

STATEMENT OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS
OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN
MINISTERS OF THE CO-ORDINATING BUREAU OF NON-
ALIGNED COUNTRIES, NEW DELHI, APRIL 7-11, 1977

Mr. Chairman, the Distinguished Foreign Minister of India,

Distinguished Foreign Ministers,

our Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The delegation of the African National Congress of South Africa conveys warm fraternal greetings to all the participants of this historic Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Co-ordinating Bureau of Non-Aligned Countries.

We would like, at the outset, to congratulate you, Mr.

Chairman, for being unanimously elected to preside over this august assembly.

We would also like to express our appreciation to the Bureau for giving us the opportunity to participate, albeit in an observer capacity, in the deliberations of the Conference.

There can be no doubt that the participation of liberation movements does enrich the contents of discussions and decisions that emerge at such meetings.

Besides congratulating the host country for making excellent arrangements to hold this Conference, the delegation of the African National Congress of South Africa wishes to place on record its sincere thanks and appreciation to the leaders, people and Government of India for the principled and consistent support rendered to the cause of human emancipation in South and Southern Africa for many decades now. We are confident that this principled support to our cause will be expanded in the days to come.

We also wish to express our appreciation to the Non-Aligned Movement as a whole, the world socialist community, the Organisation for African Unity and democratic forces the world over for their unflinching and determined support to the national liberation movement of our country.

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Your Excellencies,

The non-aligned movement in recent years, has become truly dynamic both in qualitative and quantitative terms. It is indeed significant that the non-aligned movement of today embraces independent states of Africa, Asia and Latin America and counts in its membership countries belonging to the world socialist system which, as we know, plays a vital role in safeguarding the peace and progress of peoples everywhere.

We need only refer to some recent changes that have taken place both in Africa and Asia during the period following the non-aligned summits held in Algiers and Colombo.

The 500 year-old Portuguese colonial empire in Africa has been totally destroyed. From its ruins have sprung up progressive states in Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, Angola, Sao Tome and Principe and Cape Verde whose peoples have earned for themselves a worthy place in the world community through their heroic and victorious struggles.

The peoples of the Seychelles and Comoro Islands have also recently emerged from the dark past of colonial rule. Djibouti or so-called French Somaliland is virtually at the doorstep of independence.

The peoples of Indo-China are present at this assembly as victors against one of the most monstrous enemies of mankind - American imperialism. The peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia have already taken resolute steps to consolidate their independence. It is only fitting that this august assembly should warmly congratulate the people of Vietnam following the successful re-unification of their country.

More and more countries of Latin America are joining the non-aligned movement. This is concrete evidence that North American imperialism is no longer capable of exercising its hegemony as in the past over this area. Thus more and more countries, following the heroic footsteps of the revolutionary Island of Cuba, the first socialist State on the American continent, are breaking loose from the chains of American imperialist tutelage and diktat.

Your Excellencies,

It goes without saying, therefore, that the non-aligned movement is today much stronger and better fortified to make its contribution towards the solution of the most urgent problems facing mankind. We are fully confident that the present Assembly will prove equal to this vital task which is in the interests of millions of people all over the world whose attention is focussed on this conference.

What are these urgent problems P

The Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Co-ordinating Bureau of Non-Aligned Countries is being held in India, one of the countries of the Indian Ocean. Experience has shown that aggressive circles in the western imperialist world are interested in turning the Indian Ocean into yet another zone of conflict and rivalry.

The U.S. base on the island of Diego Garcia; the expansion of the Simonstown naval base near Cape Town and the expansion of the South African submarine fleet mainly by France; and other similar moves by Western powers can never be taken as measure designed to protect the vital interests of the Indian Ocean States, as vie are made to believe. They are motivated by a desire on the part of imperialist powers to perpetuate their political hegemony on the young states whose shores are being washed by the Indian Ocean so as to keep them within the spheres of imperialist influence.

The Conference cannot be indifferent to the potentially explosive situation in the Middle East. The causes for the permanent state of tension in this area are well-known. However, for purposes of record it should be restated that as long as Israel continues its illegal occupation of Arab lands and the Arab people of Palestine are denied their legitimate rights to self-determination, including the right to return and to establish their own Palestinian state, peace in this region will remain an illusion.

The tragic situation in the Lebanon, which is a classic example of the sort of instability which imperialism promotes in order to advance its aims and interests, calls for urgent solution by all peace-loving forces inside the Arab world, with the assistance of progressive forces the world over.

It is clear that Imperialist manoeuvres in this region aims at dividing and weakening all the forces confronting Israeli aggression and, behind the cloak of a religious war, an attempt is being made to liquidate the Palestinian resistance movement. It is urgent that these sinister plans are defeated.

Your Excellencies, the African continent is fast being transformed into a theatre of open aggression and tension by those forces directly seeking the reversal of the political gains of the African peoples.

In the past 18 months alone several African countries have fallen victim to imperialist-inspired aggression. To name a few:-

a) The Peoples' Republic of Angola heroically repelled South African fascist aggression which was directly supported by the U.S.A., France and other Western imperialist powers. The usual bogey of struggle against "Communist aggression" was used by those who sought to eliminate the heroic vanguard of the Angolan people - the MPLA;

b) The Peoples' Republic of Mozambique has on several occasions been subjected to air and land attacks by the illegal Rhodesian regime;

c) The territorial integrity of the Republic of Zambia has

been violated in the recent past by both the Rhodesian and South African regimes. These acts of aggression have been condemned by the international community and one was a subject of debate by the U.N. Security Council which condemned the Pretoria regime for its crimes against the people of Zambia;

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d) The Republic of Botswana has become the latest victim of Rhodesian aggression. Botswana territory is continuously being violated by forces of the illegal Smith regime, to stem the tide of African liberation.

The above few examples, adequately demonstrate the dangerous situation developing as a direct consequence of growing imperialist intervention in Africa, employing its aggressive task force - the apartheid regime of South Africa - as the spearhead of its strategy whose aim is both to halt the revolutionary sweep in Southern Africa while at the same time aiming at the political de-stabilization of progressive regimes on the Continent.

South Africa:

The current crisis situation in South Africa speaks eloquently of the deep-seated Black people's rejection of the oppressive apartheid policy practised by the racist regime. These repressive policies, as we are aware, have been branded a crime against humanity by the United Nations. Indeed, it would be appropriate if the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries would draw the urgent attention of all states to the relevant U.N. Convention against Apartheid, by calling upon default countries to complete the necessary formalities of signing the Convention.

The whole world at the same/is watching with revulsion and anger the savagery and inhumanity of the fascist regime in South Africa which has rocked to full consciousness all those, both in South Africa and elsewhere, who have believed that the apartheid system of oppression could be so reformed as to be acceptable to the majority of the South African population, the Black people.

In a short period of 7 weeks following the outbreak of mass resistance on the 16th June in Soweto and other Black ghettos, the para-military force of the apartheid state has murdered in cold blood hundreds of Black people mainly school children whose ages range from 7 to 16 years. Tens of hundreds were injured, some permanently maimed.

Hundreds of Black freedom fighters have already been arrested swelling the very high figure of those under detention before the Soweto uprising.

Police murders of those detained are on the increase. In March last year, a leading member of the African National Congress, Joseph Mdluli, was murdered less than 24 hours after he was detained. At the beginning of August, Mapotla Mohapi, a leader of the South African Students Organisation was found murdered in the cell in which he was detained after June 16.

Early this year, two South African freedom fighters, Joseph Nduli and Cleophas Ndlovo were kidnapped in the Kingdom of Swaziland and are facing trials in South African courts of law. The African National Congress is in possession of signed affidavits by the two kidnapped freedom fighters which demonstrate clearly that they were arrested by South African police in Swaziland. This act constitutes a flagrant violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Kingdom of Swaziland - an independent African state.

The South African apartheid state is an important link in the chain of the imperialist system. It is not surprising that, as a consequence of the disintegration of the colonial system in Africa, the imperialist powers have re-doubled their efforts in support of the South African racist regime.

A few examples will suffice

Just over a year ago, the African National Congress published material which conclusively proved an existing nuclear conspiracy between South Africa and West Germany. Spirited denial by West German authorities failed to wipe off the fact.

The perfidy and arrogance of the French monopolies cannot but be condemned. Not content with the fact that France had all along ignored the arms embargo against South Africa, recently a French consortium has concluded a deal with the

Pretoria regime for the supply and construction of nuclear reactors in South Africa. This deal has been concluded in utter contempt of African and world public opinion.

Collaboration between the South African apartheid regime and the expansionist Zionist State of Israel is growing. The growing friendship between the two aggressive States was cemented during the Vorster visit to Israel. The fact that the two countries are known bases of imperialist aggression directed against Africa and the Middle East should be sufficient proof of the urgent dangers to peace and stability in this region.

Then there was the Kissinger-Vorster meeting in West Germany last June following the Soweto uprising. Any doubt that the meeting was intended to buttress the racist regime is immediately dispelled by the reaction of the spokesman of South Africa. The suggestion was current before the meeting that Vorster will use the opportunity to place the regime's point of view before the Government of the United States and obviously seek further endorsement and support for the need of continued assistance of the apartheid regime, to preserve the vast economic and strategic interests of imperialism.

The joint meeting succeeded to boost the sagging morale of the racist white minority in South Africa. It should be noted that as a direct consequence of the Kissinger-Vorster contacts, the U.S.A. was the only country which voted negatively in a Security Council resolution which condemned South Africa for its aggression against the Republic of Zambia. There appears to be no fundamental change of policy by the new American administration, viz-a-viz, Southern Africa.

The Struggle Intensifies

Recent developments in South Africa have amply underlined the sharpened contradictions between the oppressed people on the one hand and the white minority oppressive regime on the other. The brutal way of attempting to resolve these contradictions has profoundly deepened the political crisis of the racist regime.

Long "before the Soweto uprisings it had become abundantly evident that the forces of national liberation, drawn from all sections of the oppressed population, were mobilising in the face of heavy odds" « For many years now, the ruling class has had to contend with an expanding strike movement which has shaken the white power structure to its very foundation. The world is aware of the callous massacre of peaceful African mine workers in Carltonville, four years ago; the tremendous courage displayed by unarmed Black workers in the Heinemann factory who faced police guns and batons in March last year, and the demonstration of Black youth facing the inquisitors in South African courts of law have deeply inspired the oppressed population. The continued resistance against human enslavement is eloquent testimony that far from moving towards acceptance of apartheid - which the apartheid regime so assiduously propagates- the people have totally rejected the 57stea.

The apartheid regime had hoped that it would have by now realized its design of acceptance of the nefarious policies when it outlawed the A.N.C. almost two decades ago. Little did it suspect that the seeds of revolt sown by the African National Congress, during the many decades of struggle, had taken firm root among the masses.

The very seats of white minority regime, Cape Town and Pretoria, including, the industrial heart of the country, Johannesburg, have been shaken by recent events. The courage and bravery displayed by vast sections of our people have demonstrated beyond all doubt that the freedom struggle continues unabated.

South Africa has moved very close to an armed explosion by the-Black masses than at any other period of brutal racist oppression. The A.I.T.C. which has never for once abdicated its revolutionary responsibility and leadership,- taking advantage of the favourable objective conditions both' inside and outside the country, is strengthening the armed fist of the oppressed population.

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Under the resounding slogan of Power to the People, the military wing of the African National Congress - Umkhonto We Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) - is forging ahead.

The day of reckoning for the blood thirsty fascist, racist regime in South Africa is certainly very close at hand.

Part of the burden for final destruction of this universally condemned system is the direct responsibility of the international democratic community. It is to this community that the African National Congress, on behalf of the fighting Black population, now makes an urgent appeal for more concrete material, political and diplomatic assistance.

We wish to reiterate the specific areas of international action against the apartheid state, vizi-

- a. Total rejection of Bantustans;
- b. The total isolation of South Africa in all spheres - diplomatic, sports, cultural, political, etc.;
- c. A more concerted campaign must be developed against the political, military, economic and other support given by the United States, U.K., France, West Germany, Italy and Japan to South Africa. In particular action must be directed against the multi-national corporations for sustaining apartheid and racism;
- d. The international campaign for the release of all political prisoners and detainees to be intensified.
- e. Above all, selfless and generous assistance must go to the African National Congress, the primary and decisive vehicle for democratic change in South Africa.

The contours of the victory of our national democratic revolution are already discernible on the not too distant horizon. The African National Congress pledges to continue its historic task to liberate South Africa.

We thank you, Mr. Chairman.

African National Congress
of South Africa,

New Delhi
7 April 1977