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Felo Statements



African National Congress

14th February
1982 - Year of unity in action

STATEMENT BY COMRADE PRESIDENT OLIVER TAMBO
AT A MASS RALLY- BAIRRO DE LIBERDADE, MAPUTO.
FEBRUARY 14, 1982.

Comrade President Samora Moises Machel,
President of the FRELIMO PARTY,
President of the People's Republic
of Mozambique,

Comrade leaders and militants of the
FRELIMO PARTY,

Comrade Sansao Muthemba, Secretary-
General of AMASP,

Comrades Representatives of the national
liberation movement and other fraternal
forces,

Heroic residents of Maputo and citizens
of the People's Republic of Mozambique,

Comrades,

We salute you all today on behalf of the ANC, on behalf of the
commanders and fighters of Umkhonto We Sizwe;

We salute you in the name of the workers, the women, youth, pea-
sants and all the oppressed masses and democratic forces in
South Africa. We greet you in the name of the heroic fighters
held in the fascist prisons of racist South Africa.

We greet you in the Year of the 70th Anniversary of the ANC, the
Year of Unity in Action;

We salute you in the name of the fallen heroes of the South African
struggle; we remember especially the victims of the Matola raid
at the beginning of last year.

It is that raid which has brought us here today - that raid which insulted the sovereignty of the Mozambican people, defiled their national dignity, violated their territorial integrity and challenged the very concept of African independent statehood.

It is something more than the Matola raid which brings us together on this occasion. For a people engaged, day and night, in a continuing struggle against a brutal enemy, the great question is not that there has been an attack, an invasion, a massacre or any other crime committed against the people. The great question is the nature of our response to that crime.

The history of Mozambique, especially in the past two decades, has been a history of atrocious crimes committed by colonialism against the Mozambican people - against FRELIMO. The People's Republic of Mozambique is a creature of the correct responses which the Mozambican people under the leadership of FRELIMO made to the massacres, murders and destruction perpetrated by Portuguese fascist forces.

We are here today because, exactly a year ago this day, at Praça de Independencia in Maputo, the celebrated Leader and Commander of the heroic Mozambican people, comrade President Samora Machel, responded to the Matola raid by summoning his people back to the war trenches they had known since September 25, 1964; back into battle, for the defence of their motherland, their sovereignty, their territorial integrity, their national dignity; for the defence of the gains of the Mozambican revolution - the gains of the African revolution; for the defence of their internationalist

essence and their Socialist future - a future of which the victory of the struggle led by the ANC and SWAPO against the Pretoria fascists is an integral part. And we now know that the Mozambican people, from the Rovuma to the Maputo rallied to FRELIMO'S call with their knobkerries, pangas and other weapons. When the raiders re-appeared at PONTO D'ORO, the people plunged their pick-axes into the skulls of the fascist intruders.

Your response - the response of a nation forged in the furious furnaces of two brutal wars - had a dynamizing impact throughout Southern Africa, and throughout the continent. It was an act of mobilisation of the international progressive forces for resolute struggle against apartheid colonialism and fascism.

You rivetted the 35 million people of Mozambique and South Africa together and joined them in solid unity with the peoples of the rest of the region in their determination to rid our continent of this painful and dangerous plague.

By your response, you paid a glorious tribute to the fallen heroes of our common struggle, and especially to the Mozambican heroes, who with their blood and their lives, strengthened Frelimo, created the Mozambican nation and became our inspiration and our strength.

Nothing today unites people more than the criminal nature of the Pretoria racist minority regime. From the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic; from the Southern tip of our continent to the Mediterranean; from Africa to every continent on the globe, mankind differs about countless issues. But, about the Pretoria

apartheid regime, there is one unanimous judgment - the regime is an international criminal, guilty of a heinous crime against humanity, a crime of which the people of South Africa and Southern Africa are the first victims.

We are one people today. This means we are recapturing our glorious past. We were one people. History put us together on this continent from time immemorial. We evolved together, shared a common African culture, traded with one another and dealt each with the other as human beings, whether in times of war or in times of peace; whether in circumstances of hunger or in conditions of plenty.

Then came the colonialists. Despite the heroic resistance of our forebears, from the Cape of Good Hope to the North of Africa, the colonialists succeeded to transform us from a free people into a subject people. They became our masters and made us respond to their commands with "Ja baas, Ja baas."

To perpetuate our subjugations, they divided us. We ceased to be one people. We became foreigners to one another, living in Portuguese East Africa, British Rhodesia, German East Africa, British Natal, Boer Republics. This was the pattern throughout the continent. Africa became British, French, Portuguese, Belgian, Dutch, Spanish, German, Italian.

Not only had we ceased to be one people, we had ceased to be people. The very earth that we walked, the soil that gave us life and that in its depths afforded refuge to our ancestors, had itself ceased to be African.

In their eagerness to plunder, divide and oppress, the colonialists and the racists failed to notice that they were creating new conditions for our oneness, for our unity. Together we had

become the dispossessed, dispossessed of our independence and of our countries. Together we had become beasts of burden working for the enrichment of a colonialist and racist minority. Apparently divided by frontiers which the colonialists had drawn across the face of Africa, we were in fact united by the fact that we had become, together, the oppressed, the exploited and the despised. And we had become the oppressed, the exploited and despised through the same system of imperialist domination and colonial occupation.

It was in the course of the struggle against this system that we re-created our oneness on a much broader scale and at a qualitatively much higher level. We became part of a powerful and ever growing movement of peoples fighting colonial domination, fighting all oppressors, exploiters, fascists racists and Zionists. We became one mighty army of revolution fighting in various detachments on many fronts throughout the world - an army of comrades.

Eduardo Mondlane worked with Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu to strengthen the ANC, not as strangers but as comrades committed to a common cause - the liberation of Africa, the liberation of mankind.

Likewise, it was as comrades-in-arms that the commanders and combatants of FRELIMO and the ANC trained, worked, ate and sang together in Algeria, Tanzania and elsewhere. It was because of that comradeship that commanders of FRELIMO and Umkhonto We Sizwe found themselves in the war zones of Cabo Delgado and Niassa in 1967 and Tete in 1970, where the ANC commanders were learning from the experience of their comrades-in-arms.

That same comradeship found the Mozambicans fighting with MPLA in defence of the newly independent People's Republic of Angola in 1975/76, and joining the Zimbabwean people in their liberation war against the Rhodesian and South African regimes.

And so here we are today, Comrades: British, French, Belgian, Portuguese and other colonialists have been defeated; and yet an intense struggle is being fought by Mozambique and other independent states of this region - a struggle on three courageous fronts:

- (a) against underdevelopment and for social progress,
- (b) against the colonisation and occupation of Namibia by the Pretoria regime and for the independence of Namibia under the leadership of SWAPO,
- (c) for the liberation of the people of South Africa from apartheid colonialism.

On all these three fronts the Pretoria regime features in a central role. It is fighting against the economic independence and development of the African countries; it is defying Africa, the UN and the whole international community on the question of Namibia, and adds to its defiance by spreading death and destruction in Namibia and Angola, and defiantly occupying Angolan territory; it murders, massacres, tortures and engages in kidnapping its opponents in South Africa while harassing, killing, destabilizing and organising coups d'etat against African states.

And with respect to these three fronts, like the racist regime, the people of South Africa led by the ANC and its allies also

feature in a central role: The overthrow of the Pretoria racist minority regime will thwart the designs of imperialism in this region and usher in an era of rapid internal reconstruction under conditions of peace and security.

The South African struggle is, therefore, as a matter of objective reality, a struggle of the people of Southern Africa, together and as one force spread across the continent from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, fighting in closed ranks with the rest of Africa and the progressive world. But the leading role must be played by us in South Africa.

The year 1981, the year of Matola, the year of the prolonged occupation of Southern Angola by South African fascist troops, the year of nation-wide mobilisation of the Mozambican people against the racist regime - the year 1981 has also been the year of heightened struggles in South Africa.

Umkhonto We Sizwe spread its assaults across the length and breadth of South Africa: in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Elliot, Durban, Johannesburg, Sibasa, Ermelo and many widely dispersed points in the countryside. But they concentrated on Pretoria, the fascist capital from where the raids, invasions, killings and bandit armies are controlled;

- Pretoria, the heart and the head of the heartland of racism, the bastion of colonialism;

Pretoria, which in 30 quick years, has already killed countless thousands of people in Southern Africa, including thousands of murdered and massacred children.

The working class, particularly the Black workers, have discovered their power. The youth, women, the masses in Bantustans, the

entire oppressed and democratic forces have reached a striking level of mobilisation.

Around the ANC, the South Africa of tomorrow is crystallising out; the South African nation of the approaching future is being forged in struggle - it is non-racial; it is committed to total liberation, is therefore opposed to oppression, exploitation and racism; it is anti-imperialist; it is committed to democracy; peace and friendship among peoples; a South African nation, comprising peoples whose origins are traceable to many continents, like the Mozambican nation, which was born in struggle.

This year, 1982, we are determined to achieve a much higher level of unity through action and unity in Action.

The fact that the ANC has battled for liberation for 70 years points sharply to the indisputable fact that the colonialists and racists in South Africa have long over-stayed their time. The ANC and its allies, the masses of the people in South Africa, have it as a duty of the utmost urgency to greatly intensify the struggle and advance towards victory.

In doing so we shall be alive to the fact that imperialist powers are in active alliance with the Pretoria regime. We know, too, that the defenders of colonialism, racism, and the enslavement of people, there are black slaves in the pay of the master - traitors to the cause of human dignity, independence and freedom.

The Matola raiders included black traitors who were frequently heard saying, "Ja baas, Ja baas". There is no shortage of traitors.

Bantustan puppets are working feverishly to keep our country balkanised, our people divided and landless. But today some of them are beginning to burn in the furnace of their treachery. In the Ciskei, the Sebe brothers find themselves confronted by the unflinching hostility of the people, as do the Matanzima brothers in the Transkei. The whole bantustan programme is meeting growing and intense resistance from the people.

Mphephu in Venda is replying to the people's resistance strictly according to the instructions that his masters have given him. He is assassinating our people. Others he detains and tortures mercilessly. And now he has falsely charged innocent ministers of religion with an attack on his central police station, an attack he knows very well was carried out by a unit of Umkhonto We Sizwe. Blinded by fear, Mphephu is perhaps no longer able to distinguish between the Bible and the AK47!

Black mercenaries in South Africa are being recruited to serve under the fascist army. These are part of a full set of bandit armies, such as the depraved UNITA mercenary group, who are trained, supplied and directed by the regime to spread terror, insecurity and destabilisation in the independent states of Southern Africa who refuse to be converted into bantustans and Pretoria's puppet regimes.

There is no struggle without traitors; but traitors have never won a struggle. It is the people who win. We shall win. The mercenaries, traitors and puppets will be crushed with their masters.

This is not to say they are harmless. In South Africa the mass arrests, the brutal assassination of Griffiths Mxenge, the cold

blooded murder of Tshivhiwa Mufhe in Venda and Neil Aggett in a police cell in Johannesburg are severe blows against the people's struggle. But the struggle always continues, with increased vigour, as it now will.

Likewise, when P.W. Botha, loosed his paid killers on the people of Seychelles he could have bled that country's independence to death. As it is, everywhere in Southern Africa, the footprints that Botha leaves are footprints of blood. His trade-mark is the skull-and-crossbones. His favourite diet is death and destruction.

This is the daily experience of Namibia; and Angola is in a permanent state of war. But the Botha regime is not acting in isolation. Its criminal role in Africa is an expression of the determination of international imperialism, led by the United States, to defeat the forces of progress and impose its will on the people. In pursuit of these goals, the Reagan administration has entered into strategic alliances with the most reactionary regimes in the world. These include the apartheid regime in South Africa, the Zionist regime of Israel and the genocidal junta in El Salvador.

United by their absolute contempt for human life and driven by the desire to ensure imperialist domination everywhere, these forces of reaction exclude no means or methods in the pursuit of their goals. Above all, brute force constitutes the centre-piece of their strategy. That is why today the Reagan government is busy reducing expenditures on social security while vastly increasing its military budget and sabotaging the disarmament talks with the Soviet Union.

The People's Republic of Angola suffers as she does today because of this policy. She suffers through the occupation of parts of

her territory by the apartheid allies of the Reagan administration and through repeated invasions which have inflicted a heavy toll measured in terms of thousands of men, women and children killed, maimed and displaced from their homes. We take this opportunity once more to pledge our complete solidarity with the embattled people of Angola, with the MPLA-Workers Party, the government and the armed forces of that revolutionary country, convinced that together we will defeat the common enemy.

This same enemy, specifically the Reagan administration and its ally, the Botha regime, are intent on postponing the independence of Namibia for as long as possible. They are doing this to gain time so that they can prepare their puppets to take power in a nominally independent Namibia. They pursue the strategic objective of destroying SWAPO so that they can impose a neo-colonialist regime on the Namibian people. These heroic people, under the tested leadership of SWAPO and supported by the entire progressive mankind, will surely defeat these schemes in the same way that the people of Zimbabwe defeated the enemy's attempts to make that country a neo-colonial dependency of racist South Africa and the rest of her imperialist allies.

Imperialism is hitting out against the people everywhere. It considers certain parts of the world as areas of strategic importance to its global strategy. These include such areas as Southern Africa, Central America, the Middle East and Europe. All these regions of the globe are today areas of international tension because imperialism, and especially the United States, has decided that in these regions, it will resist all progress, encourage the most backward political forces, assume direct

command of the counter-revolutionary offensive and use all possible means to achieve its objective.

This situation demands that the world forces of progress must enhance their unity, their vigilance, their mutual solidarity and their offensive against imperialist reaction. There is urgent need for all of us to act in solidarity with the PLO and the Palestinian people, with the POLISARIO Front and the people of Sahara; with the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front and the people of El Salvador, the people of East Timor and their organisation, Fretilin; with SWAPO and the Namibian people, with the ANC and the South African people; with the front line states of Southern Africa.

On the issue of Southern Africa, as on many others, we shall continue to count on the support of the OAU, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Socialist countries, the Nordic people and governments, and the democratic peoples and governments of the rest of the western world. Together we must stand firm in defence of genuine independence, democracy, social progress and peace.

All of us gathered here today value human life as a sacred thing. If we did not, would we be prepared to die as we are prepared to, for the destruction of those who deny us the right to live? All of us gathered here today value peace among the peoples as a noble goal. If we did not, would we be prepared to go to war as we are prepared to, for the destruction of those who deny us peace? Could we ever be free if we were not prepared to forgo the life of a slave and an oppressor's peace in order to attain freedom for the people?

That commitment to freedom, to life and to peace demands that we defeat Botha and his fellow racists. It demands that we sweep the Bothas and Reagans off the face of our continent and restore power into the hands of the people of South Africa as we have done here in Mozambique.

This means that we must struggle. It means that we must fight. It means also that those with the heart of a chicken should stand aside and not block the way of those who want to go forward. It means that each Matola atrocity that the enemy inflicts upon us must serve as yet another bond that strengthens our comradeship, an added incentive spurring us on to destroy the murderers and save our future.

That is the message you Comrade President, and the Mozambican people sent to Pretoria and the rest of the world this day a year ago. You said then that the Mozambican and the South African people are one people, 35 million strong. You said we would surely defeat the apartheid regime.

That was a powerful message affirming the unity of peoples and the certainty of victory in the struggle against the people's enemy.

You, Mozambican people, made that commitment because you knew that Mozambique could only be truly free when South Africa is free. So long as there is no just peace in South Africa, founded on the freedom of all her people, Mozambique herself will never know peace. You knew that the bargain the racist regime was offering you was that you buy a false peace by surrendering your independence. You flung their imperialist bargain in their fascist faces and stood firm in the cause of

freedom and lasting peace. You refused to bow down to the enemy's threats or succumb to any bribes he might offer; you would not meet an attacking enemy with kisses but with every weapon you had.

Your message was a call for the extension of the frontiers of liberty from independent Africa, through Namibia, to Cape Agulhus at the southern tip of the continent.

We shall surely defeat the apartheid regime we shall reach Agulhus, marching arm-in-arm. But that will come through bitter struggle and maximum sacrifice by the people of South Africa.

Therefore, on this first anniversary of what in future we shall together perhaps observe as the Day of Friendship between the Peoples of Mozambique and South Africa, and in this year, the 70th anniversary of the foundation of the African National Congress, we want to repeat the call that we made to the people of South Africa as the year began.

To the people of South Africa we say: unite in action and act in unity. Do not allow the enemy to drive wedges among your ranks. Let us all unite to strengthen the spirit of comradeship among ourselves. We demonstrated that spirit when our heroic youth was killed at Matola. We demonstrated it in massive actions last year. We demonstrated it again only a few days ago when we joined in action to denounce the assassination of Neil Aggett.

To strengthen that spirit of comradeship, we must isolate those whom the enemy is using to divide us. In action, in

united struggle, we must declare war on the Bantustan programme, the community councils, the management committees, and every manifestation of the apartheid separate development scheme.

The workers, who are the leading social force in our struggle for national liberation, must develop their potential strength to the full. As workers we have the power, through strike action, to deliver crippling blows at the enemy. But to achieve that we must be organised, united and conscious of our potential and our role as our own liberators.

Other sections of the population, both black and white, must themselves organise, unite in struggle and, without wavering, mount the pressure on the enemy.

Umkhonto We Sizwe is faced with the task of strengthening its presence within the country and of striking harder and multiple blows at the enemy. The assassination of the thousands of Neil Aggett's, Mofhe's, Mxenge's and Gqabi's must not go unpunished.

We must encircle the enemy in an iron ring of revolutionary struggle and hit him from all sides, striking at him with everything we have.

Our pledge to avenge those the enemy has murdered means that we must intensify the struggle. It means we must ensure the certainty of our victory by using our collective power to crush the enemy. Victory is within our grasp: Let us go forward and take it!

I wish to conclude by addressing to the Mozambican people an extract taken from President Samora Machel's address to them on the 14 February 1981.

"The Mozambican revolution is the patrimony of mankind and the liberation of people.

This is the responsibility we have always borne with courage and pride. This is the responsibility we have constantly honoured, dignified and enriched.

At home, in the suburbs, in his place of work, at all moments in our life, in all corners of our country, each Mozambican defends the highest values of our country.

He defends the history of our country, the memory of our heroes, the sacrifices made, our people's freedom, the right to well-being and happiness, our country's sovereignty, national independence, socialism, internationalism."

Long Live the Indissoluble Bonds of Friendship between FRELIMO and the ANC!

Long Live the comradeship of the people of Mozambique and South Africa.

Amandla Ngawethu!

Maatla ke a rona!

A luta continua!

Venceremos!