



UNITED
NATIONS

UNIT ON APARTHEID

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL AND SECURITY COUNCIL AFFAIRS

No. 6/74

NOTES AND DOCUMENTS*

April 1974

SOUTH AFRICAN LIBERATION MOVEMENTS ADDRESS THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON APARTHEID

Statement by Mr. Mzwandile Piliso, member of the national executive
of the African National Congress of South Africa

Statement by Mr. Potlako Leballo, Acting President of the Pan Africanist
Congress of Azania

596
114

710
11 x 6

Note: On 21 March 1974, the Special Committee on Apartheid invited the representatives of the African National Congress of South Africa and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, the two liberation movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity, to attend all its meetings as observers. It took this action in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 3151 G (XXVIII) authorizing it, in consultation with the OAU, to associate the South African liberation movements closely with its work. In that same resolution, the General Assembly declared that the South African régime has no right to represent the people of South Africa and that the liberation movements recognized by the OAU are the authentic representatives of the overwhelming majority of the South African people.

This issue contains texts of statements made by the representatives of the two organizations at a meeting of the Special Committee on 27 March 1974.]

74-09371

* All material in these notes and documents may be freely reprinted.

Acknowledgement, together with a copy of the publication containing the reprint, would be appreciated.

STATEMENT BY MR. MZWANDILE PILISO,
MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE OF THE
AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICA

It is an honour and a great privilege for me that today, deputising for our Acting President, Mr. Oliver Tambo, I address this Special Committee with a right to participate fully in your deliberations, not as a petitioner but recognized by the United Nations as an authentic representative of the aspirations of my people. Our presence here is an eloquent acknowledgement of the work this Committee has and is still doing. We salute the dedication of the men and women who serve in it. We are aware of the difficulties that lie ahead for, unfortunately, the interests of mankind do not as yet coincide. There are still those who reap benefits from the suffering of our people.

The history of our country, South Africa, since our people laid down their arms at the end of last century, has been marked by brutal massacres, each time a revolutionary situation appears to exist, in an attempt to frighten off our people and to delay the development of militant struggle. The massacres at Sharpeville and at Carltonville were in line with this development. They will not be the last as long as the status quo is maintained in South Africa. We recognize our responsibility to our people and the world to change that system.

Genocide in South Africa is not confined to these occasional shootings. There are the judicial murders which are committed every year; the political detainees who die under interrogation; the hundreds of thousands of black children who die before they are five years old; the thousands of black people who die of dietary deficiency diseases in a country that feeds skimmed milk to the pigs and that has the highest profit margins in the world for the local and foreign investor.

Our struggle has been long and difficult and we have attempted to show our rulers that it was possible for us all, black and white, to live together in harmony and in peace. In the process some of the best sons of our land have been martyred. Today, faced with the growing intransigence of the racists, our mission still remains unambiguous, the seizure of political power using all available means to rid our country of the scourge of apartheid and to set up a new order where freedom, happiness and peace will reign.

A common struggle for freedom

We believe that the struggle of the oppressed peoples of South Africa is the main guarantee for their freedom. We recognize also the fact that our victories are made possible in part by the significant changes in the world balance of forces. Thus we appreciate the inspiring support rendered to the liberation movement by all peace and freedom-loving peoples within and outside of the United Nations. We attach great significance to the unswerving support and assistance rendered by our African brothers through the OAU, the socialist countries, the Scandinavian countries, some countries of Asia and others.

We would like to emphasize that our struggle is a common struggle. It is a struggle against apartheid, colonialism and imperialism. All those who stand on

our side against Vorster do so because we are so right and Vorster is so wrong. Thus people should support us not only because they think apartheid is inhuman and appalling, but above all because apartheid is a crime and a threat to the peace and security of mankind. And those who are involved in the struggle against this system will then cease to be looked upon as victims who need mercy and pity but as nation builders and fighters for a noble and just cause.

We would like to appeal to those countries which, being members of the United Nations, are the main supporters of the South African régime to see reason and join the majority of mankind in condemning apartheid in practical terms and giving direct support to the liberation movement.

We see the success of the national liberation movement not only in the context of countering the fallacy of racism and of the assertion of the position of the black man in world affairs but also in the promotion of the spirit of co-operation and understanding universally.

Supporters of racist South Africa

We believe that it is the bounden duty of mankind as a whole to give a fitting rebuff to the machinations of the South African racists and of the United Nations to lead that onslaught. We are aware that whilst the present composition of the world body should be decisively in favour of the oppressed peoples, racist South Africa still has few but powerful supporters.

It would have been impossible for countries like South Africa and Portugal to so tenaciously hold to their colonial rule if it were not for the fact that they are assured of support by the major powers of the West, who have tried to shield the South African régime from the scathing attacks of the nations of the world, who have resisted and undermined all efforts directed towards effective international action and who have continued to pour arms into South Africa.

The United Nations has passed an impressive list of resolutions on South Africa over the years. Unfortunately, it lacks the instruments for enforcing implementation. We notice with great disturbance the rate at which trade with South Africa is growing each year in spite of United Nations resolutions calling for sanctions against South Africa. We are alarmed that so many Member States of the United Nations still continue to invest in apartheid. The irony of the situation is that this expansion in the volume of investments and trade is coupled with an astronomical rise in the defence budget each year, an increase which is only matched in its rate of growth by the ruthless oppression and grinding poverty to which my people are subjected.

We have warned in the past that by supporting South Africa, the West was building a monster they may not be able to control. And we have repeatedly pointed out that military intervention would neither be new nor accidental to the South African régime because it is consistent with the interventionist and expansionist policy of the racist régime. South Africa sent mercenaries during the intervention in the Congo. Her forces are even today fighting in Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe with camps spreading to the banks of the Zambesi River, thus threatening the sovereignty of Zambia. And South African forces are occupying Namibia in violation of United Nations resolutions and in defiance of the United Nations Council for Namibia.

Further fascist measures

Inside South Africa, the apartheid régime continues to foist upon the will of the international community a leadership which it believes has been chizzled with the hammer and anvil of apartheid - a leadership that must comply with the wishes of the Vorster régime - men who are expected to render the balkanisation of our country workable. I refer to the Bantustans. Today, the Bantustan policy remains the fraud it was when it was first mooted. It can never succeed. The real leaders of the oppressed black masses are incarcerated on Robben Island.

Recently, the South African régime has passed further fascist measures relating to the financing of public organizations, to the right of assembly and to the strengthening of the period of military service. These are, in fact, meant as an answer to the rising mobilization of the oppressed peoples inside the country. The police have voiced suspicion that they might not have succeeded in trapping all ANC men working underground and militarily trained. They have failed to arrest any so-called "ring-leaders" in the waves of strikes since three years ago at least. The attempt to cripple public organizations inside the country, like the South African Students Organization, the Black Peoples' Convention, the Black Community Programme, etc., by banning their leadership, has so far failed. The police are no longer able to control student actions.

We believe that this process is irreversible. The sinister murders that the South African régime is committing outside its borders, far from intimidating our people, will in fact increase their anger and vigilance and inspire them to greater heights of sacrifice.

Action by the United Nations

We of the ANC have watched with great interest developments at the United Nations. We were inspired by the rejection of the credentials of the South African delegation during the last General Assembly. We are aware of the legal difficulties such action entails. But the expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations and all its agencies remains part of our call for the complete isolation of the racist régime.

I have already said how much we appreciate the work this Committee is doing. However, we would like to recommend further activation of this work in areas like Latin America where South Africa is opening up new areas of co-operation and investment. Lately, we have also heard that South Africa and Israel have up-graded their diplomatic representations to the ambassadorial level.

We would like to repeat suggestions we have made in the past; namely, that the United Nations:

1. Expel the Republic of South Africa and Portugal from all its councils and agencies;
2. Declare its full support for armed struggle for liberation against colonialism and racism and also ensure that appropriate agencies of the United Nations assist in disseminating the propaganda material from the liberation movements through all its information media;

3. Call upon all its Member States to give material support to the people's fighting forces;

4. Use its good offices to see to it that the Geneva Conventions regarding prisoners of war are observed by the colonialist and racist régimes;

5. Ensure that its social and cultural agencies give assistance to the liberation movements to solve the pressing problems of social and cultural welfare, especially those connected with the education of children of the victims of oppression;

6. Urge all Member States without exception to abide by and respect all United Nations decisions and resolutions and to discipline recalcitrant régimes;

7. Press on the campaign for the release of political prisoners;

8. Mobilize support and assistance for countries bordering the still unliberated territories.

This is the challenge we must place before the United Nations. It is a loud cry from the heart of Namibia where innocent people are subjected to floggings, where leaders are gagged and shoved into prison. It is a loud cry from our comrades-in-arms in Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Angola. It is also a loud cry from the State of Guinea-Bissau.

We of the African National Congress shall spare no effort in our endeavour to eliminate racism, colonialism and imperialism.

The ANC stands with the rest of Africa in support of the OAU on the question of the Middle East. The position was stated clearly by President Gowon during the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly. The oil embargo dealt a blow on apartheid South Africa. Such acts of solidarity are very meaningful to us. They should, however, be intensified.

STATEMENT BY MR. POTLAKO K. LEBALLO,
ACTING PRESIDENT OF THE PAN AFRICANIST CONGRESS
OF AZANIA

When the international community thinks of the political situation in Azania, what looms high in its imagination is the utterly brutal killing of the men, women and children at Sharpeville, Langa, Evaton, Van der Byl Park, Bojhelong, Johannesburg, Durban and Pretoria, on March 21, 1960. Some people think of the political turmoil that led to a financial crisis, loss of profits and the shooting of Prime Minister Verwoerd by a desperate white businessman. Others think of apartheid, of race prejudice and race discrimination, and of racist gestapo police brutalities, and other horrible inhuman by-products of the fascist dictatorship in that country.

But the oppressed people of Azania think of the revolutionary campaign; of positive action for the abolition of the obnoxious Pass Laws; of the greatest political march in our history that brought the city of Cape Town and the racist white parliament to a standstill nine days after the brutal massacres, when political bankruptcy considered our people to be in disarray. They remember the martyrs of those hectic epic days in our history with national pride, and look forward to the annual occasion to re-dedicate themselves anew to the struggle for which the heroes of Sharpeville and Langa sacrificed their lives.

In the names of the martyrs and heroes of Sharpeville and Langa; on behalf of their dependents; in the name of the African people of Azania; on behalf of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, which mobilized the people and organized the revolutionary campaign of positive action that led to the brutal police killings; and in the name of Mangaliso Sobukwe, President and leader of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, who launched and led that epic campaign, and is still held to ransom "at the point of the gun" in a small, dusty village outside Kimberley - I take this opportunity which the Special Committee on Apartheid has afforded me to be present here, to join hands in paying tribute to its work of exposing the evil practices of race prejudice and race antagonism in a racist South Africa and to seek as much as possible to isolate the evil régime and its representatives wherever they may be in the world.

I must also pay tribute to the untiring work the Committee and its illustrious Chairman are doing to try to dissuade racist South Africa's trading partners and their active supporters, from their harmful activities in the service of white supremacy and foreign exploitation of the labour of our people and the material resources of our land. As a result of the work of the Special Committee on Apartheid and other United Nations agencies, the plight of our people and their physical and spiritual disabilities are known the world over. Our national liberation movement is gaining moral and material support from the peace-loving peoples of the entire world. Mr. Chairman, racism and capitalism are a crime against humanity and must be eradicated.

People will liberate themselves

Our gathering here today will not bring back the lives that were brutally brought to an end by the fascists' hail of bullets that were fired indiscriminately at our people fourteen years ago. Who will judge the guilty? Who will avenge the dead? Who will stand up for those who are languishing in Vorster's prisons and concentration camps today? What about those who are being persecuted, brutalized and assassinated today?

As we speak here today, two young men in the prime of their lives, have recently been assassinated by parcel bombs; Abraham Tiro, student leader and President of the South African Student Movement and John Dube, Deputy Representative of the fraternal African National Congress. The South African racist régime is guilty of murdering these two sons of Africa in a cold-blooded manner and without justification whatsoever. These are blood debts that must be repaid in blood.

Our people in the country have awakened to the fact that the struggle for national liberation is their struggle and they alone must liberate themselves. At first they looked to the West, especially Great Britain, for salvation and found they were gravely mistaken. Western capitalism is a system of slavery, and no slave state in the world has ever voluntarily undertaken to emancipate its slaves. Invariably all these states provide for the thorough exploitation of the slaves. Our people have no desire to improve their slave position in the country. They are engaged in overthrowing that slavery outright.

Next, they looked to the "humanity" of the white racist government for human rights and found that they were deluding themselves. They asked for bread and were promised stones. The fraudulent Bantustan policy is not going to lead them to any freedom at all. The people of the Transkei Bantustan have already had more than ten years of practical experience in the workings of that totally fraudulent system and their worst fears have been confirmed. There is nothing to indicate that under it their conditions of life are ever likely to change for the better. Rather they have deteriorated and continue to deteriorate to the point of degeneration. But no nation can be starved to extinction.

When the racist régime banned the organizations of the people in 1960, it believed that it would thus silence all opposition and stifle all determined resistance. By the early seventies the situation had completely changed. Two things became absolutely apparent. The African people began to place major trust in their ability to do things for themselves instead of waiting for someone they don't know, to come around and pull them out of their predicament. Secondly, they saw the imperative need to close their ranks and to seek out of history how to change social development; they decided to make the historical lessons increasingly available to all the oppressed and exploited people in that country.

As a result, we find close solidarity among the oppressed people whom successive racist régimes have tried to separate by race and colour in order to divide and alienate one from the other. That is a situation of the past now. Only the stooge Bantustan Chiefs, puppets and a dead wood of cowards, enter into any form of "dialogue" with the racist régime today. The unity of the oppressed

is gaining momentum day by day and this is clearly evident in the Black organizations that are springing up all over the country, in the students' movements and in the workers' movements. The racist government believes it can stem the tide by gagging the leaders of these movements or, as we have seen recently, by political assassination. But it is too late in the day for it to hope for miracles by such means. As the régime becomes more and more desperate, it cannot avoid alienating itself more and more from the people, both black and white.

In less than a month, the racist white voters are going into several elections in South Africa to give the fascist Broederbond government a new mandate. Our people are forever aware of the implications of any white general election in that country. They have not, and will not, ever consider themselves defeated by the white oppressors. Their forefathers submitted to a superior armed aggression, but they cannot remain a conquered people forever. They will not be daunted by the bullets or bayonets of the enemy, or the prospect of probable capture, torture and murder. Their minds are made up. They have accepted the call to battle, as the martyrs and heroes of Sharpeville and Langa did, but this time they have not responded with their bare hands.

The factors of war in that political situation are that men, women and children have gone to war with primitive weapons against a ruthless enemy that uses bombs and bullets and napalm and poison gas against them, at will. They have gone to war, not because they want to die, but because, that way, they will die a noble death. They are being forced to fight and to die even if they are afraid to fight or to die. War is cruel. But so is hunger and poverty. Slavery is much more cruel, and anyone who can stand the cruelty for as long as we have - for over three hundred years - since 1652 - must be in an even better position to stand the cruelty of war. We owe it to the martyrs of Sharpeville, Langa and other battlefields.

Sharpeville - a turning point

We must remember that Sharpeville was the greatest turning point in our history of resistance to tyranny where non-violence was buried. It was the beginning of a new era of armed struggle. For the first time, at Sharpeville, the people of Azania challenged the racist government by putting forward an alternative government of a non-racialist socialist democracy under the banner of African Nationalism and Pan Africanism. The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania demanded the downfall of that tyrannical régime and without ceremony. Never before had any mass struggle and its attendant crisis rocked the country to its very foundations. For the first time in the racist set-up, the régime declared a state of emergency out of a purely political crisis. For the first time in the history of that country, the fascist gestapo-like police were forced to announce the suspension of the pass laws for men because of the political crisis.

Prime Minister Verwoerd was shot in the head, the first time that such an incident had taken place since the formation of the Union of South Africa. Paul Sauer, who acted as Prime Minister while Verwoerd was struggling for his life in hospital, made his famous Humansdorp speech, in which he warned and urged the white people to consider honestly and earnestly the whole approach to the situation of the African people in the country. He warned, "South Africa will never be the same again after Sharpeville."

Even the racist government press published comments in its editorials and correspondence columns, asking for a new approach. For the first time, it considered Africans as people and its reporters interviewed them - even on the streets - and published what they said. In the face of the determined political struggle and crisis, apartheid became a lost cause without cry or advocate, and ceased to be mentioned in public: 400,000 white settlers fled the country; the economy collapsed and the end was in sight. Had the United States imperialism not intervened with over 200 million dollars to save the tottering racist régime, the situation would have been different today. Even Verwoerd rose from his sick bed and talked of divine providence having saved him from death to continue to lead the so-called chosen race of white people to the era of peace and abundance. But this was not the end.

This is not to say that Sharpeville occurred in isolation or dropped out of the blue sky. The history of Sharpeville is unsurpassed, nor can its history be falsified by anyone. The Pan Africanist Congress had challenged the régime in a contest for political power. President Mangaliso Sobukwe who led the campaign, publicly declared that we were taking the first step that would lead to independence and the unification of the African continent. He declared: "Let the world take note, in this phase of the struggle, our energies and forces are directed against a set-up; against a concept and a myth, the demi-god of white supremacy." The Sharpeville massacre and other shootings took place to hide the success of that historic campaign and to snatch the fruits of victory from the people who earned it, the broad masses of our people who answered the call to positive action.

It has been clearly and authoritatively pointed out that without the support of its western trading partners and capital investors, racism would not survive on the African continent. This was shown in 1960 and 1961. Certain members of this United Nations Organization came to the rescue of South Africa and have never looked back. But, we are aware and have studied the full implications of the tentacles of the imperialist global strategy of the mercenary movement which has been unleashed upon oppressed peoples and the nations of the world.

Kill or be killed

Mr. Chairman, we earnestly appeal to the Member States of the international community to isolate this apartheid régime, economically, politically, socially and militarily. We also direct our appeal to the Member States of this august body to give assistance to the liberation movement for a total overthrow of this apartheid régime.

The racist régime has stated with arrogance to us that we shall attain our freedom in South Africa over their dead bodies. Therefore, there can be no two ways in this contest of power. Our position is clear - KILL OR BE KILLED. No doubt we shall have to walk over their dead bodies if we are to achieve our meaningful freedom in an armed struggle against these racists. We have no fear of death whatsoever. We have nothing to lose, but the Continent of Africa to regain.

LONG LIVE THE AFRICAN REVOLUTION!