

RECORD OF THE MEETING OF THE AFRICAN  
CONTACT GROUP HELD ON FRIDAY, 13TH NOVEMBER 1981  
AT THE OAU OFFICE

3:30 PM

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Present:

1. Benin (Chairman of African Group)
  2. Kenya (Representative of OAU Chairman)
  3. Nigeria
  4. Niger
  5. Tunisia - absent
  6. Uganda
  7. Angola
  8. Tanzania: Minister Salim, Ambassadors Rupia, Fom  
and Hyera
- } African members of Security Council

The Chairman gave the floor to Minister Salim to explain the scenario for the battle.

Minister Salim thanked the Chairman for convening the meeting. He also thanked the Contact Group for its efforts in promoting the OAU candidate.

The Minister said that there was not much change since the last ballot. The only change is the idea of massive balloting scheduled to take place on Monday, 16th November 1981. This balloting is desired by some Council members and it is the privilege of the

Security Council to do whatever it wants.

The Minister went on to explain that the main problem is the USA position. There was no reason to believe any change would occur by the next ballot. But efforts had continued at various levels, especially the heads of state level in various capitals e.g., appeal by current OAU Chairman, President Moi by summoning the USA Ambassador in Nairobi; efforts in Lagos, Cairo, Sudan, etc. This united stand by Africa was very important and a most helpful position.

An assessment of the 7th and 8th ballots had shown that not getting the required majority was not the problem but opposition by a permanent member. Some Council member had also played games by switching from yes to no vote. The USA had not changed nor was she talking much. The Minister had had a meeting with Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick of the USA which had lasted for 90 minutes. At this meeting, Mrs. Kirkpatrick had repeated her remarks of high personal regard for Minister Salim. She said she would transmit to Washington the record of the meeting they had had.

On the other hand, China had continued to support Minister Salim because he was OAU candidate supported by the non-aligned nations and secondly, because China believed the time for a change had come. Chinese stand was firm and consistent.

The Minister was of the view that he was in "the same

boat" with Waldheim, exception being that the USA had not indicated firmness of stand in opposing OAU candidate. And because of massive support, the OAU candidate had more legitimacy.

The purpose of the massive ballot was intended to erode support for Minister Salim through many ballots while Waldheim's support was expected to be high through Europeans' support and Asian support. Minister Salim was assured the Chinese and 3 African members plus France which would give five votes. Responsibility for his candidature was OAU support and hence source of his legitimacy. Therefore he would continue to be in the ballot even if he received the barest minimum (China plus three Africans). France's support would avoid contest being North-South confrontation. He would disabuse those who think massive balloting would erode his resolve for the race was not that of Salim or of Tanzania but Africa's. (He drew distinction by saying he was an OAU candidate with non-aligned support.) Thus only Africa could tell Minister Salim to get out of the race.

He stated that the incumbent Secretary-General had no chance of being re-elected. The Chinese had made their position known to Kurt Waldheim. The USA hadn't given a similar position to us. The Monday ballot can erode or fail to achieve this. Either way we have to know what next. Minister Salim expressed full confidence and said he had communicated with President Nyerere on this.

The Minister said that solidarity with Latin America would be determined by the support they gave to the OAU candidate. The Contact Group should continue to put pressure on Security Council members.

The Minister said that much more is at stake than his election or non-election. The dignity of Africa is at stake.

In this regard, in the last week there had been many misunderstandings on words attributed to him by alleging that he had no confidence in the African members of the Security Council. The press report changed by proposing to quote Minister on what he had said to African group. This was to divide group solidarity. He had sent messages to the Foreign Ministers of Niger, Tunisia and Uganda expressing total confidence in their support.

Ambassador Maina of Kenya said that France was voting for Minister Salim and Waldheim. Maybe, we should appeal to France to abstain on Waldheim. He believed also Mexico was constantly supporting us as a matter of principle. He said the Chinese ambassador had told him of China's firm support for the OAU candidate. The Chinese indicated they would pass on to Austria their consistent opposition to Waldheim.

The Kenyan Permanent Representative said the mammoth balloting envisaged for Monday was meant to establish the existence of a deadlock. But hurried moves were incomprehensible in

view of the fact that there was still a long time before expiration of incumbent's term. He said whenever he was asked when is there going to be a third candidate, he would reply that there was no need for a third candidate. Only the incumbent should withdraw from the race and let Africa's candidate be elected. He ended by requesting for a meeting with USSR for support.

The Nigerian Ambassador said the situation was difficult and could not be predicted because the USA stand was not clear. He reminded of his earlier call of bypassing the Security Council and appealing to the General Assembly. This would be because there is no justification for the American veto. The principle of its being Africa's turn to produce a UN Sec.-Gen. was being flouted. Waldheim's position was absolutely untenable. We must act with firmness and dignity. We must talk to France and Mexico for support. In Lagos, President Shagari had already spoken to the USA Charge d'Affaires. But because of the not so good relations between Africa and the current USA Administration, our leverage was limited.

On the Minister's suggestion, it was agreed that Benin, Kenya and Nigeria should meet the Soviet, Japanese and French for support before Monday's vote.