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CC(79)22
TENTH PLENARY SESSION

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CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE
LANCASTER HOUSE
LONDON

Summary of the proceedings of
the Tenth Plenary Session of
the Conference, Monday
8 October

Lancaster House
8 October 1979

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PRESENT

UK Delegation

Lord Carrington (in the Chair)

Sir I Gilmour Bt

Mr R Luce

Sir A Duff

Mr D M Day

Mr R W Renwick

Mr P R N Fifoot

Mr N M Fenn

Mr G G H Walden

Mr C D Powell

Mr P J Barlow

Mr A M Layden

Mrs A J Phillips

Mr S J Gomersall

Mr M C Wood

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Mr Mugabe, Mr Nkomo and Delegation

Mr R G Mugabe

Mr S V Muzenda

Mr E Z Tekere

Mr J M Tongogara

Mr H Ushewokunze

Mr E Zvobgo

Mr S Mubako

Mr W Kamba

Mr J M Nkomo

Mr J M Chinamano

Mr J W Msika

Mr T G Silundika

Mr A M Chambati

Mr L Baron

Mr C Ndlovu

Mr W Musururwa

Miss T Siziba

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Bishop Muzorewa and Delegation

Bishop A T Muzorewa
Mr S C Mundawarara
Mr E L Bulle
Mr F Zindoga
Mr D C Mukome
Mr G B Nyandoro
Rev N Sithole
Mr L Nyemba
Mr Z M Bafanah
Mr D C Smith
Mr R Cronje
Mr C Andersen
Dr J Kamusikiri
Mr G Pincus
Mr L G Smith
Air Vice Marshal H Hawkins
Mr D Zamchiya
Mr G Mutambanengwe

Secretariat

Mr J M Willson

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The session opened at 1734.

THE CHAIRMAN said that the delegation of Mr Mugabe and Mr Nkomo had asked for a postponement, and this was the earliest time at which he had been able to arrange a meeting. He then recalled the British proposals which had been tabled on 3 October, and said that on 5 October Bishop Muzorewa's delegation had announced its acceptance of these proposals. He then asked for the reaction of the delegation of Mr Mugabe and Mr Nkomo.

MR MUGABE said that his delegation had studied the refined proposals (Conference Paper CC(79) 19) which he understood did not purport to be a final document. He then read a statement setting out his delegation's reaction to the proposals, which he asked to be tabled (Conference Paper CC (79) 23).

In reading the statement, Mr Mugabe added the following sentences at the end of paragraph 4.3.2:

"Mr Chairman, your proposals state in categorical terms that the Chairman has got to be drawn from senior ranks and, as we know, at the present moment there are hardly any Africans in what one might call the senior ranks of the Civil Service. And so the intention here is that we must be saddled with the present members of the Civil Service who hold senior rank. That to us is an attempt to perpetuate the present system in the Civil Service".

Mr Mugabe went on to state his delegation's regret at the way in which the British proposals had been presented. They were in the main a restatement of the original outline proposals (Conference Paper CC (79) 2). He added that his statement did not constitute a complete reply.

/MR NKOMO

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MR NKOMO said that his colleague had covered the major points of the Patriotic Front reservations. They had studied the British proposals carefully and with interest. They now wished to table an amended version of their previous draft (Conference Paper CC (79)11), to take account of the subsequent discussions (Conference Paper CC (79) 24).

Mr Nkomo said that he and his delegation had come to the Conference in order to produce a document genuinely capable of redressing the problems of the people of Zimbabwe. Their aim was not just to end sanctions or the war, but to negotiate a document which would confer real independence. This would in turn promote peace and stability in Zimbabwe, in the region, in Africa and globally. Britain had given independence to South Africa in 1910, but the problems of that country had since increased every day. Independence had been given to Israel, but the Palestinian people still lived in misery. In Cyprus, independence had not meant much. His delegation did not want to find their country in the same position and they therefore wished the discussions to produce a document which would prevent conflict. For this reason his delegation was tabling an amended version of their draft constitution. A number of points in the latter reflected areas of movement towards the British position and vice versa. There were still areas where his delegation maintained their reservations, but these should not hold the Conference back from proceeding with the second part of the agenda.

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THE CHAIRMAN asked whether Bishop Muzorewa would like to amplify his acceptance of the British constitutional proposals.

BISHOP MUZOREWA said that he wished to confirm his public announcement of Friday 5 October, namely that he and his delegation accepted the British Government's constitutional proposals. He emphasised that this acceptance was conditional upon agreement on suitable and satisfactory arrangements for bringing the independence constitution into effect and on the lifting of sanctions. He agreed with the Chairman that the British proposals were fair and reasonable and constituted the best possible attempt to provide a basis for a settlement; the question of sanctions, however, was of vital importance. There was no longer any justification for their continuation: more than enough had been done to meet the requirements of successive British Governments. The people of his country could no longer be deprived of the right to return to economic normality. A clear and categorical undertaking that sanctions would immediately be lifted was therefore required.

His delegation wished to proceed with the arrangements for the implementation of the new constitution. He therefore called upon the Chairman to move on to the next stage, discussion of how to implement the constitution. The Conference was already in its fifth week and he wanted to complete deliberations with the least possible delay.

THE CHAIRMAN noted that the Patriotic Front had tabled two documents: expanded proposals for a new constitution for Zimbabwe and a response to the British proposals. He said that he would

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look at these with care, but felt that he should make three points. First, there was, in his view, no possibility of obtaining agreement on a document different from that which he had put forward; he felt that this was reasonable in the light of the time already spent in discussion. Secondly, Bishop Muzorewa had accepted the British proposals, albeit with qualifications similar to those of Mr Nkomo and Mr Mugabe concerning agreement on satisfactory transitional arrangements. It would now be difficult to turn the constitution upside down. The points now raised by Mr Mugabe and Mr Nkomo seemed in any case to be largely a reiteration of those made during bilateral meetings. Any amendment to the British proposals would therefore entail Bishop Muzorewa's agreement. Thirdly, the British delegation had made it perfectly clear from the beginning of the Conference that they would not be prepared to open discussion on the pre-independence arrangements until agreement had been reached on the constitution.

Subject to these caveats, the Chairman said that he would give a considered reply the next day to the papers tabled by Mr Mugabe's and Mr Nkomo's delegation.

It was agreed to resume at 1000 on Tuesday 9 October.

The session ended at 1812.