

REPORT ON THE LAGOS PRESS CONFERENCE

01. In his opening address the President, Cde O.R. Tambo expressed appreciation of the invitation to the ANC extended through His Excellency Ike Umar Nwanchiku, Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to visit that country. After introducing the ANC delegation the President underlined the fact that the sojourn to Nigeria to Nigeria was important also in the conduct and nature of discussions held with the Foreign Minister and the Head of State, President Babangida. He pointed out that the visits coincided with phenomenal developments in Southern Africa and the subâ\200\224region. There are prospects of deserved peace and the Clearing of . the Way for independence in Namibia as a subject of struggle. African leaders have paid much attention to the process in order to ensure the reaping of positive results. The African continent and the world at large are now shifting focus from Namibia and the region to look directly at South Africa with a view to the erosion of the apartheid system and the termination of the tyranny which the regime has visited upon the people. We cdme to Nigeria as guests of the government principally to look into our situation and examine the way forward to freedom, which cause Nigeria has Cherished all along since independence, notwithstanding her geo~ political location. We came also to brief the leadership on prospects of advance to our goals and probably as we move our views will coincide with the perspectives of the Nigerian leadership. We already had the honour to be received by President Babangida in a pleasant and brotherly atmosphere. We were made to feel as though we were talking less to a Head of State than:%.concerned brother. We deliberated at length on the situation in Namibia in order to reinforce efforts to attain freedom and democracy in Namibia. On the situation in South Africa Nigeria reaffirmed her commitment to the struggle.

Humanitarian, political and material support has been characteristic of Nigeria's role in the African struggle. We are looking forward to the unfolding of a period of consultation to ensure movement. We gaggshortly with the knowledge that we have been reassured of positive campaigns to r impose sanctions on the apartheid regime. There is a tendency to see sanctions as a means to negotiations. This approach is wrong.

Nigeria has undertaken to adopt measures principally to get apartheid abolished. The immediate purpose of consultation with the South African government is .

.
. .
.

regime must be to end apartheid and not to reform or re-adjust it. A new humane system in South Africa is what Africa demands. Such a demand must become the target of all international pressures.

02. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

Information suggests that a lot of US dollars are being set aside to prop up puppets and lackeys in Namibia. If this be true it constitutes part of the struggle. What role can Nigeria play to facilitate genuine independence for Namibia?

Comrade President O.R. Tambo, in his response, pointed out that South Africa was essentially dishonest and her record is one of dishonesty. The manoeuvres need to be watched very closely and be exposed. The regime never looked forward to a SWAPO government in Namibia and has not begun to think differently now. On April 1 it was the regime which pulled the trigger first. They took the opportunity as a result of the weakness of UNTAG to carry out a massacre. All this has not stopped the process towards independence. However the objective is to defeat SWAPO at .

elections that is the focus of the present activities in Namibia. Large sums of money are being spent to torpedo SWAPO. If these efforts fail the plan is to prevent SWAPO from winning a two-thirds majority because a SWAPO victory will constitute a great difference. But if SWAPO gains a two-thirds majority plans are already in place and others are being elaborated to destabilise independent Namibia.

There is still a long way to go before we see a free Namibia. We need to expose and attack all intrigue aimed at stalling the process. We know, and Africa and the international community are aware of these manoeuvres. Nigeria has a definite role to play towards defeating the schemes. Nigeria can further consult SWAPO which might accurately indicate as to what more can be done.

I Radio Nigeria: Apart from international assistance what has been the role of the ANC against apartheid?

In Angola and Mozambique negotiations were a result of the struggle and part of it. Why do you want to make an exception of the ANC. The argument is now being accepted by Schultz and today leading spokesmen of the regime think it is wrong to make the renunciation of violence a precondition for negotiations. Armed struggle is aimed at apartheid structures and we shall call it off when the system is at the point of collapse. We have to recall the experience of Frelimo in November 1974. Even in Namibia a ceasefire was arrived at on April 1, during negotiations, as the war was raging. So, with us there is no question of dropping arms.

I New Nigerian: What is the liberation movement doing to assist the process to true independence for Namibia?

Ii In reply the President said that the struggle in Namibia was and is part of our struggle. Freedom and true independence in Namibia will not come until apartheid is destroyed. The apartheid regime will continue to destabilise her neighbours until it has been dislodged. Therefore we cannot wait about the struggle â we have been intensifying in order to facilitate an early victory in South Africa. Yet we have to be realistic. South Africa is now retreating under pressure to the final trenches, resisting forcibly. The situation is not very smooth and can become very ugly because it is the final battle.

One thing we have been doing is to forge the unity of all the forces ranged against apartheid, to win supporters away even from the apartheid regime. Fighting, uniting, but always there is more unity to be achieved. Unity is dynamic, it finds expression in action. We are going ahead very well indeed. The people are being joined by growing numbers of deserters from the apartheid camp. Our armed struggle has always been hampered by the absence of rear base facilities. But in spite of this handicap we have built and developed it. The experience of victory by liberation movements is a unique one. Today it is the concern of both the enemy and our allies ~ this gives us confidence in our victory.

I The President replied by saying that the ANC is doing a number of things. Apartheid is not only an international problem but an African issue. We have to strengthen and improve the chances of victory by strengthening international solidarity. In this regard Africa has played an important role. Our people feel that they have not been left alone. We engage the regime on many fronts. In the process the regime tries to hold back progress by resorting to extreme forms of oppression and detention without trial is used widely as a deterrent. Many are being executed for armed struggle but such intimidation is failing because the people are certain of victory, they can see it on the horizon. The regime is facing a constantly deepening crisis. The reforms have been rejected as an attempt to bribe the people and preserve apartheid. The armed struggle continues to mount. The regime has conceded that last year's military assaults were the most compared to previous years. Of course we have registered high successes. And we do it with the help of our friends and allies, Africa and Nigeria.

I The Vanguard: US President Bush has now described the ANC as a terrorist organisation. But Cohen has said that there is a shift in US/ANC relations and that you may even meet and talk. He specifically said that O.R. Tambo is not a marxist. Why is there new optimism about a political solution to the South African problem with armed struggle taking so long?

I The President responded by underlining the fact that there has always been a political struggle in South Africa. A political solution does not mean anything more than a possibility for the regime to come to terms. If a political solution is seen as a substitute for armed struggle we reject that.

~The accusation of terrorism is borrowed from the regime (SA) - is part of propaganda. They used to call everybody communist. President Mugabe was called a terrorist, Samora Machel was also called one, until they won. Armed struggle is not an alternative to other forms of struggle but part of the totality of methods - it can go hand in hand with negotiations even before victory.