



# American Committee On Africa

198 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10038 / (212) 962-1210 / Cable AMCOMMAF

## Action Alert: U.S. Policy on Namibia

Congress is now considering legislation that would end American corporate support for South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia and send a strong message of support to the Namibian people. ACOA believes this legislation, the Namibian Natural Resources Protection Act, deserves your support. The final subcommittee hearings on this bill will be held in April or May and the author of the legislation, Colorado Rep. Patricia Schroeder, is urgently requesting additional cosponsors to ensure speedy action. ACOA is urging concerned Americans to contact their representatives and request they cosponsor this bill, HR 2589, as part of a broader campaign for genuine independence in Namibia.

### Why Support This Bill Now?

The Reagan administration came into office in 1981 declaring that genuine independence for Namibia was one of its highest priorities and could only be achieved by constructive engagement with the Botha government. Five years later, Washington has yet to make real progress toward implementing the United Nations plan for elections and independence in Namibia. South Africa continues to occupy the territory in violation of international law and repeated United Nations condemnations. Pretoria uses Namibia as a source of raw materials and as a base for launching attacks against neighboring Angola.

The Reagan administration, rather than pressuring Pretoria to leave Namibia, has linked Namibia's independence and freedom to the issue of Cuban troops in Angola. In January, the Anglican Bishop of Namibia James Kauluma condemned the American role, saying "The negotiations they have been carrying on have only encouraged South Africa to continue occupying Namibia."

Over the last five years South Africa has expanded its occupation in Namibia and further militarized the territory. Last year the South African government sealed off the northern third of the country and imposed a virtual state of siege. Instances of torture, rape and murder have been well-documented by church officials and legal affidavits from the relatives of victims. "Nothing whatsoever has changed for the better," said Evangelical Lutheran Bishop Kleopas Dumeni in a recent interview. "Rather, suffering, detentions, brutal torture and the wanton violation of basic human rights are still the order of the day."

### The Hidden War

Despite the almost daily coverage of black resistance to apartheid in South Africa, the war in Namibia has gone virtually unnoticed. SWAPO, the liberation movement representing the disenfranchised majority, has called for sanctions against South Africa to help end Pretoria's illegal occupation of Namibia. Church and other community leaders inside Namibia have echoed this demand, at great risk to themselves. Passage of the Namibian Natural Resources Act will be one step in responding to this call.

### The Namibian Natural Resources Protection Act

The Namibian Natural Resources Protection Act makes it illegal for U.S. corporations to extract or export any of Namibia's raw materials. The legislation formally makes the United Nations Council for Namibia's Decree No. 1, which prohibits the exploitation of Namibia's natural resources, a part of U.S. law. While all Namibia is occupied by South African forces, Namibians

have no control over their own resources. Given these conditions, U.S. corporations should not be profiting from South Africa's illegal exploitation of Namibia's resources. Support for the Namibian Natural Resources Protection Act (HR 2589) will focus attention on South Africa's illegal occupation and on the failure of the Reagan administration's Namibia policy to bring about independence. It is time that we made U.S. business with apartheid, our business.

Please urge your representative to cosponsor HR 2589 as a part of a broader effort to support genuine independence in Namibia.

Jennifer Davis

March 1986

To contact your representative write:  
Rep. \_\_\_\_\_  
House of Representatives,  
Washington, D.C. 20515  
or call (202) 224-3121

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WOMEN'S ISSUES, CO-CHAIR

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 11, 1985

**NAMIBIAN NATURAL RESOURCES PROTECTION ACT, H.R. 2589**

Dear Colleague:

Last week the House passed the historic Anti-Apartheid Act of 1985. We must not forget, however, that South Africa oppresses the people of Namibia and devastates Namibia's natural resources.

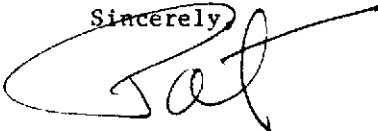
The U.N. Security Council, with U.S. support, has declared South Africa's occupation of Namibia illegal and has called upon all countries to refrain from any dealings with South Africa insofar as they concern Namibia. The U.N. Council for Namibia enacted Decree No. 1 prohibiting the exploitation of Namibia's natural resources. The U.S. should take a strong stand for liberty and cease to support in any way or participate in the illegal occupation of Namibia.

My bill, the Namibian Natural Resources Protection Act, will bring the United States into compliance with international law regarding Namibia and pressure South Africa to withdraw its illegal occupation of Namibia. The bill does this by prohibiting any person or company in the U.S. from exploiting natural resources situated in or originating from Namibia, without the permission of the United Nations Council for Namibia, the legal authority for Namibia. This Act will terminate when Namibia achieves internationally recognized independence.

Self-determination for Namibia and the preservation of Namibia's natural resources for the benefit of the Namibian people are the goals of this legislation. It informs South Africa that the U.S. is deeply committed to ending the illegal occupation of Namibia and signals to the rest of Africa and the international community that we truly believe in self-determination. That is the best foreign policy move we can make in Namibia.

Please contact Maureen Maxwell at 51955 if you wish to cosponsor the bill.

Sincerely,



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Below is an outline of the bill and information about life in Namibia.

**OUTLINE OF THE ACT**

- \* Prohibits companies or persons in the United States from using Namibia's natural resources, without the permission of the U.N. Council for Namibia.
- \* Authorizes the president to issue regulations, licenses, and orders necessary to carry out this Act.

- \* Established penalties for violation of this Act.
- \* Provides for termination of this Act when the president has certified that Namibia has achieved internationally recognized independence.
- \* Denies assistance from the U.S., in accordance with international law, to any person or company sued or held liable by the future government of Namibia for exploitation of Namibian natural resources.

## LIFE IN NAMIBIA

As part of the Allied effort, South Africa invaded German South West Africa (Namibia) in World War I. Under the League of Nations mandate system, and later under the United Nations Trusteeship System, South Africa was to administer the territory and prepare it for eventual self-rule. The Afrikaner National Party came to power in South Africa, however, and treated Namibia as an annexed province. In 1966, the U.N. General Assembly terminated South Africa's mandate and placed Namibia under U.N. control.

South Africa continues to illegally occupy Namibia and imposes the same repressive apartheid government in Namibia that it imposes on the residents of South Africa.

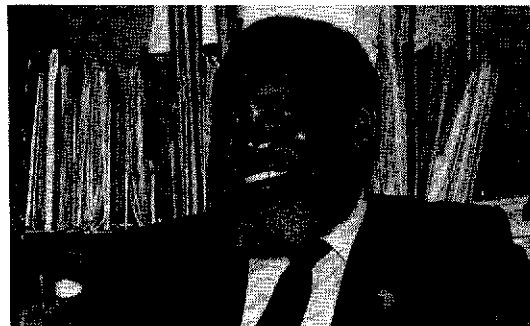
- \* Up to two-thirds of the labor force--more than almost any other country, including South Africa--are migrants, permitted to remain in the white industrial and farming areas only as long as they are required by the apartheid economy. Their movements and activities are severely restricted.
- \* Black women workers suffer a double oppression. Most have little or no education, often because they had to leave school early to work to supplement the family income. They are deliberately excluded from the majority of jobs. In general, women have not been required to register as "workseekers" and are expected to remain behind in the reservations. Working as domestic servants is the only option for most black women who work for wages.
- \* The internal government established by South Africa in 1978 officially rescinded some of the apartheid laws. Segregation, however, permeates life in Namibia, in housing, education, health services, transportation, and every other aspect of daily life.
- \* Ninety percent of goods produced are exported and 80 percent of goods consumed are imported. South Africa and its agents control wages and prices.
- \* Detention without trial is used extensively by South African authorities in Namibia. South African security police and military forces are also given immunity against civil or criminal prosecution for any action carried out "in good faith." This has produced hundreds of cases of human rights violations--torture, murder, and indefinite detention.
- \* Life expectancy for blacks is 32.7 years; for whites it is 57 years (1979 estimates).

# Voices from Namibia

## Namibians speak out against US policy and for sanctions

*"We are still demanding the imposition of economic sanctions. We are demanding economic sanctions and we are also demanding the dropping of linkage because this linkage is irrelevant as far as Resolution 435 [the UN plan for Namibian independence] is concerned."*

Andimba Toivo ja Toivo,  
Secretary General of SWAPO



*"At present there are no negotiations about Namibia even though the US says that there are some in progress. We believe that this irrelevant linkage the United States and South Africa have made between the Namibian problem and Cuban troops in Angola has brought a stalemate.... The negotiations they have been carrying on have only encouraged the South Africans to continue occupying Namibia."*

Rt. Rev. James Kauluma,  
Anglican Bishop of Namibia

*"Morally [divestment] is confronting apartheid. Maybe black people will suffer economically, but I wonder if it is for the sake of black people that these people are doing business in South Africa anyway. We will suffer, but if there is a clear message against apartheid it will have fruits. That's a way to a peaceful solution."*

Rev. Zephahiah Kameeta, President  
Evangelical Lutheran Church  
in Namibia



*"The [international] dispute over Namibia has gone on for almost 20 years. Those 20 years, added to the 82 years of colonialism, make it over one hundred years during which many lives of innocent citizens have been lost, and much of the wealth of the land plundered.... The church is thus forced to declare its position of support for sanctions against the South African government."*

From an article in *Omukwetu*,  
the twice-monthly, Ovambo-language newspaper of  
the Evangelical Lutheran Church.

For further information contact: The American Committee on Africa,  
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