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STATEMENT BY COMRADE PRESIDENT O R TAMBO ON THE
DEATH SENTENCE PASSED ON THREE ANC AND MK MILITANTS,
BROADCAST ON RADIO FREEDOM, LUANDA, AUGUST, 20, 1981.

On Wednesday, August 19, 1981, a racist judge in Pretoria sentenced to death three ANC militants: Anthony Tsotsobe, David Moise and Johannes Shabangu, after convicting them on charges arising from their opposition to the racist and colonial domination of the people of South Africa by an increasingly fascist White minority.

Following their arrest last year, the three young men were each brutally tortured into signing an incriminating statement virtually dictated by the fascist police. In sentencing them to death the judge relied solely on these police statements, which he claimed were confessions of guilt voluntarily made by our comrades.

The inhuman apartheid system relies on fascist methods for its doomed survival. Its sordid record features such ghastly crimes as the Soweto massacre, the assassination of detainees such as Steve Biko, the execution of opponents like Solomon Mahlangu, the murder of refugees as in Matola, numerous and savage crimes against the entire people of Southern Africa, and the use of torture on a scale unequalled in the world. In contrast to this scene of blood, death and destruction the innocence of Tsotsobe, Moise and Shabangu stands out like a tower, strikingly serene and unblemished. It invokes a feeling of pride in them, pride in what they stand for, pride in what they represent.

For, as members of the African National Congress and Umkhonto we Sizwe they stand for social justice, for an end to man's exploitation of man, for the national and social emancipation of the people of South Africa; they represent the aspirations of the oppressed and exploited majority; they fight for a liberated, democratic and non-racial South Africa and for peace in our country and beyond its borders. In the pursuit of these noble goals, they march shoulder to shoulder with the peoples of the progressive world.

The Pretoria White judge - himself a captive as well as a representative of a racist system - ordered the hanging of three Africans opposed to racist

White minority rule and injustice in their country. An unjust judge, agent of gross injustice, has sentenced justice to death.

But the cause of justice will never die. For the Black and democratic majority in our country the march to freedom is on. We know that beyond today's darkness lies tomorrow's brightness. And tomorrow is inescapable, unstoppable, inevitable. Our struggle is advancing irrepressibly. In the past five months alone, South Africa has witnessed an intensification by Black workers of industrial actions which have over the past two years become a permanent feature of the general mass struggle of the oppressed. A new element in this struggle has been the increasingly extensive, intensive and sophisticated armed actions by units of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the South African people's liberation army.

Last week, while a racist army was occupying Angolan and Zambian territory after perpetrating gruesome atrocities on innocent civilians, including women and children; while a racist parliament was sitting in session in Cape Town, insulting democracy, with police harassing thousands of women and children outside Cape Town; while students, workers and ministers of religion were being held in police cells for their rejection of the racist Republic of South Africa; while a racist supreme court judge was presiding over the persecution of Anthony Tsotsobe, Johannes Shabangu and David Moise in one part of the capital of fascist South Africa, in another part of the racist capital a daring unit of Umkhonto we Sizwe was shelling the headquarters

of the SADF (the South African Defence Force) with 122mm rockets, and landing them with deadly accuracy on military targets which included warplanes, important buildings housing vital army documents, and the houses occupied by top army personnel,

What does all this mean? It means that, relentlessly, P W Botha, with his Washington and other imperialist allies, is dragging the White people of South Africa into a yawning abyss from which it will be hard to retrieve them. The time for them to join the forces of liberation headed by the ANC and fight for peace and progress in our country is now, for it is these forces which hold the key to the future.

In the meantime progressive humanity, the opponents of the apartheid regime, the supporters of our just struggle, numbering hundreds of millions, and the heroic people of South Africa will not stand idly by while Anthony, Johannes and David are being dragged to the Pretoria gallows.

We call on them all to stay the hand of the hangman.

The struggle continues!