

STATEMENT ON THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S REPORT TO
THE SECURITY COUNCIL ON NAMIBIA.

Secretary General Waldheim's November 15 report to the United Nations Security Council on contacts on the question of Namibia by his personal representative, Mr. Alfred M. Escher, represents an ominous retreat from the principles established by the United Nations decision to terminate the South African mandate over Namibia and to end all South African authority in the area, in effect declaring South Africa an illegal occupier. The report also constitutes a reversal of the U.N. position of support for the right of the people of Namibia to self-determination and independence under conditions of national unity and territorial integrity.

In initiating contacts with South Africa, Mr. Escher's mission has served only to relegitimize and strengthen an illegal authority. South Africa has not been forced to relinquish any part of its total control of Namibia. Indeed South Africa is clearly using the time gained by pursuing these contacts to consolidate its control of the country.

We therefore urge the Security Council to terminate all such ~~contacts~~ and to return to its program, from which it was diverted by resolutions 309 and 319, of seeking . . . effective means to compel South Africa to cease its illegal occupation of Namibia.

In justifying his recommendation that "contacts between the Secretary General and the South Africa Government . . . should be continued" Mr. Escher refers to "positive elements" that emerged from his discussion with the South African Prime Minister.

These elements examined appear positive only for South Africa, which has won from this interlude a back-handed recognition of its status in Namibia and implicit consent for its policy of fragmentation of Namibia. This is in violation of the U.N. resolution which established the mission and its mandate in . . . terms of seeking ways to secure South Africa's complete withdrawal from the territory and the establishment of a united, free Namibia.

Mr. Escher's report on the substance of the . . . discussions between himself and Prime Minister Vorster makes it clear that South Africa dictated the framework of all the discussions. No amount of dialogue on such a basis could possibly advance U.N. objectives for Namibia. In particular:

a) Mr. Escher reports that Mr. Vorster did not consider it an "appropriate stage to go into a detailed discussion of self-determination and independence". Thus the central issue was stricken from the agenda before any talks began;

b) As if to underline his contempt for the United Nations and its interpretation of self-determination, Mr. Vorster made it clear in a press conference on November 20 that South Africa has "no timetable whatsoever" for full independence for Namibia, and that it is impossible to make one (New York Times, 11/21/72);

c) Mr. Vorster also reiterated the South Africa determination to press ahead with its 'homelands' policy, which will divide Namibia into ten "homelands" or Bantustans, with a pretense of self-government in each segment. This system is now described in new language which talks of "self-determination on a regional basis". Bantustans have been totally rejected by the U.N. and by the people of Namibia, as well as South Africa, yet Mr. Escher reports that "this seemed acceptable to me in principle". His addition "provided that the necessary conditions for the exercise of self-determination were fulfilled" is unrealistic. Bantustans are a South African instrument designed to prevent the establishment of self-determination as defined by the U.N. Changing their title does not change their function;

d) To provide a cover for this Balkanization of Namibia, Mr. Vorster has apparently offered to establish a National Advisory Council. The hollowness of this offer is immediately betrayed by its corollary - that the South African Prime Minister himself will assume overall responsibility for Namibia as a whole. Thus in one act all power is to be re-centralized in South African hands;

e) South African intransigence is further revealed by its response to Mr. Escher's inquiry "whether the Government would consider the abolition of restrictive legislation". With contemptuous honesty Mr. Vorster declared that curbs on freedom are necessary for "influx control" - thus giving Mr. Escher notice that South Africa's vicious forced labor and apartheid system in Namibia is not open to negotiation;

f) The Prime Minister flatly denied any victimization of Africans who met with Secretary General Waldheim in the spring of 1972, though there is clear evidence of their victimization. Thus the Acting President of the South West Africa Peoples Organization (SWAPO), Mr. G.N. Maxuulili, is still under a banning order imposed in the spring of 1972, when he was permitted to have an interview with Mr. Escher;

g) There was apparently not even any discussion about the raising of martial law now in effect in Ovamboland or the repeal of laws enforcing the apartheid system, nor about the release of all political prisoners.

The Security Council authorized the Secretary General to conduct exploratory conversations with the South Africa government to determine whether means could be devised to transfer power from the occupying force to the people of Namibia through U.N. intervention. "Conversations" with South Africa are leading not to the transfer but to the entrenchment of South African power. It is clear that South Africa is not prepared to agree to any real U.N. authority in Namibia.

Therefore the Security Council should terminate these contacts between its representatives and the South African government and undertake effective measures to compel compliance with existing resolutions on Namibia. In particular, it is important that the Security Council take action to:

1. Intensify its efforts to establish an independent, freely elected, democratic government of the people of Namibia in a united land;

2. Call on all U.N. specialized agencies and related organizations to implement the International Court's Advisory Opinion of June 21, 1971 by refusing to allow South Africa to represent or act on behalf of Namibia;

3. Call on all U.N. member states to comply with and implement relevant U.N. resolutions relating to Namibia, and in particular Security Council resolutions 283 and 310;

4. Give full support to representation of the territory by the Council for Namibia pending the establishment of a freely elected government of the people of Namibia, and to call on member states to similarly recognize the interim authority of the Council for Namibia;

5. Support the establishment of an adequate staff, including Namibians, to assist the Council for Namibia (and the U.N. commissioner upon his appointment) to carry out their functions.

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