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mmmmJosm-IW, PERMANEN'I'REP. OFBOI'SVENA'IU'I'HEUN
WHOI-IASJUSTBEENAPPODTI'ED'II-IESPECIAL REPRESHQTATIVE OF'IEOAU SECRETARY
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Q Ambassador legwaila, what is your mandate, what is the mandate of the
Special Representative of the OAU in South Africa?

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Africa Via Addis Ababa where I will probably be given my terms of
reference, mandate in writing but generally the mandate is simply to
lead one of the groups that are going to be in South Africa to assist
in the negotiations among the South Africans themselves. 'There already
exists there in South Africa the Calmonwealth Group, the United
NationsandtheEEII. SotheOAUalsohastobemosenttherebya
decision of the ad hoc Committee on Southern Africa which was, a
decision was made in Gaborone on the 15th of this month. So all they
want me to do is to coordinate the activities of the QAU Observer
Groupthere. That istouldbe incharge ofangpwhichIamtold
will be maybe more than 25 individuals stationed in Johannesburg
myself, with everybody scattered all over the plam so that we can
have information as quickly as we can have it on the situation in
strategic places particularly as regards the problem of violence. But
otherwise I would be also talking to the leaders of the respective
political parties, the South African Governnerrrt, the ANC, the PAC,
Kwazulu, IFP, anybodywhoneedstobetalkedtomuldbetamedtoby
both me and hopefully the other groups.

What is the significance of both your appointment and the deployment of the OAU Observers--the significance in terms of OAU's involvement in the region at this time.

The significance is that the OAU realises that a solution to the South African problem is very important to the OAU as a continental organisation. We have always been on the side of those who have been struggling for their freedom and I think at a time when they have decided to lay down their weapons, lay down their arms in order to sit down and negotiate a new constitutional dispensation for South Africa, I think we should get involved. We should get involved not by remote control but we should go there and see how we can be of assistance.

This time of assistance not exclusively to the liberation movements but to the people of South Africa generally. In other words the significance is that the OAU will be involved in the negotiations and therefore the OAU will be part of the Solutions that is going to come out of the negotiations and it is important that history must record that the OAU has played a part in the democratisation of South Africa. So insofar as my own personal appointment is concerned, I don't know what the significance is, except that I feel honoured that I am going to be there helping a neighbouring country as I did when I went to

Namibia by the former Secretary general of the United Nations, Dr. de Cuellar. So to me it's another honour that I should go to a place which is only 250 miles from my country, and try to do the best I can to help my neighbours resolve the problems that have divided them for more than 300 years.

Any special challenge presented by this appointment for you?

Well getting involved in a situation like the situation we have in South Africa is a challenge of monumental proportions because the very fact that CODESA is not sitting as we sit here, the very fact that the negotiations collapsed in May or June, the very fact that violence has been escalating and it seemingly looks like its not going to end very soon, the very fact that the society despite all the developments that have ensued after President de Klerk came into power, the society is more polarised. Its more polarised understandably so because the prize is now within sight and when you have a situation like you have in South Africa where there is so much activism insofar as the political life of the country is concerned, you have a lot of groups there fighting for the same thing and therefore coming from a democratic country its understandable that the country should be so polarised. The only tragedy of course is that the polarisation is not simply political polarisation but a polarisation which has as its dominant element violence and that is very unfortunate. But that is the challenge which I think I am prepared to face.

New South Africa is now the only remaining country still under white minority rule in the region. This is after Zimbabwe and Namibia got their independence. As a matter of fact you were personally involved in the transition to independence in both Zimbabwe and Namibia. In the case of Zimbabwe you participated in the Lancaster House talks that led to independence, in the case of Namibia as you pointed out you were the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General. Now what lessons if any can be drawn from the transition in the two countries Zimbabwe and Namibia that might be learned in the case of South Africa.

Well I think the best thing to copy by the South Africans is that even when the situation looks bleak and gloomy insofar as negotiations are concerned, the fact remains that if the people who were supposed to negotiate are committed to sit down and try to bury the past and think only about the future, they can still do so, many as they are in South Africa, they can still sit down either at (DDESA or if they create another negotiating mechanism, they can still sit down in their polarised state and come up with the new South Africa that we have always sought. In other words negotiations are always difficult. Negotiations, particularly when you negotiate the end of the kind of situation that we have in South Africa, negotiations necessarily must be very difficult. And the fact that they are difficult of course doesn't mean that the negotiators must be daunted.

The more difficult the negotiations become, the more daring the negotiators must be, and the more daring and the more daring and the more patient because unless they are patient I mean there is not where they can ever have a common ground when you have so many people. Everybody must be patient, everybody must be tolerant, there will be many people who will try to upset the negotiations and there must be tolerance across the board. It's not only the South African Government which must be tolerant but all the political parties must be tolerant of each other if they are to come up with a solution. So as you know in the Lancaster House talks it took three months for the Zimbabweans to agree and eventually they agreed. They agreed and today Zimbabwe is an independent state. And in Namibia it took eleven years to implement Resolution 435. Imagine if after 2 years we had given up Namibia would probably not be independent. But we persisted. We went to the Security Council several times and insisted on the implementation of resolution 435 and even the implementation, one year in Namibia was too long, because the implementation process was almost scuttled because the very first day it started hell broke loose. Blood started flowing even more than it had ever flowed during the liberation struggle. And yet the United Nations, SWAPO and the other political parties persisted. They were not deterred by that tragedy and then 12 months later they became an independent country. Even when the electoral process itself had started we still had so many problems that we were not quite certain until we had decided to write their statements certifying the elections, that we were going to achieve the objective for which we had laboured there for 12 months.

So this is what the South African must always bear in mind that it happened in Namibia, it happened in Zimbabwe, it happened in Namibia, it must happen in South Africa too. 'The beginning has made and then the end is in sight.

So you don't believe that same pasts maybe more difficult to bury than others?

No. Well I believe that some, you know it was difficult for the Rhodesians to give up power, it was difficult I am sure for the blacks to decide to pursue the policy of reconciliation which President Mugabe wisely pursued on the very night that Zimbabwe was celebrating Independence and President Nujoma is still pursuing the policy of national reconciliation. Forgiving is very difficult for human beings when you have been brutalised for more than 300 years. I mean no one expects you when you achieve your objective to say wonderful, that 300 years experience in the dungeons of political oblivion was so wonderful. No. You are still going to remember those who tortured you, those who imprisoned you, those who exiled you and those who killed your children and your brothers and your uncles. But if you are going to live in the future, on the basis of the past, the unfortunate thing is that you will not make a success of whatever a new South Africa you'd have created if you are going to live in the past. It's difficult to forgive but we have to forgive in order to go on living, and that is what the South African people have to do.

You mentioned earlier that there were other groups with observers teams inside South Africa, the United Nations of course, the European Community, the Commonwealth and now of course the CAD whose Observer Group you are going to be in Charge of. Is there any coordination amongst these groups or does each work independently of the others. No I wish there was coordination. Insofar as our group is concerned I have already been told by the Secretary General that I am going there actually not only to coordinate the activities of my own group, but to coordinate the activities of my own group so that they can jive in with the activities of the other groups. Like for instance when I deploy my group all over South Africa, I will have first of all to find out where the United Nations, the EEC, the Commonwealth have deployed their people, so that if needs be I don't have to deploy an OAU observer where the Commonwealth, the EEC and the UN had deployed their people so that we can cover the whole country. I just hope I will find the leaders of the other groups in the kind of positive state of mind that I will bring in myself when I get there. Using the experience of Namibia, I know how important it is that everyday without fail one must be informed of what is happening throughout the country so that if you have to nip problems in the bud you will be able to say if somebody for instance say something terrible was done by somebody who belong to the ANC or the PAC, if you get information fast it should be possible for me for instance to call on (Thabo) Mbeke and say well you know yesterday the ANC did this or something like that so that I am informed and at the same time offer my services as a peace maker to find out if there is anything I can do to help solve the problem.

And finally Botswana was involved recently in the Mozambique peace talks, Botswana also recently played a mediating role if I may call it that when your Foreign Minister chaired the talks between the PAC and the South African Government in Gaborone. Now you have been appointed for this role in South Africa, does this say anything about your country Botswana?

Well I hope it say something about my oountxy. My country is a modest moderate country which always wants to live in peace with its neighbours, a democratic oom'rtry, peace loving country. I think it sayssmethingjnthesensethatinuspeoplecanalways findthe voice of reason, the voice of moderation and the voice of conciliation and reconciliation, that in a very small way we can invite people to ouroapital andsayokaynowcanyoutalk. Butinnnstcasesactually we have not because of our nodesty, we have not invited people. People come to Botswana: because they think that we are so unoontroversial thatpeoplecanooneandmeetthereandtalkinaverycahnaUmsphere and which is what the Mozambicans did. None of the parties to the Mozambican conflict found anything terrible wrong about Botswana but theywmldfirxismethingterriblywrongabartsaneothercomrtxy wheresounobodywill say letsghereamisaynoldorrtwanttogo there. Andthenone says letsghereandtheysayohno. Ifyougo thereIammtgoingtogo. ButinBotswanaeverybodywantedtoome andwedidourbesttoallowthemthatatmospheretotalk.

And this weekend my Minister chaired a meeting between Minister Botha and the Vice President of the PAC and the meeting was a success I am told and then of come the ad hoc ommittee which decided on the appointment of a Special Representative met in my country on the 15th of this month. So we would welcome anybody who wants to use our country to reconcile.