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THE STATE HOUSE,
DAR ES SALAAM,
TANZANIA.

10th July, 1979.

Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margareth Thatcher,
The Prime Minister,
10 Downing Street,
London, S.W.1.

Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

You will by now have received from the British High Commissioner to Tanzania a report about my expression of concern over Britain's Rhodesia policy after I had listened to press reports of your own remarks in Australia.

I have nevertheless decided to write to you because I am very anxious that there should be no misunderstanding between us on a matter which is so very important to my country and to Africa generally. It is my desire, and the desire of my government, to cooperate with the British Government in bringing an end to the war in Rhodesia as rapidly as possible in the only way this can be done - that is, by the achievement of a real transfer of power to the majority by peaceful means.

As I explained to Lord Harlech, we accept that there is a new reality in Rhodesia now that Bishop Muzorewa has been made Prime Minister. To the uninitiated and only casually interested member of the public it may now (as distinct from before) appear that majority rule has been attained. But neither the Tanzanian nor the British Government is so ignorant. We both know that the constitution under which Bishop Muzorewa sits in his Prime Ministerial office is not one which could be accepted by any democrat as involving a real transfer of power from the minority to the majority. Before there can be any hope of a negotiated peace in that country, therefore, major constitutional changes will have to be introduced and genuine internationally supervised elections will have to be accepted by all parties to the conflict.

I had not been anticipating any major difference between Britain and Tanzania on this point. I fully realise that your Government gives a high priority to 'bringing Rhodesia to legal independence under conditions of the widest possible international recognition'. But Rhodesia is a matter of

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high priority for Tanzania also, and there does not seem to me to be any automatic conflict between your objective and Africa's determination on majority rule before independence. I had therefore been hoping that, after the consultations which your Government has been holding with African states and the United States of America, Britain would be coming to the Commonwealth Conference with the kind of draft constitution for Rhodesia which would be generally recognised by all members as giving genuine majority rule to Rhodesia. There is certainly no reason why such a constitution should not include some provisions designed to assuage reasonable fears of the White and Asian minority citizens about their future security.

I had anticipated further that there would be no great difficulty about reaching agreement at the Commonwealth on such a Proposed constitution; Britain has great experience and certainly understands the inconsistency of majority rule and many major provisions in the existing Salisbury constitution. It would subsequently be the work of Britain and her friends to get these proposals accepted in Salisbury, and of African states to use their influence to the same end on the Patriotic Front.

Yet it is quite obvious that a British announcement that it intends to lift sanctions come what may, is quite incompatible with any hopes of getting an end to the war through an agreed solution. Salisbury would know that it simply has to be obstinate until November, when it would get what it wants and needs. The Patriotic Front would regard Britain as having declared itself to be a supporter of Ian Smith and Bishop Muzorewa, and would disregard any suggestions it made. Zambia and Mozambique - and also Tanzania - would naturally draw the conclusion that Britain is unconcerned about Rhodesian attacks on those independent countries and indeed is willing to increase the power of Rhodesia to carry out such attacks.

I do understand the political problem which will face your Government if, in November, you have come to the conclusion that sanctions cannot yet be lifted. But your Government has a majority in the British Parliament, and on this issue you would have Labour Party support. A failure to renew sanctions could only result from a deliberate decision on the part of your Government. Your position is in this respect different from that of President Carter, who has nonetheless made clear

the intention of his Administration to fight for the power to abide by his country's international obligations in the interests of peace. For it is of course a fact that although Britain initiated the proposal at the United Nations, sanctions against Rhodesia are now a United Nations matter and under international law can only be withdrawn by the decision of the United Nations. A decision by your Government to lift sanctions can only be a deliberate and unnecessary defiance of world opinion generally and Africa in particular.

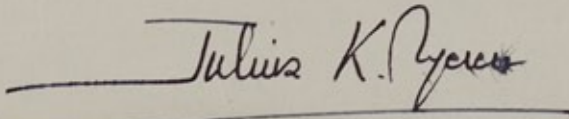
I have explained to your High Commissioner that I do not understand the distinction you were reported as making in Australia between recognition of Rhodesia - which I understand you said might come later - and the lifting of sanctions. If there is an academic distinction to be made at all - and it is only academic - it would seem to me to imply a possibility of recognising Rhodesia but continuing sanctions, and not the other way round. For sanctions were imposed as a mark of the international unacceptability of minority rule in Rhodesia, combined with Britain's incapacity or unwillingness to carry out alone its legal responsibility to institute change in that colony. The present Rhodesian constitution has not changed the world's judgement, for it is generally recognised by those interested as merely putting a black front to what is basically the same power situation.

Madam Prime Minister: I would like to repeat what I said at the beginning of this letter. It is the earnest desire of my Government to maintain and indeed to strengthen the friendship and cooperation between our two countries. The terrible war in Rhodesia needs to be brought to an end as quickly as possible. It has already caused too much suffering.

I very much hope that it is the intention of your Government to seek to cooperate with Africa to this end, and that the reports of your words in Australia gave a false impression. If so I can only apologise for writing this letter, and assure you that there will be no lack of response from Tanzania. And indeed I close this over-long letter with some confidence; for I cannot believe that Britain wishes to defy Africa and the world in the interests only of supporting a constitution in Rhodesia which entrenches racialist privilege behind the camouflage of a superficially democratic veneer.

I send my personal good wishes to you.

Yours sincerely,


Julius K. Nyerere