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**ADDRESS BY THE OAU SECRETARY-GENERAL**

**H.E. MR SALIM AHMED SALIM**

**TO**

**THE FIFTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE LIBERATION COMMITTEE**

**Arusha, 20 February, 1991.**

MR CHAIRMAN,  
HONOURABLE MINISTERS,  
DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I WISH TO ADD MY VOICE TO THOSE WHO HAVE PRECEDED ME  
IN EXPRESSING MY SINCERE GRATITUDE TO THE <sup>Hon.</sup> ~~FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE~~ <sup>LOWASSA</sup> ~~UNITED REPUBLIC OF RWANDA~~ <sup>Representing the Prime Minister of the URTZ.</sup> ~~MR HASSAN BIZIMANA~~, NOT ONLY FOR  
SPARING TIME TO BE WITH US BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY FOR THE QUALITY  
OF THE MESSAGE HE HAS DELIVERED. HE HAS MADE MY WORK A LOT MORE  
EASIER. I SHALL, THEREFORE, LIMIT MYSELF TO ONLY A FEW OBSERVATIONS  
AND COMMENTS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

ONCE AGAIN, IN THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY, THE RACIST REGIME  
IN PRETORIA HAS CAPTURED INTERNATIONAL HEADLINES, BY ANNOUNCING  
ITS INTENTION TO REPEAL THE LAND ACTS, THE GROUP AREAS ACT AND  
THE POPULATION REGISTRATION ACT, WHICH WE, IN THE OAU, HAVE LONG  
REGARDED AS CONSTITUTING THE MAIN LEGISLATIVE PILLARS OF  
APARTHEID. PREDICTABLY, THE ANNOUNCEMENT HAS INTENSIFIED THE  
CALL FOR THE LIFTING OF SANCTIONS.

PREDICTABLY BECAUSE EVEN THE EARLIER MEASURES  
ANNOUNCED IN FEBRUARY, LAST YEAR, OPENED THE DEBATE ON WHETHER  
OR NOT INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE INCLUDING SANCTIONS SHOULD BE  
MAINTAINED. THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON SOUTHERN AFRICA, MEETING  
IN LUSAKA IN MARCH AND IN KAMPALA IN SEPTEMBER LAST YEAR, CALLED  
FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF SANCTIONS BECAUSE THE MEASURES TAKEN  
WERE CONSIDERED INADEQUATE. THE CALL WAS REINFORCED BY THE UN  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

THE LATEST ANNOUNCEMENT TO REPEAL THE NOTORIOUS LEGISLATIONS, THEREFORE, INCREASED THE CALL FOR THE LIFTING OF SANCTIONS. THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY HAS ALREADY SERVED NOTICE TO LIFT SANCTIONS AS SOON AS THE MEASURES ANNOUNCED ARE IMPLEMENTED. THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA HAS ADOPTED A MORE CAUTIOUS APPROACH. WHAT THEN IS THE MAIN ARGUMENT FOR THE LIFTING OF SANCTIONS ?

IT IS IMPORTANT TO POINT OUT THAT, AMONG THOSE CALLING FOR THE LIFTING OF SANCTIONS, ARE THOSE STATES THAT NEVER WANTED SANCTIONS, IN THE FIRST PLACE, BUT WERE COMPELLED LARGELY BY PRESSURE FROM WITHIN THEIR COUNTRIES TO JOIN THE BOYCOTT. TO SUCH COUNTRIES, THE SLIGHTEST POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA WILL BE ENOUGH FOR THEM TO END THE BOYCOTT BECAUSE THEY NEVER REALLY WANTED IT IN THE FIRST PLACE. THEN, THERE ARE THOSE WHO EMBRACED SANCTIONS AS A TOOL FOR CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA. SUCH COUNTRIES NOW CONTEND THAT, WITH THE ANNOUNCED REMOVAL OF THE PILLARS OF APARTHEID, THERE WAS NO LONGER A CASE FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF SANCTIONS.

MR CHAIRMAN,

AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME, THE OAU WOULD EXPRESS ITS GRATITUDE TO ALL THOSE STATES AND ORGANIZATIONS THAT HAVE SUPPORTED AFRICA'S CAUSE IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST APARTHEID. AFRICA HAS CHAMPIONED THE CAMPAIGN FOR SANCTIONS BECAUSE IT BELIEVES IT TO BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE WEAPON FOR INDUCING PEACEFUL CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA. THE CHANGES WE HAVE WITNESSED IN SOUTH AFRICA TODAY ARE DUE, IN PART, TO THE EFFECTS OF SANCTIONS AND

THE INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES. TO LIFT SANCTIONS WOULD PRESUPPOSE AN END TO APARTHEID. BUT DO WE REALLY BELIEVE THAT APARTHEID HAS BEEN ELIMINATED ?

MR CHAIRMAN,

THE PAST YEAR HAS WITNESSED UNPRECEDENTED CHANGES IN SOUTH AFRICA. THE FRONTLINE STATES HAVE HAD A RESPITE FROM DIRECT ACTS OF AGGRESSION EVEN THOUGH THE SEEDS OF EARLIER ACTS OF DESTABILIZATION STILL CONTINUE TO DEVASTATE MOZAMBIQUE AND ANGOLA. THE CHANGES THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN SOUTH AFRICA HAVE BEEN WELCOMED BY THE OAU AS POSITIVE.

LET US, HOWEVER, MEASURE THE CHANGES AGAINST THE PROVISIONS OF BOTH THE HARARE AND UN DECLARATIONS. IT WILL BE CLEAR EVEN TO A CURSORY READER THAT THE SUM TOTAL OF ALL THE CHANGES, AS IMPORTANT AS THEY ARE, IS AN ATTEMPT TO CREATE THE NECESSARY CLIMATE AS DEMANDED BY THE UN CONSENSUS DECLARATION, FOR THE COMMENCEMENT OF SUBSTANTIVE NEGOTIATIONS. EVEN IF ALL THE CONDITIONS HAVE BEEN FULLY MET - AND THEY ARE FAR FROM BEING MET - THOUSANDS OF POLITICAL PRISONERS ARE STILL IN PRISON AND THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS IS YET TO BEGIN. SINCE NO ONE CAN PREDICT THE OUTCOME OF THAT PROCESS, MAXIMUM CAUTION IS NECESSARY.

MR CHAIRMAN,

TRUE MR DE KLERK HAS MADE A DECLARATION OF INTENT TO REPEAL THREE LAWS AMONG THOSE WHICH ARE KEY IN THE APARTHEID LABYRINTH OF LEGISLATIONS. WE, OF COURSE, WELCOME THIS AND DEMAND

THE REPEAL OF THE MANY OTHER DRACONIAN LAWS WHICH GIVE LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE FORCE TO THE EVIL PHILOSOPHY OF APARTHEID. BUT IT REMAINS A DECLARATION OF INTENT AND, LIKE ALL INTENTIONS, IT IS PRUDENT THAT WE AWAIT ITS IMPLEMENTATION. YET, EVEN IF IT WERE FULFILLED, IT WILL ONLY BE A PARTIAL MEASURE SOMEWHAT SCRATCHING THE SURFACE OF APARTHEID. IT WILL BE MEASURE WHICH WHILE CONSTITUTING AN IMPORTANT STEP FORWARD WILL STILL FALL FAR SHORT OF THE STATED OBJECTIVE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY - THAT OF TOTALLY ERADICATING APARTHEID AND THE CREATION OF A DEMOCRATIC AND NON-RACIAL SOCIETY.

AS THE SITUATION OBTAINS, WE MUST REMAIN VIGILANT AND NOT FALL PREY TO THE WOES OF MR DE KLERK AND HIS FRIENDS OR TO THEIR FACILITY OF LANGUAGE ABOUT THE END OF APARTHEID. WE NEED TO BE FULLY SATISFIED THAT THERE IS IN CLEAR EVIDENCE, AN IRREVERSIBLE PROCESS TOWARDS THE TOTAL DISMANTLING OF APARTHEID. SO FAR WE ACCEPT THAT THERE HAS BEEN SOME SIGNIFICANT CHANGES AND WE HAVE CONGRATULATED MR DE KLERK FOR IT. BEYOND THAT, IT WILL BE TO GROSSLY EXAGGERATE THE MOVEMENT MADE AND CREATE A FURTHER BASIS FOR UNDERMINING INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY AGAINST APARTHEID. AFRICA SHOULD, OF COURSE, APPLY THE FLEXIBILITY NECESSARY RECOGNIZING CHANGE ON THE ONE HAND AND GUARDING AGAINST MISPLACED EUPHORIA ON THE OTHER. WE SHOULD AIM TO SEE THE EVOLUTION INSIDE SOUTH AFRICA AND AMONG ALL THE PARTIES OF A SELF-SUSTAINING MOMENTUM FOR NEGOTIATIONS. THIS SHOULD BE A MOMENTUM LEVERAGED AGAINST THE SHARED NEED BY ALL SOUTH AFRICANS, REGARDLESS OF RACE, TO SEE EVOLVE IN THAT COUNTRY A NON-RACIAL, DEMOCRATIC AND UNITARY REPUBLIC. IT SHOULD NOT BE A MOMENTUM WHICH IS CAREFULLY CONTROLLED OR HELD IN CHECK OR

SUBORDINATED TO WHITE POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY AND DEPENDENT ON THE WHIMS OF MR DE KLERK AND THE APARTHEID SYSTEM GENERALLY.

MR CHAIRMAN,

IT FOLLOWS THAT AN INTEGRAL PART OF THIS FLEXIBILITY SHOULD BE OUR READINESS TO REVIEW THE SITUATION AS IT EVOLVES AND ADJUST ACCORDINGLY. IF, INDEED, WE DETERMINE COLLECTIVELY THAT THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND HAS SO SUFFICIENTLY IMPROVED AS TO WARRANT RECONSIDERATION OR REVIEW OF OUR POSITION ON SANCTIONS, WE SHOULD, BY ALL MEANS, BE PREPARED TO DO SO. BUT TO BE CREDIBLE, IT MUST BE A COLLECTIVE ENDEAVOUR. SO FAR THAT DETERMINATION CANNOT BE MADE. AFRICA, WHICH HAS SACRIFICED SO MUCH TO SHOULDER AND PROSECUTE THE STRUGGLE, SHOULD NOT BE FOUND WANTING IN THE DEFENCE OF THE GAINS THAT WE HAVE MADE. AT ANY RATE, AFRICA SHOULD NOT BE SEEN, WRONGLY OR RIGHTLY, TO BE TAKING THE LEAD IN UNDOING WHAT WE, TOGETHER WITH THE REST OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, LABOURED SO HARD TO ACHIEVE. NEITHER SHOULD AFRICA STAND BY IN SILENCE AS THE DETRACTORS OF AFRICA'S FREEDOM SEIZE UPON THE FEW POSITIVE STEPS TAKEN BY MR DE KLERK TO DISMANTLE THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL COALITION AGAINST APARTHEID. BUT TO BE CREDIBLE, WE MUST OURSELVES FIRST ENSURE THAT WE DO NOT, EITHER DELIBERATELY OR BY OMISSION, CONTRIBUTE TO THE UNDERMINING OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS. IF AFRICA IS SEEN TO BE ANXIOUS TO EMBRACE THE APARTHEID REGIME, WHAT MORAL STANDING SHALL IT HAVE TO CONDEMN OTHERS WHO DO SO ? THERE MUST BE A CLEAR SIGNAL FROM AFRICA THAT APARTHEID IS NOT DEAD YET AND, UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCE, ALL PRESSURES INCLUDING SANCTIONS MUST BE MAINTAINED.

MR CHAIRMAN,

THE IMPENDING REPEAL OF THE PILLARS OF APARTHEID HAS CREATED THE MISGUIDED AND UNFORTUNATE IMPRESSION THAT, BY THAT ACT, APARTHEID WOULD HAVE BEEN ELIMINATED. IT WILL NOT EVEN MENTION THE SCORES OF OTHER DISCRIMINATORY LAWS IN THE STATUTE BOOK. IT IS TRUE THAT THE OAU HAS CONSISTENTLY REFERRED TO THE PILLARS OF APARTHEID. BUT IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT THE PILLARS OF APARTHEID, AS WELL AS ALL OTHER DISCRIMINATORY LAWS, DERIVE THEIR AUTHORITY FROM A MORE FUNDAMENTAL LAW OF THE LAND, THE CONSTITUTION WHICH IS THE FOUNDATION OF THE APARTHEID SUPER-STRUCTURE. ELIMINATION OF THE PILLARS WITHOUT A CORRESPONDING ACTION AT THE FOUNDATION CAN AT BEST BE TERMED A PARTIAL ELIMINATION OF APARTHEID. BUT IT IS NOT A PARTIAL SOLUTION WE SEEK. APARTHEID CAN BE SAID TO HAVE BEEN ELIMINATED ONLY WHEN THE EXISTING CONSTITUTION, THE SOURCE OF THE RACIAL BIGOTRY, HAS BEEN REPLACED BY A NON-RACIAL CONSTITUTION. THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT THE HARARE DECLARATION STIPULATES. QUOTE

«21.6 AFTER THE ADOPTION OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION, ALL ARMED HOSTILITIES WILL BE DEEMED TO HAVE FORMALLY TERMINATED.

21.7 FOR ITS PART, THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WOULD LIFT THE SANCTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN IMPOSED AGAINST APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA».

UNQUOTE.

BUT THE PROCESS FOR THE DRAFTING OF THE CONSTITUTION HAS NOT YET EVEN STARTED !

UNTIL THEN, IT WOULD BE PREMATURE AND INDEED DANGEROUS FOR AFRICA TO LOWER THE BANNER OF ITS STRUGGLE. TO LIFT SANCTIONS NOW WOULD BE TO REMOVE THE ONLY INCENTIVE FOR PRESIDENT DE KLERK TO PROCEED WITH THE PROCESS OF POLITICAL CHANGE AND WOULD MAKE HIM EVEN MORE VULNERABLE TO THE RIGHT WING WHITE EXTREMIST GROUPS IN SOUTH AFRICA. IN OTHER WORDS, THE REMOVAL OF SANCTIONS AND PRESSURES, INSTEAD OF ENCOURAGING HIM TO MOVE AS IS BEING ARGUED IN CERTAIN QUARTERS, WILL ONLY SERVE TO RETARD OR IMMOBILIZE HIM BECAUSE THE INCENTIVE WILL NO LONGER BE THERE AND, IN ANY CASE, HE WOULD HAVE ACHIEVED HIS MAJOR OBJECTIVE.

MR CHAIRMAN,  
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

IT IS FOR SUCH CONSIDERATIONS THAT THE AD HOC COMMITTEE, AT ITS JUST CONCLUDED SIXTH SESSION IN HARARE, CAME OUT CLEARLY AND STRONGLY THAT SANCTIONS AND PRESSURES SHOULD NOT BE LIFTED AT THIS TIME. IT IS OUR HOPE THAT OAU MEMBER STATES WILL CONTINUE TO ABIDE BY THE COLLECTIVE POSITION OF THE OAU. LET US, THEREFORE, IN UNITY BRING OUR LONG STRUGGLE TO ITS LOGICAL END. IF WE CANNOT DEMONSTRATE SUCH UNITY, WE SHALL HAVE UNDERMINED THE PROSPECTS OF UNITY INSIDE SOUTH AFRICA AND DEALT A SEVERE BLOW TO THE STRUGGLE ITSELF.

MR CHAIRMAN,

WE ARE SADDENED BY THE VIOLENCE THAT HAS CLAIMED THE LIVES OF THOUSANDS OF OUR OPPRESSED BROTHERS IN SOUTH AFRICA DURING THE SECOND HALF OF 1990. I AM HAPPY TO REPORT THAT PERSISTENT APPEALS FOR AN END TO THE VIOLENCE AND THE FORMATION

OF A COMMON FRONT OF ALL THE MOVEMENTS AND DEMOCRATIC FORCES ARE NOW BEING HEDED. I AM REFERRING TO THE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE ANC AND INKATHA, BETWEEN THE ANC AND PAC. WE COMMEND ALL THESE MOVEMENTS AND URGE THEM TO REDOUBLE THEIR EFFORTS TO END THE VIOLENCE AND TO FORGE A COMMON FRONT IN THE MORE FORMIDABLE TASKS THAT LIE AHEAD. THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS IS BY FAR THE MOST DELICATE, THE MOST TEMPTING AND THE MOST DAUNTING. IT IS NOT UNCOMMON TO EXPECT THE AGE-OLD DIVIDE AND RULE TACTICS MANIFESTING ITSELF ONCE MORE AT THIS STAGE.

MR CHAIRMAN,

LET ME NOW REFER TO THE CONCRETE MANIFESTATION OF OUR COMMITMENT TO THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE. I AM REFERRING TO THE ASSESSED CONTRIBUTION TO THE SPECIAL FUND. THE REPORTS TELL THE SAME STORY OF INCREASING ARREARS IN CONTRIBUTION. HOW CAN WE, FRANKLY AND HONESTLY, TAKE PRIDE AT WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED IN THE FIELD OF DECOLONIZATION WHEN WE HAVE FAILED TO MAKE THE BAREST MINIMUM CONTRIBUTION TO THAT END ? THE STRUGGLE WILL SOON OR LATER COME TO AN END AND THE PEOPLE OF AFRICA WILL SIT IN JUDGEMENT OVER OUR PERFORMANCE. WHILST ON THIS, LET ME ALSO TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO REMIND MEMBER STATES ABOUT THE URGENT NEED TO ASSIST THE MOVEMENTS FINANCIALLY IN THE RESETTLEMENT OF THEIR CADRES. PERHAPS, THIS IS ALSO THE TIME TO MAKE A BUDGETARY ALLOCATION OR THE SETTING UP OF A SPECIAL FUND TO ASSIST THE MOVEMENTS IN CONFRONTING THE CURRENT CHALLENGES OF OPERATING AS LEGAL POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS.

FINALLY, MR CHAIRMAN, AT THIS CRUCIAL HOUR, LET AFRICA PROVE TO ITSELF THAT IT IS STILL CAPABLE OF SPEAKING WITH ONE VOICE AND ACTING TOGETHER AND THAT THE COLLECTIVE INTEREST OF THE CONTINENT OVERRIDES ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.

I THANK YOU.