, because they went from India. But because it involves these questions of racialism, because it involves not only the self-respect of India and the Indian people, but of every people in Asia, and for every people in the world, this has become a vital matter. Again you will observe the patience we have shown in this matter, how we have proceeded year after year arguing patiently, trying to make the other people understand, going to the United Nations, the United Nations passing resolutions and

our trying to fulfill the directions of the U.N.O. Now another resolution has been passed (*On 2 December 1950, the General Assembly passed a resolution calling upon India, Pakistan and South Africa to discuss at a round table conference the conditions of Asians in South Africa. It directed South Africa not to proceed with the implementation of the Group Areas Act, which provided for the separation of different ethnic groups and*

*racess, and suggested the setting up of a commission to hold negotiations if no decision was reached at the round table conference by 1 April 1951).* As the resolutions go, we welcome this. What it will lead to I do not know. But again one thing is certain. Whether it takes a month or a year or more, we shall not submit to any racialism in any part of the world” (**Parliamentary Debate. 1950: 424-25**).

## Independent India and Liberation of Southern Africa

Nehru wrote a letter to B.N. Rau in 1950 and mentioned, “The South African debate is going on now. (On 14 November, Vijayalakshmi Pandit moved a resolution in the *ad hoc* Committee of the General Assembly recommending to the South African Government “all steps necessary to bring its treatment of people of Indian origin in South Africa into conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter and the Declaration of Human Rights.” The resolution also noted “With regret” the enactment of the Group Areas Act by the Union Government as contrary to previous resolutions on the issue.) I am not very excited about it does not make too much difference whether we get the requisite majority or not. Of course I should like to get that majority. But the value of a resolution of the U.N. (On 20 November, the *ad hoc* Committee adopted a resolution moved by Bolivia and four other countries in amended form calling for round-table discussions between India, Pakistan and South Africa, and the appointment of a U.N. mediator if the parties failed to reach agreement, and asking the Union Government not to implement the Group Areas Act. India accepted this resolution in place of her own resolution.) in this matter is not very great. I am anxious, however, that our point of view should be put firmly and plainly and that there should be no weakening on it.

(**B.N. Rau Papers. 1950: 580**). The UN resolution of 2 December 1950 urged South Africa, India and Pakistan to renew discussions at a round table conference on the conditions of Asians in South Africa and asked the South African Government to refrain from implementing the Group Areas Act pending decision of the proposed conference). The Union Government of South Africa has again treated the latest UN decision with some disdain. The South African Government described the UN resolution as intervention in the domestic affairs of a member-State. It however expressed readiness to resume the round table conference on the basis of the formula agreed upon in February 1950 according to which there would be *no departure from, or prejudice to the standpoint of the respective Governments in regard to the question of domestic jurisdiction.*

The question of Indians in the African Continent as a whole raises issues of great importance from the point of view of the future, for Africa is rapidly changing and is perhaps the problem continent of the future. If Indians fir in there in a friendly way with the Africans, then we can be of service to Africa and her people and be welcome there; not otherwise. India had made it clear (on 27 March 1951) that India can only meet and discuss on the basis of that decision. India feared that there can be no

proper solution of the South African Indian problems in the near future. It is patent that India cannot surrender there and thus betray the rights not only of Indians in South Africa but the principle for which they have always stood and which applies to many other parts of the world also. At the same time, the Union Government continues to be obstinate and, perhaps, it cannot be any other than obstinate on this issue because its very policy is based on racialism. So, in South Africa there is this conflict on one of the vital issues of the world and it can only be finally resolved on a world scale. War scares and preparations the world over might cloud this issue for the moment and divert people's attention from it. And yet, nevertheless, it remains one of the basic issues of our time. Perhaps it is a part of the larger problem that troubles the world today.

Further, Nehru speech on "Foundation of Sapru House, the building for the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi, 20 October 1950, said, "There is no doubt that in the course of the next generation a very great is going to happen in Africa and people who think that Africa is going to remain more or less static are as mistaken

as those who thought that Asia was going to remain static". (**Lecture of Nehru. 1950: 513**). Nehru speeches at a public meeting, Jamshedpur, 26 November 1950 on *Building a New India* added, "It is obvious that when we fought for our freedom, it

was not merely to remove the British from here but also to have democratic rule here. We want that there should be democracy all Asia and Africa."(**Public meeting in Jamshedpur. 1950: 13**).

Nehru address to the students of Gujarat University on "Facing Life". Ahmadabad, 31 January 1951, ----- Now, I should like to give you another line of thought. This Industrial Revolution, developing in various ways and spreading in various countries, had in it certain contradictions. I mean certain developments followed which prevented attainment of an equilibrium. And if it apparently attained certain equilibrium in the nineteenth century, it was at the expense of other countries which were not industrially developed. While Western Europe and America were apparently peaceful and progress in advanced countries was gaining momentum, there lay Asia and Africa which were not industrially developed but which fed Europe and America in some ways with raw materials and took their manufactured goods. Now, I am not talking in political term, but I am trying to rationally examine these developments. What I am trying to put across to you is that while a certain apparent equilibrium was achieved in the western world, it was not clearly an equilibrium, as when changes took place in the eastern world gradually, it resulted in conflict in the western world following the spread of colonies in Asia and Africa. This was the result of the new industrial techniques and other things pushing them out to these areas where they could get raw materials. The race assumed tremendous speed in the eighties of the nineteenth century, when all these industrially developed countries specially went to Africa, a huge continent, with huge areas, and rapidly divided it up. Well, then a little later Germany advanced rather rapidly in the industrial field, and in some ways went ahead of other nations. It found that the world was already more or less cut

up and shared and divided by some other Powers, much to her annoyance. One of the results of that was the First World War brought about by a demand for a share in the world's spoils by some of the colonial and imperialist Powers. Well, the First World War resulted in Germany's defeat and other developments. Among those developments was the coming of the Russian Revolution, another major event in the world's history. It was a big shake-up that followed the First World War with all its consequences. Nevertheless, it did not solve the problem created by the growth of industry as in certain countries the industrial growth had gone so far ahead of other countries that we saw a period of considerable imbalance between the two wars. This brought about the Second World War (**Address of Nehru on Greater Production. 1951:18**). Nehru wrote a letter to Deshmukh in January 7, 1952 stated,

“Apart from domestic needs, I think we should definitely cater for Indians abroad. This can be done in two ways --- scholarships and libraries at selected places. We give some scholarships already and they have borne very good fruit. The whole of Africa has been influenced by this act of ours and looks up to India. My Ministry has prepared two notes for discussion with you. These notes deal with this question of scholarships to students from overseas countries and libraries abroad. The idea is to do something on a very much smaller scale of the kind that the British Council does. Dutt (*Subimal Dutt, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs at this time*) has prepared two notes on this. I am not sending these to you directly now, but I am asking Dutt to have a talk with Finance Secretary (*K.R.K. Menon*) so that it might be easier for you to consider this. I have not myself considered the notes, but I agree entirely with the principles involved. I should like a sum of roundabout Rs. 50/- lakhs to be put aside for the encouragement of cultural activities in India and abroad. If you think this is too much, it might be reduced (*Although in his letter to Nehru of 16 February,*

*Deshmukh had promised to consider the Education Ministry's proposal for augmenting the existing activities within a ceiling of an additional Rs. 25 lakhs, his actual budget allocation for cultural activities for 1952-53 was only about Rs. 50 lakhs to be put aside for the encouragement of cultural activities in India and abroad. If you think this is too much, it might be reduced. (Although in his letter to Nehru of 16 February, Deshmukh had promised to consider the Education Ministry's proposals for augmenting the existing activities within a ceiling of an additional Rs. 25 lakhs, his actual budget allocation for cultural activities for 1952-53 was only about Rs. 8.5 lakhs, out of which Rs. 2 lakhs were provided for promoting cultural relations with foreign countries and the rest for encouraging educational and cultural activities in India).* How we spend

it will, of course, have to be considered carefully. (Letter from Nehru to Chintaman. 1952: 310).<sup>1</sup> Nehru communicated with Kishorelalbhai on March 15, 1952, *Editor of Harijan and other Navjivan group of publications, from 1948-52* stated, “... There is a big question in Africa now of the relations of Africans and Indians. I am quite clear that we must cooperate with each other and that Indians must put African interests

first. I am also clear that any resort to violence will be harmful.” (**Communication with Kishorelalbhai. 1952: 533**).

Nehru notes to *Secretary-General and Secretary, Commonwealth Relations, 16 March 1952*, stated, “As a Government, of course, we should not say anything about the proposed joint struggle of the Africans and Indians in South Africa. That is a matter for non-official bodies here to take up, if they wish to do so. But the Government of India should not and cannot remain quiescent. I think it would be desirable for our representatives in Washington and London specially to be asked to make some representations on this subject as suggested by Secretary, C.R. It is also desirable for us to give some facts to the Press and suggest to them that they might write on this subject. Secretary, C.R., might Draft a brief note containing facts which would help the press. I should like to have a copy of that note for other purposes also. We should take up a definite attitude of full sympathy with the Africans and there should be no element of patronage about it. Indeed, we should say that in Africa, African interests must come

first.” (**Note of Nehru to Secretary. 1952**). Further, Nehru Drafted and adopted at the meeting of the AICC on 22 March 1952 on *The Situation in South Africa* highlighted

that the All India Congress Committee deeply regrets that the Union Government of South Africa have rejected the direction of the General Assembly of the United Nations regarding the steps to be taken to settle the problem of persons of Indian origin in South Africa, and have continued to implement ruthlessly its policy of apartheid. Both in the administrative and legislative spheres fresh disabilities, hardships and indignities have been imposed on the non-white population of the Union, including Indians. For many years past, the Government of India has endeavored to find an honourable way for a settlement of this problem in South Africa. All these attempts have, however, failed because of the attitude of the South African Union Government, which has consistently ignored the decisions of the United Nations. The Group Areas Act (*Passed in 1950, this act sought to empower the Government to create racial zones in urban areas in which members of a particular racial group could have exclusive rights of occupancy, ownership and trade.*) introduces complete segregation in the whole of the Union and envisages the uprooting of thousands of non-whites,

particularly Indians, from their settled localities. Its chief aim is the liquidation of the Indian Community in South Africa. Other legislations, (*For example, the Population Registration Act of 1950 and the Separate Representation of Voters Act of 1951,*) are also based on racial discrimination and the domination of a relatively small racial minority at the cost of the great majority of the population of the country. The Policy

of the South African Government is a challenge to, and a defiance of, the Charter of the United Nations and the principles governing Human Rights which the United Nations has laid down. The Government and the people of India can never accept any policy based on racial discrimination. They have endeavored and will continue to endeavour to find a peaceful settlement in consonance with the basic principles for which they stand and on which the United Nations Organisation has been built up. Defiance of these principles must lead to racial conflict on a vast scale. The A.I.C.C. welcomes the decision of the Supreme Court of South Africa declaring the South African Government’s Act placing coloured voters on a separate electoral roll to be

invalid. (*The Separate Representation of Voters Act of 1951 provided for the enrolment of the minority 'coloured' community in a separate electoral list. On 20 March 1952, the Appellate Division of the South African Supreme Court in Bloemfontein struck it down as 'invalid'*). The Committee trusts that the South African Union Government will, in view of this high judicial decision, put an end to their policy of segregation. The A.I.C.C. expresses its full sympathy with the people of Africa who suffer under degrading and discriminatory racial laws and whose progress is impeded by administrative and other measures. The Committee welcomes the cooperation of Africans and Indians is not submitting to such legislative and administrative measures which condemn them to servitude. The Committee, however, trusts that both Indians and Africans will pursue peaceful and non-violent methods. The Committee is of opinion that the interests of the Africans must have first place in Africa and Indians must not in any way associate themselves with the exploitation of Africans or seek any privilege at the cost of the Africans (**Draft of Nehru. 1952.**).

Nehru in a *Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon from New Delhi, 27 March 1952* highlighted that we have addressed you from time to time on the treatment of persons of Indian origin in South Africa. This question has been debated in the General Assembly year and many resolutions have been passed. The Assembly has taken the view that (a) measures of discrimination constitute a violation of the Charter, and (b) negotiations for setting the dispute between South Africa and India cannot be carried out successfully if discriminatory laws such as the Group Areas Act continue to be enforced. South Africa has of course declined to accept the Assembly's resolutions as a basis for negotiations. She has refused to suspend or to slow down the execution of discriminatory laws. On the contrary, while the Assembly has been making these recommendations year after year, the South African Government, especially since the advent to power of Malan's Nationalist Party, (*Daniel F. Malan's Nationalist Party came to power in 1948 and was largely responsible for following a policy of apartheid to protect the interests of the ruling white minority*), has been deliberately building up a

social and political structure based on doctrines of apartheid. In practice this means the segregation of Indians and Africans as inferior peoples, the denial to them of citizenship and other human rights and their reduction to a state of subjection to a dominant white minority. Full details of apartheid laws have been sent to you from time to time. A press note (being sent by originator under separate endorsement) we are issuing here is enclosed for ready reference. Our attitude towards these laws has been made clear in Assembly debates. It is our view that (a) no negotiations with South Africa can take place except on the basis of Assembly's resolutions which means that Group Areas Act must be suspended while negotiations are in progress; (b) discrimination and denial of rights will not be acquiesced in by Indians and Africans and apartheid will inevitably lead to racial conflict in South Africa; (c) it is not likely that this conflict will remain confined to South Africa; it will spread to other parts of Africa where racial patterns are broadly the same as in South Africa; (d) if the victims of these racial policies are driven in defence of their rights to launch a

movement of defiance of laws which have been condemned by world opinion, though South Africa refuses to modify them, there is bound to be a sympathetic response in India and in many other countries where deep resentment has been aroused by humiliation imposed on non-whites; (e) although debates in the Assembly have been confined to rights of Indian community, this question has to be seen against background of discrimination against non-whites in general; no special privilege can be claimed or is being claimed for Indians; the demand which India is supporting is for equal rights and opportunities for all classes of citizens, whether African, European or Indian. There is special emphasis on African rights since Africans are not only the original inhabitants of the country, but are also the worst sufferers from South Africa's racial policies. During the last few weeks new developments have taken place. First, South Africa has once again rejected the Assembly's resolution (*The U.N. General Assembly passed this resolution on 12 January 1952*). This resolution, which was adopted during the last session of the Assembly calls upon (a) the South African Government to suspend implementation of Group Areas Act pending conclusion of negotiations with India and (b) all three Governments to nominate representatives on a Commission which will help them to carry through appropriate negotiations. Since South Africa has rejected the resolution, India and Pakistan have declared that nomination of their joint representative will serve no useful purpose. As required by terms of resolution, India and Pakistan have declared that nomination of their joint representative will serve no useful purpose. As required by terms of resolution, Secretary General, United Nations, is considering an alternative proposal for appointment of an individual in his discretion to discharge duties assigned to the commission. Another development is that one of the discriminatory laws, viz., the Separate Representation of Voters Act which has been the subject of much controversy has been declared invalid by the Supreme Court. The Act was directed against the small community of "coloured". It did not affect Indians or Africans. Nevertheless, it formed an integral part of apartheid legislation and Supreme Court's ruling though not touching merits of legislation, has been welcomed by progressive opinion. This does not, however, mean that apartheid laws are likely to be modified as a result of this ruling. On the contrary, Malan has indicated that steps will be taken to curtail the powers of Supreme Court and that the Act in question and other apartheid laws will be retained on Statute Book and will be strictly enforced. Opposition from other European groups to Malan centres on constitutional issue affecting Supreme Courts powers. No important European group has questioned merits of apartheid laws. The third development is the most important of all. In the past there has been little cooperation between Indians, Africans and Coloureds. The White community has exploited their differences and has reduced all three to the position they are in today. A change is now taking place. There is a growing sense of unity among leaders of the three communities. A common danger and humiliation has brought them closer together. Last December, leaders of the African National Congress, the South African Indian Congress and the Franchise Action Council representing important sections



of Africans, Indians and Coloured me; in Bloemfontein and drew up a plan of civil resistance involving defiance of apartheid laws by peaceful and non-violent means. This plan is to take effect from April 6, or Van Riebeeck Day, (*Jan Van Diebeeck, a Dutch East India Company Official, had established a victualling Station in the Table Bay in the Cape and this grew into the first European settlement in South Africa*) which has been declared by the South African Government as a day of celebration to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the arrival in South Africa of White Colonists. The leaders of the three non-white groups have announced that since for their own peoples White rule has meant “colonial and imperialist exploitation which has degraded, humiliated and kept in bondage the vast masses of our peoples”, they will organize counter demonstrations of protest on April 6. Malan’s answer is that he will make full use of Government machinery to quell any “campaign of defiance and disobedience to the Government”. The leaders of the movement have not been deterred by his threat. They have announced that “as a defenceless and voteless people” they have been left with no alternative but to embark on this campaign and that they will do so in a peaceful manner; if there are any disturbances they will not be of their making. The stage is thus set for a conflict between the races in South Africa. Whatever may be the final outcome, the immediate effect can only be increase of tension, bitterness and hostility between whites and non-whites. This may be regarded as an internal matter by the South African Government but it will have wide repercussions, as stated in paragraph three. We cannot, therefore, remain silent. While recognizing that conditions in Africa are difficult and that the living side by side of peoples of many races at varying stages of development creates points of conflict, it has been our hope and endeavour to help in reducing this conflict by supporting efforts to build up a cooperative multi-racial society. South Africa’s objective, on the other hand, is a society based not on partnership or co-operation, but on the subjection of one race to another. There is thus a clash of objectives and the conflict has taken a dangerous turn involving a threat to peace and cooperation between the races. This threat must sooner or later react on the peace of the world. Because of these larger consideration, I would like you to convey to the U.K. Government at earliest opportunity our views on this subject and to express the hope that it may be possible for them, even at this late stage, to exert all their influence with the South African Government in order (a) to ensure that civil resistance, if launched in April, is so handled as not to intensify antagonism and conflict between the races, and (b) to bring about some change in South Africa’s racial policies which, in view of the tensions they have given rise to in Africa’s multi-racial societies, are injuring the cause of world peace. (**Cable of Nehru to V.K. 1952: 537- 38**).

Letter to Chief Minister, New Delhi on January 7, 1952, Nehru stated that the U.N. General Assembly has been meeting in Paris. Among other questions discussed has been the South African Indian question. This has become a hardly annual. Each time the General Assembly criticizes the South African attitude and proposes some further consultation. The Union Government of South Africa, however, regardless

of the U.N.'s advice or directives. The South African Indian question becomes a part of the much larger issue of racial discrimination. There may be no quick or easy solution of this, but it is one of the most explosive and far-reaching issues of our times, because the whole of the continent of Africa is involved in this wider issue of racial discrimination. Delay in finding a solution makes the disease worse. It will be a bad day for all if a racial explosion takes place on a big scale in Africa. We have seen the consequences of delay in Iran and Egypt. These consequences may well be much

worse in Africa (**Letter to Chief Minister. New Delhi. 1952: 602-03**).

Reply to the debate on the **President's Address on 21 May 1952** on *Rates of India's Foreign Policy*, Nehru stated that 'take the question of South Africa. That, again, has nothing to do with our being in the Commonwealth. As a matter of fact, to put it in

diplomatic language, we have no diplomatic relations with South Africa. We have no direct relations with each other. We have no direct relations with each other. We have no diplomatic representative there, and they have none here. It is totally immaterial that South Africa happens to be in the Commonwealth and we too happen to be in the Commonwealth, though in a different way and not in the same way as South Africa. In fact, if I may say so, these questions that arise in South Africa arise not only in South Africa but in other parts of Africa as well, and they are very important, and the next ten years or fifteen years are likely to see very big happenings in Africa. If the situation is dealt with some wisdom, it will be well for Africa and for the world; if not, it will be bad not only for Africa but for the whole world. It requires the most tactful handling of these problems in Africa, not just getting angry. I am not talking of South Africa at the moment; I am talking of the whole of the African continent. The Africans, quite rightly, are becoming politically conscious; they have ambitions which are very justifiable; they do not want to be sat upon; they want to grow in their own way. And so it has been our policy in Africa, which we have repeated to all our representatives there and to all the Indians living there, that on no account do we want any Indian to have any kind of a vested interest against Africans there that they are there to cooperate with the Africans, to help the Africans to progress. Insofar as they can do that they are welcome there; if not, they have no place there. We try to look ahead a little.

This trouble about people of Indian origin in South Africa has nothing to do with our being in the Commonwealth. Our being out of it will not help a solution of that problem; it will probably hinder it to some extent. I just do not understand this reference to the commonwealth on the part of honourable Members, except that it is a kind of sentimental urge from past history. I just do not understand this talk of our being inside or outside the Commonwealth. We are a sovereign Republic. In the whole of our Constitution there is no reference to the Commonwealth or to any other foreign country. But it is open to us always, as to any independent country, to have a treaty of alliance or agreement with any other country. If we have a treaty of alliance with any other country, that means some give-and-take; you give some promises, and you get some promises, apart from just promises of goodwill and friendship. In other

words, alliances, apart from those rather simple treaties of friendship, mean binding yourself to something. Now, our association with the Commonwealth is not a treaty or alliance of that kind; it does not bind us to anything, and it does not bind others to anything either. It, of course, binds, if you call that a binding factor, to meet other occasionally and discuss matters, to confer with each other, to meet each other as often as possible (**Reply to the debate. 1952: 440-41**).

*Cable to V.K. Krishna Menon from New Delhi on 2 April 1952*, Nehru highlighted that your telegram No. 12972 (*There was indignation among the white community in Southern Africa over the possibility of taking over of the chieftaincy of Bamangwato in Botswana by Seretse Khama, an heir-apparent, who married a white English Girl during his studentship in London in 1948. Eventually the UK expelled Seretse from Botswana and excluded him from the chieftaincy. Krishna Menon enquired whether he should express concern to the UK Government and ask for information on the developments.*) dated 31st March about Seretse. Indian opinion has all along strongly disapproved treatment accorded to Seretse by the British Government. Newspapers have commented adversely. In view of our own conflicts on racial issue in South Africa we did not think it worthwhile to express our opinion on the subject to UK Government. Our own views are well known. Nevertheless you can informally express our concern and ask for information. The entire position in Africa is, in our opinion, drifting badly and, unless carefully handled, will lead to very serious consequences (**V.K. Krishna Menon Papers: 567-68**).

Along with the liberation movement, Nehru shared the *Cultural Relations with Africa* in a note on 19 May 1952; Nehru mentioned that it is clear that External Affairs Ministry should be closely connected with this work both in regard to intimation and subsequent control of the cultural activities. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations should obviously have been the body to do it, but thus far it has not sufficiently developed and has few contacts, especially in Africa which I consider the most important continent of all for our purposes. The proper course would therefore be to appoint a committee consisting of representatives of Education and External Affairs (presumably Education will include the Indian Council for Cultural Relations). If it does not, then some representative of that might be included. This Committee should work its proposals and submit them to the president of the ICCR, that is, Maulana Azad. On his accepting the general proposals, the committee can go ahead with working it out and supervising it later. As I have said previously, I attach the greatest importance to Africa in this respect, that is, to African Africa. Vast changes are taking place today in the minds of men and it is of the utmost importance that we should help in this process. I should like to give as many scholarships as possible to Africans. I do not see the particular point of sending Kaka Saheb Kalelkar (*Kaka Kalelkar, a follower of Mahatma Gandhi, toured East Africa and Central Africa for six months in 1950*) or Mr. Ramachandran (*G.Ramachandran, a Gandhian constructive worker*) to East Africa. Kaka Saheb's visit did good. It would be better to send, if possible, competent young men to serve there for a year or so as doctors or teachers or in any

other capacity. They must be prepared to live among the Africans as suggested by Reverend Michael Scott (*Reverend G. Michael Scott (1907-1983); British clergyman; represented some tribes of South West Africa at the UN, 1946; expelled from South Africa, 1950; Director, Africa Bureau, London, 1952-68; member, Nyasaland peace mission, 1964-66*). (**Note of Nehru 1952: 570**).

Nehru highlighted the external affairs and mentioned that ‘in South Africa, the movement originally stated by people of Indian descent against their segregation has gradually become absorbed in a much wider movement including Africans. This development is of great significance. Indeed, as I have often pointed out to you, the continent of Africa is likely to play an important part in the coming years. There is a growth of mass political consciousness and resentment at racial laws and practice. It is clear that the millions of Africans cannot be forcibly suppressed for long. The big question for the future is whether these problems of Africa will be solved peacefully and cooperatively or will result in terrible racial wars and blood-baths. If the Malan

(*D.F. Malan, Prime Minister of South Africa, 1948-54*) policy is pursued, then the second alternative appears inevitable. In some parts of Africa, notably those governed by the UK, there has been some realization of the changes coming over the continent and some progress has been made. This has been notably so in British West Africa (*On 10 March 1952, Kwame Nkrumah was designated as Prime Minister of the Gold*

*Coast (Ghana) under the new Constitution approved by Britain.*). In British East Africa there are some hopeful signs at the same time there are other signs which are not hopeful. Among the latter is the recent decision to being about communal electorates. (*The bill on separate electorates was passed by the Kenyan Legislative Council on 20 December 1951*. The entire hope for the future of Africa lies in some such objective

being aimed at and attained. Indians occupy a peculiar place in Africa by themselves. Of course, they can make little difference and they can be squeezed out, if the others so wish. They can only really remain there with the goodwill of the Africans. Our policy for many years past in Africa has been to encourage cooperation between Indians and Africans. Indeed, we have gone so far as to emphasize that we do not propose to ask for any special privileges for Indians in Africa, that we are not going to protect any Indian vested interests there which does harm to the Africans. This is not only a wise policy from the point of view of our ideals, but is strictly practical even from the point of view intelligent self-interest. Because we have taken up this attitude, Africans have looked more and more towards India. They are afraid of Europeans and Americans and others because they fear that they look to us and expect us to help them. They require a great deal of help from outside because they are backward in many ways. A small gesture that we made some years ago of giving Scholarships in India to African students was greatly appreciated. We intend increasing the number of scholarships. It is of the highest importance for the future that there should be cooperation between Indians and Africans in Africa and that Indians there help the Africans in every way to develop themselves. In doing so they will help themselves, but they must place the interests of the Africans first. For business people this outlook

is not normally easy. Nevertheless, they have to develop it, realizing that it is in their interest also in the end. When I say that Indians and Africans should cooperate, I do not mean that we should set up a joint front against the Europeans and others. Our ideal should be as stated above – cooperation between all the three in order to build up what has been called a multi-racial society. Even if that ideal is difficult to attain and others do not fall in line, nevertheless we should pursue it. Joint fronts may be in self-defence as in South Africa. Even then the ideal should not be forgotten. We must remember that there are many people among the Europeans who sympathize with that ideal. In South Africa today there are a large number of Europeans who are against Dr Malan's policy. They should be befriended. Perhaps the greatest and bravest of the Champions of the Africans today is the Reverend Michael Scott. Such individuals are the salt of the earth, but in order to have their support we must aim rightly and with vision and not be diverted into wrong action by the passion of the moment (**On External Affairs: 637-639**).

A Note to Cabinet Secretary on New Delhi, 8 September 1952 and a copy was sent to Ministry of Education, regarding *Scholarships for African Students* mentioned that 'I agree entirely with the proposal to increase the number of Scholarships from 70 to

100. I would specially encourage Africans from Africa to come to India, as facilities for their education are terribly limited and they are looking towards India (Note to Cabinet Secretary. 1952: 380-81). Nehru shared with Maharaja Jaya Chamaraja Wadiyar on October 6, 1952 stated that 'Someone told me yesterday that there was a possibility of your going to South Africa. I think this will be unwise for any Indian

and, more especially, for you. You know the passive resistance movement going on in South Africa (*In South Africa, the non-white communities, who formed four-fifths of the Union's population, had launched passive resistance against the Government of Malan and its apartheid policy. Five thousand people had been arrested by the end of August 1952.*) We are naturally sympathizing with it. In these circumstances, any Indian going there is likely to be harassed and treated with discourtesy. I would not

like you to give an opportunity for the South Africa Government to be discourteous to you (**Shared with Maharaja. 1952: 380-81**).

Nehru in a letter to B.G. Khu, on September 30, 1952 mentioned that 'as you know, I attach the greatest importance to the passive-resistance movement in South Africa (*The Government of India, on 24 August 1952, announced its decision to bring to the notice of the UN General Assembly the passive resistance campaign in South Africa as "a development of the highest importance from the point of view of the peace of the entire African continent and the world."* The issue was to be raised as an independent issue apart from the South African-Indian question which had been before the UN for the past six years. India planned to seek the cooperation of the Asian-African group in the UN to fight the case.) The importance really comes before the Africans are

chiefly carrying it on. The purely Indian question in South Africa has receded into the background because of this larger issue. That is as it should be. About Attlee telling you that Indians are disliked by both 'whites' and 'blacks' in the Central and East

Africa, I think that his views are not quite up-to-date. They are partly true, but the situation has been a changing one there, and certainly in East Africa the Africans have looked more and more towards India (**Letter to B.G. Khu.1952: 636**).

Nehru in his note on a proposal for discussion in the House of the People on the Indian movement in South Africa on 28 July 1952 stated about UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA that “the Passive Resistance Movement in South Africa I am afraid; it is not

possible to find a day for the discussion of the motion that is suggested. In response to a desire expressed on behalf of the Opposition, a day has been fixed for the discussion of the Kashmir issue. This is Saturday next, August 2nd. There is a very heavy agenda before Parliament and it is hardly possible to find an extra day. Apart from this, I should like to point out that the reference to Indians in South Africa is not strictly

accurate (*The South African-Indian question was a separate issue which concerned the treatment of the people of Indian origin in South Africa. It had been before the UN for the past six years. The latest resolution of the UN on this was passed on 12 January 1952 which noted that the Groups Areas Act of the South African Government contravened the earlier resolution of the UN, and, considering that the South African policy of segregation was based on racial discrimination, recommended that a commission of three members be formed to assist the parties – South Africa, India and Pakistan-to carry through the negotiations.*). The movement (*The coloured and black communities, who formed four-fifths of the eleven million people in South Africa, were compelled to live in segregated areas, had no voice in the Government, were forced to travel in separate conveyances and were subjected to many other discriminatory laws which the Malan Government had placed on the Statue Book. They courted arrest by riding in “white” railway compartments, sitting on “forbidden” benches in public parks and refusing to exhibit passes. The South African Government used the Suppression of Communism Act of 1950 to arrest and detain hundreds of African and Indian leaders of the campaign*)

in South Africa is being conducted by South African nationals, some of whom are of Indian descent. This movement is on a much wider scale now comprising a large number of Africans. The question, therefore, is not one of Indian nationals abroad and is a matter affecting foreign affairs generally. While it is certainly open to members to refer to any matter affecting foreign affairs in the course of a discussion, it might not be desirable to have a special discussion of a matter of this kind where Indian nationals are not concerned (**Note on the Indian movement. 1952: 644**).

Nehru shared with Balvantray Mehta on 30th July 1952 and said, “I think it would be a good thing if you sent a circular to our Pradesh Congress Committees Drawing their attention to the situation in South Africa. This situation is significant. Africans and Indians have joined hands in a Satyagraha movement. As a matter of fact, it is the Africans who are carrying this on and very few Indians have really participated. Thus far, the movement has proceeded peacefully and on, what appears to be, correct lines. I think that we should express our sympathy with this movement and send our good wishes to it. Anyhow, we should express our satisfaction at the cooperation of Africans and Indians in a larger cause (**Shared with Balvantray Mehta. 1952: 645**).”

A *Resolution on Satyagraha in South Africa Drafted by Nehru for the AICC meeting at Indore, 12 September 1952* that was moved by Govind Ballabh Pant and seconded by Moraji Desai on The Non-Violent Struggle in South Africa mentioned that ‘The All-India Congress Committee has viewed with the deepest interest and pride the great satyagraha movement against racialism in South Africa (*The Struggle against apartheid in South Africa had in September entered its fourth month with the arrests of about 2,500 people*) and sends its fraternal greetings and good wishes to all those Africans and Indians who are participating in it, and who have by their discipline, courage and non-violence, shown themselves to be worthy followers of the great leader, who first gave this new message to the world in South Africa forty-five years ago. It is fitting and of historic significance that it should be in South Africa again that Africans and Indians and others should battle non-violently for the affirmation of the basic human right of racial equality and against the doctrine of a master race dominating over others. This challenge of racial arrogance and domination was one of the causes of the last great war. Yet racialism in its most extreme and repugnant form flourishes in South Africa and crushes the great majority of the population there. It is India’s basic policy to stand for racial equality and national freedom without which there can be no peace in the world. The great continent of Africa has suffered more than any other part of the earth’s surface from the domination of one race over others. Having patiently endured this for generations its people have now shown their strength and wisdom not only in challenging this vicious doctrine but doing so in a civilized and peaceful way. Any other course would lead to widespread bloodshed and terrible bitterness and sorrow. It is for all the peoples of the world to appreciate the significance of this great happening in Africa and to lend the weight of their moral support to this righteous struggle. In Africa, as elsewhere, it is not by the domination of one racial or religious group or community over another that a peaceful and progressive society can be built up, but by cooperation between the different elements in the population in order to build up a multi-racial society in which all have equal opportunities of growth. The AICC is particularly gratified at the cooperation of Africans and the people of Indian descent in Africa in this struggle. It reaffirms the policy of the Congress that Indians abroad should demand no special privileges at the expense of the inhabitants of the country in which they live in. In Africa, the interests of the Africans must be paramount and it is the duty of Indians there to cooperate with them and help them to the best of their ability. The basic principles (*Under Article 55 of the Charter, the UN is authorized to promote “Higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of social progress and universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.”*) of the Charter of the United Nations have been and are being violated in South Africa, and barbarous methods of suppression are being employed against a peaceful population. It is for the conscience of the world to take heed and to prevent this struggle from developing into something which might endanger world peace (**Resolution on Satyagraha. 1952: 645-46**).’

Nehru wrote a letter to Balvantray Mehta in September 1952 and mentioned that ‘in the course of speeches on the South Africa Satyagraha resolution at the AICC, an appeal was made for funds to help. Moraji Bhai specially made that appeal. We must do something about it. I cannot obviously issue an appeal of that kind. I think that you, as General Secretary, might draw attention to that resolution and issue an appeal. Perhaps it would be better for both the General Secretaries, you and Malliah, (*U.S. Malliah*) to sign it. I enclose a small draft appeal. This will be something which would help others to collect money. In the appeal names of persons who will receive the money should be mentioned. Apart from the AICC office, Morarji Desai’s name

should be mentioned, and Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant’s. If you can think of some other suitable names, they should also be mentioned’ (**Letter to Balvantray. 1952: 647**). The *Draft Appeal on Racial Policy in South Africa* highlighted the Satyagraha Campaign in South Africa against racial discrimination and the doctrine of the master race

has attracted worldwide attention and sympathy. In India that sympathy has been even more intimate and intense and all shades of opinion share it. While sympathy has undoubtedly considerable value, it would be much better to translate that sympathy into some kind of direct help. This can only be in the nature of financial help. We appeal, therefore, in furtherance of the Congress resolution, for contributions to this fund to help the satyagrahis in South Africa. In this matter we hope that there will be no party divisions and that there will be a widespread response from all who feel, as we do, that a vital struggle affecting human rights and liberty is being carried on by Africans and people of Indian descent in South Africa. Contributions may be sent to

the AICC Office, 7 Jantar Mantar Road, New Delhi, or to Shri Moraji Desai, or Shri Govind Ballabh Pant. (**Draft Appeal on Racial. 1952: 648**).

Nehru addressed the Press Conference on *Racialism in South Africa* in October 1952 and answered the question on ‘What is the possible stand India would be taking in the UN when the South African question comes before it’?, he said, ‘I want to know which question the pressman has in mind: whether the old question of Indian descendants in South Africa or the new one, the great passive resistance movement by Africans. First of all, the great passive resistance movement of Africans and Indians in South Africa is something much bigger than the so-called Indian question in South Africa. Indeed, it includes it in its scope. The old question itself was not confined to people of Indian descent there, but was symbolic of the racial inequality and domination that existed in South Africa. This question has been raised now in a broader and a more patent way. (*The Government of India had announced in August 1952 that it proposed to bring that the issue of passive resistance against the unjust laws in South Africa before the UN, as the South Africa before the UN, as the South African Government’s apartheid policy and repression of the passive resisters constituted a threat to peace. Since its announcement, this move had received support from Indonesia, Burma and Afghanistan*). Obviously, the question of racial inequality is even more important for the Africans whose country it is than even for Indians. I am very glad that in this

matter Africans and Indians are cooperating. The question has become one of vital



world significance. No amount of repression can suppress this movement. It may have its ups and downs; but, when millions of people are moved, repression cannot put an end to that. It is, therefore, not merely a South African issue, but a world issue which will have its repercussions in every continent. I am glad that this is being increasingly recognized everywhere. I cannot say what particular step the United Nations might take. But to ignore or bypass this issue will not be to the credit of the United Nations, for this will mean ignoring and bypassing their Charter and their own reason for

existence (**Address to the Press Conference. 1952: 648-49**). Further Nehru addressed the issue of South Africa in the public meeting speech on *The Awakening in Africa* in Madras on 9 October 1952 and said, "The South African issue is something much

bigger than the question of Indians in South Africa. In many ways it is a tremendous thing, a great upheaval that is happening there. The passive resistance movement may be confined to South Africa, but the whole of Africa is on the move. If this matter is not satisfactorily settled and opportunities of freedom not given to the Africans-the Indians, I am glad, are supporting this great movement-it will be a bad day for the whole of Africa, and for a large part of the world, because you cannot leave a large continent in ferment. Naturally, our entire sympathies are with the African people. The attitude we have taken up, and what we tell our Indian nationals, more especially in Africa, is that they must place the interests of the Africans above their own. We shall fight for Indian interests anywhere to the best of our capacity. But we shall not support the Indian nationals abroad if they come into conflict with the interests of the people of the country they are in. It is rather an unusual thing to say, and I do

not know if any other country has told its citizens to adopt this kind of an attitude. But that flows from the policy that we have been pursuing (*Those Indians who were already settled abroad had been advised by the Government of India not to have extra-territorial loyalties, but to identify themselves with the countries of their settlement, and seek local citizenship on a level with other communities without claiming special privileges or suffering disabilities*) (**Addressed the issue of South Africa. 1952: 649**).

Nehru addressed to the delegates attending the meeting of the All India Congress Committee, Indore on 13 September 1952 shared *India's Status Abroad* and said, "I emphasize the importance of the foreign policy Draft resolution which the Committee is called upon to discuss and adopt. Some people may imagine that the Working Committee is more concerned with external affairs than internal situation. We do owe a duty to ourselves to consider foreign affairs because they are of vital importance to the world and ourselves. Whether in peace or war, we will be involved in the consequences of anything which happens to the world. We cannot remain isolated even though our policy is one of non-alignment, and we are trying to do our utmost to prevent any disastrous development in the world. A consideration of foreign affairs is necessary not only to the members of the Working Committee or the AICC. It is also a duty of the man in the street to have a broad and proper understanding of the country's policy. We want an intelligent electorate and an intelligent populace to discuss and decide these issues. Even though the Committee

has put forward the resolutions on foreign affairs and South Africa first, what is more important is the economic affairs. The basic problem before the country is that of economic advancement. Unless we face the problem in a satisfactory and adequate measure, we fail. The problem is how to raise the level of the people, to remove the scourge of poverty and unemployment and the frustration that came out of it... It is significant that the freedom struggle of India had in a sense started in South Africa where Mahatma Gandhi, who later on gave the weapon of satyagraha to this country to fight against a mighty imperialism, first tested it in that country and made it effective after its use there. The great question that faces the world today is how the racial problem is to be solved in South Africa, whether through peace or bloodshed. If the people of South Africa decide to use arms, whatever may be their effectiveness, it will bring a catastrophe to the world. The passive resisters of South Africa have vowed to oppose the unjust laws through Methods of non-violence and by these methods, they are increasing their strength. It is possible that the racial question in South Africa may be solved in an atmosphere of peace. A major aspect of the whole problem is that Africa has awakened. The people of South Africa look for help from other people-help not in terms of money, but of knowledge and understanding. **(Addressed to the delegates. 1952: 671-72).**

Nehru in a *Note to Commonwealth Secretary, New Delhi in 14 October 1952* regarding *Loan for South Africa* it was said that 'While it is true, as the Finance minister has said, that extraneous considerations should not be allowed to influence our attitude towards a loan when it comes up for formal decision, I think that Shri B.K.Nehru's expression of his strong opinion to the Directors of the Bank was all for the good. A matter which rouses deep passions cannot be ignored. If two countries are at war, there can be no question of one country giving a loan to the other or helping in such a loan in any way, directly or indirectly. We are not at war with South Africa, but our relations are not only very strained, but are hostile to each other. Apart from this, the racial policy of South Africa has created a big stir in the world and is likely to lead to very serious consequences. Therefore, it is difficult to ignore all this and treat this matter as something which is purely a banking affair. However, it appears to be a right course for the Bank to send an investigating committee to South Africa, as suggested, it further appears that this Committee or mission has been instructed to report on the political situation. Even from a purely banking point of view this has to be considered before final decisions are taken. It will be a good thing if the leader of the mission meets Shri Apa Pant or other members of our UN delegation. What attitude the Government of India should take up about a loan to South Africa, will have to be decided after this enquiry is over. Much will depend upon the then existing situation. Unless there is marked improvement, which appears to be exceedingly doubtful, it will be difficult for India to support such a loan. At the most, she can abstain from voting. Support of the loan means inevitably support of a Government which is carrying out policies which are highly objectionable not only to us, but to vast numbers of other people. A copy of this note should be sent to the

Department of Economic Affairs of the Finance Ministry (**Note to Commonwealth. 1952: 649**).

Nehru wrote a letter to Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir on 26 August, 1952, and said, “The Passive Resistance Movement in South Africa is attracting increasing attention (*The movement had spread to Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban and Natal*). It is right that it should do so, for it is of the highest significance. It signifies the rebellion of the exploited and oppressed races in Africa against racial domination.

It is fortunate that this revolt has taken place on peaceful lines. South Africa, which, under Gandhiji, saw the beginnings of this new form of struggle, is now witnessing a new and vaster application of it. The Indian question in South Africa has been completely overshadowed by this new development, and it is right that it should be so. People of Indian origin in South Africa have joined hands with the Africans in this great struggle and thus far, in spite of the activities of the Malan Government, astonishing self-discipline has been shown by the passive resisters. Everyone in India, and indeed many abroad, will follow this struggle with the greatest sympathy and interest” (**Letter to Chief Minister.1952: 704**).

Nehru speech at a public meeting at Lucknow, 22 November 1952 on *India and the World* mentions, “Africa is another issue which has come up in the United Nations. Apartheid ill-treatment of the coloured people has been going on for a long time. Mahatma Gandhi had fought against it in South Africa in his Youth and succeeded to a large extent. But the problem has not been solved. It has now assumed very serious proportion and---everyone in Africa. The World Community is faced with the fundamental question whether it is justifiable to allow some nations of the World to keep other nations in a state of tutelage. The issue has been presented in the United Nations with India taking the lead (On 20 November 1952, the General Assembly passed the resolution, sponsored by eighteen Afro-Asian nations, recommending that a UN Fact-Finding Commission should investigate the problem of racial discrimination in South Africa and South West Africa and study on glad to say that most of the nations were in favour of the motion and the Resolution has been accepted. Only two countries opposed it. The other who did not favour the motion abstained from voting (Twenty-two Countries, including the UK and the USA). The two countries which opposed the motion were evidently South Africa and another small Latin American Country (Peru).”

“In East Africa, which is also under British rule, there is a strange situation (*The Mau Mau secret society, pledged to drive out the white settlers from Kenya gained influence on the Kikuyu tribe and launched a campaign against European settlers and African collaborators from August 1952. On 1 October, the Kenya Legislative Council empowered the State to control the Press, impose restrictions on the movement of Mau Mau supporters, increase penalties for acts of sedition, and allow the police to arrest any suspected person without warrant. On 20 October, the Government declared a state of emergency in Kenya. Between 20 October and 15 November, 8500 persons were arrested in Kenya*). I do not know all the details. But some extraordinary developments are

taking place and the population is in a state of turmoil. There have been some terrible atrocities there. There seems to be tremendous pressure on the people.”

“The Congress has, for a long time, followed a policy that if an Indian goes to another country for trade or to work, he should be able to live in dignity there. We cannot tolerate any insult to the Indian community. But at the same time, Indians must not try to dominate the local population. Just as we want freedom for our people in India, we do not want any Indians to try to suppress other people’s liberties elsewhere or to demand special privileges for themselves which the local population of the country does not enjoy. In Africa, you have the Negroes or the black population in a majority. But you are mistaken if you think that they are backward or ignorant. There are men of great caliber and ability among them, and given the opportunity, they can make great progress. One of their new ministers is here in India these days.

*(The two ministers of the Nigerian Government in West Africa, Obafemi Awolowo and A.M.A. Akinloye visited India for a fortnight from 11 November to study the electoral system and to visit the important industrial and agricultural centres and the scientific, educational and medical institutions).* He is an extremely able person. The people of Africa are looking more and more towards India. They are a little scared of the Western powers. They have the confidence that India would not try to interfere in their internal affairs. So they want our help, particularly to train people and to work in their schools, hospitals, and as advisers to their governments on planning, etc.”

“Well, anyhow, apart from the indigenous African population, there are Europeans, Indians in their millions and Arabs in Africa. So the only way in which Africa can go ahead is through cooperation among the various races who live there. The Europeans cannot hope to keep the Africans in a state of subjugation forever.”

“Africa poses a crucial problem in the world today and unless it is solved, matters will escalate and the whole continent may be engulfed in a conflagration if the movement in South Africa spreads. One-fifty of the world may be in flames. You can imagine the consequences it would have for the rest of the world. I have told you briefly about two important developments in the world today and we have taken the initiative to some extent to bring them up in the United Nations and other world forums (Public speech. 1952: 17-18).”

Nehru in his note to the Secretary-General on 7 December 1952 criticized the role of South African government and stated that ‘in South Africa, the recent judgment given by Justice Rumpff on 2nd December, sentencing a number of African and Indian leaders under the provisions of the Suppression of Communism Act is a remarkable interpretation of the law or rather of the intentions of the South African Government. *(The trial of twenty African and Indian leaders began in Johannesburg on 26 November 1952 for participating in the civil disobedience movement against unjust laws and orders of the South African Government and for contravening the Suppression of Communism Act by being parties to a plan aimed at bringing about full equality between Europeans and non-Europeans, including franchise for all. On 2 December, all were found guilty and sentenced to nine month’s hard labour.)* The Judge states in his judgment that the

whole movement was completely peaceful. Further that “*the charges had nothing to do with communism as is commonly known.*” He found them, however, guilty of what was called “statutory communism.” Apparently this “statutory communism” applies to anyone who believes that all human beings are equal and aims at the abolition of any law differentiating between Europeans and non-Europeans and the extension of full franchise rights to non-Europeans. Communism thus gets a new interpretation and it is not surprising that the United Nations are accused by Dr Malan, (*D.F. Malan, Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs, Union of South Africa.*) and his Ministers of being dominated by communism. Indeed, according to this, the Charter of the United

Nations is inspired by communism. This is a serious development, though perhaps it was implicit in the attitude taken up by the South African Government (**Note to the Secretary. 1952.**)’

Nehru replied to questions (a) 2 and (b)3 raised in the Lok Sabha (House of the People) on South Africa mentioned that ‘there are a number of questions in regard to the treatment of people of Indian descent in the Union of South Africa. A brief statement giving a summary of developments during the past year is being laid on the Table of the House. (*The summary of developments stated that the General Assembly Resolution of 12 January 1952 called upon (a) the South African Government to suspend the implementation of Group Areas Act pending conclusion of negotiations with India; and (b) all the three Governments of India, Pakistan and South Africa to nominate representatives on a Commission which would help them to carry through appropriate negotiations. On 23 February, South Africa rejected the Resolution and thereafter India and Pakistan declared that nomination of their joint representatives for the Commission would serve no purpose. India requested the Secretary General of the UN in April, and again in September, that since the Commission could not be constituted, he, in terms of para 3 of the Resolution, should appoint somebody for the purpose. However, on 14 October, the Secretary General informed the Assembly that he did not consider it “opportune” to appoint any individual.*). It will be observed that the government of India has done everything in their power to give effect to the Resolution of the UN General Assembly passed on the 12th January 1952, but that the Government of the Union of South Africa has not cooperated in this respect. Thus no progress whatever has been made during this year towards the solution of this old problem and it is now being discussed by the UN General Assembly.’

‘This question, however, has been overshadowed by a much larger issue of race conflict which has led to a passive resistance movement against apartheid. This movement which is peaceful and non-violent and a joint front of Africans, Indians and coloured people, who represent 80 percent of South Africa’s population, has been formed for this purpose. This movement is continuing and spreading in spite of severe sentences and harsh treatment of the passive resisters. Thus far more than 7,000 volunteers have courted arrest for peacefully defying unjust laws. (*The African, Indian and coloured peoples appointed a Joint Planning Council which staged a mass civil disobedience campaign against the apartheid legislation on 26 June. From July to*

October 1952, 8000 volunteers were arrested and many leaders convicted for alleged offences under the Suppression of Communism Act. The South African Government assumed further repressive powers by passing the Public Safety Act and the Criminal Law Amendment Act directed against the civil disobedience campaign. The campaign attracted international condemnation of apartheid policy) (**Indians in South Africa. 1952: 33- 4.**)’

‘Writing letter to *Balvantray Mehta* on 7 November 1952, Nehru put forward that ‘We have received information from South Africa that while the movement there is spreading, they are terribly short of money and this is causing them grave anxiety. They are in urgent need of any sum that we can send. You spoke to me the other day of sending some sum. I believe it was Rs. 50,000/- or so. Whatever you can send,

I suggest that you might send very soon (**Letter to Balvantray. 1952.**)’

The Note to the Commonwealth Secretary on *Africans and Developments in the World*, the Nehru as Prime Minister mentioned, “In view of the speed of developments in Africa. I think it is desirable that we should remain in greater touch with various parts of that continent. I agree, therefore, with this proposal. (*Badruddin Tyabji, the Commonwealth Secretary, after consulting Apa B. Pant, the Indian High Commissioner in Nairobi, submitted to Nehru a proposal to set up a small office at Salisbury (S. Rhodesia) to keep the Africans informed of major developments in the world and make them conscious of their future. The proposal was to be submitted to the Standing Finance Committee after Nehru’s approval.*) It is important, however, that careful selection should be made of the people who are sent there and I should like to know, when the time comes, as to who they are. I was under the impression that the Standing Finance Committee had ceased to exist and its functions were now performed by the Finance

Ministry (**Note to the Commonwealth. 8 November 1952.**)”

Similarly, Nehru clearly mentioned the Indian government policy regarding the *Development Loan to South Africa* in his *Note to the Commonwealth Secretary* on 26 November 1952 highlighted, “When the question of a development loan to South Africa by the International Bank was raised (*The Union of South Africa received total loan of \$60 million on 28 August 1953 from IBRD for import of equipment to increase transport and power generation facilities.*) Our representative (*B.K. Nehru*) in the Bank took some objection to it. This military assistance given by the USA to South Africa (*The USA under their Mutual Defence Assistance Act of 1940 was giving about Pound 40 million worth of arms to South Africa “to further the policies and purposes of the Act which are to foster international peace and security within the framework of the UN.”*) is obviously much worse and it is meant for maintaining internal security. A note on the subject might be sent to our ambassador in Washington (*G.L. Mehta*) and to Mrs. Pandit (*Vijayalakshmi Pandit was the leader of India’s Delegation to the UN General Assembly at this time*) and they might be asked, should a suitable opportunity

occur, to express our concern and, more especially, to point out that there can be little doubt that this can be used to bolster up the racial policy of the South African Government. Mention should be made of this to the American Embassy here also.

The note should be sent to our High Commissioner in London (*B.G. Kher*) also (**Note to the Commonwealth. 26 November 1952**).”

The Prime Minister in his letter to Chief Minister on 30 October, 1952 explained that ‘The General Assembly of the United Nations is meeting at present and is considering matters of high importance. We are particularly interested not only in Kashmir but in the South African racial issue and, of course, in Korea. Some of these questions are being discussed there. But, as a matter of fact, everything in America is at present subordinated to the Presidential election. Nothing really important is going to be done by the UN till that election is over early next month. While South Africa is on the agenda of the UN, a new and rather dangerous situation has arisen in East Africa. On the one hand, it is reported that a secret society of Africans has been carrying out a terrorist campaign and there have been a number of murders; on the other hand, the measures taken by the British colonial authorities are of the severest kind. It is clear that terrorism and assassination have to be met and put down. But it is equally clear to me that the colonial policy being adopted there will lead to grave consequences. It is not possible to crush the whole people, more especially when they have become politically wide awake. A large number of African leaders have been arrested and the African organizations have been practically broken up. The result of this policy can only be to embitter the Africans and to make a friendly settlement much more difficult. Our definite policy in Africa, as you know, has been to encourage to the greatest extent Indo-African Co-operation. We have made some considerable progress in this. Now, there is danger of our past work suffering or being even wiped away. Indians, of course, have nothing to do with the terroristic activities, nor are they responsible for the repression by the British colonial authorities. But a difficult question arises for them in their dire hour of peril. It seems to me quite clear that, while dissociating ourselves completely from acts of violence, Indians should not stand aloof from the Africans when they are in such great trouble (**Letter to Chief Minister. 1952: 544-45**).

Nehru further stated the government position on South Africa in his letter to Chief Minister on November 20, 1952, said, “The major question, therefore, before the UN today is that question of Korea, and India is playing a fairly important part in trying to bring together these hostile groups which dislike and distrust each other intensely. There are other important questions also before the UN – the racial issue which has been raised in South Africa (*On 3 November 1952, the UN began a debate on Indians in South Africa alleging social, economic and political discrimination*) is one of these. This in effect includes the question of South Africa has recently decided (*On 13 November 1952*) against Dr Malan’s (*D.F. Malan*) contentions and his attempt to set up parliament as an overriding judicial authority. (*On 3 June 1952, a Bill was passed in the South African Parliament to set aside any judgment of the Supreme Court on any Act of Parliament*). That has brought matters to a head. And yet, on the whole, it has had a calming effect on the situation. But the passive resistance movement

continues and maintains its discipline and peaceful character. There have been one or

two instances of violent conflict, notably at Port Elizabeth (*Eleven persons were killed and twenty-three injured and property valued at Pound 100,000 destroyed during riots on 18 October in New Brighton, a model "native" township at Port Elizabeth.*) But they do not, I think, affect the peaceful character of the struggle launched by Africans and Indians alike in South Africa. In East Africa a strange and dangerous situation has developed. (*Kenya was at this time witnessing terrorist activities by the native Mau Mau secret society, which were directed against the whites and the non-cooperating Africans*). It is said on the British side that some secret terrorist organizations, pledged to drive our Europeans, (*The society had two-fold objective: (i) to fight the raw imperialism of the white or European settlers of the colony; and (ii) give a better life to the natives by remedying the wrongs done to them*) have been carrying on a campaign of assassination, and therefore the Government there must take all necessary measures to suppress them. Whatever the truth in this charge might be, two facts stand out. Why are Africans there so utterly dissatisfied as to have to indulge in such deplorable activities? The second is that this widespread repression can only worsen the situation in the long run. This reference to African reminds me of two distinguished African visitors to India. These are two Ministers of the Nigerian Government in West Africa, (*See ante, p. 18*) who are on a visit to India at present. Nigeria and the Gold Coast (*Elections were held in the Gold Coast (Ghana) from 5 to 10 February under the auspices of the new Gold Coast Commission announced by the British Colonial Office on 30 December 1950*) have got a measure of self-government and to some extent these two places look upon themselves as the leaders of the Africans, because they are now exercising some authority in their own countries. On their success or failure will depend much in Africa. The two Ministers who are here are anxious for our help and cooperation in building their countries up. We shall certainly give them such help as we can (**Letter to Chief Minister. 1952: 549-50.**)

The President of India addressed to Parliament on 11 February 1953 stated, "Nine months ago, I welcomed you as Members of the first Parliament of the Republic of India, elected under our Constitution. Since then, you have had to shoulder heavy burdens and to face difficult problems, both domestic and international. ---In the continent of Africa, which continues to be the greatest sphere of colonialism today, events have taken a turn for the worse. In South Africa, the doctrine of racial

domination is openly proclaimed and enforced by all the power of the State. (*About 8,000 people had been imprisoned during the passive resistance campaign against the segregation Acts in South Africa, between 26 June 1952, when the campaign began, and the end of 1952*). The efforts made by the United Nations to deal with this problem

have been ignored by the Government of the Union of South Africa. A movement against racial discrimination, which was remarkable for its peaceful and disciplined character, is sought to be crushed by legislation and government action, (*In February 1953, the South African Government introduced an anti-resistance Bill (i) to prevent public or newspaper criticism of any act of Parliament or administrative measures; and (ii) to empower the Government to open mail and parcels suspected of containing*



*subversive material*), which are unique in their denial of democratic processes and the purpose which was proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations. In East Africa there is racial conflict (*At this time the native Mau Mau secret society in Kenya directed its terrorism against the imperialism of the whites and the non-cooperating Africans*) which, if not ended to the satisfaction of the people, is likely to extend and engulf vast areas of Africa. There are many people still who do not realize that racial domination and discrimination cannot be tolerated in the world today, and any attempt to

perpetuate them can only lead to disaster (**The State of the Union. 1953: 14-16**).

The Fear Psychosis and a Positive Policy, speech in the House of the People, on the motion of thanks on President's Address, 18 February 1953, Prime Minister mentions, "All these problems ultimately not of military might but of men's minds. They cannot be dealt with by .....; sometimes may be necessary. I don't know. But certainly they are problems of psychological approach to vast numbers of human beings, whether it is in Asia or whether it is in Africa. The approach that is being made in Africa, in larger parts of Africa, whether its virtue in the minds of those who are doing it may be for the present, one thing is dead certain that it is bound to fail ultimately, tomorrow or the day after. There is no shadow of doubt about it. It does not require a prophet to say that this approach will lead to the most dangerous consequence in racial conflicts. Take the question of the steps that one being taken in South Africa (Before 1952, the UN General Assembly made many recommendations to the Union of South Africa to end racial discrimination and racial conflict. The Union Government, questioning the competency of the World body to----- on the domestic jurisdiction of a member state, not only ignored them but even extended the scope and application of racial segregation and discrimination in its territory. Its latest act was the enactment of an anti-resistance Bill in February 1953 which prohibited any public criticism of

of an act of Parliament or the administrative order) [**Motion of thanks. 1953: 54**].

Nehru wrote a letter to Shaikh Abdullah on 27 February 1953 mentions, "We want the very serious problems in Europe and Africa to be solved, last they lead to World War. But therefore, no progress has been made and, in fact, things are a little worse than they were" (**Letter to Shaikh Abdullah. 1953: 211**). Earlier, Nehru in his Presidential Address, Fifty-Eighth session of the Indian National Congress, Hyderabad on 17 January 1953, he mentions, "While there is cold war between great nations, there is also something very much like a race war developing in Africa (The continent of Africa was in the throes of a crisis in the wake of resistance to French rule in Tunisia, the problem facing Britain and Egypt over the future of the Sudan, the racial policies in South Africa, the prospect of federation with terrible forebodings in Central Africa, and the grim fight between the British Government of Kenya and the forces of nationalist resistance called the Mau Mau). The policy of the South African Government has been opposed by us in so far as people of Indian origin are concerned. That policy has progressively emphasized racial discrimination and indeed the over-lordship of one race over another. The movement in South Africa has now become widespread and the Africans are taking a leading part in it. It is being

carried on peacefully in accordance with the technique discovered by Gandhiji in South Africa itself long years ago. While passive resistance is taking place in South Africa, in East Africa a very different situation has developed. (*African leaders had been put on trial in Kenya (East Africa) as a result of rioting caused by growing local discontent.*) On the one side, there have been terroristic outrages, on the other, severe and widespread repression. I have no desire to balance these, but I am concerned at the grave consequences that are already flowing from this conflict.”

“I am exceedingly sorry that some people in Kenya took to methods of violence which can only do them harm and will not strengthen their cause in any way. They have suffered long and I can understand their feeling of utter frustration and despair. But they will not achieve anything by methods of violence. On the other hand, repression will never solve the problem of Africa and the grave danger is that something in the nature of a race war will develop and bring disaster in its train. I earnestly hope that a wiser and a more positive approach to these problems will be made. It must be understood quite clearly that no doctrine based on racial inequality or racial suppression can be tolerated for long. There will be no peace in the world if one race tries to dominate over another or one country over another” (**Presidential Address. 1953: 405- 406**).

Nehru explained the Foreign Affairs and mentioned that ‘the situation in Africa is alarming from the long range point of view. I feel that Africa is to be a very important question in the near future. We have had our own problems, the problems of Indians in South Africa. I leave them out for the moment, though the very important basic principle of racial equality is involved in them. In the world of today, it is quite impossible for any country to carry on a basis of racial inequality. Apart from that, in West Africa and Nigeria, the British Government have taken some steps which are much in advance of steps taken in other parts of Africa. A limited measure of Self-

government has been given and I think it is a very good thing, and the other parts look up to this. (*The constitutional reforms introduced in Gambia on 18 September 1950 by the Colonial Office had provided for (1) the nomination of an African as Vice-President of a Legislative Council; and (2) increase in the number of nominated members of the Legislative Council; and (3) a full electoral system for the town of Bathurst and Gambia colony. In Nigeria, a new Constitution promulgated on 29 June 1951 had (1) replaced an advisory Executive Council by a Council of Ministers with legislative and executive powers; (2) a Central Legislature with 136 elected members; and (3) a Regional House of Assembly for each region*). In other parts of Africa, other developments have happened. Secret societies (*The Mau Mau secret society, pledged to drive out the white settlers from Kenya, gained influence on the Kikuyu tribe and launched a campaign against European settlers and African collaborators from August 1952. On 1 October, the Kenya Legislative Council empowered the State to control the press, impose restrictions on the movement of Mau Mau supporters, increase penalties for acts of sedition, and allow the police to arrest any suspected person without warrant. On 20 October, the Government declared a state of emergency in Kenya. Between 20*

*October and 15 November, 8500 persons were arrested in Kenya*) have been formed by the people but I think they are very badly advised to employ force that way. But if you deal with them in such a way as to arouse antagonism and fear, it would be a failure. No doubt the administration has to normalize the situation; you cannot allow murders to take place. But in doing this, we should not do something which appears to a large number of people as unjust, something which is meant to crush them. The situation in Africa has disturbed me very much because it has been worsening for the last few months and a great deal of fear and other passions have been aroused. I am afraid Africa will have a bad time (**Addressed to the Council. 1953: 473**).

A word overburdened with Fear, Anger and Hatred, Statement in Parliament on 17 March 1953, Nehru explained, "Honourable Members ask me what we have done in South Africa or in some other places. (N.C. Chatterjee said on 17 March that "Indians are being driven out, maltreated and ill treated and disfranchised, not only in South Africa, not only in East Africa, but also in Ceylon and Burma, and everywhere. How is our foreign policy successful?"). It is perfectly true that we have been unable to do anything in South Africa except to express ourselves in the United Nations or otherwise. But what am I to do in South Africa? Let us think of that calmly. It is not a matter of my or honorable Member opposite beating argument by argument. We have, all of us, got to face these questions, and these questions are not of high policy

– we agree – but of the method of reaching a certain result. I confess I do not see any solution of the problem in South Africa in the near future – certainly I cannot bring it about - except a gradual development of situation in the world which brings enormous pressure. That situation has been developing. I regret that the Government of the Union of South Africa is so constituted that it seems to be impervious to any such reasoned approach. As it is that Government has to face a difficult situation, and the time may come when other countries of the world will have to choose definitely as to what policy they are to adopt in regard to a country like South Africa where this policy of racial inequality, discrimination and suppression is applied in the way it is done. I confess at the present moment to a feeling of disillusion at the way a number of important and great countries quibble about these matters. They cannot openly support this kind of policy, of course, because practically no reasonable person in the world can support it. All that they can say is, raise some legal argument: *Oh, this is a domestic issue. Let us not interfere –Let us not make matters worse. It will be settled gradually.* They may say that as an excuse. They cannot support it. But that is not good enough, because it is a vital matter, not a thing today for the few hundred thousands

of Indians who live in South Africa, but for the millions of Africans, who have a much greater right to that country than any Indian. Fortunately, I am happy that the Indians in South Africa and the Africans there have cooperated in this matter together."

"I think that this kind of half-hearted attitude of some of the important countries does not do credit to them in this matter. It is all very well for some countries to divide up the world into the so-called western bloc and the eastern bloc, and the Communist world and the non-Communist world, and try to label everybody by these labels. We

have refused to be labeled, and what is more, we refuse to consider these questions in terms of those labels, whether it is a racial issue in Africa or whether it is a national issue, a question of national freedom anywhere. It is no good telling us that we have to support some colonial power because, if we do not, colonialism will win there. The answer to that, the obvious answer to that is this, that whatever may happen if nationalism comes in there, one thing is certain, that if you go on supporting colonial authorities there, something very much to your disadvantage will happen. That is dead certain. And it amazes me that intelligent persons and Governments cannot see this simple lesson of history and do not understand the minds of people in Asia or Africa today. It just does not matter what country you may take. This simple lesson holds: if you support colonial authority, if you support colonial domination and colonialism, apart from doing the wrong thing, you encourage and strengthen the very forces you apparently think you are contending against.”

“Honourable Members say to me, why do you not go out in the market place, if I may say so, and condemn this and that country? Well, I do not and I cannot, because I happen to be a responsible Member of a responsible government. I cannot behave in a manner of raising slogans against countries, but I can state policies as I have done now, and as I have done previously. These policies can be interpreted easily by those who take the trouble to interpret them. If NATO is the defender and protector of colonialism, then it has put its wrong foot forward. At first, it talked about the defence of a certain Atlantic community. They have every right to defend themselves. They have every right to fight any aggression that may come to them. But if in this business, they think that in order to do this, they have to participate and to help in keeping down and suppressing the freedom of colonial territories, then not only have they misunderstood the temper of the people of Asia and Africa today, but they are going against the obvious lessons of history. Today the person or the group or the country

which is going to be welcome anywhere must go there as a liberating force, not as a repressing force” (**Statement of Nehru. 1953: 485-87**).

Writing letter to *Chaman Lal* (*Dewan Chamna Lal, a Member of the Council of States and a reputed lawyer, was in Nairobi on the invitation of some African associations to help them in the defence of cases against some of their members*), Nehru on January 1, 1953 explained that ‘...the situation in East Africa is an extraordinarily

difficult one. If the Africans had the experience, discipline and good sense to carry on a non-violent movement, their success would be assured and nobody can stop them. But they have not that experience or discipline and some of them have taken to violence of a bad way, which worsens the situation immensely. I can quite understand the African leaders, feeling somewhat frustrated, thinking that a conference (*An all-African Conference*) in New Delhi will immediately yield results. But that is not so and ultimately results depend upon the situation in East Africa. The proposed conference must necessarily have representatives of Nigeria and the Gold Coast. Both

of these, though with a measure of self-government, are very much under the British Colonial Office. I doubt if they can easily participate in the conference. I am very

anxious to help the Africans because I attach the greatest importance to the future of Africa. I am not so much afraid of what the colonial authorities might do. That is after all a passing phase, although it is most disagreeable. I am much more afraid of the Africans going to pieces by violence and subsequent repression. That will make it difficult for them to pull up or do anything effective in the foreseeable future. I think the Africans should realize that, whatever the provocation, they will be playing into the hands of their opponents by encouraging violence. Even inaction will not harm them much, provided it is accompanied by a policy of non-surrender. That policy itself is a constant irritant and has certain dynamic qualities about it. In our non-cooperation movement, the real thing that counted was the conviction that grew in the minds of all that we would never bow our heads to British imperialism. If we were to announce a conference in New Delhi, I rather doubt if even passports and visas or other traveling facilities would be forthcoming for most of the delegates. That might be a propaganda point. But it would not take us much further.'

'The more I think of it, the more I feel that probably the best course would be not to attempt to hold such a conference. If it could be held in Africa, of course this might be done, but even that appears rather doubtful. What might be done is for one or two or three representative African leaders to come to India; not for a conference but simply because they desire to consult us. That would be a simpler approach to the problem and would not raise quite so much obstruction, though even that might not be allowed. Thus, two or three persons from East Africa can come here for consultation. In the same way, possibly one or two representatives from the Gold Coast or Nigeria could come' (**Letter to Chaman Lal. 1953: 546-47**).

Nehru wrote a *Note to the Commonwealth Secretary* on 18 February 1953 and expressed the Protest to the South African Government highlighted, "I agree with CS (*Bedruddin Tyabji was Commonwealth Secretary*). We should protest to the South African Government and inform the Commonwealth countries concerned (*South Africa was censured at the United Nations on the issue of treatment of the Union's Indian population. In 1952, the UN General Assembly had set up a three-man good offices commission to assist in negotiations between India, Pakistan and the Union. South Africa, however, had refused to cooperate with the commission, arguing that the UN's effort constituted an encroachment on its domestic jurisdiction. Nevertheless, the Assembly adopted a seventeen-nation resolution asking the commission to continue its work and make recommendations to bring about a peaceful settlement. Concurrently, South Africa was urged to refrain from applying its group Areas Act, which provided the legal basis for segregating persons of Indian origin*). We should then wait for some time for the answers and can consider the next step then. It is quite possible that the South African Government might send us a reply fairly soon. If so, we can immediately think of the next step, which should be to inform the Commonwealth countries of the South African reply and our intention to raise this matter before the UN. As for publicity, the newspapers have given some publicity to it. After sending our protest to the South African Government, (that is after two or three days of that) we might let the

press know that we have sent such a protest without actually publishing the protest. Copies of our note to the South African Government and to the Commonwealth Governments should be sent to our Delegation at the UN, who should be kept informed of developments” (**Note to the Commonwealth. 18 February 1953**).

Further, Nehru’s *Note to the Secretary General, Foreign Secretary and Commonwealth Secretary* on 1 March 1953 regarding South African Attitude towards Indians, it was noted that ‘We had decided to send a protest to the Union Government of South Africa about their ending the old agreement relating to wives, etc., of Indians. (On 10 February 1953, the Minister of the Interior, Danges announced that he would introduce a Bill to end the agreement concluded in 1913 between General smuts and Mahatma Gandhi under which foreign-born wives and children of Indian residents in South Africa had been allowed to enter the country freely). So far as I know, this has not been done yet. We should expedite this. Regarding other steps being taken by the South African government to enforce the Group Areas Act, (The Group Areas Act of 1950 gave the Government powers over the lives and property of the people including the power to evict people from their homes and places of business and compel them to dispose of their property at nominal rates, without any obligation on the part of the Government to provide alternative accommodation.), is it not desirable for us to bring this matter to the notice of the UN? These are important developments affecting very large numbers of people and I think we should inform the Secretary General (Trygve Lie) of the UN and, if possible, raise the matter in the General Assembly (A communication of 9 March 1953 from the Permanent Representative of India addressed to the Secretary-General drew attention to the proposed early proclamation by the Government of the Union of South Africa, of Group Areas under the Group Areas Act, in deliberate disregard of the General Assembly’s resolutions of 1950, 1951 and 1952 on the issue) (**Note to the Secretary. 1 March 1953**).

Prime Minister Nehru delivering his speech on *India and the World* at a public meeting on Jallianwala Bagh Day on 13 April 1953, mentions, “---On the other hand, look at Africa and what is happening there. Elections are going to be held in a few days in South Africa. (Elections were held on 15 April 1953 and Daniel F. Malan’s National Party, Championing racial segregation, won with a thumping majority). We have no interest in the election results, but our association with South Africa is an old one. The way Indians are treated there is an old story. I said “Indians” but the more correct term would be the people of Indian origin who are settled there because they are no longer Indians by law, but are the citizens of that country. They went originally from India two or three generations ago and are now citizens of South Africa. So legally we have no rights, but we do have the right to take an interest, for one thing because when they went originally from India, certain promises had been made to them by the then Government of India and secondly, it is absolutely wrong and improper that there should be deliberate injustice done to anyone because his colour is not white. The United Nations Charter guarantees the equality of races. Now it is not a secret that the Government in South Africa wish to treat Indians and the

Africans as inferior human beings. They wish to give them no rights and to follow a policy of segregation everywhere, in trains and buses and houses. Now this is a very strange thing in today's world and we have always raised our voice against it. We had first protested in connection with the Indian settlers there but the matter has gone so far that the Africans, who have the greatest right to take an interest in the matter rose in protest. They have been brutally suppressed. It is a wonderful thing that the people of South Africa and the Indian settlers have often cooperated to do Satyagraha, as they had learnt nearly forty years ago from Mahatma Gandhi, right there in South Africa, and have gone about it quite peacefully. In fact, it is surprising how they have managed to be peaceful in spite of everything."

"Anyhow, Africa is a very large issue and I am not drawing your attention to it merely so that you may sympathize with them, but because it is very important and fundamental to the world today. If they are not solved, preparations for a new kind of war will start in the world, a racist war, which is an extremely dangerous thing, even more dangerous than national wars. Africa is not a country, it is a continent with many countries, large in size but not very heavily populated. The climate is deteriorating so rapidly there that danger seems to threaten the whole world. If you are familiar with the map of Africa - many of you may not be - in the north-west corner, there

are two or three small countries under British rule, like the Gold Coast, (*The British Government had approved of a revised constitution for Gold Coast (Ghana) in June 1952, which evoked a favourable response from most of the nationalist parties*), Nigeria, (*Elections took place for the regional legislatures in Nigeria between August 1951 and January 1952, under the new constitution adopted on 29 June 1951*), etc."

"There has undoubtedly been some progress in those countries especially under the last Labour Government and though there is no freedom, they have moved to some extent in that direction, which is a good thing. If there could be similar progress all over Africa, we could have hoped that this problem will be solved soon, even if it takes ten or fifteen years. But what is really happening? I mentioned what is happening in

South Africa. In Central Africa a Federation (*On 23 March 1953, the British Parliament approved of a scheme to create a federation comprising Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi). The scheme aimed at ensuring control of the white settlers, while the Africans strongly opposed it fearing further loss of community land*) is being formed of many of the provinces, and there is no harm in that. But power is going to be retained in the hands of the British or a handful

of Europeans, and the Africans are going to be given no rights whatsoever. Please remember that colonialism was bad enough, whether it was done by the Germans or the British and in a sense, there was colonialism in India and elsewhere, too, but even worse is that the rights over these colonies should be handed over to a handful of people there because even the few controls, that had existed earlier, like that of the British Parliament, have been removed. For instance, South Africa is an independent country and the sort of things that are being done by the South African Government would perhaps not be done in any colony. There are always some controls. Now in

Central Africa, in the Federation that is being formed, all powers will be concentrated in the hands of the handful of English or German or other settlers who had gone there and forcibly taken away the land from the people. There will be absolutely no one to protect the Africans. In fact, the decisions that are being taken are against their wishes and in fact without their being consulted at all. This is absolutely wrong. On the third side, you see what is happening in East Africa, especially in Kenya. There is a terrible situation there and they are murdering one another. It is a beautiful country, with fertile land, especially the Highlands, where you can grow practically anything. The climate is excellent. Then people went from outside, the British and other Europeans, even British Army officers from India and settled there because in the beginning they got the land almost free. The poor people of Africa to whom the land belonged were merely removed and the land forcibly seized. You will be surprised to know how much land was seized and some people own a lakh or 50,000 acres each. They got the land at very nominal rates and without too much effort, their annual income from that land was easily ten or fifteen lakhs. The poor Africans who had been pushed out of their land were kept in certain reserves in the capacity of farm labourers, without any rights whatsoever. A great deal of the land has been kept lying fallow in case there are more European settlers in future. There is no one to protect the interests of the 50 lakh Africans in Kenya. They are backward and uneducated. There is a tremendous urge among them to get educated and so they started collecting money even in their poverty, to build schools, which they did with their own hands, with very little help from the government. The poor people, in their enthusiasm to get educated and make progress, have built thousands of small schools. (*The independent schools movement in the Kikuyu territory was started in 1929, as a protest against the attempted homogenization of education by European missionaries, which overlooked the cultural identities of the natives. By 1952, the Kikuyu independent Schools Association (KISA) had an estimated enrolment of 270,000 children. After the declaration of Emergency, in October 1952, 184 KISA schools were closed down for aiding Mau Mau*). It is obvious that the more educated they became, the more vociferous they became and began to demand land and agitate for their right to vote, etc. Now I do not know who took the first step and who retaliated. It is said some Africans formed a secret society called the Mau Mau which decided to kill the British and other whites. (*A revolt of the Kikuyu people of Kenya against the Colonial Government and white settlers led to widespread violence and killing. The Government declared a state of emergency on 20 October 1952 and the next day Jomo Kenyatta and six other Kenyan leaders were arrested for aiding and abetting Mau Mau. British troops were deployed for its suppression*). It is possible that some people may have been involved in this. Certainly some white men were murdered and the retaliation was terrible. The guilty could have been punished, but as a matter of fact vengeance was wreaked upon millions of people and they were put in camps, etc. and all sorts of things are happening. All this is very bad. It is obvious that the problem of Africa cannot be solved this way. Nobody can hope to get that the problem of Africa cannot be solved this way. Nobody can hope to get away with



treating millions of people in this inhuman way and suppressing them brutally, either today or in the future. The question is becoming more and more terrible. The African question is becoming one of the world's most complex issues. It may take years to be solved. Africa is a very large part of the world and contains nearly twenty countries or more. It is obvious that our sympathies in this matter lie with the people of Africa. In fact, we told the Indian settlers there, who are generally traders or businessmen, quite clearly that we do not warm any Indian to stay in Africa against the wishes of the Africans or to harm them or exploit them in any way. If the people of Africa do not like the Indians, we are not going to send our troops to suppress the people of Africa. Those Indians will have to come back home. The people of Africa have already been brutally suppressed. We do not have any part in that. We want to help them and we can do so in a thousand different ways, in educating them, organizing them, etc. But we must always remember that we are their guests and the country belongs to the people of Africa. In this connection, we have given nearly 70 scholarships to African students who are now studying in India, in Delhi, Lucknow, Banaras, Bombay and Madras, so that they can go back and serve their country."

"Well, I drew your attention to some of these international issues because we cannot isolate ourselves from them. Even when we were not free we used to look at the world situation but ever since we became free, we have been even more bound by it because it is not possible for us to isolate ourselves. These problems come up before us in the United Nations. When I go to the office every day, the first thing I see is a bundle of telegrams from our ambassadors all over the world, from England, New York, Washington, Peking, Moscow, Teheran, Cairo, etc. This bundle of telegrams contains information about any new developments in those countries and queries seeking advice from us regarding the course of action they have to pursue. So an independent country like ours gets drawn willy-nilly into the affairs of the world. Our country is especially large one and whether we like it or not, we are drawn into world politics, in spite of the fact that we tried our best not to get entangled in it. But we had to take on that responsibility because it goes hand in hand with freedom. You must have seen during the Korean war that after great deliberation, we presented a proposal in the United Nations which was accepted by everyone except the Soviet

Union and China (*The Soviet Union rejected the Indian Resolution on Korea on the ground that it was "contrary to the Geneva Convention" on prisoners of war and the Chinese Communist Government termed it, "unacceptable"*) and it is obvious that if they veto it, it cannot be implemented because they have played a big role in the

Korean war. They have to be consulted in the matter. Therefore it was not implemented then because the Soviet Union and China especially had objected to one or two clauses in it and were even a little upset with us. We said that we are not trying to force anyone. We had merely presented a proposal for peace and even now it is our opinion that if it had been implemented, there would have been peace with honour for every country. But they vetoed it and we were helpless. But now there have been some new

developments, either from China or the Soviet Union and if you read them carefully, there is very little difference between our old proposals and these new ones. There is a slight difference but it is nothing big, at least not on principles. Therefore India has been proved right in the step she had taken earlier. Our intention was not to criticize anyone. We were searching for a way to help in the matter. So a new atmosphere is being created and the first step towards it is the decision taken just a couple of days ago to exchange the wounded and the sick prisoners of war on both sides and to send them to a neutral country, which is a good thing. This itself shows that these questions are being looked at from a different angle and I hope that other problems too will be considered in Panmunjon in Korea where the talks are being held” (**Delivered his speech on India and the World. 1953: 20-22**).

BBC Television Press Conference on *An Asian Vision* in London on 12 June 1953, different interviewer asked the questions to Nehru such as:

1. “Martin Quest.:- Do I understand you, rightly, Mr. Prime Minister, that what you regard as the big thing in Asia, and for that matter, now in Africa, is the growth of a great national feeling? As I understand from that speech of yours – what you think is the most important is the growth of the national feeling and the fear that the Chinese may make use of that. Would you say something about that?”

Ans JN: I think, in the perspective of history, one of the biggest thing that has happened and is happening is this awakening or upsurge in Asia and to some extent in Africa. It is a tremendous thing. It develops differently in different parts of Asia. But it has upset completely world order. China has gone one way and India another way. We arrived at a peaceful settlement with Britain, with Burma, in South East Asia. Everywhere it has a different face. But the main thing is an enormous upsurge. In a sense, after three or four hundred years of, well, more or less European domination, Asia is coming into its own, sometimes rightly, sometimes wrongly, and one has to understand that, appreciate it, understand it, and not merely get angry with it or dislike it. Of course, to some extent, in a different way, the same applies to Africa.

2. Clark Qus: Do you think, Mr. Prime Minister, that the Europeans understand what is taking place in Africa or are they making the same mistakes which have been made in Asia over the last – shall we say, three hundred years”? (BBC Television Press. 1953: 69).

JN: I am afraid they are actually making those mistakes. Africa, please remember, is a continent. It is a most tragic continent. For hundreds and hundreds of years the people of Africa have suffered terribly. Maybe they are not so developed as others because they have not had that opportunity. Given the opportunity, no doubt they would. I am deeply distressed at what is happening in Africa, whether in the North or the East or the West. In fact, the only bright spot in Africa, if I may say so, is the Gold Coast, and partly Nigeria.

3. McLachlan Qus: You are not suggesting, Prime Minister that there is one solution and one criticism to be made about all parts of Africa? Is not the problem different in something like a dozen parts of that continent?

JN: The problem is different but the approach is the same, an approach, friendly and sympathetic to the Africans.

4. Hodson Qus: Is there not a direct contrast between these countries like the Gold Coast and Nigeria where Europeans could not make their permanent homes and countries like the Union of South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and Kenya where there is not only a settled European community but people who have – and had for generations – no other home?

JN: Of course, the problems are different. But, however many Europeans may live there, they are outnumbered tremendously by the African population. Either they cooperate, that is, giving some kind of cooperation, or they try to suppress each other. If the Europeans try to suppress the Africans, undoubtedly a day will come when the Africans will suppress the Europeans and push them out because they outnumber them so much.

5. McLachlan: Mr. Prime Minister, with regard to this very difficult problem at the United Nations, I think it is right to say that India and other Asian nations have from time to time expressed very strong views about British and other Europeans policies in Africa. Do you think by doing that you assist race relations or make them more bitter?

JN: Well, I do not remember that we have said much about British policies in Africa. We have said a great deal in the United Nations, I mean, we have said a great deal about the situation in South Africa.

McLachlan: and in North Africa – in French North Africa?

JN: Yes, in Morocco and Tunisia.

McLachlan: Do you think that helps the French to solve their problems with the Africans?

JN: That is a curious question.

McLachlan Qus: The French do not think so.

JN: Well, I think it is a curious question – my being told that you must not say that way when the evil is happening, lest the evil may become worse. As a matter of fact, since by some circumstance I became Prime Minister of India I have to hold myself in check all the time as to what I may say. Otherwise, I would shout out from housetops what is happening all over the world and in Africa, North, South and East. I would not remain as quiet as I do now.

6. Martin: You feel a difference, don't you, Mr. Prime Minister, in what you say about countries in which there are Indians and others? It seems to me there is a slight difference in your status in relation to countries where there are Indians?

JN: Do you mean in Africa?

Martin: Well, I was thinking about Kenya. For instance, the Kenya situation, where there are twice as many Indians as Europeans.

JN: Yes. What we have told the Indians there year after year, is that they must cooperate with the Africans. They must not exploit them or take advantage of them and what we will not support them in their demands for any privilege which goes against the Africans. “If you cannot get on with the Africans you have to get out of Africa” – that is what we have told the Indians.

Martin: But inside the Commonwealth Conference and so on, you do not discuss or deal much with the South African situation? You regard that as a matter for the United Nations rather than the Commonwealth, do you?

JN: Not directly. (**BBC Television Press. 1953: 71**).

Nehru during the **Resurgence of Asia and Africa**, *Inaugural statement at a Press Conference in Cairo on 25 June 1953* said, “---Therefore, the strongest urge still in Asia and Africa is basically the nationalist urge against foreign domination. But together

with that I may associate of course the urge against racial discrimination which has accompanied usually European colonial domination, that is, the white races of Europe considering themselves superior and behaving as such. I do not mind what they consider themselves, but behaving as such even in law – of course, the supreme example of that patent thing is in South Africa – that naturally no self-respecting nation can tolerate. So conflicts arise. And so long as this racial discrimination policy is followed in any country it will always sow the seeds of conflict and those seeds may well grow and poison the whole atmosphere. Now, in the whole of Africa today, leaving out Egypt for the moment, other parts of Africa, these racial feelings, racial conflicts, are growing and that is a bad outlook, if they are allowed to grow. Because then nobody will act reasonably. Passions are aroused and then every party misbehaves. Now the second urge, and a very powerful urge, is the social urge all over the world. It affects us in Asia and Africa more because economically speaking we are underdeveloped nations. We are poverty-stricken nations. And now that a measure of freedom has come, any country, take India, take Pakistan, Burma, Indonesia, other Asian countries like Ceylon, a certain political change has come. They have gained political independence that has resulted immediately in liberating all kinds of forces which had been kept down under foreign domination. Now those liberating forces in men’s minds create powerful urges, for change, for advance, powerful demands,

that is to day, people in the mass are not prepared to put up with their poverty and unhappiness any longer” (**Inaugural statement to Press. 1953: 18-36**).

Nehru explained the Bilateral Relations in a Cable to B.G. Kher and mentioned, “Your telegram dated April 17th (*Kher had reported that Swinton, Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, told him that Nehru’s Delhi speech of 13 April 1953, reported in The Hindustan Times of 14 April, had “aroused deepest resentment”*). And was “made on a highly emotional occasion and was bound to encourage greater violence on the part of the Mau Mau”. He felt that Nehru’s reference to persecution and denial of

*fundamental human rights in Kenya and Central Africa was “travesty of the policy of HMG and amounted to interference in matters of British policy.”*

“I am sorry that anything that I said should have shocked and pained the Ministers of the UK Government. (For instance, Thomas Lloyd of Colonial Office, wrote to Commonwealth Relations Office, on 17 April 1953, that considerable feelings had been aroused “in responsible quarters here and throughout East Africa by such speeches” and complaints were being made that “such allusive and untrue statements are going unanswered by HMG”). I am myself surprised at this reaction of theirs though I can understand their not agreeing with our viewpoint in some matters. Clutterbuck (Peter Alexander Clutterbuck (1897-1975); entered Civil Service, 1919 and served in various capacities; Deputy High Commissioner for UK in Union of South Africa, 1939-40; Assistant Secretary, Dominions Office, 1940; Assistant Under Secretary of State, 1942-46; High Commissioner for the UK, in Canada, 1946-52, in India, 1952-55; Ambassador to the Republic of Ireland, 1955-59; Permanent Under Secretary of State, Commonwealth Relations Office, 1959-61). Saw Raghavan Pillai on 14th April and incidentally referred to my speech, more particularly to my reference to Central African Federation with which he expressed his concern. He intended seeing Pillai again.”

“I spoke as Congress President for nearly two hours to a vast audience on the anniversary of Jallianwala Bagh and reviewed world situation referring to Korea and recent favourable developments, to prospects of peace and to serious situation in Africa as a whole. As I have often said before, I pointed out the grave possibility of racial conflicts developing all over Africa. I pointed out good work done and progress made by UK Government in Gold Coast and Nigeria and referred to Dr Malan’s dangerously anti-racial policies in South Africa. In East Africa the situation had become serious and had been described by UK Minister as bordering on civil war. I condemned violence of Mau Mau or others and said that this could only bring ruin to them, but I pointed out also the way to meet it was not by suppression of whole people and thus laying seeds of bitter racial conflict. I referred to the land hunger of the Africans and fact that foreign settlers had taken possession of vast areas. This was the cause of trouble. Foreign settlers’ activities had often been checked by UK Government. If they had their own way, position would deteriorate even further. African opinion could not and should not be ignored and constitution and formation of Central African Federation meant handing over those territories to foreign settlers against expressed will of people.”

“I referred to racial policies and conflicts in Africa, more especially as proclaimed in South Africa, as denial of UN Charter and fundamental human rights as we conceive them. I should like you to point out to UK Government that in these racial matters, as exemplified in Africa, there is deep passion in India. We have come into direct conflict with this in South Africa and the UK Government, as they are entitled to do, have adopted passive and neutral role. But we feel very deeply over these matters and

consider that they are seeds of great conflict in the future. I have no desire to interfere in matters of British domestic or other policy (Swinton further stated that while he

had endeavoured to maintain very cordial relations with India, how would it strike Kher if in the course of his speech he criticized Indian Government's policy in regard to, say, separation of Andhra State or on the question of untouchability). But where such policy hurts our deepest convictions and our national self-respect, we can hardly be expected to remain silent. I have tried to check expressions of these sentiments by others in Parliament and have often succeeded. But if I remain wholly silent, others will say much more."

"Hindustan Times report of long speech is brief and does not correctly represent what I said. I tried to look at picture in broad continental and historical perspective and expressed my deep sympathy for the African people as a whole and warned Indians that they must on no account expect any privileges in Africa at the cost of the people there. That has been our basic declared policy for many years and I have often referred to it because that is part of our world view and, in our opinion, the future peace of the world depends upon it. In Africa we have supported throughout the ideal of an inter-racial society, which is the only way of bringing peace and some progress to that tortured Continent. To see that ideal being shattered in South Africa, and conditions being created elsewhere to prevent its realization, is painful for us, regardless of whose fault this may be."

"UK Ministers will, of course, answer any questions put to them in Parliament (*Swinton had said that questions might be put in the British Parliament and he might not be able to say anything in defence of Nehru's speech*) as they think proper, just as I would have to deal with questions in my Parliament."

"We are firmly committed to the ending of colonialism and the spread of freedom according to the principles of the UN charter. In particular, we view racial discrimination with the deepest resentment. We realize that progress has to be slow but, where whole trend is reversed and vicious policies laid down as in South Africa,

we have to protest and give expression to our deeply felt feelings" (**Cable to B.G. Kher. 1953: 372-74**).

Nehru clarified again to B G Kher (Your telegram No: 2012 dated 20th April, *Kher mentioned: "I would advise that we do not say anything which may be construed as an "apology" or expression of "regret"*) in the Cable on 21 April 1953 and said, "There is no question of my expressing any regret or even indirectly apologizing. I had used

the word "regret" in my answer to you in a formal way. You can vary the phraseology." "Indeed I have not thought in terms of regret at all and the whole purport of my message is otherwise. I think that the UK Government, more

especially their Colonial Office, is completely in the wrong and I want them to know that we feel so. (*Kher further stated that probably Swinton's outburst was at the instance of the Colonial Office and the vociferous lobby voicing the opinion of the white settlers. He added that it was significant that Swinton was "careful to avoid association of Churchill's name with his protest" and that no newspaper, with the exception of the Beaverbrook Press, had commented one way or another on Nehru's speech. He concluded that if the Government as a whole had felt as strongly as Swinton "would have us believe, there would certainly*

have been adverse press comments”). I would have preferred your informing Swinton (Swinton, *1st Earl of, Philip Cunliffe-Lister (1884-1972); MP, Hindon Division of Middlesex, 1918-35; President, Board of Trade, 1922-23, 1924-29, and 1931; Secretary of State, for Colonies, 1931-35, for Air, 1935-38; Chairman, UK Commercial Corporation, 1940-42; Cabinet Minister resident in West Africa, 1942-44; Minister of Civil Aviation, 1944-45; Deputy Leader, the House of Lords, 1951-55; Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, December 1952-April 1955; Baron Masham, 1955, and author of sixty years of Power: Some Memories of the Men who wielded it, 1966*) as early as possible. (Kher met Swinton on 23 April 1953). Delay means that we are put out by his message and are thinking of how to answer it. But I leave it to you to judge when to inform Swinton” (**Clarification to B G Kher. 1953: 374**).

Nehru shared the policy of Bilateral Relations with Apa B Pant on April 8, 1953 and mentioned, “Nobody talks of India having its sphere of influence in Africa. Nobody hints even at an imperialist policy of India. But India has the strongest objection to hostile empires being built up in Africa under foreign rule. ---You have a hard job before you and I sympathize with you. You will of course do your best in the circumstances. As far as we are concerned, we should not be anti-European or anti-anything, except anti-racial domination, or any domination and anti-racial discrimination” (**Bilateral Relations. 1953: 381**).

Nehru wrote a letter to Prime Minister Godfrey Martin Huggins My dear Prime Minister (*Godfrey Martin Huggins, FRCS 1908; served in two hospitals in the UK before migrating to Southern Rhodesia in 1911; general practitioner and surgeon, 1911- 21; served in the war, 1914-17; Member, Legislative Assembly of Southern Rhodesia, 1923-44, and Prime Minister since 1934*) on May11, 1953 and mentioned that, “---In the course of my speech, I referred to the turmoil and serious situation developing in

various parts of the African continent, and expressed my grave apprehension in regard to it. I considered it as a matter which might well affect world peace in the future. I first referred to South Africa and the extreme racial policies being followed by the Government of the Union there, which I considered not only highly objectionable but also opposed to all the conceptions and ideals underlying the Charter of the United Nations. ---Finally I referred to the proposal for a Central African Federation, and I pointed out that this was being imposed on the African population there against their expressed wishes, (*The formation of Central African Federation was an attempt to overcome the balkanization of Africa. The Federation, initiated during 1945-51 by the British Labour Party, consisted of three territories – Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi). The whites of North under Roy Welensky and of South under Godfrey Hussins favoured the Federation plan. For Southerners, Federation was the means to secure revenue from the copper wealth of the North to meet the rising cost of its rapidly increasing white settlement. The Africans of Zambia and Malawi opposed Federation fearing further loss of community lands to the whites and perpetuation of colour bar in the copper belt. In 1948, to resist amalgamation, they set up a Federation of Welfare Societies which in 1951, was rechristened Northern*

*Rhodesia African National Congress under Harry Nkumbula, to resist the Federation scheme*), and was likely to lead to the formation of a dominion which might follow the racial and other policies of the South African Union. I felt that, even if this was not the present intention, this development was natural if a small minority of the population, racially different, governed the great majority.”

“I then explained what our policy was insofar as Indians in any part of the country or elsewhere abroad, were concerned. We had consistently advised them that they must not claim any privilege which was against the interests of the Africans. They had every right to demand equality of treatment, but they had no business to profit at the expense of the indigenous inhabitants of the continent. They must make friends with them and try to help them in such ways as they could; otherwise they would have no place in Africa in the future”.

“That was the main line of my argument. There had been a good deal of discussion of these subjects in the Indian Press for many months past. Indeed, the South African issue has deeply stirred Indian opinion for years past. It has become a test case for them, and one of our basic policies is the recognition of racial equality. I do not mean to say that all races or all individuals are equal or have the same capacity, but we do feel strongly that there should be a basic recognition of equality and that equal opportunities should be given to all. Indeed, we thought that that was one of the basic policies is the recognition of racial equality. I do not mean to say that all races or all individuals are equal or have the same capacity, but we do feel strongly that there should be a basic recognition of equality and that equal opportunities should be given to all. Indeed, we thought that was one of the basic criticisms against Hitler’s racial policy and the idea that a master race should dominate the world. The charter of the United Nations had laid down in clear terms that principle of equality or of equal opportunity. I know that the Africans are backward and that they cannot suddenly get out of this backward condition. They will require time to do so and every kind help”. “We have all along stood, therefore, for the development of a multi-racial society

in Africa. I am glad to find that you have used these words yourself in your speech, but evidently this concept of a multi-racial society can be interpreted in many ways (*Huggins further wrote that their problems were those of a truly multi-racial country*

*and added: “It is quite wrong to apply the term ‘Colonialism’ to us. Each of the three countries in this part of Africa contain Europeans, Indians and Africans, and all these races are here to stay. To refer to the Europeans and Indians as ‘settlers’ is to ignore facts, because these people are no less permanent inhabitants of these territories than are the Africans, who themselves only came to this part of Africa comparatively recently”*).

The way we interpret it is that the African must have first place in their country with others also having an honoured place. In your own speech you have indicated that you cannot foresee any time when the Africans will have that position or authority in their own countries”.

“In your speech you have discussed the concept of democracy and set out your political philosophy, and have stated that you reject the idea of domination of our



race by another. But I do not myself see how the proposal, for a federation can result in anything but the domination of one race by another. Obviously, the basis of any such proposal, or the building up of a multi-racial society, must be confidence and cooperation between the various elements that go to build up that society. If any such proposal is imposed against the wishes of the great majority of the people, that can only lead to increasing hostility, suspicion and bitterness. That will not only come in the way of the building up of friendly inter-racial relations but will inevitably make the dominant minority dislike the majority and try to safeguard its own interests by all the means in its power. We see that happening in other parts of Africa where a measure of political consciousness has grown among the Africans. The result is thus conflict in Africa and unhappy reactions in many other parts of the world”.

“We in India have no desire to interfere in other countries’ internal affairs. I have deliberately refrained from discussing internal conditions in other countries, but where world issues of importance are involved, and when deep passions are aroused even among our own people, I have sometimes discussed these matters as moderately as I could, to give a right direction to people’s thinking and not allow it to express itself in extreme forms. The basic thing in regard to any proposal is that it should come from goodwill and consent. Any other approach is not only opposed to the spirit of the times but is likely to lead to unfortunate consequences”.

“No one can be opposed to the concept of a federation and it is perfectly true that small backward countries cannot easily develop. (*Huggins mentioned that they had in the Federation of these three territories, three races of permanent inhabitants and that those races must live together, and make the best of it. Apart from any other consideration, the real interests of the African demanded that the three countries be federated*). The modern trend is for larger groups or federations to function together. But the element of consent among the people concerned appears to me to be essential. As far as I know, there is almost complete unanimity among the Africans in their opposition to the Federation scheme. No inter-racial society can grow up with this background, more especially when the colour bar operates both in the social and economic fields and legislative and executive authority is concentrated in the hands of a relatively small group of different people. With the best will in the world, this cannot lead to the realization of the ideal of a cooperative multi-racial society”.

“Any full consideration of this subject leads one into many avenues of thought and a variety of other world problems are affected by it. Indeed, it becomes part of the complex and confusing picture of the world today. This picture has to be seen as a whole even in order to understand a part of it. Among the major events of recent times have been the changes in Asia and the continuing ferment all over this great continent. Many things are happening in Asia which are good, many are not good. It is not so much a question of liking or disliking them, as of understanding a tremendous, dynamic and historic process that is going on. To some extent, this applies to the continent of Africa, though in a different measure, as conditions there are different. Nevertheless, there is dynamism in Africa also, and it requires the most

careful and gentle handling. I deplore the violence that is being indulged in by certain African tribes in Kenya. I think that will injure them more than anything else. But I deplore also any idea of crushing the whole people by the coercive apparatus of the State. (*Nairobi on 24 April 1953, western and south-western forest reserves on 20 May and Tinderet forest reserves on 29 May were declared "special" areas i.e., anyone failing to halt when challenged could be shot at. On 29 May 1953, all territory occupied by the Kikuyu, Meru and Embu tribes was declared "closed", i.e. official permission was required to go out or come into these areas. From 30 April, bombs were used against Mau Mau. In an Official announcement made on 9 July, it was stated that during the past ten weeks, 183 sorties had been flown against 85 different targets; 1096 bombs had been dropped and 96,000 rounds of ammunitions fired*). That will sow the seeds of infinite conflict in the future. The Africans are, I suppose, a somewhat immature people with the virtues and failing which accompany immaturity. But they are to some extent aware today and a measure of political consciousness is coming to them. In the context of the world now, this political consciousness can neither be ignored nor suppressed, quite apart from the merits of the question. The only way that appears

to me is to make a friendly and cooperative approach and try to help them to train themselves to assume responsibilities" (**Letter to Prime Minister. 1953: 374**).

Nehru spoke in Press Conference in London on June 8, 1953 and answered clearly such as:

Question: Mr. Prime Minister, how do you consider the problems in Africa? Do you have any reluctance in regard to Africa?

Jawaharlal Nehru: Yes, the same reluctance in the sense that however anxious I might be in regard to a problem, that particular approach is seldom helpful, I mean to day, that direct approach. You mention Africa. Now we, in India, are tremendously concerned about Africa. If I may say something in this context, many of you, gentlemen, have visited Africa and Asia and all other places and have intimate acquaintance with developments there. Nevertheless, we are not talking of press of other countries but of others. I do not think there is an adequate awareness in Europe or America of what is happening in Asia and Africa. Of course, I am not talking about events of the past but rather of a certain upsurge in the people's minds there, millions of minds, an upsurge, which is really changing Asia more and Africa in every way, much more rapidly than people imagine. Unfortunately, most discussions do take place on a level of certain communist countries, certain non-communist countries – communism versus non-communism or something like that. I will talk about achievements in those terms. Now, I think that we have some value in it, but it is a very partial picture of many problems, and most certainly the problem of Asia and Africa, because you have something different there which is neither communism nor anti-communism there. It is nationalism, a demand for economic changes and a surge; it is political consciousness, which has awakened. It is a mark of economic changes and a surge; it is political consciousness, which has awakened. It is a mark of economic changes and a vague search for them, and a person or an idea is welcomed if it seems to them to be

a liberating idea, if it seems to them to answer how they could consider the question of political, economic, and the rest. It is something no good we are doing to a country in Asia with standard of communism or anti-communism unless that fits into their problems. Therefore, they did not get excited about these things. That is, you must appear – anybody who goes there appears – as a liberating force from what they at present suffer from, whether it is political or economic distress, and unless there is this much of awareness of these dynamic changes in the mind of Asia, you will not understand it. You see the various events that have happened in the War. Since the War, they are ending colonial conditions in some countries in Asia – independence of some countries. All this has released forces, which had been more or less suppressed. Now these forces have to function. They may function for good or they may function for evil, but they have no function, nobody can ignore them. And the only right policy can be to recognize those forces and direct them, insofar as we can, in right channels, and merely not recognize them or recognize them – not to like them and therefore try to suppress them is no good or it will bring some other argument, communistic or anti-communistic, does not help at all. They are just not interested in that argument. Now, Africa is different from Asia or, If I may say so with all respect, less developed, more immature politically and otherwise and, but certainly with a developing political consciousness and a sense of grievance, which is perfectly justified. Undoubtedly, they, the people of Africa, have suffered tremendously for hundreds of years. What they used to tolerate in the past, they are not prepared to tolerate now. That is the question in a nutshell. I am not sure.

Any attempt to force them with conditions, ir to maintain status quo, meets resistance in their minds, even there is not enough response otherwise. They go round, they misbehave in their anger. What wrong they do, you should it, punish it, if you can, but understand the background and try to deal with it in a political and economic way. (*In contrast to Nehru's perception of the African problem, Oliver Lyttelton, Colonial Secretary, stated in the House of Commons on 7 November 1952, that the Mau Mau movement was not "a child of economic pressure" but "an unholy union of dark and ancient superstitions with the apparatus of modern gangsterism."*)

Q: Can land question be solved by asking people to behave properly?

JN: I spoke about the land question. As in India, the land question is a primary question of Asia. The Chinese Revolution succeeded because they dealt with the agrarian question (*By the end of 1952, land reforms in china were said to be complete by confiscation of lands belonging to feudal lords, schools, monasteries etc. by a law passed on 30 June 1950. By the end of 1955, 60 percent of the peasants were said to have been organized in agricultural cooperatives*). Even in Japan the Americans were wise

enough to tackle the land question, and with what success I do not know, but I think, they put through a fairly far-reaching reforming agrarian legislation there. Now every country in Asia is troubled with the land question. In another sense that applies to Africa too. Land question is the principal question of Africa and other question, of course, like racial discrimination, these are important questions, but neither can be

solved by telling the people just to behave and to carry on the way they were carrying on. What frightens me about Africa is the depth and extent of the bitterness all over Africa, and it would be a bad thing if that is not met in a constructive way.

Q: Are you taking any step in that direction? Are you engaged in trying to help solve the African problem?

JN: No, I can say that we have not been so engaged.

Q: Did you raise that question in the United Nations? What is the position of Indians in Africa?

JN: Well! United Nations! The position of Indians in Africa is a United Nations problem. We have raised that question in the United Nations and the United Nations has passed several resolutions about it and nothing has happened, and the South African Government has ignored both the resolutions and will not even permit the Commission of the United Nations appointed to go there. So there it is. Now in regard to bringing these matters up before Commonwealth Conference, well, even persons, who disagreed in these matters, agreed not to bring them up there. I tell you why, because we do wish the Commonwealth Conference to be treated as a super state dealing with different Commonwealth countries. Of course, in a friendly way, one can consult on any matter, but we do not wish to develop in that way. That would be something, I think, not in keeping with the growth of this commonwealth status as it is. Therefore, some subject may incidentally be referred to but we do not really discuss such matters.

About Africa and Indians there, I might tell you the policy we have pursued for many years. We have said, I am not talking about the Indians in South Africa because they are not Indian nationals at all, they are South African nationals. I am talking about Indian nationals in Africa. We have told them very definitely and precisely that we as a Government will not encourage them, help them, support them in anything that they might want which goes against the interest of the Africans. We made that perfectly clear to them. We shall support, of course, our citizens in their particular legitimate demands, but not those demands for gaining any privilege at the expense of the Africans. We have told them they are there with the goodwill of the Africans and if the Africans want them to be pushed out then they will be pushed out, and if they will be pushed out, they need not have to remain there. But, of course, that may be an idealistic attitude, if you like, but it is also an opportunist's attitude, because that is the only way – constructive way – of really seeing that they can live there in peace and goodwill of others. We have to educate opinion. Otherwise, obviously, they may remain there for a few years but the businessmen's business will mostly suffer. They cannot carry on, apart from other difficulties. And because we have adopted that policy, we have affected the African nation. There was a conflict between their interests, between the interests, I mean, of Indians there, who are mostly petty merchants, traders and the like, and of some Africans, who did not like them. There

has been much more goodwill towards Indians there than there was previously, and in all these troubles it is very seldom that you are there if you find Indians involved.

Q: What is the position of Indians in South Africa?

JN: In South Africa the question of Indians, that is though importance for us, we have deliberately allowed to become a secondary issue to the larger question of racial discrimination there. And as you know the resistance movement there is far more Africans than Indian. They are of course Indian but the leadership is really African and we wanted it to be so (Press Conference on African. 8 June 1953: 396-99).

Earlier Nehru addressed the Press Conference on *Urge for Independence in Asia and Africa* in London on 13 June 1953 and answered the queries such as:

JN: Then there is the fact, which I have tried to stress, that Asia and, to some extent, Africa are in the process of revolution – using the world in the broadcast sense. That is, they have been uprooted; the minds of men have been uprooted, from what they used to be. They used to tolerate many things; they do not tolerate them now. They want changes. There is a strong national urge for independence. There is the economic urge for better conditions. That is, all kinds of new forces have been liberated in these continents in the course of the last generation. Now, how are we to meet this challenge? First of all, we have to understand that they are those forces and they are dynamic. Secondly, we have to consider how to meet them. You cannot meet them on a military plane alone. Sometimes you may, slightly here and there. We have to meet them on some other plane.

Now, the average politician or statesman in America or Europe may have some intellectual appreciation of the changes in Asia or in Africa, but he has not got what I would call an emotional awareness of these things. It is some statistical thing that he has seen. He does not realize that what has happened has changed very greatly his whole conception of the world. The European or the American outlook in regard to Asia and Africa, which may be, apart from the premise, which may be correct to some extent, yet somehow misses the inwardness of things that are happening.

Now, we have one advantage in India that we are more aware of them, we have gone through the mill ourselves, we can understand others' feeling that way, and our approach can be more understanding and sympathetic. So, I have stressed everywhere, whether in this Conference, this aspect of it, of this approach, and undoubtedly they have appreciated that there is such a thing. To what extent they have imbibed that approach is a different matter. Again, suppose we had a formal conference, each person formally addressing it, and I took up that attitude or somebody else did, it may have some effect, but the very formality and rigidity of the Conference would inhabit people from imbibing that. That is the advantage of these Commonwealth conferences. The lack of formality helps in putting forward viewpoint, and the minds of the hearers are a little more receptive than they might otherwise be.

Q: How do you assess the situation in Asia and Africa?

JN: Talking about Asia and Africa, on various occasions here, I have drawn attention to the state of affairs in Africa, which distresses me very deeply. All over

Africa, if I may say so, North Africa, the Arab part, Morocco, (*There was a nationalist upsurge in Morocco and Tunisia against French colonialism. The demands for political reform in Tunisia, conceded partially by the French in December 1952, led to an intensification of the campaign*), Tunis, South Africa, of course, because of the policy of racial discrimination, East Africa, (*It was reported in April 1953 that a scheme for an East African Federation comprising Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika on the lines of the Central African Federation was being prepared by Oliver Lyttelton, the British Colonial Secretary*) Central Africa (*The Rhodesia and Nyasaland Federation Bill was presented to Parliament on 22 April 1953, and was enacted on 14 July 1953*), problems differ in each part, and the only part which I would say is more or less satisfactory is the Gold Coast (*Elections were held in the Gold Coast (Ghana) in February 1951 under the new Gold Coast Constitution. On 10 March 1952, Kwame Nkrumah was designated its Prime Minister. The British Government statement of June 1952 on the proposed Gold Coast constitution from all major sections of Public opinion*), Tanganyika (*Oliver Lyttelton, announced in the House of commons on 25 June 1952 that the Government had accepted the recommendation of the Twining Committee on Constitutional Development in Tanganyika and that the unofficial seats in the Legislative Council should be divided equally among the three main racial groups, Africans, Asians and Europeans – while retaining the Official majority in the Council*) and others are relatively speaking in a slightly better position. But what I have laid stress on is not a particular problem of Africa but the whole background of Africa. Large numbers of people there are politically conscious. No continent and no people in the whole wide world have gone through such a frenzy of martyrdom as the people of Africa in the last several hundred years. It is a terrible history of Africa if one reads it and so all our sympathies have gone out to these people and one feels that they should be given every chance to develop.

Perhaps, you know that we have got nearly a hundred Government of Indian scholars from Africa in India, and we would like to increase them. Their hunger for education is tremendous. They want to get going. Thousands and thousands of schools are being started in East Africa from the pennies of the people. Whether these schools are good or bad, it is immaterial, I do not know, they may have been bad, but it shows their hunger for education. And it is a terrible thing that this desire to make good, is frustrated. It is crushed, because then all that turns into terrible bitterness, and I fear that bitterness is spreading in other parts of Africa too, all parts. And if that becomes, well, strongly entrenched, it is a bad outlook for the future for millions and millions of people in Africa. It inevitably takes a racial aspect, as it must.

Of course, the principal economic problem of Africa is land. They have been deprived of their land. Then there is this racial discrimination problem, and unless this is met constructively you get the basis for future racial conflict on a big scale. That is why I am greatly worried about it (Press conference on Urge. 10 June 1953: 400).

On the issue of **South Africa and Apartheid**, Nehru addressed the Press Conference on June 27, 1953 and stated such as:

Q: Did you discuss the racial policy of South Africa at the Commonwealth Prime Minister's Conference?

Jawaharlal Nehru: The South African question was not at all discussed at the Commonwealth Conference. Questions like that were never discussed at such conference and I refused to discuss it at the meeting of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers. That is a matter between India and South Africa. What do you think the Prime Minister's Conference is? Is it a tribunal to which we can refer our difficulties with another member of the Commonwealth. I do not want Commonwealth Conference to be a tribunal to which we go and wait for something.

The Commonwealth Prime Minister's Conference did not pass any resolutions. We had general discussions which were very useful and helpful and the result is an attempt to find a large measure of cooperation as far as possible. I found the Commonwealth Conference useful and helpful in this respect. The Commonwealth Conference did not discuss any specific issue connected with racial problems in South Africa. The greatest strength to a country comes from its own strength and not from conferences.

Q: Has India's position strengthened as result of the talks?

JN: How can the talk benefit India? It is all right taking such issues before the UN. The purpose of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conferences is different. I refused to discuss the South African question at a conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers. We discussed matters of general common concern, and we did not discuss the racial policy in any particular manner. But, in the general discussion, the racial policy might have come up, but no particular reference was made to any member country. At the Premiers' Conference, we discussed complicated problems and tried to emphasize certain aspects which might have been overlooked. The Conference could not force any other country to adopt a policy, but in the ultimate analysis, general policies of various countries were discussed.

The Conference cannot force any other country to adopt a policy. No country can force another to adopt a certain policy. But in the ultimate analysis general policies of various countries may be affected – and are affected – by friendly conferences and by putting forward one another's points of view.

The greater the contact among the countries in friendly conferences, the more would be the mutual understanding among them.

The Commonwealth Conference is a forum for informal discussions of problems affecting the various countries and about which there may be differences. Each one will have his own approach. My approach will be from the point of view of the Asian angle. The result is that there will be greater understanding of the problem.

The Commonwealth Prime Minister's Conference is for information, friendly discussions of problems about different countries. Some of these problems in their different aspects are approached in a different manner, but at the same time the discussions give greater emphasis to the general point of agreement. Ultimately, there is greater understanding of the problems by the countries concerned. There is nothing like "white or black" when we approach and consider the question.

Thus, in the Commonwealth Conference I discerned a greater realization of the importance of the Asian views. This has become more and more obvious. They have begun to realize that the Asian point of view counts... (Press **Conference on South**

**Africa. 1953: 402-04).**

Nehru wrote to Winston Churchill, London on 8th June, 1953 and observed that, "You have a wide and varied knowledge of world affairs. But perhaps I might draw your attention to the extraordinary changes that have come about Asia and even Africa during the last few years. I am not referring to the political changes, which are great, but rather to the changes in the psychology of masses of men. There is an upsurge of the human spirit in these great continents, a dawning of political consciousness, a demand for economic betterment and an intense nationalism. Much is said about communism and an attempt is made to divide the world into the communist group and the non-communist group. For some purposes that might be helpful. But this ignores certain other vital factors and that is this revolutionary upsurge in Asia and Africa. I think that this is one of the dominant factors of the age and many of our difficulties are caused by a lack of awareness of this dynamic situation in the countries of the east. This upsurge has not always worked for good and it has sometimes resulted in evil consequences. But the facts to recognize is that Asia and, to some extent, even Africa are changing rapidly, in so far as men's minds are concerned. The situation is not only dynamic but, so far as men's minds are concerned. The situation is not only dynamic but, to some extent, explosive. All kinds of new forces have been released, which are partly good and partly bad. One might perhaps help by encouraging these good forces and discouraging the bad. One might perhaps help by encouraging these good forces and discouraging the bad. By lumping them together and trying to discourage both, we only increase our difficulties and function artificially".

"I do not wish to raise the question of racial discrimination in South Africa. But this is no local matter and it has very far-reaching consequences all over Africa and Asia. Apart from this, there is the question of racial discrimination and the openly avowed object of racial domination. You will appreciate that much that was tolerated in the past is not tolerated today and every little incident adds to the basic discontent. Not only in South Africa but in East and West Africa there is widespread discrimination in petty matters as well as big. Africans of course are affected by it. But all Asians are almost equally affected. It is in this background that recent developments in certain parts of Africa have to be seen and the effects of it on vast masses of human beings all over Asia judged. I am perhaps going out of my domain in writing to you as I have done. But I have ventured to do so because I feel sure that with your wide vision you will understand this and not mind my writing. We appear to be turning a corner in world history and the turn is for the better. At this stage the lead you give is of very great importance. That lead, I hope, will cover all these problems which afflict humanity" (**Letter to Winston Churchill. 1953: 485-86).**

*Towards a Brotherhood of Nations*, Nehru's statement in Parliament on 15 May 1953 reaffirmed, "The great continent of Africa, from its Northern Mediterranean



Coast to the far South ---In the extreme south, as is well known, a racial policy of gross intolerance and arrogance has shocked the world, In other parts of Africa also, in various shades and degrees, this racial policy is in evidence. It comes into conflict with the rising nationalism and consciousness of African nations. Unfortunately there has been a great deal of violence on all sides and repression, which has brought misery to vast numbers of people. No solution of the African problem can be based on racial discrimination or on the suppression of the African people, who have suffered so terribly for centuries past, who must command our sympathy. I earnestly hope that methods of violence will cease there, for this can only bring misery to all concerned

**(Statement in Parliament. 1953: 504).**

Nehru drafted the *Congress Resolution on Foreign Affairs* highlighted that, ‘The Committee have noted with deep regret the deterioration of the situation in the Middle Eastern countries and the acute and disastrous conflicts that are going on in some parts of Africa, resulting in the furtherance of racial antagonism and in the suppression of large number of people. The Congress has always attached the greatest importance to the recognition in theory and practice of racial equality and to the growth of freedom and free institutions in colonial countries. Any assertion of racial domination will inevitably meet with resistance and no stable or peaceful society can be based on the theory of a dominating race or of colonial control. ---The Committee

earnestly hope that peaceful methods will be employed in the solution of these great problems that afflict Africa today **(Resolution Drafted. 1953: 506).**

Letters to Chief Ministers, New Delhi on April 19, 1953, Nehru mentioned, “In South Africa, Dr Malan has secured a victory in the General Elections (*In the elections held on 15 April 1953, Malan’s National Party defeated the United Party*). He went to the polls on the clear issue of apartheid or racial segregation and we was won. This means an accentuation of the situation in South Africa and probably additional

measures to suppress the Africans and the Indians there. From the governmental point of view, this can no doubt be done and the movement against racial discrimination suppressed. But no one can imagine that Dr Malan’s victory will put an end to the passionate demand of the African people. Possibilities of peaceful settlement are being eliminated and the chances of greater and more widespread conflict increased. This, I believe, is being increasingly recognized in other parts of the world and the conscience of Europe and America, such as it is on these issues, is troubled. But this pricking of conscience is not enough to make these countries change their policies”

**(Letters to Chief Ministers. 1953: 545-46).**

Nehru in his Interview to CBS Television on 2 September 1953, he stated the answers clearly such as:

Q: Mr. Nehru, do you think the West understands what is happening in Asia and Africa in terms of the struggle for national independence; for racial equality – the struggle for bread itself?

JN: The West is rather a large term, isn’t it? I suppose many people do understand it and many do not. By and large I think they do not fully grasp it. That is, one can

sometimes understand a thing intellectually but not emotionally. Now, an emotional awareness is not without its significances. It does matter to have an emotional awareness of a distant happening. If you have an accident in your street you are emotionally aware of it. You read in the paper of an earthquake ten thousand miles away which is a much bigger thing and you are not aware of it. It's an item of news for you. So, in that sense probably, most people in the West are not aware – emotionally

aware – of the ferment in the East or in Asia or Africa (**Interview to CBS. 1953: 3**).

India and the World, Nehru's speech at the meeting of the All India Congress Committee held at Agra on 6 July 1953, mentioned, "Anyhow, our responsibilities have increased and it is obvious that I feel happy that our country is being accorded such respect. At the same time, I feel a little worried about how well we can discharge our responsibilities. We have to face the situation with courage. There are countries in Asia and Africa where a struggle for freedom is going on even now. They too look to us for help. By help I do not mean military help, but sympathy and support in the United Nations, etc. Our sympathies are certainly with those countries, whether they are in North Africa or South Africa. We are involved in all these problems. But, ultimately, India's standing in the world will be determined only by her strength. For a short while, other issues may push us into the forefront, but ultimately the strength of a nation consists of military and economic power. If we are held in respect in the world today, it is not because of our military power – though our small little army is a good one – or our wealth. We are a poor nation. Why then is India held in respect? It is a little difficult to say but let us say that it is chiefly because we follow our policy firmly with determination and show strength of character and intellectual power. Neither do we succumb to pressure nor do we flatter anyone. We wish to be friendly with everyone which itself imparts a kind of strength. Ultimately it is our combined strength which can take us far."

Take Africa. Africa was behind Asia in these matters. But the same thing is happening there. We have had long years of association with the problems of South Africa because settlers had gone there from India. You may remember that the first Satyagraha was launched by Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa. So this has been going on since then. The Africans were ill-treated and regarded as an inferior race and Indians too were not treated properly. This cannot be tolerated anywhere in the world. Then in northern Africa there are Arab-Africans who speak Arabic – in Morocco and Tunisia. There also a war of independence is going on and they are being treated very harshly. In Central Africa, in Kenya, there is a strange upheaval taking place. So there is a fire raging in the large continent of Africa and all efforts at suppressing it are unsuccessful. It is possible that neither side may succeed nor the trouble may spread farther a field" (*Speech at the meeting of the All India Congress Committee AICC. 1953: 22-39*).

"Look at Africa, for instance. A storm is brewing there. The revolt in South Africa is an old story and was started nearly forty to fifty years ago by Mahatma Gandhi and is now rapidly gaining momentum. It is now no longer an Indian saga but a revolt of the

people of Africa in which Indians are also participating. Then, in Northern Africa, the Arabs in Morocco, Tunisia and other countries are also fighting for freedom against Europeans who are committing great atrocities there. They too look to India and it is indeed strange how everyone who is struggling for freedom looks up to India. Egypt is an independent country but is facing a complicated problem especially vis-à-vis the British and nobody can predict what the outcome will be. A storm is raging in East Africa – Kenya and in other countries. The only part of Africa which is calm and peaceful is the Gold Coast in the West where the British Government has followed a very liberal policy and conceded many rights to the Africans. So they are making progress.”

“I gave you the example of Africa to show how an entire continent is in a revolutionary ferment. Great upheavals are taking place there. There are two problems in Africa. One is colonialism and foreign domination which we have always opposed. These problems are to be found everywhere in different forms and cannot be solved merely by shouting slogans or clapping your hands. Colonialism cannot be removed at once. But it has to be accepted that it has to go and then ways and means have to be found for removing it – and in some places it has to be removed immediately. The second problem is peculiar to Africa. It is the problem of racial discrimination which was first started in South Africa. The Whites regard the Blacks as inferior and indulge in every form of discrimination. This is a grave problem in Africa. Now, this is something, as you can well imagine, that no self-respecting person can ever accept. I said recently in Agra that though we do not wish to go to war with anyone and would like to solve all problems by peaceful methods, this is an issue of our own self-respect and so we cannot tolerate for a moment that we should be considered inferior by any nation. I agree that there are bound to be disparities between nations and individuals in the matter of opportunities and capabilities. That is one thing but no discriminate by law against someone is intolerable. We have also been guilty of this crime in the past in that we allowed the practice of untouchability and segregation of castes in our country too. This is a great sin and a crime perpetrated over thousands of years and we are still paying for it because no individual or nation can do wrong without paying for it. We are now making efforts to correct it and have succeeded to a large extent by passing laws. So this comes under the same category as the racial discrimination in Africa. The people of Africa have no right to vote, no opportunities for education, and separate registers are maintained for them. Therefore there can be no compromise on this issue except to demand that all nations and races must enjoy equal rights. That is quite clear. In whatever international forum this issue comes up, we shall throw in our weight in favour of equality. Leaving aside the principle underlying it, you can realize that in a nation of millions of Blacks, racial discrimination cannot be tolerated forever and once they rise in revolt against it, there will be a great upheaval. This worries me a great deal. I am unhappy about Africa and have often said that if a peaceful solution is not found very soon to this problem, there will be a major conflagration there which will engulf the entire continent.”

“I am discussing all these problems with you because of some strange good fortune or whatever you may call it. People of all these countries afflicted with such problems are looking to India for help and sympathy and want our help politically in the United

Nations and other forums. All this increases our responsibilities” (**Public speech on Hard Work. 1953: 45-46**).

Continuity in Policy, Statement in the House of the People on 17 September 1953, Nehru mentioned, “In regard to South Africa, that question has become, shall I say, a frozen or a petrified question which does not show the slightest improvement and shows some continuing deterioration. That question, of course, has passed outside the limited sphere in which we raised it originally, in which it was. It has become a much wider issue in South Africa, but a question of the great majority of the population of the Union of South Africa, that is, the Africans themselves, and a major question of racial discrimination. There is this racial discrimination in many places in the world, especially in Africa, but more especially in South Africa. In other places it takes places, but there is an element of apology about it, but in South Africa there is no apology. It is blatant. It is shouted out, and no excuse is put forward for it. In fact, this question in South Africa has become out of the major issues, major tests of the world, because there can be not a shadow of a doubt that if that policy of racial discrimination – of a master race dominating over other races, some colonies and settlers from Europe presuming to dominate for ever the populations of Asia or Africa – is sought to be justified, then obviously there are forces in this world – not in your or my opinion only, but in this world – which will fight that to the end. Because those days are past then such things were tolerated in theory or even in practice. Therefore, this issue in South Africa, though it apparently lies low today – to some extent it does not lie low, but other problems have somehow overshadowed it – is one of the basic issues in the world today which may well shake up this world. We have seen other aspects of this racial discrimination and colonialism in other parts of Africa. We have been accused – we meaning India, has been accused - of interfering in the affairs of other countries, in Africa. We have also been accused of, well; some kind of imperialist tendency which wants to spread out in Africa and take possession of those delectable lands which now the European settlers occupy. As a matter of fact, this House knows very well that all along, for these many years, we have been laying the greatest stress on something which is rather unique – I think unique in the sense that I am not aware of any other country which has laid stress in that particular way on that policy. I do not mean to say that we are very virtuous and all that, and others, other countries, are not, but we have rather gone out of our way to tell our own people in Africa, in East Africa, or in some other parts of Africa, that they can expect no help from us, no protection from us if they seek any special rights in Africa which are not in the interests of the people of Africa. We shall help them; we have told them: “We shall help you. Naturally we are interested in protecting you, your dignity or interests but not of you go at all against the people of Africa, because you are their guests and if

they do not want you, out you will have to go bag and baggage and we will not come in your way” (**Statement in the House. 1953: 393-95**).

Nehru remarked on the Policy towards Africa at a press Conference on 30 July 1953 such as:

Question: Your remarks at Agra on the Kenya and Africa situation have evoked strong protests in the United Kingdom including the latest outburst in the House of Commons yesterday (*See ante, pp. 415-416*). Have you any comments?

Jawaharlal Nehru: My remarks at Agra about the African situation were general, affecting practically the whole of Africa, What I said represented roughly five percent of what I had in mind. I did not deliberately refer to any particular incident or any part of Africa. What I said that the entire question of Africa was of supreme importance and people did not seem to realize it. It was important from many points of view, and if this fact was not realized, the world may well have to face major explosions and eruptions in Africa of the worst type, of a racial war type.

A few matters I pointed out specially. One was the desire for political freedom, and the other was racial discrimination or inequality. Those are exemplified in Africa more than anywhere else today. One can understand a certain delay in political changes or political progress, provided the objective is there. But I do not see why I should accept any non-recognition of racial equality. This is a matter which may be most evident in Africa, but it concerns each one of us here. It is an insult to every single Indian, the thirty-six crores of them – I am not mentioning the millions of others in Africa or Asia. At no time are we prepared to put up with the doctrine of racial inequality, whatever the consequences to India or to any one else. That I want to make perfectly clear.

It has been my desire, since I became Prime Minister to refrain, naturally, from saying things about other countries. But where policies are declared and followed like, for instance, in South Africa which, I think, are pernicious in the extreme, which are insulting in the extreme, to expect me to remain silent about it is to expect the impossible.

Apart from political considerations, I should like to know how far discrimination is exercised in regard to Indians in East Africa. I am not talking about other matters. The Dominion of South Africa is an independent country. Others are subject countries; and discrimination is still being exercised not only against the poor Africans, but against others. Who is responsible for that – I should like to know. They want to create new Dominion governments there, in various parts of Africa, and to perpetuate racial discrimination? I greatly regret that. We shall never agree to it; and where there is any question of racial discrimination, as I said in Agra, we shall do everything in our power, short of war, to oppose it.

I referred to the whole of Africa. I had in mind North Africa, Morocco, Tunisia and other parts, where the situation is different, of course, but nevertheless very serious. In fact, the only one part of Africa which is promising is the Gold Coast; and some parts of Africa, like Tanganyika, Uganda, are much better off than others.

Q: In one of the papers of America last week there was a very supposedly responsible assessment of the African situation. In that very important paper, it was said that Europeans in Rhodesia, in East Africa, and almost everywhere in Africa were feeling that India's policy was born of two reasons: One was that India wanted Africa to absorb its surplus population; and the second was that Mr. Nehru wanted to start a new kind of imperialism based upon racial sentiment, and by creating an internal discontent, he would see the Europeans out, and the Indians will find a place for the surplus population. I might say that the paper quoted a responsible minister of Rhodesia. That paper was the New York Times.

JN: It is difficult for me to talk about our own policy and our own bonafides. But for the last many years, even before we came to Government, and after we came to Government, we have declared our policy in the clearest terms to our people outside India and that policy has been – to talk in relation to Africa – that “you will get no support from the Indian Government in any claims that you may advance against the Africans. You are there as guests. The interests of the Africans must be dominant. If you can serve them, well and good. If not, pack up and go, because we will not protect you there.”

Now, this was rather an unusual policy for a country to tell its own citizens. We were prepared to fight for the rights of those citizens, against any encroachment of those rights, but not when those citizens wanted for themselves special rights against the Africans – and I am not prepared to give them any protection then. This policy naturally did not meet with the approval of many of our own nationals in Africa, because thus far they had been trained up to demand rights for themselves. Seeing the European settlers taking advantage of the situation, by gaining special rights, special privileges, land, and all that kind of thing, the Indians also wanted a share in the spoils of Africa. We said, “No, we will not permit this.” And we have been pursuing that policy throughout. I do not mind if every Indian leaves Africa and comes away. But we will not permit him, so far as we are concerned, to claim a single privilege over the Africans.

To talk about Indian imperialism there is just nonsense. People seem to imagine that the earth in the fullness thereof is to be reserved for a few settlers from Europe. Well, other people in the rest of the world have a different opinion about it, and the rest of the world will ultimately count, not those few persons from Europe there (Press Conference on Policy. 1953: 540-42).

Nehru sent the note on India-Africa Committee to Commonwealth Secretary on 21 August 1953 mentioned, “I am certainly not going to this or any other meeting organized for Mr. Evans (*Peter Evans, a British lawyer sympathetic to the cause of Africans, had been deported from Kenya and was in India at this time*), While Mr. Evans

is doing some good work here from the point of view of propaganda, I do not wholly like his method of approach and his running down Indians in Africa or here for their lack of support. There may be truth in what he says, but that is no reason why

he should indulge in that propaganda here. He might as well go to England and do propaganda there.”

“The India-Africa Committee was formed in a wrong way and the wrong people were put in charge of it. We are not responsible for that...In fact it is because of this bad beginning that the India-Africa Committee could never get properly going.”

“I do not think Mr. Evans can possibly be made the Secretary of this Committee... It will be wholly wrong for him to be appointed in this way. The proper course appears to be for some smaller committee to take interest in this matter. We cannot take official action in this (Note to Commonwealth Secretary. 1953:544-45).”

Nehru wrote a note to Commonwealth Secretary on Policy of Racial and Political Domination on 11 September, 1953, stated, “The whole question is not one of some Indians or some Africans misbehaving or going further than they ought to go. The questions that are raised in East Africa today are of the widest significance in regard to national policies. We have attached importance to them because of that. On no account is India going to reconcile itself with the policy of racial or political domination of Europeans in Africa. We may not be able to do much for years, but we shall remain un-reconciled to it. We have to keep the distant future in view as well as the present. Sometimes starry wild-eyed people are very desirable in a community

*(In a letter (not published) of 23 September 1953 to Apa Pant, Nehru wrote: “...I do not understand why you or anyone should get so excited about odd news items or about the reactions to them of European public opinion of Africa. If they can get worked up at such an item of news, they should appreciate that the people of India can be infinitely more worked up at their activities.”)* (Note to Commonwealth Secretary. 1953:546-47).”

In this business of colonialism, of course, the question of racial discrimination comes in. In regard to racial discrimination, Nehru had said, “there can be no compromise of any kind. I realize that one cannot put an end to almost age-long customs quickly and suddenly. But, there is such a thing, first of all by law and constitution putting an end to racial discrimination and then trying one’s best to put an end to it in practice in social affairs. We put an end to unsociability here by the here by the law of the constitution and my colleague the Home Minister is bringing in a Bill to make untouchability a crime. Well and good. I realize that I have by law of the constitution and my colleague the Home Minister is bringing in a Bill to make untouchability but even now, here and there social practices may continue, but let us fight them.”

“But this kind of legal, constitutional and every kind of recognition and perseverance in maintaining this racial discrimination, racial suppression, is something that is absolutely intolerable.”

“As I said I can understand somebody misbehaving somewhere; I can condone it or punish it. But, if Governments misbehave like that, it is intolerable. I express my deep regret that when we consider the case of the South Africa Union, which is the most flagrant example, when this matter comes up, as it does annually, before the United Nations Assembly, it is a matter of surprise and deep regret to me that there

are nations and great nations at that, which support South Africa or at least abstain. There is no question of abstention when this monstrous evil comes up for discussion. There is no question of anybody taking shelter under any legal quibble, whether this is a matter to come up there or not. This is a matter which vitally affects hundreds of millions of people all over the world. It is about time that others realized it; and, laws or no laws, this racial discrimination in Africa or Asia or anywhere in the world will not be tolerated. It is an amazing thing to me.”

“If you go to Africa, the real bright spot of Africa has been the Gold Coast and, to some extent, Nigeria, where progress has been made and will be made (*In the Gold Coast (Ghana) and Nigeria the handing over of power by an imperialist government to a national government was a peacefully taking place at this time.*) I hope, I am surprised that while this policy has been pursued in the Gold Coast and Nigeria, a contrary policy has been pursued in other parts. The House knows also about Uganda (*The Kabaka or King of Buganda had been sacked by the Colonial Office because he opposed the plan for East African Federation consisting of Uganda, Kenya and Tanganyika and asked for independence for Buganda within the Commonwealth.*), the Central African Federation. It is a very good idea to have Central African Federation (*In October 1952, Britain ushered in a Federation in Central Africa consisting of Southern and Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The motive for the creation of the new political unit was Britain's economic need to exploit the three federating colonies to greater purpose and move effectively by means of a central agency than was possible with three separate governments. The federation did not involve diminution of political control that the British settlers exercised over native population's. All talk was about the development of the colony, not about the improvement to be effected in the living conditions of the bulk of the inhabitants.*) and it is not my concern to interfere with it. But, if anything is imposed against the will of a large number of inhabitants, it is a bad thing and it will not last. We used to talk about authoritarianism and fascism and the like. If a small or a comparatively small racial group perpetuates its authority over a large nation, especially of a different group, well, I do not know what the difference is in that type of fascism and this.”

“These are the three matters that I venture to place before the Members of the House, Sir, and I am grateful for their patience in listening to me” (**Speech during Motion. 1953: 567-70.**)”

Nehru remarked at Press Conference in New Delhi on 15 November 1953, “Apart from the political aspect of it, which is important in Africa, what is very important the racial aspect becomes prominent. The South African Union is the most flagrant example of this. There is no attempt to hide the fact. It is their policy, declared openly, and now you will notice that in the Central African Federation, about which a basis of the South African policy of apartheid. Other parties repeat the same in more moderate terms.”

“Now that is a matter – that is, this business of racial discrimination – on which, as you know, we hold strong views. It is a question on which, so far as we are concerned,



there can be no compromise with anybody anywhere. It is a different matter that we cannot do anything about it. We cannot go about crusading about it all over, but I am of the specific opinion that there will be no compromise so far as we are concerned on the question of racial discrimination anywhere. Apart from theory, we are involved in it. There is no doubt about it that Indians in Africa – I am not referring to South Africa but even in other parts – are discriminated against, perhaps not to the same extent as the Africans, but nevertheless any policy that is based on racial discrimination is bound to be resented all the time till it is changed. I cannot say how it will take. Therefore, condition based on that policy must of necessity be unstable.”

“It is open to any country, within its own territories, to restrict immigration and the like for various reasons. We may not fully like it, but nevertheless we do not challenge it. But it is a completely different thing for countries that is colonial countries, having to experience this policy imposed by a small handful of people at the top in their own country. That is the case in every part of Africa, including the Union of South Africa.” “It is a simple fact that vast numbers of human beings live in Asia and Africa.

It is also a fact which must be known that large numbers of them, if not all, are increasingly conscious politically, and are not prepared to submit to conditions which they had endured previously. Therefore, any policy which irritates these hundreds of millions in Africa and Asia cannot be conducive to any stability in the world. The world picture appears to be considered far too much from the military point of view nowadays, forgetting that human beings count and masses and hundreds of millions of human beings still count apart from their lack of military power or influence” **(Hardening of Imperialist. 1953: 622-23).**

Nehru note to Secretary General and Commonwealth Secretary on the Attitude to Central African Federation on October 14, 1953, said, “Before I got this note from Commonwealth Secretary, I mentioned this matter to Secretary – General and expressed the opinion that we should support the request for the oral hearing for Chiefs of Nyasaland before the Fourth Committee (*On 13 April the Chiefs of Nyasaland African Congress decided to appeal to the UN against the proposed Central African Federation*).”

7. “Mr. Tyabji (*Badruddin Tyabji was Commonwealth Secretary*) had previously sent a note to me. I have not carefully considered that note yet, though I have hurriedly glanced through it. I shall deal with the general question raised in that note separately and later. The question raised in the telegram from Indiadel, attached, is the limited one of our supporting the oral hearing for the Chiefs of Nyasaland before the Fourth Committee. I do not see how we can refuse such a hearing or not support the request of the Chiefs of Nyasaland in this respect. There is a slight difference between our raising the whole question of the Central African Federation (*The British Parliament passed an Act creating a Federal Union of Northern and Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe and Zambia) and Nyasaland as demanded by the white settlers in these territories. The native population opposed the new Federation because it would increase the resources of the white settlers and*

*make their domination over the native people more easy. The representation provided for the native population in the Federal legislature was too small to be effective. The machinery provided to protect the interests of the African population was not adequate. A deputation sent to England for dissuading the British Government from proceeding with the Federal project failed.)* and our agreeing to this hearing. We may later consider fully our general attitude to the Federation; but for us to side with those who are opposed to hearing of the Chiefs of Nyasaland appears to me to be not only wrong in principle, but opposed to the general line we should adopt in such cases. We cannot ignore any person who is interested and wants to be heard. What is done after the hearing is another matter. If we are outvoted in this matter, there it ends. If a majority is in favour of hearing, then for us to side with the minority will be highly objectionable. What the colonial powers do in regard to it is quite another matter.”

8. “The UK Colonial policy has been progressively deteriorating in recent months. It is clear that – whether in Kenya or Egypt or British Guiana or Central Africa – this policy is of aggressive colonialism. We cannot even passively acquiesce in it, though no doubt we have to take certain accomplished facts for granted.”
9. “Therefore, I think that we should make clear to our Representative in New York that he should support the request or the oral hearing of the Nyasaland Chiefs. What our further attitude should be in regard to the Central African Federation will be considered later and advice sent to him” (**Attitude to Central. 1953: 626-27**).

Further, Nehru note to Secretary-General, Foreign Secretary and Commonwealth Secretary, 16 October 1953, he pointed out,

10. “...Africa, though separated by the Indian Ocean from us, is in a sense our next door neighbour. In historical perspective, Indian interests are likely to be bound up more and more with the growth of Africa. From the point of view of the conflict of forces in Africa at present, we are also deeply interested. In Africa we see:
  - (i) The Union of South Africa, representing and symbolizing the extreme view of European and racial domination. In varying degrees this view is shared by the settlers in other parts of Africa. In the territories adjoining South Africa, this will have even greater effect, but that effect really can be felt as far as East Africa, Central Africa, etc., that is, wherever there is a fairly considerable European settler population. It will not be felt much be the Gold Coast and Nigeria, where there is hardly any settler population.
  - (ii) Growth of African nationalism. This is a common feature in varying degrees all over the African continent.
  - (iii) Colonialism. The attempt to hold on to existing colonial territories and to strengthen that hold. So far as the French, the Portuguese and the Belgians are concerned, the attempt appears to be merely to hold on. So far as the

British are concerned, there is a more far-reaching policy in evidence of building up a new type of colonial empire in collaboration with the settlers elements. A progressive self-government is to be given, but this would be dominated by the settlers. This will inevitably approximate more and more to the South African pattern. The growth of self-governing federations or dominions of this pattern in Africa will not only be highly detrimental to the growth of the Africans in self-realization and in attaining freedom, but will also be a menace to India and to what India stands for.

- (iv) The conflict of nationalism in North Africa, that is, chiefly in the French dominated Arab regions.
- (v) The cold war, between the USA group and the Soviet group, has resulted in the USA supporting colonial administrations in Africa and elsewhere, as they are expected to help in the case of real war and to supply operation bases. Negatively, they are supposed to prevent communism in those areas. Normally, the USA in the past has been after opposed to European colonialism. But the present war fever there has become the dominant force and this has resulted in the support of colonial and reactionary regimes everywhere (*The US Government of the explained that the developments of colonies in Africa under her allies could take place only within the limitations imposed by strategic considerations arising out of the impending struggle with Russia and her associate nations.*)”

These various forces at work overlap and support or come in conflict with each other. So far as South African is concerned, our policy is quite clear, though it is not a very effective policy and practically all we can do is to express ourselves strongly (*The United Nations had been seized of the problem of racial discrimination in South Africa since 1946, when India brought its complaint of discriminatory legislations and practices against South Africans of Indian origin. In 1952, again on the initiative of India and support of other Afro-Asian, a wider question in regard to the policies of apartheid had been various bodies of the United Nations, including the Security Council*). We have, however, succeeded in rousing public opinion all over the world and that is undoubtedly a powerful element in the situation. As regards North Africa, Morocco, Tunisia, etc., we have also played a rather minor and not very effective role in the UN and elsewhere. It is not quite clear what more we can do at present. But it is important that our position in regard to these countries should be perfectly clear and repeatedly proclaimed to the world, in suitable language of course. We must remember always that these countries, as others also, look to India a great deal and that casts a heavy burden upon us. Also that the continuation of colonialism anywhere is both a challenge and a danger to us and to peace in the world.

- (vi) In regard to the Gold Coast and Nigeria, our attitude must necessarily be of friendly cooperation and assistance wherever possible. The extent to

which we can help them to develop will depend on circumstances from time to time.

- (vii) The real areas of conflict, ideological and other, are thus East Africa and Central Africa. In Central Africa there is the question of the federation and in East Africa there is the great struggle going on between the Africans and the colonial authorities plus the settlers. The question of the federation is important for us because that represents the very tendency of establishing

settler dominions, to which we object and which are bad from the African point of view as well as Indian (*On 14 October 1953, India expressed her fears in the UN about the interests of the Africans in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland through the establishment of the Central African Federation. Lakshmi Menon, speaking in the sixty-nation Trusteeship Committee, said that the economic, social and other interests of the Africans in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland might suffer through its Federation*). We are not in a position to do much in regard to this federation and we cannot take up

a purely negative and possibly rather artificial attitude of not recognizing facts as they are. Nevertheless, we should be known where our sympathies lie. Where we can help the Africans to develop and organize, we should do so in a proper and unobtrusive way. We should try to avoid taking any step which gives the impression to the Africans there that we have accepted the changes as accomplished facts. Much will depend on what the facts are there. If they accept them, naturally we cannot be more royal than the king” (S. Gopal, Vol. 24: ?).103

Nehru wrote to V K Krishna Menon on November 13, 1953 and said, “I am troubled about the developments in Africa. I know we cannot do much. But the question is not of doing anything effective, but rather of keeping faith with the African people who look to us so much. If they lose faith in us as well as in the United Nations, then they will become completely frustrated.”

“The advice you gave about not directly raising the question of the Central African Federation again in the United Nations, was, I think, right. In the circumstances, nothing much could have been gained by it, except the ill-will of the UK. On the other hand, this must result in severe disappointment among the Africans and, more especially, the people of Nyasaland (*Chiefs of Nyasaland who looked to India for taking up the cause of the Central African who promised to communicate their request Nehru*). I hope that you will explain to Michael Scott (*Rev. G. Michael Scott; British clergyman who represented some tribes of South Africa at the UN*.) and others how we feel about this matter.”

“I have received a letter from Michael Scott, a copy of which I enclose (*In his letter of 8 November, Michael Scott, while thanking India for raising the question of the Central African Federation at the UN., hoped that India would ensure a “full discussion” and “a strong positive as well as negative policy with regard to South, Central and East Africa”*)

so that “the continent may yet be saved” from racial conflict)” (Note to Secretary- General. 1953: 627-32).

Nehru wrote on Consequences of Racial Discrimination to Secretary-General and the Commonwealth Secretary, 15 November 1953 mentioned, “I think that we should not encourage Mr. Crocker (*Walter Russell Crocker (b. 1902); served with British*

*Colonial Service, 1930-34; with ILO, 1934-40; served in the Army, 1940-46; Professor International Relations, ANU, to Indonesia, 1955-57; High Commissioner in Canada, 1957-59; Ambassador, to Nepal, 160-62; to the Netherlands and Belgium, 1962-65; to Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda, 1965-67; to Italy, 1968-70; publications: The Japanese Population Problem, 1931; Nigeria: A Critique of Colonial Administration, 1936; On Governing Colonies, 1946; Self Government for Colonies, 1949; Can the UN Succeed?, 1951; The Racial Factor in International Relations, 1955; Nehru, 1966; Australian Ambassador, 1971.) or the Australian Government in the idea of their functioning as*

mediators between India and South Africa. If we do anything of this type, the result is bound to be embarrassing for us. Apart from this, I dislike the idea of asking any country, much less Australia to mediate in this matter.”

11. “To imagine that Australian attempts at mediation or anything like it will yield the slightest result is I think a misreading of this situation.”
12. “The general attitude we should take up is to inform representatives of Commonwealth countries informally but with some strength and vigour, that the attitude of South Africa, apart from being wholly wrong and unjustifiable, is most dangerous for the future. That attitude is setting up hundreds of millions in Asia and Africa against the South African Union Government. The racial issues having been raised there affect other countries and we are, therefore, drifting towards a state of affairs when racial passions will be fully roused and it will be difficult to deal with this question with any logic or calm reason. It is obvious that South Africa by its racial policy (*In South Africa, the whites had long since acquired self-government which in effect meant that they possessed the right to rule not only over themselves but also over nearly 10 million Africans. They had evolved for their guidance the principle of apartheid which involved racial segregation and a theory of the superiority of the whites over the coloured. Since 1946 when the question of apartheid first came before the United Nations, the Government of South Africa had refused to recognize the competence of the UN to intervene in the settlement of what it regarded as essentially a domestic affair.*) is not going to terrify all the peoples of Asia and Africa. It will only gain the enmity of these hundreds and millions, and the countries that support, actively or passively, the policy of the South African Government, will somewhat share in this displeasure.”
13. “As a matter of fact, this is increasingly realized in Europe and America and we should press this home. We should not talk of or accept meditation from anybody on this subject. I do not mind how long this conflict lasts. As I stated in my press

conference today, there is no compromise on this issue” (**Note to Secretary-General. 1953: 633-34**).

Congress Working Committee of India adopted the resolution on *Colonial Domination and Racial Discrimination* on 5/6 December 1953 that stated, “The Indian National Congress, in the course of its long history stood not only for the freedom of India but also for the freedom of other subject countries. It was particularly opposed to the colonial pattern of government which had developed under foreign domination in many countries of Asia and Africa. This system was not only degrading to the people of those countries but was based on an economy which prevented the development of those peoples and impoverished them. On many occasions, the National Congress gave its moral support to the struggle of other peoples for freedom. The great movement for the independence of India, carried on under the leadership of Gandhiji by peaceful method, became a symbol and an inspiration to other countries similarly situated. Just as India had become the classic land of colonial and imperialist domination and had thus been the indirect cause of other countries also being so dominated, so also the struggle for India’s freedom became an example to others. That struggle was not only for political independence, but also for social change and advance. It was also identified with a challenge to theory and practice of racial discrimination. India’s great and beloved leader, Gandhiji, began his career of service and sacrifice for the suffering, the dispossessed and those who were discriminated against, in South Africa, where the doctrine of racial domination has been made into a State policy.”

14. “Those ideals and objectives of the Indian people continued to move them throughout their own struggle and, when Independence was achieved, they hoped that other countries under colonial domination would also achieve their freedom. The current of history which had brought this colonialism to Asia and Africa had turned and the countries of Asia were coming into their own. The independence of India and other countries of Asia was evidence of this reversal of the process would continue and would lead to the elimination of both colonial control and racial discrimination.” ---
15. “The attempt to maintain by law and practice racial discrimination and suppression prevails in its crudest form in the Union of South Africa, and neither the Charter of the United Nations nor repeated declarations of the UN General Assembly have produced any results (*The South African Government had enacted discriminatory laws in recent years; (i) The Group Areas Act which, effectively prevented racial groups from co-existing (ii) the Suppression of Communism Act, the Public Safety Act and the Criminal Law Amendment Act, all of which in different ways destroyed or imperiled freedom of speech and of opinion and (iii) the Press Laws and the Native Urban Areas Act, which together destroyed freedom of movement and created an atmosphere of progressive distrust, fear and resentment.*). It is a matter for regret that some great nations, who profess democracy and faith in the Charter, have thrown their weight on the side of racial discrimination in

South Africa. In East and Central Affairs, the doctrine of racial discrimination is not laid down publicly in the same open manner as in South Africa, but in practice this discrimination prevails against Africans and Indians and is resented by both. The Working committee is of opinion that any kind of racial discrimination is an insult not only to those who actively suffer under it, but also to all others who can come within its scope. This doctrine and practice must, therefore, be resisted and opposed wherever it occurs.”

16. “The Working Committee have learnt with great distress of happenings in Kenya where a state of emergency was declared nearly a year ago and has continued since then. --- The Committee consider that the use of violence in carrying on a struggle for freedom is undesirable and harmful, and the adoption of such methods by some African groups have injured their cause greatly. At the same time, the Committee is convinced that widespread suppression and killing by powerful weapons of modern warfare, including bombing from the air, of large populations are inhuman and can only aggravate a most difficult situation. This has led already to extreme bitterness and racial hatred on both sides and cannot possibly bring about a peaceful solution, which must be based on mutual tolerance and cooperation among the various racial groups that inhabit Africa, keeping always in view that the interests of the Africans must be given first priority.”
17. “The Committee had welcomed the introduction of a measure of self-government in the Gold Coast and in Nigeria and had hoped that this policy would be pursued in other parts of Africa also. Their regret, therefore, is all the greater at the reversal of this policy in many parts of Africa. They have noted with surprise the recent deposition of the Kabaka (Mutesa II (*Edward Frederick*) (1924-1969), *Kabaka (king) of Buganda, 1940-53, and President of Uganda, 1963-66*) of Buganda in East Africa (*Kabaka’s deposition had arisen because of his demand for self-government and his refusal to appoint members to the Uganda Legislative Council*) for the offence of claiming independence for his territory within the Commonwealth. In Northern Rhodesia, a new policy of active discrimination against Indians is being followed and Indians have been declared as “prohibited immigrants.”
18. “The Committee view with particular concern the new phase in Africa which aims at the establishments of so-called self-governing dominions, where all the power is held by a small group of white settlers, and the others, and more especially the vast majority of Africans, are prevented from having their legitimate share in it. This establishment of white dominions in Africa, against the wishes of the inhabitants of the countries concerned, and opposed to their interests, is a new form o colonialism which is full of danger for the development of Africa, and even of Asia.”
19. “In the cause of democratic freedom of these countries of Asia and Africa, as well as in the cause of world peace, it is essential that this domination by one race over another should cease, and attempts should be made progressively to build up

societies where the different peoples can live in friendly cooperation respecting each other, and the majority of the people of the country have a predominant voice in their own government and their future (*In a note to N.R. Pillai, on 7 December (not printed), Nehru wrote that this resolution "is an important one and it is a notice to the world of what our general policy and be sent by air mail to our missions abroad, more particularly, to East Africa, Cairo, Gold Coast, London, Washington, Paris, Burma, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria."*) (Resolution on Colonial. 1953: 635-38).

Indian government mentioned its relations with South Africa in the note to the Secretary-General on 8 December 1953, "No reference is made in this Aide Memoire on racial discrimination (*The Aide Memoire, presented to the High Commissioner of UK in Delhi on 10 December 1953, dealt with racial discrimination, political and economic situation in the British colonial territories.*). I think a paragraph should be added. This would be the penultimate paragraph. This might run thus: ---

13. "The Government of the UK are aware of the deep feeling in India in regard to racial discrimination. The laws passed by the Government of the Union of South Africa and the general practice of the Government in regard to racial discrimination have led to strained relations between South Africa and India. Not only the people of India but the people of Asia generally as well as of Africa have resented this treatment of the non-white peoples in South Africa and this question has been raised repeatedly before the United Nations Assembly. That Assembly has expressed its displeasure at the attitude of the Government of the South African Union. This has had no effect on the policies of the Union Government, which has defied or ignored the decisions of the UN Assembly. In a lesser degree, racial discrimination exists in other parts of Africa and is the cause of increasing bitterness. The Government of the United Kingdom will appreciate that people who are subjected or who may be subjected to this insulting and humiliating treatment can never accept it willingly. It can, therefore,

only result in continuing conflict and increasing bitterness. For people in Asia and Africa, this question of racial discrimination is of vital importance (*This paragraph with minor changes, formed part of the Aide Memoire*)" (**Indian government relations. 1953: 638-39**).

Nehru Speech at the inauguration of an African students conference in Delhi University on 26 December 1953 highlighted, "I am frightened at the prospects of Africa going through a welter of blood and thereby losing a generation or two generations of lives on this business before it starts on its constructive and creative career. Retain your pride in Africa and do not be disheartened, but the pride should not be overdone lest it should result in vanity."

"When you go back to Africa you have to face tremendous problems and shoulder a great burden and responsibility and serve your people and help them to march on the right path by giving them proper guidance. For this purpose, you have to train yourselves thoroughly. Whether you like it or not, the burden of leadership will fall



upon you as your country has to grow and it is a big job you have to undertake whether you come to India or go elsewhere for your studies.”

“The problem of Africa is going to be one of the most important problems. We have lived through a period when the problem of Asia dominated world history but now that process has started in Africa. To see this great historic process going on in Africa, I think of you as a part of the great process that is going on in that continent and what a tremendous responsibility you have to bear as leaders of your country in carrying with you the burden of others.”

“A variety of reasons has prevented people of Africa from attaining the standard of education and even now the opportunities for education there are meagre. But now African students are able to come to India and other countries too for their studies. They will be able to shoulder more responsibilities in the advancement and progress of their country. We are passing through many strange before the Great Powers. The colonial revolution started earlier in Asia has gone far, but in Africa conditions are different. Nothing can be said how long it will be before the revolution there is complete but it is certain that its pace will gain speed and Africa is bound to play an important role in world affairs.”

“Many generations in India fought for freedom which was achieved only ‘yesterday’ from the point of view of history. I advise you to share your experiences and draw your own conclusions. Some of your experiences may be helpful to them in studying things objectively. We have learnt a little of what Mahatma Gandhi taught us. India is a vast country. It has experimented in the past in social adjustments and succeeded in a great measure and failed also occasionally, but the whole social framework has been changing with the growth of society.”

“I deprecate the idea of a regimented form of uniformity, but unity in amazing diversity is necessary with a sense of understanding and purpose. The world is a very variegated place and each country can contribute substantially to the welfare and prosperity of humanity. Africa gave me a sensation of youth and vitality which are precious to every nation. Asia gives me a feeling of age and the wisdom of ages with its cobwebs coming down to people through 2000 years.”

“I do not presume to advise you or the people of Africa as to what they should do, but I am convinced that the methods which were adopted in India under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi were fundamentally right and ideal. Non-violence and peaceful methods have become all the more important on account of what is happening in the world today....” (**Travail of Africa. 1953: 639-40**).

Nehru in his letter to Chief Minister wrote on 17 October 1953, “The position in Africa is of very special interest to us. In a sense, Africa is our neighbour, even though a wide sea separates us. What happens in Africa is of significance to the world, but more especially to India. The development of settler dominions, with so-called self-

government (*Nehru had in mind the Union of South Africa, Kenya and the Central African Federation.*), which applies to the white settlers only, would be a dangerous

thing for India and of course much more so for the Africans”(Letter to Chief Minister. 1953: 660).

“We have seen the gradual with Dr Awal of the British power from Asia. Other countries have also been compelled by circumstances to give way. There is till, however, colonial domination in Indo-China and Malaya. The British have sought to build up a new colonial empire in Africa. A new pattern is being set there, the pattern of white dominions. We see this process in East Africa and in Central Africa. There is no essential difference between the policy pursued in the Union of South Africa and the successive steps that have been taken in some other parts of Africa. The language is somewhat different and more moderate. But the aim is almost identical, that is, the establishment of some kind of Dominion Governments with permanent rule of a small white minority. This is not so inconceivable as people might think, for any State today has great power and can coerce to its will on large masses of people” (**Letter to Chief Minister. 1953: 678-79**).

## Indonesia Proposal on Southern Africa

Nehru in his note to Commonwealth Secretary, 6 April 1954 on Indonesian Proposal for an Afro-Asian Conference and mentioned, “I had a fairly long talk with Dr Palar (*L.N. Palar was the Ambassador of Indonesia in India at this time.*) this afternoon on this subject. I told him that, ever since the Asian Conference held in March 1947 (*See Selected Works (second series), vol. 2, pp. 501-523*), we had been hoping to build up some kind of a formal or informal meeting place for Asian (and African) countries. The Asian Conference itself tried to form a permanent organization. This did not function although we have still got the relics of a branch in Delhi. Then I met representatives of Asian and African nations in Paris at the time of the United Nations General Assembly. We discussed this question again. There was general agreement that some such thing was desirable, but each representative said that he would have refer to his government. Ultimately result nil”.

1. “Again early in 1949, we had the Indonesian Conference here, which was a success chiefly because of certain circumstances and because it was confined to one subject. At that time, we discussed the question of meeting frequently and having some kind of organizational set up. The matter was to be referred to governments. Result again nil.”
2. “Previously, I had discussed this matter both with President Sukarno and U Nu. We were all more or less of one mind, but the difficulties in the way seemed insuperable and we decided not to take any step just then (*The Daily News, Colombo on 11 March 1954, however quoted Dr Ali Sastroamidjojo the Prime Minister of Indonesia as saying that he would take the initiative in calling a conference of Afro-Asian nations with the exception of South Africa to strengthen economic cooperation in the region.*)”

3. “At the present moment, as CS points out, conditions in the greater part of Asia and in Africa are exceedingly fluid. I do not quite know ho to deal with. There is no unity of outlook, and any large scale conference is likely to bring about more an exhibition of difference of opinion than unanimity. The first question that will arise is as to who we should invite. Should this conference be entirely on the official level? If so, countries like Morocco, Tunisia, east Africa would be omitted. Perhaps, though I am not quite clear, the gold Coast and Nigeria might be included. In eastern Asia, who are we to invite from Indo-China-Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Viet Minh?”
4. “Nevertheless, I told Dr. Palar that I liked the idea but I would not like any step to be taken without full thought. I said that this was a subject that we a subject that we might well discuss at Colombo (*The Prime Ministers of Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, Burma, and Indonesia met in Colombo from 28-30 April and on 1-2 May 1954 at Kandy adopted the following resolution: “The Prime Ministers discussed the desirability of holding a conference of African-Asian nations, and favoured a proposal that the Prime Minster of Indonesia might explore the possibility of such a conference.”*). If the Indonesian Government held such a conference, we would certainly like to send representatives”(Note to the Commonwealth. 1954: 502-03).

Nehru mentioned his Conversation with Chou En-Lai IV and said, “Speaking of India, there is a slight fear – not much – whether in Ceylon or Pakistan or Burma – that India is bigger country, perhaps stronger than these. China is also a powerful country, an integrated and powerful State. Therefore, there is a fear, not in India but in other countries. It should be our effort to remove such fears regarding India and China. There is a big propaganda in Africa by Europeans – not by Africans – that India wants to expand, turn out Europeans and set up her empire in Africa (*For example, D.F. Malan, the South African Prime Minister, said in the South African Parliament on 4 May 1954, “Mr. Nehru is not hiding the fact that he has his eyes on Africa... He wants Europeans and the white man out of Africa. Therefore he has embarked on a policy of ‘anti-colonialism’.” He added, “Mr. Nehru, and I say this deliberately, is an enemy of the white man.”*). We have told our Indians there that they can only stay in these countries with the goodwill of the people of those countries. So we have to create confidence among the people of these countries” (**Conversation with Chou en-lai IV. 1954: 390-91**).

Nehru wrote to Ali Sastroamidjojo on Proposal for an Asian-African Conference on August 18, 1954 and copies of this letter were sent to U Nu and John Kotelawala on 19 and 24 August 1954 respectively. Nehru said, “About ten days ago, your Ambassador in Delhi handed to me an *aide-memoire* dealing with your proposal to hold Conference of Asian-African nations. I remember that this proposal ( *Sastroamidjojo said before the opening session of the Colombo Conference on 28 April that the Asian and African nations found themselves at the cross-roads of the history of mankind because of “pressure politics” and the race for armaments between the Power blocs, and suggested*

*the convening of a conference of these nations to discuss the problems faced by them*) was discussed, though rather briefly, at Colombo and you kindly agreed that you might explore the possibilities of such a Conference”.

“In the *aide-memoire*, your Government has made certain suggestions. Among them, is the proposal to hold the Conference in the month of September or October, 1954, while the General Assembly of the United Nations is in session in New York (*Elaborating the purposes of the proposed conference, the aide-memoire said that apart*

*from striving toward “the achievement of world peace through constructive ways on moral principles”, cooperation of a more specific nature could be utilized “to analyse and settle common political and economic problems from the Afro-Asian point of view.”*). You have also suggested that the countries to be invited to this Conference

should be those represented on the Afro-Asian group in the United Nations, with the addition of Ceylon and Jordan, and that the Conference should be on a governmental level with Prime Ministers, if possible, representing their respective countries. There should be no observers and the Conference should be of an informal character.”

“In spite of these many preoccupations, we have given a good deal of thought to your proposal about an Afro-Asian Conference. I would welcome such a Conference and I hope that it will be held in Indonesia. But the more I think of it the more I realise that such a Conference, if it is to yield any satisfactory results, must too proceeded by a good deal of preparatory work. September and October are much too near for such preparatory work to take place. We have also to be clear about various matters before we can convene such a Conference.”

---“I am pointing out all these confusing and somewhat contradictory factors. I do not quite see what a conference made up of these discordant elements is likely to achieve. I think that it would be desirable for the Colombo countries to meet first and discuss this general situation as well as the proposed Afro-Asian Conference. Even this meeting of the Colombo countries should take place some time after the South- East Asian Organisation meeting at Baguio. We should, therefore, wait for the Baguio meeting to be over and then decide on a suitable date for a meeting of the Colombo countries.”

“I would very much like to meet you and discuss these various problems with you before putting forward any precise proposals for the future. A great deal has happened since we met at Colombo and it would be helpful certainly to me to have full and frank discussions with you. I would be very happy therefore if you could visit us in India for a few days to have these talks. Even from a larger point of view your visit to India would be welcomed greatly by our people and would be good for both our countries. You could suit your convenience for such a visit to Delhi. I shall be here throughout September and almost any date in September that suits you could be fixed for this purpose” (Letter to Ali Sastroamidjojo. 1954: 424-28).

Nehru further noted Indonesia Proposal for an Afro-Asian Conference on 24 September 1954 given to Ali Sastroamidjojo during his visit to New Delhi mentioned, “At the Conference of Prime Ministers held in Colombo, the Prime Minister of

Indonesia put forward a proposal to hold an Asian-African Conference. This proposal was generally approved, but it was pointed out that this required to great deal of preparation. The Prime Minister of Indonesia was requested to process this further. Subsequently he addressed a letter to the other Colombo Conference countries on this subject.”

“Since the Colombo Conference, many important developments have taken place affecting Asia. There has been Geneva Conference which led to agreements about Indo-China and the ending of the seven-year war there. This Conference was essentially in regard to Asian affairs, but the members of the Conference were non-Asian, except for the actual participants in Korea and Indo-China. An important feature of this Conference was the presence of the People’s Republic of China, which functioned throughout in this Conference as if it was a great power, although it was not recognized by many of the countries represented at the Conference.”

“Although Asian representation at the Geneva Conference was thus strictly limited, there is no doubt that the suggestions put forward at the Colombo Conference had considerable influence over the Geneva Conference. Indeed, the final decisions at Geneva in regard to Indo-China were broadly on the lines suggested at Colombo.”

“Later a Conference was held at Manila also to consider Asian problems. The Colombo Conference countries, though invited, did not attend this Conference, with the exception of Pakistan. This Manila Conference consisted, therefore, principally of certain Western powers with the addition of Thailand, the Philippines and Pakistan, as an observer. It may be said that this Conference was mainly the Conference of colonial powers or those interested in the maintenance of colonialism plus some countries closely associated with them.”

“The purpose of holding this Conference at Manila was by no means clear. There was no critical situation and no fear of aggression from any quarter. In fact, the situation in South-East Asia had eased greatly after the Geneva settlement and tensions had relaxed. For the first time after the Second World War, there was peace in South-East Asia and there was a certain optimism about the future. Nevertheless the Manila Conference was held ostensibly to protect that area against aggression and a rather vague organization was formed, called the South-East Asia Defence Organization. The result of this has been, to some extent, to impair the good effect of the Geneva Conference and to add to the tensions of South-East Asia.”

“Although the Manila Treaty does not go far in a military sense, its implications appear to be far-reaching. It is not only a treaty directly affecting the signatory powers but it concerns itself with other neighbouring countries also. This is rather a novel approach and introduces the element of “spheres of influence”, which was a well-known method adopted by the big colonial powers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Further it refers not only to aggression from outside but to a fact or situation arising, which might endanger the peace of the area. An area, it should be remembered, is an area much wider than that of the signatory powers. This provision might well be claimed to entitle the powers concerned to interfere in the internal

affairs of the countries of this entire area. In effect, it is, however indirectly put, an attempt to secure the dominance of certain great powers over this large area of Asia and to prevent even an internal change which might not be approved of by them.”

“I do not propose to discuss the various aspects of the SEADO Treaty, but they deserve careful consideration. It is obvious that this Treaty, and the whole approach underlying it, is opposed to the other idea of having a peace area in South-East Asia in which the countries are not aligned to any big power bloc. Apparently one of the intentions underlying this Manila Treaty is to undermine the idea of peace area which should be kept out both of a shooting war and a cold war. The Manila Treaty brings the cold war to that area.”

“Some other grave developments have taken place in the Far East of Asia in recent weeks and there is practically a small-scale war going on the coast of China and on the Island of Quemoy. Fairly large scale bombing has taken place on the coastal area in China. This is a serious matter and might develop into bigger military operations, endangering the peace of the entire East and South-East Asia.”

“All these developments are of significance and deserve careful consideration by the countries of Asia and, more especially, by those of South-East Asia. Therefore, the proposal of the Prime Minister of Indonesia to have a Conference of countries of Asia and Africa has an added significance and importance now. Such a Conference should be held before long. At the same time, it has to be borne in mind that a Conference of this kind has to be carefully prepared and cannot function effectively without that preparation.”

“It is also considered desirable that before this Conference is held, there should be a meeting of the Colombo Conference countries to consider both the general situation and, more particularly, matters relating to this Conference. Possibly this meeting could be held sometime in December” (**Note of Indonesia Proposal. 1954: 429-**

**30**). Nehru asked two major points in his cable on **Asian – African Conference** that

dealt with (i) who is to be invited and (ii) The subjects for discussion. Nehru pointed out, “It is very difficult to discriminate in this matter. Broadly speaking, an area has to be indicated and every country in that area has to be invited. If the area was South-East Asia, only the countries of that area would be invited. If it is Asia, then other countries would have to be included. If, on the other hand, it is both Asia and Africa, then the number of countries entitled would grow. It is difficult to limit this Conference to the South-East Asia countries. Such references as have been made previously have always mentioned both Asia and Africa in this connection. For the same reason, even a purely Asian Conference would not be feasible now, as Egypt could not and should not be excluded.”

“It has practically been decided that only independent countries should be invited. Some countries are rather in a peculiar position and it is not possible to call them independent, and yet, from some other points of view, it would be desirable to include them. In Africa, Egypt and the Sudan and Abyssinia would qualify. There are some other countries like Libya and Liberia which are on the border line and perhaps not

of great importance. More important are the Gold Coast and Nigeria, but neither of them is independent.”

“Coming to Asia, it is exceedingly difficult to discriminate and only to invite selected countries. I think that all the independent countries have to be invited. This would include China and Japan and Turkey at the other end. To exclude either China or Japan in a conference which is going to deal, to a large extent, with South-East Asia problems would be very odd and liable to much criticism.”

“Therefore there is no way out except to invite all Asian countries. I would, however, exclude the Asian Republics of the Soviet Union, as, in a sense, they are attached to a European Power. Thus the countries to be invited would be, apart from the Colombo countries, the Arab countries, Iran, Afghanistan, Thailand, the Philippines, the

People’s Republic of China and Japan (*In a note dated 30 September 1954 to T.N. Kaul, Joint Secretary, MEA, Nehru stated “I might mention for your information that by an oversight I did not mention Nepal in the note I gave to the Prime Minister of Indonesia. I corrected this later and told him that Nepal should of course be included, and he agreed.”*). I have not included Israel though there is no logical argument against it. The only thing that can be said is that the Arab countries will object strongly.”

“As for the Indo-China countries, I do not think we can invite them as members. We may consider inviting all four of them as observers.”

“In Africa, the countries to be invited should be Egypt, the Sudan and Abyssinia. Some other countries might be asked to send observers, such as, Libya, Liberia, the Gold Coast and Nigeria. The question of Morocco and Tunisia offers difficulties. In other places we deal with Government. In these two you cannot deal with Governments and it will be rather confusing to invite the heads of popular movements even as observers. They may be encouraged to come in some other capacity for consultation.”

5. (ii) Subjects to be discussed: “The first thing to be decided is what subjects should not be discussed. The internal controversial subjects of these countries should not be discussed. Thus we should not discuss the Palestine problem. We must not discuss the Indo-China problems. it would be undesirable in any event and it would be particularly embarrassing for India, which is acting as Chairman. Other problems as between India and Pakistan or Ceylon and India, should not be discussed. We should confine ourselves to broad issues affecting Asia as a whole or South-East Asia.” Those issues would be:
  6. The preservation of peace, more especially in the light of recent developments. Avoidance of any activity or step which adds to tensions and thus creates a war atmosphere. As far as possible non-alignment on issues of war.
  7. The promotion of freedom in countries which are still subject. Condemnation of individual colonial powers should be avoided and the question should be discussed in its broad aspects as flowing from the UN Charter and as being for the cause of peace.
  8. Racialism

9. We should the five principles which have been agreed to as between India, Burma and China. We need not refer to them as those very five principles or we might do so as we choose. But the main content of them should be discussed, that is, recognition of territorial integrity and sovereignty, non-aggression and non-interference. Non-interference is most important and means non-interference of all kinds, whether it is interference on the part of colonial powers or interference on behalf of the Communist countries. This would include the activities of Communist Parties. We cannot discuss the internal activities. It would be a good thing of course if the Conference generally accepted those five principles.
10. Economic Cooperation. This is obviously desirable, but it will not be possible for a large Conference of this type to consider ways and means. Also it is not feasible for any multilateral arrangements, including distant countries. Economic cooperation can only be worked out as between two countries would require our economic experts and the conference will hardly be a place for discussion of technical matters of this kind. The Conference might discuss the broad issues involved, included the acceptance of foreign aid. (This might be an embarrassing question for some). It should lay stress on the cooperation of Asian or African countries *inter se* and suggest to them to investigate this more fully as between two countries.
11. Cultural. Here also it is difficult to discuss this matter in any detail. We can discuss various aspects of this generally and express our hope for the promotion of cultural cooperation. This may include students and professors being exchanged.
12. It is important Asian and African countries should get to know each other. At present our knowledge of each other is very limited. Probably we know more about European or American countries than about Asian or African countries. We might indicate that some steps should be taken to promote this knowledge of each other.
13. The question of having some machinery for consultation. It will not be desirable to have any formal set-up, but some simple machinery for consultation appears desirable. In this connection, I should like to draw attention to the Asian Relations Conference held in Delhi in March-April 1947. I have sent a note on this subject separately."

"It is obvious that a Conference of the type indicated will have many elements in it which differ from each matter to make it function satisfactorily. The only way one can do this is to keep discussions on a broad and general level and not to allow particular disputes to be discussed, whatever they might be.

"The Prime Minister of Indonesia at one stage suggested basing this Conference on the Asian-African group in the UN. That group in the UN. That group is rather vague and fluid. In any event one would have to add other countries to it. It is perhaps, therefore, not desirable to base the Conference on that group, but to proceed on the basis of including all the countries of Asia as well as the independent countries



of Africa. (Naturally we do not include in this the Union of South Africa and like countries.) Also colonial powers are excluded.”

“I think it is rather unfortunate to leave out Israel. That will be a solitary exception. But I do not know to avoid this. I would prefer to put it to the Arab countries directly that on the basis that we propose to function it is desirable to invite every country including Israel. If they take strong exception then we can leave out Israel.”

“These are some broad suggestions for consideration and to be the basis of future talks (*A joint statement issued in New Delhi on 25 September, after the talks between Nehru and Sastroamidjojo, said, among other things, that the two Prime Ministers were agreed that an Asian-African Conference was desirable and would be helpful in promoting the cause of peace. They also expressed the opinion that the Conference should be held at an early date to discuss matters of common concern and that it should be preceded by a meeting of the Colombo Conference countries, preferably at Djakarta.*)” (**Note of Indonesia Proposal. 1954: 431-34**).

Nehru Note to the Principal Private Secretary on 19 July 1954 on Dispatch of Books and Newspapers to South Africa, he said, “I do not know which Ministry was responsible for these restrictions on the dispatch of books, newspapers, etc., to South Africa. It is quite clear that these restrictions or prohibitions were completely wrong. Books and newspapers should never be considered as normal trade-goods. By banning them we hurt ourselves and cannot put our view across there; we hurt also the numerous people of Indian descent there who look to India in cultural matters.” “This ban on books and other publications should be immediately removed. This has nothing to do with the Ministry of Finance. This note should be seen by the Ministry of External Affairs and should be sent on to the Communications Ministry.” “We have now no direct contacts left in

South Africa as our representative has been withdrawn (*The Government of India terminated its trade agreement with the Union of South Africa and withdrew its High Commissioner in 1946 in protect against its policy of apartheid. On 26 June 1954, the Government announced its decision to close the office of the High Commission in South Africa at the Instance of the Government of South Africa.*). Therefore it is all the more necessary to have our books and papers sent there.” (**Note to the Principal. 1954: 530-31**).

Minutes of talks with Chou En Lai on Foreign Policies of America and China at Beijing on 26 October 1954, Nehru said, “I was talking about Africa. We have a very large population there. A very dangerous development is now taking place in Africa. The Western nations, after having lost their colonies, are now trying to consolidate themselves in Africa and their rule there is worse than that in the colonies. They are establishing dominions by the white men. There is, thus, the South African Federation and they are similarly trying to establish a dominion in East Africa. This white domination is entirely fascist in outlook.”

“There are some people in Africa who are opposed to India and we cannot do much about them. But there are many Africans who are also friends of India. We are trying to give them whatever help we can. There are at present forty-five African

scholars studying in Indian universities and we have also sent about one hundred technical experts to Africa and the Middle East. Africa is not playing any important role in the world today but it is a dangerous zone and we are concerned about it. In North Africa, in the colonies under French colonial rule, there is also a very strong nationalist movement. Then there is Egypt and there is the African Africa. I am mentioning these things just to give a brief outline of the world picture. Africans must be helped to develop, for they are not strong to take action by themselves. I am mentioning this because however big a problem may be we have to see the whole picture. We are connected with East and West Asia and Africa. We had a lot to do with Europe, but we had little to do with America and very little contact with South America. Our Vice President is at the moment touring the South American continent (*S. Radhakrishnan undertook a six-week tour of Europe, USA, Canada and Latin America during October-November 1954*). I am just mentioning this to show that we are in touch with various countries. They do not like it. In fact, I recently read from an American journal where they said that first they talked of helping India, but now they feel that if India becomes strong then it will be bad for the US.”

“As regards the question of disarmament, it is a difficult question. Industrially developed countries can arm themselves quickly. Factories that can produce aero planes can easily produce bombs. But disarmament must come. I agree, but there must first be little less tension. The main question is how to remove fear and entanglement from power blocks. You referred to the proposed Asian-African Conference. The proposal was made by the Indonesian Prime Minister. We welcome it and it will be held. But it will be a mixed Conference. Even in Colombo Conference, Pakistan had one voice and others had another. So, it will not be a united Conference, but still to have a Conference is good and I think, if Asian and African countries can come together, even if they differ, we can still influence them” (**Minutes of talks. 1954: 15-17**).

Thoughts on Afro-Asian Conference, Nehru noted on 20 December 1954, “Ever since the proposal to have an Afro-Asian Conference was made by the Prime Minister of Indonesia at the Colombo Conference, we have given much thought to it (*The proposal was made by Ali Sastroamidjojo on 30 April 1954, during the sixth session of the Colombo Conference. For Nehru’s views on the proposal see Selected Works, (second series), Vol. 25, pp. 431-433. The second meeting of the Colombo Powers to draw up an agenda for the Afro-Asian Conference took place at Bogor, Indonesia, on 28 and 29 December 1954*). The proposal was obviously attractive and it was desirable that there should be some such meeting. But, the moment one began to think about it, various difficulties arose. Who was to sponsor this Conference? Who was to be invited? What should be the purpose of the Conference? What should be the agenda? And, finally the date and venue of the Conference.”

“So far as the venue is concerned, it is generally agreed that the Conference should take place in Indonesia. India is quite agreeable to this. The date will, no doubt, be settled at the meeting at Djakarta to be held soon. The difficulty about the date is that

any such Conference requires a good deal of previous preparation. On the other hand, to postpone the Conference for a considerable time also appears to be undesirable.”

“The sponsors of the Conference should presumably be the five Colombo Conference countries, namely, Indonesia, Burma, Ceylon, Pakistan and India, provided, of course, all the five are willing to sponsor it. If, by any chance, any of them is not so willing, then the remaining countries will have to sponsor it. The sponsoring countries should share the cost of the Conference.”

“The purpose of the Conference can only be defined in general terms, that is, to bring these countries closer to one another, to enable them to discuss broad problems which are common to them, to facilitate their cooperation with each other, etc. Obviously the maintenance of peace must be in the forefront. Most countries that attend will be interested in the removal of colonialism and racialism. Economic cooperation should also be considered.”

“The countries that participate in the Conference have different political and economic policies. They have also their particular problems and, sometimes, there are problems inter se. Any discussion of controversial political issues between any two or more countries would not be desirable in the Conference. Such issues can only be considered by the countries concerned themselves and not in a Conference of this kind. Broad issues, however, might be considered even though there is some slight difference of opinion or emphasis. The whole object should be to create an atmosphere of cooperation and to put Asia and Africa more in the world picture. During the last few years, the position of Asia in world affairs has gradually changed and the relationship of Asian nations to European or American nations is also a changing one. The old balances no longer hold good and Asia and Asian problems cannot be treated as the sole concern of non-Asian countries.”

“Better understanding of and between the nations and peoples of Asia and Africa and good neighbourliness as between them should receive consideration. The Five Principles which should govern their relations with each other and which were agreed to in the communications exchanged between India, Burma and China, may well form the basis of such consideration.”

“We have to desire to impose these Five Principles as such on other countries or to consider them as unalterable in their present form, but they do lowering of existing tensions and the necessity for countries of differing systems of government and ideologies, respecting each other’s sovereignty and independence and without interference in each other’s internal affairs and also without basing their mutual relations on conflict and armaments, should be considered. This alternative is often referred to as peaceful coexistence.”

“As this will be the first Conference of its kind, we shall have to proceed a little cautiously so as to attain some results and avoid too many differences on highly controversial topics cannot wholly be avoided where opinions differ on the basic approach to world problems. But they can well be avoided on specific issues.”

“The agenda for the Conference ought to be a broad and general one. In fact, there should be no formal agenda at all to begin with. Only certain general subjects need be indicated. This is the usual practice in Conferences of the kind we propose to convene.

For example, in Conferences of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, where, as is known, there are marked differences among the participating countries and yet, it is possible to discuss these subjects and, sometimes, arrive at some general conclusions.” “It would, therefore, be desirable to indicate these broad subjects and inform the countries invited about them, adding that the real agenda will be Drawn up when the conference itself meets. This appears to be the proper course. Any other course might well be objected to by the other countries who might say that they were not consulted

about the agenda.”

“Probably, the most difficult point to be decided now is the composition of the Conference, that is, who should be invited. At one time, it was suggested that the Afro-Asian group in the United Nations might be invited. This excludes some important countries and it, therefore, is unsatisfactory. Indeed, any approach, which is a selective and exclusive one, would lead to difficulties. What test are we to apply to the process of selection? In view of the two great rival blocs of powers, any selective process will be criticised and might well be unfair to one or the other. Therefore, some general rule has to be applied which is, for all practical purposes, inclusive of the sovereign countries in these two continents.”

“I, therefore, feel that we must invite every independent country in these areas, subject to some minor variations which I suggest below.”

“I would not invite the Soviet Asian Republics. We should consider the Soviet Union as a unit. It can hardly be described as an Asian Power. Therefore, we should leave out the Soviet Asian Republics.”

“In Asia, apart from the five Colombo Conference countries, the independent countries are:-

- (i) Japan
- (ii) China
- (iii) The Philippines
- (iv) Thailand
- (v) Nepal
- (vi) Afghanistan
- (vii) Iran
- (viii) Turkey
- (ix) Iraq
- (x) Saudi Arabia
- (xi) Yemen
- (xii) Lebanon
- (xiii) Syria
- (xiv) Jordan
- (xv) Israel

“There are also four States in Indo-China which occupy a somewhat peculiar position. It is difficult to differentiate between the four States of Indo-China for the purposes of our Conference. We have to invite them all or none. They constitute a major issue in the context of peace and stability in South East Asia. They participated in the Geneva Conference and were treated as four independent units, each speaking in its own name. Therefore, I think that we should invite all of them, namely, Vietminh or North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia.”

“Logically speaking, we should include Israel as not only an independent country, but one represented in the United Nations. It is likely that the Arab countries will take strong exception to the participation of Israel. The sponsoring countries should seek to explain to the Arab countries that the basis of the Conference is of “no exclusions” and the sponsoring countries, or the majority of them, are alone responsible for the invitations and that the presence of an invited country does not constitute or suggest any change in the relationship of one invited to another. Further, as China must, I think, be invited, if there is to be a proper conference at all, it could be less embarrassing for states, who have not recognized China, if another state to which also they have strong objections, who is in the area, is invited. The Arab countries might first refuse to attend or raise objections, but we should seek to persuade them. They could be informed that they can make their position quite clear. After all, such a Conference includes all kinds of countries and an invitation does not mean agreement with that country. We sit in the UN with countries with whom we disagree or with whom we have no diplomatic relations. However, in the final analysis, I think it is better not to

include Israel if that is likely to lead to the Arab countries keeping away (*Ali Yavar Jung the Indian Ambassador in Cairo had informed Nehru on 16 December 1954 that the Arab States were being very ‘sensitive’ regarding the possible inclusion of Israel in the Afro-Asian Conference. They alleged that it was well known that the Afro-Arab-Asian group in the UN did not include Israel. Ali Yavar Jung felt that at Bogor, Pakistan was likely to voice the Arab objections.*)”

“I think it is not at all feasible for us to invite Formosa. The sponsoring countries do not recognize the Formosa Government and four of them recognize the People’s Government of China. We cannot invite both China and Formosa.”

“It has been said that if the People’s Government of China is invited this will displease the USA and I understand that some pressure has been brought to bear on some of the countries which might be invited, in regard to China. I feel that it would be out of the question for us to leave out China. Most of us are pressing for the inclusion of China in the UN and for us not to invite China would be opposed to our entire policy. It would also be a little absurd for Asian countries to meet and the biggest Asian country to be left out. Nobody can accuse us of inviting countries belonging to one group of nations when we are inviting, at the same time, the other group fully; but we will be accused of partiality if we do not invite China and there will be no answer to that accusation. Therefore, I feel that China has to be invited even through this might displease some people. It must be remembered that we are likely

to invite Japan, Thailand, the Philippines and Turkey which are definitely aligned with the opposite group. Some countries of Western Asia may also perhaps be said to be inclined that way.”

“Therefore, I would suggest that, of the countries of Asia, the following should be invited (the five sponsoring countries are not mentioned below):-

1. Japan
2. China
3. The Philippines
4. North Vietnam (Vietminh)
5. South Vietnam
6. Laos
7. Cambodia
8. Thailand
9. Nepal
10. Afghanistan
11. Iran
12. Turkey
13. Iraq
14. Jordan
15. Syria
16. Lebanon
17. Saudi Arabia
18. Yemen

“In considering countries in Africa, we have to face the difficulty of colonial powers. There are few independent countries. South Africa is independent, but, in the circumstances, I do not think we can invite it. If we did invite it, our invitation would be refused. The Central African Federation stands on a somewhat different footing and we may consider whether it should be invited or not. I have no objection to its being invited. If they are present, it will be good for them to feel the weight of Asian opinion. Also the deferential treatment offered to the, as compared to the Union of South Africa, might be a good thing. In the larger context of world politics and in our approach to Asian and colonial problems, we should seek to avoid drawing racial and colour bars. The chances are that they may not accept the invitation, but it would be worthwhile to invite the other independent countries in Africa are:-

1. Egypt
2. Ethiopia
3. Libya

#### 4. Liberia

“Sudan and the Gold Coast are not completely independent, but they are well on the way to it. They are important and I think that they should be invited.”

“The other countries of Africa are under colonial administrations. However much we might sympathize with them, it is difficult to include them in this list. Thus, we might invite from Africa:-

1. Egypt
2. Sudan
3. Ethiopia
4. Libya
5. Liberia
6. The Gold Coast and, possibly,
7. The Central African Federation

“I do not think we should only have full members of the Conference and outside the Afro-Asian area. I think that we should only have full members of the Conference and not Observers.

“If we want this Conference to be businesslike and effective, we cannot make it a vague, amorphous gathering. It should be strictly a ministerial level Conference, and I would invite each country on the list to send, as its representative, its prime minister or its foreign minister. Each delegation can, of course, have advisers.”

“Once a decision has been taken on these preliminary issues, it will be necessary to set up a secretariat to undertake the preliminary work which will be heavy. The secretariat should be set up in the country where the Conference is going to be held. It should consist of representatives of the sponsoring countries. As I have said above, the expenditure of the Conference should be shared equally by the sponsoring countries” (Note of Afro-Asian Conference. 1954: 107-12).

Nehru gave statement at the first session of the Conference of the Prime Ministers of the five Colombo Countries, Bogor on 28 December 1954 regarding the objective of the Proposed Conference. He said, “I would like to express my gratitude to you and to your Government for the fact that we are meeting here today (*The Conference* was opened by Ali Sastroamidjojo, who recalled the important developments in Asia since the Colombo Conference. He also put forward the items for the consideration of the Conference. The Myanmarese Premier, U Nu, Contended that the Conference should not aim towards creation of a power bloc, but through mutual understanding ‘enlarge the area of peace.’). When we met at the Colombo Conference at the instance

of Sir John Kotelwala, I ventured to say that the mere fact of our meeting there was of historical significance. That has been justified by subsequent events and the fact that a good part of the world took then a great deal of notice of our meeting and of what we decided. In fact, it may be said that the deliberation of the Geneva Conference which was held about that time were considerably influenced by our

recommendations in regard to Indo-China (*The Colombo Powers recommendations urged an immediate ceasefire in Indo-China by an agreement and not adding to the "war potential of the combatants*). Therefore, our meeting here today is of importance not only to our respective countries, but in a much larger and wider sense. ---In so far as the main purpose of our meeting is concerned, i.e., the proposal to have an Afro-Asian Conference, we agreed to it in principle in Colombo and I have no doubt that subsequent thinking has confirmed all of us in the desirability of having such a Conference; and the reactions we have had also, generally speaking, from other countries in Asia and Africa have been favourable. Again, the mere fact of our thinking in these terms is itself important because, apart from the problems of individual countries in Asia and Africa – and those problems are important – there is a basic problem of Asia and Africa, if I may use the words, pulling their weight together regarding their own problems in world affairs. But the position has changed greatly in the last few years because of countries becoming independent. That process is not complete yet, either in Asia or in Africa. Nevertheless, Asia certainly has been exercising more influence and that influence has been exercised in the direction of peace. It is important that we are thinking of, to help to place Asia and Africa in proper perspective in the world, because the old perspectives no longer apply. Although they do not apply, nevertheless, it is difficult for some people in other countries to realize that the world has changed and the old balances are no longer there. Therefore, it is of particular importance that this Afro-Asian Conference should meet at a suitable time and discuss broadly the questions that are common to us. I do not wish to say anything about that Conference now because that is the main subject of our Conference. I agree with U Nu that it is not our purpose in meeting here today or at a later date in that Conference to form blocs and the like. We meet for mutual cooperation amongst ourselves as well as with others (*Nehru was followed by Mohammad Ali, the Pakistan Prime Minister, and John Kotelwala, the Sri Lankan Prime Minister. Ali emphasized the need for adherence to the principles underlying the UN Charter for promotion of peace. Kotelwala urged the premiers of India and Myanmar to narrate their experience of their visit to China and speak about the impressions that they gathered about the Chinese attitude*).” (**Conference of the Prime Ministers. 1954: 112-14**).

Nehru Intervened at the third session of the Conference of the Prime Minister of the five Colombo Countries, Boger on 29 December 1954 regarding *Coordination in Economic Field*. On the suggestion at the Indian Prime Minister, “it was agreed that from then on the term Afro-Asian Conference should be altered into Asian-African Conference. The word “Asian” should come first, because the Colombo Countries

which have initiated and sponsored the Afro-Asian Conference are Asian countries. The word “African” should be used instead of “Afro”, since the latter might cause some resentment among the Africans themselves, just as the word “Asiatic” used to do in bygone days...The Prime Minister of India, in his closing Address, recalled the statement he made on his arrival that, even if the Conference cannot come to any conclusion, it will still be of great importance, because the participants will have



come together and have exchanged views. He was glad to note that the Conference has been concluded in the appropriate time and has come to good conclusion due to the excellent approach of the participants” (**Interventions at the third session. 1954: 118-19**).

Nehru during his Press Conference on the Bogor Talks in Djakarta on 30 December 1954 answered the questions such as:

Q: What were the reasons for rejecting South Africa?

JN: It was not discussed, but the fact was mentioned that the Union of South Africa, although obviously it is an independent country, could not possibly be invited because of its very aggressive racial policies. There the matter ended. There was no discussion in the sense of two views on it.

Q: Have you been able to discuss a fair outline of the agenda of the Bandung Conference (*On 28 December the Colombo Powers decided to hold the Asian-African Conference at Bandung, Indonesia, during last week of April 1955.*)

JN: We have not discussed any agenda. In fact, we have declared that there should be no rigid agenda. Such an agenda is likely to be Drawn up by the Conference itself. OF course, a good deal of secretarial work will have to be done so that the Conference will have papers to consider. That the Secretariat will do. We did not discuss it at all. A Conference of this type, it is obvious, has to deal with general matters only.

With twenty five countries – or whatever the number may be – meeting together, if each country starts discussing its own problems, there will be no end to these discussions, and you cannot decide questions, normally speaking, in such a Conference by a majority of votes. You cannot outvote anybody. You may put down some general conclusions. If I may give an example – it is not wholly applicable, but still, by and large, it might be – it is the Conference of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers, where the six or seven countries that you have there, are certainly not all of one opinion. In fact, there is the greatest divergence of opinion, say, between South Africa and India. We are both present there. We do not argue such problems there, but each party gives its opinion about the general situation – in Europe, Asia, or anywhere else – and then we record some minutes about it. We do not pass formal resolutions.

Possibly – I cannot say – that will be the general approach to the Bandung Conference. Normally such a Conference does not pass resolutions, except on something on which obviously there is agreement. You do not pass resolutions by a majority overriding the minority. All that I can say must necessarily be tentative. It is a new thing. There is no convention behind it. I do not know how the countries which will attend might feel about it, but it seems to me that a Conference like this cannot pass resolutions on controversial topics by mere votes. It is mainly a Conference where we get to know each other’s viewpoints, and express our general opinion, where there is broad agreement, about particular subjects, not a specific subject.

Q: You have referred to the possibility of economic cooperation. What exactly have you mind in setting up a committee of experts?

JN: When we set up this committee of experts, they will really consider the answer to this question as to what they can do. There are many things that they can do. The field is limited in the sense of our capacity to do things, because most of the countries in South East Asia or Africa are relatively under-developed; we do not complement each other. Nevertheless, there is no doubt there are fields where we can help. It might interest you to know that today, in spite of our tremendous need for technical personnel; we have lent the services of at least 125 qualified technicians, engineers and others, to other, to other countries of Asia and Africa. When the demand comes, even at our own cost we send some people.

The problems of these countries are basically those of economic developments. Politics comes in chiefly as a nuisance, if I may use the word. It stands in the way of economic development. We have to deal with political questions; otherwise, if you ask me in India what my main concern is, it is not politics but the development of India. I do not wish to make comparisons with other countries, but I would say that the amount of time and energy we spend on thinking and acting on development programmes is tremendous. We have the First Year Plan. Now we are thinking of the Second Five Year Plan. All our basic policies of industrialization, balances and investment, balancing of heavy industry with light industry and cottage industry, investing without inflation – these are the live problems which are to be faced. These are not political problems, but politics do come in; we cannot escape it.

Q: What kind of economic cooperation do you envisage between the five countries?

JN: We may have ad-hoc committees, we may have bilateral arrangements. I do not know. The capacity of any one country to help another is not very great.

Nevertheless, the capacity of all of them helping each other slightly in one matter or the other is there and, taken as a whole, it might make a difference. Apart from

Japan, we are all raw material producing countries, wanting to industrialize ourselves. The same problem is before each one of us. I suppose in this area, apart from Japan, relatively speaking, India is a little more advanced, and has a few more technical personnel

compared to the other Asian countries.

Q: Do you feel that the holding of the Asian-African Conference will discourage such spheres of influence?

JN: I hope so. It is obvious.

Q: Why was the name ‘Afro-Asian’ changed to ‘Asian-Africa’?

JN: It is a finer way of describing it. We put Asia first, not because Asia is more important, but just because it reads. Even at the UN, the name ‘Arab-Asian’ has been changed.

Q: Would you regard the Arab-Asian group as a bloc?

JN: It is not a rigid organization. It has a loose form. It is not as if the people have signed up to join an organization or group. They just meet and discuss matters.

Q: How have you included Turkey among the invites, when Turkey regards itself as a Western power?

JN: There is a bit of Turkey and a very large part of it in Asia. It is perfectly true that about thirty years ago, when Lemal Pasha Ataturk became the ruler of Turkey, he initiated a definite trend towards Europe in every way, politically and socially, and under his successors that influence continued. But the fact remains that Turkey is in

Asia and cannot easily get away from it” (**Press conference. Bogor. 1954: 119-27**).

Nehru sent a note on *Analysis of Bogor Conference* to the Indian Missions abroad for information on January 3, 1955 and mentioned, “Conference was very successful and all decisions taken were practically unanimous. Principle laid down for invitation to Asian-African Conference was that all independent countries in Asia and Africa should be invited. Border line cases to be considered separately. The only independent country that we did not invite was Union of South Africa for obvious reasons, because of their intense racialism and hostility to Asian and African peoples.”

“Three countries in Africa, namely Gold Coast, Sudan and Central African Federation were borderline cases, not wholly independent but approaching it. We felt that we should invite to show that we were not proceeding on the basic of racial discrimination.”

“Of Course, in the modern world we are thrown together, whether we like it or not. All the countries of the world are thrown together. Not, I talked about Asia or, if you like, about Africa. And as you perhaps know there has been a proposal recently made – or made during the past few months originally by the Prime Minister of Indonesia – for a Conference, an Asian-African Conference – which may take shape sometime or the other. Now, what does that mean? Are we in Asia or in Africa, who are close together, banding ourselves together against anybody? Certainly not. If we hold the Conference – or whether we hold it or not – we do not think of banding ourselves together against any continent or any country. The thing which sometimes we object to is that we should be pushed and harried about and made to participate in other people’s conflicts and troubles. We have enough of troubles of our own. Why should we carry the burden of others’ conflicts? I do not understand. So, when we talk of Asia or Africa and our cooperation with these countries, it does not mean – and it should not mean to anybody – that this is opposed in the slightest sense to any other continent or country.”

“And when I sat that I do not exclude, of course, cooperation with countries outside Asia or Africa or countries of Europe which have greatly advanced the cause of civilization to their credit; that is to say, the countries of Asia, while passionately preserving or wishing to preserve their independence – or to acquire it where they have not got it yet – do not wish to live in an isolated way or in a hostile way to any part of the world or to band themselves together or to associate themselves with other groups or bands – hostile group – but desire to live in friendship with all countries, provided only that their independence, their freedom of action and development is not interfered with.”

“Perhaps, I have gone a little further than I might have done on this occasion. That is a failing I suffer from because my mind runs on. It is often occupied with thoughts

and ideas and seeing so many of you, eminent citizens of Bombay and others present here, I allowed the mind to run on. And may I – talking about the eminent citizens and talking about the not so eminent citizens of Bombay – mention more especially the distinguished guest we have here, the Minister of the newly-freed country of Sudan (*Sayed Ibrahim El Mufti, Minister for Commerce & Industry of Sudan*)? Here he is representing not only his great country in this broad area of Asia and Africa, but a country which, I am glad to say, has peacefully and cooperatively achieved its freedom. He is here to meet us, and we are happy to welcome him, because we are of the same fraternity and same brotherhood. We have also here representative – distinguished representatives – of Ceylon, whom we welcome also. So, the course of history runs on, and we have entered a new chapter which calls upon us to be wide awake, to stand on our cultural inheritance, but to participate fully in that great inheritance of the world. In this, it is evident that we should cooperate as closely as possible with our old friends like those of the Arab world; and so I again welcome the

formation of this society” (**Analysis of Bogor Conference. 1954: 128- 29**).

Nehru addressed the public meeting of May Day on *Peaceful Transition to Socialism* in New Delhi on 1 May 1955 and said, “Many important things have been happening. Recently, a conference was held in a little city of Indonesia, Bandung, which was attended by the representatives of Asian and African countries. Mostly it was prime ministers who came there and all of us were together for seven or eight days. It was an unusual gathering of people of various colours and in diverse garments. Many of them had never visited this part of the world, like the people from Africa and the Arab countries. It was a strange new world for them. For instance, there is hardly any rainfall in the Arab countries where there are great deserts with little or no greenery. They suddenly found themselves in a country like Indonesia which has rainfall all the year round and has lush green vegetation. You will find that there is no particular time for sowing or harvesting and both go on simultaneously. For the Arabs, to whom even a little water is very valuable, this was an entirely novel experience. Then there were the differences in dress and ways of living.”

“All of us met at Bandung. And in spite of all the differences, there was a common bond between us. We were together for seven or eight days and many friendships were formed, a mutual understanding of one another’s problems grew and we formed a closer bond. Many of the delegates passed through Delhi on their way to Indonesia and others will halt here on their way back...”

“There is no doubt about it that the Bandung Conference was a historic landmark in the history of Asia and Africa. At the same time it increases our responsibility to some extent. Many countries of the world are looking towards India for guidance. They are interested in seeing how we are solving the big problems before us and making progress. They want to learn from us. Innumerable foreigners come to India to see what is happening here. They go to see the big projects that we have undertaken all over the country, like Bhakra-Nangal, Damodar Valley, the fertilizer plant at Sindri, the factory at Chittaranjan which produces rail engines, the locomotive and

aeroplane manufacturing units at Bangalore, our big scientific laboratories, etc. But they are particularly interested in our schemes for rural development. You must have heard about the community schemes, which are arousing great interest and rightly so, because they concern the daily lives of millions of people who live in the rural areas. We are trying to uplift them through their own efforts. This is something that people in other countries in a similar situation could also copy. I include all the Asian countries except Japan in the category of countries which are poor and backward with a tremendous unemployment problem. This is the general condition of practically the whole of Asia and Africa whether you take China, India, Burma, Indonesia, Egypt or any other country. The basic problems are the same. The countries of Asia became very backward during the last two hundred years while the United State of America and the European countries advanced rapidly. They produced enormous amounts of wealth and the people became well off. They grew very powerful and began to suppress other countries. We, however, are not interested in suppressing others. What we do wish is to make our people better off and increase production because ultimately the real wealth of a country is what it produces, whether it is from land or factories or cottage industries. We are trying to make the country strong in these various ways. These are the basic problems. Europe and the United States have had more than a century in which to progress. Moreover, though their progress was due to their own effort and hard work, they were helped greatly by their colonial possessions in raw materials and resources. They are not to be blamed because our own foolishness was responsible for that. We have no means of snatching from others or taking undue advantage. We have neither the means nor do we think it proper. We want to achieve in ten years what they did in 100-150 years, which is extremely difficult. It requires a great deal of hard work. All our plans are aimed at this---" **(Public meeting of May Day. 1955: 60-62).**

Nehru wrote to Ali Sastroamidjojo regarding Asian - African Conference on February 20, 1955 and highlighted, "My dear Prime Minister ((1903-1975); *Prime Minister of Indonesia, 1953-55 and 1956-57*). This letter will be taken by Mohammad Yunus ((b. 1916); *member, Indian Foreign Service, 1947-74*), who is leaving tomorrow morning for Djakarta. He is one of our team for helping the Joint Secretariat of the Asian-African Conference (*The 29 countries which participated in this conference, held at Bandung, Indonesia, from 18 to 24 April 1955 were: Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Myanmar (all sponsors), Afghanistan, Cambodia, People's Republic of China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Nepal, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, North Vietnam, South Vietnam and Yemen. These countries had a population of about 1,440,408,000 or nearly two-third of the world population as estimated in 1953. The Joint Secretariat comprised of Ruslan Abdulganj, Secretary General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Indonesia, as its Secretary General and B.F.H.B.Tyabji(India), Chaudhari Khaliquzzaman (Pakistan), M. Saravanamuttu (Sri Lanka) and Mya Sein (Myanmar) as members.*). Another

member (*A. Appadoraj joined the Joint Secretariat as Conference Officer*) of this team will go early in March.”

“As you know, I have been away in England and only returned three days ago. On my way back I stopped for two days in Cairo and had talks with the Prime Minister and other Ministers of Egypt. Prime Minister Gamal Nasser (*Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918-1970); Prime Minister of Egypt, 1954-56*) is greatly looking forward to his visit to Indonesia for the Asian-African Conference. He will probably come to India on his way to Indonesia and it is possible that we might come together to Djakarta.”

“The Asian-African Conference has attracted very great attention in the world. There would have been so in any event, but the continuation of the grave crisis over Formosa and the offshore islands of China will no doubt heighten the interest in our Conference. The situation in the Far East is a very difficult and serious one. Indeed,

it might well be called an explosive one. The recent speech of Mr. Dulles (*John Foster Dulles (1888-1959); US Secretary of State, 1953-59*) in which he has announced the American intention of shielding Quemoy and Matsu islands to worsen the situation

and add to the danger of major incidents. Much may therefore happen even before we meet at Bandung.”

“In view of this great importance of the Bandung Conference. I hope that the Joint Secretariat is making full and adequate preparations for it and will not be taken unawares at the last time. The full Conference will probably only meet once or twice, but there are likely to be numbers of committees meeting as well as private consultations between various delegations. We are only meeting for a week or so and time is thus very limited. I hope that this time will not be taken up much by protocol routines or by banquets and the like. The more time we have to have private discussions amongst ourselves, the greater the success of the Conference will be.”

“The Conference is unique in many ways. The mere fact of our meeting is of high importance. Then we have at the Conference representatives of countries holding diametrically opposing views. All this will require the most careful and tactful management. On the one hand, we cannot be just a gathering of diverse people talking vaguely about world problems; on the other hand we cannot obviously take up highly controversial issues as between our countries. Such a conference cannot decide any question by majority vote. In spite of these difficulties, I think that the Conference can well help in producing a broad common approach in some matters affecting Asia and Africa and throw its weight on the side of peace.”

“I am venturing to write to you this matter because of the high importance of this Conference and the necessity to make it a success in every way. The Joint Secretariat

will no doubt work to this end. But I hope that they will have your personal guidance” (**Letter to Ali Sastroamidjojo. 1955: 97-98**).

Along with it, Nehru to B.F.H.B. Tyabji (*Ambassador to Indonesia, 1954-56*) on February 20, 1955, said, “As Yunus is going tomorrow morning to Djakarta, I am giving him a letter for the President (*Letter to Ahmed Sukarno, President of Indonesia,*

*not printed*) and another for the Prime Minister (*See the preceding item.*). Copies of both are enclosed. Please have them delivered.”

“I am rather anxious about this Asian-African Conference and, more especially, about the arrangements. I wonder if the people in Indonesia have any full realization of what this Conference is going to be. All the world’s eyes will be turned upon it and I have no doubt that vast numbers of press correspondents will go there for the occasion. The Conference will represent a historic event of great significance and might well mould the future of Asia and Africa. The immediate subject that it will probably have to face will be a very grave crisis in regard to Formosa, etc. I do not mean that it should throw itself into this muddle, but it cannot wholly ignore it either.” “Because of all this, we cannot take the slightest risk of lack of adequate arrangements. There is no reason why there should be this lack because everything can be done if there is proper understanding and intention to do it. What I fear is that there is not full understanding even and much less intention. It will be a tragedy if the arrangements are feeble and a break-down occurs.”

“You have been pointing out that the Indonesians are sensitive. We should respect their sensitiveness. But we cannot afford to have everything messed up because they are sensitive. The harm to Indonesia will be very great indeed if all the world sees that they cannot organize the Conference or organize it very badly. The whole work of the Conference might go to pieces because of lack of foresight and lack of proper organization. As for the foreign delegations that come there, they will go back with irritation and, maybe, even ill-will.”

“These are serious consequences which we cannot ignore simply because people are sensitive. I want you to realize this and I want the Indonesian Government and the Joint Secretariat to realize it fully. I have no doubt whatever that if things do not come up to standard, there will be a burst up even we are in Indonesia and others will take charge of the situation and not calmly look on while everything goes to pieces”

(**Letter to B.F.H.B. 1955:28-29**).

## Indonesia and Southern Africa

President Sukarno said at the Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung in 1955 and told the delegates, “... we may not deceive ourselves into thinking that the history of the world will end when the last nation has won political independence! The elimination of the physical occupation by the colonialists is just the first stage of national independence in this age. Willy-nilly, however, we must go further and eliminate all kinds of exploitation, direct or indirect, mental and material... To release ourselves from the spiritual and mental bondage of the colonial past, and then to explore and exploit our personality, our potential and those of our nation-these are the essentials of nationhood in the modern age. It is the search for these things as the basis for new nationhood that is the cause of this upheaval in our continents, and upheaval which constitutes a confrontation between the New Emerging Forces and that Old Established Order which threw upon the explanation of its fellow men... Sisters and

brothers, I am well aware that these words of mine are not the product of conventional thinking. They have nothing to do with the conventional idea that we wait until we are ‘mature’, the colonial powers who bestow independence upon us as a gift. They do not conform to the conventional idea that all we need after independence is technical skills, capital and machinery with which to develop nationhood... Far more essential, however, is the question of the basic concepts produced by the society as a foundation for its activities. It is these basic concepts that will ensure that these activities do gradually round out and perfect the independence already gained. No matter what errors of judgement, no matter what mistakes are made through lack of skill in the meantime, these basic concepts will ensure the correct direction, if only they are sound, if only they are in harmony with the Revolution of Mankind, if only they express the genius of the nation.”

“The New Emerging Forces were defined by Sukarno as the newly liberated areas of Africa, Asia, South America, the Communist countries, and the progressive groups in the capitalist countries.”

“At the Belgrade Conference of Non-Aligned Nations in 1961 Sukarno stressed that the old colonial powers refused to realize the historically inevitable march to power of the New Emerging Forces and were constantly attempting with every means available to obstruct progress in the newly developing countries.”

“It is common knowledge to us all that the old colonial powers, in having to leave their colonial territories, want to preserve as much as possible of their economic - and sometimes also their political and military – interests. This is carried out in various ways: by creating strife amongst all layers of the local people; by provoking the secession of one part of the old colonial territory from the rest under the pretext of self-determination; creating chaos through provocation or-and this is also

common---” (C L M Penders.1974: 170-71).

Nehru Speech at the concluding session of the Asian-African Conference highlighted this **Historic Milestone in Cooperation** in Bandung on 24 April 1955 and said,“Mr. President, for seven days we have been in this pleasant city of Bandung,

and Bandung has been the focal centre, perhaps I might even say, the capital of Asia and Africa, during this period. For all the world’s eyes have been upon us. We were neighbours for these seven days as you all know, and we have dealt with many problems and we have come to certain conclusions that have been placed before you. Why did we meet? The Prime Ministers of five countries invited us. But do you think that is the reason why we met? There were the conscious or unconscious agents or other forces. We met because mighty forces are at work in these great continents, in millions of people, creating ferment in their minds and irrepressible urges and passions and a desire for change from their present condition. So however big or small we might be, we represented these great forces. We met. What have we achieved? Well, you have seen the draft statement which has been read out to you and I think it represents a considerable achievement. Other delegates have referred to it and you have agreed to it but I should like to draw your attentions, to direct your minds not to that statement



which is an important statement but rather to the imponderables, to the fact that we have met, gathered here from thousands of miles, conferred together, seen each other, and in spite of all manner of differences and arguments, made friends with each other.”

“My friend, the Prime Minister of Burma, referred to our diversities of opinion and our differences and our arguments. We have wrestled with each other in many ways because we were not all of the same opinion, because obviously the world looks different from where you are. If you are sitting in the far east of Asia you have a different perspective of the world. If you are sitting in the far west of Asia you have a different perspective again, and if you are in Africa naturally the problems of Africa overwhelm you. So we all came with our own perspectives, with our own problems, each one, no doubt, considering his own problem the most important in the world, but at the same time trying to understand that big problem of Asia and Africa, and trying somehow to fit in our little problems in this larger context, because in the ultimate analysis all our little problems, however important they might be, are parts of this larger problem and can hardly be solved unless that larger problem is tackled and solved. How will you solved this problem or that problem if peace is shattered, endangered and thrown overboard? Obviously you cannot. The very primary consideration is peace. You and I, sitting here in our respective countries, are all passionately eager to advance our countries peacefully. We have been backward. We are backward. We have been left behind in the world race, and now we have got a chance again to make good. We want to make good, and we have to make good rapidly because of the compulsion of events. It is not so much a choice of yours and mine, it is a choice dictated by this compulsion of events because if we do not make good we fade away and we stumble and fall not to raise again for a long time. We are not going to do that. We are determined not to do that. We are determined in this new chapter of Asia and Africa to make good: primarily, not to be dominated in any way by any other country or continent; secondly, to rise in the economic domain, in the social domain, to become prospects, to bring happiness to our people, to put an end to all the age-old shackles that have tied us, not only political – you rightly call them colonialism – but the other shackles of our own making which have also tied us. We criticism is just. Therefore we advance it. But in the final analysis the criticism has to be directed against ourselves, because a country falls because of its won failings, not because another attacks it or does anything to it. It is because we fail that we fell, and it is only when we make good that we will succeed, and not all the resolutions in the world would make much difference if we are weak of heart and weak of spirit. But there is another spirit in Asia today. Because Asia today is not static, is not passive, is not submissive, does not tolerate chains as it has tolerated so long. Asia is alive and full of life. Asia will make mistakes, has made mistakes, but it does not matter. If life is there, every mistake is tolerated we advance. If life is not there, then all our right words, right actions and right eloquence is no good.”

“What have we achieved then? I think our achievement has not only been great in the agreements we have arrived at, but much greater in the background of that

agreement, because as I said we have wrestled with problems, we have wrestled with our differences, we have argued till fatigue overtook all our bodies and minds, and finally in spite of those differences, we have agreed. That is the main thing. We are not 'yes-men', I hope, sitting here saying 'yes' just to this country or that, saying 'yes' even to each other. I hope we are not. We are great countries in the world who rather like having freedom, if I may say so, without dictation. Well, if there is anything that Asia wants to tell them it is this: No dictation there is going to be in the future; no 'yes-men' in Asia, I hope, or in Africa. We have had enough of that in the past. We value friendship of the great countries and if I am to play my part, I should like to say that we sit with the great countries of the world as brothers, be it in Europe or America. It is not in any spirit of hatred or dislike or aggressiveness with each other in regard to Europe or America, certainly not. We send our greetings to Europe and America, I hope, from all of us here, and we want to be friends with them, and to cooperate with them, But we shall cooperate only as friends, as equals. There is no friendship when nations are unequal when one nation has to obey another, and when one dominates over another. That is why we raise our voices against the domination of colonialism from which many of us have suffered so long, and that is why we have to be very careful that any other form of long, and that is why we have to be careful that any other form of domination does not come in our way. Therefore, we want to be friends with the West and friends with the East and friends with everybody, because of there is something that may be called the approach of minds and spirit of Asia, it is one of toleration and friendship and cooperation, not one of aggressiveness."

"I wish to speak no ill of anybody. In Asia, all of us have many faults, as countries and as individuals. Our past history shows that. Nevertheless, I say that Europe has been in the past a continent full of conflicts, full of trouble, full of hatred, and their conflicts continue and their wars continue, and we have been dragged into their wars because we were tied to them. Now are we going to continue to be dragged in, tie ourselves to the troubles, hatred and conflicts of Europe? I hope not. Of course, Europe and Asia and America and Africa and all these countries, it is perhaps not quite right to think of them as isolated, because they are not. We have to live together and cooperate with each other in this modern world which is going up towards the ideal of one world. Nevertheless Europe has got into that habit of thinking. Whatever political or economic persuasion there may be, America and Europe are in the habit of thinking that their quarrels are the world's quarrels and therefore the world reasoning. I do not want anybody to follow Europe or Asia or America. If others quarrel, why should I quarrel, and why should I be dragged into their quarrels and wars. I just do not understand it. Therefore, I hope we shall keep away from these quarrels and exercise our pressure with other not to quarrel. I realize, as the Prime Minister of Burma said, that we cannot exercise tremendous influence over the world. Our influence will grow no doubt, it is growing, and we can exercise some influence even today but whatever our influence, big or small, it must be exercised in the right direction, in an independent direction, with ideals and objectives behind it, if we

represent the ideals of Asia, if we represent the dynamism of Asia. Because if we do not represent that, what are we then? Are we copies of Europeans or Americans or Russians, what are we? We are Asians or Africans. If we become camp followers of Russia or America or of any other country of Europe, it is not very creditable to our dignity, our new independence, our new freedom, our new spirit and our new self-reliance.”

“So we mean no ill to anybody. We send our greetings to Europe and America. We send our greetings to Australia and New Zealand. And indeed Australia and New Zealand are almost in our region (*In reply to a questionnaire submitted by Douglas*

*Wilkie of the Sun News Pictorial of Australia, Nehru said on 25 March 1955 that: (i) The Question of Australia and New Zealand attending the Conference did not come up at the talks among the Prime Ministers of the Colombo powers held at Bogor, Indonesia, on 28-29 December 1954 to discuss the proposed Asian-Africans Conference, because it was assumed that they did not form part of Asia; (ii) There was no foundation for any suggestion that Australia had been left out of the invitation because of its dispute with Indonesia over the question of Irian (Dutch New Guinea); (iii) It was far from the minds of the sponsoring Asian Prime Ministers to create a so-called third world bloc – or in fact any bloc; (iv) There was no intension of ranging the East against West or non- white against white; and (v) If Australia anted to attend the Conference it should have made known its wishes to the Prime Ministers of Indonesia who was the sponsor of the Conference).* They certainly do not belong to Europe, much less to America. They are next to us and I should like Australia and New Zealand to come nearer to Asia. I would welcome them because I do not want that what we say or do should be based on racial prejudices. We have had enough of this racialism elsewhere.”

“We have today passed many resolutions, etc., about this or that country, but I think that there is nothing more terrible, nothing more horrible than the infinite tragedy of Africa in the past few hundred years. When I think of it everything else becomes insignificant before that infinite tragedy of Africa ever since the days when millions of them were carried away into America or elsewhere: the way they were taken away, fifty per cent dying in the process, we have to bear that burden, all of us, I think the world has to bear it. And when we talk about this little country or that little country in Africa or outside, let us remember of this infinite tragedy. But unfortunately even now the tragedy of Africa is more than that of any other, I venture to say, even today, whether it is racial, whether it is political, whatever it may be, it is there. And it is up to Asia to help Africa to the best of her ability, because we are sister continents.”

“So, Sir, I trust that the achievement that we have had in this Conference has left, I am sure it has, a powerful influence over the minds of all who are here. I am quite sure that it has left an impress in the minds of the world. We came here, consciously and unconsciously, as agents of a historic destiny. And we have made some history here and, we have to live up to what we have said, and what we have thought and even more so, we have to live up to what the world expects of us, what Asia expects of us,

what the millions of these two continents expect of us. I hope we will be worthy of the people's faith and our destiny" (**Speech at the concluding. 1955:125-28**).

Nehru issued a statement in Lok Sabha on 31 March 1955 on the Issues in Foreign Policy particularly regarding to India and World Affairs, said, "There are, of course, many other important things happening too, but I do think that these two matters are, in a historic sense, of high importance, more important than anything else. As the sign and symbol of the latter, that is, the emergence of Asia, we are having, as the House well knows, a conference at Bandung in Indonesia in about two and a half weeks' time a conference which is styled the Asian-African Conference, to which all the free and independent nations of Asia and Africa have been invited. I do think that this Conference has something of historic importance about it. It is unique, of course; no such thing has ever happened before, and the fact that representatives, I believe, of 1400 million people meet there, even though they differ amongst themselves is a matter of the utmost significance."

"I cannot presume to speak for other people, but I think I am correct of saying so. So this Asian-African Conference is a gathering, I think, of very great importance. The mere fact of its meeting is important. What it does, I cannot say, because countries coming there have different policies, different outlooks, sometimes opposing policies, and I do not know that it will be very easy for them to evolve any common outlooks or approaches. Yet, it is clear that there is something in common between them, even though they might otherwise differ; otherwise, they would not have agreed to gather together in this way."

"So that is an important factor which, I hope, the House will remember, the Conference that is coming. The Conference, of course, is not opposed to anybody, opposed to Europe or America, or taking sides as Conference in the great conflict and tug-of-war that is going on in the world. It is merely a coming together of Asian and African countries. Now, what do the Asian and African countries exactly aim at all? Well, they obviously aim at two things: peace and opportunity to progress. They are all anxious to do that. They are not interested in other people's quarrels or disputes. They want to get on. They want to make good themselves in their own countries just as we, in our country, want to make good. And, for that purpose, we want peace in the world. Therefore, there is this tremendous urge for peace, which is present all over the world – I think in the countries of Asia and Africa more than perhaps even elsewhere – just as the urge to freedom too is present, I think, all over the world, but more so among those who were not free for long periods, who either recently achieved their freedom or have yet to achieve their freedom. Freedom for them is much more important than to those who have been used to freedom for a long time past. Therefore, there is this passionate desire for peace and opportunity for progress in these countries and that is a common bond."

"As I said, I hope – I cannot say definitely, but I hope – the Conference will not line up with these great power blocs. It cannot, in the nature of things, because the countries that are attending the Conference themselves hold different views on that

matter. The House knows that it has become almost impossible to consider any matter logically and reasonably or by itself. Everything has to be considered now, we are told, like this: whether it is communist or anti-communist. There is no way of dealing with the situation by some powers and authorities unless you raise the conflict of communism or anti-communism. Now, this has made it difficult to understand any question, much less to solve it. The simple, rather naïve view of the world is that you must belong to this bloc or that bloc. If you do not, well, you are either very foolish or you do not understand what is happening in the world or there is some mischief behind your attitude. This kind of approach would have been difficult enough at any time, but, when we live as we do now on the verge, on the threshold, of this atomic age, it is dangerously simple way of looking at things. And, we might, because of the simple thinking – I mean the world – suddenly find ourselves just on the brink of disaster” (**Statement in Lok Sabha.1955: cols 3887-3912**).

Nehru shared on International and national Situation in the Conference of the Heads of Indian Missions in Europe on 28-30 June 1955 and said,“Africans in general looked up to Indian for aid. Every effort was being made by the Government to provide higher educational facilities to Africans through the grant of scholarships etc. The white population in Africa generally spoke of imperialist designs of India on that continent. It was a pity that the colonial powers were increasingly taking South Africa as their model in their policies towards the racial question” (Proceeding of International. 1955: 252).

Nehru during his Inaugural speech on **Understanding Africa** at the opening of the Department of African Studies in Delhi University on 6 August 1955,“I should like to congratulate the University of Delhi in starting this Department of African Studies. What surprises me very greatly is that why such an important step was not taken long, long ago by this University or any other University. It is so obviously necessary and desirable for people in India to study Africa, not merely, as the Vice Chancellor said, because it is there, yes, as our neighbour. But you ignore the study of Africa at your peril. Let this be understood. It is not a theoretical proposition. It is not an academic matter for you to consider what Africa is. It is of the most urgent importance for us to understand Africa – to understand the rest of the world, too, but certainly Africa and her problems and her people more particularly.”

“Now, understanding includes many things. It means, of course, all kinds of political, economic, historical and other matters which you should know. But when you try to understand a country or a continent, it really means your understanding the people there.”

“The people there, there are many kinds of people there and till almost recently if one talked of Africa, one talked not of the people of Africa, not of the Africans, but of other people who ruled there. They were Africa. Now if we are to understand Africa, we have to understand the Africans, not those who superimposed themselves there and sat upon them, though it is as well to understand even those too know exactly what they are about.”

“Now how does one understand a people? You have to understand not only their minds, what is moving in their minds, but their hearts. What are their urges? What are the big forces that are driving them and in what directions are they being driven? Because there is no doubt at all that Africa is in a state of high ferment today. In whatever part of Africa, you may go, whether it is the northern Mediterranean fringe, whether it is the heart of east or west or central Africa or south, the picture may differ because the problems are somewhat different in each area, but essentially it is Africa in ferment. The people of Africa are in a mental, and emotional ferment, and in physical torment, often enough, and all that. It is undoubtedly one of the most tremendous problems of the day. It may be over-shadowed for the moment by other problems of war and peace, whether it is in Europe – the problem of Germany – or whether it is in the Far East, Formosa and all that. They are big problems of the day, very vital problems because on them depend war and peace. That is so. Nevertheless, in a big continental sense, the problem of Africa is about the most vital problem that you have, and I think in the course of the next few years, this will become more and more evident. And now I cannot look into the future and map out what is going to happen, nobody can. Except for one thing, that I am dead sure that African will not remain statically as it is. But things in Africa are not, the conditions in Africa as they are, in some places, violently with arms and other places in other ways, but they want to change them. And it is inconceivable to me that things will remain as they are. They are bound to change. Fortunately, there are some parts of Africa where one can look forward to a peaceful change to freedom and one has seen some such changes and I earnestly hope that this change will continue and will set an example for the other parts of Africa. Because I look with certain, well – with a great deal of apprehension on Africa in this struggle – not only a political struggle, but it might become almost a racial struggle being carried on with the shedding of large quantities of human blood. That would be a tragedy of tremendous significance. So this is a problem, from the world point of view, of the greatest importance.”

“Then again, looking at it from our own point of view, it is a problem of practically a neighbour country or rather continent because the sea does not divide us. It is a little hop by air or otherwise. It is a neighbour continent. We are neighbours. And so it is about time that we paid attention to this fact and realize this and try to understand not only what is happening there, but what people are thinking, what they are looking forward to. How do they look to us – the people of Africa? Well, I do not suppose I can put this in a sentence or two. There may be various ways of looking at us in India. Certainly, I think it is true that many of them look with a measure of hope towards India. They are a little frightened of Europe. I do not mean people of Europe but I am rather talking of national policies of Europe. And those national policies of Europe have resulted in a tremendous deal of misery in Africa. It is just amazing what Africa and the people of Africa have gone through in the last few hundred years, from the days when the slave trade started and right up to now. So it is natural for the people of Africa to be a little afraid of those nations which have been in the past, or are in

the present, responsible for the continuation of that tradition, even though it might be modified somewhat.”

“We have no such past in regard to Africa. We ourselves have recently gone through a struggle for freedom and have loudly asserted certain ideals. So, it is natural for the people of Africa to look with friendly and hopeful eyes towards India.”

“There is, of course, the mighty figure of Gandhi which attracts people, not only in Africa but elsewhere. That is true. At the same time, for us to imagine that everybody in Africa looks up to India with infinite gratitude and as a kind of elder brother who should do them good turns all the time, well, that is wrong. There is a measure of apprehension, too, in the minds of some about India. I do not think it is really justified, but we face the facts. There is a measure of apprehension. What will India do when she is stronger? Will India copy the West to some extent – trying to spread, if not a territorial domain, that of course nobody I suppose thinks – but in economic matters and others, try to exploit the African people? I do not think this sentiment is at all widespread. I am merely saying that, this kind of thing is played upon especially by, oddly enough, those very people who are exploiting Africa today. Well, I do not think that there is any possibility of our doing so, it does not arise.”

“But nevertheless, I want our minds to be quite clear and I want to remind you what the National Congress has been saying at least for the last thirty years and what it said, although it related to Indians in Africa, they are of various types. One, as you know, are the Indians who went to South Africa originally as indentured labour. They have stopped the indentured labour. They did that, and before the world and before the United Nations – not their problem really, but essentially the problem of one race trying to dominate others in South Africa, a doctrine which is openly proclaimed. Well, there is no question of those Indians in South Africa exploiting anybody: they were among the numbers, as merchants and traders etc. This warning was issued by us to them that they can expect no help from India if they indulge in exploitation of the people of Africa. We would of course try to protect them, their honour and self-respect insofar as we can where these are attacked. But we want them to remain there only so long as they have the goodwill, then we will not respect them. The sooner they come back the better. Because we do not want, even in the slightest degree, this idea among Indians there that they are a superior people or they are a people who can make money out of the unhappiness or poverty or misery of others. We just do not want that, at any cost.”

“When I think of Africa, many ideas come to me, all kinds of ideas; and when I think of Africa as a human being not as an India. I have a tremendous feeling of atonement of humanity; the way Africa and the people of Africa have been treated for hundreds of years, a kind of feeling that the rest of humanity would perform *prayashchit* for it, atonement for it.”

“And just now in my Hindi Address (*Not Printed*) I referred to Dr. Albert Schweitzer who deliberately has given his life, his entire life, and the life of a man endowed with the most brilliant abilities and talent, just to sit in the dark African jungle, to serve

the poor and the diseased there. IT is a wonderful example which you should all remember. He is a man of eighty now, almost going blind but continuing in that service, because he has felt this, how his forbears – not his own personal ones, but I mean in Europe – have treated Africa in the past and for his part he wants to atone for it insofar as he can. But it is not Dr Schweitzer only but the whole world ought to atone for it. Well, we can atone for it of course. But the first thing is to stop the evil from continuing. That is the first thing. That is difficult enough.”

“Now I hope I have indicated to you the great importance of knowing about Africa. It is not just an ordinary subject for you or for us. It is a subject of great significance for the future and if you want to know about Africa you must approach this, as any subject, with a measure of humility, not in pride and arrogance that you are going to some backward place and study some anthropological specimens because do not forget that while it may be different Africa has a history, Africa has a culture, grown out of its soil, through thousands of years. It may seem strange to you. Do you realize that many people who come here think you and me very strange people and our customs very strange? It is an odd thing how a human being thinks something he does not understand as strange. So let us not make that mistake.”

“I think that the Delhi University is to be congratulated for starting this Department of African Studies. I hope it will grow and prosper. And may I say, because I think it was the Vice Chancellor who said something about it, about some scholarships for people from Africa to join this school – yes, overseas scholarships. I am quite sure that my colleague Maulana Sahib who is sitting here will gladly consider any such proposal. About the other thing, too, the Vice Chancellor wanted to invite some eminent scholars from abroad here, I am sure there would be no difficulty about it either. So, I am very happy to inaugurate this Department of African Studies and the African Society and I wish it all success” (**Inaugural speech. 1955: 239-42**).

## Issue of Bandung Conference

On the attitude of the Bandung Conference Countries, Nehru wrote a note to *Secretary General, Foreign Secretary and Commonwealth Secretary* on 8 September 1955 and mentioned, “It referred to the Bandung Conference decision against colonialism and point out that Goa is a flagrant example of foreign colonial domination. It should state that we have received, we have pursued peaceful methods only and intend to continue doing so. Goa has, thus, become one of the symbols of intransigent and oppressive

colonialism, completely out of keeping with the spirit of Asia and Africa and, indeed, all freedom loving people all over the world... (**Note to Secretary General. 1955: 368-373**).”



## Role of Yugoslavia in the Liberation of Southern Africa

Nehru wrote letter to Josip Broz Tito (President of Yugoslavia) on 23 December 1955 and shared with him about Africa. Nehru mentioned that, “your letter contained a very helpful analysis of the situation and of your talks with Mr. Dulles and others. I entirely agree with your views on the German Question (*Tito pointed out the necessity of German development taking a peaceful direction, and not following “a policy of revenge.” He said attention was not being paid to the future character of a reunified Germany, as a “unified and armed” Germany was an “unknown quantity.” Tito sought East Germany’s participation in the unification process, which in turn would strengthen “progressive forces” in the whole of Germany.*). The American approach to this question has become very unrealistic (*Dulles had told Tito that “as far as the unification of Germany was concerned, there were no prospects of an agreement being reached soon, since the Western countries insisted on free elections for the whole of Germany, while the USSR proposed formation of a joint council as a first phase towards German unification.”*). I do not see how they think that they can achieve anything by merely shouting at each other. You rightly lay stress on the German people as a whole taking any part in solving this question of unification and also at the same time of internal democratization of Germany.

1. Unfortunately, both the USA and UK Governments seldom think of the people in any country. They think of dealing with a few people at the top. When those people at the top happen to change, the whole policy of the Western Powers tends to collapse.”
2. “A very notable instance of the failure of Western policy is afforded by the so-called Baghdad Pact or the Middle Eastern system of alliances. These alliances ignored completely the people of these countries (*Tito observed that “it had been a very unfortunate idea to form pacts in the Middle East which only resulted in the breaking up of Arab unity and in creating constant friction in that part of the world.”*). Pressure was brought to bear upon the present ruling group. What has happened in Jordan has demonstrated the failure of this kind of approach (*In Jordan, the Government’s proposal to join the Baghdad Pact led to widespread rioting and divisions in the cabinet of Said en-Mulki and he resigned on 12 December 1955. A caretaker Government under Ibrahim Hashem was appointed on 19 December 1955.*)”
3. “In the Middle East the initiative appears to have been taken in regard to these military alliances by the United Kingdom. The United States have no doubt supported them, but they have not quite approved of the British policy there. The British think that they can control the Middle East through men like Nuri el Said Pasha of Iraq who represents the nineteenth century.”

4. “It is quite extraordinary how Mr. Dulles manages to do the wrong things repeatedly. His joint statement with the Foreign Minister of Portugal, in which he supported Portuguese colonialism in Goa, naturally produced a very powerful and angry reaction in India. To some extent there was the same reaction in many other Asian countries.
5. You refer to Egypt and Israel, As you say, this is a very difficult and delicate question. We have also been sometimes approached to take some step in the nature of mediation (*Dulles had suggested to Tito to mediate between Egypt and Israel “with a view to the cessation of ... hostilities.” On 12 December 1955, Malcolm MacDonald, UK’s High Commissioner in India, wrote to Nehru “that any help given by India in the Middle East would be of special significance. To this end, he urged Nehru to make a statement “expressing sympathy with Anthony Eden’s Guildhall speech on the Middle East.”* B We would gladly help if we could, but we have no intention of getting entangled in this complicated knot.
6. The situation in Vietnam is a very difficult one. The South Vietnam Government has not been behaving properly at all and has refused to act in accordance with the Geneva Agreements. The International Commission there, of which India is Chairman, has thus been placed in a very embarrassing position. They have reported to the two Co-Chairmen, Molotov and Eden. Diem, the Prime Minister of South Vietnam, wants to postpone any kind of elections till he has established himself firmly. In Laos also, the position is difficult. There, on the whole, the Pathet Lao group (that is the Northern group supported by North Vietnam) has not been very cooperative.
7. We have diplomatic relations with Laos and Cambodia. In so far as Vietnam is concerned, we have no formal diplomatic relations because the country has been divided into two. In effect, however, we have close contacts with them through Consul Generals stationed in both countries. Our position is rather a special one because of India’s Chairmanship of the International Commission. Whatever we do in one part of Vietnam has to be done in the other so that we might not appear to be partial to one side.
8. I am enclosing a note prepared by me about the recent visit of the Soviet leaders to India. There is nothing very new in it, but I thought it might interest you (**Letter to Josip. 1955: 354-65**).”

## Need for Concrete Action for Yugoslavia

Speech at banquet in honour of the President, Mr. Veselin Djuranovic of the Federal Executive Council of Yugoslavia at New Delhi on September 26, 1980, She said, “It is a privilege to have in our midst His Excellency Mr. Veselin Djuranovic, President of the Federal Executive Council of Yugoslavia, and the distinguished members of his delegation. Their country has many notable achievements to its credit and we value our close bonds of friendship and trust with it.”

“Excellency, I met you last on the sad occasion when President Tito, that outstanding warrior, maker of modern Yugoslavia and greatly respected world statesman, was laid to rest. It was my privilege to have known President Tito closely. I had high admiration for his deep love for his country and concern for its freedom and unity, and his contribution to peace.”

“Yugoslavia and India had not been thrown together by history until our own days when Jawaharlal Nehru and Josip Broz Tito became co-workers and good friends. But there have been similarities in our respective national experiences and achievements. We have both known what it is to lose freedom and regain it. We have woven the strands of diverse races, religions and languages into the rich fabric of national unity. President Tito once described the strength of Yugoslavia as arising from the morale of its people, from their “consciousness of unity which grew like a fire”, and from the clarity with which they say their perspectives. That indeed is how our own Indian nationhood was forged.”

“The national genius for adaptation and synthesis predisposed our countries towards the concept of coexistence. Realizing that international stability and the domination of any one group over others is incompatible, we chose non-alignment.”

“The history of the non-aligned Movement is too well known to be repeated. It has withstood attempts and attacks to divide its ranks. In spite of the weaknesses which have crept in, it remains a force in international life. Its conceptual relevance is as valid as in the early fifties. Indeed, so long as the great powers continue to seek vassals and forge military alliances, so long must the non-aligned preserve in their struggle against the carving of the world into blocs and spheres of influence.”

“The struggle for a more equitable international economic order is, in a way, the big challenge for the Non-aligned Movement in the ‘80s. We have the ability to resolve differences which might today appear irreconcilable and to evolve a common approach which ensures a better economic future for us all. Let us not be disheartened by setbacks in the process of negotiations. The struggle must go on in the spirit of co-existence and co-operation which are central to the philosophy of the non-aligned. As a beginning, we can perhaps help one another in solving our economic difficulties and giving practical shape to the ideals of economic and technical co-operation among developing countries. Each can profit from the other’s experience.”

“Experience, your visit to India has provided us with the opportunity to discuss in detail some of the more important issues of our times, as also the steps that our two countries can take to extend and strengthen our bilateral relations. I am glad that you are accompanied by the Federal Secretary for Foreign Trade of Yugoslavia H.E. Mr. Rotar, with whom we can discuss and identify new areas of economic and commercial co-operation.” (**Meeting with President Veselin Djuranovic. 1980: 458-59**).

## NAM and Issue of Southern Africa Liberation

Taking an increasing interest in African affairs, Nehru answered the questions asked by the journalist such as:

TM: After all, Bandung, to a certain extent, represented this tendency. This is obviously the next phase of human development in this huge continent. How far do you think, Mr. Prime Minister, that the independence of Asia, I mean the liberation of the ex-colonial countries of Asia, has influenced the African situation?

JN: It has obviously influenced it very much. I do not know how to measure that, but it has influenced it. In his connection, I do not think it is adequately realized in many Western countries or in America how strongly we feel on the question of colonialism. It is in our blood, we have suffered from it. It is no good somebody telling us, 'Yes, you are right-but wait, there are other difficult problems'. That is an important and vital problem for us. Colonialism and racialism, these two things are vital for any Asian country. And whatever our differences may be we meet together as in Bandung and we are all at one on this. Some at that meeting may be communist countries there, some may be anti-communist countries, but they all agree on this question because of the tremendous popular feeling on that subject. We are interested, therefore, not only in the elimination of colonialism from Asian countries where it exists, but also from Africa."

"Also for another reason. We fear that unless this is done, there will be, well, tremendous trouble in Africa, and of the racial type which is very bad really."

"Thirdly, and this is rather a new development, we are afraid of a new type of colonialism in Africa based on powerful military resources and calling itself self-government there. Not colonialism of a metropolitan country having a colony but the colonialism of a small dominant group controlling the country and calling it self-government."

TM: It is similar to what in South East Asia we call Latin Americanisation?

JN: Another difficulty: large parts of Africa possess uranium and other things necessary for atomic energy, and have thus become very important. Now, that is an unfortunate thing for Africa because that will make it more difficult for African territories to gain their freedom of that valuable material and that type of intimate control will continue and lead to trouble."

"We have seen, in fact quite enough trouble in East Africa, in North Africa and any person can say that there will be no solution of that problem by military means. One can understand the use of the military on occasions when there is trouble, but this continuous use of the military year after year in suppressing a movement obviously can produce no result at all. It makes matters worse."

TM: But do you think, Mr. prime Minister, in this African situation, these more enlightened methods of certain European powers their Asian possessions may serve as a useful example for the future?

JN: Yes, of course! They serve as a useful example, but the example has to be followed and followed fairly rapidly.

TM: Well, on this question of Africa and the Middle East, we may come back, to the population problem. It seems to be a fairly regular phenomenon that any power which tried to dominate India tended to get hold of the keys of the Indian Ocean. The British Empire was securely established over India only when Britain really controlled these Gibaltars of the Indian Ocean—Aden, Suez, Singapore, Ceylon and East Africa. Now there are certain apprehensions in Africa that India is trying, so to say, to dump her surplus population on certain areas of Africa. Some Africans may go even as far as to speak of, sort of, threatened colonization, ‘Indian colonisation,’ I use this very much in quotes, this expression, of certain parts of Africa. Do you think, Sir, that in a future India, whose circumstances we cannot foresee at the movement, it may be imaginable to see India as an expansive power having a more intimate link with these countries?

JN: Well, I hope not and I think not, in that sense I mean. So far as the policy is concerned, we have laid it down very clearly, say, in regard to Africa as well as in regard to other countries, that we do not want Indians to have any rights or privileges in a country which, in any way, come in the way, come in the way of the inhabitants of that country. Let them consider themselves as guests. If they are unwelcome then they have no business to be there. We have gone as far as that all these past hundred years or more. Indians have gone to Africa. How many Indians are there? Very few, relatively, and chiefly of the merchant class except in South Africa where they were sent as indentured labourers long ago; but other places, some people have gone, small merchants, small shopkeepers and others, they prospered or they not did.... But there has been no attempt at sending large numbers, in fact, there has been some attempt to restrict their going. I do not see why that should take the shape of any attempt to send large numbers to colonise. Anyhow, we have set our face against doing anything which goes against the interests of the African people (**Fourth Session. 1956: 512-14**). Nehru laid the foundation stone of the main building of I.I.T. at Kharagpur on

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March 1952 mentioned that ‘as a matter of fact, apart from our own great needs in India, all kinds of demands come to us now from friendly countries, chiefly in Asia, partly in Africa, for technical personnel, for even administrative personnel, for people who have some training in our community projects, and it is becoming very difficult for us to meet these demands. We want to help them, of course. Even now, there are several hundreds of our technicians, whom we have sent to countries in Asia and Africa. But the demand gradually will run into not hundreds but thousands, and I would like to send them because these countries of Asia and Africa and we are all in the same boat, being underdeveloped countries. If we are a little ahead of them, then it is up to us to help them. There is going to be no lack in India of trained people having opportunities of doing worthwhile work, and if there is some difficulty it means that our organization has gone wrong, has slipped somewhere. Demand is there, so that

it becomes a question really of planning from the earliest stages to see who is being trained where, where can he fit in, and keeping track' (**Foundation stone. 1952: 38**).

Nehru in his note to Commonwealth Secretary mentioned about the School of African Studies to strengthen the education of African countries pointedly such as:

1. "I have read these papers. It is not clear to me what the summary (*The Ministry of External Affairs prepared a summary regarding (a) the appointment of C.J. de graft Johnson, an African Economist from Gold Coast University, as Reader in Economics in the School of African Studies of Delhi University and (b) the constitution of an Advisory Board consisting of representatives of the Ministries of External Affairs and Education to ensure closer cooperation between the MEA and the School of African Studies*) is for."
2. "As regards the constitution of an Advisory Board, there appears to be some confusion. In one place, it is stated that the Minister for Education is in favour of such a Board. In another place, it is said he does not agree with the suggestion to set up a Board to supervise the African students. Then, again, it is stated that the idea of having a Board is being ruled out (*On the one hand, the Education Minister was of the view that it would be desirable to have an Advisory Board with persons like H. N. Kunzru and K. M. Panikkar associated with it in addition to the representatives of the Ministries of Education and External Affairs. On the other hand, he felt that the African students should not be treated as a "problem group" to be dealt with by a special board and they should be looked after by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations and that the Council might appoint a small sub- committee for this purpose, if necessary*)."
3. "I think that an Advisory Board would be desirable. This is not so much to deal with complaints and the like, but rather to keep the problem of African students in view. We need not make them a problem group but, undoubtedly, they require special consideration and, sometimes, some special treatment. To herd them together with the others under some general rules, is likely to prove unsatisfactory. I think, therefore, that there should be an Advisory Board, and Dr. Kunzru (*Member of Rajya Sabha*) and Mr. Panikkar (*K.M. Panikar was ambassador to France at this time*) may be made members of it, apart from representatives of E.A. and Education."
4. "I do not see why we should rule out summarily the proposal that some good students of the School might be used in our foreign missions. Whether they are taken into our Foreign Service is another matter. But a person who has specialized in African Studies, will obviously be helpful in our Missions in Africa. What is the point of his specializing otherwise (**The School of African Studies. 1956: 97**).

Further, Nehru in the Conference of Heads Indian Missions of twenty-one Indian representatives in Asia and African countries in New Delhi discussed the *Shaping of India's Foreign Policy* on 24 March - 3 April 1956 mentioned. "This is a meeting of our representatives from Asia and Africa. Africa, as you know, is till very largely

colonial Africa, but it is undergoing a fairly marked change. I should imagine that in a few years' time Africa would be different from what it is today. In considering the questions of Africa and Asia we cannot isolate them from the general world situation which governs almost every development in foreign affairs. Therefore, in effect, we consider the world situation and not the Asian or African situation, or we consider the world situation and then in the context of that larger picture, a particular situation in a particular country."

"I think, Africa is going to be a very tough problem in the next few years. Among the hopeful aspects of Africa, one is, of course, what is happening in the Gold Coast; and it is possible that the Gold Coast may, in the course of this year, become an independent domination. That will have fairly far-reaching results psychologically all over Africa, because thus far the independent countries of Africa were Ethiopia., Libya, Liberia, Morocco and Tunisia which are half Arab and half Africa. The Gold Coast is a cent per cent African country and any major change there has a powerful effect on the whole of the African population in Africa psychologically. Secondly, the Gold Coast, if it becomes an independent dominion, will have powerful effect on the commonwealth. I think that very probably the Commonwealth will be split on this issue because South Africa will not tolerate the Gold Coast coming in there. It is painful enough for them to tolerate us and Pakistan there and it would become completely intolerable to have some six-foot tall black men from the Gold Coast sitting next to them. England, whatever she may feel in her heart, will have to support the Gold Coast coming into the Commonwealth. England agrees to it because it cannot help it. But, oddly enough, Canada is very anxious and keen that this must be done. Canada, on the whole, is a conservative country, but it is a very decent country. It does not talk tall. It is an earnest country and does not wish to get into trouble or get other people into trouble. It is a really a peaceful country. I have considerable admiration for the Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. St. Laurent. Canada is naturally tied up with America in many ways, but it does not allow itself to be pulled about too much. So this year, 1956, or the next may see rather big developments in the Commonwealth and this may affect naturally the whole of the world situation. There is a very great feeling, I believe, in England against South Africa, against their racial policy of segregation.

Rameshwar Rao (*J.Rameshwar Rao (1923-1998); associated with the socialist wing of the Indian National Congress; First Secretary, Indian Commission in Nairobi, 1950- 52; Commissioner for Government of India in East Africa, 1950-51; Commissioner for Government of India in the Gold Coast and Nigeria, 1953-56; Member, Lok Sabha, 1957-80.*) has recently been hobnobbing with Queen Elizabeth. She went to the Gold Coast (*IN fact, Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh paid a three weeks' visit to Nigeria from 28 January to 15 February 1956.*) and in the course of her talk with him she expressed her extreme dislike and almost horror of how the South African Government was functioning."

"A year ago, you are well aware, that all the countries from Asia represented here and from Africa and some others too met at the Bandung Conference. That Bandung

Conference was, I believe, a very significant and historic event from the point of view, more especially of the countries of Asia and Africa. Among other things, a certain approach was made in it towards economic and cultural cooperation, which did not go

very far. Naturally, we could not discuss details there” (**Conference of Heads. 1956: 408**).

Along with it, Nehru sent an invitation to USSR to the Asian-African Conference on 3 February 1956 and stated, “It seems to me rather odd for Parliament to consider a resolution which calls upon the Government of India to recommend to the Colombo Powers to invite the USSR at the next session of the Bandung Conference. This Conference is confined to independent countries of Asia and Africa. Even though the Soviet Union extends to Asia, it can hardly be called an Asian Power. In our opinion, therefore, it cannot be invited without doing violence to the rules previously laid down for this Conference. Apart from this, it would be improper and highly embarrassing for Parliament to consider something in the nature of a request to a large number of other countries whose approval will have to be sought. If, as is highly likely, the others do not agree, then it is almost a rebuff to our Parliament.”

5. “On the other hand, if the resolution is considered by Parliament and opposed by Government, as it is bound to be, then this becomes a rebuff to the USSR.”
6. “I am quite clear that the consideration of this resolution is not desirable and will create difficulties and embarrassments all round.”
7. “A copy of this note might be sent to the Lok Sabha Secretariat for the consideration of the Honourable Speaker (*G. V. Mavalankar*).
8. “Of Course, Yugoslavia is very near to us in regard to board policies. We are seeing an inevitable shift over of the balance of power in Asia, in Africa, Egypt and in the Middle East” (**Asian-African Conference. 1956: 480**).

Nehru sent a message to Congress and shared with them on 2nd May 1956 that ‘There is the question of people of Indian descent and indeed all non-Europeans in South Africa and the intense and aggressive policy of racial segregation and humiliation followed there. This policy, in a somewhat lesser degree, is followed in some other parts of Africa. ---Then there are questions of countries under colonial domination. Recently, the struggle in North African countries has attracted much attention. Fortunately, in Tunisia and Morocco, some settlement has been arrived at, but Algeria still is going through a terrible period of trial (Strengths and Weaknesses. 1956: 319-21). The Asian-African Conference was held in Bandung in April 1955. This approach has two essential aspects which must both be always remembered – our support to freedom movements and our adherence to a peaceful approach. Nehru met Haile Selassie I, the Emperor of Ethiopia, arrived in Mumbai on 25 October 1956 on a three-week State visit to India. The Emperor wished to express his high regard for the Five Principles and the importance he attached to the Bandung Conference which had brought Asian and African nations closer to each other.



## The Issue of Tanganyika

Nehru wrote to S. M. Patel (President, Tanganyika Hindu Council) on August 19, 1956 and mentioned,

1. "You have raised a number of points in your letter which concern not only the immediate issues in Tanganyika but our wider policies. In regard to these matters, the Government of India's broad policies are being communicated to our Commissioner in Nairobi (*Prem Krishen*) and I suggest that you get in touch with him and discuss these subjects with him."
2. "I might here indicate to you, however, our broad approach to these problems of Africa. The exact application of that approach might vary in different parts, but the general principles should apply almost everywhere."
3. "It is naturally our wish to protect the interests of our fellow-countrymen abroad, wherever they might be. Prior to independence, we could do little in this respect, except to rely on the goodwill of the colonial authorities. Even then, however, it was clear to us that we could not attain much through that goodwill only if, in the process, we lost the goodwill of the indigenous population. We laid down a general rule then that Indians abroad should cooperate with the people of the country and not seek in any way to exploit them."
4. "Since independence, India's position is in some ways stronger and it grows in strength from year to year. At the same time, because of that very growing strength, the colonial authorities have become a little jealous of it and afraid of the future. In effect, therefore, we cannot do much at present to protect our citizens abroad in most of these territories. In Rhodesia, Indians, including our Consul there, have frequently to put up not only with racial discrimination but with discourteous treatment. We protest to the British Government as well as to the Central African Federation. We get some kind of an apology, but there is no improvement."
5. "Meanwhile, there has been a rapid development in the African scene in a greater or lesser degree. The whole of Africa is affected by this, and powerful movements are growing up to represent this new urge of the Africans. Sometimes they are even against our own people. The fact, however, to be recognized is that conditions in Africa are rapidly changing. Within a year the Gold Coast will have achieved full independence within the Commonwealth. Nigeria will follow. This example is affecting the rest of Africa. There can be no doubt that within a measurable distance of time many of the African territories will be self-governing and that the Africans there will have a predominant voice."
6. "Apart from any high principles, although principles are good, looking at this objectively and from the point of view of the future, we have to consider this situation that is rapidly arising and changing the face of Africa. I cannot say how long this process will take, but I rather doubt if the period will be longer. The pace

of events is faster now than ever before. For our part, the principles which we hold and which we proclaim to the world, must lead us to help this process and to expedite this change-over.”

7. “From the long term point of view, therefore, it seems clear that Indian nationals in Africa will have to depend upon the goodwill chiefly of the Africans. Any step taken which alienates that goodwill will be injurious from that long term point of view.”
8. “Even from the short term viewpoint, we are not likely to further the interests of our fellow-countrymen abroad by pursuing an isolationist policy and by seeking special privileges for our people. I do not think we shall get them even if we try and the effect of our trying will put us in a false position and really endanger the interests and position we may now have.”
9. “In your letter you refer to the report of the Maharaj Singh Delegation of 1947 (A three member official delegation led by Maharaj Singh visited East Africa in 1946 to examine the proposed restrictions on immigration into Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika and Zanzibar. The delegation, in its report submitted on 16 October 1946, concluded that the proposed bills would, in practice, adversely affect the immigration of Indians much more than that of Europeans. It also found the provisions of the bills extremely stringent and feared that they would encroach on the liberty and security of individuals.). That report was a good one and we can learn much from it. But the world has changed greatly during the last ten years and India has functioned as an independent power in the world during this period. I have no doubt that many countries in Africa require the services of outsiders in considerable numbers. Further that recruits from India can do good work there in many ways. They will be more suitable and certainly less expensive than recruits from other foreign countries. We are in fact sending our technical men and teachers and others already to several African countries. We are also training African students in India. But our recruits will go there at present or in the future only if they are welcome there. They cannot be thrust on unwilling people.”
10. “I have indicated our general approach to this problem. The specific application of it can be discussed with our Commissioner in Nairobi.”

“This letter is not for publication” (**Letter to S. M. Patel. 1956: 402-04**).

Nehru on Communism and Freedom of Press on 23 September 1956 said, “The real issue behind it is oil. But a deeper cause lies in the rapidly changing pattern of relationship between Europe and the countries of Asia and Africa. That was a historical necessity which nobody could prevent. India broke away from the colonial domination and so are the other countries of Asia and Africa. Fortunately, we have been able to maintain friendly relations with England and Europe because India won freedom by peaceful methods and without fighting a war. So, we achieved our objectives and kept the path of friendship open.”

“Now, are living in revolutionary times. One aspect of that is that the countries of Asia are making a bid for self-determination and progress. All this has an impact on Europe. Not that we wish to cause harm to anyone but the Asian countries must put their national interests first. So, the process of becoming free of colonial domination and the march towards self-determination is proceeding apace all over Asia and Africa in various ways. It is an irreversible process. Both these continents are in great turmoil and undergoing revolutionary changes, peaceful as well as violent, depending on the country. India is an example of bringing about a peaceful revolution by which both sides emerged unscathed.”

“Anyhow, you find a great desire for freedom in all these countries of Asia and Africa. It can be suppressed for a few years but not forever. But the most dangerous thing that is happening is in South Africa where there is an open suppression of the blacks by the whites.”

“Anyhow, the question is whether these revolutions are peaceful or violent. I have given you examples of Africa. In West Africa, there is a country called the Gold Coast which belongs wholly to the Africans. Just four-five days ago, the British Government has announced that it will become completely free seven months hence, in March (*On 18 September 1956, the British colonial Secretary, Alan Tindal Lennox-Boyd, informed the Governor of the Gold Coast, Charles Arden-Clarke, that his country would be granted independence within the British Commonwealth on 6 March 1957, under the name of Ghana.*). This is a very good thing and commendable too. It is of historic importance that an African country will become completely free.”

“There are other countries in Africa like Egypt and Sudan which are not wholly African Countries. But the Gold Coast is a full fledged African country and now it draws the attention of the entire continent upon itself. IT has lighted the flame of freedom. But both these things are happening simultaneously. On the one hand, we are finding ways and means of bringing about a revolution peacefully. On the other hand, there is grave danger of war and countries are using all kinds of threats and pressures. Then there are some countries in North Africa where terrible atrocities are being confirmed (*The national movements in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia were suppressed by the French Colonizers. The French denied the right of self-determination to the people of Algeria, where the situation threatened to disrupt peace in the Mediterranean region. But the situation improved in Morocco and Tunisia, owing to their agreements with the French Government on 2 March and 20 March 1956 respectively, according to which the French recognized their independence and sovereignty.*). They are engaged in a struggle for freedom. The question is which way we should lean? It is obvious that we will throw our weight on the side of freedom because we belong to Asia and our sympathies lie with Africa and her aspirations for freedom. But at the same time our effort is to see that these problems are solved peacefully and by friendly methods so that no country is made to look small. This is how the world will remain on an even keel and everyone stands to gain.”

“However, you must realize that what we are trying to do in the rest of the world is right for our own internal affairs. It is right not only on principle but even from the narrow viewpoint of right code of conduct so. So, we must not be led astray or do wrong things or indulge in violence and riots, etc.”

“At present, it would appear that great countries think that the only reality is force and violence, and that fine phrases are merely the apparatus of diplomacy. This is a matter which concerns all of us, in whichever quarter of the world we may live countries, for some of our countries have recently emerged into freedom and independence, and we cherish them with all to better their lives and make them grow in freedom and progress. We have bitter memories of the past when we were prevented from growing, and we can never permit a return to that past age. And yet, we find an attempt made to reverse the current of history and of human development. We find that all our efforts at progress might well be set at naught by the ambitions and conflicts of other peoples. Are we not to feel deeply when our life’s work is imperiled and our hopes and dreams shattered?”

“May I venture to point out to you also that a world organization like this cannot be properly constituted or function adequately, if a section of the world remains unrepresented here. I hope that three countries which have recently attained their independence, the Sudan (*On 1 January 1956*), Tunisia (*On 20 March 1956*), and

Morocco (*On 2 March 1956*), will find a place soon in this organization to share the burdens and responsibilities of its labours. But, I would especially refer to the People’s Government of China and the six hundred million people who live in that great country, which have so far not been represented here” (**Communism and Freedom, 1956: 21-23**).

Nehru answered to a questionnaire given by David Alfaro Siqueiros in a note dated 14 November 1956 and mentioned,

1. “Mr. Siqueiros has raised broad questions of past history and present policy both in South America and in Asia and Africa (*Siqueiros, a Mexican painter, revealed these answers at a press conference in Mexico on 17 January 1957*).”
2. “So far as principles are concerned, we have laid them down in what is called the *Panchsheel* or the Five Principles. Also, in the ten principles of Bandung, which include these Five Principles. These ten principles were accepted by the thirty Asian-African countries attending the Bandung Conference (*Held from 18 to 24 April 1955 at Bandung, Indonesia. For Nehru’s speeches at and impressions of the Conference, see Selected Works (second series), Vol. 28, pp. 100-137*). But, in practice, the internal and external policies followed by the Bandung countries often differ considerably.”
3. “While it is true that Asian and African countries are strongly opposed to colonialism and imperialism, it is equally true that, in practice, some Asian countries have followed policies which rather encourage colonialism.”

4. “The Asian-African group of countries comprises a fairly large part of the world. Possibly it is already an unwieldy group of nations, many of which have different economic and other interest. That particular group is more or less a geographical one. It would not be feasible to add to it. But it is always possible for a larger field of cooperation in the United Nations as well as perhaps in direct relationships between countries, wherever they may be situated. Recently, in the crisis of the Middle East, the action of the United Nations had considerable effect. Probably, no smaller group of nations could have produced that effect” (**Policy Towards the Third. 1956: 541-42**).

In the Union of South Africa, racialism in its most acute and offensive form has continued. The problem of the people of Indian origin in South Africa, who are citizens of that Country, has merged into the larger problem of all those who are not considered to be of the white race. These are denied the rights of citizenship and are segregated. Recently, 140 persons coloured, African and Asian, were arrested by the Government of South Africa in a general round-up (*On 5 December 1956 at Cape Town*). Thus, a white minority suppresses the people of the country and others who are supposed to belong to an inferior race. Nowhere in the world is racialism so rampant and authoritarianism so evident. India has sought to solve this problem by peaceful and cooperative methods. But the Union Government of South Africa have refused even to discuss it. They have even ignored the resolution and directions of the United Nations, and sown the seeds of a terrible racial conflict. The conduct of the Government of the Union of South Africa is a challenge to the conscience of mankind and to the United Nations.

India’s relations with the countries of Asia and Africa have been particularly close and the Bandung Conference was a historic example of the coming together of all these nations. India and China first enunciated the Five Principles for the governance of international relations, which have subsequently become famous as the Panchsheel. It is on the basis of these principles alone that world peace can be assured.

The years following the Second World War have witnessed great changes and have seen many colonial territories in Asia and Africa attain freedom. The old balances have thus been upset and the domination of European countries over parts of Asia and Africa has been greatly lessened. It is essential that these changes should be understood fully all over the world and no attempt should be made to deal with the countries of Asia and Africa in the old colonial way. We have seen recently that such attempts are doomed to failure, just as we have seen that any imposition of foreign authority or ideology cannot succeed.

Nehru addressed to the Twenty-seven nation Asian-African group at the United Nations, New York, 21 December 1956 highlighted, “I think to some extent this group, took shape and form after the Bandung Conference (*The Asian-African Conference was held at Bandung, Indonesia, from 18 to 24 April 1955*), which itself represented

countries of Asia and Africa. Now I have no doubt that this group representing Asia and Africa performs a historic function.”

“---One of the major changes of the last few years or since the war, is a certain shift, well, in the balances in the world, due to changes in Asia and Africa, specially Asia. Although these changes are obviously taking place – there are many countries independent now, which were not independent – there is a tendency still for questions, relating to even Asia and Africa, and much more so for questions outside that region, to be decided by countries outside Asia and Africa. I can understand that other countries are interested in those questions, and have every right to participate in the solution of the problems of Asia and Africa.”

“I do submit that the old habit is not so evident to day as in the past. The old habit that Asian and African problems could be decided by others has no meaning at all today. But the old habit persists, and it is not an easy matter for people and countries to get out of the ways of thinking to which they had grown accustomed to in the past. I think that this inclination is due to the fact that the people have not adjusted themselves to the reality in Asia and Africa. Of course Asia and Africa are not static, but changing, and developing. But this basic fact, I think, should be kept in view, not by us; I am talking of other countries.”

“---When we had the Bandung Conference, we laid stress on that fact. The Bandung Conference was held for us to get together. It was not meant to be some kind of conference opposed to Europe or America. That was not its intention. Some people were afraid that it was so. We had no intension, if I may use the expression, of ‘ganging up’; otherwise our voice was ignored and the voice of Asia and Africa was not effective. ---I do not say that this will suddenly, but I do say that something has been happening, which has been more evident lately, and we should take advantage of it. It is obvious that each country can play a helpful role, and the UN can play the most helpful role of all. This group can play the important role, not only by pressing the claim of Asian and African countries, but in doing so we must impress the world that we have in view the future of the world – that we are working not merely in any angry way reflecting the passions of the moment, but the future which we and others will inherit. I do trust this may be kept in view, that the prestige of this group will rise and wield more influence than its votes in the General Assembly, because we stand for something constructive and not destructive. After all we want constructive efforts to solve the problems of the world” (**Address to the Twenty. 1956: 522-25**).

Overall, Jawaharlal Nehru is considered to be the architect of modern India. Apart from his careful handling of India’s tumultuous domestic situation in the years immediately after the Independence, Nehru’s major contribution lies in the field of foreign policies. Socialism can be said to be one of the greatest international influences on Nehru, but Gandhi’s ideals of Satyagraha also influenced him to a great degree. But he committed himself to neither point of view in framing his foreign policy. Nehru’s foreign policies were characterized by two major ideological aspects. First, he wanted India to have an identity that would be independent of any form of

overt commitment to either power bloc, the USA or the Soviet. Secondly, he had an unshaken faith in goodwill and honesty in matters of international affairs. The first policy led ultimately to the founding of the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM). His second faith was terribly shaken by the Chinese attack of 1962, openly disobeying all the clauses of the Panchsheel or five-point agreement of 1954 between New Delhi and Peking. This breach of faith was a major psychological shock for Nehru, and was partially the reason for his death.

The greatest success of Jawaharlal Nehru's non-committal international politics was the formation of the NAM. Nehru found allies in Tito, Nasser, Sukarno, U Nu and Nkrumah at a later stage in his formation of this new alliance. An alliance of newly independent and long colonized nations of Asia and Africa was not taken seriously in the beginning, either by the Eastern or the Western bloc. However, the importance of the alliance was soon felt, and initially led to a great degree of international pressure from both parts of the globe. However, Nehru proceeded with his mission undaunted. It was great test for his courage and it was soon found out that the NAM was not merely a passive platform of neutral and inactive nations. It had clear objectives that included the gradual decolonization of the world, and a strong statement that the member countries were not party to the ever escalating tension of the Cold War. The favored process of decolonization as adopted by the NAM member countries was one of discussion and peaceful agreement. On many occasions, NAM met with success, often under the leadership of Nehru. Nehru preached a policy of issue based alliance and not one based on political and economic dogmas. Nehru's unshaken belief in the force of international brotherhood was attested with his decision to continue with India's Commonwealth status. He was made subject to much criticism back home because of the support he extended towards the Commonwealth, particularly after the complication of the independence issue by the British government in the post World War II years, leading to the unwanted partition. However Nehru, always the believer in peaceful alliances and solution of international affairs based on discussions, went on with his ideals.

## **The Belgrade NAM Summit**

Pt. Nehru's Speech at Conference of Non Aligned Nation at Belgrade in September 2, 1961 and said, "It was a happy and wise thought of the sponsors of this conference to have convened it. Our meeting would have been important in any event but it has become more important because of the developments of the last two or three months when we have been made aware of the abyss stretching out before and below us. This conference would have attracted attention in the normal course, but that attention is much more because we meet at the time of this particular crisis in human history."

"Today everything, including the struggle against imperialism, colonialism and racialism, which is important and to which reference has been made repeatedly here, is over-shadowed by this crisis. Therefore, it becomes inevitable for us to pay attention to this crisis which confronts humanity. The great powers also watch us."

“We call ourselves non-aligned countries. The word “non-aligned” may be differently interpreted, but basically it was coined and used with the meaning of being non-aligned with the great power blocs of the world. “Non-aligned” has a negative meaning. But if we give it a positive connotation it means nations which object to lining up for war purposes, to military blocs, to military alliances and the like. We keep away from such an approach and we want to throw our weight in favour of peace. In effect, therefore, when there is a crisis involving the possibility of war, the very fact that we are unaligned should stir us to feel that more than ever it is up to us to do whatever we can to prevent such a calamity coming down upon us.”

“If in this crisis some action of ours helps to remove the fear of war, then we have justified and strengthened ourselves. I know that the key to the situation does not lie in the hands of this conference. It lies essentially in the hands of the two great powers, the United States of America and the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, this conference or rather the countries which are represented in this conference are not so helpless that they look on while war is declared and the world is destroyed. The time, the place and the occasion are now and here to take up the question of war and peace and make it our own and show to the world that we stand for peace and that, so far as we can, we shall fight for it in the ways open to us. The power of nations assembled here is not military power or economic power; nevertheless it is power. Call it moral force. It does make a difference obviously what we in our combined wisdom feel and think about this issue of war and peace.”

“Some six, seven or eight years ago, non-alignment was a rare phenomenon. A few countries here and there asked about it and other countries rather made fun of it or at any rate did not take it seriously. “Non-alignment? What is this? You must be on this side or that,” – that was the argument. That argument is dead today. The whole course of history of the last few years has shown a growing opinion spread in favour of the concept of non-alignment. Why? Because it was in tune with the course of events; it was in tune with the thinking of the vast numbers of people, whether the country concerned was non-aligned or not, because they hungered passionately for peace and did not like this massing up of vast armies and nuclear bombs on either side. Therefore, their minds turned to those countries that refused to line up.”

“We have arrived at a position today where there is no choice left between an attempt between negotiations for peace or war. If people refuse to negotiate, they must inevitably go to war. I am amazed that rigid and proud attitudes are taken up by the great countries as being too high and mighty to negotiate for peace. I submit that it is not their prestige which is involved in such attitudes but the future of the human race. It is our duty and function to say that they must negotiate.”

“I believe firmly that the only possible way to solve many of these problems ultimately is complete disarmament. I consider disarmament an absolute necessity for the peace of the world. I think that without disarmament the present difficulties, fears and conflicts will continue. We cannot expect to achieve disarmament suddenly even if this conference wants it. For the present moment the only thing which we can



do is to lay stress on the need to negotiate with a view to getting over these fears and dangers. If that is done, the next and other steps follow.”

“I would venture to say that it is not for us to lay down what should be done in regard to Germany or Berlin which is the immediate cause of the present tension. It seems to me obvious that certain facts of life should be recognized. There are two independent entities: the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Government of the German Democratic People’s Republic. As things stand, we find the great City of Berlin divided by what might be called an international frontier. It is a very awkward situation, but there it is. West Berlin is very closely allied to West Germany and to Western countries and they have had access to it. I am glad that Mr. Khrushchev himself has indicated that that access will not be limited and it will be open to them as it is now. If that is made perfectly clear and guaranteed by all concerned, I should imagine that one of the major fears and cause of conflict will be removed. I am merely putting this forward to indicate how some of the big things which are troubling the people are capable of solution even if the entire problem is not solved.”

“The most important thing for the world today is for the great powers directly concerned to meet together and negotiate with a will to peace. And if this conference throws its weight in favour of such an approach, it will be a positive step which we take in order to help.”

“May I say that the danger of war coming nearer has been enhanced perhaps by the recent decision of the Soviet Government to start nuclear tests? I regret it deeply because it may well lead to the other countries also starting the tests, and apart from the inherent danger of nuclear fall-outs, this brings us to the very verge of the precipice of war. Therefore, it has become even more urgent that the process of negotiation should begin without any delay.”

“I should like to refer briefly to some of our other problems. Many of the countries represented here have only recently become independent. They have tremendous problems and have, above all, the problem of making good economically and socially, because most of these countries are under-developed. It is right and proper that the affluent countries should help in this process. They have to some extent done so. I think they should do more in this respect, but ultimately the burden will lie on the pex racial arrogance, racial discrimination, and apartheid which is an intolerable position to be accepted by any of us. And this is imposed upon South-West Africa in challenge to the United Nations’ decision! All these problems crowd upon us. We have to face them.”

“The most fundamental fact of the world today is the development of new and mighty forces. We have to think in terms of the new world. There is no doubt that imperialism and the old-style colonialism will vanish. Yet the new forces may help others to dominate in other ways over us, and certainly the under-developed and the backward. Therefxen greater folly than ever. If we cannot prevent war, all our problems suffer and we cannot deal with them. But if we can prevent war, we can go ahead in

solving our other problems. We can help to liberate the parts of the world under colonial and imperial rule and we can build up our own free, prosperous societies in our respective countries. That is positive work for us to do. Therefore, I venture to submit to this assembly that we must lay the greatest stress on the removal of this major danger of war today. Not only is this incumbent on us but if we do this we shall be in line with the thinking of millions and millions of people. Non-alignment has received strength from the fact that millions of people are not aligned and that they do not want war.”

“Let us use this strength rightly, with courtesy and with a friendly approach so that we may influence those who have the power of war and peace in their hands. Let us try, if not to prevent war for all time, to push it away so that in the meantime the world may learn the ways of mutual co-operation” (Pt. Nehru Speech at Conference of NAM. 1961: 365).

## Nehru’s Television Interview on NAM

Nehru gave television interview in Washington in November 12, 1961 and answered on the relevance of NAM and said, “Mr. ARNOLD MICHAELIS: You have said that anyone who says that he will never compromise is foolish because life is constantly forcing compromise on us. How do you compromise in respect of holding to your principles?”

Mr. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: You have to draw a line. You cannot draw the sword at every non-essential; that is absurd, childish.

MR ADLAI STEVENSON: Somebody once said that a wise man who stands firm is a statesman and a foolish man who stands firm is a catastrophe; maybe we have to find a compromise through wisdom.

MR. ARNOLD MICHAELIS: In regard to the very pressing and continually burning question of admittance of Communist China to the United Nations, our Government’s position, as you know, Mr. Nehru, is opposed to it. The alleged conflict between the Soviet Union and China is said to be built on the basis of the Soviets wanting to pursue a course of co-existence and the Chinese being opposed to it. If that is true—and the Chinese in fact are opposed to co-existence—what basis do you see for their admittance to the U.N.?

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: My argument for the admittance of China has nothing to do with their views, but is based on the fact that you cannot solve any major problem leaving out a quarter of the world’s population. I would say that one has to face that fact. Take them in, even as a hostile element. That is better than keeping them out, and allowing them to go on with their hostility and try to upset our plans.

MR. ARNOLD MICHAELIS: Do you believe that they really want to join the U.N.?

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: It is difficult to say. I imagine they do now, though, I must say, I have sometimes rather doubted it. Anyhow, they have not been so terribly keen as others have been in wanting them to join. I think they like their

freedom to say and do just what they like, to criticize everybody, with no element of responsibility coming in.

MR. ADLAI STEVENSON: They have never renounced the use of force against Formosa, Taiwan, the Republic of China, which hardly makes them qualify for membership in accordance with the, literal language of the Charter.

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: Do other countries, Governor? Have all the countries renounced the use of force?

MR. ADLAI STEVENSON: They have, by joining the United Nations, except in self-defence, and adhering to the principles of the Charter. I believe the Chinese have asserted repeatedly that their claim to Formosa would be enforced, if necessary.

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: One difficulty which I have noticed is that various countries use the same words in different meanings. Take co-existence. The Chinese go on saying that they stand for co-existence, but it seems to me evident that the meaning which they attach to it is somewhat different from mine.

MR. ADLAI STEVENSON: Maybe what we should say from now on is not co-existence but that we stand against co-extinction.

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: Yes. I will tell you a little story. When Chou En-lai came to India for the first time about six years ago, before the Geneva Conference, he spent two or three days in Delhi and at the end of it he asked me to draft a small joint statement to be issued to the press. My Ministry drafted it. For a long time he looked at it. He said he knew a little English, not too much. He said, "It seems to me all right, but I should like to see the Chinese translation of it." When this he came he protested. He objected to certain word in the draft - quit harmless words, not involving any high principle. He said it sounded funny in Chinese and he could put any suitable word he liked but that was the English sense. For hours we argued about certain words and phrases, quite without any relevance to any principle. Ultimately in the small hours of the morning they agreed to something. That experience made me think how different was the genius of the Chinese language from not only English but all the other languages, including the Indian languages, because we are all one family of languages. It struck me that these people who say they are Marxists have read Marx in the Chinese version. The whole linguistic background of the Chinese is different and so they use words with different meanings. Their pictographs represent ideas, not words as in our languages. That is why I think some trouble is caused by different interpretations to words.

Mr. ADLAI STEVENSON: Yes, I am sure, it creates great difficulties; for example, the translation of words in the United Nations, because the meaning of words is not always the same in all the languages which we use.

Could you, Sir, give me some simple explanation of what you describe or define as the policy of non-alignment of India and the United Nations?

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: I could. Of course, what I say would not be a complete thing. Broadly, non-alignment means not tying himself off with military blocs of nations or with a nation. It means trying to view things, as far as possible,

not from the military point of view, though that has to come in sometimes. But independently and trying to maintain friendly relations with all countries.

MR. ADLAI STEVENSON: That is one thing I have not been able to understand lately. We have seen refugees shot in cold blood under the barbed wire in Berlin, we have seen the double-dealing of the Soviet Union in respect of nuclear testing, and her detonation of an enormous bomb with dire consequences for the human race, and yet I do not see that this stirs up the kind of indignation among the non-aligned people that one would anticipate.

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: You are right, Governor, to some extent. We will find almost everyone deploring this, but you are right that the degree of indignation elsewhere may be lesser than in the United States. That depends on how it affects them personally. Suppose there was a nuclear test in Africa. The African nations will be wild. The thing is the same, whether it is in Africa, Europe, or somewhere else. But when it is near to their doors, they personally see it and are affected by it. And they will shout. You can explain that only by the past conditioning of all these countries. At the Belgrade Conference we have had a majority of newly independent African countries so full of their own problems that the rest of the world does not seem to exist for them except vaguely as an imperialist, colonialist world against which they are striving to free themselves. You see they have a background in which they have grown and they react accordingly. Of course, if you put this matter to them, they will say, "it is very bad". At Belgrade they did say it was very bad and it should not have been done. But having said so, they reverted to their own problems.

MR. ADLAI STEVENSON: I think we in the United States share the attitude of India about the colonialism which you mentioned was such a concern at Belgrade, and also about self-determination. I believe we share your view that this should be the objective of all peoples everywhere. This great wave of independence, which has swept the world and freed a billion people and created 42 new nations, I think, since the war, has not reached some regions of the world. I speak specifically of Eastern Europe where governments have been imposed on the people by force of arms and are maintained in that manner. Wouldn't it be true that if non-colonialism and self-determination applied to Africa it should also apply to Eastern Europe and give those people an equal opportunity for self-determination?

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: That would be an ideal thing. But there is difference. Obviously there is an old-style colonial type in Africa or Asia. That is not the type in Eastern Europe. It is not colonialism. It is the domination of a certain group or party, aided by outside elements from another country. I dislike the second thing also, but it is different. Those elements which went to form the other colonialism really apply here. It may be, and it sometimes is, that the second type is even worse from the human points of view than the other.

MR. ARNOLD MICHAELIS: In other words, you would favour self-determination for all peoples.

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: Yes, but if I agree to that, I don't quite know where it will land me. Self-determination for a country, for a part of a country, for a district, for what?

MR. ARNOLD MICHAELIS: We are speaking of governments which have had other governments superimposed on them.

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: Yes, it would be a good thing if every country as such was given that opportunity. Then that gets tied up with so many other factors. Take this development of the East European countries, partly as a result of the last war and partly conditioned by fear of future wars. See what a terrible thing happened in Hungary. And yet probably a reason for that was the fear that that was going to lead to a world war. Just at that time the Egyptian invasion by the French and the British was taking place. And it looked almost as though it were going to burst into a world war. If so, the Russians may have thought, "We are going to take no chances in Hungary". The instinct of self-preservation came in.

MR. ARNOLD MICHAELIS: The Soviet instinct.

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: Yes, and they behaved in a brutal manner in Hungary. MR. ARNOLD MICHAELIS: I am glad to hear you say that today, Mr. Nehru, because, as you know from our press, there are large sections of the American population which feel that you didn't speak out forcefully against the situation in Hungary.

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: Mr. Michaelis; that shows their lack of touch with what I have been saying. It is perfectly true that in the first few days I said I wanted to know the facts before I said anything. And soon after that I expressed my opinion clearly enough. Always there has been a desire not merely to express an opinion - that is easy enough - but to do something to help in a difficult context.

MR. ADLAI STEVENSON: Non-alignment, Mr. Prime Minister, serves a useful purpose in the United Nations. It spurs negotiations between the aligned countries. It has the effect of sustaining pressure on them in peaceful directions, and it is often a guide to public opinion around the world. It serves very many useful purposes. But when non-alignment leans one way more than the other, it does have the effect of encouraging the Soviet Union to more extreme adventures. And this, in turn, would lead to the same in this country and also to a loss of confidence in the United Nations. I think this problem is something that we have to deal with all the time. But we do respect your non-alignment. With respect to your delegation to the United Nations, we have felt that frequently we did not share common views on political issues. On other issues in the field of colonialism, in the field of executive action by the United Nations, in the Congo, in the Middle East and so on we find common ground. I should like very much to take this occasion, while you are here with me this morning, to express the gratitude of my Government for the services that India has rendered in the effort to unify the Congo and in many other cases to establish a United Nations presence, and to use this instrumentality more effectively to preserve peace in the world. I think it has been a very useful service, and I am very grateful to you, Sir.

MR. ARNOLD MICHAELIS: That gives us the right to enjoy the luxury and privilege of disagreement, since we have agreement in so many areas.

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: This has nothing to do with non-alignment. Non-alignment is a basic policy, but its application to particular circumstances or resolutions is a matter for judgment. Non-alignment is the background which governs our thinking. That doesn't arise as a resolution. It is not because we are not aligned that we must agree or not agree to something. That requires an independent judgment as to which is likely to lead to the objective aimed at. We do avoid, generally speaking, mere condemnations which often make it difficult to bring differing groups together. But in regard to particular things, we should express our opinion clearly aiming always at achieving results. It is not a result, in our opinion, merely to damn somebody.

MR. ADLAI STEVENSON: We find it difficult to understand how India can take a position of impartiality between nuclear tests by the United States and the Soviet Union. This form of non-alignment of trying to find a position of non-identification between right and wrong or good and evil can, I am sure you will appreciate, cause us some confusion in this country.

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: There is no difficulty in choosing between right and wrong if the question appears in that sense. It doesn't always appear clearly in that way. Between white and black, there are many shades of grey. The question is what you are aiming at. I do not quite know what you have in mind, Governor, about the tests. Obviously the fact that the Soviet Union resumed nuclear tests was a very bad thing from every point of view – in its results, in its breach of a covenant, voluntary covenant, no doubt. It was bad as an example to be followed by others. It vitiated the atmosphere of coming together. If the United States Government started its underground tests or any other tests, there is no question of putting them in any other category. But the thing to think about is the future. For us to say, "Well, the Russians have had a go. Therefore it is only right that the Americans should have time to go ahead to equalize," creates difficulties. The Russians are completely wrong, no doubt. But when we think a nuclear test is evil, we have to say that at every stage. There is no question of equalizing, although Russia may have possibly gained an advantage by some test. This cannot be helped. That becomes a political, technical and military question, but we are not in a position to judge. In this particular matter, obviously it was Russia that took the step which we consider very wrong.

MR. ADLAI STEVENSON: I was very glad to hear you say the other day that you believe that the solution to this matter lies in the execution of a treaty providing for control and inspection of nuclear weapons, and that the sooner this is done the better. MR. ARNOLD MICHAELIS: I think that feeling has caught the imagination of all peoples, certainly in Britain. The other day Lord Home, the British Foreign Secretary, said that Mr. Khrushchev apparently has extended an olive branch to him. "If indeed it is an olive branch, I will be happy to climb up on it and sit next to him and coo like a dove with him," he said.

MR. ADLAI STEVENSON: I hope there is plenty of room on that olive branch. There will be a lot of people trying to get on it.

MR. ARNOLD MICHAELIS: If that happens, your efforts will have proven successful, Mr. Nehru.

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: Yes. You see the alternatives are terrible to contemplate. The reality facing the world today, if there is a nuclear war, is so amazing in its consequences that one tries to avoid it. I am quite sure nobody wants it in the world. But certain urges of an out-of-date mentality govern all nations still. They take step after step till it becomes a matter of national honour not to retreat, and then you have wars.

MR. ARNOLD MICHAELIS: Mr. Nehru had made the statement in some part of his writings that one test of his sobriety and sanity is the fact that he has never suffered a bad headache. I wonder if this has been true since the nuclear age came upon us?

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: It is true, broadly speaking. I don't have headaches and I sleep well even though perhaps not enough. It is a good sleep.

MR. ADLAI STEVENSON: I have to say that we have some things in common. I have never had headaches either of the technical variety. Of the non-technical variety I am never free of one. As far as not sleeping is concerned, I find I have no trouble with insomnia during the day. My trouble is only at night.

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: I sleep well at night. I sometimes find it difficult to keep awake in the day-time.

MR. ARNOLD MICHAELIS: You also made the statement, Mr. Nehru, on a previous occasion that one must journey through life alone. To rely on others invites heart-break. How heart-broken are you these days?

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: Well, as one advances in experience and age, one gets a little tougher, used to all kinds of kicks. In one's youth, the heart breaks easily, whether it is the political heart or any other. One survives that still. Many things happen which are painful, and yet one views them with greater calmness than previously and perhaps with some expectation that things may better themselves.

MR. ARNOLD MICHAELIS: We hope that you suffer less and less heart-break and that it is the result of the nations of the world coming and closer together.

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: That is so, Ultimately, Mr. Michaelis, heart-break is always greater in regard to matters affecting one intimately. I suffer more from something that happens in India, which I think is wrong, that even a major catastrophe outside for which I don't hold the direct responsibility, I feel a shock about it. But if some catastrophe happens to my people in front of me, that pains me very much more because that seems to mar their future.

MR. ARNOLD MICHAELIS: Governor, November 14th, two days away, will mark the 72nd anniversary of Mr. Nehru's birth. Won't you join me now in advance in wishing the Prime Minister well at his 72nd and hope that he will continue many, many more years of traveling inside India as well as outside of India?

MR. ADLAI STEVENSON: I do indeed. Sir, we are more honoured that you had occasion to come to this country at this time. I am sure we have all profited from your wisdom and philosophical understanding of our times. And I hope you never have a headache.

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: Thank you, Governor. Thank you, Mr. Michaelis.

MR. ARNOLD MICHAELIS: And we wish you Godspeed on your trip home, Mr. Nehru.

MR. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: Thank you” (*Africa Quarterly*, Vol. X, No. 1, 1970:379-87).

## India and the Liberation of Southern Africa

The author Surender Pal Singh published his article in the journal and focused on the liberation of Southern Africa and the role of India in detailed. The era of decolonization in Africa has come to a standstill with the withdrawal of British and French authority from those colonies. The remaining areas under foreign or white minority rule in southern Africa continue to defy the historical process and remain a challenge to the independence of Black Africa. Anachronistic colonial pockets and ghettos of apartheid continue to disfigure the southern part of Africa. In spite of various resolutions passed by the United Nations condemning colonialism, the Portuguese and the ‘white’ minority governments in South Africa and Rhodesia do not appear to be in a mood to change their attitude. The indigenous people of these territories have been denied all social, political and economic rights, resulting in the absence of organized political activity in the form of political parties with socio- economic and political programmes to lead them towards the goal of independence and majority rule.

South Africa’s policy of apartheid, which has been described by the UN as “a crime against humanity”, touches every aspect of social and economic life – the home, the school, the church and the trade union, the factory and the political party. Though on the face of it, all the acts passed by the South African Governments apply equally to the ‘whites’ and the ‘coloureds’, and benefit only the ‘whites’. Politics in South Africa is dominated by two issues; defence of the white Aristocracy, and Afrikanerdom’s

*Kradadidgheid* (firm resolve) to dominate was motivated by their reactions against British imperialism and to avenge their defeat in the Anglo Boer War. Now they believe that only the Afrikaners have the non-‘white’ elements. It was Mahatma Gandhi who first drew the attention of the world community to the racial discrimination practiced in South Africa during his stay in that country from 1893 to 1915.

The Government of South Africa has enacted legislation in defiance of world opinion eroding the personal life of the Africans in an increasing measure. It has also extended the pernicious doctrine of apartheid to the UN Trust Territory of Namibia (South West Africa). South Africa has violated with impunity all the decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council concerning apartheid and Namibia.



In Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia), the illegal minority regime which declared independence unilaterally on November 11, 1965, has consolidated its hold. Its new constitution has not only been approved by the so-called Rhodesian Parliament and the Officer Administering the Government but elections have also taken place on its basis. The constitution provides for a form of geographical and political apartheid. The illegal racist regime has also adopted a Land Tenure Bill demarcating 'white' and 'black' areas. The Bill sets apart 45 million acres of land for 241,000 'whites' as against a similar area of 4,184,000 Africans. On March 3, 1970, the racist minority regime made the formal declaration of a Rhodesian 'Republic' replacing Queen Elizabeth as the Head of State By an elected President. The people of Zimbabwe have naturally reacted sharply to these racist measures.

Similarly, Portugal, which is poor and underdeveloped, is doing everything possible to perpetuate its hold on the territories of Angola, Mozambique and the Portuguese Guinea which are extremely rich in natural resources. In pursuing this policy, Portugal is receiving encouragement and indirect support from some of the Western Powers. Negotiated withdrawal of colonial power which was the hallmark of the era of decolonization seems no longer possible. The intransigent attitude of Portugal and the 'white' minority Governments has led to the realization by the African people that no settlement of their political problems is likely to come through peaceful means. They are convinced that these colonial powers can be overthrown only through armed struggle. A number of liberation movements have accordingly come into being to fight for their independence. These movements naturally look to the independent nations of Africa and other freedom-loving nations of the world for aid in their struggle for freedom. Their strategy is to concentrate on the strengthening of their organizations, training of their cadres and infiltrating into the colonial territories for guerilla activities or direct military action.

The African nationalists are fighting their battles along a broad front extending from Mozambique in the east along the Zambezi River to Angola in the west. The freedom fighters are also active in Guinea-Bissau on the western coast of Africa.

In South Africa, the freedom fighters have united under the banner of the African National Congress led by Mr. Oliver Tambo. Only last year a united command under the leadership of the ANC was formed. The freedom fighters of the ANC, in collaboration with the freedom fighters of the ZAPU, are up in arms against the well-equipped South African forces. In Namibia, the South-West African Peoples of Organisation under the leadership of Sam Nujoma is active on the Caprivi Strip.

In Zimbabwe, the freedom fighters of the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union have already taken up the challenge and are fighting the illegal regime under the leadership of Joshua Nkomo. The freedom fighters in Zimbabwe are active in the Western Zambezi Valley. They are fighting against heavy odds inasmuch as they have to contend with the unholy alliance between the racist regimes of Rhodesia and South Africa on the one hand and Portuguese colonialism on the other.

In Mozambique, the Frente da Libertação da Moçambique (FRELIMO) is operating under the able leadership of Samora Machel. It has already liberated large areas where it is running educational institutions, co-operatives and dispensaries. It goes to the credit of the FRELIMO that despite the assassination of its dynamic leader, Dr Eduardo Mondlane, by the agents of the colonial and racist forces on February 5, 1969, it has continued the struggle with unabated zeal.

Two major liberation movements are engaged in the fight for freedom in Angola. These are the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA) under the leadership of Dr Holden Roberto, and Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA) under the leadership of Agostinho Neto. The FNLA, with headquarters in the Congo (K), has formed a Revolutionary Government of Angola in Exile (GRAE) headed by Dr Holden Roberto; the movement has made tremendous progress since it embarked on its armed strategy. The MPLA, which is the oldest of the parties currently engaged in the military struggle against the Portuguese in Angola, was formed in 1956. The movement is recognized by the OAU and receives considerable assistance from it. It claims to have liberated almost one-third of Angola.

In Portuguese Guinea, the fight for freedom is continuing under the able leadership of Amílcar Cabral, Secretary General of the Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde (PAIGC). Military initiative in Guinea-Bissau is now in the hands of freedom fighters who are controlling most of the country with the exception of major towns. Recently the PAIGC took the fight to the Islands of Cabo Verde which are of vital importance to the Cape sea routes and where the Portuguese have established an all-weather jet airbase with South African assistance. It is estimated that nearly 85% of the population of the Guinea-Bissau lives in the liberated areas.

The freedom fighters in Africa are carrying on the fight against heavy odds. They are handicapped for want of resources to conduct military operations against the well-equipped troops of the colonial powers and the racist regimes. The unholy alliance of the racist and totalitarian regimes of South Africa, Portugal and Rhodesia has become the main headache of the liberation movements. Not only are these powers conducting joint operations to exterminate the freedom fighters but they are also putting pressure on the neighbouring independent African States with a view to dissuading them from providing the freedom fighters with military assistance and bases for armed struggle and guerilla activities.

As for India, her own experience and protracted struggle for freedom from foreign rule has endowed her with deep sympathy for similar struggles in other countries. Her policy has been to support the right of all peoples, irrespective of their colour or creed, to compete independence and equality under a government of their choice. That was the basis of the policy of the Congress Party even while India was fighting for her own freedom. As a matter of fact, India was the first country to raise the question of racial discrimination in South Africa in the UN General Assembly in 1946. We have always supported the just struggle of the people of South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau. The Government

of India have steadfastly opposed the continuation of colonial rule in Angola and other parts of Africa and have consistently espoused the cause of the people of the countries in the UN and at other international forums. India is an active member of the UN Special Committee of 24 on Colonialism which has done commendable work in bringing to the notice of the world the atrocities committed by the Portuguese and other colonialists on the indigenous people in southern countries in Dar-es-Salaam on April 16, 1970, Mr. Dinesh Singh, Foreign Minister of India, once again focused the attention of the world to the denial of freedom and dignity to the indigenous peoples of South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and the territories under Portuguese domination and emphasized that it is “absolutely essential for us to consider what active help we can give” to these people struggling for their liberation.

As for the material assistance to the people belonging to these colonies, the Government’s efforts have been primarily directed towards enabling them to equip themselves with necessary education and expertise to that they can carry forward the political awakening of the masses in their countries. Towards this end, India has been providing education and training facilities to a number of people from these territories. For example, 24 Angolan students received training in nursing and other technical fields in India. India has also been assisting in a modest way the FRELIMO in running its Mozambique Institute at Dar-es-Salaam. In addition, India has sent by way of gift a number of consignments of medicines and clothing to various liberation movements.

During 1969-70, six proposals for the supply of clothing, medicines, medical equipment, food, stuffs, supplies for schoolchildren, etc., to the Zimbabwe African Peoples Organisation, the African National Congress, the *Patrido Africano da Independecia da Guine e Cabo Verde*, the National Liberation Front of Angola, and the *Movimento Popular de Liberation de l’Angola* have been approved. Besides, the Government of India has assisted the African National Congress of South Africa to establish their Asian Mission in New Delhi in November 1967. Since then, we have been helping the ANC in various ways it to fulfill its mission in this country.

The Indian Council for Africa has also provided material assistance to the ZAPU and the FRELIMO. The Council is helping some of the movements by giving financial assistance to students from their territories. It has also published some interesting reports on the freedom struggles in Africa.

We have spent more than one and a quarter million rupees so far to assist these movements. The large demand on our resources at home puts a severe limitation on our capability to assist them. However, the will to support our toiling brethren in Africa continues unmitigated.

Now that the liberation movements have entered a very crucial stage in their struggle for independence, their needs for material assistance have also increased. Naturally, they look to their sympathizers abroad to meet their requirements. India would no doubt continue to extend its support to them in accordance with its policy and in conformity with the resolutions of the UN. As Jawaharlal Nehru said: “It must

be understood quite clearly that no doctrine based on racial inequality or racial suppression can be tolerated for long. There will be no peace in the world if one race tries to dominate over another or one country over another". It is, therefore, our fervent hope that the day is not far when the oppressed people of these countries will join the comity of free nations as sovereign and equal partners. (Surendra Pal Singh, 1970: 4-8).

Similarly, Southern Africa liberation was focused in India and Samarendra Kundu wrote about it. He wrote, "The birth of the Organisation of African Unity fifteen years ago was an event of outstanding importance for the African people and for the international community. It had for us in the Indian Sub-Continent a particular significance as Africa is our sister continent, many member-states of which are linked to us by the Indian Ocean and all the members of which belong to the fraternity of the non-aligned group. We were particularly happy that the affirmation of a policy of non-alignment with regard to all blocks was solemnly enshrined as a guiding principle in the OAU Charter."

"The Organisation of African Unity has a solid record of achievements during the last fifteen years of its existence. Its contribution to the liberation struggle in the African Continent against colonialism, racial discrimination and economic exploitation is well known. In fact as against 31 members of OAU when it was founded, its membership has now swollen to 49 members. The liberation movements in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa are now converging and acquiring such momentum that before long the last vestiges of colonialism and racialism would also be eliminated. The Father of our Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, started his non-violent crusade against racial discrimination in South Africa at the turn of the last century before he began his long and arduous struggle to lead the Indian people to freedom. It was India which first came to the United Nations to internationalise the campaign against racial discrimination. Indian Government assures African brethren people of its full support and help not only in their liberation struggle against colonial rule but also against the monstrosity of racialism and apartheid which is a crime against humanity and a scar on the conscience of the international community."

"The two most important items on the African agenda for 1978 are the questions of Zimbabwe and Namibia. As regards Zimbabwe, the Organisation of African Unity has recognized Patriotic Front as the main liberation movement. We are glad to know that the leaders of the Patriotic Front are displaying necessary flexibility and are prepared to negotiate on transitional arrangements leading to majority rule in Zimbabwe. We in India are in constant touch with Frontline States and Patriotic Front on this important matter. Political, economic and diplomatic pressure has to be maintained for convening the all parties conference where a consensus could be reached on transitional arrangements, leading to elections on the basis of one man one vote and setting up of majority rule on the basis of Anglo-US proposal. We have unequivocally condemned the so-called internal settlement reached in Salisbury. We would like unity to be forged amongst nationalist leaders in Zimbabwe so that

effective pressure is brought on Smith and his followers for establishing authentic and genuine majority rule. Should, however, the latter not see the writing on the wall, the intensification of armed struggle for bringing about independence and freedom in Zimbabwe would become inevitable, and in that case Patriotic Front would be entitled to receive fullest possible cooperation and assistance from all members of OAU and other supporters in the non-aligned and developing world.”

“The obduracy of the South African regime has been the single most important factor in preventing a negotiated settlement of the Namibian question. We deplore and condemn the recent South African raid into Angola when innocent civilians and SWAPO refugees were killed. One cannot forget the fact that this dastardly act was perpetuated right at the time when SWAPO was willing to resume negotiations on the basis of five-power proposals. SWAPO has made several concessions and has shown a flexible approach on the matter as against South African approach characterised by unreasonable demands and unacceptable conditions. The international community is unanimous in asking for the withdrawal of South Africa from Namibia. If a peaceful and negotiated arrangement cannot be found, then there would be no alternative for SWAPO, the only liberation movement in Namibia, to intensify its struggle. India would continue to render support to SWAPO so as to enable it to achieve its genuine goals and objectives.”

“We also intend to observe anti-apartheid year in India and are in the process of finalizing the programme of various activities which would be undertaken in this connection. No fight in the defence of human rights can be considered complete unless the affront to human dignity and equality as symbolized by apartheid is done away with.”

“We in India note that OAU has made tremendous contribution not only in bringing about emancipation of African territories which were under colonial yoke but also in the other set of its purposes as stated in the OAU Charter which refer to coordination and harmonization of general policies of its member States in the field of political, diplomatic, economic, cultural, health, nutritional, scientific and technical cooperation.”

“Unfortunately, of late, OAU has been confronted with various regional problems. What is more disturbing is that lack of effective timely action has, in certain cases, resulted in foreign military involvement which would render the task of OAU more difficult if not impossible. If intra-African disputes are not resolved early, African unity would get weakened, the attention would be deviated away from the real issues in Southern Africa and the Non-aligned movement as a whole would get adversely affected. This is too grim a prospect and we should bend our energies so that the present situation is not let adrift. We believe that the purpose and principles as embodied in the OAU Charter are as valid today, if not more, than when conceived 15 years ago. We should like to express the hope that there would be renewed thrust in the policies and actions of the member States of OAU for promoting unity and solidarity amongst themselves. There is also the supreme need at the present moment

for strict observance, implementation and upholding of the principles enshrined in the OAU Charter by the African States with a view to avoid prospects of external military involvement in the continent of Africa which is threatening to undermine their real sovereignty and non-aligned status. In this connection, I would particularly like to refer to the principles embodied in the OAU Charter relating to respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of each State and for its inalienable, right to independent existence, and concerning peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation or arbitration. The OAU principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States needs to be adhered fully in actual practice.”

“India and OAU members have been cooperating together with other developing countries in the Group of 77 in their efforts to bring about a new international economic order. India believes that an important element of this cooperation is the building up of collective self-reliance among developing countries. We should examine carefully how this cooperation can be given content while finalising the strategy for the third development decade. India attaches a great deal of importance to the speedy and full implementation of the action programme for cooperation among non-aligned and developing countries as worked out in Non-aligned and U.N. We attach a great deal of priority to the expansion of our relations with OAU and its member States in educational, cultural, scientific, economic and technological fields. We would be hosting the Non-aligned Centre for Science and technology in India. We would be happy to cooperate with OAU in ensuring that Africa derives maximum benefits from its cooperation with India and other non-aligned countries in this vital field where we have something to offer because of our large reservoir of scientific and technical manpower.”

Pandit Nehru died on May 27, 1964. Gulzari Lal Nanda took over as an interim Prime Minister from May 27, 1964 - June 9, 1964. Lal Bahadur Shastri joined as Prime Minister from June 9, 1964 - January 11, 1966. Gulzari Lal Nanda worked again as interim Prime Minister from January 11 - 24, 1966. Indira Gandhi came to power and joined as Prime Minister from Jan. 24, 1966 to March 24, 1977 and then January 14, 1980 to Oct. 31, 1984.

## **Mrs. Indira Gandhi, NAM and Southern Africa**

Mr.s. I. Gandhi delivered her speech on Africa Day celebrations on India and Africa in New Delhi on May 25, 1974 and said, “I was once again reminded of our own freedom struggle when I met in Algiers the leaders of the African movements of Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Zimbabwe and South Africa and was impressed by their idealism and force of character. It is true that we feel emotionally about all freedom struggles, but it is not merely a feeling of emotion or heart, it is very much a well thought-out decision. As the Congress President said just now, we support freedom struggles because we believe that our own future freedom is bound up with them because we believe that while any country is not free, we ourselves – and in fact no people, even those living in the so-called free countries – can be truly free.”

“While any country is still under a colonial power, it cannot develop, and we believe that prosperity and progress are as indivisible as freedom and peace.”

“At the non-aligned summit meetings in Lusaka and even in Algiers, I was privileged to meet a large number of African Heads of Government and formed high respect for their statesmanship. We have warmly welcomed some of them in Delhi. This year, we had President Sadat, Prime Minister Ramgoolam and then it was a happy coincidence that President Nyerere and I both happened to be in Calcutta at the same time and could meet briefly, even though no break in his journey had been scheduled.”  
(**Africa Day celebrations. 1974: 683**).

“India stands irrevocably committed to peaceful co-existence, non-alignment and international co-operation. I hope that there will be greater co-operation within regions and between regions, as between Africa and Asia, to strengthen the international foundations for peace.”

“Once again, I should like to send my greetings to all people of Africa but specially to those who are still in the midst of a hard struggle for freedom. Our thoughts are with them and our good wishes are with them and we have no doubt that they will succeed and in their success lies our success. Let us all help them as much as we can, in every way we can, now, before they have won their freedom and afterwards when they have won it also, to stand on their feet, to become strong so that together the developing nations can gain in strength and make their voice heard so that the justice that was so long denied can at last be attained, not just for ourselves but to enable us

to work together for a much better world” (**Africa Day celebrations. 1974: 685**).

During the Lusaka Summit, India was the Chairperson of the key political committee. Extending India’s support to brave freedom fighters of Africa, Indira Gandhi said that we can feel the vibration of the struggle against the minority government in Zimbabwe, against the apartheid policies in South Africa and the national movement in Namibia and Guinea-Bissau (**US Jha. 1998: 19**).

Mr.s. Gandhi said during the Algiers NAM Summit in September 1973 and stated, “What was now required was effort to overcome the economic, technological and intellectual consequences of colonialism. The unfinished revolution must, therefore, continue until freedom is assured to all until inequalities among nations are narrowed and until power at the disposal of nations is tamed through institution in which all people can participate (**M Sen. 1986: emphasis mine**).

Mr.s. Gandhi followed up at Colombo in August 1976 that non-alignment remains the bulwark of an ever-widening area of peace, a shield against external pressures and a catalyst of a New World Economic Order based on equality and justice.

## Prime Minister Charan Singh and NAM

Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Minister of External Affairs, visited Tanzania in July 1977 and visited capital of six other African states such as Zaire, Ghana, Liberia, Senegal, Kenya and Ethiopia. At the sixth non-aligned summit held in Havana in September

1979 was represented by S N Mishra, Minister of External Affairs in the Charan Singh government. India represented a five point charter in the conference such as:

1. 'The economic section of the communiqué should explicit reference to the world's energy situation and the section should call upon socialist nations to give more assistance to needy nations'.
2. 'The section on the Indian Ocean should be reDrafted to reflect continuity in the earlier resolutions and point of view expressed on this question in the NAM'.
3. 'The disarmament section should be reDrafted to take into account development since the tenth special session of the UN General Assembly'.
4. 'Continuity should be maintained within the NAM'.
5. 'All the main aims and objectives of the NAM should be enumerated and placed together to form an opening chapter of the draft declaration' (**U S Jha. 1998: emphasis mine**).

Sh. Charan Singh government maintained India's relations with Africa as a whole remained almost unchanged. India always has been for the cause for territorial integrity, sovereignty, social progress and liberation of Southern Africa.

Mr.s. Gandhi came to power again in the 1980s and as the Chairperson of the NAM, she stated, "Non-Alignment is national independence and freedom. It stands for peace and the avoidance of confrontation. It aims at keeping away from military alliances. It means equality among nations and the democratization of international relations, economic and political. We are against exploitation. We are for each nation's right of its resource and policies. We want an equal voice in the operation of international institution. We reiterate our commitment to the establishment of a NIEO based on justice and equality." (**V D Chopra. 1998: emphasis mine**).

In March 1983, when due to unforeseen circumstances India was called upon to host the Seventh Summit meeting of the non-aligned nations. It was both a challenge and an opportunity for India because first, a controversial debate was going on in various parts of the world about the ideology of the NAM. Second, it was plagued by a serious internal crisis due to fratricidal war among some NAM nations. Third, the major thrust of the non-aligned against power politics, cold war and colonialism was being shifted to the growing tensions over the North-South debate. Finally, the general impression that one could gather from India's participation in NAM activities from the very beginning was that of a calculated and cautious rather than an enthusiastic partner. When India assumed the chairmanship of the movement the nation was surrounded by adverse circumstances, particularly external threats to its security, sovereignty and integrity. There were imperialist attempts to pressurize and destabilize India.

Hence, during the leadership of Mr.s. Gandhi, the NAM entered the phase of mass popularity, worldwide acceptance and the people belonging to various ideologies, political and social systems extended their warm support for this movement. She called



upon the people of NAM too get united to work for the objectives reality of peace so as to determine to help ourselves, to make sacrifices to polo u resources of knowledge and initiative and to work together on bilateral, regional and multilateral basis.

## Non-Aligned News Pool

Mr.s. Gandhi gave inaugural speech at the Ministerial Conference of Non-aligned Countries on the Press Agencies Pool in New Delhi on July 8, 1976. She said,“Leaders and people of the non-aligned countries have a special claim on our affection”

**(Inaugural Speech. 1976: 771).** “We want to hear Africans on events in Africa. You should similarly be able to get an Indian explanation of events in India. It is astonishing that we know so little about leading poets, novelists, historians and editors of various Asian, African, Latin American countries, while we are familiar with minor authors and columnists of Europe and America” **(Inaugural Speech. 1976: 773).**

Reply to a question by Mr. Bobby Harrypersadh, News Editor of the Durban Daily Post Natal, May 17, 1980, She explained the stand on South Africa and said, “

Question: How do you view the South African situation? Is there any change in your attitude towards South Africa since you returned to power? Do you see any change in South Africa’s outlook?

Prime Minister: For almost ninety years the racial policies of the South African Whites have greatly exercised the minds of the Congress leadership. It is in South Africa, experiencing the discrimination meted out to Indian settlers, that Mahatma Gandhi developed his unique methods of political action by which the weak could challenge the powerful.

Since then, the struggles of the people of India for independence and of the Black people of Africa for self-rule have gone hand in hand. In other parts of Africa, the Blacks have come into their own. Some years ago, I spoke at the Non-aligned Conference in Lusaka that the heartbeats of Africa were sounding like drums. With the liberation of Zimbabwe, the unfinished revolution came a step nearer to its culmination. I was elated and greatly honoured to represent India at the independence ceremony in Salisbury.

What lesson have the White rulers of South Africa Drawn from this inexorable march of history? Can they hope to be sheltered from the gale that is blowing? Neither military-economic strength nor subterfuge can help to withstand the united demand of the people for freedom.

People of an earlier generation in India did not believe that India could be free in their lifetime. This was also said regarding the freedom of many African countries. But the unbelievable does happen. The present rulers of South Africa must realize this.

Whether there will be a change of heart on South Africa’s part, I cannot tell. Political hearts are not as easily transplanted as Dr Barnard’s hearts. But until there is majority rule in South Africa, we, in India, and other countries will continue our policy of not having any political and economic dealings with the regime there. I stand steadfast

by our time-tested policy with regard to racialism. There will be no halfway house, no deal and certainly no surreptitious diplomacy” (**Durban Daily Post. 1980: 456**).

It is India’s privilege to host a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of non-aligned countries in New Delhi next month. I hope that every country will exert itself to the utmost to strengthen the unity and purpose of the non-aligned community. At this moment, we should recall and be inspired by the wisdom and vision of the great pioneers of our movement.

**Non-Alignment and Freedom** (Inaugural speech at the Non-aligned Minister’s Conference, New Delhi, February 9, 1981)

“On the historic and magic day when India’s independence was proclaimed, my father declared that India looked at the world with clear and friendly eyes and would co-operate with all nations and peoples of the world in furthering peace, freedom and democracy. Since then we have worked consistently to democratize relations, we have supported liberation struggles, we have fought against all foreign domination and racism, and have pleaded the cause of coexistence and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. Peace is not that which teeters on the brink; that is the absence of war, yet it threatens war. Nor can peace be based on outmoded concepts of imperialism, military alliances, spheres of influence or balance of power and competition in nuclear and conventional terror.”

“At this conference we must again raise our voices against the last bastions of colonialism and racism. We salute the victorious people of Zimbabwe and the brave freedom fighters of Namibia, South Africa and Palestine. We deplore the failure of the recent talks in Geneva and the manner in which the UN plan for the independence of Namibia is being frustrated by South Africa’s obstructiveness.”

“Experience has shown that political subjugation and economic exploitation go hand in hand. So, through political freedom, we hoped to achieve economic advance. The economic dimension of the policy of non-alignment is no less important than the political. In Algiers, Colombo and Havana, the conferences articulated the economic content of non-alignment. Yet, for most of us, economic prospects have been worsening with each passing month. I strongly urge that global negotiations be undertaken without further delay to pave the way for a new international economic order.” (Inaugural speech at the Non-aligned Minister’s Conference. 1981: 506).

**Non-Alignment and Peace** (Keynote Address at the commemorative meeting to mark the twentieth anniversary of the first Summit Conference of non-aligned countries, New Delhi, February 11, 1981)

“There is an integral, intrinsic and indissoluble link between non-alignment and anti-colonialism. The man who led the very first anti-colonial battle stated in his farewell message: “It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances in any portion of the foreign world.”

It has also been said: “Whose freedom is by sufferance and at the will of a superior, he is never free.” Having struggled so hard against domination, could we again accept the shelter of the umbrellas and shields of others? Could we acquiesce in outside

advice as to where our interests lie, and who our friends should be? Was it for this that vast numbers of brave men and women suffered and died”?

“Non-alignment is neither neutrality nor indifference. It involves active and free exercise of judgment on certain principles. Peace is not passive. As a remarkable woman of my country, the poet Sarojini Naidu said, “True peace is not the peace of negation, not the peace of surrender, not the peace of the coward, not the peace of the dying, not the peace of the dead, but the peace – militant, dynamic, creative, of the human spirit which exalts.” Today, let us concern ourselves with future, mobilizing all our resources, material and moral, in our co-operative quest for such a peace” (Inaugural speech at the Non-aligned Minister’s Conference. 1981: 507).

**Non-Alignment** (Interview to Press agencies of the non-aligned countries on the twentieth anniversary of the Non-aligned Movement, September 3, 1981)

Question: Over the years the international priorities have changed from liquidation of colonialism and imperialism to achievement of national development. How does the policy of non-alignment seek to meet these new challenges?

Prime Minister: Non-alignment was the logical expression of the foreign policy of the anti-imperialist fight of the people of Asia, Africa and other regions. It is a manifestation of political self-assertion and the need for economic self-reliance of newly-free peoples. The first Conference of Non-aligned Countries, held in Belgrade in 1961, was faced with the challenges of disarmament, decolonization and development. During the sixties, a large number of colonies, mostly from Africa, succeeded in throwing off the yoke of colonialism. This process continued in the seventies. With the achievement of independence by Zimbabwe, the movement has reached a new landmark. But it is by no means over. The liberation of Namibia has yet to come about. The Black majority is still being suppressed in South Africa. Moreover, tremendous economic and political pressure is being exerted on developing countries. There is also interference in internal affairs and the giving of support to more pliable groups and parties.

Question: On the 20th anniversary of the Non-aligned Movement which is being observed by the community in September what message would you like to give to readers in non-aligned and other countries?

Prime Minister: I should like to reiterate the faith of the people and Government of India in the principle of non-alignment which has stood the test of time. Periodically, purveyors of gloom have described the Movement as a spent force because of divisions within its ranks. But each successive conference of the non-aligned, including that of the Foreign Ministers of non-aligned countries, held in New Delhi in February 1981, has shown that nothing can be farther from reality. In a gathering of independent sovereign countries, practicing their own forms of self-governance, differences of approach and emphasis are bound to exist. Such differences testify to the health of the Movement rather than to its weaknesses. Resilience is a greater sign of strength than rigidity. What is significant is the harmonious manner in which we resolve our differences. So long as we continue to be motivated by a spirit of conciliation, non-

alignment will continue to be a source of strength to us and a benign influence in the world. (Interview to Press. 1981).

## Africa's Decade of Destiny

Mr. Gandhi addressed at the Africa Week Cultural Festival, organized by the African Students' Association, New Delhi, January 11, 1982 and said, "My first acquaintance with Africa was with Egypt when I was a very small girl. But after that I have had the opportunity of visiting several countries in different part of that huge continent. But there are many parts which I still do not know. I have, however, visited South Africa, not by choice, but because the ship on which we were coming home in 1940-41 was diverted first to Cape Town and then to Durban. We spent a week in Durban. I had a first-hand opportunity of seeing what humiliation was. We had seen humiliation in India, but it was already lessening by the time that I was conscious of these things. But there in Durban we constantly saw not how the Africans but the Indians also were treated. General Smuts said that very week that we were in Cape Town: "The colour of your skin is your passport." We were in the midst of our freedom struggle at that time, but even then we believed that freedom was indivisible and that all freedom struggles were ours."

"I had the great honour and privilege of representing India at the 'Uhuru' of Kenya and what was then Zanzibar and more recently in Zimbabwe. There was great joy and rejoicing during these events. At the Zimbabwe celebration, there was the shadow of Namibia and the shadow of what was happening in South Africa. Today you have very vividly portrayed these feelings. As you know, we regard Nelson Mandela as one of the foremost proponents of freedom-freedom of man. We regard him also as a friend of India. We admire him. We have honoured him as one of our own heroes and our thoughts are often with him and his family. He wrote a very beautiful letter, which had to be smuggled out, when we presented him with the Jawaharlal Nehru Award for International Understanding."

"I welcome this effort which the African students of Delhi have made to bring about a greater consciousness of their problems among Indians and all others. There is a growing consciousness even in those countries which do not believe in these things. I think it is because of the efforts made not only by great leaders like Nelson Mandela and others who are supporting him, but even by students and others in different parts of the world who are constantly working towards this end."

"The Government and the people of India have consistently supported the oppressed people of the world in their fight for political and human rights. We have shared the joy if each country of Africa as it attained independence. We share the shock of every brutal act which is perpetrated by imperialists and racists, as happened in Sharpeville."

"We have, of course, had contacts with Africa for many centuries – contacts of commerce, of culture – but in today's world these have to be much closer and more meaningful. Of course, our special contact with South Africa is that our own great

leader, Mahatma Gandhi, fashioned what, for us, was the potent instrument of a non-violent crusade. He fashioned this against racial discrimination in South Africa. It was after twenty years that he returned here and converted our Party, the Congress Party, into a mass movement and took up the leadership of our struggle and brought us victory.”

“Humankind cannot be totally liberated until the last vestiges of colonialism, racism and apartheid are swept off the scene in Africa. We have consistently reiterated our solidarity and unwavering support to the liberation struggles of the brave people of Southern Africa and to the Governments and peoples of the Frontline States. They have undergone sacrifices, have suffered and are suffering great hardships for a just cause.”

“National liberation movements in Africa have readily accepted peaceful transition towards independence. But racist minority regimes spurn the hand of peace and they cling to power by brute force and betrayal. An increasing number of countries are publicly disowning them. Yet they do continue to receive military, technological and economic support from some places. The decade of the eighties may well decide the destiny of Southern Africa. The African people must win. And we, in India, reiterate our total support to you.”

“As I said earlier, freedom is indivisible and the denial of freedom in any one place is bound to create concern everywhere else. We reaffirm our total support for the Namibian people’s right to sovereignty and express our solidarity with the struggle led by the South West African People’s Organization. We welcome the SWAPO representative’s current visit to Delhi to establish SWAPO’s office so that their cause is more widely known among our people.”

“We strongly disapprove South Africa’s bid to subvert the UN plan for peaceful settlement in Namibia as contained in the Security Council resolution and deplore the actions of certain States which are propping up the apartheid regime of South Africa in its defiance of world opinion. South Africa’s acts of unprovoked armed aggression against the Frontline States are reprehensible.”

“Forming States like Bantustans is but a ploy on the part of South Africa’s racist Government. Creation of such illegal and artificial entities perpetuates the inhuman system of apartheid and is against the basic interests of South Africa’s oppressed peoples. It is essential that the African people stand as one against all such maneuvers.” “May every year, rather every day, bring greater strength to those who are fighting!

May it bring courage and understanding amongst those who are still doubtful or those who, for their own narrow purposes, are trying to halt the march of history! I have no doubt that no one can stop freedom. There is no act of repression, there is no brutality, which can stop the forward movement of a great idea and there can be no greater idea than the freedom of the human being. That will win. But it is up to all of us to do whatever we can to help these movements and to create a greater public consciousness” (**Africa Week Cultural Festival. 1982: 335**).

## Harmony and Goodwill

Mr. Gandhi addressed to the National Assembly of Mauritius, Port Louis, August 24, 1982 and said, “Our peoples have suffered long years of neglect and colonial exploitation. Independence opened wide the gates, not for miracles, but for economic development and cultural renaissance. Freedom is the first cause. It is the foundation for a nation’s self-respect and for citizens to be able to work and grow to full stature. But to have meaning for the people, it must manifest itself through tangible social and

economic benefits. (**National Assembly of Mauritius. 1982: 370**).”

“Close to you is a country whose policies are an affront to all the values we hold dear. South Africa refuses to give up the pernicious doctrines of apartheid and racist domination, denying freedom to the majority of its own people as also to those of Namibia. The Government and the people of India have consistently and firmly condemned the atrocities on the blacks and coloured people of South Africa. We have supported the cause of the African National Congress, of SWAPO and other liberation movements in Southern Africa. This is another sphere which calls for common efforts, in co-operation with the Frontline States, to end these abhorrent policies of racialism and colonialism.” (**National Assembly of Mauritius. 1982: 371**).

## India and Mozambique

Mr. Gandhi speech at a banquet hosted by President Samora Machel of Mozambique, Maputo, August 25, 1982 and she put forwarded the message of liberation and said, “Even before the advent of Europeans, there were links between our two countries. Ships plied between your port of Sofala and Calicut on our west coast. Vasco da Gama’s fleet brought Europe to your shores as well as to ours. Mozambique spent a longer period under colonial subjection than we did. During the period of Portuguese colonial rule also there was interaction between our two countries. Over the decades, hundreds, perhaps thousands of families of Indian origin have made Mozambique their home. Today they are free citizens of independent Mozambique. I am glad that they are participating in the task of constructing a new, prosperous Mozambique.”

“Next door to your country, Mr. President, you are plagued with the hateful doctrine of racism. In South Africa, a minority rules over the majority, trampling their dignity and their rights. In its pursuit of apartheid, the South African minority government has built a structure of institutionalized terror against its own people merely on the basis of race and skin-colour. But the question is not merely one of human rights but of colonialism as well.”

“The regime is a remnant of the outdated colonial system. From the days of Mahatma Gandhi, who lived and worked in South Africa for some years, we have firmly opposed racial discrimination. When our own Government came to power under Jawaharlal Nehru, we enacted laws for greater equality in our own land and our first major international in the United Nations was a crusade against racial discrimination and apartheid. We share the deep agony of the black and coloured

people who suffer in South Africa. We share their faith in their ultimate victory. We are aware of the problems you have faced as their neighbour and well wisher. We realize the responsibilities of the Frontline States. These issues have been discussed between us again today. Zimbabwe is now free. So shall Namibia be. And, indeed, in the not too distant future, South Africa too will be free of oppression, opening the doors of opportunity to people of all races. I salute the gallant freedom fighters of South Africa, whose shining advocate Nelson Mandela is. Meanwhile, we hope that the attempts to destabilize you and other countries working so hard to solve their own problems will cease. India stands solidly with you. We applaud your courage and determination. We shall continue to support the process of bringing nationhood and freedom to Namibians.”

“Mozambique and India are members of the Nonaligned Movement. We share a common approach to problems of world peace. We realize that a new international order, whether political or economic, can endure only if based on equality and justice. As one of its earliest members, India has conscientiously carried its responsibilities within the Nonaligned Movement. In the coming years, we look forward to working closely with Mozambique in the Nonaligned Movement. In the coming years, we look forward to working closely with Mozambique in the Nonaligned Movement, which can and must make its influence felt in favour of disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, and the reduction of economic disparities.” (Banquet hosted by President Samora Machel. 1982: 374).

## Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and NAM

Mr. Rajiv Gandhi as Chairperson of NAM developed relations with the world leaders and emphasized on the collective political will to open North-South dialogue and strengthening South-South Cooperation. He took the issues of Namibia and South Africa seriously and raised at all the international platforms. He reaffirmed India’s position regarding Indian Ocean as Zone of peace that was embodied in the VII Summit Declaration. He has taken vocal position for the inalienable rights and self-determination of the people of Namibia. Mr. Gandhi on the eve of IX NAM Summit held in Belgrade in 1989 highlighted the issues of disarmament, South-South cooperation and liberation of South Africa.

He stressed to end the continued collaboration of some western nations in military and economic sectors with South Africa apartheid government and continued the policies of Mr.s. Gandhi as NAM leader (**K. Ramamurthy. 1985: 108-110**). Mr. Gandhi

was assassinated in December 1, 1989.

## Post 1990 NAM and India

Sh. V P Singh joined as Prime Minister in December 2, 1989 and continued till November 10, 1990 and supported NAM movement for the liberation of Southern Africa. Sh. Narasimha Rao came to power in June 1991 and affirmed the NAM

objectives. Mr. Rao spoke in Tokyo in June 1992 and said, “The pursuit of Non-aligned foreign policy is even more relevant today than ever before. Non-alignment basically consists of the espousal of the right of nations to independence and development, regardless of the block phenomenon. Whether there is one bloc or more at a given moment, the urge of a non-aligned country would continue to be to maintain its independence, to take decisions according to its rights, not tagging itself in advance to others (M S Rajan. 1994: 122). India took the forward position in the draft Declaration during the 10th NAM Summit at Jakarta in 1992 and looking forward for the independence of South Africa.

## Notes

- a) Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai (1891-1954) joined the I.C.S. in 1914; India’s Agent-General to the U.S. 1941-47; Secretary-General, Ministry of External Affairs, 1947-52; Governor of Bombay, 1952-54) and Mr. Deshmukh (R.M. Deshmukh (b.1892-1981); High Commissioner for India in South Africa, 1945-47; Prime Minister and Adviser to the Rajpramukh of Vindhya Pradesh, 1947-48; member, Rajya Sabha, 1952-58.
- b) See Selected Works (second series). Vol. 30:453.
- c) See Selected Works, (second series), Vol. 25: 431-433 and Vol. 26: 375.
- d) See Selected Works, (second series), Vol. 25: 423-426.

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# 9.6

## **The Role of the Organization of African Unity in the Liberation Struggle of Southern Africa**

**By Mohammed Omar Maundi**

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## Introduction

One of the major objectives of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) prescribed in its 1963 Charter was the total eradication of all forms of colonialism from Africa.<sup>1</sup> In the pursuit of this objective the OAU Member States solemnly affirmed and declared their adherence to the principle of absolute dedication to the total emancipation of the African territories which were still dependent. True to this commitment, one of the first decisions taken by the OAU leaders immediately following its establishment was to form the OAU Coordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa.

Established through a resolution adopted by the First Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the OAU, the Co-ordinating Committee, which latter on came to be known as *The Liberation Committee*, had a specific mandate to facilitate and co-ordinate the struggle by the African freedom fighters. This entailed, according to the resolution establishing the Liberation Committee, harmonizing the assistance and managing the Special Fund set up for that purpose.<sup>2</sup> In simple words, the Liberation Committee's major task was to help the African Liberation Movements to achieve the total liberation of Africa from colonialism and racial minority rule.

Thirty-one years later after its establishment, the Liberation Committee was formally dissolved on 15 August 1994 in Arusha, Tanzania, after successfully fulfilling its mandate. Its dissolution was not an indication of its failure but a demonstration of its accomplishment of its mandate. The Liberation Committee thus stood out to be one of the most successful organs of the OAU.

Within a timeframe of thirty-one years from 1963 to 1994 this Chapter undertakes an in-depth and comprehensive investigation on the OAU's contribution to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. The OAU's contribution is assessed through the work of the Liberation Committee. Although the Committee had a broader mandate covering the whole continent, for the purpose of this work, the Chapter focuses only on the Committee's work in Southern Africa. This is regardless of its active involvement in the independence of the Comoros, Djibouti and Seychelles in the Eastern African region and the liberation of Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde in Western Africa.

The significance of this Chapter lies on the fact that the Liberation Committee provided an effective continental framework through which Africa morally, politically, diplomatically and materially supported the liberation struggle in Africa in general and Southern Africa in particular.

Indeed, the continental framework was a significant complement to the contributions made by individual African countries. It was also an important entry point for other supporters outside Africa to channel their contributions to the liberation struggle.

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(1) The Organization of African Unity Charter, Article II.

(2) The Resolution Establishing the OAU Liberation Committee, Article II.

The assessment of the OAU's positive role in the liberation struggle in Southern Africa is conducted through multiple research instruments. They include a historic and analytical study of publications and documents on one side and oral interviews on the other. The research relied heavily on the OAU's Liberation Committee's archives as the most reliable source of secondary data.

As far as oral interviews were concerned the study focused mainly on African key personalities who provided the Liberation Committee's leadership as well as influential political, public and intellectual figures who, in one way or the other, were involved in or familiar with the work and activities of the Committee. The most important was Ambassador Hashim Mbita who was the third, the last and the longest serving Executive Secretary of the Liberation Committee. Equally important was Dr Salim Ahmed Salim who served as the OAU's Secretary General from 1989 to 2000.

Taking into consideration that the OAU's Liberation Committee had its headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, many Tanzanian prominent politicians, government functionaries, security agencies' senior officials, veteran journalists and academicians were a useful source of reliable data. Among these were the late Mzee Rashid Mfaume Kawawa, Hon. John Malecela, Hon. Cleopa Msuya, Hon. Kingunge Ngombale Mwiru, Hon. Joseph Warioba, Hon. Pius Msekwa, Hon. Ibrahim Kaduma, Mr Joseph Butiku, General Davis Mwamunyange, Professor Arnold Temu, the late Professor Haroub Othman, Professor Issa Shivji and Professor Isaria Kimambo.

The Chapter first deals with the definition of the *problem* that the Liberation Committee was tasked to deal with. It then looks at the Committee's organizational structure. This is followed by the section on the specific strategic and policy options employed by the Committee in fulfilling its mandate. It subsequently touches on the Committee's specific activities. It then focuses on the Committee's active involvement in the liberation struggles of Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. It concludes by looking at how the Liberation Committee was finally dissolved, focusing also on its specific achievements and the challenges it faced during its lifetime.

## The Problem

The Liberation Committee was established to deal mainly with the problem of colonialism and racial minority rule. In the context of Southern Africa the Liberation Committee was supposed to deal with the problems of the Portuguese colonialism in Angola and Mozambique; British colonialism and Ian Smith's racial minority rule in Zimbabwe; South Africa's colonialism in Namibia; and racial minority rule in South Africa under the obnoxious and infamous policy of apartheid. The problem then that the Liberation Committee had to deal with was how to assist the African peoples in these countries liberate themselves from colonialism and racial minority rule.

This was a serious problem due to the nature and complexity of the domination in these countries. At one level, these were settler economies built by the white minority who were not expected to go anywhere. They were part and parcel of those societies.

Portugal, for example, regarded Angola and Mozambique as her overseas provinces. Hence, permanent structures were built to guarantee whites comfort and dominance. The whites in South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia considered themselves as South Africans, Zimbabweans and Namibians. They had also created socio-economic structures that guaranteed their permanent existence and domination in those countries. This domination was protected by strong political, legal, economic and security arrangements that guaranteed whites supremacy over the black majority.

At another level, there were deliberate efforts by the minority racist regimes to beef up their numbers by attracting the immigration of more whites. Specific projects and programs were designed to make sure that this happened. Among these was the Cabora Bassa Project in Mozambique, which South Africa and Portugal hoped would have brought in one million white immigrants after its completion in 1974. The other was the Cunene River Dam Project in Angola, which was expected to attract over half a million white immigrants.<sup>3</sup>

One complex aspect of the racial domination in Southern Africa was the issue of networking among the racist regimes. An unholy alliance between Portugal, Rhodesia and the racist regime of South Africa was created with a sole purpose of perpetuating colonialism and oppression in Southern Africa.<sup>4</sup> Anchored on the principle of “good neighbourliness” the holy alliance was based on the issue of common interests.

It was mainly with South Africa that Portugal shared the “same values” which the two countries were determined to defend. The good neighbourliness was in keeping with the position taken by South Africa, which felt that such relations could exist between the two nations in spite of their different internal policies. While Portugal’s internal policy favoured assimilation, this was diametrically opposed to that of South Africa that favoured separate development.<sup>5</sup>

The racist regimes cooperated in economic and security arrangements in order to protect their common interests. With the support of some of the Western developed countries, particularly the United Kingdom and the United States of America, they built strong economies and military forces to face up to any challenges from within and without that threatened their regimes.

As a cover up and a convenient justification for their country’s continued presence in Africa as a colonial power, the Portuguese worked up the fear of the settler minority in Southern Africa. They propagated that if Portugal was ousted from Africa, the minority settlers in Zimbabwe and South Africa would be threatened and that would mean the end of white rule in Southern Africa.

At another level, there was a deliberate effort on the part of the racist regimes to turn the armed struggle in Southern Africa into a Cold War context. They were

(3) Report of the Administrative Secretary General on Apartheid and Racial Discrimination, CM281 of 1969, p.15.

(4) Progress Report on the Developments in the Situation of Territories under Colonial and Racist Domination, Addis Ababa, February 1969, p.19.

(5) Report of the Secretary General on Territories under Portuguese, French and Spanish Domination, CM/283 of 13th Session, August 1969, p.14.

able to impress upon the Western powers to adopt the attitude that the Southern African region was becoming an arena of East-West confrontation. Hence, rather than taking the confrontation in Southern Africa as a confrontation between those who supported the liberation struggle and those who opposed it, it was turned into a confrontation between those who were purportedly considered as fighting in order to establish Marxist regimes in Southern Africa and those who were opposing them.

This was the situation that the freedom fighters and the Liberation Committee were faced with in their efforts to end colonialism and racist minority rule in Southern Africa.

## **Organizational Structure of the Liberation Committee**

At its inception in 1963 the Liberation Committee was constituted by nine members. These were Algeria, Ethiopia, Guinea, Congo Kinshasa (DRC), Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania (then Tanganyika), Egypt and Uganda. Its membership grew as many African countries were being liberated through the support of the continental organization and the struggle against colonialism intensified. Zambia joined the Liberation Committee immediately after its independence in 1964. Cameroon, Ghana, Liberia, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Somalia and Congo Brazzaville joined the Committee later on.

Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique joined the Committee immediately after their liberation in 1973 and 1975 respectively. So from 1963 to 1976 the membership to the Liberation Committee grew from nine to twenty one. The number went up to twenty-two following the liberation of Zimbabwe in 1980. It went back to twenty-one following the withdrawal of Morocco in 1985 due to the admittance of the Sahrawi Republic to the OAU. Finally, the Committee gained its maximum membership of twenty-two following the liberation of Namibia in 1990.

There were a number of criteria for an OAU Member State to join the Liberation Committee. The first was on the basis of one of the OAU cardinal principles of geographical distribution. When it came to the issue of sharing of responsibilities the rationale of this principle was hinged on yet another principle of burden-sharing. So in terms of geographical distribution the northern region was represented by Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco (before it withdrew its OAU membership) and Mauritania.

The western region was represented by Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Liberia. The central region was represented by Cameroon, Congo Kinshasa (DRC) and Congo Brazzaville while the eastern region was represented by Tanzania, Uganda, Somalia, Ethiopia and the Seychelles. The southern region was represented by Angola, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Namibia.

Another criterion to the membership of the Liberation Committee was the principle of volunteerism. This was essentially based on the willingness of a member to serve. The willingness to serve was a function of a number of factors. One was



the commitment to the liberation struggle. Another criterion was proximity to the arena of the armed struggle. This simply meant the countries bordering those under white domination. The other was the issue of being ready to participate effectively. This entailed the attending of all the meetings of the Liberation Committee and participating in other important activities of the Committee. These included serving in its sub-structure organs and in its special missions. However, the volunteering to serve in the Liberation Committee was subject to acceptance by the other OAU members. This was important because the general membership of the OAU knew exactly who was committed to the cause of the liberation struggle.

The principle of volunteerism explains why a country like Botswana, which was so much committed to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa and a neighbour to South Africa, Zimbabwe and Namibia, was never a member of the Liberation Committee. The demonstration of its commitment was on her active involvement in the work of the Frontline States.

The other criterion of membership to the Liberation Committee was to include all the countries that got their independence through the armed struggle. These were Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Namibia. These members brought in not only their practical experience but they had a duty to join those who sacrificed a lot to their independence in assisting those who were still languishing under white domination.

The Liberation Committee had its headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. Branch offices were later on opened at Conakry, Guinea; Lusaka, Zambia; Luanda, Angola; and in Maputo, Mozambique. The criterion for opening these offices was to bring the Committee's services closer to the theatre of operation of the armed struggle. The Conakry office assisted the freedom fighters in Guinea-Bissau while those in Lusaka, Luanda and Maputo catered for the Southern African countries.

Structurally, the Liberation Committee was initially composed of three permanent committees. These were the Standing Committee on Administration, Information and General Policy; the Standing Committee on Defence; and the Standing Committee on Finance. Each of the three permanent committees was supposed to deal with the specific issues involved in its name. Later on, as the liberation struggle progressed the three committees were merged into two: the Standing Committee on General Policy, Information and Defence; and the Standing Committee on Administration and Finance.

Throughout its life span the Liberation Committee formed other ad-hoc bodies as and when it was necessary. These were bodies created to deal with specific problems, among which were the various ad-hoc committees that were formed to deal with the problem of unity among the liberation movements within one country, and the problem of leadership within the Liberation Movements. An example of a committee to address the problem of unity among the Liberation Movements was the Sub-Committee on the Unity of National Liberation Movements of South Africa (ANC

and PAC).<sup>6</sup> The Reconciliation Committee on the PAC Leadership was an example of an ad-hoc committee formed to address the problem of leadership within the Liberation Movements.<sup>7</sup>

Besides the standing and the ad-hoc committees another organizational structure of the Liberation Committee was the Special Fund. This was the financing agency of the Committee. The Fund got its resources from the assessed contribution by the OAU Member States and voluntary contribution by Member States and supporters of the liberation struggle both from within and outside Africa.

### **The Frontline States and the Conference of Heads of State and Government of Eastern and Central African States**

Apart from these organizational structures there were other informal structures which constituted the Liberation Committee's support-system. Among these the most effective were the Frontline States and the Conference of Heads of State and Government of Eastern and Central African States. The Frontline States was a very important informal group of Southern African leaders. Chaired first by the first President of Tanzania, Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere, it also included President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia; President Sir Seretse Khama of Botswana; President Samora Machel of Mozambique (then President Joachim Chissano when Machel died in October 1986) and later on joined by President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe in 1980. These distinguished African statesmen led the Frontline States with vision, courage and remarkable distinction. They made the fight against colonialism and apartheid one of their top priorities.

The Frontline States was formed as an advisory body which worked hand in glove with the OAU. Its major task was to mobilize and provide political support for the liberation of Southern Africa within and outside the continent. This group was so influential that the Western countries could not initiate anything in terms of finding a solution to the Southern African political problem without consulting the Frontline States leaders.<sup>8</sup> The Frontline States' meetings were frequent but not regular. They were called when there were burning issues to be tackled.

Due to the frequency and urgency of the Frontline States' meetings one senior official who was closely associated in preparing them characterized the Frontline States as a crisis management group:

(6) Report of the 30th Ordinary Session of the OAU Co-ordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa, Tripoli, February 1974, p.4.

(7) Report of the 31st Ordinary Session of the OAU Co-ordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa, Khartoum, July 1978, p.15.

(8) Interview with Joseph Butiku, former Private Assistant to President Julius Nyerere, Dar-es-Salaam, 4th June 2009.

The Frontline States was actually the guys who were in the operations room guiding the thoughts of those who were actually going to execute the war. Given that they were actually in the war zone themselves, they had to meet and find a way of managing these very grave crises which threatened the lives of millions of people in the region.<sup>9</sup>

While determined to assist the liberation struggle in Southern Africa, the Frontline States was also a collective regional mechanism for guaranteeing the national freedom and security of its individual Member States. Their collective action was a defensive move to prevent the Portuguese from attacking Tanzania and to prevent South Africa from attacking Zambia. It was a defensive strategy of making sure that the war was fought in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and in South Africa, by assisting the freedom fighters in those countries.

The Conference of Heads of State and Government of Eastern and Central African States was another useful support-system to the Liberation Committee. Unlike the

Frontline States, which was constituted by very few countries, the Conference of Heads of State and Government of Eastern and Central African States was a larger group of fourteen Member States. It included Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia from East Africa; Burundi, Rwanda, Central African Republic,

Chad, the DRC and Congo from Central Africa; and Zambia and Malawi from Southern Africa. The Conference aimed at expanding the scope of supporting the liberation struggle in Southern Africa beyond the Frontline States. Its wider membership was useful to garner more support for the liberation struggle in Southern Africa both within Africa and at the international level. Like the Frontline States, the group held a series of consultative meetings. The most important was its 5th Summit held in Lusaka, Zambia from 14 -16 April 1969. One of the most useful

outcome of this Summit was the adoption of the *Lusaka Manifesto on Southern Africa* which, subsequently, ended up being one Africa's instrumental philosophical tools that guided the work of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa.

The Conference decided to request the Administrative Secretary General of the OAU to communicate the text of the Manifesto to all Heads of State and Government of the OAU and put an item dealing with the Manifesto on the agenda of the 6th Session of the Assembly. At the 6th Session of the OAU Assembly held in Mogadishu, Somalia in 1969, the African leaders adopted the Lusaka Manifesto. The leaders of independent Africa intended, through the Manifesto, to dispel any misunderstanding by the international community of Africa's reasons for its united opposition to the racist policies of the governments of Southern Africa.

The Manifesto was presented to the United Nations at the 24th Session of the General Assembly by President Ahmad Ahidjo of Cameroon as the Chairman of the OAU. After its discussion and debate it was adopted and made a UN document.

(9) Mark Chona, Special Assistant to President Kenneth Kaunda, from *Interfacing with Personal Assistants to Former Presidents of the Frontline States*. Unpublished, Dar-es-Salaam, 4-5 June 2007, p.12.

The Manifesto reiterated Africa's acceptance of the belief that all men were equal and had equal rights to human dignity and respect regardless of colour, race, religion and gender. It did not accept that any individual or group had any right to govern any other group of sane adults without their consent. It was on the basis of this commitment to human equality and human dignity, not on the basis of achieved perfection, that Africa took its stand of hostility towards the colonialism and racial discrimination which was being practiced in Southern Africa. It was on the basis of this commitment to those universal principles that Africa appealed to other members of the human race for support.<sup>10</sup>

The last aspect of the organizational structure of the Liberation Committee was its statutory meetings. The Committee met twice a year at Ministerial level, usually represented by the Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs. The first meeting took place usually in February before the OAU budgetary sessions of the Council of Ministers to which the Liberation Committee was supposed to present its report for the Ministers' endorsement. The second took place usually in May close to the OAU Summit. The meetings played the supervisory role for the Liberation Committee. They deliberated on the reports of the Executive Secretary and those of the Standing Committees as well as those of the ad-hoc committees. The meetings were responsible for recommending the Liberation Committee's budget proposals to the Council of Ministers and any other specific recommendations emanating from the Liberation Committee's structure.

The leadership of the Liberation Committee was divided between the political and administrative functions. Politically, the leadership of the Liberation Committee was constituted by a Bureau which was formed by a Chairman, First and Second Vice-Chairman and a Rapporteur. The chairman was traditionally from the country that was hosting a particular session. As far as the administrative function was concerned, the Liberation Committee was headed by the Executive Secretary. There were two Assistant Executive Secretaries; one in charge of General Policy, Information and Defence and the other in charge of Administration and Finance.

Lastly, there were Liaison Officers in charge of the Liberation Committee's Sub-Offices in Conakry, Lusaka, Maputo and Luanda. Throughout its life span the Liberation Committee had three Executive Secretaries, all from Tanzania. The first was Ambassador Sebastian Chale who served from 1963 to 1965. He was succeeded by Ambassador George Magombe who served until 1972. And then Ambassador Hashim Mbita became the third, the last and the longest serving Executive Secretary of the Liberation Committee. He served from 1972 to 1994 when the Liberation Committee was formally dissolved.

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(10) The Lusaka Manifesto, p.2.

## The OAU Strategy During the Liberation Struggle in Southern Africa

It was clear from the beginning that the OAU adopted a two-pronged approach towards the total liberation of Africa. This was through peaceful means and through the armed struggle. For the liquidation of all forms of colonial oppression Africa was pragmatically supposed to pursue the route of dialogue to negotiate the independence of African countries which were under foreign domination. At the same time, the OAU was pretty aware that due to the nature and complexity of some of the colonial and racist minority rule situations, it was not possible to rectify them purely through negotiation alone.

Hence, the OAU committed itself to supporting an armed struggle whenever it was inevitable. This was unambiguous in the Resolution Establishing the OAU Liberation Committee. Referring specifically to one of such complex colonial situations, the resolution categorically stated thus:

Reaffirms its support of African nationalists of Southern Rhodesia and solemnly declares that if powers in Southern Rhodesia were to be usurped by a racial white minority government, State Members of the OAU would lend their effective moral and practical support to any legitimate measures which the African nationalist leaders may devise (emphasis mine) for the purpose of recovering such power and restoring it to the African majority.<sup>11</sup>

It is obvious that in terms of choice the OAU preferred dialogue. But knowing that negotiation would not have facilitated freedom in all the circumstances, support to the armed struggle was the alternative strategy. This choice was made while fully aware that the armed struggle would undoubtedly be bitter and difficult. But given the circumstances, there was no other choice. The Lusaka Manifesto was a living testimony of free Africa's desire to avoid bloodshed wherever and whenever possible:

We have always preferred and we still prefer, to achieve African liberation without physical violence. We would prefer to negotiate rather than destroy, to talk rather than kill. We do not advocate violence; we advocate an end to the violence against human dignity which is now being perpetrated by the oppressors of Africa. If peaceful progress to emancipate were possible, in the future, we would urge our brothers in the resistance movements to use peaceful methods of struggle even at the cost of some compromise on the timing of change.<sup>12</sup>

It is clear from the above quotation that strategically, the use of force for Africa was conditional. It was applied mainly when the doors for dialogue were closed. Even then, Africa did not regard the use of arms as an end in itself but a means through which it could force the adversary to the negotiating table. This approach came out

(11) Resolution Adopted by the First Assembly of Heads of State and Government Establishing the OAU Liberation Committee. Addis Ababa, May 1963, para 4.

(12) The Lusaka Manifesto, p.6.

of the realization that the freedom fighters could not achieve outright victory from the battle field.

The intention was to challenge the enemy militarily in order to force it to change its perception about the conflict's final outcome, that is, from a zero-sum to a win-win mind-set. It was a way to force the racist regimes to realize that it would be too costly to pursue a unilateral solution and to be aware of the importance of a joint-solution alternative. It was a means of forcing the racist minority regimes into a conciliatory mentality where they would come to be convinced that the solution was to be found with, not against, the adversary and were prepared to give a little in order to get something, to settle for an attainable second-best rather than hold out for an unattainable victory.

## **The Liberation Committee's Special Responsibilities and Activities**

The specific responsibilities and activities of the Liberation Committee could be divided between those of the Liberation Committee as a political body and those of the Executive Secretariat as an administrative body. Functionally, the Liberation Committee as a political organ was responsible for policy issues. Through its statutory meetings it was supposed to receive reports from the standing committees and from the Executive Secretariat. It was required to deliberate on these reports and submit specific recommendations to the OAU Council of Ministers. The specific recommendations were on policy, budgetary matters and the assessment and evaluation of the work of the Liberation Movements.

As such, the Committee played both advisory and supervisory roles. At the same time, the Liberation Committee played a co-ordinating function at the international level. This entailed presenting the OAU position on issues of liberation struggle to the international fora like the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Commonwealth. It was also involved in the function of soliciting material and financial assistance from the socialist countries, the Non-Aligned countries, the Nordic countries and from anti-apartheid movements in different parts of the world.

Operating within its larger task of facilitating and co-ordinating the liberation struggle by the African freedom fighters, the Liberation Committee's overall activity was to mobilize local and international moral, political, diplomatic and material support for the liberation struggle. It was a result of this mobilization that many countries provided rear bases, training and other forms of assistance to the Liberation Movements.

Hence, the Liberation Committee gave essential backing to the African peoples' struggles against colonialism, racial rule and against apartheid. In military terms, the Liberation Committee constituted a rear base in support of the frontline fighters.

As the administrative body, the Executive Secretariat was the direct link between the Liberation Committee and the Liberation Movements. The former President of

Namibia, Sam Nujoma, characterized the work of the Executive Secretariat of the Liberation Committee as the lifeblood of the African National Liberation Movements by rendering material and financial assistance to these organizations.<sup>13</sup> The Executive Secretariat was the implementing body of all the decisions made by the Liberation Committee, by the Council of Ministers and by the OAU Summit on all matters related to the liberation struggle.

Apart from operating the Special Fund, which was the financial organ of the Liberation Committee, the Executive Secretariat was responsible for preparing the Liberation Committee's draft reports, draft budget proposals as well as preparing the statutory meetings. Taking into consideration that the military training centres were established in independent African countries, the Executive Secretariat was responsible for the logistical negotiations of all that was required for setting up such centres. It was also responsible for the disbursement and overseeing the utility of the financial and material resources allocated for such centres.

Considering that the military training centres set up by the Liberation Committee itself were limited, the Executive Secretariat was also responsible in arranging the training of some freedom fighters in the training facilities of the Member States. Apart from the military training, the Executive Secretariat was also responsible for facilitating the training of the nationals of the countries under domination in non-military professions. This was intended to create a well-trained cadre that would man the administrative and other sectors after the liberation. The Executive Secretariat was therefore responsible for placing the nationals of the dominated countries into a number of training institutions of various countries inside and outside Africa.

The Executive Secretariat was also responsible for arranging transit facilities for the freedom fighters. This was a result of the problem encountered by the freedom fighters in entering or transiting through some independent African states in order to liberate their homelands. The Executive Secretariat had therefore to request all countries bordering on dependent countries to allow the freedom fighters to enter or transit through their territories in order to intensify their struggles.

The Executive Secretariat was also responsible in arranging travel documents for the freedom fighters and for those who were going for the non-military training. The Executive Secretariat was responsible for negotiating with the OAU Member States to issue travel documents to freedom fighters and the others to enable them to travel to places where they were to receive their training.

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(13) Statement by H.E. Dr Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, Arusha, Tanzania, 15 August 1994 during the dissolution of the Liberation Committee.

## The Liberation Committee's Active Involvement in the Liberation Struggle of Specific Southern African Countries

As a continental organ the Liberation Committee played different roles in various African countries which were still under colonialism and racist minority rule. This section sets to look critically at the active involvement of the Liberation Committee in the liberation struggle of Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa.

### Angola

The Angolan people started to organize themselves against Portuguese colonialism under the Union of the People of Angola (UPA) in 1954. This was followed by the formation of other political organizations like the Democratic Party of Angola (PDA) and the People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). The formation of these political parties coincided with the formation of similar political movements in other African countries which were under the yoke of foreign domination. Their common characteristic was being nationalistic political movements, with an objective of mobilizing the African people under colonialism to struggle for their freedom. These political parties were established within the currency of the wave of Pan-Africanism, which was then sweeping across the continent.

#### **FNLA**

For Angola the period between 1954 and 1961 was a period of political consolidation. The UPA and the PDA merged on 27 March 1962 to form the Angola National Liberation Front (FNLA). The Angolan Revolutionary Government in Exile (GRAE) was formed in April 1962 with its headquarters Congo Kinshasa. GRAE became the executive arm of the FNLA. GRAE had external offices in Algiers, Cairo, Tunis and New York. With Mr Holden Roberto as its president, GRAE's other cabinet members included Mr Emmanuel Kounzika as the Vice President; Rosario Neto, in charge of information; Ferdinand Ndombele, in charge of social affairs; and Jonny Eduardo, in charge of external affairs.

In the same month of April 1962 GRAE launched an armed struggle with an objective of freeing the Angolan people from the Portuguese colonialism.<sup>14</sup>

#### **MPLA**

The MPLA was established on 10 December 1956 at Luanda as an amalgamation of several underground political organizations at the time. Its major objective was to form one large united popular liberation movement for the whole of Angola. Its headquarters was initially in Congo Kinshasa with branch offices in Algiers, Cairo,

(14) Report of the Committee of Seven on the Mandate, composition and Structure of the Coordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa, June 1971, p.35-40.



Lusaka and Dar-es-Salaam. Dr Agostinho Neto was its president. The other leaders included Daniel Chipenda, Henrique Carriera, Lucio Lara and Floribert Maimoma.<sup>15</sup>

From the beginning there were fundamental differences between the FNLA and the MPLA in ideological, political and organizational terms. The FNLA was typically a nationalist party in the liberal sense that aimed at waging a conventional anti-colonialism struggle with the intention of gaining independence for Angola. The formation of a government in exile was an expression of the independence that would finally be actualized once Portuguese colonialism came to an end. The government in exile had all the conventional structures including a cabinet and an army. Its military was organized on the lines of the structures of a conventional army of an independent state.

The MPLA, on the other hand, was ideologically a Marxist organization with an objective of uniting all Angola in order to wage a liberation struggle that would lead not only to eradicate Portuguese colonialism but also to establish a socialist society free of all forms of exploitation. Therefore, the MPLA was a revolutionary movement without formal government structures. Hence, while the FNLA's military was organized on the lines of a military structure of an independent state, that of the MPLA was more oriented to guerrilla warfare.

The two movements were supposed to fight the same enemy: the Portuguese colonialism. Instead of cooperating for such an arduous task, they ended up being competitors for such a struggle. Instead of being comrades in arms they turned out to be enemies in the struggle.

The ideological, political and organizational differences between the FNLA and MPLA, to a large extent contributed to the two movements' acrimonious relationship. The personality differences between the leaders of the two movements and their ethnic and educational as well as political orientations were an added source of misunderstanding between the two movements. This was exacerbated by the fact that initially, all the two movements were headquartered in the same capital of Kinshasa and their military forces were operating on the same area of northern Angola. However, in 1963 the MPLA headquarters were moved to Congo Brazzaville after the movement was expelled from Congo Kinshasa.<sup>16</sup>

The first active involvement of the Liberation Committee in the liberation struggle of Angola took the form of the official recognition of the two Liberation Movements, the FNLA and the MPLA. This official recognition was crucial for the movements to receive assistance from the OAU organ. The official recognition was accompanied by the extension of financial and material assistance to both movements. For example, out of a total budget of UK Pounds 800,000 of the Liberation Committee's budget of the Special Fund for the fiscal year 1967/68, a total of Pounds 90,000 was allocated to

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(15) Ibid, p.44-46.

(16) Report of the Neutral Military Commission on Angola 1-17 June 1967 p.5.

the two movements. Pounds 75,000 was allocated for the provision of material and Pounds 15,000 was intended to cover their administrative activities.<sup>17</sup>

Secondly, the Liberation Committee performed all the administrative functions on behalf of the two movements which were related to the training of its freedom fighters; training of their non-combatants; provision of traveling documents; and arranging for transit visas.

Thirdly, and the most challenging involvement of the Liberation Committee in the liberation struggle of Angola was the task of reconciling the two movements and to impress upon them to form a united front. This was not an easy matter given the serious acrimony between the two Liberation Movements.

The OAU took up the task of reconciling the two Liberation Movements as early as in 1964 during the OAU's First Ordinary Summit held in Cairo in July 1964. For this task the Summit formed a Committee of Three composed of Egypt, Ghana and Congo Brazzaville with a mandate to reconcile the two movements and move them towards the direction of forming a united front. This was a Herculean task for the Committee of Three given the fact that at that moment GRAE, for various reasons, was not prepared to enter into any serious discussions with the MPLA on the question of creating a united front.

For starters, GRAE was of the opinion that the problem of misunderstanding between itself and the MPLA would not have arisen had the OAU not given military assistance to the MPLA. The leadership of GRAE was also convinced that the MPLA would have died a natural death at one time or another.

The MPLA on the other hand, was prepared to create a common united front with GRAE provided the condition for it was first made favourable. The MPLA maintained that once GRAE released its freedom fighters it had imprisoned, the necessary atmosphere would have been created for the formation of a united front. The MPLA also believed that as long as GRAE continued imprisoning MPLA freedom fighters, its popularity would fade away more and more among Angolans.

Under this unfavourable environment, the Committee of Three set itself to work. After a series of sessions, the Committee succeeded in bringing the two Liberation Movements to the negotiating table during its 5th meeting in Cairo held from 10-15

October 1966.<sup>18</sup> The Committee discussed the best means of achieving the objective set by the OAU's First Ordinary Summit. It was decided that the essential approach was to open a new phase by studying the best means of achieving the objective for which the meeting was convened, which was the reconciliation of the two movements. The Committee of Three therefore requested the representatives of the two movements to submit their specific proposals. A total of nine proposals were submitted, five from the MPLA and four from GRAE. In the end a draft agreement was drawn and presented to the parties for their consideration. After both parties had

(17) Report of the OAU Co-ordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa to the Council of Ministers at its 8th Session, Addis Ababa, February 1967.

(18) Report of the Committee of Three on the Reconciliation of MPLA and GRAE, Cairo, October 1966.

expressed their complete satisfaction and agreed to implement immediately and in full the provisions of the agreement, in a spirit that would conform with the interests of the Angolan people for the liberation of their country from the Portuguese colonialism, the representatives of GRAE and the MPLA signed the agreement in the presence of the Committee of Three on 15 October 1966.<sup>19</sup>

Among the specific recommendations of the Committee, which formed part of the agreement signed by the two movements, one was the setting up of a Neutral Military Commission which, in cooperation with the OAU Liberation Committee, would re-assess the military situation in Angola and lay down the correct basis for the military assistance to be provided in future, in order to intensify the struggle against the Portuguese and to ensure a successful liberation of the territory.

This recommendation was immediately implemented. The Neutral Military Commission was set up with the membership of Cameroon, Kenya, Senegal and Ethiopia.<sup>20</sup> A part from its mandate of re-assessing the military situation in Angola and lay down the correct basis for the military assistance to be provided in future in order to intensify the struggle against the Portuguese, the Commission was also supposed to act as a Special Arbitration, Mediation and Conciliation Commission in the event of outbreak of operational hostilities between the two movements.

The Neutral Military Commission took a number of initiatives to try to implement the Cairo agreement. Apart from holding meetings with the two movements, it also visited Burundi, Congo Kinshasa, Congo Brazzaville and Zambia.<sup>21</sup> Apart from holding discussions with the representatives of GRAE and the MPLA it also visited centres of operations of the Liberation Movements.

Regardless of all these efforts the Cairo agreement was never implemented and the Angola nationalists continued to deploy part of their energies in fighting each other, instead of the real enemy. In the report of its June 1967 meeting, the Neutral Military Commission was of the opinion that the unification of GRAE and the MPLA at that time was unlikely to be realized. By the beginning of 1968 the Liberation Committee was faced by two unfortunate scenarios as far as the liberation struggle in Angola was concerned.

On one scenario the Liberation Committee did not succeed in bringing the two movements into a united front. On the other, only the MPLA and not the FNLA was relatively actively involved in the liberation struggle inside Angola.

This scenario forced the Liberation Committee to form a Military Commission to assess the level of the military activities of the FNLA. After a thorough examination of the report submitted by the Military Commission, the Standing Committee on Defence mandated the Executive Secretary to send a letter to the president of the FNLA bringing to his attention the weaknesses of his movement. The letter was supposed to include, one: the inefficiency of the military action of the movement; two:

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(19) Ibid. p.13.

(20) The Neutral Military Commission on Angola Working Paper 1967, p.11.

(21) Report of the Neutral Military Commission on Angola, June 1967, p.1.

the hopes of the Committee that the FNLA would transfer its military headquarters into Angola as soon as possible; and three: a request to the FNLA to recruit two hundred freedom fighters in order to send them to the training centre in West Africa for military training.<sup>22</sup>

Throughout the year 1968 the FNLA neither improved on its inefficiency nor addressed the issues of moving its headquarters to Angola. It also failed to recruit the two hundred freedom fighters for military training. This situation forced the OAU's 5th Summit to withdraw the status of government-in-exile from GRAE.

All these actions, first the letter from the Executive Secretary to its president and then the withdrawal of its status of a government-in-exile by the OAU Summit, were interpreted by the FNLA as an interference not only in its internal matters but also in the liberation process in Angola. This negative interpretation triggered a hostile response from Holden Roberto, the president of the FNLA. Responding to an interview by a Tunisian newspaper, L'ACTION of 2nd July 1969, Mr Roberto scornfully referred to the Liberation Committee as an ineffective organization which should be scrapped forthwith. Due to its sensitivity, the interview is quoted hereby at length:

Journalist: What about your relations with African governments?

Mr Roberto: We have excellent relations with reliable governments who earnestly work for the liberation of Africa. However, as for the governments who indulge in criticism or believe that they have to guide our future, and –fortunately– these are few, we just plainly ignore them.

Journalist: Has there been any change in the attitude of the Liberation Committee set up by the OAU namely the Co-ordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa?

Mr Roberto: The one known as the Liberation Committee? Obviously, it is a failure. Since 1963 it has done no good but only harm. It should not continue to exist. The sooner the better it must disappear. We should have the courage to say so and even to demand it. This Committee is a hindrance to the cause of Angola. Up to now, it intervenes where it should not, and consequently, its intervention is harmful. This notorious Committee takes into account ideological considerations which have nothing to do with our Liberation Movement.<sup>23</sup>

This interview raised serious concerns within the Liberation Committee and within the OAU. The Liberation Committee viewed Mr Roberto's statement not only as inimical to the liberation struggle but also designed to bring into disrepute and ridicule the collective efforts of all Member States of the OAU in their task of seeking to eradicate all forms of colonialism, racialism and imperialist influence from the African continent. The Liberation Committee also considered Mr Roberto's statement as a portrayal of his absolute lack of confidence in the work which the

(22) Report of the Liberation Committee to the 12th Council of Ministers, 17 February 1969, p.3.

(23) Tunisian newspaper L'ACTION of 2nd July 1969 quoted as Annex iv of the Report of the Liberation Committee to the 13th Council of Ministers, Addis Ababa, August 1969, p.1-2.

Liberation Committee had set about to carry out and constituted a negation of the basic principles and objectives of the OAU.

During its 15th session held in Dakar, Senegal, in July 1969, the Liberation Committee noted with regret the persistent un-cooperative attitude manifestly displayed by the FNLA towards the Committee as a result of which the assistance rendered to the movement had been frustrated. The Committee took the opportunity to reject and condemn in the strongest terms, the allegations contained in the statement of Mr Roberto. According to the Committee, the allegations constituted a gross insult and willful act of disrespect not only to the Liberation Committee but also to the highest organ of the OAU, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government that set up the Committee.<sup>24</sup>

The Liberation Committee, therefore, recommended the following to the Council of Ministers: that first, it should reaffirm to the Assembly the recommendation adopted at the Committee's 12th Session concerning the FNLA and request the Assembly to withdraw immediately the status of the government-in-exile from the FNLA.

Secondly, that the assistance accorded to the FNLA should be suspended until the leadership of FNLA recognized its responsibility to the OAU and to the people of Angola. The Committee went on to recognize the positive results the MPLA was gaining in the liberation struggle and on the basis of the positive report from the Military Commission which had visited Angola, the Committee recommended that the assistance accorded to the MPLA be increased.<sup>25</sup>

Mr Holden Roberto's statement infuriated the Liberation Committee, the OAU and the individual Member States. In his speech during the 15th session in Dakar, the out-going Chairman of the Liberation Committee, Hon. Stephen Mhando, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Tanzania had strong words in response to Mr Roberto's suggestion that the Liberation Committee should be scrapped:

It has been feverishly suggested from certain quarters that we should wind up the Co-ordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa. The suggestion is, regrettably, not qualified with an alternative that would indicate serious and positive involvement in the liberation of Africa. We reject the suggestion as irrelevant and ridiculous.<sup>26</sup>

Putting the position of Tanzania clearly, the Minister had this to say:

Tanzania would not stand in the way of any sister country that feels that the headquarters of the Liberation Committee should be in her capital- and not in Dar-es-Salaam- and that the training camps should be moved from Tanzania to her territory. Tanzania will not oppose any move by this meeting to declare the Liberation Committee dead and buried in Dakar- although we know that its soul will not rest in peace. Tanzania would, however, as a matter of principle, continue to help the movement for the emancipation

(24) Report of the 15th Session of the Co-ordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa, Dakar, July 1969, p.3.

(25) Ibid. p.4.

(26) Speech by the out-going Chairman of the Liberation Committee Hon. Stephen Mhando, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Republic of Tanzania, Dakar, July 1969, p.4.

of Africa in other ways. The Liberation Committee can only be rendered redundant once there are no more people in bondage and in need of liberation from the yoke of imperialism and oppression on this continent.<sup>27</sup>

Addressing Mr Roberto's accusation that there were few governments which were indulging in criticism or believed that they had to guide his movement, to which he suggested that these governments should be ignored, Minister Mhando's response was first to expose the un-cooperative character of the FNLA:

It needs no military pundit to realize that in certain areas of our fight, much more would be achieved if the two or more apparently irreconcilable groups forgot their so-called ideological differences and teamed up together to form a common front. The Liberation Committee, since its inception has done all it could to bring together into a united front some of these groups. I regret to say that so far the Committee has not succeeded. Perhaps what you do not know is the fact that certain representatives of some of these movements go out of their way to insult representatives of independent African governments who try to unite these groups in the larger interest of Africa.<sup>28</sup>

Mr Mhando was emphatic in condemning Mr Roberto's attitude and in expressing Tanzania's strong opposition to such behaviour:

The proper place for these disillusioned gentlemen to talk tough is in Salisbury and not in Dar-es-Salaam. The government of Tanzania will not tolerate such an arrogant and highly irresponsible attitude towards its representatives, and that any such further manifestations will be dealt with by my government in the manner they deserve. At this hour of Africa's need, Africa's freedom fighters need to intensify their efforts to liberate our motherland. They must not sit down in comfort in the capitals of free Africa, and other men to pay the supreme sacrifice, and then have the impudence and the insolence to insult the governments which make possible the struggle in which some of these so-called leaders are unwilling to play a full and physical part.<sup>29</sup>

It was obvious that from 1966 to 1969 the Liberation Committee's efforts to support the liberation struggle in Angola were more directed towards reconciling the two national Liberation Movements than in assisting them to fight against the Portuguese. If anything, it was the armed struggle that suffered. Although freedom fighters had opened new fronts in the north and east of the country, there had not been many great military successes.<sup>30</sup>

It was in the first quarter of 1970s that the MPLA increased its military activities inside Angola. Towards the end of 1971, for example, the MPLA launched a series of military operations that prevented the Portuguese armed forces from launching important offensive on any of the five military fronts on which the MPLA operated. One of the important developments in the MPLA's struggle at this time was the establishment of a new military front in the south western areas of Angola. This

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(27) Ibid. p.5.

(28) Ibid. p.6.

(29) Ibid. p.7.

(30) Report of the Administrative Secretary-General on the Development of the Situation in the Territories Under Colonial and Racist Domination, Addis Ababa, 27 February 1970. p.23.

new military front bore significant strategic importance as it threatened the South African and Portuguese scheme of Cunene which involved the construction of 28 hydroelectric projects on the Cunene River.

In the meantime, no significant military operations were carried out by the FNLA. The FNLA stopped even in participating in the Liberation Committee's sessions. For example, it did not participate in the 19th Session of the Liberation Committee held in Benghazi, Libya on 12-19 January 1972. Hence, the FNLA did not submit its report on its activities at the meeting. At the 20th session, which took place in Kampala, Uganda on 15-22 May 1972; a representative of the FNLA appeared before the Liberation Committee and submitted a report stating that the FNLA was operating on three fronts and that the main objectives of his movement was to destroy coffee plantations and to paralyze the mining industry in the areas where the FNLA was operating.

Since this report was not submitted in time for consideration by the Standing Committee on Defence, the Liberation Committee was unable to discuss it in order to assess the level of the struggle carried out by the FNLA and consequently to sensitize the needs and requests submitted. The question of the lack of cooperation with the Liberation Committee on the part of the FNLA was raised and after taking note of the statements of the representative of this movement, the Liberation Committee requested the FNLA to endeavour to submit its reports and needs well in advance and to show more cooperation in the interests of the struggle in Angola, in future.<sup>31</sup>

At the same time, the issue of forming a united front between the MPLA and FNLA still haunted both the Liberation Committee and the two movements. In 14th March 1972 the President of the MPLA, Agostinho Neto, wrote to Holden Roberto, President of the FNLA on this issue proposing that the FNLA should clearly make known its attitude towards unity with the MPLA; that all hostilities between the two organizations or against the militants of either party, regardless of their magnitude must come to an end; and that a joint MPLA/FNLA committee be formed immediately under the auspices of the OAU to work out fields of political and military cooperation.<sup>32</sup>

During its 20th session, the Liberation Committee discussed the initiative taken by Dr Agostinho Neto and directed the Executive Secretary to submit to the next session of the Liberation Committee a comprehensive report on the question of unity between the MPLA and the FNLA as well as on further developments in connection with the MPLA initiative. Following the Liberation Committee' efforts, a meeting between the leaders of the MPLA and the FNLA took place in Congo Brazzaville in June 1972. The meeting was organized under the auspices of Presidents Mobutu of Zaire and Marien Nguabi of Congo. At that meeting the leaders of the two movements agreed on the necessity of unity to confront the Portuguese enemy with a united political and military front.

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(31) Ibid. p.7.

(32) Ibid. p.8.

The 9th Session of the OAU Summit in Rabat on 12-15 June 1972 congratulated the leaders of the two movements and decided that the OAU Presidential Conciliation Commission, consisting of Tanzania, Zambia, Congo and Zaire, created by the 8th Summit, be allowed to continue with its mission until all aspects of conciliation between the MPLA and FNLA were settled satisfactorily.

In conformity with the Rabat decision, the Conference of the Heads of State and Government of East and Central African Countries, meeting in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, 4-8 September 1972 requested the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Tanzania, Zambia, Congo and Zaire to follow up the efforts made by their Heads of State in this respect. The Foreign Ministers met in Kinshasa on 13 December 1972. The meeting was also attended by the representatives of the MPLA and FNLA. The meeting was successful in reconciling the two movements. At the end of the meeting the two movements signed a reconciliation agreement. By signing the agreement the two movements demonstrated to Africa and to the international community at large their willingness to forget the past and open up a fresh page in the armed struggle in Angola.

Like the previous agreements, this one also faced obstacles in its implementation. In an attempt to implement the Kinshasa agreement, the leaderships of the MPLA and FNLA held joint explanatory meetings from 25th February to 10th March 1973 and from 3rd-8th May 1973.<sup>33</sup> During those meetings the two movements discussed the general framework of unity, its bases and the modalities of functioning of the unified organs to be established. A series of other meetings were planned. Regardless of the efforts of the governments of Tanzania, Zambia, Congo and Zaire to help the two movements to implement the Kinshasa agreement the two movements failed to implement it.

Lack of unity among the liberation movements seriously undermined the liberation struggle in Angola in 1973. Another factor that undermined the liberation struggle in Angola in 1973 was an internal conflict within the MPLA. According to the MPLA itself, there was a big plot aimed at the physical elimination of the movement's president and a number of its outstanding leaders and cadres. This regrettable situation was attributed to tribal affiliation, social and educational differences as well as racial considerations. The conflict paralyzed the activities of the organization in the second and third quarters of 1973. On the war front, the MPLA carried out only 89 operations of all types in 1973 compared to 231 operations in 1972.<sup>34</sup>

### **The Political Changes in Portugal and the Collapse of Portuguese Colonialism in Africa**

The brilliant victories of the liberation struggle in the early 1970s in the Portuguese colonies had direct impact to Portugal itself. The successes of the liberation struggle in Guinea-Bissau and in Mozambique raised internal opposition to colonial wars

(33) Minutes of 22nd Session of the Liberation Committee. Mogadishu, Somalia. October 1973. p.175.

(34) Report of the Administrative Secretary General on Decolonization, Mogadishu, June 1974, p.12.



in Portugal. The colonial wars created sharp divisions among the social, political and military forces. Students, workers, intellectuals and progressive sectors of the Portuguese public came out openly to condemn the continuation of Portuguese colonialism in the African territories. This opposition was even common within the military.

It was obvious that the leadership in Portugal was not ready to drop out its desire to maintain its hold on its African colonies. Its major challenge was how to face the opposition at the centre and from the periphery. Equally challenging was to decide what would be the most effective strategy to maintain its hold to the colonies apart from the military means. A large section of officers and men of Portugal's armed forces, who were war-weary, shared the view that Portugal could never solve her African problems by military means.

Even Portugal's top military leader, General Antonio Spínola expressed open opposition to the continuation of Portugal's colonial wars in Africa. In his book entitled *Portugal and the Future*, published in March 1974, General Spínola put forward the view that Portugal's African colonies could not be retained by military means and suggested the setting up of a loose federation consisting of Portugal, Brazil, Angola, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau.<sup>35</sup>

The political and military turmoil generated by the publication of General Spínola's book led to the overthrow of the Caetano fascist regime by a military junta on 25 April 1974 which installed General Spínola as a new Head of Government in Portugal.<sup>36</sup>

The change of government in Portugal had a direct impact to the liberation struggle of the Portuguese colonies in Africa. Immediately after its coming to power, the new Portuguese government launched a series of negotiations with its African colonies aimed at granting them their independence. Portugal started by officially recognizing the independence of Guinea-Bissau. This was followed by signing the Lusaka agreements on 7 September 1974 which defined the outline of Mozambique's accession to independence.

In conformity with the Lusaka agreements, a transitional government led by FRELIMO and comprising Ministers appointed by the Government of Portugal was constituted and it assumed power on 20th September 1974, and 25th June 1975 was set for the full independence of Mozambique.

In Cape Verde Islands, the talks held with the Portuguese authorities led to the establishment of a transitional government comprising PAIGC representatives. On 26th November 1974 the Portuguese signed the Algiers agreements with the representatives of the Liberation Movement of Sao Tome and Principe (MLSTP) setting 12th June 1975 as the date for the independence of that country.

Lack of unity among the three liberation movements in Angola was a stumbling block to this country to negotiate with the Portuguese government for its accession

(35) Report of the Administrative Secretary General on Decolonization. Mogadishu, Somalia. June 1974. p.14.

(36) Minutes of the 23rd Session of the Liberation Committee. Yaoundé, Cameroon. May 1974. p.67.

to independence. Apart from the MPLA and FNLA, the third organization was UNITA. This organization came to the picture of the liberation struggle in Angola and started to attend the meetings of the Liberation Committee in May 1974 under the observer status without a formal recognition by the Liberation Committee. Its officials claimed that UNITA was established in March 1966 and had been fighting mainly inside Angola.

The Portuguese authorities had been able to sign a ceasefire agreement with the three movements by negotiating with them separately. The first agreement was signed with UNITA on 14th June 1974. The second was signed on 15th October with the FNLA. The last was signed on 21st October 1974 with the MPLA. The Portuguese authorities committed themselves to grant independence to Angola on 11th November 1975.

By the beginning of 1975 the inter-party fighting among the three movements undermined seriously the decolonization process in Angola. Their disunity made any meaningful negotiations with the Portuguese impossible. Following the failure to implement the Kinshasa agreement, various initiatives were taken by the OAU and its organs to reconcile the three movements. These included the Mombasa agreement of January 1975; the Alvor agreement of January 1975; and the Nakuru agreement of June 1975.

During its 12th Session, the OAU Summit held in Kampala, Uganda, in July 1975 formed a Conciliation Commission to reconcile the three movements. All these efforts failed to reconcile the liberation movements. Hence, Angola gained independence on 11th November 1975 on the verge of a civil war and under a threat of being invaded by South Africa.

## Mozambique

Unlike Angola, which had more than one liberation movements, Mozambique had only the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO). FRELIMO was established on 25 June 1962 under the leadership of Dr Eduardo Mondlane. Its headquarters was in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. Following the death of Dr Mondlane on 3/2/1969 in Dar-es-Salaam by a parcel bomb, the leadership of the movement passed over to the Presidency Council which was constituted by Samora Machel and Marcelino dos Santos.<sup>37</sup>

It is important to note that although FRELIMO was the only liberation movement in Mozambique it was however a united front from the merger of several political organizations.

FRELIMO entered into cordial relations with the Liberation Committee immediately after the latter's establishment in 1963. Apart from granting official recognition to FRELIMO the Liberation Committee created a good working relationship with the movement both at the level of the Executive Secretariat and at the level of the Committee itself. FRELIMO would always present its problems and

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(37) Ibid. p.41-43.

needs to the Executive Secretariat and those problems and needs would be discussed together and necessary clarifications would be provided to the movement from the Executive Secretariat.

One of the most encouraging activities of the Liberation Committee to FRELIMO was the visits of its Executive Secretary and other senior staff of the Liberation Committee to FRELIMO-controlled areas in Mozambique during the armed liberation struggle. The visits served as a morale booster to the freedom fighters. They also demonstrated the Liberation Committee's commitment in assisting the freedom fighters in their resolve and determination to defeat the Portuguese.

FRELIMO's working relation was also good at the Liberation Committee level. The movement had the opportunity to brief the Committee on the developments of its struggle and submit its problems and needs during the Committee's meetings. The movement's statements always received much sympathy and understanding by the Committee.

Another active role of the Liberation Committee to the liberation struggle of Mozambique was the provision of financial and material assistance to FRELIMO. The financial assistance grew proportional to the increase of the Liberation Committee's annual budget. FRELIMO's portion was always among the highest within the liberation movements. For example, out of a total budget of Pound 800,000 for the 1967/68 fiscal year, FRELIMO received the second highest portion of Pounds 120,000 after the Zimbabwe liberation movements which received Pounds 140,000.<sup>38</sup>

The Liberation Committee also assisted FRELIMO to solve its internal crises. One practical example of this role was during the internal leadership crisis that had accompanied the assassination of FRELIMO's first President, Dr Eduardo Mondlane. Following the death of Dr Mondlane, the Central Committee of FRELIMO decided to replace its Presidency with a collective leadership known as the Presidential Council composed of its Political Officer, Mr Marcelino Dos Santos, its Military Commander, Mr Samora Machel and its Vice-President, Mr Uriah Simango who was also designated as the Coordinator of the Council.

On 5th November 1969 Mr Simango, in a press release, offered to resign his post if certain demands he made were not met by the movement. In a 15-page document with a title "Gloomy Situation in FRELIMO", Mr Simango listed what he described as some of the principal problems confronting FRELIMO and which, in his opinion, accounted for a sharp decline in the degree of cooperation existing between the political and the military leadership of the movement. There was, he said, a shroud of mystery surrounding the assassination of Dr Mondlane and other leaders of the movement.<sup>39</sup>

An emergency meeting of the Permanent Representatives of the Member States of the Liberation Committee stationed in Dar-es-Salaam was convened on 6th

(38) Report of the OAU Coordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa. Addis Ababa. February 1967.

(39) Minutes of the Sixteenth Session of the Liberation Committee. Moshi, Tanzania. February 1970. p.41.

November 1969 to hear the members of the FRELIMO Presidential Council in a bid to arrest the situation which could become prevalent in the movement. Mr Samora Machel admitted that there was internal dissension in the movement which he attributed to imperialist deliberate attempt to infiltrate FRELIMO ranks.

At the end of the meeting, the three FRELIMO leaders agreed to a communiqué proposed by the Permanent Representatives reaffirming their faith in the continuation of the liberation struggle in Mozambique. The Executive Committee of FRELIMO held a meeting in Dar-es-Salaam on 8th November 1969 at which Mr Simango's document was discussed. It finally issued a communiqué announcing its decision to suspend Mr Simango from membership of the Presidential Council until a future meeting of the Central Committee when his fate would be finally decided upon.<sup>40</sup>

The Liberation Committee's intervention to arrest the leadership crisis in FRELIMO was crucial in making sure that the crisis did not affect the liberation struggle in Mozambique. Among the most important steps that the Committee did was how to deal with the discredited former Vice-President of FRELIMO Mr Uriah Simango. It was decided to expel him from Tanzania and he was given political asylum in Egypt. This was done in order to prevent him from engaging in any activities that would have been detrimental to the liberation struggle in Mozambique. This action helped to resolve the leadership crisis in FRELIMO.

Another step which was useful in resolving the leadership crisis was the holding of the movement's Central Committee's meeting in May 1970. The meeting elected Mr Samora Machel as the Acting President and Mr Marcelino dos Santos as the Acting Vice-President.

In 1973 FRELIMO was not only fighting against the Portuguese but also against South African and Rhodesian troops which were carrying out major anti-guerrilla operations in Mozambique at the request of the Portuguese government. Hence, the Liberation Committee's assistance to FRELIMO was significant in helping the movement to face up to this challenge. Despite the joint attack by Portugal and her allies, FRELIMO was able to score brilliant successes in the military and political fields. The contribution of the individual Member States of the Liberation Committee to this success was equally significant. Countries such as Congo, Ghana, Guinea, Tanzania Zaire and Zambia devoted, apart from financial and material assistance, substantial portions of their radio and press activities to the liberation struggle. The broadcasts by the liberation movement from these countries made enormous contributions to the struggle for the liberation of Africa.

### **The End of Fascism in Portugal and the Independence of Mozambique**

The year 1974 was a watershed in the history of the liberation struggle in Africa in general and in Mozambique in particular. The collapse of fascism in Portugal on 25th April 1974 was engineered by the success of the liberation struggle in the Portuguese

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(40) Ibid. p.41-43.

African colonies. FRELIMO's victories at the war front in 1974 contributed a lot to the political events in Portugal that finally led to the change of government in April 1974. Among the positive steps that the new Portuguese government took was the declaration on the right to independence of the territories still under Portuguese domination. From this commitment the Portuguese authorities negotiated with FRELIMO and signed the Lusaka Agreement on the 7th September 1974 which defined the outlines for Mozambique's accession to independence.

In conformity with the agreement, a transitional government led by FRELIMO and comprising Ministers appointed by the government of Portugal was constituted and it assumed power in Lourenço Marques on 20th September 1974. Mozambique became fully independent on 25th June 1975.

The OAU's contribution and that of the Liberation Committee to the independence of Mozambique was significant. This contribution did not end at a time when the transitional government was installed. The Liberation Committee in particular continued to assist FRELIMO during the phase of the transitional government and immediately after independence. For example, immediately following the installation of the transitional government, the FRELIMO-led administration faced an invasion scare from mercenaries. One day in October 1974 a group of mercenaries made a move and surrounded the radio station in Lourenço Marques. The Liberation Committee assisted FRELIMO in air-lifting its troops from rear and advanced bases to the capital to liquidate the rebellion. With this timely assistance, the rebellion was crushed in a three-day time.

At the same time, the Liberation Committee assisted FRELIMO in purchasing and transporting foodstuff in order to relieve the civilian population in some localities of the liberated areas that were affected by the disruption of distribution of food following the collapse of the Portuguese civilian and military administration in these areas. Taking into consideration that the FRELIMO administration was faced with numerous difficulties, the Liberation Committee continued to assist FRELIMO financially and materially in carrying out its organizational and political activities. This assistance was crucial particularly in urban centres and in remote rural areas. The Liberation Committee also continued to provide training facilities for FRELIMO in OAU centres during the period of transition.

## Zimbabwe

Like Angola, Zimbabwe had more than one liberation movement. The major ones were the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) under the leadership of Ndabaningi Sithole as its president and the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) under the leadership of Joshua Nkomo. While ZANU was established on 8th August 1963 ZAPU was formed earlier on 17th December 1961. Apart from Ndabaningi Sithole ZANU's other prominent leaders included Herbert Chitepo as the National Chairman; Leopold Takawira as its Vice President; Robert Mugabe as the Secretary

General; Edson Zvobgo as the Deputy Secretary General; Enos Nkala as Treasurer; and Michael Mawema as the Organizing Secretary.

Besides Joshua Nkomo, ZAPU's other leaders included James Chikerema, the Vice National President; George Nyandoro, National Secretary; Jonson Moyo, National Treasurer; and Joseph Msika, National Secretary for External Affairs.

ZANU and ZAPU had a tumultuous history of being banned and its leaders imprisoned. Immediately after its establishment in December 1961 ZAPU, for example, was banned in 1962 and most of its leaders were detained. In August 1963 the remaining leaders of ZAPU formed the Peoples Caretaker Council (PCC) which, in order to attract international support, continued to call its external offices ZAPU offices while the operating party in Zimbabwe was called the PCC. On August 1964 both ZANU and the PCC were banned.

Like the FNLA and the MPLA in Angola, ZANU and ZAPU had also acrimonious relationship. The relationship between ZANU and ZAPU went through many changes over the years. As a matter of policy ZAPU followers were directed by their leaders not even to greet, talk or show any friendliness to ZANU members.

As far as the role of the Liberation Committee in the liberation struggle of Zimbabwe was concerned this started with the official recognition of ZANU and ZAPU. This was followed by the provision of financial and material assistance. For example, from the Special Fund's budget of Pounds 800,000 for the 1967/68 fiscal year, ZANU and ZAPU received the highest allocation of Pounds 140,000.<sup>41</sup>

Like in Angola, the biggest challenge of the Liberation Committee in Zimbabwe was to reconcile ZANU and ZAPU and to assist the two movements in forming a united front. The efforts toward the forming of a united front between ZANU and ZAPU started immediately following the establishment of the Liberation Committee. In 1963 the OAU appointed Tanzania and Malawi to mediate between the two movements. A meeting was called in Lusaka. ZANU attended and agreed to discuss the matter. ZAPU boycotted and refused to discuss it. At Accra in 1964, again ZANU expressed its willingness to discuss the issue of a united front. ZAPU refused. At Nairobi in 1965, ZANU agreed to make specific proposals for unity but ZAPU refused.<sup>42</sup>

In 1966 at Addis Ababa ZANU made other different proposals for the establishment of a Joint National Emergency Council to deal with military matters, leaving the political parties separate; ZAPU rejected this proposal. During 1967 and 1968, ZANU repeatedly stated its position that it considered unity necessary in the face of Smith's determination to enslave the black Zimbabweans forever. In 1969 the OAU Assembly of Heads of State and Government appointed Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia to use their good offices to create a common front among the liberation movements in Zimbabwe. The three countries, together with the representatives of ZANU and

(41) Report of the OAU Coordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa. Addis Ababa. February 1967.

(42) Op cit. p.15.

ZAPU, met at Tanga, Tanzania, on 20th June 1969 to examine the possibility of forging some form of cooperation between the two movements.

ZAPU spurned on a proposal by Kenya, Tanzania and Zambia, to mark the day by making a joint declaration with them and ZANU and in it to indicate readiness to consider as between ZANU and ZAPU “ways of widening agreement and cooperation and narrowing differences”. While ZANU expressed its willingness, ZAPU refused.<sup>43</sup> Hence, the efforts of the three countries regrettably proved abortive.

Frustrated by ZAPU’s attitude towards unity, in 1970 ZANU put conditionality on the issue of unity with ZAPU. Its new position was issued in its organ, the *ZIMBABWE NEWS* of March 1970:

Our position on the question of unity is clear. It is that we shall continue to struggle to unite with all those forces and elements in our country that genuinely desire to bring about a unity of purpose on the basis of the common minimal objective of overthrowing white minority rule. But under no circumstances will ZANU go back to the unproductive “unity” of pre-1963 Zimbabwe. In our search for unity we shall not only be concerned with numbers, but also with the revolutionary quality of those who desire to work with us in the common cause. This is important if this revolution is not to be destroyed-in the name of “unity”. We believe in “UNITING WITH REAL FRIENDS TO FIGHT REAL ENEMIES.”<sup>44</sup>

ZAPU’s attitude towards unity needs to be explained. Being the first liberation movement in Zimbabwe, ZAPU considered itself as the only legitimate movement. Anybody operating outside it or any other political organization was regarded as “rebels” or an organization not to be taken seriously. According to ZAPU, ZANU had neither the right nor the legitimacy to initiate unity talks or negotiation with it.

This meant that ZAPU was prepared to work with all the people of Zimbabwe interested in genuine unity under its terms. All those aspiring for unity, including anyone from ZANU, was allowed to join ZAPU without conditions to enable them to participate in the liberation struggle. Members of ZANU were welcomed to join ZAPU on their own individual capacity but not through intra-organizational negotiations. ZAPU’s attitude was obviously the major stumbling block for unity between the two movements.

Efforts towards unity between ZANU and ZAPU were further undermined when an internal crisis erupted within ZAPU in February 1970. The crisis began following the circulation on 25th February 1970 of a document titled “Observations on our Struggle” by the National Treasurer of the party, Mr J. Moyo, to his colleagues in which he expressed grave concern about the sharp decline in the effectiveness and efficiency of the ZAPU Military Command. He cited instances of abuse of privileges, desertion, corruption tribalism and nepotism in which members of the Command were directly involved. He felt that the unhealthy atmosphere and crisis of confidence prevailing in the Command was nearing breaking-point and might soon reach an

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(43) *Ibid.* p.16.

(44) *Ibid.* p.16.

explosive stage which could trigger off a serious and irretrievable disaster for the party's armed struggle. He doubted very much the wisdom of concentrating powers in an individual, namely the Acting President, Mr J. Chikerema. He concluded by suggesting reforms and accordingly drew up a series of corrective measures for immediate application.<sup>45</sup>

In a reply, dated 17th March 1970 to Mr Moyo's "Observation", Mr Chikerema refuted all the allegations. He accused Mr Moyo and his collaborators of conspiring to oust him from the external leadership of the party. He reiterated his position as the sole leader and his readiness to shoulder all the responsibility for the conduct of the party's affairs. He, therefore, decided to dissolve the entire Military Command and to assume full control of all matters relating to foreign affairs, education, defence, finances and the administration of the party.

In a counter-reply dated 21st March 1970, jointly signed by the National Treasurer, Mr Moyo, the Deputy National Secretary for Publicity and Information, Mr T. Silundika, the Supreme Authority of the National Executive of the party was emphasized as the source from which all policy decisions should derive. The dismissal of the Executive Members was discounted and Mr Chikerema's assumption of all the powers of the party's Executive was scorned.

In a rejoinder dated 9th April 1970, the same three officials put forward proposals for a peaceful settlement of the party's crisis and called for a return to the status quo of the party's affairs and recognition of the principle of collective responsibility of the National Executive in all matters affecting decisions on the armed struggle.<sup>46</sup>

The leadership crisis had its repercussions on ZAPU's effective participation in the armed struggle. Besides affecting the morale of the freedom fighters, it greatly affected the movement of personnel and the transportation of materials. Moreover, Commanders inside and outside Zimbabwe were paralyzed, given that orders and instructions mainly emanated from Headquarters.

It was during this leadership crisis in ZAPU that news of new efforts to form a united front between ZANU and ZAPU were circulated in December 1970. The news was clouded with a lot of uncertainties as to who took the initiative. The uncertainty led to the Executive Secretariat of the Liberation Committee to convene a consultative meeting with the top representatives of the two movements in Dar-es-Salaam on 18th

19th January 1971. Chaired by the Executive Secretary of the Liberation Committee, Mr George Magombe, the meeting was attended by its Assistant Executive Secretary for General Policy, Mr O. Adesola; the Acting President of ZAPU, Mr Chikerema, ZAPU's National Treasurer, Mr Moyo, and ZAPU Deputy National Secretary, Mr Ndlovu. From ZANU the meeting was attended by its Chairman, Mr H. Chitepo, its Secretary for External Affairs, Mr N. Shamuyarira, its Treasurer, Mr M. Hamadziripi.

(45) Minutes of the 17th Session of the Liberation Committee. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. August 1970. p.39.

(46) *Ibid.* p.40.



It transpired during the course of the discussions that there was general agreement in principle on the desirability of a ZANU/ZAPU united front except that there were differences as regards the timing of the implementation of such a programme. Both Moyo and Ndlovu held the view that the moment was not opportune yet for talks of uniting the two movements until the matter had been raised and resolved at the ZAPU Executive Committee level and also after ZAPU had succeeded in putting its own house in order. ZANU, on the other hand, expressed its willingness to enter into unity talks at any time that ZAPU expressed its willingness to do so. ZANU leadership would, however, have preferred to negotiate with a united ZAPU rather than with either of the two factions of that movement.

The consensus at the end of the talks was that the split within ZAPU made it difficult for any meaningful unity talks to succeed. It was, therefore, desirable that ZAPU should convene an emergency meeting of its Executive Committee in order to address their differences.<sup>47</sup>

Further efforts towards uniting the two movements were taken by the Liberation Committee in 1972. At its 19th session, which took place in Benghazi, Libya, on 12- 19 January 1972, the Liberation Committee discussed at length the internal crisis prevailing in the two movements. This led the leaders of ZANU and ZAPU to take the initiative of drafting a declaration of intent aimed at forming a united front with a promise to submit a joint programme of action to the 18th Session of the Council of Ministers which was to be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in February 1972.

The Liberation Committee decided that a meeting be held shortly after the 18th session of the Council between ZANU and ZAPU leaders within the framework of the Standing Committee on Defence, assisted by the Executive Secretariat, to consider the programme of action and its implementation. During the 18th session of the Council of Ministers consultations held between ZANU and ZAPU leaders and the Executive Secretariat led the two movements to submit, on 14th February 1972 a "Draft Programme for Joint Action" on co-ordination of policy and military matters. It was further agreed to convene a meeting of the political and military leadership of both movements under the auspices of the Executive Secretariat of the Liberation Committee in Mbeya, Tanzania, on the 20th March 1972.

The Mbeya meeting took place as scheduled. At its conclusion both movements signed, in the presence of the Executive Secretary, a protocol on the establishment of a "Joint Military Command (JMC)". A concrete programme of joint action for the prosecution of the armed struggle in Zimbabwe was also worked out. The Liberation Committee discussed at length the above developments. At the end of its deliberations the Committee felt that the establishment of the JMC, though falling short of the aspirations of the Zimbabwe people and the hopes expressed by the OAU's Heads of State and Government, urging the liberation movements to close ranks and face the enemy in one united front, could be considered as a positive step towards unity.

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(47) Minutes of the 18th Session of the Liberation Committee. Moshi, Tanzania. February 1971. p.32-36.

However, the Liberation Committee noted with disappointment that the leaders of both movements were still reluctant to merge politically.<sup>48</sup>

### **FROLIZI and the ANC**

In 1972 two additional organizations entered the Zimbabwe political scene. These were FROLIZI, which emerged on 1st October 1971, and the African National Council (ANC) which emerged during the Pearce Commission. The ANC was under the leadership of Bishop Abel Muzorewa. Although not officially recognized by the Liberation Committee, FROLIZI started to attend the Liberation Committee's meetings in 1972 and it was receiving financial and material assistance from the Committee. The organization held its inaugural Congress in Lusaka, Zambia, from 21st August to 5th September 1972. The outcome of the Congress was the overhaul of the whole of its leadership and the appointment of a new Central Committee. The change was opposed by the young military cadres who considered these changes as a come-back of the old guards and politicians.

This situation left the Executive Secretariat of the Liberation Committee in a state of uncertainty as to the future of the organization. During the meeting of the Standing Committee on Defence held in Dar-es-Salaam on 5th -6th December 1972 the Committee endorsed the suspension of assistance to FROLIZI until its situation was clarified and requested the Secretariat to continue maintaining FROLIZI military cadres in close cooperation with the Zambian Government.<sup>49</sup>

During the 21st Session of the Liberation Committee, the Committee took note of the views expressed by the Zambian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs to the effect that FROLIZI was non-existent in reality. It was therefore decided that FROLIZI cadres should be merged into the ZANU/ZAPU Joint Military Command. All forms of assistance to FROLIZI as a movement were to be discontinued forthwith. Only FROLIZI cadres who were willing to fight in Zimbabwe under the direction of the JMC would henceforth be provided for by the Executive Secretariat.<sup>50</sup>

In 1973 another initiative was taken by the Liberation Committee to influence ZANU and ZAPU to honour the Mbeya Agreement on establishing the JMC. At its 21st Session in Accra held in January 1973 the Liberation Committee formed an Ad-Hoc Committee consisting of Zambia, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya and Tanzania with a mandate to mediate between ZANU and ZAPU. The Ad-Hoc Committee was able to bring the two movements to the negotiating table in Lusaka, Zambia whereby the two parties finally signed the Lusaka Agreement that defined a strategy for the liberation of Zimbabwe (P.C.Z.).

In attempting to implement the Lusaka Agreement the two movements held meetings on 27th March, 2nd April, 8th to 10th May 1973 following which a document on implementation was signed by the Chairmen of ZANU and ZAPU on 14th

(48) Report of the 19th and 20th Sessions of the Liberation Committee. Rabat, Morocco. June 1972. p.11-13.

(49) Minutes of the 21st Session of the Liberation Committee. Accra, Ghana. January 1973. p.98.

(50) Ibid. p.234.

May 1973. On 29th June 1973 the Executive Secretary of the Liberation Committee addressed a letter to the leaders of the movements requesting them to communicate to him within two months the names of the people constituting the unified organs as well as the political steps taken for the creation of the JMC Army. The Executive Secretary informed the leaders that the Secretariat was ready to provide a common training centre for the purposes of joint training.<sup>51</sup>

From May 1973 to November 1974 there was no significant movement in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. In the beginning of November 1974 Ian Smith and John Vorster initiated quiet diplomatic contacts seeking a peaceful settlement of the Rhodesian constitutional deadlock. As a result of these initiatives Nationalist leaders of Zimbabwe, Joshua Nkomo and Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole were temporarily released from detention to consult with some African Heads of State on the future of Zimbabwe. The two leaders and Bishop Abel Muzorewa had meetings with Presidents Seretse Khama, Kenneth Kaunda and Julius Nyerere in November 1974.

The talks were held again in Lusaka at the beginning of December 1974 and the outcome was the merger of all the national liberation movements of Zimbabwe under the banner of the African National Council; the release of political prisoners by the Smith regime; lifting of the ban on political activities in Zimbabwe; and preparations for constitutional talks on the future of the country.<sup>52</sup> The merger of all the national liberation movements necessitated the shift of the OAU recognition from ZANU and ZAPU to the ANC as the sole and authentic representative of the African people in Zimbabwe.

Like all other previous initiatives aiming at unity among the liberation movements, the ANC was not spared from internal leadership squabbles. At the middle of 1975 there existed an under-current within the ANC of mistrust and differences at the leadership level which came to a head on the question of holding a Congress inside Rhodesia to elect a substantive leadership of the ANC. This prompted emotional reactions which led to the split in the leadership. Bishop Abel Muzorewa, the President of the ANC, held the view that it was not in the interest of the Zimbabwe liberation struggle to hold a Congress then, while Mr Joshua Nkomo, one of the Vice-Presidents of the ANC, insisted that the leadership should have the mandate of the people.

In the end Bishop Muzorewa, acting in his capacity as the President of the ANC, expelled Mr Nkomo from the ANC. Mr Nkomo, on the other hand, decided to go it alone and called for a Congress which elected him President of the ANC. Immediately following his election as the President of the ANC, Mr Nkomo initiated constitutional talks with the Smith regime.<sup>53</sup>

Following Mr Nkomo's decision to start talks with Ian Smith, the external section of the ANC set up the Zimbabwe Liberation Council (ZLC) on the 1st September

(51) Minutes of 22nd Session of the Liberation Committee. Mogadishu, Somalia. October 1973. p.192-193.

(52) Minutes of the 24th Session of the Liberation Committee. Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. January 1975. p.74-75.

(53) Minutes of the 26th Session of the Liberation Committee. Maputo, Mozambique. January 1976. p.54.

1975. On 7th September 1975 Mr Nkomo declared his disapproval of the ZLC. In 1976 Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole, another Vice-President of the ANC, pulled out of the ANC and went back to ZANU which had already split into two. One faction was under Mr Robert Mugabe and the other under Sithole. At the end of 1976 both factions of ZANU applied to be officially recognized by the Liberation Committee as distinct entities.

The split of the ANC did not make things easy for the OAU and its Liberation Committee. Once again, the organization was called upon to continue with its efforts of reconciling the ANC leadership. The Liberation Committee's position was that the OAU's recognition was with the ANC. In this connection, the Committee decided, during its 26th Session, to mandate the Executive Secretary to continue with his efforts to maintain unity among the cadres as well to resolve the leadership crisis.<sup>54</sup>

By 1976 the liberation movements in Zimbabwe were in disarray. There was no single credible organization that one could say was the true representative of the Zimbabwe Africans and one that was leading the armed struggle in the country. In the midst of this leadership vacuum, the British and the Americans, in collaboration with Ian Smith, launched the Anglo-American shuttle diplomacy aimed at getting a peace settlement in Rhodesia.

The leaders of the Frontline States worked hard throughout 1976 trying to bring together the liberation movements' leadership in order to intensify the armed struggle and to have a credible leadership that would have responded to the Anglo-American initiative. In September 1976 the efforts of the leaders of the Frontline States bore fruits when they were able to impress upon ZAPU, now under Joshua Nkomo, and ZANU under Robert Mugabe, to form the Patriotic Front as the political wing of the Zimbabwe People's Army (ZIPA). The Frontline States officially recognized the Patriotic Front on 9th January 1977. As a political tool, the Patriotic Front was expected to provide political guidance to the fighting cadres of ZIPA as a unified army of the Zimbabwean freedom fighters.

While the leaders of the Frontline States were praised in some quarters for being able to deliver Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe in forming the Patriotic Front, this was not appreciated by the other political organizations in Zimbabwe and their supporters. Dissenting views were expressed during the 28th Session of the Liberation Committee which took place in Lusaka from 29th January to 4th February 1977. The representative of the ANC of Bishop Muzorewa objected to the very presence of the Patriotic Front in the meeting Hall. He alleged that the Patriotic Front was formed by the Frontline States and did not represent the people of Zimbabwe. He further asserted that there was no real unity between ZANU and ZAPU, and that the formation of the Patriotic Front was a fictitious marriage of convenience between Joshua Nkomo and Robert Mugabe. He criticized the Frontline States for imposing leadership upon the people of Zimbabwe. The representative of Ndabaningi Sithole's

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(54) Ibid. p.80-81.

group of ZANU shared the views of the representative of Bishop Muzorewa's group of the ANC. 55

### **The Geneva Constitutional Conference**

The Anglo-American shuttle diplomacy on the issue of having a peaceful settlement of the Rhodesian problem resulted into the holding of the Geneva Constitutional Conference. One single and major objective of the conference was to determine the modality and date for Zimbabwe's independence. The conference took off on 28th October 1976. At the opening session, the four Zimbabwe nationalist leaders, Joshua Nkomo, Robert Mugabe, Ndabaningi Sithole and Bishop Muzorewa gave detailed statements emphasizing the necessity for immediate independence. Ian Smith made remarks which lasted no more than two minutes.

After the opening session, the conference adjourned for consultation between heads of delegations. The subsequent meetings of the heads of delegations tackled mainly the problem of fixing the date for independence. After more consultations and meetings, the nationalist leaders agreed on a transition period of 9 to 14 months. Ian Smith insisted on 23 months. The British suggested 15 months. At this stage Ian Smith decided to leave Geneva and return to Salisbury claiming that there was nothing to do in Geneva. He formally rejected the British proposals on 24th January 1977. This brought the Geneva Conference to its inconclusive end.

One encouraging development in Geneva was the cohesion that existed within the Patriotic Front. This aspect was well demonstrated during the recess when the Patriotic Front insisted on meeting the Chairman of the conference as a single entity. The Patriotic Front, therefore, served one of the objectives that it was created for - to serve as a united entity in negotiations such as the Geneva Constitutional Conference.

From the time that the Geneva Constitutional Conference failed in January 1977 to the time of the Commonwealth Conference in Lusaka, Zambia in August 1979, Zimbabwe was preoccupied by four major activities. The first was the continuation of the armed struggle waged by ZIPA under the political guidance of the Patriotic Front. The second was the continued effort to strengthen unity in the political and military fields among the two factions of the Patriotic Front. The third was the Ian Smith efforts to get an internal settlement deal after the failure of Geneva. He was able to negotiate with Bishop Muzorewa, Sithole and Chief Jeremiah Chirau. The negotiations resulted into the signing of the "Rhodesian Constitutional Agreement" on 3rd March 1978. It was in the implementation of this so-called constitution that a sham election was held in April 1979 resulting into the installation of the illegal Muzorewa/Smith regime.

The fourth activity was the continuation of the Anglo-American shuttle diplomacy aimed at having a peaceful solution to the Rhodesian problem. This initiative resulted into two meetings between the British and the Americans on one side and the

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(55) Minutes of the 28th Session of the Liberation Committee. Lusaka, Zambia. January/February 1977. p.10-11.

Patriotic Front on the other. One of these meetings was in Malta and the other in Dar-es-Salaam.<sup>56</sup> Nothing concrete came out of this initiative.

### **The Lancaster House Agreement and the Independence of Zimbabwe**

In August 1979 the Heads of State and Government of the Commonwealth met in Lusaka, Zambia. The problem of Zimbabwe was one of their important agenda items. They agreed on a plan on how to proceed with the achievement of a negotiated settlement which would bring the fighting to an end and create the necessary mechanisms for the emergence of an independent Zimbabwe.

In implementing the Commonwealth Plan, a constitutional conference on Rhodesia took place at Lancaster House in London and lasted for three months from 10th September 1979 to 21st December 1979 when the Agreement was signed. Chaired by the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Carrington, the conference was attended by the two factions of the Patriotic Front, ZANU-PF of Robert Mugabe and ZAPU-PF of Joshua Nkomo on one side and the Muzorewa/Smith regime on the other. At the end of hard bargaining an agreement was reached, including interim arrangements, ceasefire arrangements and finally the elections. The British appointed Lord Christopher Soames as Governor of the colony to supervise and implement the Lancaster House Agreement.

Elections were held from 27th to 29th February 1980. They were overwhelmingly won by the ZANU-PF of Robert Mugabe. Out of a total of 80 black seats contested by 9 political parties, ZANU-PF obtained 57 seats whereas the ZAPU-PF got 20 seats. Finally, Zimbabwe became independent officially on 18th April 1980 with Robert Mugabe as the Prime Minister.

## **Namibia**

Like Mozambique, Namibia had also just one liberation movement, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). SWAPO was formed in 1960 and launched its armed struggle in Namibia in August 1966. This was the only liberation movement which was formally recognized by the OAU and the United Nations. However, in the late 1960s an organization called the South West Africa National United Front (SWANUF) emerged claiming that it was based inside Namibia and waging an armed struggle. It even applied for a formal recognition by the Liberation Committee. SWAPO refuted the existence of such an organization inside Namibia and the Liberation Committee did not recognize this organization.

SWAPO's leaders in the early 1960s suffered the same fate like all nationalist leaders, of being detained and imprisoned. Among the most outstanding were Herman Toivo ja Toivo, Eliezer Tuhadeleni and John Otto Nankudhu. SWAPO's leadership in exile was elected in December 1969 during the Consultative Congress which was held in Tanga, Tanzania. Among them were Sam Nujoma as the President; Bredan Simbwaye

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<sup>(56)</sup> Minutes of the 31st Session of the Liberation Committee. Dar-es-Salaam. Tanzania. June 1978. p.42.

as the Vice-President; Mishek Muyongo as Acting Vice-President (standing in for Mr Simbwaye who was in prison); Moses Garoeb as the Administrative Secretary; Lucas Pohamba as the Assistant Administrative Secretary; Peter Mueshihanga as the Acting Secretary for Foreign Relations; Andreas Shipanga as the Acting Secretary for Information and Publicity; and Peter Nanyemba as the Secretary of Defence and Transport. The Consultative Congress elected a new Executive Committee of ten members and a new Central Committee composed of thirty members.

### **Namibia's Political Problem**

Namibia was a United Nations' Trustee Territory governed by the Republic of South Africa on behalf of the British who were mandated by the UN to administer the territory. By the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 214 XX1 of October 1966 the UN terminated the South African mandate over Namibia. By this Resolution South Africa had no more right to administer the territory and henceforth Namibia came under the direct responsibility of the UN. Therefore, the continued domination of Namibia by South Africa after this Resolution was adopted constituted an illegal occupation.

By its Resolution 2248 of 19th May 1967 the UN General Assembly set up an 11 member Council for Namibia to take over the administration of the territory and, with the assistance of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, to prepare it for independence. The Council was instructed to proceed immediately to the territory to replace the South African administration. So, the political problem that SWAPO and the OAU had to deal with in Namibia was essentially the South Africa's illegal occupation of the country.

### **The Liberation Committee's Role in Namibia**

Like in the other liberation movements in Angola and in Mozambique, the first positive role that the Liberation Committee played in Namibia was to formally recognize SWAPO as the only liberation movement representing the people of Namibia in their legitimate struggle for independence. The second role that the Liberation Committee played in the liberation struggle of Namibia was to provide moral and diplomatic support to its struggle both within Africa and at the international community level.

Thirdly, the Liberation Committee was responsible for providing material and financial support to SWAPO. The Liberation Committee was also responsible for training SWAPO's freedom fighters and assisting in making sure that young Namibians were trained in non-military professions within and outside Africa. At the same time the Liberation Committee played an intermediary role in resolving internal problems within SWAPO's leadership.

Among the important needs of SWAPO in its early days of existence was the issue of publicity. In its role of providing moral and diplomatic support, the Liberation Committee arranged with the OAU Member States to provide broadcasting time on their external radio services. For example Radio Tanzania External Service, Dar-

es-Salaam, and the VOICE OF AFRICA from Cairo provided SWAPO 45 minutes weekly programme.<sup>57</sup> This was extremely useful in counter-acting the effect of the propaganda machinery of the South African minority regime.

The OAU Member States were also instrumental in the role of providing moral and diplomatic support at the UN. They were able to impress upon the Asian, Socialist countries and other third world countries to keep the issue of Namibia alive at the UN. This helped to damage the image of South Africa. The OAU Member States at the UN supported SWAPO in rejecting India's proposal at the UN in 1969 for the formation of the Namibian Government in exile which would have been given a seat at the UN. SWAPO rejected the proposal on the ground that South Africa's supporters at the UN would have seized this opportunity to refrain from supporting any positive political action against South Africa on Namibia with a view to make the world public believe that Namibia was now independent, and hence its case could not be discussed in the world organization any more while in actual sense, Namibia was still under colonial bondage of South Africa.

The OAU Member States, in their role of providing moral and diplomatic support to Namibia contributed financially to the expenses of the Namibian case at the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences for States of the continued presence of South Africa in Namibia.

The active involvement of the OAU and the UN in the question of Namibia was sometimes not free from confusion and misunderstanding. At one level, it undermined co-ordination of activities between SWAPO and the Liberation Committee. One practical example of the lack of proper co-ordination was a case whereby a telegram from the OAU Assistant Secretary-General at the UN was sent to the Executive Secretary of the Liberation Committee expressing regret at SWAPO's lack of cooperation with the Africa Group at the UN.

During the meeting of the Standing Committee on Policy and Information held in Dar-es-Salaam on 4th December 1972 the SWAPO representative was invited to comment on this embarrassing incident. He admitted that there were some misunderstandings within SWAPO caused by the assumption of certain individuals within the organization that independence was "around the corner". This, he said, resulted in confusion within the movement to the extent that some individuals were being tempted to take certain undemocratic measures to the embarrassment and against the interest of the movement.<sup>58</sup>

At another level, there was confusion on policy and the appropriate strategy to be used to attain Namibia's independence. Due to the involvement of both the OAU and the UN, the situation became confusing as to whether Namibia was to be liberated through the armed struggle or through political negotiation. Even if political

(57) Minutes of the 16th Session of the Liberation Committee. Moshi, Tanzania. February 1970. p.198.

(58) Minutes of the 21st Session of the Liberation Committee. Accra, Ghana. January 1973. p.57-58.



negotiation were to be resorted to eventually, the situation would still have to be clarified as to who should play the greater part in the negotiation: the OAU or the UN.

There was a feeling within the OAU that the liberation struggle in Namibia seemed to have shifted from Africa to New York. SWAPO appeared to divert more and more of its attention to the UN in the hope that the world body would provide a solution to the Namibian independence problem. The Liberation Committee was worried that if this trend of thoughts were to be encouraged or continued, the possibility of any armed struggle in Namibia would be drastically curtailed. Regardless of the fact that SWAPO's policy was to liberate Namibia through armed struggle, there were indications that armed struggle was being pushed to the background and political negotiation was being given prominence.

The Liberation Committee's role in providing material and financial support was on large extent based on how effective SWAPO was in waging the armed struggle. One of the criteria of measuring a movement's effectiveness at the war front was for the Liberation Committee to conduct fact-finding missions in the areas of operation to assess the level of the struggle. In its attempt to assess SWAPO's effectiveness in the armed struggle, the Liberation Committee sent a fact-finding mission in August 1973 composed of two Military Experts from the Secretariat with the specific assignment to cross into Caprivi Strip, one of the main operational areas of SWAPO, in order to assess the level of the struggle in Namibia and SWAPO's needs.

This mission, which was organized in consultation with SWAPO, failed. The two Military Experts, after being taken to a SWAPO training camp were left for 5 days in that camp without being taken to any entry points. Finally, since SWAPO Commanders in charge of escorting the members of the mission were not able to take them inside within the prescribed period, they had to return without fulfilling their assignment.

In view of the seriousness of the matter, the President of SWAPO, Mr Sam Nujoma, was contacted and requested to submit a detailed report on the circumstances which prevented the mission from accomplishing its task. Mr Nujoma stated that he was still waiting for a report from the SWAPO Commanders and that though all arrangements were carefully made between his organization and the Secretariat, the military situation could have changed at the point of entry. He reiterated SWAPO's readiness to receive another mission.<sup>59</sup>

From this unfortunate incident, it was clear that SWAPO was not well organized at the war front. This impacted negatively on the Liberation Committee's financial assistance to SWAPO. For example, out of financial year budget of Pounds 800,000 for the 1967/68 financial year, SWAPO received only Pounds 35,000. The amount was the lowest compared to what was allocated to the other movements in Southern Africa.

By mid 1970s SWAPO was generally scoring diplomatic successes more than military success at the war front. The appointment of the UN Commissioner for

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<sup>(59)</sup> Minutes of the 22nd Session of the Liberation Committee. Mogadishu, Somalia. October 1973. p.139.

Namibia, Mr Sean McBride, in January 1974 enhanced Namibia's diplomatic status at the UN. At the same time the mid 1970s experienced a number of initiatives aimed at ending the Namibian problem. The first was South Africa's initiative of getting an internal settlement through the Turnhalle Constitutional Conference. This initiative was influenced by the situation that led to the independence of Mozambique and Angola. South Africa was forced to come up with a solution in Namibia that would have guaranteed her interests in that country; hence, the idea to initiate the internal settlement through the Turnhalle Constitutional Conference.

The Turnhalle Constitutional Conference began on the 1st September 1975. The racist regime of South Africa publicized the conference as an "epoch-making" opportunity for the "people" of Namibia to decide the constitutional future of their country.<sup>60</sup> The Vorster regime strongly believed that the talks were the only basis for a peaceful solution to the Namibian problem. The participants at the talks were the racist regime and tribal chiefs. SWAPO was not a party to these negotiations. The objective of the conference was to establish a puppet government formed by black Namibians. The Vorster regime was planning to appoint the so-called transitional government to which sham independence would be handed.

After almost two years of negotiations, a draft constitution was agreed upon, providing for an interim government as from July 1977. As part of translating this constitution the so-called elections were held between 4th and 8th December 1978 which allowed the racist South Africa to embark upon the exercise of imposing a puppet regime in Namibia. Obviously, SWAPO, the only movement recognized by the OAU and the UN as the sole and authentic representative of the people of Namibia, did not take part in these elections. The elections were followed by the proclamation of the so-called National Assembly in the first half of 1979. On 4th May 1979 an Administrator-General was appointed.

The second initiative was the Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy on Namibia in the last part of 1976. This was part of Kissinger's efforts to resolve the political problems in Southern Africa, particularly in Zimbabwe and Namibia. In launching his shuttle diplomacy in Namibia, Kissinger met SWAPO's President in New York on 29th September where Mr Nujoma was very sceptical of Kissinger's initiative. While Kissinger succeeded in convincing Ian Smith to accept the Geneva meeting on Zimbabwe, he failed to get any concession from Vorster on the issue of Namibia. It is important to keep in mind that Vorster had all along rejected the idea of a constitutional conference to be attended by SWAPO, the UN and South Africa itself. Hence, this initiative failed.

The third was the Contact Group initiative. This initiative was actually influenced by a UN sponsored International Conference in support of the peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia held in Maputo, Mozambique in May 1977. Attended by over 90 UN Member States, the Conference adopted a declaration in support of the peoples of

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(60) Minutes of the 28th Session of the Liberation Committee. Lusaka, Zambia. January/February 1977. p.160.

Zimbabwe and Namibia. It was on the eve of the Maputo Conference that the five Western powers, Britain, United States, Federal Republic of Germany, France and Canada, made contact with the South African racist regime to explore the possibilities of coming up with an internationally acceptable settlement of the Namibian question in consistence with Security Council Resolution 385.

The Contact Group, as it came to be popularly known, held substantive discussions and struck far-reaching agreements with South Africa. One of these agreements was South Africa's acceptance of the UN Secretary-General's proposals on a peaceful settlement. South Africa announced its readiness for the implementation of the Demilitarized Zone as proposed by the Five Western Contact Group and discussed between herself and the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Namibia. Apart from these two elements, South Africa seemed to be playing delaying tactics and was not fully prepared for a negotiated settlement.

South Africa's acceptance of the two elements and SWAPO's acceptance of engaging South Africa in the presence of the UN, facilitated the UN to arrange a Pre-Implementation Meeting on the Independence of Namibia Plan. The meeting took place in Geneva from 7-14 January 1981. The Frontline States, Nigeria, the OAU and the Contact Group participated as observers.<sup>61</sup> The two principal delegations to the meeting were led by the South African Administrator-General and the President of SWAPO.

SWAPO made her position clear both on her readiness to cooperate with the UN Secretary-General in the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 435 (1978) and 439 (1978); as well as the signing of a ceasefire in Geneva. Unfortunately, the South African delegation diverted the meeting from its main objective to irrelevant issues such as the so-called impartiality of the UN. It was clear from the beginning that the two delegations went to Geneva with different objectives. In the end, the meeting turned out to be a failure.

Numerous efforts by the OAU, the UN and the Non-Aligned Movement followed the abortive Geneva Pre-Implementation Meeting in order to implement the UN Security Council Resolution 435 (1978). For almost seven years the Reagan Administration blocked Namibia's independence by introducing the irrelevant and extraneous concept of "linkage", which the Pretoria regime gleefully embraced. It was only in April 1989 that the implementation of the UN plan for the independence of Namibia began.

Elections in Namibia were held from 7th to 11th November 1989. They resulted in SWAPO getting 53.7% of the valid votes cast. This, under the system of proportional representation, gave SWAPO 41 of the 72 seats available. Namibia became independent on 21st March 1990, thus marking a historic turning point as Africa and the world witnessing the end of South Africa's colonial occupation and the emergence of a free Namibia.

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(61) Minutes of the 36th Session of the Liberation Committee. Arusha, Tanzania. January 1981, p.75.

## South Africa

Like Angola, South Africa had two major liberation movements recognized by the Liberation Committee. These were the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC). The ANC was established on 8th January 1912 and the PAC was established on 6th April 1959. Chief Albert Luthuli was the President of the ANC until his death in 1969. Following Luthuli's death Oliver Tambo became the Acting President of the ANC. Other prominent leaders of the ANC who were in prison for quite a long time were Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, W. Mkwayi and Govan Mbeki. The other leaders who were in exile included A. Nzo, who was the Secretary General, J.B. Marks, Deputy Treasurer, M. Kotanei. M. Mabhida, Dr Dadoo and Joe Slovo.

The PAC leaders were Mangaliso Robert Sobukwe, President; Potlako Leballo, National Secretary; Templeton Ntantala, Commander of the armed forces of the PAC; E. Mfana, National Organizer and Acting Chairman; S.T. Ngandane, Secretary for Foreign Affairs; Zeph Mothupeng, National Executive Committee member; and Nyati Pokela, National Executive Committee member.

Apart from the ANC and the PAC, four years after the Liberation Committee was established, a political organization calling itself the Unity Movement of South Africa (UMSA) solicited recognition from the OAU. It continued doing so in every other session of the Liberation Committee. Time and again the organization's requests had been "examined at length" but recognition postponed pending a "more detailed study" of the activities of the organization. Without an official recognition and financial assistance from the Liberation Committee, the funds used by the movement were raised by the members themselves through their own efforts.<sup>62</sup>

As it was in the case of the MPLA and the FNLA in Angola, there were political, ideological, policy and personality differences between the ANC and the PAC. Ideologically, and in terms of policy the ANC was a rainbow of a lot of political orientations. In a sense, it was like a united front which embraced a lot of other political groups. For example, it had a fraternal relationship with the South African Indian Congress and the Coloured Peoples Organization from which they formed the Congress Alliance under the leadership of the ANC.

In terms of ideology and policy the ANC had an objective of uniting all those who wished to contribute to the struggle against racism irrespective of ideological affiliation. By this position the movement had Communists, Socialists, and members of other different political orientation within its membership. This simply meant that as far as the ANC was concerned the problem in South Africa was that of racial minority rule. This was more of a problem of lack of democracy in a multi-racial society.

The PAC, on the other hand, was more of a nationalistic organization. As far as the PAC was concerned the problem in South Africa was a colonial issue. The

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(62) Minutes of the 21st Session of the Liberation Committee. Accra, Ghana. January 1973. p.84.

organization considered the white racist rule in South Africa as a colonial rule which needed to be fought in order to emancipate the country.

Like the relationship between the MPLA and the FNLA in Angola, the ANC and the PAC did not have a cordial relationship. The ANC, for example, while acknowledging the existence of the PAC, did not consider the PAC as a true liberation movement.

### **The Role of the Liberation Committee in South Africa**

Apart from playing its mandated role in assisting the liberation movements in their struggle against colonialism and racist minority rule in Southern Africa, the Liberation Committee's activities in South Africa from mid 1960s to the whole of 1970s focused mainly on three major areas. The first was to sensitize the ANC and the PAC to speed up the process of the armed struggle inside the country. The second was to help the movements solve their internal leadership problems. Lastly, was to push the movements towards the formation of a united front.

While the last half of the 1960s could have been taken as the preparatory phase for the launching of the armed struggle by the two movements, and the 1970s should have been the operational and executing phase for the armed struggle, unfortunately, that was not the case. Numerous sessions of the Liberation Committee reported lack of significant military activities inside South Africa. Even the ANC and the PAC acknowledged the fact that the armed struggle was almost at a stand-still and none of them was able to give concrete proposals as to how the armed struggle could be activated and intensified. Both movements emphasized the tremendous difficulties they encountered in the infiltration of personnel and material into the country, especially during the rainy seasons, when conditions were not favourable for guerrilla activities.

The only meaningful activities taking place during the rainy seasons related to the armed struggle included concentrating on training of cadres outside and preparing underground activities inside the country. The PAC attributed the lack of progress at the war front partly to lack of adequate support from the Liberation Committee.

In order to address the problem of the low level of armed struggle, the Liberation Committee mandated the governments of Tanzania and Zambia, assisted by the Executive Secretariat, to look into the matter with a view to assist the South African liberation movements to form a united and effective fighting front. It was clear that the mandate had two objectives. The first was to address the problem of the low level of the armed struggle; and the second was to help the two movements to form a united front.

Due to the complexity of the South African problem, this assignment was not an easy one. During the 23rd Session of the Liberation Committee, held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, in May 1974 it was reported that the Governments of Tanzania and Zambia had expressed their inability to continue with the given mandate. Their explanation was that the task with which they had been entrusted was impossible.

This was mainly because the ANC had declared its position that it would not have any dialogue with the PAC. This being the case, there was not much that could be done.<sup>63</sup>

During its meeting of 16th August 1974 the Standing Committee on Policy and Information felt that time had come for devising another strategy for the advancement of the liberation struggle in South Africa and to submit recommendations to the next session of the Committee. The Standing Committee recommended the expansion of the Ad-Hoc Committee for reconciliation of South African liberation movements to include Algeria, Ghana and Egypt, that is, in addition to Tanzania and Zambia to whom the Standing Committee made a special appeal requesting them to continue with the task. The Ad-Hoc Committee was also invited to study in more details various ways of enhancing the struggle in South Africa.<sup>64</sup>

From mid 1960s to the end of the 1980s the Liberation Committee was also preoccupied with the issue of assisting the ANC and the PAC to resolve their internal leadership crises. For several years the PAC had continuous internal crises arising mainly out of personality differences and what could be described as inadequate and ineffective leadership. One of these crises erupted towards the end of 1977. One afternoon at a PAC camp near Dar-es-Salaam an ugly incident took place at a rally which was being addressed by the Chairman, Mr Potlako Leballo. The incident resulted into physical injuries.

When the matter was brought to the attention of the Executive Secretary, immediate and prompt action was taken, in collaboration with the host Government to arrest the situation. As a result of this incident the leadership of the PAC was requested to explain the root-cause of the problem. The explanation given by the PAC leadership was that the incident was caused by unruly and undisciplined cadres who had no respect for the leadership. Mr Leballo himself gave assurance that such incident would not reoccur.

A few months after this incident, however, an ugly and more serious incident took place in one neighbourhood in Dar-es-Salaam. In broad day light PAC cadres started beating one another in the manner unbecoming of members of a liberation movement. It took the intervention of the Executive Secretariat to get the release of over 70 cadres who were to appear in court to answer charges in connection with the incident.<sup>65</sup>

After the two incidents the competent authorities within the Tanzania Government worked very closely with the Executive Secretariat and in full cooperation with the leadership of the PAC in an effort to resolve the problem within the party amicably. The efforts to find an amicable solution within the PAC culminated in the Consultative Conference which took place in Arusha, Tanzania from 27th June to 2nd July 1978. In the hope that the PAC would use this opportunity to clean its house and iron out all differences, every assistance was given to the party morally, financially and materially.

(63) Minutes of the 23rd Session of the Liberation Committee. Yaoundé, Cameroon. May 1974. p.81.

(64) Ibid. p.81.

(65) Minutes of 33rd Session of the Liberation Committee. Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania. June 1979. p.46.

Unfortunately, the result of the Arusha Conference fell far below expectations. Nevertheless, the Government of Tanzania and the Executive Secretariat accepted the decisions made by the PAC mainly as a respect to the sovereignty of the party. One of the major decisions made at the conference was the expulsion of a number of members of the Central Committee and some cadres, and the election of a new Central Committee.<sup>66</sup>

A few months after the Arusha Conference more problems erupted within the new Central Committee. This time the problem involved more serious incidents whereby some arms were illegally smuggled into Tanzania. At this stage again the attention of the PAC leadership was drawn to the seriousness of the situation. By now it was getting clearer and clearer that the crises within the PAC rotated around its top leadership.

The problems of internal leadership crises within the liberation movements and the issue of unity were not resolved until February 1990 when the political situation in South Africa changed drastically following the announcement by the racist President F.W. de Klerk of the unbanning of the ANC, the PAC, the South African Communist Party and a host of other mass organizations and anti-apartheid groups. The unbanning of the liberation movements was accompanied with the release of Nelson Mandela on 11th February 1990.

The unbanning of the national liberation movements and the release of Mandela and other related developments occurred soon after the UN had endorsed the essential elements of the Harare Declaration. The Harare Declaration was adopted by the OAU Ad-Hoc Committee of Heads of State on Southern Africa and it contained a well-articulated negotiation concept to end apartheid. This historic Declaration was endorsed and adopted by the Non-Alignment Movement and was the basis on which the UN Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in South Africa was adopted by the Special Session of the General Assembly in December 1989.<sup>67</sup>

These political developments led to the commencement of exploratory talks between the ANC and the Pretoria regime. The talks aimed at removing all remaining obstacles to genuine constitutional negotiations. The political developments led also to the improvement of relations between the ANC, the PAC and other anti-apartheid movements in South Africa. The improved relationship culminated into the historic meetings between the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom Party of Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi and between the ANC and the PAC which took place inside South Africa on 29th January and 4th February 1991 respectively.

Following the unbanning of the liberation movements, the ANC and the PAC were able to re-establish themselves inside South Africa. In December 1990 both movements successfully held their party conference inside South Africa for the first time in 31 years. During the February 1991 meeting between the ANC and the PAC the

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(66) Ibid. p.47.

(67) Report of the 53rd Session of the Liberation Committee to the Council of Ministers. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. February 1990. p.15.

two movements expressed, for the first time in three decades, their readiness to forge a broad united front against the common enemy. The National Executive Committees of the two movements held a historic joint meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe from 15th to 16th April 1991 and decided to convene a Patriotic Congress of all democratic organizations of the oppressed people in August 1991. This conference was held in Durban in October 1991 under the name of the Patriotic United Front Conference. It was attended by the widest-ever representation of the oppressed people in the history of South Africa.

From the spirit of the Patriotic United Front Conference a Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) was convened from 20th - 21st December 1991. Preparations for this convention involved twenty political parties and organizations. The meeting was attended by international observers from the OAU, the UN, the Commonwealth, the Non-Aligned Movement and the European Community. The only regrettable thing about the meeting was that its preparatory stage was bedevilled with strong misgivings and suspicions by the PAC against the ANC, a situation which forced the former to convene an Extra-ordinary Congress a week before CODESA.<sup>68</sup> This special congress was held to consider whether to participate in the first session of CODESA. The outcome of the Congress was that the PAC decided to withdraw from CODESA while at the same time re-affirmed its commitment to the Patriotic United Front Conference.

The withdrawal of the PAC from CODESA, which was considered as the genuine negotiating forum, complicated the issue of the appropriate strategy to be adopted by the liberation movements in order to confront the racist regime at this crucial stage of the struggle. Whereas the ANC had suspended military operations to allow negotiations to forge ahead, the PAC called for the intensification of the armed struggle.<sup>69</sup>

The withdrawal of the PAC from CODESA and the issue of the different approach in terms of strategy between the ANC and the PAC revived the problem of disunity among the major liberation movements. This situation, obviously, impacted negatively on the last and crucial stage of the struggle. Closely linked to the problem of disunity was the scourge of violence which gripped the black community. Regardless of the signing of the National Peace Accord by the racist regime and the anti-apartheid forces, which was supposed to end the tragic and senseless bloodshed in South Africa, township violence continued.

As far as the negotiations with the racist regime were concerned the multilateral approach was adopted. The multi-party negotiations resulted in the adoption of a "Declaration of Intent" and a provisional date for South Africa's first non-racial elections. It was decided that the general elections be held on 27th April 1994. The elections were held on that date whose outcome was the impressive victory of the

(68) Report of the 57th Session of the Liberation Committee. Arusha, Tanzania. February 1992. p.11.

(69) Ibid. p.37.



ANC who formed the first non-racial and democratic government in South Africa with Mr Nelson Mandela as the first South Africa's black President.

## Conclusion

The successful decolonization process in Namibia in 1990 and the abolition of apartheid in South Africa in 1994 heralded the accomplishment of the mandate of the OAU Liberation Committee. Obviously, the end of colonialism and institutionalized racism in Africa was indeed a victory not only for the Liberation Committee and the OAU but also for the entire African continent.

Following the accomplishment of its mandate the Liberation Committee held its last session (Sixty First Session) in Tunis, Tunisia, from 4th - 5th June 1994. The session made specific recommendations to wind up the activities of the Liberation Committee. On movable assets of the Committee it was proposed that all movable assets should be entrusted to the OAU Headquarters which would determine what to do with them. On balance of funds it was recommended that any balance of funds after the closing of the books of the Committee should be transferred to the OAU Peace Fund. Another recommendation was that all immovable assets (buildings) should be handed over to the Government of Tanzania. Recognizing the fact that the mandate of the Committee had been terminated the session recommended that all outstanding arrears of contribution owed the Special Fund should be written off as an exceptional case. By the same token all excess contribution by Member States should be offset against their contribution to the regular budget of the OAU.

Regarding the staff of the Executive Secretariat the session recommended that all internationally recruited staff should be redeployed to Headquarters or wherever the Secretary-General may decide within the available established posts. The locally recruited staff should be paid appropriate terminal benefits in accordance with existing rules and regulations of the OAU.

The session also recommended that consultations should be undertaken by the Secretary-General and the Executive Secretary for a special one day solemn ceremony in Tanzania to formally wind up the Liberation Committee. The date for such a ceremony should be announced as soon as possible to ensure maximum attendance by Heads of State and Government. And finally, a formal Resolution should be drafted for adoption by the 30th Assembly of Heads of State and Government terminating the mandate of the Liberation Committee.

These recommendations were adopted by the Sixtieth Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers held in Tunis, Tunisia. The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU, meeting in its Thirtieth Ordinary Session in Tunis, Tunisia from 13th to 15th June 1994 adopted a Resolution that recognized the successful accomplishment of the mandate of the Liberation Committee. It also decided to formally terminate that mandate and directed that a solemn one day Special Summit of African leaders be held in Tanzania by the end of July or early in August 1994 for that purpose.

The solemn one day Special Summit took place in Arusha on 15th August 1994. It was attended by nine Heads of State and Government; two Vice-Presidents; one Prime Minister; and nine Foreign Ministers. The Summit was honoured with the presence of one of the OAU Founding Fathers, Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere, who delivered the keynote address. The ceremony marked the end of the mandate of the Liberation Committee.

### **Achievements**

Throughout the over thirty years of the OAU existence, the Liberation Committee became the most successful organ of the OAU. The Liberation Committee was dissolved in 1994 not because of its failure but due to the successful fulfilment of its mandate. With the major task of assisting the African liberation movements to achieve the total liberation of Africa from colonialism and racial minority rule, its winding up came about only after the end of colonialism in Namibia and the end of apartheid in South Africa. This was the culmination of a long and bitter struggle against colonialism and racial minority rule in various parts of the continent.

It was gratifying to note that out of twenty two countries which gained independence after the founding of the OAU and the establishment of the Liberation Committee in 1963, eleven countries attained self-determination and independence through, among other means, the direct assistance of the Liberation Committee.

The first credit for this achievement should go to the Founding Fathers of the OAU who set themselves the objective of the total liberation of Africa from colonialism and racial minority rule as their priority number one. The importance which they attached to this objective could be judged from the fact that the establishment of the Liberation Committee was among the first decisions that were made during the OAU's inaugural meeting in May 1963. The second credit goes to the OAU Member States who, for thirty years contributed morally, politically, diplomatically and materially to the objective of seeing Africa free itself from the scourge of colonial oppression,

It was due to Member States' firm commitment that many of them provided rear bases, training and other forms of assistance to the liberation movements. The Member States deserved to be praised for their commendable role played throughout the struggle against colonialism and apartheid.

The third credit goes to the members of the Liberation Committee who, for thirty years, worked hard in assisting the liberation movements. In military terms, the Liberation Committee constituted a rear base in support of the frontline fighters. Those who deserve to be thanked also for the Liberation Committee's achievement are the Executive Secretary of the Liberation Committee Brigadier General Hashim Mbita and his staff who devoted their time and energy to plan strategy and ensure that the Liberation Committee lived up to its expectations.

Brigadier-General Mbita's 22 years of service to the Liberation Committee was exceptional. He managed the affairs of the Executive Secretariat with a high sense of commitment and dedication. He was not a couch-potato sort of an administrator

but one who was actively involved even in the war front. The Mozambicans recall his visits to the FRELIMO-controlled areas in Mozambique during the armed liberation struggle. These visits were obviously a morale booster to the freedom fighters.

Those who deserve the most credit for the success of the Liberation Committee are the national liberation movements and their freedom fighters. It was these liberation movements and their freedom fighters who boldly and physically challenged the colonial and the racist regimes in Southern Africa militarily. The freedom fighters sacrificed their lives so that others could live in peace, freedom and dignity. And finally, it is important to appreciate the contribution of the international support to the achievement of the Liberation Committee. The UN, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth, the Nordic countries, the socialist countries and anti-apartheid groups contributed morally, diplomatically and materially to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa.

### **Challenges**

While appreciating the achievements of the Liberation Committee during the armed struggle in Southern Africa it is equally important to recognize the challenges that the Liberation Committee faced during its time of existence. The first challenge was obviously the formidable economic and military power of the colonial and racist minority regimes. The liberation movements, the neighbouring countries that supported them and the Liberation Committee had to face up particularly the military might of these regimes. They had to pay high and heavy price both in blood and material through the loss of many lives and destruction of property at the hands of the colonial and racist regimes. These regimes unleashed a campaign of terror and destruction resulting in the deaths of hundreds of innocent people and the maiming of others. Regardless of these atrocities, the liberation movements had to continue with the armed struggle and the neighbouring countries and the Liberation Committee had no choice but to continue supporting them.

Another challenge for the Liberation Committee was not having adequate resources to support the liberation movements. This was one of the major challenges facing not only the Liberation Committee but also the OAU in general, the liberation movements as well as the neighbouring states. The major source of funds for the Liberation Committee was contributions from the OAU Member States to the Special Fund.

Years in years out many Member States of the OAU were not up to date with their contributions to the Special Fund. Usually the annual budget of the Liberation Committee did not exceed US\$ 3.5 million. But the annual collection hardly reached half of the amount. By February 1992 for example, the Liberation Committee was in arrears to the tune of US\$ 14 million.<sup>70</sup> Numerous appeals from the Liberation Committee, the Council of Ministers and the Assembly to Member States to pay up

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(70) Report of the 57th Session of the Liberation Committee. Arusha, Tanzania. February 1991. p.27.

always went unheeded. Lack of adequate resources was always the major complaint to the OAU by the liberation movements.

This issue of some Member States of the OAU not meeting their financial obligations to the Liberation Committee was an expression of the level of their commitment to the liberation struggle. It explained the fact that not every African country played an active part in the work of the Liberation Committee. While the level of commitment of some Member States was very low, at the same time there was a vanguard of African countries which were highly committed to the total liberation of the continent. Among these were the Frontline States plus Nigeria, Libya, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guinea, Senegal, Algeria and Ghana.

The Liberation Committee also faced the challenge of animosity between the liberation movements. Clear examples were the cases of the MPLA and the FNLA in Angola and the one between the ANC and the PAC in South Africa. It was one of the tasks of the Liberation Committee to help the liberation movements to work in unity. When unity among the freedom fighters failed the armed struggle for Africa's total liberation received a setback.

The Liberation Committee spent a lot of energy in trying to reconcile the movements and in trying to impress upon them to form a united front. In both cases the Liberation Committee was not successful. Finally, another challenge for the Liberation Committee was to resolve conflicts within the individual liberation movements. All the liberation movements in Southern Africa were affected by this problem, The Liberation Committee succeeded in resolving them in some liberation movements and failed in others.

# 9.7

## **UN Contribution to The Liberation Struggle of Southern Africa**

**By Dr. E. Kisanga and Ulli Mwambulukutu**

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# I: Introduction

The United Nations contributed immensely towards the Liberation Struggle of Southern Africa, which for purposes of this Chapter applies specifically to the five countries directly involved in the final stages of the struggle against colonial and racist domination in the African sub-region. These are: Angola, Mozambique, Namibia (South West Africa), Zimbabwe (Southern Rhodesia) and South Africa.<sup>1</sup> The contribution of the UN to the liberation struggle of Southern Africa, however, deserves a critical analysis of developments, which led the world organization to act, albeit belatedly, in support of the struggle. The principle of the UN Charter agreed at the founding San Francisco Conference in 1945 also serves as the basis for UN action. This role has to be seen in the overall context of the decolonization process, especially during the immediate post-war period with the increased urge never to repeat the events that led to World War II.<sup>2</sup> In San Francisco, all signatories embraced the principles of the Charter, including opposition to all forms of domination. The UN founder nations saw colonialism and racialism as morally reprehensible, a setback to human development, and a threat to international peace and security.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, the UN was foreseen in the Charter as a credible vehicle for championing the cause of human development; under the Charter, the right to self-determination and independence was also given due attention.<sup>4</sup> Rightly, African liberation movements looked to the UN Charter to legitimize and internationalize their demands, including the right to self-determination, respect for human rights and enjoyment of freedoms without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. This is what drove them to engage in the internecine struggles towards self-rule, independence and a deserved place among the community of nations.

By the 1960s more and more independent African states emerged onto the world scene and joined UN membership in increasing numbers. Their admission into the UN helped push Africa on the forefront of the international agenda for the total elimination of colonialism and racial domination in the continent. Although the liberation struggle in Southern Africa was primarily the responsibility of people and national liberation movements in the specific territories, it required the broad international support and mainly from UN. Africa, Asia, Latin America, as well as countries in the Eastern Block and Scandinavia became the natural allies of the liberation movements. Real progress was made with the founding of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1962. The OAU contributed not only towards consolidation of African unity, but also strengthened Afro-Asian Solidarity and became a part of the formidable voice within the Non-aligned Movement (NAM). The voice of liberation

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(1) *Charter of the United Nations*, Article 1, Chapters XI, XII, and XIII.

(2) The Charter promised new hope for mankind and to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

(3) Article 1(2) provides for the principle of self-determination of peoples; Article 1 (3) is on respect for human rights and enjoyment of fundamental freedoms.

(4) See UN Charter, Chapters XI, XII and XIII.

resonated especially well in the General Assembly, where the foundations for future UN-OAU collaboration on African liberation and independence were also laid.

Special mention also ought to be made of the timely emergence of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and its contribution to the African decolonization process and the anti-apartheid struggle. Created during the collapse of the colonial system and the independence struggles of the peoples of Africa, Asia, Latin America and elsewhere in the world, the Movement was a key factor in support of the struggle against all forms of domination. From the Bandung Conference (April 18-24, 1955 and by 1960) to its formal founding, it was fully complemented during the 15th Ordinary Session of the UN General Assembly. Seventeen new African and Asian countries were admitted into the UN at this time. NAM's mission statement was unambiguous. Its primary objectives included: the support of self-determination, national independence and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States; opposition to apartheid; the struggle against colonialism, neocolonialism, racism, foreign occupation and domination. This commitment to "ceaseless battle to ensure that peoples being oppressed by foreign occupation and domination can exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence", assured the anti-colonial struggle a place in the international forums. Cuba remained a leading member of NAM and its role in the decolonization process and the anti-apartheid struggle in Southern Africa, has been acknowledged internationally.<sup>5</sup>

Still, the liberation struggle in Southern Africa continued to elude speedy and concerted action by the UN. This was mainly because of entrenched national interests, especially from among the major powers (Britain and the United States). No wonder colonialism and racialism in Southern Africa persisted well into the 1990s with liberation and independence arriving too late and at great cost, both in terms of human life and development. It is unthinkable that the most powerful UN member nations would remain so impervious to the principles of the Charter and continue to impede progress towards liberation in Southern Africa. The Tanzania Permanent Representative to the UN in the 1970s, Ambassador Salim Ahmed Salim, shared some thoughts on the UN handling of the question of colonialism. Ambassador Salim, who had also chaired two important UN committees - the UN Decolonization Committee and the Security Council Committee on Sanctions against Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), maintained that there was no real basis for the major powers to deny UN action on the issue of self-determination for all colonial territories. He pointed out that the UN Charter and related declarations represented adequate *raison*

(5) The Bandung Conference held in 1955 stated in a communiqué: "colonialism in all its forms and manifestations was an evil which should be speedily brought to an end; the 1956 Accra All African Peoples Conference, followed by the 1960 Addis Ababa Second Conference of Independent African States, called for independence and immediate end to colonialism. On NAM, also see: Document on History and Evolution of the Non-Aligned Movement, prepared for the XV NAM Summit, Sharm El Sheikh, 11-16 July 2009, Egypt Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



*d'être* for UN member States to fully abide by the principle of self-determination and extend support to the African liberation movements.<sup>6</sup>

## Declaration on Decolonization

The UN General Assembly action on decolonization, however, also had to deal with a number of implementation loopholes, including areas where the Charter does not specifically assign colonialism matters to any particular UN body. This made it easy for colonial powers to shirk on their responsibility to decolonize territories under them. Since most of the UN member States were in principle strongly against colonialism, the General Assembly, emboldened by the increasing African UN membership and allies from Asian and Latin American countries, took on the responsibility to steer discussions on the anti-colonial agenda in the UN. Since no colonizing power was prepared to go on public record as openly against the majority UN anti-colonial stance, the Assembly effectively encouraged debate on this important issue. Attempts by the administering powers to prevent the UN from expanding its role in colonial matters, were stopped by the tide in world opinion calling for increased UN involvement in the process of decolonization.<sup>7</sup>

The application of Article 73 (transmission of information from Non-Self-Governing Territories), for example, also impacted UN action on the situation in Southern Africa. The administering authorities remained reluctant to meet the requirement on transmission of information on developments in their colonial territories. The British Government, for instance, considered Southern Rhodesia a “self-governing territory” and, therefore it claimed that Rhodesia was not covered by Article 73. However, Britain only changed this position following the rebel regime’s unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) in 1965. On the other hand, Portugal remained ever recalcitrant claiming that its colonial territories (including Angola and Mozambique) were its “overseas provinces” and not subject to Article 73. The role of the UN in the liberation struggles of Rhodesia and the former Portuguese territories - Angola and Mozambique – is covered in the territory specific section of this Chapter. The 1960 General Assembly session proved to be most decisive in matters of decolonization. This was very much aided by the presence of 16 new African states and Cyprus in the UN, raising to 44 the number of African and Asian nations, out of a total membership of 100. The voice against colonial and racist domination grew stronger and stronger; by the close of the august session a draft text of a Declaration

(6) Ambassador Salim, who later became his country’s Foreign Minister, Prime Minister and Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), spent most of his career working on issues of colonialism and liberation struggle in Africa. In discussions with him at his retirement residence in Dar es Salaam he referred to his Mimeographed Paper: The Committee of 24: Its Role in the Process of Decolonization, Columbia University School of International Affairs, 28 November 1973. Ambassador Salim, believes the points raised in his paper and subsequent interviews on his role in the liberation struggle of Southern Africa remain valid.

(7) See Encyclopedia of the Nations-United Nations - Independence of Colonial Peoples website. The colonial powers disputed the General Assembly action on the submission of reports (Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories) on the various territories based on requirements by the Charter under paragraph (e) of Article 73.

on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples had already been crafted. The draft became a precursor to the future guidelines regarding UN contribution towards decolonization and African liberation according to the Charter Declaration. The draft declaration underlined in its preamble “the important role of the United Nations in assisting the movement for independence in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories.”

When the Declaration was put to a vote on 14 December 1960, there was no negative vote recorded. The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples was adopted 89–0, with only nine abstentions (Australia, Belgium, the Dominican Republic, France, Portugal, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States).<sup>8</sup>

In 1961, the General Assembly debated the problem of implementing the Declaration and overwhelmingly voted for the creation of a 17-member Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. However, given the importance attached to the work of the Special Committee, membership kept increasing and at one point the membership had risen to 24 (the Committee is also referred to as the Committee of 24). Important colonial powers, including Britain and the United States, initially joined membership of the Special Committee, while others like France, Spain, Portugal and South Africa stayed out. Britain and the United States, however, later suspended their cooperation with the committee, which was in a way to the advantage of debates in the General Assembly; the deliberations became vehemently anti-colonialist.

In 1963, the General Assembly assigned the Special Committee important responsibilities, including the right to brief the Security Council on matters deemed a threat to international peace and security; examine information on non-self-governing territories; and dispatching visiting missions to dependent territories. Thus the Special Committee evolved into the General Assembly’s leading arm on colonial issues and for piloting UN contribution to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. The General Assembly further tasked the Special Committee to handle problems concerning individual colonial territories, as well as other related issues, including “the role played by foreign and military interests that are impeding the attainment of independence or exploiting natural resources of the territories that rightfully belong to the indigenous inhabitants”<sup>9</sup>

The Special Committee also actively disseminated information on colonial problems, mobilized international support and assistance for the colonial peoples in their struggle for self-determination and independence. The General Assembly has continued to play a leading role in the decolonization process and as recently as 1988 declared 1990–2000 as the Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. The decade’s

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(8) See UN resolution 1514 (XV).

(9) Encyclopedia of the nations.

plan of action for the Special Committee was adopted in 1991. It called for the total eradication of colonialism by the year 2000. Perhaps that may have sounded too ambitious or too late, but it was within the decade that the last of the five Southern African countries, Namibia (21 March 1990) and South Africa (10 May 1994), attained liberation and independence. In the plan, the General Assembly tasked the Special Committee to:

- formulate specific proposals for the elimination of the remaining manifestations of colonialism, and to report its findings each year to the General Assembly;
- make concrete suggestions to the Security Council about developments in colonial territories that threaten international peace and security;
- pay special attention to small territories, and dispatch visiting missions to those territories to gather information firsthand; and
- continue to collect, prepare and disseminate studies and articles on the problems of decolonization.<sup>10</sup>

### **Cold War and Liberation struggle**

From this, we read continued efforts to mobilize international action in support of decolonization and the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. The contribution of the UN remained crucial in arriving at a speedy resolution of the conflict in all Southern Africa (Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa). Unfortunately, the liberation process was held up for reasons beyond the lofty principles of the UN Charter and the Declaration. The attitude of the West, especially those with the power of veto in the Security Council, made matters very difficult for the Southern African liberation movements. At the height of the Cold War, world powers clung to their individual interests (strategic, economic and political) with East-West rivalry looming ever large. Britain and the United States, representing Western interests, were too involved in rivalries with the Eastern bloc countries, led by Russia and China, to effectively work with the UN in support of the liberation struggle.

Noting that the road to a peaceful liberation struggle was being blocked, the African freedom fighters were left with little room, but to engage the enemy in armed combat. In this, they counted on the support of the new African nations in the UN, along with their allies in the General Assembly. Such support was vital in winning concerted action and votes in the General Assembly and in pushing the liberation agenda high up in the Security Council. Through work in the General Assembly, representatives of the Southern African liberation movement were later invited to participate as observers rather than mere petitioners in the forums of the UN.<sup>11</sup>

(10) Encyclopedia of the nations mentions continuation of the periodical "Objective: Justice and the special series called Decolonization."

(11) *Liberation in Southern Africa: Regional and Swedish Voices*, Edited by Tor Sellstrom, Second Edition 2002, Elander Gotab, Stockholm discusses in detail the bridge-building role of Scandinavian countries, working with either East or West to agree a common UN position on decolonization and liberation struggle issues.

It is against this background that the Chapter assesses the role of the UN in the liberation struggle of each of the five Southern African countries. It starts with a general overview of the work of the UN Special Committee on Decolonization in relation to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa; then examines the territory specific liberation efforts; and notes the contribution of the UN and its relevant organs (the Security Council, General Assembly, specialized agencies and committees established to support liberation struggles in Southern Africa.

## II: Special Decolonization Committee

The role of the UN in the liberation struggle of Southern Africa was set in the aims of its founding, focusing on facilitating cooperation in international law, security, economic development, social progress, human rights and achieving world peace. However, the role of the UN regarding decolonization and liberation, found particular expression in the work of the Special Committee on Decolonization. Still, ten years after the General Assembly promulgation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (1960–1970), the world organization had very little to show regarding progress in the decolonization process. According to documented UN figures, only 27 territories with a total population of 53 million people had achieved independence by 1970. More than 44 territories with a population of about 28 million were still under colonial or white minority domination.<sup>12</sup>

Meanwhile, liberation movements were opting for armed liberation struggle in the absence of progress by peaceful means alone. As a result, the liberation struggle increasingly assumed international dimension. In territories under Portugal, and soon in the other colonial situations of Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), racist South Africa and the occupied UN Trust Territory of South West Africa (Namibia) took up arms to free their countries. By the early 1960s, the armed struggle raging in most of the Portuguese territories (Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde, and São Tomé and Príncipe), was already being regarded as constituting a threat to international peace and security. Portugal, in particular felt the brunt of the liberation wars, leading to economic stagnation and slackening morale among troops in its colonial armies. The prospects for a regional conflagration, resulting from the growing collaboration between South Africa, Portugal, and the minority rebel regime in Rhodesia could hardly escape the attention of the UN.<sup>13</sup>

Meanwhile, the OAU openly encouraged the liberation movements to establish offices and rear bases away from their territories in order to benefit from the relative safety of the newly independent African states. The OAU Liberation Committee, based in Dar es Salaam (Tanzania), coordinated and facilitated the work of African liberation movements. Dar es Salaam and Lusaka (Zambia) became the Mecca for the Southern African liberation movements; virtually all movements had a presence

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(12) See Encyclopedia of the Nations: Independence of Colonial Peoples – Progress of Decolonization, website.

(13) Ibid.

in the two cities and in other up country locations. Tanzania (under President Julius Nyerere) and Zambia (under President Kenneth Kaunda) not only dedicated their energy to the cause of African liberation, but also wholeheartedly supported (morally and materially) the liberation movements struggling for self-determination and independence in the sub-region. Zambia, however, was in a more delicate situation than Tanzania because of its proximity to Rhodesia and the Portuguese colonies of Angola and Mozambique, as well as “touching” on the South African occupied Caprivi Strip. Therefore, Tanzania was considered relatively secure for the liberations movements to operate, including setting up training camps to prepare for the onslaught on the colonial and racist regimes in the sub-region. As Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe attained liberation, the reach of liberation movements in the remaining territories also expanded.<sup>14</sup>

The Afro-Asian group in the UN continued to press for international action in the General Assembly. On the recommendation of the Special Committee on Decolonization, the Assembly looked for ways and means to prevent the situation in Southern Africa from imploding out of control. The attention of the UN turned towards supporting liberation movements in the five Southern African territories and the General Assembly decided that the UN should hear firsthand from the representatives of the African liberation movement. The African Group also led the call for tough measures, including mandatory economic sanctions by the Security Council, against colonial and racist minority regimes in Southern Africa. The Western powers (Britain and the United States), however, would not readily agree to the idea of imposing sanctions, claiming that it would be inconceivable for the UN “to embark upon a direct policy of confrontation with the economically wealthy white-minority regimes of southern Africa.” The least they came to accepting anything in this regard was sanctions in connection with the rebellious Rhodesian regime.<sup>15</sup>

Notable progress was made in 1971 when the Special Committee decided to conduct a mission to the liberated areas of Portuguese Guinea (Guinea Bissau). This was at the invitation of the leader of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), Amilcar Cabral. The Committee Chairman, Ambassador Salim Ahmed Salim, led the multi-national mission. In discussions with him in Dar es Salaam he described the mission as having been intricate, but with profound results for the African liberation movement. According to Ambassador Salim, the Portuguese government was “totally opposed to the idea” of a mission to its territory of Guinea Bissau. Portugal held the myth that “there was nothing like liberated areas,” claiming that “Portugal was pluri-continental” and that all the Portuguese colonies were “part of Portugal.” The Special Committee insisted on undertaking the mission in order to demystify the “no colonial territories” perception. The Special Committee

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(14) See George M. Houser, African Liberation Movements; Report on a Trip to Africa, in *JSTOR: Africa Today*, Vol. No. 14 Spring 1967.

(15) *Ibid.*

also reckoned that the mission to the liberated areas would help “give legitimacy to the liberation movements.”

Ambassador Salim assessed that the mission achieved “a dramatic breakthrough in international understanding in terms of (accord) greater legitimacy to the liberation movement vis-à-vis the United Nations.”<sup>16</sup> It also presented the opportunity for formal UN recognition of the liberation movements. Immediately after the visit to Guinea Bissau’s liberated areas, the Special Committee convened a review meeting of the whole in Conakry, capital of neighboring Guinea. In New York, following the recommendation of the Special Committee, the Fourth Committee (political) invited representatives of liberation movements to participate in its work as legitimate observers.<sup>17</sup>

Significantly, PAIGC leader Amilcar Cabral happened to be at UN Headquarters in New York and the Special Committee tried to get him address the General Assembly. However, such a move did not please many a UN member, including the usually sympathetic Scandinavian countries. Ambassador Salim explained the mood at the time, saying it was inconceivable for liberation movement leaders to address the General Assembly, even when the notion had majority support. Indeed, at the suggestion of Scandinavian diplomats, regarded as “bridge-builders” between East and West, this was not the time to insist on Cabral speaking. One of these diplomats told Ambassador Salim: “Look, we are not happy with this (idea of Amilcar Cabral addressing the GA). Legally, it gives us problems if representatives of the liberation movements address the General Assembly. It has not been done before and it causes a lot of problems.”<sup>18</sup>

Amilcar Cabral was equally magnanimous when informed about the Scandinavian position. He decided not to offend them, saying: “They have supported us through thick and thin and we do not want to embarrass them. I will not address the General Assembly.” He could not address that General Assembly session nor did he have any other opportunity to do so in future. He was assassinated in January 1973, leaving behind an indelible legacy of perseverance in the struggle for liberation. This was not the first Portuguese engineered assassination attempts on leaders of liberation movements. In 1969, the leader of the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO), Dr. Eduardo Mondlane, was assassinated by a letter bomb in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The assassination of Cabral meant that the liberation struggle in the

(16) In discussions with Ambassador Salim A. Salim in Dar es Salaam he referred to his Mimeographed Paper: The Committee of 24: Its Role in the Process of Decolonization, Columbia University School of International Affairs, 28 November 1973. According to Ambassador Salim, the points raised in the paper remain valid.

(17) See Wikipedia. The UN Fourth Committee is one of six General Assembly committees consisting of all UN members. It was initially given jurisdiction over Trusteeship and Non-Self Governing Territories. However, after the dismantling of the trusteeship system, resulting from independence being granted to all the trust territories, it was merged with the Special Political Committee.

(18) See Tor Sellstrom interview with Ambassador Salim A. Salim, Copenhagen, 16 November 1995, for the Nordic African Institute, Uppsala, Sweden.

Portuguese colonies would no longer be the same. The struggle continued unabated, both on the ground and at the level of the UN.

### **Towards legitimization**

Portugal's continued refusal to heed the 1963 Security Council resolution calling on Lisbon to recognize the right of peoples to self-determination and independence; end the war in Angola, and negotiate with national liberation movements, was met by sustained international pressure. Portugal was expelled from the UN Economic

Commission for Africa (ECA), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO). This was just a beginning to the further ouster of Portugal from other international organizations. When the Security Council convened its first ever session in Africa in 1972 (it met in Addis Ababa, the

Ethiopian capital and seat of the OAU), it strongly condemned Portuguese colonialism. The Council also gave an audience to representatives of the liberation movements from Portuguese colonies and reaffirmed the colonized peoples' right

to liberation and independence. In another development, the UN and other international organizations recognized the MPLA, FRELIMO and PAIGC; MPLA representatives were also admitted to UNESCO, World Health Organization, the ECA and other organizations.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, the General Assembly officially declared that "the national liberation movements of Angola, Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, and Mozambique are the authentic representatives of the true aspirations of the peoples

of those territories." The Assembly requested all governments and UN bodies, when dealing with matters related to these territories, should invite the representatives of liberation movements concerned as participants. In 1973, the

General Assembly extended similar recognition to the national liberation movements of Southern Rhodesia and Namibia. Representatives of SWAPO and the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) fully utilized their presence in

New York to articulate on the situations in their territories during General Assembly meetings.<sup>20</sup>

These developments, along with increased liberation efforts and mounting international pressure against Portuguese colonialism, greatly contributed to the events leading to the 25 April 1974 military coup d'état in Lisbon. Young Portuguese army officers seized power in what came to be popularly known as the "Carnation Revolution". The coup had a cataclysmic impact on Portugal and on the geo-political map of its African colonies. On 27 July 1974, the new rulers in Portugal passed a decree taking into account the principles of the UN Charter on the right of peoples to self determination, opting for a peaceful resolution of all matters relating to overseas territories. The new regime proceeded with the immediate handover of power to the

(19) UN documents and other sources, including USSR and Countries of Africa, Chapter V: The Soviet Union and the Liberation of Southern Africa; web entry.

(20) See Yassim El-Ayouty, Legitimization of National Liberation: The United Nations and Southern Africa in Issue: *Journal of Opinion*, Vol 2, No. 4 (Winter 1972) pp 36-45). El-Ayouty on issues related to legitimization of liberation movements, giving their representatives observer status in UN meetings.

liberation movements, resulting in the Portuguese troops first exiting Guinea-Bissau in haste. The country not only became liberated and independent, but also entered into UN membership by the end of 1974. The rest of the former Portuguese colonies, including Mozambique (1975) and Angola (1976) followed suit. For purposes of this Chapter, however, only the liberation struggles in Angola and Mozambique are covered in the country specific assessments of the role of the UN in the Southern African liberation struggle.

### **III: Country Specific Situations**

#### **Angola Liberation Struggle**

The liberation struggle of Angola reflects the hundreds of years of Portuguese colonial domination dating back to the 1400s. Angola, like the rest of the former Portuguese colonies in Africa was categorized as Portugal's overseas province. Under a 1933 decree, Portugal gave itself total supremacy over all its colonies and by the 1950s, hundreds of Portuguese citizens were encouraged to migrate and settle in Angola.

Apart from early cravings for freedom and independence by loose Angolan nationalist elements, liberation efforts against Portuguese rule in Angola began in earnest in the early 1960s. The emergence of three rival liberation movements, each sworn to fight for liberation and independence from Portugal, saw to the launching of a serious armed liberation struggle in Angola. However, the three movements – the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) and National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) - harbored uncompromising rivalry compounded by different leadership styles, ideological orientation and the foreign support each courted. This made it impossible for the movements to forge a united national liberation front. The future direction of the liberation struggle in Angola was wrecked by the rivalries, which even affected the post-liberation situation as Angola sank into fractious civil conflict. The UN later found itself playing a peace keeping role to assist Angola return to normalcy.

The first shot of liberation struggle in Angola was fired by MPLA in a February 1961 revolt in Luanda, the country's capital. The revolt was met with brute force from the Portuguese authorities. More than 20,000 Angolans were massacred in Luanda. Other revolts followed in different parts of the country. The uprising in Luanda attracted international attention and in June 1961 the UN General Assembly established a sub-committee to investigate the situation in Angola. The sub-committee produced a report condemning the actions of the Portuguese forces. The events in Luanda also emboldened the rest of the liberation movements to fight on. The background and nature of the three main liberation movements are outlined below:<sup>21</sup>

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(21) See AFP Newsletter of Robin Wright Men at War: Angola's Liberation Leaders, 12 December 1975 (Robin Wright Story in.rtf).



- MPLA was founded in December 1956. Its declared aim was “ending colonial rule and building a new and unified society.” It was led by Dr. Agostinho Neto and his movement drew support from among the Kimbundu people and the intelligentsia in Luanda. Its external backing came from the Soviet Union and Cuba, but it also enjoyed wide support from independent African countries, especially neighbouring Zambia.
- National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), led by Holden Roberto, was formed in 1962. FNLA was an amalgam of two Bakongo groups. It operated from the north and counted on the backing of the United States, as well as African countries, especially Zaire (Democratic Republic of Congo).
- National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), under the leadership of Dr. Jonas Savimbi, was formed in 1966. It was a breakaway movement from FNLA and operated from Central/South Angola; it had a following among Ovimbundu, Chokwe and Ovambos. Externally, UNITA was backed by the United States and South Africa.

The involvement of the United States and the Soviet Union, the two permanent members of the UN Security Council with the power of veto, not only turned Angola into a fertile ground for cold war inspired proxy wars, but also affected decisions in the Security Council and in other key UN bodies. In fact, the rest of Southern Africa, in particular Namibia and South Africa, was later embroiled in inter-linked conflicts, placing the UN in an awkward dilemma to resolve.

The tensions inside Angola continued in the 1960s with the liberation war targeting the symbols of Portuguese colonial rule. Police stations and prisons, as well as government buildings and settler farms were attacked in different locations of the vast country. The liberation war intensified to the extent that wealthy Portuguese colonists fled to Portugal; thereby sending a clear message to Lisbon about the intensity of the situation. This is what eventually culminated into the war-weary Portuguese soldiers and their commanders staging a coup against Lisbon in April 1974. The coup changed the history of Portuguese rule in Africa forever.<sup>21</sup> The new Portuguese military junta chose to end the costly war and decided, under the Alvor

Accords, to immediately transfer power to the three Angolan liberation movements. Thus the first “nationalism and liberation” war in Angola (1961-1974) ended, *albeit* chaotically, leaving the three movements fumbling over the implementation of the Alvor Accords.<sup>22</sup>

The Alvor Accords was a result of three important meetings, attended by Agostinho Neto, Holden Roberto and Jonas Savimbi in Bukavu (Zaire), Mombasa (Kenya) and Alvor (Portugal) in July 1974, 5 January, and 10-15 January 1975 respectively, with

(22) Inge Brinkman in “Encyclopedia of African History, Volume 1 A-G, writes: “Portugal spent nearly half of its annual budget on the war in the colonies, in 1969 alone it sent some 150,000 troops to Africa and lost an average of 100 soldiers and more than 200 civilians annually in Angola.

the parties nominally agreeing to conduct the first elections in October 1975; and forming a government of national unity.

As soon as the Portuguese left Angola, however, the MPLA, FNLA and UNITA launched into cut-throat competition for the control of the country, including Cabinda, where the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC) fought spasmodically to separate from Angola. The Portuguese had left out FLEC from any negotiations for independence and it has remained a thorn in the Angolan body politic to-date. There was no progress on efforts to form a government of national unity in Angola.

UNITA and FNLA, egged on by their external backers, embarked on armed civil conflict to wrest power from MPLA, which was by now in control of the capital, Luanda, the coastal strip and oil-rich Cabinda. South Africa intervened on behalf of UNITA (sending 1,500 to 2,000 troops from Namibia into southern Angola) and Zaire for FNLA, in September and October 1975 respectively; the MPLA, which on 11 October 1975 declared independence, invited the Cubans to come to its aid in November 1975. This effectively internationalized the conflict in Angola. UNITA and FNLA formed a rival coalition government in Huambo, Central Angola, but in 1976 Lisbon and the UN recognized the MPLA government under Angola's first President Agostinho Neto. As expected, the United States was not happy to see left-leaning MPLA take power in Angola. The then US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger "considered any government involving the pro-Soviet, Communist MPLA, to be unacceptable and President Gerald Ford oversaw heightened aid to the FNLA."<sup>23</sup>

The new MPLA government in Luanda braced for confrontation with the opposing armies of FNLA and UNITA in a civil war, which was largely influenced by Cold War politics. The strategic interests of the United States and those of the Soviet Union, as well as the presence of fighting forces from South Africa and Cuba, played out dangerously in Angola. The abundance of oil and mineral wealth in Angola further helped fuel the civil war, affording the purchase of weapons of war (civil or proxy). The protracted civil war would thus leave Angola forever "mortgaged to billions of dollars."<sup>24</sup> The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) makes a pertinent observation about the extent to which the ferocious "Cold War" struggle for influence in Africa played itself out in Angola:

"Fighting against one foreign power started Angola's long chapter of violence and foreign powers have fueled the conflict since then. In 1975, Zairian troops entered the country in support of FNLA, South African forces invaded from the south to support UNITA, and Cuban troops arrived to defend areas under the MPLA's control. The war raged on through the latter part of the 1970s and into the 1980s with territory frequently changing hands. South African troops repeatedly entered Angola, and even occupied parts of southern Angola in the early 1980s, in order to back UNITA and

(23) Ibid. See Inge Brinkman on the first liberation war in Angola.

(24) *The Destruction of a Nation: United States Policy toward Angola since 1945* by George Wright. London: Pluto Press, 1997.

to attack Namibian rebels of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) who sheltered in Angola. The Cold War struggle for influence and control of Africa played itself out with ferocity in Angola as the USSR armed and backed the MPLA, and the USA, as well as South Africa, armed and backed UNITA.<sup>25</sup>

Jett also contrasts the Cold War involvement in the former Portuguese colonies of Mozambique and Angola, referring to author D. Birmingham where he notes that “the superpower involvement in Mozambique was predominantly covert”, unlike in Angola where “a war-by-proxy between the United States and the Soviet Union replaced Vietnam as one of the foci of Cold War confrontation between East and West.”<sup>26</sup> This further illustrates the dilemma of the international community to effectively contribute towards sustainable liberation and independence in Angola. At best, the UN role in Angola became more visible during the post-liberation period when the international community sought peaceful means to independence for Namibia. The UN later dispatched Security Council authorized peace-keeping missions to Angola to help MPLA and UNITA put their acts together; and help facilitate Namibia's road to independence.

### **Cold War situation**

The situation started to improve only when the super power strategic importance of Angola began to wane in the late 1980s amid increased thaw in the Cold War relations. The international community also became better inclined to sue peace in Southern Africa, helping create a positive environment for settlement in Angola and the rest of Southern Africa. The signing of the two agreements on 22 December 1988 concerned Namibian independence and the withdrawal from Angola of both the South African forces (completed by April 1989) and the Cuban troops, observed and verified by the United Nations Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM I). In April 1990 UNITA and the MPLA-led government of Angola entered into a series of peace talks. Although fighting continued as each party tried to raise its ante in order to negotiate from strength, the talks (brokered by Portugal, the USA and the USSR) were a success. On 31 May 1991, the parties signed the *Acordos de Paz para Angola*. The agreement, also known as the Bicesse Accords, provided for disarmament, the unification of the Government and UNITA forces and national elections.

Following the conclusion of the mandate of UNAVEM I on 25 May 1991, UNAVEM II (Resolution 696 to “observe and verify” the disarmament process and support creation of a new unified Angolan army) was authorized by the Security Council as the successor mission in Angola. Despite delays and violations of the Bicesse Accords, the peace process enabled the holding of elections in September 1992. The elections, which were deemed “generally free and fair” by the UN and other international observers, gave MPLA majority seats in the National Assembly.

(25) See Dennis C. Jett, *Why Peacekeeping Fails*, Palgrave, New York, 2001 pp.61-62, contrasting the situation in Angola and that of Mozambique in a chapter entitled: ‘Similar Histories, Different Outcomes.

(26) Ibid. Dennis C.Jett, p.65.

The Presidential vote, however, fell short of the required tally necessitating a run-off between MPLA's José Eduardo dos Santos and UNITA's Jonas Savimbi. UNITA chose to return to the war path and by October it managed to control a large part of the Angolan territory by October.

The UN mission continued its efforts to ensure full implementation of the Lusaka Protocol, which was signed on 20 November 1994. The Protocol, among other things, reiterated the principles of the Bicesse Accords, reestablished a cease-fire, and provided for the disarmament of all civilians, national reconciliation, and the completion of the electoral process. On 8 February 1995, the Security Council established UNAVEM III to assist the parties restore peace and achieve national reconciliation. This was the period known in UN circles as a "no war, no peace" situation in Angola with UNITA, in particular, continuing its intransigence. On 1 July 1997 the Security Council decided to terminate the mandate of UNAVEM III and replaced it with the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA). MONUA's mandate was to assist Angolans consolidate peace and national reconciliation; confidence-building and long-term stability; democratic development and national rehabilitation. A Government of National Unity and National Reconciliation (GURN) was inaugurated on 11 April 1997. In October 1997, the Security Council imposed further sanctions against UNITA. As a result, UNITA virtually severed contacts with MONUA and the MPLA-led Government.

### **UN role constrained**

The role of the UN in Angola suffered partly because of factors, including resource allocation and mandate issues. For example, even when the Security Council had increased the budget and expanded the mandate of UNAVEM (Security Council Resolution 747) the work remained largely frustrated. The Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in Angola, Margaret Anstee (notes), queried the value of asking the UN to implement agreements arrived at without its participation. She is particularly remembered for her terse remark about her mandate in Angola, likening it to "flying a Boeing 747 with only enough fuel for a DC3"<sup>27</sup>

Several rounds of negotiations for cease-fire in Angola, including talks in Namibe (Angola) in November 1992; Addis Ababa in January 1993; and Abidjan in April-May 1993 saw little action on implementation of the Bicesse Accord. The UN replaced Anstee with former Mali Foreign Minister Alioune Blondin Beye. His task was to bring the government and UNITA back to the negotiating table. They held meetings in Lusaka in June and November 1993 under the auspices of the UN. On 20 November 1994, the Lusaka Protocol was signed. UNITA's Savimbi was only represented at the signing ceremony.

The Lusaka Protocol is beyond the scope of this chapter, but it is important to mention it in order to show how the UN did its best to help bring peace and security

(27) See Manuel J. Paulo, Junior Research Fellow for the Africa Programme, Royal Institute of Foreign Affairs, London, UK; paper contributed to the British-Angola Forum, Conciliation Resources.

to Angola. With UNAVEM III, the UN had learned lessons from the inconclusive UNAVEM I and II. This time the UN was not only involved in negotiating the Lusaka Protocol, but also facilitated its implementation. The Troika countries (the US, USSR and Portugal) also assisted in the Lusaka negotiations. When the Security Council established UNAVEM III in 1995, it dispatched to Angola with a much improved mandate and increased UN involvement. Paulo notes the mandate of UNAVEM III with some satisfaction and writes:

“Under the Lusaka Protocol both sides were to conclude the 1992 election process under UN supervision, with the Special Representative chairing the Joint Commission to oversee the implementation of the protocol, including a ceasefire, quartering of UNITA soldiers and disarmament. The power-sharing clause also provided assurances to the UN that both parties had the political will to restore peace.”<sup>28</sup>

### **Humanitarian dimension**

The UN humanitarian role in Angola was deemed less controversial. Under conditions of conflict and attendant human suffering, going back to the liberation struggle, the UN humanitarian agencies had a relatively welcome presence in Angola. The UN Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit (UCAH) was established in Angola in 1993. Its assigned task was to coordinate humanitarian activities, including the repatriation of hundreds of refugees. UCAH assisted thousands of Angola’s internally displaced persons (IDPs); and distributed emergency food and medical service to the needy. UCAH, supported by UNAVEM, also effectively conducted the quartering process for UNITA demobilized soldiers. Unending tension and conflict in Angola, however, affected humanitarian operations as much as it did UNAVEM III. In the absence of peace and political will, especially on the part of UNITA, the UN role in Angola remained untenable. The Lusaka Protocol was too complex to implement and UNAVEM III mandate terminated in 1977. It was replaced by MONUA and UNOA, more as care taker missions than fully appointed UN operations. Meanwhile, the Government of Angola positioned itself to confront UNITA and takeover without Savimbi. In a combination of luck and fortune of a much changed international situation (complete thaw in Cold War situation) UNITA leader Savimbi was killed on 22 February 2002. The Angolan authorities decided they no longer needed a UN peace keeping presence in their country.

### **Summary of UN contribution**

The contribution of the UN to the liberation struggle of Angola was, therefore, not that visible during the period of nationalist liberation struggle (1960-1975). The Angolan liberation movement mostly benefited from the UN Charter principle of self-determination and sustained international pressure on Portugal to grant independence to its overseas possessions. The founding of the OAU on 25 May 1963

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(28) Ibid. Manuel J. Paulo.

also meant that the African liberation movement as a whole could count on the support of African members of the UN to internationalize their plight. The number of independent African countries in the UN topped 32 with all of them committed to the OAU Charter principle “to eradicate all forms of colonialism from Africa.”<sup>29</sup>

Serious lacks of political will among Angolan parties, in particular UNITA under Savimbi, compounded by the super power strategic interest in the region, prevented early arrival at a negotiated solution to the conflict. UNITA leader Savimbi would not accept anything short of total power, the presidency. A thaw in cold war relations in the late 1980s resulted in the super powers’ readiness to sue for peace in Angola and the rest of Southern Africa. The attention of the UN Security Council was also shifting toward other urgent situations such as achieving independence in Namibia, as well as the “pressing” situations in the Balkans, especially Bosnia and Herzegovina. Angola, helped by the presence of UN peace-keeping missions (UNAVEM-III), played its part in the liberation struggle in Southern Africa; it provided SWAPO fighters with a reliable rear base and helped facilitate the UN operation in Namibia. In the final analysis, since Angola was at the centre – either as victim or facilitator of the liberation struggles in the sub-region – it remained under constant view of the international community well after the post-liberation period.

## Mozambique Liberation Struggle

Like elsewhere in the Portuguese colonies, Mozambique was perceived as an overseas possession of Portugal and not eligible for independence in the manner other European powers transferred power to colonial peoples. As a result, the nationalist liberation movement in Mozambique evolved only in the 1960s. Several anti-colonial groups joined forces to demand independence from Portugal. In 1962, these groups formed the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO), led by ex-UN Staffer Dr. Eduardo Mondlane. FRELIMO launched an armed liberation struggle against Portuguese colonial domination in September 1964. Ten years of liberation struggle, coupled with the seismic changes in Portugal, mainly the military-led 1974 Carnation Revolution in Lisbon, saw Mozambique win independence on June 25, 1975.

Following the April 1974 coup, Portuguese colonialism collapsed. The new military ruler’s decision to withdraw from Mozambique was largely dictated by the victory of the decade-long armed liberation struggle, at first led by Dr. Mondlane, who was assassinated in 1969, and later by Samora Machel. At independence, the leaders of FRELIMO, characteristic of independent African States, extended support to the liberation movements of South Africa (African National Congress) and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU).

In turn, the minority-racist regimes of Rhodesia and apartheid South Africa propped up and financed an armed resistance group, the Mozambican National

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(29) *The Organization of African Unity Charter*, Article II.

Resistance Movement (RENAMO), whose objective was to reverse the gains of the Mozambican liberation struggle.

Civil war, sabotage from Rhodesia and South Africa, and attendant economic collapse characterized the first decade of Mozambique's independence. The ensuing civil war also occasioned mass exodus of Portuguese nationals, displacement (internal and external) of the population, and rendered the government ineffective. About a million Mozambicans died during the civil war, while about 1.7 million took refuge in neighboring states, and several million more were internally displaced. During the third FRELIMO party congress in 1983, President Samora Machel acknowledged the deteriorating situation and called for major political and economic reforms. However, Machel died, together with several advisers, in a suspicious 1986 plane crash.

The background to the liberation struggle of Mozambique is not different from that of the rest of the former Portuguese colonies. Portugal assumed influence in the south-east African country of Mozambique as early as the 15th century. However, Lisbon only formalized its colonial system by the early 1900s.<sup>29</sup> In 1962, Dr. Mondlane united the various anti-colonial groups to form the Movement for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO). FRELIMO launched its armed struggle against Portuguese rule in Mozambique with ready support African OAU countries and in particular from neighbouring Tanzania. It also had wide international backing from the UN as well as Europe, China and Asian countries.

FRELIMO, comprising various groups with different political inclinations, was soon faced with in-fighting requiring urgent clarification. The "purges" exercise instituted further weakened the liberation movement. The assassination of FRELIMO leader Dr Mondlane in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in 1969 made matters worse. Soon, FRELIMO picked itself up under the new leadership of Samora Moises Machel and direct support from Tanzania under Mwalimu Julius Nyerere's presidency. FRELIMO made guerrilla incursions into Mozambique from bases in Tanzania and successfully established itself in areas it liberated in Tete Province.

In 1970, Portugal hit back massively in an operation dubbed, *Operation ordian knot*, including deadly use of Napalm and infrastructure destruction. This resulted in much suffering among the Mozambican population. People were herded into *aldeamentos* (controlled settlements), culminating in the notorious Wiriamu Massacre by the Portuguese military commandoes in 1972.

Neighbouring South Africa had its own worries about progress in the liberation struggle in Mozambique. Bidding to stem the tide of the African National Congress (ANC) armed wing, *Umkhonto we Sizwe*, Portugal solicited the support of South Africa. The South African army was drawn into Mozambique's independence struggle. It suited the apartheid regime well as it sought to "create a white buffer zone across

the region involving Cahora Bassa hydro electric project on the Zambezi River."<sup>30</sup>

(30) Martin Rupiya, War and Peace in Mozambique, gives a historical context of the liberation struggle in Mozambique in his contribution to a *Accord: The Mozambique Peace Process in Perspective*, Published by Conciliation Resources, London, 1998 pp 10-17.

By April 1974, however, disenchantment over Portuguese overseas had grown apace. The toppling of the fascist regime in Portugal under the “Carnation Revolution,” changed the situation in favour of liberation and independence for Mozambique. The 60,000 plus Portuguese colonial troops were to pull out of the country as the new progressive rulers in Lisbon prepared to hand over power to the people of Mozambique.

Die-hard conservative colonists, however, saw things differently. They tried to seize the colonial run Radio in *Lourenco Marques*, (now Maputo), falsely trying to emulate the events in Rhodesia, where minority whites went for unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) in 1965. However, this was an underestimation of the strength of the military coup in Lisbon. The new rulers went into negotiation with FRELIMO in Lusaka, Zambia. On 7 September 1974, the Lusaka Accord was signed to end Portuguese rule in Mozambique and hand over power to FRELIMO. Following a brief interlude under the Chissano (Joaquim) “internal self-government,” the way was clear for Samora Machel’s formal inauguration the first President of Mozambique on 25 June 1975.

The birth of a new Mozambican nation was not without pain. The FRELIMO leadership had to move into Government amidst the remaining vestiges of white-settler inspired opposition. Mozambique’s proximity to the hostile white supremacist regimes of Rhodesia and South Africa did not augur too well for the future of the newly liberated country. Indeed, in February 1997 FRELIMO declared itself a socialist Marxist-Leninist party, further risking misunderstanding by the capitalist West and white supremacist South Africa.

RENAMO, a child of ex-Portuguese settlers, armed and funded by Rhodesia and South Africa, launched into sabotage campaigns against Mozambique. The Rhodesian Intelligence Organization (CIO) played master handler of RENAMO, unleashing it to hound Mozambique into stopping support to the ZANU-PF military wing, ZANLA, and circumventing UN sanctions against the rebel Smith regime.

The struggle for the liberation of Zimbabwe, however, continued unabated; and for Mozambique it was *a luta continua* until total African liberation. Following the liberation of Zimbabwe in 1980, control for RENAMO passed on to South Africa’s Military Intelligence Directorate (MID). South Africa used RENAMO to undermine Mozambique’s support to liberation movements of South Africa. South Africa also plotted to cut off land-locked Zimbabwe’s access to Mozambican sea ports. South Africa’s strategy aimed at total subjugation of the entire Southern African economy, including that of the front line States.

By 1982, RENAMO’s acts of sabotage had reached most of Mozambican territory, causing untold havoc in the rural areas and denying the Samora Government of the full benefit of the gains of liberation and independence. The pressure on Maputo was so much that President Samora was forced to negotiate with the enemy, South Africa. The Nkomati Non-Aggression Pact was signed in 1984, promising cessation of hostilities on condition that Mozambique halted ANC operations from its territory;



and that talks be held between the Mozambique Government and RENAMO under South African mediation. Soon, Nkomati collapsed and the situation returned on the South African fueled civil war path.

RENAMO remained unclear as to its political direction or place in civilian life and continued to be a thorn on the side of the government. FRELIMO and RENAMO were ever apart with matters getting especially worse following the suspicious plane crash which killed President Machel in October 1986. Under the Presidency of Joaquim Chissano, FRELIMO carried on with the reform programme started under Machel and resumed talks with RENAMO under the aegis of the Sant'Egidio Rome process. (Sant'Egidio, is the Rome based Catholic Community which is involved in the "non-threatening and non-diplomatic" peace negotiation mediation efforts. In the late 1980s, Sant'Egidio felt that civil war ravaged Mozambique, needed peace and in 1990 both the FRELIMO Government and rebel RENAMO accepted its role negotiations that led to the signing of the Rome General Peace Accords in 1992).<sup>31</sup>

On 4 October 1992, President Chissano and RENAMO's Afonso Dhlakama signed a General Peace Agreement (GPA) in Rome. Italy offered RENAMO "significant financial incentives to secure compliance" while the United States, Britain, France and the UN gave political and technical support to ensure broad international support for the implementation of GPA.

### **UN Contribution**

Within a week of the signing of the GPA, the United Nations Security Council authorized the establishment of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) to monitor and verify its implementation. The mandate of ONUMUZ, covered important areas, including:

- monitoring the withdrawal of Malawian and Zimbabwean troops from the Beira, Limpopo and Nacala transport corridors.
- overseeing the cantonment, demobilization and disarmament of approximately 110,000 soldiers from both sides, the creation of a new national army;
- the resettlement of between five and six million refugees and displaced people, and,
- the organization of elections.

The ceasefire aspect of the GPA was respected right away by both sides. The problem area was the implementation of the military issues of the GPA, held up by lack of trust. It took the diplomatic skills of UN Special Representative Aldo Ajello, along with support from the Security Council and UN Secretariat, to bring the UN mission in Mozambique (UNOMOZ) to a successful conclusion.

<sup>(31)</sup> See "Internal War, International Mediation and Non-official Diplomacy" by Richard Jackson, *Journal of Conflict Studies*, Volume 25 No. 1 (2005), University of Manchester, UK.

The timely visit of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to Mozambique, for example, was credited for enabling a compromise on issues of pre-election arrangements. Rupiya notes regarding this issue:

“In the face of open signs of Renamo hostility to the UN, and a demand for elections before complete demobilization, UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali visited Mozambique in October (1993) to seek a breakthrough. This visit achieved a compromise on sensitive issues surrounding electoral law as well as the cantonment and demobilization of regular troops.”<sup>32</sup>

The elections were successfully held on 27-29 October 1994. FRELIMO took 129 seats to RENAMO's 112 in the 250-seat parliament; and 09 seats went to a smaller party. In Chissano won against Dhlakama and others in the presidential elections. The elections were certified by the UN as “free and fair” and Dlakama conceded defeat.

As in the case of Angola, the contribution of the UN to the liberation struggle of Mozambique was more visible in the post-liberation period. The UN helped end the civil war in Mozambique, an award for the sacrifices made in extending support to the liberation struggles in Zimbabwe and South Africa.

## Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) Liberation Struggle

The Zimbabwe liberation struggle was one of the most complicated in the white racist-minority dominated territories of Southern Africa. It was dubbed Southern Rhodesia and was a part of the Federation of Rhodesia; it was also known as the Central African Federation (CAF) in Southern Africa. It consisted of Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and the British protectorates of Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi). Southern Rhodesia was Britain's former “self-governing” colony in a federation intended for eventual membership of the Commonwealth of Nations as a dominion. The British decided to give Southern Rhodesia internal self-government in 1923, “although under a constitution that vested political power exclusively in the hands of the white settlers”. Internationally, Britain excluded its Rhodesia colonial possession from its 1946 list of non-self-governing territories and stopped transmitting information on it to the UN under Article 73(e) of the Charter. Britain reserved the residual power to veto any legislation contrary to African interests, but this power was never applied and white-minority settlers dominated the territorial government with impunity.<sup>33</sup>

Therefore, the Federation became an international problem from its establishment on 1 August 1953 to the very last days of Zimbabwe's liberation in 1980. The Federation was created in the interest of a buffer zone between the newly independent African states to the north and the white-dominated regimes of South Africa (along with South West Africa), Angola and Mozambique. Such thinking was strongly opposed by African national freedom fighters of Zimbabwe. No one would accept perpetual

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(32) Ibid. Rupiya.

(33) Based on sources including Wikipedia and Progress of Colonia Peoples websites.

domination by the supremacist minority whites. The national liberation movements especially encouraged by the success of the decolonization process elsewhere in Africa and in particular Ghana's independence in 1958, mobilized efforts for the liberation struggle.

The newly emergent African States united to push forward the UN agenda of decolonization. With an international community already committed to ending colonialism in all its forms, the British Government found itself on the receiving end of international pressure to decolonize Rhodesia. The OUA member states repeatedly raised the decolonization issue in the UN General Assembly, calling for all colonizing powers to grant independence to all colonized peoples. The Rhodesian federation collapsed on 31 December 1963 with Zambia's rise to independence from Britain and Malawi following suit. This left only Southern Rhodesia in the uneasy hands of Ian Smith's rebel rule. Meanwhile, the Zimbabwe liberation movements, backed by the OAU with newly independent Zambia playing a frontline role, stepped up the liberation struggle for the independence of their country. The Zimbabwe liberation war was led by the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe Peoples Union (ZAPU), led by Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole/Robert Mugabe and Joshua Nkomo respectively.

UN involvement in the question of Southern Rhodesia became increasingly marked in the early 1960s when the Afro-Asian group called for UN action in the General Assembly. When in 1961 efforts to get Britain to stop Rhodesian rebels from enacting a new constitution had failed, the matter was raised in the General Assembly. The so-called "new" constitution gave Africans only token representation in the Southern Rhodesian parliament and largely "restricted their franchise through a two-tier electoral system heavily weighted in favor of the European (settler) community."<sup>34</sup>

In June 1962, acting on the recommendation of the Special Committee, the General Assembly adopted a resolution "declaring Southern Rhodesia to be a non-self-governing territory within the meaning of Chapter XI of the Charter, on the grounds that the vast majority of the people of Southern Rhodesia were denied equal political rights and liberties". The General Assembly called on the British Government to convene a conference of all political parties in Rhodesia to work out a new constitution that would ensure the rights of the majority on the basis of "one-man, one-vote." However, Britain continued to maintain that it could not "interfere in Rhodesia's domestic affairs". The rebel regime proceeded with the constitutional process, bringing it into effect in November 1962.

The situation got worse when on 11 November 1965, the rebel regime unilaterally declared independence (UDI) for Southern Rhodesia. This time, the British Government saw the implications of such an act and condemned UDI as an "illegal act." It brought up the matter in the Security Council on the following day. The

(34) Also see: Tongkeh Joseph Fowale, *External Actors in Zimbabwe's War of Liberation: Commonwealth, Frontline States and Liberation of Rhodesia*, October 17, 2009, suite 101.com.

Council adopted a resolution condemning the declaration and calling upon all states to refrain from recognizing and giving assistance to the rebel regime. In a further Security Council action on 20 November, it adopted another resolution that condemned the rebel “usurpation of power,” and called upon the Britain to bring the regime to an immediate end. It also requested all member states, among other things, to sever economic relations and institute an embargo on oil and petroleum products. In 1968, the Security Council imposed wider mandatory sanctions against Southern Rhodesia and established a committee to oversee the application of the sanctions. The General Assembly also urged countries to give moral and material assistance to the national liberation movements of Zimbabwe.

Impervious to international pressures, Southern Rhodesia declared itself a republic on 2 March 1970 and broke relations with Britain. Following Mozambique’s independence in 1975, the liberation movements intensified guerrilla activity along the border with Southern Rhodesia; the border was also closed, further threatening the economy of Southern Rhodesia, already hurt by UN sanctions.

In 1977, the UK-US proposals for the settlement of the Southern Rhodesian question were communicated to the Security Council by the British Government. The proposals called for the surrender of power by the Smith illegal regime, free elections on the basis of universal suffrage, the establishment by Britain of a transitional administration, the presence of a UN force during the transitional period and the drafting of an independence constitution. The proposals were to be discussed at a conference of all political parties in Southern Rhodesia, white and black. Again, the rebel Smith regime rejected the idea of such a conference. Attempts by the regime in 1978 and early 1979 to draft a new constitution giving minority whites effective control failed. The ZANU-ZAPU liberation struggle intensified with the movements forging a formidable Patriotic Front.

In August 1979, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (the Iron Lady) caved in to the pressures of the liberation struggle and the international community. She conceded at the Lusaka Conference of Commonwealth Heads of State and Government and announced that the British Government intended to initiate the decolonization process in Zimbabwe, bringing Southern Rhodesia to legal independence on internationally accepted conditions. In her own words:

“The problem of Rhodesia has hung over the Commonwealth for many years. The present trouble began in 1965 when the Rhodesian government made the illegal declaration of independence. This was followed by years in which the efforts of successive British governments to achieve a settlement based on the wishes of a majority of the people of Rhodesia were frustrated, years in which the political rights of the majority were denied. Then came the war which has brought great hardship both inside Rhodesia and neighboring countries.”<sup>35</sup>

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(35) See Home History African History African Colonialism, Tongkeh Joseph Fowale, Africa and the Liberation Struggle in Rhodesia: The OAU’s Liberation Committee in Zimbabwe’s Struggle for Freedom Oct 16, 2009 Tongkeh

In the statement, Prime Minister Thatcher was conceding that the Commonwealth had responsibility towards majority Africans in Zimbabwe especially in their liberation struggle. She was answering to the demands of most African members of the Commonwealth, who had consistently asked that Britain should assume its responsibility to lead Zimbabwe to independence. A constitutional conference was convened in London on 10 September 1979. It was attended by representatives of the Patriotic Front (ZANU/ZAPU); and the Rhodesian regime in Salisbury was also invited.

On 21 December 1979, an agreement was reached on a draft independence constitution and on transitional arrangements for its implementation, and on a cease-fire effective on 28 December. Britain appointed Lord Soames as transitional Governor of the territory. The elections were successfully held in February 1980 in the presence of UN observers. On 11 March, Robert Gabriel Mugabe, whose ZANU- PF party won the majority of seats in the House of Assembly, was named as Prime Minister. The independence of Zimbabwe was proclaimed on 18 April 1980, and Zimbabwe became a member of the UN on 25 August 1980.

The liberation struggle in

Zimbabwe was essentially led by two opposing movements, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) of Joshua Nkomo and the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), initially headed by the Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole and later by Robert Mugabe. These movements formed a united front in 1976 for the final onslaught against the white minority regime. The ZANU Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), winner of the elections, took power in Zimbabwe under the leadership of Mugabe. The two liberation parties further worked on a unity agreement in 1987, bringing in Nkomo as Vice-President in a government led by Mugabe.

### **UN Role in Zimbabwe**

The UN acted rather slowly on the question of Southern Rhodesia. This was partly because of the positions of Britain and the United States, both permanent members of the Security Council. It took a lot of pressure from the OUA and its allies in the UN, demanding that the British Government should take its responsibility as a colonial power to prepare Zimbabwe for independence, for the UN to move. Nonetheless, the UN made very useful contribution worked closely with the Commonwealth in the lead up to Zimbabwe's liberation and independence. The UN was outstanding in:

- Mobilizing international support to the liberation struggle of Zimbabwe, under the principle that colonialism posed a threat to international peace and security in southern Africa;
- According moral, political and material assistance to the liberation movements of Zimbabwe;

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Joseph Fowale. Detailed insight on the British handling of the Rhodesian problem is in: Martin Meredith, *Mugabe – Power, Plunder, and the Struggle for Zimbabwe*, Public Affairs, New York, 2007, pp-35-38.

- Recognizing the liberation movements of Zimbabwe (ZANU and ZAPU/Patriotic Front) as the authentic and legitimate representatives of the people of Zimbabwe in UN and other international forums;
- Isolating the white supremacist regime of Southern Rhodesia internationally;
- Urging UN member States to fully implement UN sanctions against Southern Rhodesia, including imposition of a blockade against apartheid South Africa and territories still under Portugal;
- Insisting on US repeal of the Byrd amendment and urging a stop to the purchase of Rhodesian chrome, a strategic mineral;<sup>36</sup>
- Appealing for support to Zambia on the immediate line of attack (economic and military) from Rhodesian and South African forces; and extending similar support to the rest of the frontline States;
- Deploying UN observers to the pre-independence elections in Zimbabwe scheduled for February 1980.

## Namibia (South West Africa) Liberation Struggle

The Namibian liberation struggle and involvement of the United Nations is assessed against the background in the chronology below:<sup>37</sup>

**1886-90**—Namibia’s present international boundaries are established by German treaties with Portugal (1886) and Great Britain (1890).

**1889-90**—First German troops arrive; Germany annexes the territory.

**1892-1905**—German suppression of uprisings by Herero and Namas; armistice signed on 20 December 1905 ends the German genocide (after the murder of 80 percent of the Herero population).

**1915**—South Africa invades and occupies Namibia. Germans surrender at Peace of Korab, 9 July 1915. Namibians try to reclaim land taken by the Germans. South Africa imposes martial law.

**1920**—Council of the League of Nations grants South Africa the right to govern Namibia as an integral part of its territory (“South West Africa”).

**1946**—United Nations refuses to allow South Africa to annex South West Africa (SWA). South Africa refuses to place SWA under UN Trusteeship Council.

**1953**—UN General Assembly forms Committee on SWA to supervise mandate without South Africa’s cooperation.

(36) See: The Byrd Amendment: a Postmortem by R. Sean Randolph, *World Affairs* Vol.141, No 1 (Summer 1978) pp.57-70, World Affairs Institute. The amendment was passed in the US Senate in November 1971 and influenced US policy formulation on Rhodesia. It prohibited the “embargoing” of any strategic material imported from non-communist countries. The amendment was used to circumvent UN-mandated economic sanctions against Rhodesia and intended to exempt Rhodesian chrome imports from US restrictions.

(37) Historical Dictionary of Namibia (Grotper 1994) based on Scarecrow Press (Lanham, Md.)

**1958**—Herman Toivo Ya Toivo and others organize the opposition Ovamboland People’s Congress, renamed the Ovamboland People’s Organization (OPO) in 1959. OPO becomes the South West Africa People’s Organization (SWAPO) in 1960.

**1959**—South West Africa Nation Union (SWANU), the oldest Namibian nationalist party, is founded in August.

**1961**—UN General Assembly demands South Africa terminate the mandate and sets SWA’s independence as objective.

**1966**—SWAPO announces plan to begin armed struggle against South African occupation.

**1968**—South West Africa officially renamed Namibia by UN General Assembly in April.

**1972**—UN General Assembly recognizes SWAPO as “sole legitimate representative” of Namibia’s people on 12 December.

**1989**—Elections held for a Namibian Constituent Assembly. SWAPO wins.

**1990**—Namibia becomes independent on 21 March and joins the United Nations.

Until designation by the UN General Assembly in June 1968, Namibia was known as South West Africa. A pre-World War I German colony, it was administered by South Africa under a 1920 League of Nations mandate. The question of Namibia preoccupied the General Assembly almost since the founding of the world organization. In 1946, the General Assembly voted against South Africa’s attempt to annex the territory and recommended that Namibia be placed under the UN trusteeship system. In 1947, South Africa refused to place the territory under UN trusteeship. From then on, the General Assembly was preoccupied with a series of defiance from the apartheid regime over Namibia and even measures by the Security Council were brushed aside by South Africa. Key UN decisions on the question of Namibia are outlined below:

- In 1950, the General Assembly sought advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice; the ICJ held that South Africa continued to have international obligations “to promote to the utmost the material and moral well-being and social progress of the inhabitants of the territory as a sacred trust of civilization, and that the UN should exercise the supervisory functions of the League of Nations in the administration of the territory.”<sup>38</sup> South Africa refused the court’s opinion and any suggestion of UN supervision over the territory’s affairs.
- In October 1966, the General Assembly decided to terminate South Africa’s mandate and place the territory under the direct responsibility of the UN.
- In May 1967, the General Assembly established the UN Council for South West Africa (later renamed the UN Council for Namibia) to administer the territory

(38) See: International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion of 11 July 1950 arising from General Assembly request in resolution of 6 December 1949.

until independence “with the maximum possible participation of the people of the territory;” a UN Commissioner for Namibia was appointed to assist the Council carry out its mandate; South Africa’s continued refusal to accept General Assembly decision and non-cooperation with the UN Council for Namibia, the matter was referred to the Security Council for action to enable the UN Council for Namibia to carry out its mandate.

- In 1969, the Security Council recognized the termination of the mandate by the General Assembly, describing the continued presence of South Africa in Namibia as illegal; it called South Africa to withdraw its administration from the territory immediately.
- In 1970, the Security Council declared for the first time that “all acts taken by the government of South Africa on behalf of or concerning Namibia after the termination of the mandate are illegal and invalid.”
- In 1971, the International Court of Justice advisory opinion upheld the Security Council position that “the continued presence of South Africa in Namibia being illegal, South Africa is under obligation to withdraw its administration from Namibia immediately and thus put an end to its occupation of the territory.” South Africa, however, remained recalcitrant and continued to administer the territory.
- In September 1974, for the sake of securing for the Namibians “adequate protection of the natural wealth and resources of the territory which is rightfully theirs,” the UN Council for Namibia passed a Decree for the Protection of the Natural Resources of Namibia; no person or entity may search for, take, or distribute any natural resource found in Namibia without the council’s permission, and any contravention of the decree “may be held liable in damages by the future government of an independent Namibia.”
- In the same year (1974), the Council for Namibia established the Institute for Namibia, based in Lusaka, Zambia, until South Africa’s withdrawal from Namibia, to provide Namibians with education and training and equip them to administer a future independent Namibia.
- In 1976, the Security Council demanded for the first time that South Africa accept elections for the territory as a whole under UN supervision and control so that the people of Namibia freely determine their own future; the Council condemned South Africa’s “illegal and arbitrary application ... of racially discriminatory and repressive laws and practices in Namibia,” its military buildup, and its use of the territory “as a base for attacks on neighboring countries.”

In the same year, the General Assembly condemned South Africa “for organizing the so-called constitutional talks at Windhoek, which seek to perpetuate the apartheid and homelands policies as well as the colonial oppression and exploitation of the people and resources of Namibia.” It decided that any independence talks regarding Namibia must be between the representatives of South Africa and the South West Africa People’s Organization (SWAPO), which it recognized as “the sole and authentic



representative of the Namibian people.” In 1977, the General Assembly declared that South Africa’s decision to annex Walvis Bay, Namibia’s main port, was “illegal, null, and void” and “an act of colonial expansion,” and it condemned the annexation as an attempt “to undermine the territorial integrity and unity of Namibia.”<sup>39</sup>

In May 1978, a General Assembly special session on Namibia was held. It adopted a declaration on Namibia and a program of action in support of self-determination and national independence for Namibia. It also extended “full support for the armed liberation struggle of the Namibian people under the leadership of the SWAPO,” and declared that any negotiated settlement must be agreed with SWAPO and within the basis of UN resolutions.

**UN Plan for Namibian Independence:** In July 1978, the Security Council considered a proposal by the five Western members of the council—Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States—for a settlement of the Namibian question. The proposal comprised a plan for free constituent assembly elections under the supervision and control of a UN representative, supported by a UN transition assistance comprising civilian and military components. The council noted the Western proposal and requested the Secretary-General to appoint a special representative for Namibia. In September 1978, the Council approved the Secretary-General’s report and in Resolution 435 (1978), the Council endorsed the UN plan for the independence of Namibia, establishing the UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG). UNTAG’s mandated was to ensure speedy independence for Namibia through free and fair elections supervised by the UN.

Implementation of the UN plan involved the cessation of all hostilities; the repeal of discriminatory or restrictive laws, the release of political prisoners, and the voluntary return of exiles and refugees; and the holding of elections after seven months of preparations, followed by the entry into force of the newly adopted constitution and leading up to Namibian independence. Thus, the General Assembly made Security Council Resolution 435 (1978), endorsing the UN plan for the independence of Namibia, its major reference point in finding a peaceful resolution of the situation in the territory. It roundly condemned South Africa for trying to obstruct implementation of UN resolutions and for perpetuating its illegal occupation of a UN mandate territory. South African attempts to establish a linkage between Namibian independence and “irrelevant, extraneous” issues, including Cuban presence in Angola, were also rebuffed.

In order to speed up the pull out of South Africa from Namibia, the General Assembly requested member states to cut off links with South Africa, and urged the Security Council to impose mandatory comprehensive sanctions against the apartheid regime. It also authorized the UN Council for Namibia to mobilize international support for ending South Africa’s illegal occupation of Namibia. By April 1987, the Secretary-General reported to the Security Council the system of

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(39) UN Resolution 435 of July 1978 calling for the reintegration of Walvis Bay into Namibia.

proportional representation agreed with South Africa for the elections to be held in Namibia as envisaged in Council Resolution 435 (1978). South Africa's insistence that the Cuban troops leave Angola before implementing the UN plan on Namibian independence, delayed the deployment of UNTAG. In December 1988, United States, Angola, Cuba, and South Africa, agreed the modalities on the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola and peace in Namibia. On 16 January 1989, the Security Council (Security Council Resolution 628/1989) formally declared that Namibia's transition to independence would begin on 1 April 1989. In Resolution 629/1989, the Security Council authorized UNTAG to deploy to Namibia to supervise the transition to independence.

Between 1 April 1989 and 21 March 1990, UNTAG oversaw the transition process, along with other UN partners. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), for instance, supervised the repatriation of 433,000 Namibian exiles from 40 countries.<sup>40</sup> The historic election was successfully held from 7–11 November 1989. The Special Committee on Decolonization sent a mission to observe and monitor the election process. SWAPO leader Sam Nujoma was elected Namibia's first president. The UN mission's verdict was that the people of Namibia had, in accordance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978), exercised their "inalienable right to self-determination by choosing their representatives to a constituent assembly that was charged with drafting a constitution for an independent Namibia".

The UN celebrated its sustained contribution to the liberation and independence of Namibia fittingly. In March 1990, Secretary-General Perez de Cuéllar presided over the swearing in ceremony for the new Namibian president (SWAPO leader Nujoma). In a symbolic gesture, President F. W. DeKlerk of South Africa participated in the inauguration ceremony as did the much celebrated Nelson Mandela, leader of the South African National Congress party (ANC), only shortly released from long imprisonment on Robben Island, South Africa. On 23 April 1990, Namibia took its rightful place among the community of nations as the 159th member of the United Nations.<sup>41</sup>

## Anti-Apartheid Struggle in South Africa

Important dates in the UN anti-apartheid campaign<sup>42</sup>:

**2 December 1950** — The General Assembly declared that "a policy of 'racial segregation' (apartheid) is necessarily based on doctrines of racial discrimination". (Resolution 395(V))

(40) *Security Council Resolution 435* (1978) of 29th September, 1978 on independence for Namibia independence, defining the role of the United Nations *Transition Assistance Group* (UNTAG).

(41) Based on inputs from Enuga S. Reddy, former UN Assistant Secretary-General, Head of UN Special Committee against Apartheid and Director, UN Centre Against Apartheid).

(42) Global Security.org: Article on Anti-Apartheid Struggle.

**1 April 1960** — The Security Council, in its first action on South Africa, adopted Resolution 134 deploring the policies and actions of the South African government in the wake of the killing of 69 peaceful African protesters in Sharpeville by the police on 21 March. The Council called upon the government to abandon its policies of apartheid and racial discrimination.

**2 April 1963** — First meeting of the Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa, It was later renamed the “Special Committee against Apartheid”.

**7 August 1963** — The Security Council adopted Resolution 181 calling upon all States to cease the sale and shipment of arms, ammunition and military vehicles to South Africa. The arms embargo was made mandatory on 4 November 1977.

**13 November 1963** — The General Assembly, in Resolution 1899 (XVIII) on the question of Namibia, urged all States to refrain from supplying petroleum to South Africa. It was the first of many efforts by the UN to enact effective oil sanctions against apartheid.

**23 August-4 September 1966** — International Seminar on Apartheid, Brasilia, organized by the UN Division of Human Rights, the Special Committee against Apartheid and the government of Brazil - the first of scores of conferences and seminars on apartheid organized or co-sponsored by the United Nations.

**2 December 1968** — The General Assembly requested all States and organizations “to suspend cultural, educational, sporting and other exchanges with the racist regime and with organizations or institutions in South Africa which practice apartheid.

**30 November 1973** — International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid approved by the General Assembly (Resolution 3068(XXVIII)). The convention came into force on 18 July 1976.

**1 January 1976** — The UN Centre against Apartheid was established.

**17 August 1984** — In Resolution 554 the Security Council declared null and void the new racist constitution of South Africa.

**16-20 June 1986** — World Conference on Sanctions against Racist South Africa, organized by the United Nations in cooperation with the OAU and the Movement of Non-aligned Countries

**14 December 1989** — The General Assembly adopted by consensus the “Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa,” calling for negotiations to end apartheid and establish a non-racial democracy (Resolution A/ RES/S-16/1).

**22 June 1990** — Nelson Mandela addressed the Special Committee against Apartheid in New York – his first appearance before the Organization.

**30 July 1992** — With political violence escalating and negotiations at risk, Nelson Mandela requested the United Nations to send observers to South Africa. On the following day the Secretary-General announced that he would send a small group of UN monitors. The United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa was established by the Security Council on 17 August 1992.

**8 October 1993** — The General Assembly requested States to restore economic relations with South Africa immediately, and terminate the oil embargo when the Transitional Executive Council in South Africa became operational (Resolution 48/1).

**10 May 1994** — South Africa's first democratically elected non-racial government took office following the general elections of 26-29 April.

**23 June 1994** — The General Assembly approved the credentials of the South African delegation and removed the item of apartheid from its agenda. The Security Council removed the question of South Africa from its agenda on 27 June.

**3 October 1994** — The first democratically elected president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, addresses the General Assembly.

The UN is an international organization that aims to facilitate cooperation in international law, security, economic development, social progress, human rights and achieving world peace. It was founded in 1945 and replaced the League of Nations. It has been concerned with the issue of racial discrimination since its beginning and racism became an important item on the United Nations agenda after African nations attained independence and after the Sharpeville massacre in South Africa in 1960. The Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1963), which led to the International Convention in 1965. It proclaimed the International Year for Action to Combat Racial Discrimination in 1971 and the three Decades for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination in 1973. Besides the specialized agencies on Apartheid, several other agencies of the UN were also involved in anti-apartheid and solidarity activities.

South Africa represents one of the most studied cases of the African liberation struggle. And UN involvement in the problems of South Africa is recapitulated in the above statement from the *Mandela Foundation* listing of International Organizations associated with the anti-apartheid struggle. It has the longest history, involving the international community and in particular the United Nations, which took up the question of apartheid almost immediately after its founding in 1945. South Africa was among UN founder members and became the subject of much controversy throughout the nearly 40 years of struggle against the policies of apartheid.

South Africa and apartheid was on the agenda of the United Nations for the first time in 1946 when the Government of India raised concern over the treatment of people of Indian origin living in South Africa. The elimination of South Africa's

apartheid system of racial discrimination remained on the agenda of the United Nations from the first session of the General Assembly. Throughout, the UN continued to contribute to the international struggle against apartheid by highlighting “the inhumanity of the system, legitimizing popular resistance, promoting anti-apartheid actions by governmental and non-governmental organizations, instituting an arms embargo, and supporting an oil embargo and boycotts of apartheid in many fields.”

In 1952, however, apartheid was more specifically raised in connection with the overall question of race conflict in South Africa in response to the African National Congress (ANC) Defiance Campaign. At first, the South African regime responded by claiming that “apartheid was part of the internal affairs of the country, and for this reason fell beyond the scope of the United Nations”. Many Western UN member States of the time were inclined to back this empty claim, although they continued to take part in the regular debates on the issue, urging South Africa to change its apartheid policies.<sup>43</sup>

**Internal Struggle:** Meanwhile, developments inside South Africa pointed towards increased international involvement as the application of apartheid policies spread. Youth protests were also becoming a commonplace and a move towards a definitive liberation movement in South Africa appeared unstoppable. In 1952, the African National Congress’ youthful leadership, including Nelson Mandela, Albert Sisulu and Oliver Tambo, gave the apartheid regime an ultimatum to repeal all the unjust laws or risk a Defiance Campaign by 6 April 1952.

The regime took little heed and the Defiance Campaign went ahead as planned. Mass rallies and stay-at-homes organized by ANC received huge response from thousands of people on 6 April and 26 June. In reaction, the South African regime banned leaders of the liberation movement as well as the media under the Suppression of Communism Act and arrested those involved in the protest marches. The Defiance Campaign ended in December 1952, but without impacting the unjust laws. The ANC, however, gained in stature with membership increased from about 7,000 early in the year to more than 100,000 paid up members by the end of 1952. ANC also elected Nobel Peace *Laureate* Albert Luthuli as its new president.

Faced with restriction and banning, the ANC along with other like-minded groups, convened a multi-racial Congress of the People near Soweto from 25-26 June 1955. The objective was to work on a new vision for a future South Africa that would transcend the “protest politics.” The Congress agenda centered around a draft Freedom Charter, calling for a non-racial society with all groups enjoying equal rights; land “shared among those who work it”; and people having a “share in the country’s wealth.” However, in the final stages of ratifying the Charter, the Congress was interrupted by the police on allegations of treason being committed.

The Freedom Charter was described by its authors as “a unique document in that for the first time ever, the people were actively involved in formulating their own

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(43) Ibid. Global Security.org.

vision of an alternative society.” It totally rejected all manifestations of apartheid such as oppression and exploitation prevalent during the 1950s. The Charter was the child of the ANC Congress held in August 1953, where the idea of convening a Congress of the People (COP) to draw up the Freedom Charter was broached by Professor Z.K. Mathews and later adopted the rest of the multi-racial anti-apartheid movements. The COP was hugely publicized, leading to a pre-Congress “million signatures campaign”. The Freedom Charter’s proclamation that “South Africa belongs to all who live in it” and that “all shall be equal before the law” remained the guiding light for the anti-apartheid struggle inside South Africa and internationally.<sup>44</sup>

Arrests and protracted trials for treason of anti-apartheid leaders (including Luthuli, Mandela, Tambo and Sisulu) that followed throughout the 1950s did not stop mass resistance. Bus boycotts, protests against extension of pass laws continued as the apartheid regime refused to rescind implementation of apartheid. Meanwhile, a rift developed within the ANC over approach to the anti-apartheid struggle. Some members argued against alliance with other political groups and in particular those of whites (Congress of Democrats), charging that this compromised the struggle and was not meeting the interests of majority Africans. The advocates of this position called for increased action against the apartheid regime and found ready leadership in Robert Sobukwe. They were forced out of the ANC, but formed their own movement, the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC).

In March 1960, the PAC initiated a vigorous national campaign against pass laws, urging Africans to gather in massive numbers outside police stations without their passes and challenge the police to arrest them. Outside Sharpeville Black Township police station, near Johannesburg, the police fired on hundreds of protesters, killing 69 people and wounding more than 186 others. Thousands of people, however, continued their peaceful protests and work stoppages. The apartheid regime declared a state of emergency, ordered protesters arrested, including the leaders of ANC and the PAC.<sup>45</sup> From now on, the two liberation movements would remain the main rallying points for the struggle against apartheid inside South Africa and in exile.

International reaction to the Sharpeville Massacre was uproarious. From 1960 on, many in the West no longer considered apartheid as an internal matter and began to openly criticize the apartheid policy. On 1 April 1960, the Security Council, in its first ever action on South Africa, adopted Resolution 134 (1960), which deplored the policies and actions of the South African regime. It called upon South Africa to end its policies of apartheid and racial discrimination. It requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with South Africa, “to make such arrangements as would adequately help in upholding the purposes and principles of the Charter.” The vote was 9 in favour and 2 abstentions (France and the United Kingdom). South Africa, however, defiantly

(44) Based on ANC document on the adoption of the Freedom Charter at the Congress of the People at Kliptown, Johannesburg, on 25th and 26th June, 1955.

(45) Online Encyclopedia Featured Articles website provides a useful background to the evolution of the anti-apartheid movement of South Africa.

banned the ANC and PAC. The UN became ever seized of the apartheid situation in South Africa, affirming that it constituted a possible threat to international peace and security. In the same year, South Africa decided to withdraw from the Commonwealth of Nations because of sustained condemnation from the organization.

On 6 and 12 January 1961, Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld's visit to South Africa yielded no progress on the part of the apartheid regime. In his report to the Security Council on 23 January 1961 he noted that "so far no mutually acceptable arrangement" had been found on racial policies in South Africa.

Meanwhile, the UN began a series of seminars on Apartheid with the first one held in Brazil in 1966. The General Assembly also designated 21 March as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to commemorate the Sharpeville Massacre. In 1967, a follow on International Seminar on Apartheid, Racial Discrimination and Colonialism in Southern Africa was held from 25 July-4 August 1967 in Kitwe, Zambia. This was a significant development because it brought the issue of apartheid closer home, Southern Africa. That newly independent Zambia offered to act as host country was extremely symbolic, for it was geographically very close to the subject of the seminar and represented a country that was very committed to the African liberation struggle and in particular the peoples of Southern Africa.<sup>46</sup> The seminar also presented the defining moment for the role of the UN in Southern Africa. It was convened by the UN Secretary-General pursuant to a General Assembly decision arising from a recommendation by the Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa. Special Committee Chairman M. Achkar Marof set the tone for the conference in a paper that recalled the reasons leading to the convening of the seminar. The detailed paper is instructive, suffice to refer to the main point about the linkage between racial and colonial problems in Southern Africa and the need for the UN to deal with the problems of that region as a "whole rather than piecemeal" He noted:

The Special Committee has felt, for some time, that the racial and colonial problems in southern Africa are inextricably interlinked and that the explosive situation in the whole region was assuming more and more serious proportions because of the failure of the international community to take effective action toward the eradication of racism in South Africa. It is convinced that the South African problem which was entrusted to it for consideration, should itself be seen in the wider context of the whole of southern Africa and that the United Nations should attempt to deal with the crucial problems of this region as a whole rather than piecemeal.<sup>47</sup>

He went on to detail the pervasive nature of apartheid in Southern Africa with a finger in practically every country –Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Namibia, as well as the rest of the front-line states. Marof argued against any suggestion that

(46) Ibid. Global Security.org.

(47) The Crisis in South Africa: Addresses by M. Achkar Marof, a mimeographed collection of speeches circulated by the UN Unit on Apartheid in January 1968. United Nations document A/6486-S/7565: marof doc).

resolution of the apartheid question in South Africa should wait until those of the rest of Southern Africa were completed. As a result of this seminar and others that followed, there was better international focus and increased coordination in regard to the liberation struggle in the region and the commonality of the scourge of the apartheid policies of South Africa and implications for the rest of Southern Africa.

The United Nations has all along been pre-occupied with the question of apartheid in South Africa. The highest bodies of the world organization, the General Assembly and the Security Council, have often made strong pronouncements on the problem, declaring “apartheid incompatible with the UN Charter”. The General Assembly condemned apartheid as “a crime against humanity”. The Security Council described it “a crime against the conscience and dignity of mankind, and a threat to international peace and security.” It is on this basis that wide ranging actions leading to the elimination of apartheid have been agreed by UN organs.

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**Root of anti-apartheid struggle:** A return to the root of the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa helps indicate the factors at play. The anti-apartheid movement in South Africa began after white settlers voted for a racist platform in the late 1940s in fear of the so-called “black threat.” The winners, Rev. Daniel Malan’s Nationalist Party, imposed “apartheid” or separate development policies to literally shut out black people. This started the anti-apartheid movement, dedicated to fighting apartheid and liberating South Africa. The movement received immediate support from individuals inside South Africa, as well as governments and organizations the world over. International support was so overwhelming that it helped mobilize internationally against the apartheid regime in South Africa.

The anti-apartheid movement had a two-pronged strategy: “the internal campaign to destabilize the racist apartheid regime in South Africa, and the external campaign for political, economic, and cultural sanctions”. The driving force for the movement was the struggle led by the African liberation movements of South Africa to rid the country of white supremacy. The internal movement was eventually seen as both “a catalyst for actions at the international level and the critical link that gave coherence to the movement as a whole”. The external front was in the form of regional efforts to provide military bases, material, and diplomatic support for liberation movements; and the exile movement, which focused on seeking international sanctions against the regime and providing direct aid to the liberation movements. The internal struggle inside South Africa was the core of the anti-apartheid movement, but it served as the anchor for broad regional and international support activities. The liberation movement emerged to confront the apartheid legislation imposed by the Nationalist Party of Rev. Malan following an all-white election of 1948. The segregationist legislation in question, included:<sup>48</sup>

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(48) Online Encyclopedia Featured Articles website provides a useful background to the evolution of the anti-apartheid movement of South Africa.



- The Prohibition of Mixed-Marriages Act (1950), which made interracial marriage a criminal act;
- The Population Registration Act (1949), which required registration and racial classification of all persons above sixteen years of age;
- The Suppression of Communism Act (1950), which associated anti-apartheid activities with communism;
- The Group Areas Act (1950), which allowed the government to determine the areas in which people of different races and nationalities could reside and own property;
- The Bantu Education Act (1953), which brought missions schools under government control and circumscribed the education of Africans.

The struggle was at first based on nonviolent direct-action tactics led by movements including the African National Congress (ANC), the South African Communist Party (SACP), the Indian National Congress (INC) and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC). On 1 May 1950, these movements joined forces to organize a national strike to oppose the Suppression of Communism Act. Thousands of workers boycotted their work, causing the apartheid regime to respond by sending troops to the townships, and 18 workers were killed. Nevertheless, the coalition called another strike for June 26, and workers again responded in big numbers.

The boycotts referred to above were, therefore, just a beginning to the mass civil-disobedience campaigns beginning with the 1952-1953 “Campaign of Defiance of Unjust Laws.” Between June and December 1952, thousands of activists were arrested for defying ridiculous apartheid laws, such as “whites only” drinking fountains, train compartments, and waiting rooms. Nelson Mandela of ANC rose to prominence at this time, addressing rallies across the country urging black people to defy apartheid laws. The government responded by gunning down demonstrators and arresting movement leaders, including Mandela and others.

**Internationalization of anti-apartheid struggle:** These internal anti-apartheid struggles and the violent reaction from the apartheid regime also helped develop the international movement. The Defiance Campaign, for instance, was an inspiration for supporters the world over. On 12 September 1952, thirteen Afro-Asian group member States brought the issue of racial discrimination before the Secretary General of the UN, requesting the organization to establish a commission to study the issue and report its findings at the next General Assembly session. Although this specific campaign did not make much progress at the UN, the effort to persist in raising the world’s attention to the plight of black people in South Africa would eventually pay off by way of a comprehensive sanctions resolution.

On 23 March 1960, South African police killed 69 men, women, and children in Sharpeville Township during demonstrations against the Natives Act of 1952 (the Pass Laws) that required African people to carry identification cards with them at all times. The laws were intended to restrict the free circulation of black people into urban areas. This was the Sharpeville Massacre, which sparked angry

international reaction. The earlier call by the ANC for international sanctions was given credibility the Sharpeville Massacre. South Africa became a pariah state amid increased international action. South Africa was banned from sports, cultural, and academic institutions. On 6 November 1962, the UN General Assembly voted to sever diplomatic, transportation, and economic relations with South Africa. Although voluntary, the resolution was a major victory for the anti-apartheid movement. International organizations, including UN specialized agencies - the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) also decided to expel South Africa.

The apartheid regime's response was declaring a state of emergency, banning anti-apartheid movements, including the SACP, ANC, and PAC. The liberation movements went for underground operations inside South Africa and while others went into exile, where the second phase of the movement, the armed liberation struggle was launched. This phase saw the internationalization of the struggle, benefiting from regional and broader African support under the OAU. In exile, the liberation movements were afforded rear operational bases, military training and political education through the OAU Liberation Committee as well as from the independent African countries in Southern Africa.

Meanwhile, the apartheid regime launched armed attacks against neighbouring African countries and shored up rebel groups such as RENAMO (Mozambique) and UNITA (Angola) to carry out sabotage and attempts to bring down governments opposed to apartheid. These countries, later formally grouped into the Frontline States, played a crucial role in support of the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. Their presence was given due importance in the work of the UN in support of liberation and independence in the sub-region. Set up at the height of the Southern African struggle, the independent African States met in Lusaka, Zambia in 1969 and signed the Lusaka Manifesto, declaring that:

All men are equal, and have equal rights to human dignity and respect, regardless of colour, race, religion or sex. By this manifesto we wish to make clear, beyond all shadow of doubt, our acceptance of the belief that all men are equal, and have equal rights to human dignity and respect, regardless of colour, race, religion or sex. The truth is, however, that in Mozambique, Angola, Rhodesia, South-West Africa, and the Union of South Africa, there is an open and continued denial of the principles of human equality and national self-determination.

The Frontline States fervently backed the liberation movements, including supporting the armed struggle through provision of rear bases and supply of arms. SWAPO was fighting in Namibia, Frelimo in Mozambique, the MPLA in Angola and Zanu and Zapu in Zimbabwe then (Rhodesia). They also played a crucial diplomatic role, especially in persuading the British Government to initiate the process of decolonization for rebel controlled Rhodesia.

Former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in one of her rare occasions acknowledged the role played by the presidents of the Frontline States in arriving at a peaceful independence in rebel held Rhodesia. She notes in her Biography: “The Lancaster of House proposals could not have got through without the support the Presidents of the ‘front line’ States...”<sup>49</sup>

As a result of their efforts in support of liberation movements, the Frontline States, directly bordering on white-racist regimes in Rhodesia and South Africa were subjected to heavy attacks and acts of sabotage with devastating consequences on lives, infrastructure and their economies.

In July 1979 these countries met in Arusha, Tanzania to found the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC). Besides supporting the struggle in the remaining Southern African countries, the Frontline States sought to “to reduce member states’ dependence, particularly, but not only, on apartheid South Africa”.

The Cold War factor also played out in the case of South Africa founded on the super power strategic interests in the sub-region. In the 1970s, the US and South Africa sponsored insurgent movements (UNITA and FNLA) while Cuba and the Soviet Union backed the governments of Mozambique and Angola. South African forces invaded Angola and attacked the Frontline States of Lesotho, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Tanzania. Inside South Africa, many a protesting youth were killed in police crackdowns in the townships, including Soweto. In the 1980s, the liberation movement in South Africa entered the stage of massive resistance, marked by increased determination to make the country ungovernable. Strikes, boycotts, demonstrations and acts of sabotage were a commonplace. In 1983, a United Democratic Front was created out of internal organizations and church groups. An attempt by the regime to sideline the opposition by offering Indians and Coloreds (people of mixed race) limited franchise in the elections of 1984 was utterly rejected. Instead, it further helped step up acts of civil disobedience and sabotage.

On the international front, the international anti-apartheid struggle was also winning increased world-wide support. Most countries imposed military and economic sanctions against South Africa as called for in UN resolutions. The only exceptions were Britain and the United States, which remained outside compliance with the international sanctions regime. However, even for the two permanent members of the UN Security Council, the tide of anti-apartheid struggle had already reached the establishment’s highest level. In the US, for instance, 1986 saw Congress pass the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act (CAAA). The CAAA impacted the South African economy, which was already troubled by the 1985 withdrawal of U.S. banks. In South Africa, 250,000 African mine-workers went on strike in 1987, dealing a further blow to the economy and rendering the apartheid state illegal.

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(49) See Martin Paut, BBC News Analyst, and Margaret Thatcher, *The Downing Street Years*, Harper Collins, New York, pp76-77.

From then on, there was no turning back on efforts to end apartheid in South Africa. The combined pressures of international sanctions and internal activities would pave the way to the demise of the apartheid system. The apartheid regime was eventually forced to retreat by repealing the pillars of apartheid legislation, starting with the repeal of pass laws in 1986. By 1990 South Africa had lifted the ban on the liberation movements, including, ANC and PAC and repealed the 1913 and 1936 Land Acts, the Population Registration Act, and the Separate Amenities Act. ANC leader Nelson Mandela was released in 1991, ending 27 years of Robben Island imprisonment. On May 10, 1994, Mandela was sworn in as president of South Africa, after ANC won an overwhelming victory in the elections of 1994, organized with UN support; black and white opposition parties were roundly defeated to give Mandela undisputed leadership of the new democratic and nonracial South Africa.

The *UN Chronicle* covered the question of apartheid extensively and this section draws on its institutional memory to assess and record the role of the UN towards the liberation struggle in South Africa.<sup>50</sup>

From 1952 to 1962, the UN General Assembly considered the question of apartheid in South Africa under the agenda: “Policies of apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa”.

In the initial UN action in the 1950s the Assembly appealed to South Africa to abandon its apartheid system and request that it conduct itself in line with the principles of the UN Charter and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. South Africa, however, refused to accept the Assembly’s decisions and accused the UN of violation of the principle of non-interference in its internal affairs. It consistently refused to respond to the Assembly appeals and resolutions.

In 1961, in resolution 1598 (XV), the Assembly for the first time “defined apartheid as a danger to international peace and security.” As of 1961, the Assembly requested member states to consider taking separate and collective actions to force South Africa to abandon its racial policies; it called on member states to: sever diplomatic relations with the South African regime; close ports to all South African flag vessels: prohibit ships from entering its ports: boycott all its goods; ban exports to South Africa; refuse landing and passage facilities to all aircraft belonging to the Government and companies registered under South African laws; and called for a voluntary embargo on the supply of petroleum, petroleum products and strategic raw materials to the country. From 1962 through 1988, the Assembly repeatedly urged the Security Council to impose mandatory sanctions against South Africa. (Notes: UN Chronicle)

### **Special Committee against Apartheid**

In 1962, following the declaration of a state of emergency in South Africa and the banning of protests, the General Assembly, adopted resolution 1761 (XVII) on 6 November, establishing the *Special Committee against Apartheid*, to keep South

<sup>(50)</sup> Based on *UN Chronicle* 1994 summary of UN action in relation to the anti-apartheid struggle against South Africa, along with annotations from E.S. Reddy.

Africa's racial policies under constant review and report to the Assembly and the Security Council accordingly. The Special Committee against Apartheid became the focal point in the efforts of the international community to promote and monitor a comprehensive programme of action against apartheid and encourage support and assistance to South Africans and their liberation movements.

From 1965 through 1973, the credentials of the South African delegation were called into question by the Assembly; but it was only in 1974 that the Assembly, in resolution 3206 (XXIX), based on the report of its Credentials Committee, decided it would accept the credentials of representatives of UN member states "with the exception of the credentials of the representatives of South Africa". On 30 September 1974, the Assembly requested the Security Council to review the relationship between the UN and South Africa (resolution 3207 (XXIX)), but at its 30 October meeting, the Council failed to adopt a resolution on the issue.

In his ruling of 12 November 1974, General Assembly President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria noted the consistency over the years with which the Assembly had refused to accept the credentials of the South African delegation, and stated that it "is tantamount to saying in explicit terms that the General Assembly refuses to allow the delegation of South Africa to participate in its work". This ruling was upheld by the Assembly by a vote of 91 to 22, with 19 abstentions. From that time, South Africa did not participate in the proceedings of the Assembly.

Also in 1974, the Assembly recommended that the South African regime be excluded from participation in all UN sponsored international organizations and conferences held under UN auspices for so long as it continued to practice apartheid. However, a proposal made to the Council in 1974 to immediately expel South Africa from the UN did not receive the necessary majority.

In 1970, the General Assembly condemned South Africa's establishment of "separate homelands" for its African population as "fraudulent, a violation of the principle of self-determination and prejudicial to the territorial integrity of the State and the unity of its people". Later, the Assembly also condemned the proclamation of "independence" of four of these "homelands"-- the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei.

In 1984, the South African Government sought to introduce a "new constitution" through the holding of "elections" for segregated chambers for the so-called "coloured people" and people of Asian origin. The Assembly rejected the validity and relevance of the "new constitution" and the "elections", and declared them null and void.

### **UN accords legitimacy to liberation struggle**

Of all UN bodies, the General Assembly took the lead in adopting a wide range of measures aimed at providing political, moral and material support for the South African liberation movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the ANC and the PAC. In recognition of the "legitimacy of the struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa" in pursuing their human and political rights, the

Assembly subsequently declared that the people have an “inalienable right to use all available and appropriate means, including armed struggle”.

The Assembly made regular appeals for assistance to the South African people and their liberation movements, and invited representatives of ANC and PAC to participate as observers in debates relating to the question of South Africa.

The General Assembly consistently appealed for the release of all persons imprisoned or subjected to other restrictions opposed to apartheid. The Assembly also condemned the torture and killings of detainees and executions of persons for activities carried out in the struggle against apartheid, and demanded prisoner-of-war status for freedom fighters.

On assistance to the South African people and their liberation movements, the General Assembly declared that the UN and the international community had a “special responsibility towards the oppressed people of South Africa and their national liberation movements in their struggle against apartheid and to establish a non-racial democratic society.” The February 1984 issue of *UN Chronicle* records wide-ranging actions of the General Assembly in connection with the policies of apartheid of South Africa as indicated in an omnibus resolution. The Assembly urged all member States and organizations to provide the necessary “moral, political and material assistance” to those liberation movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) “at this crucial stage of their struggle for liberation”.

On 5 December, the Assembly approved 11 texts under its item on “policies of apartheid of South Africa”. A twelfth resolution on the subject, invalidating the results of the South African all-white referendum on Constitutional proposals, including establishment of a three-tier Parliament divided along racial lines, had been approved on 15 November.

The drafts approved in December called for an end to collaboration with the South African regime, including assistance provided by certain Western Powers, in particular particularly by the US and Israel. The Assembly also called for action to impose sanctions against South Africa, including an oil embargo, cessation of nuclear co-operation and an end to all foreign investment in that country. It also condemned acts of aggression by South Africa against neighboring African States.

In the omnibus text, 38/39 A, the Assembly again called on the Security Council to impose “comprehensive and mandatory” sanctions against South Africa, and urgently asked the International Monetary Fund to terminate credits or other aid to it. It also recognized the right of the oppressed people of South Africa and their liberation movements “to resort to all means at their disposal, including armed struggle” in their resistance. It demanded release of persons detained for their opposition to apartheid; return of political exiles; lifting of bans on political and other organizations and media opposed to apartheid; and termination of all political trials and repressive measures against apartheid opponents.

The list of member States voting against consisted mainly of Western countries: Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Iceland, Italy,

Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Portugal, United Kingdom and United States. Those abstaining were: Austria, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Guatemala, Ireland, Ivory Coast, Malawi, Spain and Sweden. This voting pattern was generally repeated in other actions, especially by the major Western powers.

In a second resolution, 38/39 C, the Assembly condemned South African aggression against Angola, Lesotho and Mozambique and threats against independent African States in southern Africa, and demanded that all its troops “be immediately and unconditionally withdrawn” from Angola. Acts of “destabilization” and an economic blockade against Lesotho were strongly condemned.

The international community was asked to provide assistance to independent African States in the sub region to enable them to defend their sovereignty and territorial integrity “and to counter the hostile South African acts of aggression and to rebuild their economies”. The Security Council was asked to consider, as a matter of urgency, “the means to ensure peace in southern Africa”

Under resolution 38/39D, the Assembly asked the Security Council to consider action under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter towards comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against South Africa. Member States were asked to act against corporations and interests that violated the mandatory arms embargo against South Africa.

The Assembly, in resolution 38/39 I, again urged the Security Council to urgently consider the matter of the cessation of all new foreign investments in, and financial loans to South Africa, with a view to taking effective steps to achieve that end.

By a fifth text, 38/39 J, the Assembly reaffirmed its recommendation to the Security Council to consider urgently a mandatory embargo on the supply of petroleum and petroleum products to South Africa, under Charter Chapter VII.

It also renewed its authorization to the Secretary-General to organize an International Conference on oil Embargo against South Africa to consider national and international arrangements to ensure the implementation of such embargoes or policies. States concerned were also asked to take effective action against corporations and tanker companies involved in the illicit supply of oil to South Africa.

### ***Conventions/Declarations***

The General Assembly in 1963 adopted the UN Declaration on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination. In 1973, it adopted the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, and also declared apartheid “a crime against humanity”. In 1977, the Assembly adopted the International Declaration against Apartheid in Sports and in 1985 the International Convention against Apartheid in Sports.

### ***Oil embargo***

On 12 December 1979, the General Assembly adopted resolution 34/93 F, imposing an embargo against South Africa, by requesting all States to enact legislation prohibiting

the sale and supply of petroleum and petroleum products to that country. In 1986, the Assembly called upon all States to broaden the scope of the oil embargo and established the Intergovernmental Group to Monitor the Supply and Shipping of Oil and Petroleum Products to South Africa.

### ***Destructive Consequences***

During 1989, a thaw in the international climate facilitating the peaceful resolution of conflicts was manifested in the Southern Africa region by agreements that led to the independence of Namibia. Within South Africa, intensified guerrilla infiltration coupled with renewed demands by anti-apartheid organizations for a negotiated end to apartheid and a new constitutional order coincided with a change of mindset within the ruling Nationalist Party, it was leaning towards a new policy which acknowledged the failure of apartheid and the realization of the need for constitutional change.

In New York, during its sixteenth special session held on 14 December 1989, the General Assembly adopted by consensus the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa. By that text, the people of South Africa were encouraged to join together to negotiate an end to the apartheid system and agree on measures necessary to transform their country into a nonracial democracy. The Declaration dealt with fundamental principles for a new constitutional order, with the creation of a climate for negotiations, guidelines for the process of negotiations, and a programme of action in pursuance of the Declaration's objectives. Forced by intense anti-apartheid struggle at home and relentless international pressure, the South African regime as from 1990 was forced to embark on measures directed at dismantling its obnoxious apartheid system, including: the lifting of the ban on ANC, PAC, the South African Communist Party and other political organizations; the unconditional release of political leaders, including ANC President Nelson Mandela, imprisoned by the regime for more than 27 years; the release of a large number of political prisoners; the granting of immunity for political offenses to South Africans, both inside and outside the country; and an agreement with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to allow the return of exiles and refugees to South Africa.

### ***Towards National Peace Accord***

The Government also repealed the most important apartheid legislation and entered into a National Peace Accord in 1991 with major political parties and organizations, aimed at promoting peace and reconciliation in violence-stricken communities and the country as a whole. A Commission of Inquiry regarding the Prevention of Public Violence and Intimidation, known as the Goldstone Commission – named after its Chairman, Justice Richard Goldstone – was also set up in terms of the Accord.

### ***Multi-party negotiations***



From December 1991, the Government launched a negotiating process with the parties concerned – first through the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) and subsequently through the broader-based Multi-party Negotiating Forum.

They reached agreement on constitutional principles, political participation and the role of the international community, transitional arrangements and the time frame for the implementation of decisions leading to the holding of free, democratic and non-racial elections, and the adoption of a new constitution.

By 1993, the negotiating process embarked upon by the parties resulted in a number of crucial agreements reached. These agreements, among others, covered a set of binding constitutional principles for a democratic government, including a bill of fundamental human rights and an independent judiciary, as well as a decision that non-racial democratic elections leading to an interim parliament/constituent assembly would be held on 26 April 1994.

### ***Transitional arrangements***

On 23 September, the South African Parliament passed a bill to establish the Transitional Executive Council (TEC) to oversee government operations and the preparations for free and fair elections. Bills were also passed enabling the independent Media and Electoral Commissions and the independent Broadcasting Authority to be set up. The TEC began its work on 7 December and the South African Parliament, in its last meeting on 22 December 1993, adopted a Constitution for the Transition Period, which will come into effect on 27 April 1994.

The interim constitution offered guarantees, including fundamental human rights, limits the president's power to declare a state of emergency, abolishes the homelands and demarcates the country into nine provinces. It also provided *inter alia* that a government of national unity responsible to the National Parliament (interim parliament/constituent assembly) will be established following elections in April 1994 and will continue until 1999, when national elections under a permanent constitution will be held. A constitutional court will have authority to resolve disputes of interpretation of constitutional provisions during the transition period between different levels of government.

These developments led the UN, especially the General Assembly, to urge support for the process of political change in South Africa, stressing the responsibilities of all political and other relevant parties in the country to bring about a peaceful transition to a non-racial South Africa. At its forty-eighth session, the Assembly amended the title of its agenda item on South Africa to "Elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa"

Following ANC leader Mandela's appeal in the General Assembly on 24 September 1993 for the lifting of sanctions against South Africa and the subsequent decision on 29 September by the OAU Ad Hoc Committee on Southern Africa, calling upon the international community at large, and the UN in particular, to respond positively to that appeal, the Assembly adopted by consensus on 8 October the first resolution

(4811) of its session, deciding to lift all economic sanctions against South Africa with immediate effect, and the oil embargo as of the date when the TEC became operational. After the TEC had met on 7 December 1993, the General Assembly was informed on 9 December by its President that the oil embargo was officially ended.

### ***UN consensus support***

The Assembly further gave UN-wide support for the political process underway in South Africa, adopting by consensus for the fourth year an omnibus resolution (481159 A) on “International efforts towards the total eradication of apartheid and support for the establishment of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa”. Among other things, the Assembly:

- strongly urged the South African authorities to exercise the primary responsibility of government to bring to an end the ongoing violence;
- called on all parties in South Africa, including those which did not participate fully in the multiparty talks, to respect agreements reached during the negotiations, recommit themselves to democratic principles, take part in the elections and resolve outstanding issues by peaceful means;
- requested the Secretary-General to accelerate planning for a UN role in the election process;
- and strongly urged the international community to assist the people of South Africa in the economic reconstruction of their country and ensure that the new South Africa began its existence on a firm economic basis.

In other resolutions, the Assembly terminated the mandate of the intergovernmental Group to Monitor the Supply and Shipping of Oil and Petroleum Products to South Africa (481159 C), called for continued humanitarian and legal assistance to victims of repression and former political prisoners (48/159 D), and welcomed the expanding educational and training activities inside South Africa of the UN Educational and Training Programme for South Africa (481160).

### ***Security Council action***

The Security Council, though in many cases constrained in its decisions by super power interests and the realities of cold war politics, did take some important actions regarding the question of apartheid. The Council first considered the situation in South Africa in 1960 in response to the 21 March Sharpeville Massacre in which 69 unarmed anti-apartheid protesters were killed; it called upon South Africa to abandon its apartheid policy. The Secretary-General visited the country in 1961 for talks with the apartheid regime, but no mutually acceptable arrangement was found. In resolutions 181 (1963) and 182 (1963), the Council considered that the situation in South Africa was seriously disturbing international peace and security, and instituted a voluntary embargo against the supply of arms to the country, calling on States to cease the sale and shipment of arms, ammunition, military vehicles, as

well as equipment and materials for the manufacture and maintenance of arms and ammunition to South Africa.

The first attempt in June 1975 by African States to make the arms embargo mandatory failed to move in the Security Council; but on 4 November 1977 the Council imposed a mandatory arms embargo against South Africa on 4 November 1977 by adopting resolution 418 (1977). It unanimously decided that all member States cease forthwith any provision to South Africa of arms and related materials of all types, including the sale or transfer of weapons and ammunition, military vehicle and equipment, paramilitary police equipment and spare parts for them, and also cease the provision of all types of equipment and supplies, and grants of licensing arrangements for their manufacture.

Ex[pressing serious concern that South Africa was at the “threshold of producing nuclear weapons”, the Council also decided that all States should refrain from any cooperation with that country in the manufacture and development of such weapons. The Council also established a Committee to monitor the implementation of the mandatory arms embargo by adopting resolution 421 (1977).

Between 1960 and 1988, the Security Council adopted 25 resolutions on the question of South Africa. Among these, it: recognized the legitimacy of the struggle of the South African people for the elimination of apartheid and the establishment of a democratic society; called for the release of all political prisoners and the commutation of death sentences imposed on them; rejected the division of the country into “bantustans”: declared as null and void the so-called “new Constitution” imposed by Pretoria in 1984; and demanded that South Africa stop its military aggression and destabilization of neighbouring African States.

In adopting resolution 569 (1985), the Council urged Member States to suspend all new investment in South Africa, prohibit the sale of coins minted in South Africa, restrict sports and cultural relations, suspend guaranteed export loans, and prohibit all sales of computer equipment that could be used by the South African army and police.

Subsequent to the adoption by the General Assembly on 14 December 1989 of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa (S-1611), the Council resumed its consideration of the question in July 1992. The Council, gravely concerned by the consequences of the escalating violence on the political process underway in South Africa, unanimously adopted resolutions 765 (1992) on 16 July and 772 (1992) on 17 August, in which it emphasized the greater involvement of the international community in facilitating the transition to a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. The importance of such an involvement was further underscored by the appointment and subsequent missions of Special Envoys dispatched to South Africa by the Secretary-General and by the establishment of the UN Observer Mission to South Africa (UNOMSA) in September 1992.

In addition, the Secretary-General designated two Special Envoys to carry out separate fact-finding missions in 1992 to South Africa: Virendra Dayal (16-27 September), and Tom Vraalsen (22 November-9 December).

In reporting (S/25004) to the Security Council on 22 December 1992, the Secretary-General called on all parties to recognize that continued uncertainty over the country's future would only lead to further violence, instability and economic decline. He underlined that the principle of inclusiveness must be recognized as essential for a transition to democratic rule through free elections and new constitutional arrangements. Furthermore, the Secretary-General called on all political leaders to take immediate action to curb violence, while recognizing that the South African Government had primary responsibility for the maintenance of law and order.

As unprecedented violence raged on in the East Rand area of South Africa, during July and August 1993, the Council President on 24 August issued a statement on behalf of its members calling on all parties in South Africa to assist the Government in preventing opponents of democracy from using violence to threaten the country's democratic transition. In that regard, the Council noted the proposal for a national peace force to restore and maintain order in restive areas. It insisted that any such force must be genuinely representative of South African society and its major political bodies and, just as importantly, that it must have the confidence, support and cooperation of its people.

### ***Stronger UNOMSA***

On 2 February 1990, South African President F.W. de Klerk announced, among other measures, the lifting of a 30-year ban on the ANC, the PAC and other anti-apartheid organizations, the suspension of the death sentence until further review, the release of some political prisoners and the partial lifting of restrictions on the media and on some detainees. On 11 February 1990, Nelson Mandela was released from prison unconditionally.

From 9-19 June 1990, a United Nations team visited South Africa to meet representatives of the Government, political parties and organizations on a fact finding mission on recent measures taken and proposals made for bringing about an end to the apartheid system. The mission stressed the need for a series of confidence-building measures that could reduce the political violence and increase the level of trust and understanding among all parties, and between the people and the Government.

On 22 June 1990, Nelson Mandela was much applauded in his first address to the Special Committee against Apartheid in New York. He declared that nothing which had happened in South Africa called for a revision of the position that the organization had taken in its struggle against apartheid. He urged the UN to do everything in its power to maintain the consensus it had achieved when it adopted the Declaration on Apartheid in December 1989. On 13 December 1990, the General Assembly after three days of debate on the question of apartheid, welcomed the

positive developments that had taken place in South Africa, but cautioned that the South African authorities had failed to meet the conditions for negotiations set forth in the Declaration on Apartheid.

On 4 September 1991, in his second progress report on the implementation of the United Nations 1989 Declaration on Apartheid, the Secretary-General noted that “over the last 12 months the process towards the end of apartheid in South Africa, although halting, has remained on course”.

Inside South Africa, ANC leader Mandela announced on 21 June 1992 that he was suspending all talks with the Government in the wake of the killings in Boipatong on 17 June when more than 40 people were killed and scores injured. He requested the UN Secretary-General to call a special meeting of the Security Council to discuss the killings. On 16 July 1992, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 765(1992) following which the Secretary-General appointed Special Representative Cyrus Vance to recommend measures to help bring an effective end to violence and create conditions for negotiations to resume. Mr. Vance visited South Africa from 21- 31 July 1992 and held talks with representatives of political, religious, business and labour leadership.

On 17 August 1992, the Security Council approved the Secretary-General’s report (S/24389), and authorized the stationing of UN observers in South Africa to work closely with the National Peace Secretariat in addressing the areas of concern noted in the report. The Secretary-General would decide the number of observers to be sent to South Africa. The Council also invited the deployment of observers from the OAU, the Commonwealth and the European Union. [Resolution 772(1992)]

Ms. Angela King, appointed head of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA), arrived in Johannesburg with UN observers with a full complement of 50 observers expected to arrive in October. UNOMSA was established to assist the South African parties in their efforts to end violence.

Meanwhile, on 23 September 1993, the Secretary-General met in New York with South African President F.W. de Klerk, congratulating him on the historic decision adopted by the Parliament on the establishment of the Transitional Executive Council and promising him that UNOMSA would be strengthened before the April 1994 elections.

Noting the progress in the multi-party negotiations, the Security Council in 1993 authorized increases in the number of observers to a total of 100 to provide a nucleus for the UN element in the electoral process in South Africa. In November 1993, the Council President also welcomed in a statement the successful completion of the multi-party negotiating process and the agreed interim and electoral bill.

On 16 December, the Council approved the appointment of Lakhdar Brahimi as the Secretary-General’s Special Representative for South Africa, who joined a survey team in a visit to South Africa from 16 to 23 December. The team consulted with the Government, political parties, representatives of transitional institutions, other intergovernmental observer missions, officials of the national peace structures, the

Chairman of the Frontline States, and the diplomatic community in South Africa. On the basis of the team's findings, the Secretary-General presented a comprehensive report to the Security Council on 10 January 1994. The report outlined the next steps in South Africa under the watch of an expanded UNOMSA mandate.<sup>51</sup>

27 April 1994, South Africa's interim constitution entered into force. The UN Secretary-General congratulated South Africa on the occasion of the country's first democratic elections as well as the conduct of the voting, in particular the performance of the voters, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and the UNOMSA. South Africa's new flag was raised for the first time at the United Nations Headquarters.

In May 1994, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali applauded the election process in South Africa as a peaceful expression of the people's aspiration to a better future. Noting the more than 40 years of United Nations involvement in the world campaign against apartheid, he congratulated all those who worked for the peaceful transition from apartheid to a new, democratic, non-racial and united South Africa. On 10 May 1994, a democratic non-racial government took office in South Africa, with Nelson Mandela as first democratically elected President.

On 23 June 1994, the General Assembly approved the credentials of the South African delegation and removed the item on apartheid from its agenda. The Security Council followed suit on 27 June 1994, noting with great satisfaction the establishment of a united, non-racial and democratic Government of South Africa. It also removed the question of South Africa from its agenda. President Mandela in his General Assembly speech lauded the contribution of the UN to the anti-apartheid struggle, summed up in one sentence:

“We stand here today to salute the United Nations Organization and its Member States, both singly and collectively, for joining forces with the masses of our people in a common struggle that has brought about our emancipation and pushed back the frontiers of racism.”

*South African President Nelson Mandela Address to UN General Assembly 3 October 1994*

**UN role:** Though UN contribution to the anti-apartheid struggle was halting at first, progress started to be made as the liberation movements intensified the struggle inside South Africa and from exile, backed by a strong international anti-apartheid movement. The UN gave space for the clash of ideas on South Africa amidst the loaded super power strategic interest in Southern Africa. As the Cold War situation experienced a thaw and with it came the international urge for peaceful resolution of the situation in the sub-region, the struggle for liberation in the sub-region was being won. Finally, apartheid ended in South Africa as in the rest of Southern Africa.

(51) See UN document A/48/845-S/1994/16, containing the legal framework for the electoral process and for the observation of the elections; coordination and cooperation with other observer missions, as well as the role of UNOMSA.

The UN was at the centre of all events that brought positive change to the racist dominated region.

### **III: Conclusion**

Its shortcomings notwithstanding, the UN made immense contribution to the liberation struggle in Southern Africa. Starting with the work of the Special Committee on Decolonization (Committee of 24), which ensured that the principles of the Charter of the world organization were fully applied in all colonial situations. The Committee devoted a considerable time to the challenging question of Southern African territories -Angola, Mozambique, Southern Rhodesia, Namibia and South Africa. It gave liberation movements a platform and helped mobilize international support against colonialism. The Committee also worked closely with key UN bodies, in particular the Security Council, General Assembly, as well as other UN specialized bodies - the Special Committee against Apartheid, the Council for Namibia, and the UN humanitarian agencies - in the area of decolonization.

In Southern Africa, the UN acted not only as the honest arbiter in situation like Angola and Mozambique, where the Portuguese left without proper handover, but also engaged in supporting efforts towards the stabilization of newly liberated countries immersed in civil conflict. The UN sent peace-keeping missions to help consolidate peace and organize elections. At the same time, the UN was called upon to provide humanitarian assistance to refugees, the internally displaced persons and other vulnerable persons. Therefore, the contribution of the UN in Southern Africa went beyond strictly supporting liberation struggles, but also in all aspects of peace-building and mediation in situations of internal conflict, fueled by the Cold War and super power strategic interests in Southern Africa. Equally important was the UN role in preparing peoples in colonial territories to take over administrative work at independence. Education funds, including UNEPTSA, helped many people in these countries and it is on these that the liberated countries depended upon. This is particularly the case for Namibia, where specialized institutions, including the UN Council for Namibia and the Institute for Namibia, were created to prepare the country for independence. Namibia is today one of the most stable countries in Southern Africa.

