

file LISBON file
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R E P O R T

L I S B O N - 28th November - 5th December, 1977

I visited Lisbon from November 28th to December 5th at the invitation of the UJC (Union of Communist Youth). You are no doubt aware of this since my going there was with the accord of the Secretariat.

During my stay there I visited a co-operative farm where I had discussions with both the workers and the management. They expressed determination to defend their gains by all means at their disposal. The Soares regime was trying to denationalise all the lands that had been nationalised under the Vasco Goncalves government.

I also had discussions with the Secretary-General of the UJC and the head of the International Department which centred around the present situation and developments in South Africa and in Portugal, particularly the struggle that is being waged by the oppressed people of South Africa under the leadership of the ANC, future perspectives as well as a global analysis of the international situation and the role the Portuguese youth can play.

I was also received in audience by the Co-ordinator of the Central Committee of the PCP with whom we made a tour d'horizon of the international situation.

I had several interviews with the local newspapers and held a press conference on the day preceeding my departure. My visit was basically one of information.

I also met the Preparatory Committee of the Lisbon Anti-Apartheid conference. They wanted to know what they should do - whether to continue and set up something more permanent since they had already made a start or simply disband (which they were not quite keen to do). They informed me that they had discussed the matter with comrade Joe Jele and were awaiting a final decision from headquarters. They would very much appreciate it if they could be given guidance on this matter which, they feel, should be treated with the urgency it deserves.

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C O N G O - December 21st - 1st January, 1978

I attended the 3rd Ordinary Congress of the Union of Socialist Youth of the Congo (UJSC) from the 23rd - 27th December and then participated in the festivities marking the 8th anniversary of the foundation of the Congolese Worker's Party.

I must say that our delegation was received exceptionally well. We were chosen, together with WFDY and Komsomol (USSR), to lay a wreath at the tomb of the late Marien N'gouabi on behalf of all the 40 or so foreign delegations. In both his opening and closing address the President of the Republic and Head of the Military Committee of the Congolese Worker's Party, General Joachim Yhombi OPANGO ~~mentioned their~~ expressed their unconditional support to the African National Congress, the vanguard movement of the people of South Africa. In the list of messages of foreign delegations we were again 3rd after the WFDY and Komsomol.

We were well received wherever we went and there is a lot of consciousness about the struggle in Southern Africa but there is more need to keep the people informed.

During my stay there I was received in audience by the adviser on diplomatic affairs to the President. He expressed thanks for our accepting to participate in the 3rd Congress of the UJSC. He saw our presence as an honour as well as an expression of revolutionary solidarity with the Congolese revolution.

After discussing in detail the present developments in South Africa, western involvement in trying to maintain the status quo and the development of the struggle, I raised matters that had already been raised directly or indirectly with the Congolese government and Party viz.:

- 1) that our President be invited by the Head of State to enable them to know each other with the view to consolidating the relations that exist between our two peoples and Parties;
- 2) that a youth delegation visit the Congo at a date to be agreed upon to exchange views on problems of common interest and co-operation;
- 3) the urgent question of scholarships;
- 4) the question of the passports they offered us.

He informed me that we will have concrete answers to all the questions raised within two (2) months.

There is an urgent and burning need for the further consolidation of these relations.

All African Students Union (AASU)

Whilst in Brazza I also had discussions with a delegation of AASU which informed me that they had been visited, differently, by Jeff Baqwa and Tsietsi Mashinini accompanied by Miriam Makeba.

Jeff tried to convince them to open a Bank account in Botswana for AASU in his name. This they refused to do. They say they were not at all impressed by his big talk and his low morals. He failed to turn up for important appointments because he was messing up with women and his general conduct leaves a lot to be desired. They gave me a copy of a memorandum he presented to them. I am enclosing it.

They further informed me that Miriam brought Mashinini to Accra to meet them claiming that ANC and PAC have done nothing in South Africa, all they have done is to take money from people; that the students are the ones who are going to liberate South Africa.

They told them that they were not impressed; that they work with the ANC Youth and Students Section and that any action they engage in in South Africa is through this movement; that as far as they are concerned the students could, under no circumstances, become a liberation movement simply because they are privileged in comparison with the masses of the people; that if Mashinini had committed errors in the past by thinking he is a leader this is the time for him to correct them and join in with the rest of the struggling people.

They analysed Miriam's role as follows:

~~They~~ Miriam is now old and will soon be out of work. She has adopted opportunistic positions right through her career and now she has no political home. She has no position in any movement that she thinks is fit for her so she encourages anything that might make its leaders owe allegiance of a sense of debt to her. She is there trying to create a Mashinini organisation of which she automatically becomes the godmother.

This information was confirmed by the full secretariat of AASU when I met them in Accra during my transit to Benin on the 11th January.

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B E N I N 12th - 16th January, 1978

Comrade Johnny instructed me to go to Benin for the week of solidarity with the peoples fighting for national liberation which started on January 9th to 16th in Cotonou, Benin. Unfortunately I could not be there on the 9th due to commitments in France and Italy. I arrived on the 12th and was informed at the airport that that day was South Africa day (Day of Solidarity with the struggle of the people of South Africa). I had a short interview at the airport and was driven straight to the conference hall. After registering my presence there we went for lunch after which I was taken to the Radio by some journalists. There I had an hour-long interview which covered all the basic and important aspects of our struggle. This was broadcast over and over again during the day.

The following morning I took the floor in the conference and made a contribution on behalf of the ANC and the oppressed and struggling people of our country. I am enclosing a copy of this contribution. Also enclosed is a copy of the contribution of the Pan-African Youth Movement which was represented by Jenerali ULIMWENGU.

There was a lot of confusion among the Benin people about the word 'AZANIA' and the role of the PAC. On my arrival I noticed that comrades from SWAPO, Patriotic Front; RXPYM, Algerian delegation and others had gone out of their way to explain this to the local authorities. We then worked systematically to inform on the present situation in South Africa. When I got there we were referred to as the ANC of Azania and by the time we left the PAC had become the PAC of South Africa. This, as the president of the republic told me, was due to the fact that they have absolutely no information of the struggle of South Africa and that it was in fact for him the first time he ever met a representative of the fighting people of that country. This is a mistake on our part that must necessarily be corrected.

On friday 13th I was received in audience by comrade President Mathieu KEREKOU. The interview lasted for about an hour during which I conveyed to him revolutionary and fraternal greetings from our President, comrade Oliver Tambo and apologised on his behalf for his inability to be personally present in Benin due to more pressing work in the homefront. I further informed him of the present developments in Southern Africa and South Africa in particular, the imperialist manoeuvres to maintain the status quo and the development of the liberation struggle.

President Kerekou then informed me that he was very happy to meet, for the first time, a representative of the struggling people of South Africa. He informed me that they were ready to give every possible political support according to their means. He then suggested that I call a press conference so that I can inform the public to the maximum. He recalled that in 1972 when they took power they expressed readiness to help liberation movements and that they have ever since institutionalised all their active means of assistance to the national liberation movements. He stressed the need for direct contact ~~in~~ with the revolution in Benin and expressed readinedd to receive a permanent mission of the ANC in his country. He asked me to convey his personal greetings to President Tambo and said he was looking forward to meeting him in the very near future.

FRANCE

During my routine contacts with the Party here at the beginning of January I was informed that the Secours Populaire (which I had contacted for the first time exactly a year ago) wanted to see me. I then went there and since I was leaving France they asked me to postpone my departure so that they could officially hand over to me material they had collected during the year. This consisted of 1 ton milk; 500 kgs? medicines and 1 ton of clothing. This was effectively handed over to me on the 9th January. I asked them to send the Bill of Lading by registered mail to comrade Cassius.

They requested that comrade Cass acknowledge receipt as soon as he receives the material. They also requested that if it is possible to take photos of the arriving material, its use etc. so that they can use them to collect more. This consignment, they emphasised, was the first in a series they intend sending.

They also suggest that if it is possible it would be more convenient for them, from all points of view, if we had a sort of organisation like the Red Cross or some Medical Association which enables them to deal directly with it (something which can be seen as non-political) for purposes of maximum mobilisation in France. This is, of course, up to you comrades to decide there. This was just an idea from the comrades here.

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Portuguese Proletarian Movement (PRP)

We were contacted in Algiers by the Secretary for External Relations of this movements who extended an invitation to the ANC to attend their constitutive conference to be held in the 2nd week of March in Lisbon. We gave him the address of headquarters and asked him to address the formal invitation to the SG. They have invited all the other liberation movements based here and were put in touch with us by the FLN here. Unfortunately they are not sending tickets for this conference.

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GENERAL

Our attention was drawn by the local authorities to a request they received from some VUYANI MRWETYANA AND FRANCO FUMI (a white man) for funds to run a paper in the Transkei in Xhosa called 'ISAZISO'. They would like to know if we know anything about this paper and what their reaction should be. I have asked them not to act until further notice.

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Conclusions

I would like to request and recommend that invitations be honoured as this is of great importance in the situation facing us today. All sorts of bogus organisations are trying to denigrate the movements and our active presence can avert these manoeuvres. Africa particularly is ready for us and it is incorrect to think that people know - we must inform them more. I think there is an urgent need for more personnel to be put in the field of international work.

I would strongly request that from time to time their representatives engaged in international work be associated with the work being done on the home front to enable them to be more informed and effective. Maybe

representatives should meet periodically to exchange views, notes and experiences on their common work.

I would be very grateful if you could send us comments and remarks on this report.

Amandla!

Maatla!

Thami SINDELO

30th January, 1978.