

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT BY THE OAU SECRETARY GENERAL
HIS EXCELLENCY MR SALIM AHMED SALIM TO THE
SEVENTH SESSION OF THE OAU AD HOC COMMITTEE OF HEADS
OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT ON SOUTHERN AFRICA
ABUJA, NIGERIA, 29 JULY, 1991

YOUR EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT IBRAHIM BABAGINDA,
CURRENT CHAIRMAN OF THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN UNITY
AND PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA, THE HOST COUNTRY,
YOUR EXCELLENCIES, HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT AND
HEADS OF DELEGATION,

ONLY ABOUT TWO SHORT MONTHS AGO, IN JUNE, WE CONVERGED IN THIS BEAUTIFUL
FEDERAL CAPITAL CITY, ABUJA, TO CONSIDER, AMONG MANY OTHER EQUALLY IMPORTANT
ISSUES THE POSITION OF OUR ORGANISATION ON DEVELOPMENTS IN APARTHEID SOUTH
AFRICA. DESTINY BRINGS US BACK TO ABUJA AND WE ARE ONCE AGAIN GRATEFUL
TO OUR HOSTS FOR THE WARM WELCOME AND EXCELLENT WORKING CONDITIONS YET
ANOTHER TIME PROVIDED. IT WOULD BE RECALLED THAT IN JUNE, THE ASSEMBLY OF
HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT, CONSCIOUS OF THE LONG-STANDING, IMMUTABLE
COMMITMENT OF THE ORGANISATION TO RID OUR CONTINENT OF THE SCOURGE THAT IS
APARTHEID, BUT MINDFUL NONETHELESS OF THE NEED FOR AFRICA TO RETAIN AT ALL
TIMES SUCH FLEXIBILITY THAT WOULD ENABLE IT TO RESPOND EFFECTIVELY TO
CHANGING SITUATIONS, DECIDED, IN THE ABUJA DECLARATION, TO, AND I QUOTE
"MANDATE THE CURRENT CHAIRMAN OF THE OAU, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE FRONTLINE
STATES AND THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, AND WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF
THE OAU AD HOC COMMITTEE OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT ON SOUTHERN AFRICA,
TO CONTINUE TO MONITOR AND REVIEW THE SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA, TAKING INTO
ACCOUNT CONCRETE STEPS UNDERTAKEN BY SOUTH AFRICA TO REMOVE ALL OBSTACLES
TO GENUINE NEGOTIATIONS AS STIPULATED IN THE HARARE AND UN CONSENSUS DECLARATIONS,
AS WELL AS PUTTING AN IMMEDIATE END TO THE ON-GOING VIOLENCE".

FURTHER, GIVEN THAT ONE OF THE CRUCIAL INSTRUMENTS USED BY AFRICA AND
INDEED THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IN WAGING THE STRUGGLE AGAINST APARTHEID
IS SANCTIONS, IT WOULD BE RECALLED THAT THE HEADS OF STATE COMMITTED THEMSELVES
"TO REVIEW THE QUESTION OF SANCTIONS WITH A VIEW TO RE-ADMITTING
SOUTH AFRICA INTO THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY...", ON CONDITION - AND THE

ASSEMBLY WAS SPECIFIC ON THIS - THAT THE REGIME ADOPTED MEASURES LEADING TO "POSITIVE, PROFOUND AND IRREVERSIBLE CHANGE TOWARDS THE ABOLITION OF APARTHEID".

IN CONSIDERING WHETHER WHAT PREVAILS ON THE GROUND MAY BE PROPERLY CHARACTERISED AS "POSITIVE PROFOUND AND IRREVERSIBLE", WE RECALL THE PERCEPTION IN ABUJA IN EARLY JUNE, APPARENTLY WIDELY - SHARED, THAT THE AD HOC COMMITTEE WOULD PROBABLY BE CONVENED SHORTLY, AND INDEED, THIS SENSE OF URGENCY SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN JUSTIFIED BY SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS.

THESE DEVELOPMENTS INCLUDE MAINLY, THE REPEAL OF THE SO-CALLED "PILLARS OF APARTHEID", AND THE FURTHER EROSION OF INTERNATIONAL SANCTIONS. THIS EROSION, HAVING BEEN NO LESS AGGRAVATED BY THE SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO IT BY SOME OF OUR OWN MEMBER STATES, AND HAVING ALREADY BEEN DECRIED BY BOTH THE FIFTH AND SIXTH SESSIONS OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE, WAS CARRIED A STAGE FURTHER BY THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE LIFTING OF US SANCTIONS BY PRESIDENT BUSH ON THE 10TH JULY, AND THE RE-ADMISSION OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC MOVEMENT ONLY A DAY EARLIER.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

IT IS TRUE ENOUGH THAT THERE HAS BEEN SOME SIGNIFICANT CHANGE IN THE APARTHEID STATE, NOTABLY THE REPEAL OF CORE PIECES OF APARTHEID LEGISLATION AND THE INITIAL MANIFESTATIONS OF THE GRADUAL OPENING UP OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY AS SIGNIFIED BY THE HOLDING OF THE ANC NATIONAL CONGRESS RECENTLY. THESE DEVELOPMENTS HAVE, HOWEVER, CREATED AN IMPRESSION OF FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE WHICH IS NOT BORNE OUT BY THE ACTUAL SITUATION ON THE GROUND. THIS IMPRESSION HAS NONETHELESS BEEN SEIZED ON BY SOME AS JUSTIFICATION FOR THE RELAXATION OF INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE AGAINST APARTHEID.

YET, THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION IS THAT THE RECENT REPEAL OF THE GROUP AREAS ACT, THE LAND ACTS AND THE POPULATION REGISTRATION ACT HAS NOT REALLY TACKLED THE SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INEQUITIES. IN A BACKGROUND PAPER PREPARED BY THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR THIS SESSION AND CIRCULATED TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE AN ATTEMPT HAS BEEN MADE TO DISCUSS AND ANALYSE THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE REPEAL OF THESE LEGISLATIONS FOR THE PLIGHT OF THE BLACK PEOPLE.

WHAT IS CLEAR IS THAT MOST OF THESE MEASURES TAKEN BY THE REGIME HAVE MERELY SKIRTED ROUND THE ISSUE OF APARTHEID BY REMOVING ONLY THE MOST GLARING ASPECTS. HOWEVER, THE MISERABLE AND OPPRESSIVE DAY-TO-DAY EXISTENCE OF THE ORDINARY AFRICAN HAS HARDLY CHANGED.

IT IS CRUCIAL TO REMEMBER THAT THE WHOLE STRUGGLE AGAINST APARTHEID IS A MATTER OF THE RESTITUTION OF THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF THE AFRICAN MAJORITY, INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO VOTE. THIS WOULD CONFER ON THEM A PLACE IN THE MAIN STREAM OF POLITICAL LIFE. SO FAR, HOWEVER, THE REGIME HAS CONTINUED TO EMPLOY THE MAIN WEAPON WHICH IT HAS USED OVER THE YEARS AGAINST THE BLACK MAJORITY. THIS IS THE CONSTITUTION, FROM WHICH ALL APARTHEID LAWS HAVE DERIVED THEIR LEGITIMACY. IT FOLLOWS, THEREFORE, THAT THE DETERMINATION THAT SUBSTANTIVE AND IRREVERSIBLE REPUDIATION OF APARTHEID HAS BEEN EFFECTED CAN BE MADE ONLY WHEN A CONSTITUTION, IN WHOSE ELABORATION THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRESENTLY DISENFRANCHISED MAJORITY HAVE PARTICIPATED, COMES INTO FORCE, SUBSEQUENT TO A PROCESS OF GENUINE NEGOTIATIONS.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

IT IS CLEAR THAT WHAT IS LACKING IS AN INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS ON THE MEANING OF THE CONCEPTS OF PROFOUNDITY AND IRREVERSIBILITY. IT MAY ARGUED THAT MR. DE KLERK WILL FIND IT DIFFICULT, IN PRACTICAL TERMS, TO ACTUALLY PROCEED TO REVERSE MEASURES HE HAS INSTITUTED SO FAR. YET THAT IS NOT THE POINT. WHAT IS THE CRUCIAL CONSIDERATION IS NOT REALLY THE REPEAL OF LAWS PER SE WHICH THE GOVERNMENT MAY OPT NOT TO NEGATE BY A SUBSEQUENT LEGAL ACT IN THE FUTURE; BUT WHETHER THE REPEAL ACTUALLY REVERSES THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND, BECAUSE THE REGIME, RATHER THAN SEEKING TO ENTRENCH WHITE PRIVILEGE IN ANOTHER GUISE, HAS SINCERELY TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS WHICH IMPINGE ON THE LAW.

THIS CAN ONLY HAPPEN WITH THE TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGN LEGISLATIVE POWER TO A NON-RACIAL LEGISLATIVE STRUCTURE CONTROLLED BY THE MAJORITY WHO WILL BE IN A POSITION TO ADOPT A NEW CONSTITUTION AS WELL AS PUT THEIR STAMP ON ALL LEGISLATION AFFECTING THEIR INTERESTS WHICH EMANATES FROM SUCH LEGISLATIVE STRUCTURE.

IN THE LIGHT OF THE ABOVE, THEREFORE, IT IS TRUE TO SAY THAT OUR OBJECTIVES AS AN ORGANISATION HAVE NOT BEEN MET. ACCORDINGLY, THE AD HOC COMMITTEE MAY WISH TO RE-AFFIRM THAT THE PARAMETRES OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS

REGARDING THE PURSUIT OF RELATIONS BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY WITH SOUTH AFRICA SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE BASICALLY DEFINED BY THE HARARE AND UN CONSENSUS DECLARATIONS, ESPECIALLY AS REGARDS THEIR STIPULATION OF AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION:

- a) THE REMOVAL OF ALL OBSTACLES TO NEGOTIATIONS INCLUDING, I MAY ADD, VIOLENCE;
- b) THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INTERIM STRUCTURES TO ENSURE THE SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY, AND.
- c) THE ADOPTION OF A DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTION AND THE HOLDING OF FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS TO A NON-RACIAL PARLIAMENT AND REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

WE NEED HARDLY STRESS AGAIN AND AGAIN THAT ALL THE CHANGES WHICH HAVE OCCURRED IN SOUTH AFRICA HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE AT ALL BECAUSE OF THE COMBINATION OF PRESSURES, BOTH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL. IF PRESSURES WERE NECESSARY TO BRING THE STRUGGLE THIS FAR, THEN IT STANDS TO REASON THAT THEY ARE NECESSARY AND INDEED, CRUCIAL TO ENSURE THAT THE PROCESS OF CHANGE CONTINUES AND THAT THE DE KLERK REGIME REMAINS IRREVOCABLY COMMITTED TO CHANGE. THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO ENSURE THAT DE KLERK FULFILS FULLY THE DEMANDS CONTAINED IN THE HARARE AND UN CONSENSUS DECLARATIONS AND SOUTH AFRICA ACQUIRES GENUINE INTERNATIONAL ACCEPTABILITY.

APART FROM THE FACT THAT THE REPEAL OF CERTAIN LEGISLATION HAS BEEN VERY LIMITED IN EFFECT, IT IS ALSO TRUE THAT THE REGIME HAS DONE VERY LITTLE TO CREATE A CLIMATE CONDUCIVE TO NEGOTIATIONS, INCLUDING ITS FAILURE TO RELEASE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS, TO END POLITICAL TRIALS, TO FACILITATE THE SMOOTH RETURN OF EXILES AND TO PUT AN END TO THE VIOLENCE LARGELY ORCHESTRATED BY ITS OWN SECURITY FORCES, WHICH VIOLENCE HAS LED TO THE DEATHS OF AT LEAST 10,000 PEOPLE.

INDEED RECENT DISCLOSURES ABOUT PAYMENTS OF MONEY AND THE PROVISION OF ARMS TO INKATHA, MERELY VERIFY THE ASSERTION OF THE ANC THAT THE REGIME HAS BEEN PURSUING A "DOUBLE AGENDA" OF TALKING PEACE WHILE WAGING WAR.

THE WHOLE NEGOTIATING PROCESS HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY UNDERMINED, AND MR. MANDELA'S WARNING OF A "COMPLETE BREAKDOWN IN RELATIONS" CANNOT BE TAKEN LIGHTLY.

THESE DEVELOPMENTS RAISE THE QUESTION WHETHER IN THE LONG RUN THE RESULT WILL BE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT, ACHIEVED THROUGH SINCERE, FREE AND OPEN NEGOTIATIONS; OR WHETHER THERE WILL STILL BE IN EXISTENCE A REGIME THAT HAS MANAGED TO ENTRENCH ITSELF IN POWER THROUGH THE PURSUIT OF A DOUBLE AGENDA.

EVEN IF THE NEGOTIATIONS WERE TO TAKE PLACE, THEIR PROSPECTS MUST BE CONSIDERED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE EVOLVING SITUATION. FOR AGAINST A SCENARIO OF AN ANTI-APARTHEID MOVEMENT WEAKENED BY DIVISION AS A RESULT OF THE REGIME'S TACTICS AND ACTIONS, THE REGIME WOULD BE ABLE TO PREPARE ITSELF FOR NEGOTIATIONS ^{THAT} ~~BUT~~ WOULD CLEARLY BE CHARACTERIZED BY AN UNEQUAL BALANCE IN POWER. THE RELAXATION OF PRESSURE AT THIS POINT IN TIME CAN ONLY SERVE TO DEEPEN THIS IMBALANCE IN POWER, GIVING COMFORT AND SUPPORT TO THE REGIME.

IT NEED HARDLY BE REITERATED, THAT IN THE VARIOUS COMBINATIONS OF PRESSURE APPLIED SO FAR, SANCTIONS HAVE PLAYED A CRUCIAL ROLE; AND TO THE EXTENT THAT THE OBJECTIVE OF ERADICATING APARTHEID IS STILL UNMET, SANCTIONS WHICH WERE MERELY MEANT TO FURTHER THE OBJECTIVE, SHOULD CONTINUE TO BE AVAILABLE AS ONE OF THE POTENT WEAPONS FOR CHANGE IN THE ARSENAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY.

THE QUESTION IS NOT WHETHER IT IS RIGHT AND NECESSARY TO EXERT PRESSURE. NOW HOWEVER, GIVEN THE REALITY OF THE EROSION OF SANCTIONS, THE ISSUE IS HOW WE CAN CONTINUE TO MOBILISE INTERNATIONAL OPINION TO SUSTAIN THE PRESSURE. IN OTHER WORDS HOW CAN THE INSTRUMENTALITY OF SANCTIONS BE DEPLOYED GIVEN THE PRESENT REALITIES. THUS FOR EXAMPLE EVEN IN THE CASE OF THOSE COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE LIFTED SOME SANCTIONS, HOW CAN THIS COMMITTEE AND THROUGH IT THE OAU STRIVE TO ENSURE THAT THE REMAINING SANCTIONS SUCH AS FINANCIAL SANCTIONS AND THE OIL EMBARGO ARE STRICTLY ADHERED TO BY THESE VERY COUNTRIES.

IMPLICIT IN THIS POSITION ALSO IS THE PRINCIPLE, THAT OVER AND ABOVE THE MAINTENANCE OF THOSE SANCTIONS, THERE IS THE NEED FOR THE CONTINUING AND UNWAVERING COMMITMENT, BACKED BY CONSISTENT AND SOLID ACTION, OF THE

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO WORK FOR THE TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF APARTHEID. AND ENSURING THAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN REGIME SEES THROUGH THE PROCESS OF CHANGE LEADING UP TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DEMOCRATIC, NON-RACIAL, UNITED SOUTH AFRICA.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE AD HOC COMMITTEE IS MEETING AT A VERY CRUCIAL PERIOD OF OUR COLLECTIVE STRUGGLE FOR AN END TO THE INDIGNITIES THAT OUR PEOPLE ARE SUBJECTED TO IN SOUTH AFRICA. THE SITUATION THERE HAS GREAT POSSIBILITIES BUT IS ALSO FRAUGHT WITH OBVIOUS DANGERS. THROUGHOUT THE STRUGGLE AGAINST APARTHEID, THE OPPRESSED PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA HAVE ENJOYED THE UNEQUIVOCAL AND STEADFAST SUPPORT OF AFRICA. THEY HAVE ALSO ENJOYED, BY AND LARGE, THE UNWAVERING SUPPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. FOR YEARS, A STRONG AND SOLID INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS AGAINST APARTHEID HAS BEEN FORGED. REGRETABLELY HOWEVER, AS THE PROSPECTS OF VICTORY APPEAR TO LOOM ON THE HORIZON, THERE HAVE BEEN CRACKS WITHIN OUR OWN RANKS AND SIGNIFICANT EROSION IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONSENSUS ON THE ISSUE OF PRESSURE AGAINST THE APARTHEID REGIME. THE GREATEST CHALLENGE BEFORE THIS COMMITTEE THEREFORE IS HOW TO ENABLE AFRICA TO RESEIZE THE STRATEGIC INITIATIVE AND SUCCESSFULLY MOBILISE AFRICAN AND INTERNATIONAL OPINION AND SUPPORT FOR THE FINAL ONSLAUGHT AGAINST APARTHEID. IN ORDER TO DO SO, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THIS SESSION OF THE OAU AD HOC COMMITTEE ON SOUTHERN AFRICA SHOULD COME OUT OF ITS CURRENT SESSION IN ABUJA WITH A CLEAR MESSAGE.