

STATEMENT BY MR. SALIM AHMED SALIM, OAU
SECRETARY GENERAL TO THE FIFTY-NINTH SESSION
OF THE LIBERATION COMMITTEE, 8 - 11 FEBRUARY 1993

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished Guest of Honour
and Minister of State in the President's Office and
Secretary General of CCM, Hon. Horace Kolimba,

Distinguished Ministers and Heads of Delegation,

Distinguished Executive Secretary of the OAU Liberation
Committee,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I want at the very outset to join the previous speakers
- the Ambassador of Zaire as Dean of the African Diplomatic
Corps in Tanzania and the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of
the PAC in expressing our appreciation and gratitude to
Hon. Horace Kolimba, CCM Secretary General and Minister
of State in the President's office for his important,
eloquent and inspiring address. His presence in our midst
is a further testimony to the Commitment of the Government
and people of Tanzania to the cause of the total liberation
of our continent. Through him we convey our thanks to the
President, the Government and people of Tanzania for their
steadfast support. Through him also we convey our appreciation
to the authorities and all the people of Arusha for their
traditional hospitality.

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When this Committee last met in an Ordinary Session in Dakar, Senegal, it expressed its grave concern over violence in South Africa and particularly the Township violence that was taking its toll in human lives through wanton massacres of innocent people and families, and the large scale destruction of property. The Committee further stressed that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of law and order in the country was that of the South African Government. It also expressed its concern about the potential irreversible derailment of the peace negotiations, should the ambivalence of the Government over the atrocities go unabated.

It was thus on this assessment of the situation, that the 56th Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers in a decision endorsed by the 28th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government meeting in Dakar, Senegal, in July 1992 requested the convening of an urgent meeting of the United Nations Security Council to review the situation in South Africa. An African Ministerial delegation presented the case before the Security Council. Subsequently on considering the situation, the Security Council adopted two resolutions on the issue, namely 765 and 772 which, inter alia, requested the UN Secretary General to send a special representative to South Africa and to deploy United Nations Observers in South Africa and invited the OAU, the Commonwealth and the European Community to deploy their own independent Observers to work in collaboration with the United Nations Team.

An OAU Fact-find Mission which was dispatched to South Africa in the wake of the Security Council decision recommended a presence of the OAU of longer duration inside the country in order to assist in the monitoring of the violence.

Consequently, as you are no doubt aware, the Ninth Ordinary Session of the Ad Hoc Committee of Heads of State and Government on Southern Africa meeting in Gaborone, Botswana, in October last year requested the Secretary General to deploy, for an initial period of three months, Observers in South Africa whose activities were to be co-ordinated by a Special Representative.

Since that October 1992 Session of the Ad Hoc Committee, I have appointed a Special Representative in the person of Ambassador Legwaila J. M. J. Legwaila, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Botswana to the United Nations, who has already assumed his duties. Assistant Executive Secretary Ibok of this Committee is the Principal Assistant to my Special Representative in South Africa. The ten OAU Observers drawn from ten African countries have been deployed in the various provinces of South Africa. I am sure, Mr. Chairman, if you so desire that you will have comprehensive reports by the Executive Secretariat of the Liberation Committee on the composition, deployment and activities of the observers. It should, however, be pointed out that if the observers are to be kept in the field for a longer periods the question of resources should be addressed for the immediate and in the long term. At the sametime, for the Mission to be effecting it does inter alia need the **full** support and cooperation of the ANC and the PAC in addition to that of the other Actors in the South African political scene.

Mr. Chairman,

If I had to dwell on our previous ~~decisions~~ and indeed expectations, it was only to give a backdrop to the situation currently prevailing in South Africa. But where do we stand now?

Violence is still rampant. The problem of the hostels has yet to be handled conclusively. Mechanisms under the National Peace Accord have yet to prove efficient. And Liberation Movements and the Anti-Apartheid forces generally have yet to show more cohesion and a common stand in their talks with the South African Government remain uncoordinated.

On violence, Mr. Chairman, and contrary to expectations, the many bilateral agreements and multilateral accords signed in recent years between the protagonists did not succeed in ending the violence. In fact 1992 had shown an increase in political violence. This violence, according to our Observer Mission in South Africa, is particularly prevalent in public places and facilities such as trains and taxis, rallies and funerals. ANTAGONISM between political organizations and provocative attacks by elements within the security forces, continue to exact a heavy toll in terms of human lives.

The National Peace Accord did appear, at the time of its signing on 14 September 1991, to provide a general framework for ending violence. Regrettably these mechanisms set under the Accord have not stemmed the violence. May be, Mr. Chairman, the Liberation Movements may wish to advise us and inform us on how best these mechanisms, that are already in place, can be strengthened and reinforced if we were to attain a reduction in the incidence of violence in South Africa.

Mr. Chairman,

May I now turn to the negotiation process in South Africa. As you all know, the parties to CODESA II failed to agree on a number of important principles regarding South Africa's transition to a non-racial and democratic society. The Boipatong massacre and later that of Bisho greatly

aggravated the situation leading to ANC's withdrawal from the talks.

However, I note that of late bilateral talks were going on between the various Liberation Movements, other Anti-Apartheid organizations and the South African Government. The recent agreement of the parties concerned to resume multi-lateral talks next month is indeed a welcome development.

We are aware that difficulties abound as to time-frames, constitutional formats and even to the question of participation in the multilateral talks. But, we in the OAU, committed as we are to peaceful negotiations as propounded in various Declarations, would like to see these great endeavours succeed for the benefit of the people of South Africa and for the continent as a whole. We hope that this year will see meaningful change towards a democratic non-racial and united South Africa through the determined and dedicated efforts of those directly concerned in the process. To attain this objective there is urgent need for the progressive forces in the country to close ranks for the greater good of their people. On its part, the OAU will spare no effort to intensify its support for the ANC and PAC as well as for all those in South Africa who are for genuine negotiations and change.

Mr. Chairman,

Even with this guarded optimism, the situation in South Africa now presents a new challenge beyond that of forging unity among all the anti-apartheid forces. The new challenge is how the anti-apartheid forces and especially the Liberation Movements can respond to the swiftly changing political circumstances and prepare for the future. Equally to this Committee is how it can assist in that process of adjusting to

the new political situations and in preparing for the future. For beyond the crucial task of mobilization, and expanding their reach in the South African political constituency, there is the equally difficult task of handling the practical aspects of conversion from Movements of Liberation to political parties and of dealing with the mechanics and intricacies of electioneering.

I find this task deserving urgent attention at this juncture when, there is contemplation of agreement on an interim government and subsequent elections in South Africa in the near future. Considering the magnitude of the task at hand - that of preparation and of facing what will obviously be stiff competition from a government determined to win the election at any cost and with massive resources at its disposal.

We will therefore need to respond with determination and requisite resources as we did in Namibia for example. While assisting the Liberation Movements must be our overriding objective, I am of the view that the Movements themselves should spell in detail the kind of assistance they require and at what magnitude. This Session should therefore provide the opportunity to think and plan ahead on how we can face the daunting challenge of preparing to win the future elections in South Africa, and what form of support Africa will have to give to the people of South Africa.

Mr. Chairman,

While we look forward to those elections and must seriously prepare for them, we should bear in mind that the situation remains quite fluid indeed. The possibility of continued procrastination on the part of the Government is real. Equally real are attempts by the die hard racist

elements to frustrate and ultimately halt the process of change which is in progress. Optimism apart this is not therefore the time for Africa to drop its guard. Quite to the contrary instead of letting our optimism throw us into complacency, we should heighten our vigilance and ensure that the process of change is kept on course and consolidated. Above all, we should not allow ourselves to do anything consciously or by omission which will have the effect of undermining the position of the National Liberation Movements or sent the wrong signal to the South African Government. Correspondingly, we should continue to demand of the International Community to continue exerting the necessary pressure and to ensure that the Government is unalterably committed to the transition to a democratic, non-racial, United South Africa.

Mr. Chairman,

As we continue to maintain vigilance we must also urge the National Liberation Movements to heighten the momentum for negotiations. For the longer the negotiations take or get drawn out, the more the likelihood of confusion and derailment. The negotiations must be approached with the determination to conclude them speedily. In this situation, the least desirable thing is for the National Liberation Movements to be accused of procrastination or indecision. In order therefore for the momentum of the negotiations to be maintained, the National Liberation Movements ought to move more resolutely, with speed and determination. And in this they should in turn find Africa ready and willing to assist.

I wish the Committee successful deliberations.