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Paris, Feb. 25th 1993

Dear Wally Mongane Serote,

A month or so has elapsed since you were in Paris for the "Belles etrangeres Afrique du Sud". As agreed on the night before, I kept ringing your hotel on the Saturday you were due to leave, but was unable to reach you. Still I hope you had a safe journey back. It has been a very special occasion for many of us to meet you in Paris.

As promised, here is the French translation I have now completed of the 11 official letters I gave you for the A.N.C. Records regarding relations between the apartheid regime and France, mainly over the period of time when I was the president of the French A.A.M.

In case you still have with you my copies of A Tough Tale and Third World Eggross, could you send them back to me (inscribed by you, please!) at the above address, as they are rather hard to get by here and I plan to show them to various people for potential publication in French ? Many thanks in advance.

I have had a fruitful meeting with Mr MSIZI early in February and assured him of my wish to take a full part in solidarity work here in France with the A.N.C., as I am now back in this country after a one-year stay in London. He has told me how difficult he has found it over the last year or so to build back such solidarity as there was in France in the 1980s.

I also fully intend to keep pushing for more publications of contemporary writers from South Africa. Since I set myself up as a professional literary translator in September 1985, as well as translating Dickens, Byron, Kipling, William Morris, Kipling, Emily Bronte, George

Eliot, Djuna Barnes, Paul West etc. I have translated the following works (either on request from a publisher or, more often than not, on my own initiative) :

May 1986 Sipho SEPAMLA A Ride on the Whirlwind  
October 1986 Alex LA GUMA Time of the Butcherbird  
April 1988 Mewa RAMGOBIN Waiting to Live  
October 1988 Alex LA GUMA In the Fog of the Seasons' End  
October 1989 Miriam TLALI Muriel at Metroglitan  
November 1989 Nadine GORDIMER The Essential Gesture  
April 1990 Hilda BERNSTEIN Death Is Part Of The Process  
December 1991 Njabulo NDEBELE "Fools"  
December 1992 Njabulo NDEBELE "Uncle"

and a number of shorter pieces in literary magazines or political journals, including Le Monde dl lomati ue, with accompanying interviews, book reviews, articles, talks etc. on South African cultural matters.

Still I strongly feel the need for renewed collective action here in support of the A.N.C.. My involvement in anti-apartheid activities goes back to 1981 : my hope is that a dozen years' involvement -- as a French .national and as part of a truly collective effort -- in matters South African can make my contribution to today's solidarity work with the A.N.C. more effective. I shall certainly not give up at such a critical moment. Please pass my warmest greetings to Mr Matshoba. I shall be glad to help in any request you two may have from France.

I hope we will meet again soon and I wish you well in all,  
Yours in active solidarity,

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Jean-Pierre Richard

Mr. Wally Mongane SEROTE

Head of the Cultural Department

A.N.C.

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Sir,

In your letter dated 12 February you voiced your concern over European policy towards South Africa on the eve of the Dublin conference of Ministers on political cooperation. As you will have noted, E.C. members states greeted with pleasure Mr Mandela's liberation and the measures adopted by Mr De Klerk concerning anti-apartheid organisations. However most of our partners considered with us that it was too early to lift the restrictive economic measures adopted in 1985 and 1986, as long as the state of emergency remained in force in South Africa and until all political prisoners are released. Yet, in order to encourage the evolution now taking place, a decision was taken to cease discouraging scientific and cultural cooperation with South Africa, with the aim of contributing to the abolition of apartheid. There will also be a mission to South Africa by the Troika (France, Ireland, Italy) at ministerial level.

Be assured that the French Government will continue to exercise great vigilance concerning the evolution of the situation in South Africa.

Yours etc.

Nicolas NORMAND

Mr. Jean-Pierre RICHARD

The President's Office 11 February 1986

The Secretary

Sir,

In your letter dated 20 January 1986 you drew Mrs. MITI'ERRAND'S attention to an article in the Quotidien gg Paris daily newspaper of 5 November 1985 questioning the respecting by Aerospatiale of the embargo on arms and military equipment to South Africa.

On the very day the article appeared, Aerospatiale issued a statement saying that the company did indeed sign a licensing agreement with South Africa in 1973 concerning the building of the PUMA SA 330 and the ALDUETTE III.

According to the licensing agreement South Africa maintains and services its PUMA SA 330 and ALDUETTE III helicopters by its own means.

But Aerospatiale points out that, in implementation of Government instructions of June 1981, it provides no spare parts any longer to South Africa.

Like its competitors, Aerospatiale also sells ECUREUIL type planes to various South African civilian customers and provides the corresponding spare parts and technical assistance. The area of civil aviation is not covered by the United Nations embargo.

The Chairman of Aerospatiale has declared that he will be vigilant in ensuring that the activity of his local representatives be strictly limited to civil helicopters in conformity with Government instructions on the implementation of the embargo to South Africa.

Yours etc.

Jean MUSITELLI

Association for Organising the Boycott  
of the apartheid regime

31000 TOULDUSE

The Prime Minister 10 April 1984

Mister President,

In your letter dated 28 February you draw my attention to the campaign to isolate South Africa that your Movement intended to launch on let March.

The problem you raise is in fact that of economic sanctions against that country. As you know the French Government has always firmly condemned the apartheid regime and the policy of racial discrimination conducted by the Pretoria authorities.

The vigorous stand taken by my Government as well as its constant and determined actions are well known.

That being said, and without its condemnation of apartheid being in the least ambiguous, France has never been party to the United Nations General Assembly's demands for an economic embargo against South Africa. There are a number of reasons for this and I should like to remind you of some of the major points.

Firstly, a decision in favour of a boycott would only have real impact if applied unanimously by the whole of the international community.

Secondly we do not think that an economic embargo is the measure best adapted to the South African case. It would hit all categories of the South African population. Those who would suffer most would, we can safely assume, be precisely those who are the victims of apartheid. The effect would therefore be exactly the opposite of the one you seek. In this regard, the example of the former Rhodesia has already shown that the logic of a blockade could go counter to the intended aim, with the weight of constraints and privations falling essentially on the Black population.

Finally we remain convinced that an embargo would almost certainly be ineffective since it would concern a country disposing of such natural and human resources as would enable it to overcome such an embargo.

I regret that the enormous demands on my time will not allow me to receive you but I wish nevertheless to assure you that France will act, in the ways it deems most appropriate, to increasingly isolate the condemnable apartheid regime.

Yours etc.

Pierre MAUROY

Monsieur Jean-Pierre RICHARD

President of the Anti-Apartheid Movement

46, rue de Vaugirard

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Fbreign Ministry 23 January 1984

ThetHnisum:

Mister President,

In your letter dated 7 December 1983 you drew my attention to the visit by Mr NKABINDE, Rector of the University of Zululand, invited by my department.

The following details will, I hope, enable you to better understand the reasons behind this initiative.

First, the invitation extended to Mr. NKABINDE is part of our policy of helping towards the education of the Black communities, which I personally decided to implement. In this context it seems to me natural to give some of the administrators of Black communities in South Africa the possibilities of discovering the French administrative and educative systems, as long as our guests enjoy a degree of autonomy from governmental authority in South Africa and provided they will really be in a position to play an increasingly important role in the higher education of members of their own community.

Secondly the choice of Mr. NKABINDE has particular reasons : he is probably the Black rector who has shown constantly the most independent mind with regard to the South African administration. Indeed he recently resigned from an official commission which was set up to propose educational reform, as a sign of disapproval of Government measures.

It may be of interest to add that Zululand represents the Black community that is in many ways the most important in the country. The Zululand leaders refusal of the 'independence' that the South African Government sought to bestow upon them shows their determination in front of the Pretoria authorities and for us made easier to deal with Rector NKABINDE.

So in my view he cannot be regarded as an " apartheid collaborator'.

Yours etc..

Claude CHEYSSON

Monsieur Jean-Pierre RICHARD

President of the Anti-Apartheid Movement

46, rue de Vaugirard

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Ministry of Education 6 January 1984

The Minister

Mister President,

Following the visit by Mr MKABINDE, Rector of the University of Zululand, you have drawn my attention to the bloody unrest that recently occurred in that university, and asked me to terminate his stay in France. I am glad to inform you that his invitation did not come from my department but was issued by the Foreign Ministry alone.

On consultation the Foreign ministry informs me that it awards scholarships each year to students from Zululand of particularly humble social origin.

A number of these students may well come to France at a later date to continue their studies. It therefore seemed necessary to inform the Rector of our system of High Education.

His visit, which ended on 16 December 1983, was purely technical and it is in this spirit, at the request of the Foreign ministry that he was able to meet civil servants from my department and teachers from various universities.

On a political level I obviously share your concern and I shall be vigilant in ensuring that higher education institutions answerable to my department do not, in the present circumstances, set up relations with the University of Zululand.

Yours etc.

Alain SAVARY

Monsieur Jean-Pierre RICHARD

President of the Anti-Apartheid Movement

Ministry of Foreign Affairs 27 May 1983

The Minister

Mister President,

Thank you for your letter dated 17 May concerning a meeting to be held at The Mutualite in Paris and organised by a so-called "Resistance Internationale", which will be attended by exiles from different countries, including representatives of UNITA and MNR.

Your request that steps be taken to prevent Mr FURTADO and Mr LUMBO-VILANCULOS from taking part in this event surprises me coming from movements attached to the cause of human rights and therefore to freedom of speech, and for which I have the highest regard.

Not that I feel any affinity whatsoever with the ideas expressed by these two people and even less with those who may support them. Indeed you are well aware of it. But for me, a Socialist Minister, freedom of speech is a non-divisible right to be exercised by all, whether they share my ideals or not.

The very credibility of France is at stake : we must be very demanding of ourselves before we can be demanding of other countries. It is in this spirit, as you know, that the French Parliament repealed in September 1981 the arrangements which for many years made it compulsory for foreign associations to seek advance authorisation for their activities. Concerning sports relations with South Africa I fear there has been a misunderstanding. The Government has indeed banned French Sports Federations from organising or taking part in events involving partners engaged in apartheid, but there has never been any question of stopping individuals from moving freely.

Yours etc.

Claude CHEYSSON

Monsieur Jean-Pierre RICHARD

President of the Anti-Apartheid Movement



The Ministry for Research and Industry 18 January 1983

The Minister

Mister President,

I read with great interest your letter of 30 November concerning the visit to the Republic of South Africa by a delegation from the Jacques Monod Institute of the CNRS (the French State Center for Scientific Research).

I am particularly concerned about this problem and I ordered an enquiry by my services. I am now in a position to inform you that

-- it concerns a mission which visited Cape Town University from 22 November to 4 December 1982 to run a course on genetic, engineering to students from South Africa and from a number of other African countries (including Nigeria)

-- the mission was made up of teachers and researchers from the Jacques Monod Institute (CNRS), the Pasteur Institute and the University of Orleans. It was organised by COGEN (Committee for Genetic Experimentation), a subcommittee of the UNESCO-financed International Committee of Sciences Unions

-- similar missions have recently 'been organised in India, Brazil and Yugoslavia

-- Cape Town University was selected because it is particularly well equipped for this type of course which requires a sophisticated technological infrastructure. This university is apparently well-known as a centre of opposition to apartheid.

I hope I have been able to answer your worries

Yours etc.

Jean-Pierre CHEVENEMENT

Monsieur Jean-Pierre RICHARD

President of the Anti-Apartheid Movement

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Ministry of Foreign Affairs 24 November 1982

TheIHhhster

Mister President,

In your letter of 16 November you ask me to deny that the French Government is about to approve the sale of a new nuclear power station to South Africa.

I can indeed give you full assurance that permission for such a sale is not currently on the cards and that, should the question arise, I should be personally opposed to such a project.

Yours etc.

Claude CHEYSSON

Monsieur Jean-Pierre RICHARD

President of the Anti-Apartheid Movement

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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2 November 1982

The Minister

Mister President,

In your letter, dated 18 October, you draw my attention to some aspects of our relations with South Africa.

I think I should first remind you that we maintain diplomatic relations, which are at times difficult, with that country and that, within that framework, we attach great importance to dialogue with the South African authorities, insofar as it enables us to make our position clear, particularly on the principle of our total condemnation of apartheid. In particular, it is through diplomatic channels that we are able to intervene with the Pretoria Government in the most serious humanitarian cases.

As for the visit to France of the South African ministerial delegation, it is on a strictly technical level. The discussions that took place concerned only our policy in matters of town planning and regulation of rented accommodation. No other topics were evoked insofar as the South African delegation wished only to be informed of our policies in this area. As for Mr. DU PLESSIS's visit, to which you refer, it falls within the framework of our diplomatic relations with the Republic of South Africa and it is in this context that he held discussions with the Director of African Affairs in my department.

Furthermore, concerning visits by French citizens to South Africa, although we try as far as possible to discourage them, we cannot legally ban them. I should point out, in this matter, that I intervened personally with the Minister of Youth and Sport (Mrs. AVICE) to state our very strong disapproval of the proposed South African tour by the French national rugby team. I asked Mrs. AVICE to inform me of any action she may take to ensure that this type of event is countered as effectively as possible. Finally, since in France Press and Radio Agencies are not under Government control, there is no question of monitoring their activity. They remain free to express their opinions.

Yours etc.

Claude CHEYSSON

Monsieur Jean-Pierre RICHARD

President of the Anti-Apartheid Movement

46, rue de Vaugirard

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Alliance Frangaise 25 June 1982

The President '

Sir,

You have written a letter to the Foreign Ministry regarding the Alliance Frangaise and asking that the Association's activities in South Africa should be brought to an end. The Minister of Foreign Affairs has consulted me on this matter.

I replied on May 7th to a letter you had previously addressed to me. I must admit to not understanding your hostility towards our association. I should be glad if you could explain in what way our action in South Africa is damaging the interests of our country, so that I can inform the Minister.

I would add that if my previous letter did not convince you, I would have expected a reply.

Yours etc.

Roger GOUZE

Monsieur Jean-Pierre RICHARD

President of the Anti-Apartheid Movement

46, rue de Vaugirard

75006 PARIS

The President's Office 8 Dec 1981

(The President's Adviser on Cultural Affairs)

Dear Sir,

Thank you for sending me the documents in your letter dated 4 December 1981. They are a valuable contribution to my knowledge of South Africa and also, alas, of certain French circles.

As you know, the President's adviser for African Affairs is Guy PENNE. I shall discuss with him how best to counter such propaganda, though I must remind you that even if such warnings are useful, it is neither possible nor desirable to ban private associations.

As I shall be going abroad within the next few days I cannot arrange a meeting right now. I shall not fail to contact you on my return.

Yours etc.

Regis DEBRAY

Monsieur Jean-Pierre RICHARD

President of the Anti-Apartheid Movement

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