
We Will Intensify the Armed Struggle

We print here some excerpts from the statement made by the President of SWAPO, Sam Shafiqhuna Nujoma, at the International Conference in Solidarity with the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence, on the 25th-29th April 1983. The conference was held at UNESCO House in Paris, and was attended by more than 500 delegates from about 140 countries. Liberation movements, national bodies, including non-governmental organisations, and international organisations were present

Ladies and Gentlemen,
I have the distinct honour and I am most pleased to participate in this important Conference.



President Nujoma

This morning we listened to important statements by outstanding personalities who are involved, in one way or another, in the question of Namibia. We are studying and digesting their messages and will refer to them in the course of the Conference.

Enlarged Central Committee Meeting.

This important International Conference in Support of the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence is taking place immediately after the successful conclusion of the Second Enlarged Central Committee Meeting of SWAPO, held in the People's Republic of Angola, attended by 138 delegates consisting of SWAPO National Leadership, Senior Commanders of the People's

Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), Deputy Heads of Departments, Wings, SWAPO Representatives abroad, the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW), Functionaries representing our Movement in International Organisations, Representatives of Regions, such as the warzones, Namibian Health and Education Centres in the People's Republic of Angola and the Republic of Zambia, and Senior Officers from the Provisional Headquarters in Luanda, Principals of SWAPO schools and representatives from the National Headquarters in Windhoek, the capital city of Namibia.

The Second Enlarged Central Committee Meeting critically and systematically reviewed the liberation activity of the Movement over the past six years, which activity was based on the decisions and programme of action adopted by the First Enlarged Central Committee, held at Nampundwe, Zambia, in July 1976.

The convening of the Second Enlarged Central Committee was preceded by thorough preparations carried out over a year by a Preparatory Committee, whose work was reviewed by the National Executive Committee (now renamed Political Bureau) on 14th and 15th April 1983. In turn, the National Executive Committee submitted its review of the work of the Preparatory Committee to the outgoing Central Committee, sitting in its regular session on 16th April 1983.

Mr President, it was against this background that the Enlarged Central Committee carried out its deliberations. And I am, therefore, pleased to inform this august assembly of friends and supporters, as well as the representatives of the media, that the said Meeting was representative in its composition, comprehensive and critical in its analysis of all aspects of the national liberation struggle in Namibia, and was unanimous in consolidating the unity of the rank and file of our Movement.

On this basis, the Meeting adopted new guidelines, including an amended Constitution and a Programme of Action for the

next five years; in addition, the Second Enlarged Central Committee re-elected the President of SWAPO, elected the Vice-President, in the person of Hendrik Witbooi, and re-elected David Merero as the National Chairman. Similarly, the majority of the members of the former Central Committee were also re-elected, including eleven new members.

I have gone to a considerable length to describe the process involving SWAPO's consolidation of unity of SWAPO ranks, adoption of new strategy and tactics, sharpening of perspectives of the struggle, in order to deal more effectively with the situation in and relating to Namibia.

Washington's Imperialist Global Ambitions.

The Conference is being held at a critical time, when the independence of Namibia is being held hostage, and the suffering of our people is being used by the Reagan Administration to achieve Washington's imperialist global ambitions. Therefore, the oppressed but struggling Namibian people are following with keen interest the deliberations of the Conference, and are hoping that its conclusions and resolutions will reaffirm the active solidarity and support of the international community for our just cause for national liberation.

When we met here in the same hall in 1980, in another International Solidarity Conference on Namibia, hopes and expectations were high that Namibia would be independent by now. Equally, those same hopes and expectations prevailed when the International Conference on Sanctions Against South Africa was held again in the same hall in 1981.

Regrettably, Mr President, the situation in and around Namibia has taken a negative turn as the racist regime of Pretoria has intensified its brutal and generalized repression in South Africa itself, and in Namibia, and has embarked upon a campaign of aggressive military attacks and destabilisation throughout Southern Africa.

The ever-more aggressive and arrogant policy and actions of the Pretoria racists are

a direct result of the advent of the reactionary Reagan Administration in Washington, which has publicly embraced apartheid South Africa as a friendly country.

In Namibia, the last three years have seen the massive South African military build-up turning Namibia into a garrison state. The obvious consequence of this state of affairs is the untold suffering of the Namibian masses, in the form of cold-blooded murder, abductions, torture, incarceration in concentration camps, massacre of innocent villagers, rapes and constant acts of intimidation.

In the same fashion, the racist Pretoria regime has embarked upon a generalized and calculated campaign of destabilisation against independent African States in the region. To this end, the regime has been recruiting, training, financing, arming, transporting, deploying, commanding and rescuing puppets and bandits from these countries. These acts of destabilisation are being perpetrated against Angola, Mozambique, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana and other African States as far afield as the Seychelles.

Illegal Occupation of Angola: Threat to International Peace

The People's Republic of Angola is one country which the Pretoria racists and their imperialist allies have singled out for all-out destabilisation, counter-revolutionary sabotage and diplomatic blackmail. Using occupied Namibia as a springboard, the racist regime of South Africa has launched massive and destructive military attacks inside the sovereign Territory of Angola. From these criminal and savage armed attacks, the racist expansionists have since 1981 occupied militarily parts of Southern Angola.

In short, Mr President, the continued illegal occupation and massive concentration of racist South Africa's armed forces in Namibia, the intensified apartheid reign of terror, the constant acts of aggression and destabilisation against independent States in the region, taken together, constitute a

serious threat to international peace and security.

This is the present situation in and around Namibia, to which this important and timely Conference is called upon to give an urgent and appropriate consideration. The negative developments which have continued to impede progress towards Namibia's independence in the course of the last three years reflect the overall negative developments on the world scene. It is sad but proper and necessary to state here that the past three years have seen the resurgence of the ugly cold-warmongering, reactionary policies of confrontation, threats of intervention and intensified covert activities against progressive governments and, above all, the most dangerous threat of nuclear holocaust by the aggressive circles of imperialism. This is, indeed, an ominous international situation.

But the champions of liberation, justice and peace the world over should never succumb to these outrageous policies of those who are busy trying to convince the world that nuclear war is not only thinkable but that it is actually winnable. In this connection, it is heartening and encouraging to note that millions of people have taken to the streets in North America and Western Europe in active opposition to such irrational policies. They are doing so to help save the world from total destruction.

Socialist Countries: Supporters of Democracy and Transformation

One of the direct consequences of the latest irresponsible and dangerous behaviour of the aggressive circles of imperialism is the calculated distortion of the legitimate demands of the oppressed and exploited masses in Southern Africa for their right to self-determination, freedom and national independence. In other words, their demands for liberation, justice and independence have been relegated to the lowest point, if at all, on the list of priorities by the major capitalist powers and their monstrous transnational corporations whose greed for world domin-

ation and profits supersedes every other consideration.

In the face of this critical development, it has become quite apparent that liberal democracy in the West seems to have lost moral force, such that the leading Western power is more concerned with military superiority than with moral and ideological persuasion.

Undeniably, the true and consistent supporters and defenders of the ideals of democracy and meaningful transformation of societies of oppressed and exploited peoples in the world are the countries of the socialist community, and other progressive forces. On the other hand, the capitalist powers have earned themselves the shameful reputation as heartless proponents of world domination, defenders of the exploitative systems and supporters of tyrannic regimes throughout the world.

Here we are in the land of Voltaire, a land which is widely acknowledged for having made a significant contribution to world history and civilization, including the universally proclaimed ideals of liberty, fraternity and equality of man.

It is from here, the birthplace of these noble ideals, that we are now questioning the intentions of the Western powers who shamelessly pursue selfish policies, in collaboration with the apartheid clique of Pretoria, in order to ensure free access to the mineral wealth and the African cheap labour in Southern Africa, in total disregard of the legitimate demands and just struggle of the millions of the African majority in the region. How can we be expected to trust them if all that they are after is plundering our wealth by keeping us in bondage and by prolonging our suffering?

The Contact Group: Enough is Enough

Enough is enough. We condemn these countries for their criminal policies, we reject their hollow promises and unfounded claims about progress in the process of decolonization of Namibia, which is our primary preoccupation. We renew our appeal to the whole of

the peace-loving and justice-upholding sectors of the world community to condemn and reject the delaying tactics of the imperialists and their racist clients in Pretoria.

I now wish to say something about the role of the so-called Contact Group. This group of countries is at the core of all the unwarranted and negative developments that I have spoken about before at various places and just right now in this Conference. The Five Western Powers - Canada, Federal Republic of Germany, France, United Kingdom and the United States, said to be a Contact Group, have offered themselves over the past six-year period to assist the United Nations to achieve its primary objective in Namibia, that is, freedom and genuine independence. To this end, the Security Council adopted a settlement plan as endorsed in Resolution 435 (1978). This Plan was to be, and remains still, the final and only basis of a negotiated settlement of the Namibian problem.

In this connection, I have been mandated by the Central Committee of SWAPO to categorically and clearly state that our Movement, having reviewed the history of the negotiations and the role of the so-called Contact Group, led by the U.S., has concluded that this Group has lost proper contact with the letter and spirit of Resolution 435, and that the whole exercise has now turned out to be a mere rescue operation for the white racist, illegal occupiers in Namibia. In particular, the Central Committee of SWAPO has singled out the Reagan Administration which, because of its public embrace of apartheid South Africa, has injected in the decolonization process of our country, an extraneous issue, by linking the independence of Namibia to a withdrawal of Cuban forces from the People's Republic of Angola. The Central Committee categorically rejected and vehemently condemned this unjust, arrogant and irrational and objectionable policy of linkage. The position of SWAPO is that the oppressed people of Namibia are entitled to independence without any further delay, precondition or prevarication.

It is in the light of this that SWAPO has

come to the conclusion that the role of the Five Western Powers ceased to be that of honest brokers in terms of the implementation of Security Council Resolution 435 (1978). These powers, and the Reagan Administration in particular, must be prevailed upon to desist forthwith from their sinister attempts to hijack and misuse the Namibian negotiating process for their own selfish ends.

We thus call upon this august gathering to endorse the recent decisions of the OAU Liberation Committee and the Seventh Summit of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries, which have urged the United Nations Security Council to urgently exercise its authority and to resume full responsibility for the speedy implementation of Resolution 435.

The Angolan Bandits

The recent decision of the European Community has caused great apprehension for the struggling Namibian people. By adopting a reactionary and hostile resolution with a view to providing direct financial and material assistance, under false pretexts, to the Angolan bandits and mercenaries based in occupied Namibia, the European Community has taken a public position in favour of further strengthening the hands of the Pretoria regime in its campaign of destabilisation and subversion against the People's Republic of Angola. We strongly condemn the sponsors and supporters of this reactionary resolution, and reject its import as an act of hostility against the peoples of Africa.

We Shall Leave No Stone Unturned

One more customary but sincere duty before I conclude, I take this opportunity to renew SWAPO's militant solidarity with the struggling people of South Africa, under the leadership of the African National Congress, whose military wing, Umkhonto We Sizwe, is challenging daily the military machine of the racists inside the country; the people of Saharawi, under the leadership of Polisario Front; the people of Palestine, under the

leadership of the PLO and all other anti-imperialist and democratic forces the world over who are struggling for liberation, justice and social progress.

Finally, I wish to state that the patriots of Namibia, led by SWAPO, their sole and authentic representative, have always been realistic and sober-minded about the difficulties inherent in the struggle, and have accordingly resolved to wage a protracted struggle until we have achieved the total liberation of Namibia. I pledge, once again, here before this august world assembly, that we shall leave no stone unturned in our struggle to liberate Namibia. We will intensify the armed liberation struggle for as long as the racists prevent a negotiated settlement. We will, in other words, continue to make the price of illegal occupation higher than its benefit for racist South Africa.

Notwithstanding the concentration of the racist South African troops in Namibia, the heroic combatants of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) continue to engage the enemy forces on a sustained and ever-broadening scale from the Zambesi river in the North-Eastern part of our country to the Atlantic, and from Northern frontiers to the district of Windhoek, deep in the central part of Namibia. Not a single day passes without armed encounter between our liberation forces and the occupation troops in our country. PLAN has not only succeeded in maintaining the initiative but also in demonstrating its high calibre of fighting ability. Racist South Africa has failed to contain the ever-broadening and deepening advance of PLAN's armed operations throughout the country. Our heroic combatants have successfully managed to pin down more than 100 000 enemy forces and to steadily raise higher for the enemy the price of continued illegal occupation of our country. Recent months have seen brilliant victories being scored by PLAN and high casualties being inflicted on the enemy. Pretoria is now being forced to spend over three million rands a day in its doomed attempt to perpetuate its occupation of our country.

RIVONIA: TWENTY YEARS ON

by
HAROLD WOLPE

It is twenty years this month since the arrest, at Rivonia near Johannesburg, of a number of leaders and other cadres of the ANC. The trial that followed, at which eight leaders were sentenced to life imprisonment, came to be known as the Rivonia trial.

Harold Wolpe was one of those arrested, and was detained in Johannesburg. He escaped, together with Arthur Goldreich, Abdulhay Jassat, and Moosa Moolla.. Here, he briefly discusses the place of the Rivonia trial in the history of the South African liberation struggle.

The Sharpeville massacre of 1960, the mass upsurge which followed throughout the country, and the state's utilisation of emergency military and police powers forcibly to win back control of the situation, marked the beginning of a new phase in South African politics.

The 1950s were dominated by the development, despite state coercion, of mass struggles against the apartheid regime. These were reflected, not only in the growing strength and mobilising power of the Congress Alliance led by the ANC, as shown in the Defiance Campaign, the Congress of the People, and so on, but also in the country-wide mushrooming of people's organisations formed to campaign on specific demands against the state – such as trade unions, and organisations concerned with such issues as civil liberties, education and living conditions.

State Repression and the Armed Struggle.

State repression in 1960 established the political conditions in which it became possible for the regime to develop, extend and utilise ever more coercive powers, in its attempt to cripple all the major centres of revolutionary opposition and, at the same time, effectively to eliminate the terrain of non-violent political struggle in South Africa. The consequence of this was to drive our movement in the direction of armed struggle.

The turn towards armed struggle, by way of urban sabotage in the first instance, presented a major threat to the apartheid state, for, despite the state's success in curtailing the independent political organisations of the masses, the militancy and high level of political consciousness of the people, which had developed in the 1950s, remained. Umkhonto We Sizwe provided the means for mobilising the militancy of the people, in a direct challenge to the state's coercive power.

In these circumstances, the arrest, by the security police, of many of our top leaders at the headquarters of our underground organisation on the farm, 'Lilliesleaf' in Rivonia, near Johannesburg, on the 12th July 1963, represented a momentous defeat for the national liberation struggle. With one blow, the state completed its grip on the political arena, by capturing key leaders of the ANC and MK.

The People Rise Again

For ten years the state held the people of South Africa in a vice-like grip of political immobility, but then, in 1973, the great workers' strikes revealed something of what was occurring beneath the surface — the growth of a large, confident and militant black working class, determined to struggle against state and employers for a living wage. This was only the beginning, for, in the context of the weakening of imperialism in Southern Africa in the 1970s through the defeat of Portuguese colonialism in Angola and Mozambique, and of the racist regime in Rhodesia, there followed, over the next ten years, a resurgence of the peoples' struggles and organisation inside South Africa.

Thus, struggles in the factories, in the schools and communities (reaching a high point in Soweto in 1976) have become an everyday feature of South Africa. The growth of the independent black trade unions, the formation of black student organisations, the revival of the Transvaal Indian Congress, the politicisation of cultural activities and of

black churches, are merely part of the picture.

The ANC Survives and Leads.

The struggle of the ANC to survive the defeats of the 1960s, to rebuild its organisation, and to effectively and concretely resume its leading role in the national liberation struggle inside South Africa, was carried on in the face of formidable obstacles, including the unconstrained power of the state's security apparatus. Nevertheless, our movement not only survived, but continued to operate on an ever-expanding scale, in both the political sphere and in the armed struggle within South Africa.

Indeed, the political and trade union resurgence in South Africa, and the direction it has taken, owes much to the determined and courageous work undertaken by our cadres throughout the worst period of state repression, and in the most adverse conditions. The role of our movement is testified to by the fact that its leadership has been spontaneously recognised by individuals and organisations alike engaged in the struggle for national liberation in South Africa.

Much Remains to be Done.

Yet much remains to be done, and undoubtedly we are up against a ruthless and determined militarised regime, which has the backing of the major imperialist powers. On this twentieth anniversary of the Rivonia arrests, we must recall the words and deeds of our comrades, Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, Govan Mbeki, Dennis Goldberg, Elias Motsoaledi, Andrew Mlangeni, and Raymond Mhlaba, who are serving life imprisonment now, and re-dedicate ourselves to the struggle for the release of all political prisoners, and for the liberation of South Africa.