

GRS 350

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FM PRETORIA

TO PRIORITY FCO

TELNO 592

OF 231655Z DECEMBER 86

INFO PRIORITY MBABANE, MAPUTO, HARARE, LUS AKA, GABERONE,  
INFO PRIORITY JOHANNESBURG

MY TELNO 566 : SOUTH AFRICAN RAIDS INTO SWAZILAND

1. IN A TELEVISION INTERVIEW ON 22 DECEMBER, THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, PIK BOTHA, WAS CLOSELY QUESTIONED ABOUT THE RECENT SOUTH AFRICAN ABDUCTIONS FROM SWAZILAND, FOLLOWING A VISIT EARLIER THAT DAY TO MBABANE FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SWAZI PRIME MINISTER.
2. BOTHA SAID THAT HE HAD NOT GONE TO SWAZILAND TO MAKE ADMISSIONS OR DENIALS, BUT TO TALK TO HIS SWAZI FRIENDS, AND EXPLAIN TO THEM WHAT HAD HAPPENED AND WHY. NEITHER COUNTRY COULD TOLERATE ANC TERRORISTS ENTERING SOUTH AFRICA FROM MOZAMBIQUE VIA SWAZILAND.
3. ASKED IF SOUTH AFRICA WAS INVOLVED IN THE ABDUCTIONS BOTHA SAID THAT HE ADMITTED NOTHING AND DENIED NOTHING. ACTIONS TOOK PLACE BY SOUTH AFRICAN SECURITY FORCES THROUGH WHICH PEOPLE DANGEROUS TO THE COUNTRY WERE TAKEN. THEY HAD BEEN ILLEGALLY IN SWAZILAND IN ANY CASE. THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN TAKEN EVEN IF THEY HAD BEEN IN LONDON. TWO HAD BEEN FREED BECAUSE OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, BUT SOUTH AFRICA'S NON-AGGRESSION PACT WITH SWAZILAND WAS NOT APPLICABLE IN THIS INSTANCE. WHEN SOUTH AFRICA HAD CALLED UPON THE SWAZILAND GOVERNMENT FOR HELP IN THE PAST, THE SWAZIS WERE CRITICISED FOR WORKING WITH THE WHITE RACISTS FROM PRETORIA. SO, CONCLUDED BOTHA, WE REALLY DID THEM A FAVOUR BY NOT INVOLVING THEM, AND THEY CAN NOW SAY THAT THEY GOT A FEW PEOPLE BACK BECAUSE OF THEIR GOOD RELATIONS WITH US.
4. ASKED IF HE KNEW BEFOREHAND ABOUT THE RAIDS, BOTHA SAID YES, BUT AFTER A LONG PAUSE. HE ENDORSED THE ACTION AND ACCEPTED FULL RESPONSIBILITY TOGETHER WITH HIS COLLEAGUES. HE WOULD TAKE THE SAME DECISION AGAIN. NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES MUST KNOW THAT TERRORISTS WOULD BE TAKEN OUT. IT DID NOT MATTER WHO THEY WERE, AND THE CONSEQUENCES DID NOT MATTER. WE ALREADY HAD SANCTIONS.

COMMENT

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5. PIK BOTHA SHOWED NO SIGNS OF APOLOGY OR REPENTANCE. WHATEVER HE SAID TO THE SWAZIS IN PRIVATE, HIS PUBLIC REMARKS WERE EVEN MORE THAN USUALLY INSENSITIVE. THE SOUTH AFRICANS THUS CONTINUE TO CLAIM A FREE HAND IN SWAZILAND, AND CAN BE EXPECTED TO ACT AGAIN ACCORDINGLY.

MOBERLY

POHPAN 1166

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