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PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE

SERIAL No. T 176A/85



Union Buildings
Pretoria

9 October 1985

Dear Prime Minister

You would by now have received my letter of 4 October 1985 which deals to a large extent with matters raised in your own letter of 4 October 1985.

I was pleased to learn of your recent talks with President Machel of Mozambique and in particular of the various British aid programmes. As mentioned to you before, we believe that such assistance will yield positive results. South Africa is ready, within its means, to continue its own programmes of assistance, which may, of course, be adversely affected by the punitive economic measures decided on by the United States, the EEC countries and others. I trust that those Governments which subscribe to the anti-South African measures will be prepared to fill the vacuum should South Africa be forced substantially to reduce its economic commitments and cooperation in the field of labour and other spheres.

As regards recent announcements by Maputo of breaches of the Accord of Nkomati I wish to confirm to you that we view these developments in a most serious light. I personally gave instructions to have these allegations fully investigated by a team of independent persons. Certain technical violations were indeed discovered which we have subsequently acknowledged and explained to the Mozambique government. At the same time it transpired that these "violations" occurred in the course of efforts on the part of the South African military authorities to bring Frelimo and Renamo together around the negotiating table in the belief that peace can only be achieved in Mozambique by bringing about direct talks leading to a cease-fire between these two groups. These efforts I may add, had the explicit approval of the Mozambican authorities at the time and were not aimed at providing any advantage at the expense of the government in Maputo.

I wish to confirm South Africa's continued commitment to the Nkomati Accord. We remain in contact with the Mozambican government and will undertake all efforts to remove any misunderstanding in this matter.

I am aware of the problems which the SWA/Namibian question creates for your Government in the international community. I can assure you that I share your wish to see an early resolution of this problem.

However, I think we must ask ourselves what we are trying to achieve in the south western part of Africa. Do we really wish to confirm in power in Luanda an unelected Marxist Government that depends almost entirely on the Soviet Union and Cuba to enable it to maintain its position? Is it under these circumstances really possible to wean the MPLA from the Soviet Union? As far as SWA/Namibia is concerned, is it enough simply to want to remove vexatious questions from the international agenda? Do we not have responsibilities to the peoples concerned which transcend the rhetoric of international politics? Do we really want to create the conditions for a Marxist take-over in SWA/Namibia and to doom that country to totalitarianism, inter-group conflict and economic disintegration?.

We believe that the minimum that we can do to avoid such an outcome is to counteract the growing threat posed by the Soviets and the Cubans to the security of our region. As you know, we do not believe that UNSCR 435 can be successfully implemented while Cuban forces remain in Angola. We also believe that the consolidation of Soviet and Cuban influence in Angola would be a grave threat to the security of all of the countries of our region, including a future independent SWA/Namibia. Other countries in Africa share our concerns in this regard.

The situation is made more critical by the escalation of direct Soviet involvement in the civil war in Angola. Soviet staff officers are directing offensives, which also include Cuban and SWAPO elements; Soviet advisers are stiffening the resolve of FAPLA units; and Soviet and Cuban pilots are flying some of Angola's Mig 23 aircraft and MI 25 helicopter gunships. This heightened Soviet involvement could be a decisive factor in the civil war. If uncontested, it might ultimately lead to the destruction of UNITA, a nationalist movement which is a legitimate heir of the Alvor Agreement, which is pro-Western and which probably enjoys the support of the majority of Angola's people.

These developments confront South Africa with difficult decisions. We cannot stand aside while Soviet-directed offensives threaten UNITA and jeopardise the security of our region. At the same time South Africa has no desire to become involved in a direct conflict with the Soviet Union.

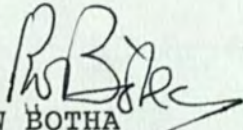
The West must also make some difficult decisions. It must understand that the Soviet Union's current projection of will in Angola cannot be stopped by good intentions and diplomatic initiatives alone. It must not allow the situation to develop in which moderate African States will draw the conclusion that when it comes to the test, they are not able to rely on the West.

All these developments have made it more urgent than ever that a firm agreement should be reached on the genuine withdrawal of Cuban forces from Angola. South Africa is at present engaged in an initiative to re-energise the talks on this question.

We certainly hope that this initiative will lead to the genuine withdrawal of the Cubans and to the implementation of the international settlement plan. However, we have no illusions concerning the benefits which we might expect to derive from the resolution of the SWA question. In the present international climate it would bring us only a brief respite.

Reports are reaching us on racial unrest in parts of the United Kingdom. The media is probably making these events appear considerably worse than they really are. Nevertheless, we in this country who have experienced disruptive events of a similar nature have great sympathy and understanding for the difficulties which confront your Government in this respect.

Yours sincerely


P W BOTHA
STATE PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

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