

CHRONOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

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United Nations Centre against Apartheid; New York, N. Y 10017

Tel. (212): 963-5311, Fax (212) 963- 5305

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The Heads of African states, meeting at the OAU summit in Dakar (Senegal), decided to call for an urgent UN Security Council meeting to examine the issue of escalating violence in South Africa.

The Congress of SA Trade Unions (COSATU) called for a general strike of "unprecedented proportions" beginning August 3 unless the Government agreed to an interim government and a constitutional assembly by December.

Justice Bhagwati, former Chief justice of India, was appointed to join the Commission of Inquiry regarding the Prevention of Public Intimidation and Violence, as an assessor in the investigation of the recent Boipatong massacre. Dr. P.A.J. Waddington, Director of Criminal Justice Studies of Reading University (United Kingdom) was appointed to evaluate the police investigation of the massacre.

Police opened fire with shotguns and plastic bullets at a crowd of about 4,000 anti-government demonstrators in central Cape Town. Several people suffered injuries.

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In a letter to the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC), President F.W. de Klerk accused ANC President Nelson Mandela of increasingly falling under the influence of more militant allies in the South African Communist Party and labour unions. President de Klerk, however, offered to lower the margin of approval needed for changes in South Africa's constitution from 75 per cent to 70 per cent. This issue, among others, had brought talks to an impasse of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) II.

After lengthy discussions with sports bodies, the ANC decided to endorse scheduled sports tours, including the Olympics, but imposed a moratorium on arrangements for further international sports contacts.

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Rejecting President de Klerk's bid to revive stalled negotiations, ANC President Nelson Mandela said he would resume negotiations only if President de Klerk abandoned demands for a white minority veto.

Thousands of demonstrators marched through the township of Boipatong, to protest the killings last month of more than 40 people and demand action against the attackers.

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During a four-day consultative visit in South Africa, Commonwealth Secretary-General Chief Emeka Anyaoku said the Commonwealth was prepared to help get constitutional talks back on track.

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Following a preliminary hearing on the Boipatong massacre, the Goldstone Commission of Inquiry said it found no evidence of involvement by senior Government officials in factional fighting among black groups. However, the report stated that the government ignored or did not adequately implement the Commission's recommendations on urgent measures to put an end to the violence.

Toyota SA dismissed 6,000 striking workers at its Durban plants following an ultimatum ordering them to return to work or be fired. Strikers said they would defy their dismissals and continue "striking" until the company returned to bona fide negotiations.

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Business leaders held high level talks with the ANC and its allies to discuss the country's crisis and their concern on the planned mass action. The business delegation consisted of leaders from the SA Chamber of Business (Sacob), Afrikaanse Handelsinstituut (AHI) and Steel and Engineering Industries Federation of SA (Seifsa).

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An agreement was signed between the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Minister of Correctional Services, Mr. Adriaan Vlok, enabling the organization to interview prisoners without witnesses, have access to all places of detention and to repeat visits.

Business leaders formally opposed the planned "rolling" mass action, stating that it would result in further business closures and retrenchments, a "downward spiral" in the economy and a negative impact on local and overseas business confidence.

COSATU Secretary-General Jay Naidoo said that his organization would not be intimidated on the issue of mass action.

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The European Parliament called for greater control over security forces amid mounting violence in South Africa and appealed for the resumption of the CODESA talks.

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An international panel led by Philip Heymann, Director of the Harvard Law School Center for Criminal Justice, proposed changes in the way South African police dealt with protestors, including the universal ban on demonstrators carrying weapons, timely notice by protest organizers, and the prohibition of using lethal force to disperse a crowd.

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An International Hearing on Political Violence in South Africa, which was co-sponsored by the Special Committee against Apartheid and organized by the British Anti-Apartheid Movement, was held in London from 14 to 15 July 1992. Discussions focused on the causes and impact of the violence, as well as measures to curb it. Testimonies were presented by South Africans as well as international legal and human rights organizations. The Hearing found that the primary responsibility for the ongoing violence lay with the SA Government "since it failed to take effective measures to end it".

President de Klerk announced the disbandment of two security force units, the 31 and 32 battalions, and the dissolution of the controversial police unit, Koevoet. Other measures included urgent action on hostels as well as further restrictions on carrying dangerous weapons.

Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers and Foreign Minister Hans van den Broek called off a visit to South Africa planned for August.

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At the request of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Security Council convened on 15 to 16 July to examine the issue of violence in South Africa and take appropriate action to end it. Forty-eight Member States addressed the Council as well as ANC President Nelson Mandela, Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) President Clarence Makwetu and South Africa Foreign Minister Roelof "Pik" Botha. The Council listened to nine representatives from other political parties who spoke in their personal capacity. The Council, in Resolution 765 (1992), authorized the UN Secretary-General to send a Special Representative to South Africa to discuss with parties concerned. recommend measures to bring an end to the violence and create conditions towards a peaceful transition.

PAC Secretary-General Benny Alexander gave his full support for all demonstrations by European anti-apartheid groups against South African sports missions in Europe.

16 July

The Human Rights Commission (HRC) of South Africa said in its monthly Report On Repression that 373 persons had been killed in political violence during the month of June 1992.

According to press reports, British intelligence provided evidence of SA Security Force involvement in a plot to assassinate in England Mr. Dirk Coetzee, former member of the Civil Co-operation Bureau (which was sponsored by the South Africa Defense Force) and key witness of the Harms Judicial Commission last year.

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UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali appointed Cyrus R. Vance as his Special Representative to South Africa.

Police said 78 residents of the KwaMadala hostel would be charged with murder or public violence in the Boipatong massacre. Iscor, the conglomerate that owns the hostel, said it would convert the hostel into a nonresidential business use.

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The Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on Southern Africa, appointed by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, carried out a field mission to Zimbabwe and Botswana from 19 to 30 July in order to receive testimonies from persons having first-hand experience on the situation of violations of human rights, constitutional negotiations and renewed escalation of violence in South Africa.

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South Africa's Olympic hopefuls were given a rousing send-off at the Jan Smuts airport. National Olympics Committee of South Africa (Nocsa) President Sam Ramsamy said that lighting the Olympic flame stood for peace and the sporting hopes of the South African team. ANC President Nelson Mandela was scheduled to attend the opening of the Olympics in Barcelona (Spain).

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Cyrus Vance arrived in South Africa for talks with a broad array of political, religious, business and labour leaders with a view to making the widest possible recommendations.

A spokesman for the Foreign Ministry of Norway said his Government did not find the time appropriate to lift sanctions in view of the standstill in negotiations due to the violence.

More than 1,000 black protesters were arrested in a mass protest at various locations, such as police stations and supermarkets in Johannesburg. They were later released with warnings.

Namibia Prime Minister Hage Geingob asked US Secretary of State James Baker to use his influence to bring an early resolution to the negotiations on the future of Walvis Bay. He added that the issue would be taken to the UN Security Council if progress was not made.

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President F.W. de Klerk requested the Goldstone Commission to investigate attacks on South African police. A police spokesman said 117 policemen had been killed so far this year.

After several meetings and consultations, the SA Consultative Committee on Labour Affairs (SACCOLA) and Cosatu did not reach agreement on their planned charter and programme for peace, democracy and economic restructuring. The ANC and its allies said it would have to go ahead with its plan for mass action starting on August 3.

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Agreement was reached between the South African Police, ANC, SACP and Cosatu on the principles outlined by a panel of experts on how mass demonstrations should be controlled.

The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) said it was unable to agree to terms restricting the carrying of cultural weapons.

24 July

Dr. Peter Waddington of Reading University, who had been invited by the Goldstone Commission to make an independent inquiry into Boipatong massacre, presented his report in which he stated that while there was no evidence of police collusion in the killings, the South African Police suffered from "serious organizational problems". Inadequate command and control, in particular, had "allowed the massacre to be perpetrated unhindered", and it appeared that the police lacked effective intelligence and contingency planning.

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Dr. Jonathan Gluckman, an independent pathologist, said that 90 per cent of the 200 cases of deaths in police custody for which he had performed post-mortems, were killed by the police. He also said that he had discussed the deaths with high-ranking officials but, to his knowledge, no action had been taken.

Reacting to this report, Minister of Law and Order Hernus Kriel

announced that he had ordered a full investigation into all deaths in detention over the past two years.

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Church leaders launched a major initiative among business, labour, government and political groups to restart negotiations and help create a more favourable political climate for the coming week's general strike.

ANC President Nelson Mandela said that next week's general strike would go ahead. He said the aim of the mass protest, was not an insurrection but the peaceful removal of de Klerk from power; the immediate transfer of political power to the people, installation of an interim government, free and fair elections to a constituent assembly.

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Law and Order Minister Hernus Kriel announced that he would deploy 5,000 police and soldiers in Boipatong, Soweto and other townships in Johannesburg. He said the operation was aimed at restoring peace, essential services and infrastructure to areas affected by unrest.

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ANC President Nelson Mandela requested the United Nations to send observers during the ANC demonstrations scheduled for the following week. The UN Secretary-General announced that he would send a small group of UN officials from the Department of Political Affairs. The group would constitute an independent presence and would be working through the National Peace Committee. President de Klerk said he had no objection to the presence of impartial and objective observers representing the Secretary-General.

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UN Special Representative Cyrus Vance concluded his visit after holding intensive discussions with senior members of the South African government, liberation movements, political organizations, religious and business groups and legal organizations. He was expected to present a report to the Secretary-General upon his arrival in New York.

Seven UN observers joined three UN staff members who were already in South Africa with Special Representative Cyrus Vance. They were immediately deployed in various provinces of the country to monitor events during the week of mass action.