

S. Africa
MSC. (2)

Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

Prime Minister

You ought to be aware of this dispute -
but I am sure we should stay out of it.

Dear Sir,

A.S.C. 9/7

ASL 1/1
p.c.South Africa/Swaziland Border Negotiations

Following our discussion on the telephone, you may find the attached note on this subject useful. At our request, the JIC are also preparing an assessment.

As the note shows, the issue is a complex one and the balance of advantage for our interests in recognising or disapproving of the transfer is by no means clear. In addition to uncertainties about the position of our Allies and the OAU, the extent to which the inhabitants of the areas concerned freely consent to their transfer will be an important factor in our view. Therefore, we wish to avoid taking a public position until the facts and African attitudes become clearer. We have initiated consultations with the Americans and the Ten with a view to coordinating a joint position. I understand that the Americans are considering a discreet warning to the South Africans about the dangers of precipitate action.

Meanwhile, if comment is unavoidable we are taking the line that the issue is not one in which we have any standing; and that it appears to raise many complex legal, political and historical factors which are still by no means clear and which will take time to evaluate.

Yours ever

John Holmes

(J E Holmes)
Private SecretaryA J Coles Esq
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NOTE BY THE FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE: SOUTH AFRICA/
SWAZILAND BORDER NEGOTIATIONSBACKGROUND

1. There have been increasing signs that longstanding negotiations between South Africa and Swaziland initiated by the latter about the cession of territory to Swaziland are likely to reach a conclusion soon. The territory involved is the KaNgwane (Swazi) homeland lying north and west of Swaziland and a strip of land lying between Swaziland and the Indian Ocean known as Ingwavuma, which is presently part of the KwaZulu homeland (see attached map). Historically and ethnically, KaNgwane is Swazi. Ingwavuma, however, is a sort of Alsace-Lorraine, neither completely Swazi nor Zulu.

SWAZI POSITION

2. Swazi motivation is a mixture of long-standing irredentism against the Boers and Zulus, and a desire to have an outlet to the sea. The elderly and ailing Swazi King Sobhuza clearly sees the recovery of lost territory and people as the culminating achievement of his long reign. More sophisticated Swazis, including in the Government, are concerned about the probable internal political and economic repercussions of incorporating an additional 30% of territory and 50% or more of population; and also of the possible international consequences. However, Swaziland is likely to push ahead with the cession so long as the King survives.

SOUTH AFRICAN POSITION

3. The South African Government's inducement to agree to Swazi demands include the opportunity to get rid of a sizeable number of blacks (there are about 350,000 blacks in the areas to be ceded, and 450,000 elsewhere in South Africa who would lose their South African citizenship as a result); and the enlisting of

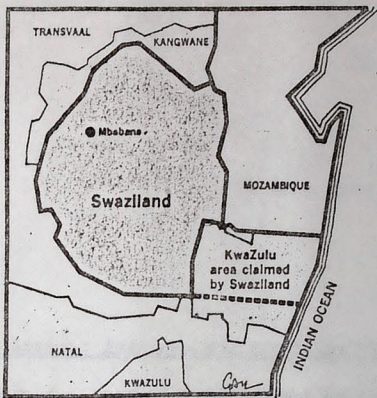
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active Swazi cooperation in the fight against the African National Congress and in possible South African plans to form a 'constellation of states' in the region. However, there is opposition to the transfer both among blacks and whites in South Africa. Some black political leaders in both KaNgwane and Ingwavuma are opposed for economic and political reasons. The ANC and the black internal Zulu-based political organisation, INKATHA (led by Chief Buthelezi) are also bitterly hostile. There has been white opposition both in the South African Parliament and from the Natal provincial government. Nonetheless, current signs are that the Prime Minister, Mr P W Botha intends to override opposition within South Africa.

LEGAL AND POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS

4. From the legal point of view, consideration of the issues involved in territorial transfer between sovereign states cannot nowadays overlook the wishes of the inhabitants. In this case, the wishes of those directly involved are unclear, nor have South Africa or Swaziland yet indicated that any objective test of opinion is likely to take place. In addition, because the areas to be transferred form part of the South African homeland system, the deal is open to the charge that it is a betrayal of the interests of the black people of South Africa. Particularly important politically will be the attitude of the Organisation of African Unity. If as seems possible they condemn the cession out of opposition to apartheid and concern about the principle of the inviolability of inherited colonial boundaries in Africa, it is likely that the matter will be raised in the United Nations Security Council.

6 July 1982



N.S.
 NSIKAZI will be an
 enclave without a direct
 border with the enlarged
 Swaziland.

Kangwane, the Swazi homeland which has become the centre of controversy over attempts to cede it to Swaziland.