

**REMINISCENCES**  
**OF THE**  
**INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST APARTHEID -**  
**WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE**  
**UNITED NATIONS**

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## INTRODUCTION

Since my retirement from the United Nations in 1985, a number of friends have been asking me to write my “memoirs” so that the “inside story” of United Nations action against apartheid and way the United Nations works will be known. I have resisted the temptation to write because I wanted to avoid giving an exaggerated impression of my own role. I felt it was difficult for me to write an objective account as I was deeply involved in the campaign.

After the changes in South Africa since 1990, and especially after I had helped prepare the book on “*United Nations and Apartheid*” in which I included much of what can be written from published sources, and after further pressure from friends, I decided to write my “oral history”.

I decided to put down on paper what I remembered of United Nations action, as well as action outside, as a record for reference in an archive rather than for publication. I did type some reminiscences, but did not make too much progress for some years because of other preoccupations.

I hope this will be useful to students of South African history of the recent period as much of the information is not in published documentation. I also hope that this account will help in recognition of a number of people who have made vital contributions to the campaign against apartheid.

I must caution anyone reading these rambling notes.

1. This is a collection of reminiscences, not my “memoirs”, much less a history.
2. I believe I have made a significant contribution to action against apartheid - in the United Nations as well as outside - mainly by formulating plans for action, securing agreement, following up decisions of the United Nations and of various conferences etc. I also took serious personal risks in the work and I do not know of any United Nations official who worked on an issue with equal determination and conviction, spending 70-80 hours a week, giving up holidays and vacations etc. for two decades.

But I could have achieved little if my suggestions did not receive the approval of the United Nations committees (and especially of the successive chairmen of the Special Committee against Apartheid) and if I did not have the encouragement, cooperation and assistance of many leaders of the liberation movement, anti-apartheid movements, governments etc.

3. We have perhaps a tendency to idealise liberation movements which fight for things we believe in, and their members. I have had the greatest respect for the South African liberation movement; without such respect and, in fact, emotional attachment, I could not have given it all that I did. But people are human. If I refer to the frailties of people in the liberation movement or of their friends in the United Nations or anti-apartheid movements, that does not detract in any way from my respect for the liberation movement.

For myself, I derived great personal satisfaction from what I did. And I have received flattering commendations for my work all through the years. I will quote a few.

Sean MacBride, in a speech introducing me in Dublin where I delivered the Luthuli Memorial Lecture on March 19, 1985:

“It has been my privilege to work with E.S. Reddy for close on 20 years, and I can say without fear of contradiction that there is no one at the United Nations who has done more to expose the injustices of apartheid and the illegality of the South African regime than he has. E.S. Reddy has done so with tremendous courage and ability. It is not always easy to work within a bureaucracy such as the United Nations for an ideal. Many civil servants who succeed in securing a post in this world body tend to lose their idealism and to become bureaucrats. This never happened in the case of E.S. Reddy. Steeped in the tradition of Indian nationalism and the anti-colonial revolution, he dedicated his entire energy and skills to the liberation from oppression of the people of Southern Africa. He had to face many obstacles and antagonisms, coming from the Western Powers mainly, but he had the skill, courage and determination necessary to overcome the systematic overt and covert opposition to the liberation of the people of Southern Africa.”

Olof Palme in a letter of November 20, 1985, to me:

“Your own contributions to the work of the UN against apartheid have been formidable. Your devoted work has been highly appreciated by many of us here in Sweden.

"I am confident that you will continue to play a major role as a source of knowledge and inspiration to the international movement against apartheid.”

Archbishop Trevor Huddleston in his speech accepting the Indira Gandhi Prize in New Delhi on January 27, 1995:

“In a real sense, at considerable economic and political sacrifice, India became the first Frontline State against apartheid and has remained steadfast ever since. India’s pioneering role resulted in the United Nations taking up the struggle against apartheid. And in this context, I feel bound to pay tribute to Mr. Enuga

Reddy, the former UN Assistant Secretary-General, who personally played such an important role in this work.”

One cannot ask for more.

Some of my reminiscences are online on the ANC website:

Reminiscences of Oliver Tambo at  
[www.anc.org.za/un/reddy/reminiscences\\_ot.html](http://www.anc.org.za/un/reddy/reminiscences_ot.html)

Chief Luthuli and the United Nations at  
[www.anc.org.za/un/reddy/cluthuli.html](http://www.anc.org.za/un/reddy/cluthuli.html)

Defence and Aif Fund and the UN at  
[www.anc.org.za/un/reddy/defence.html](http://www.anc.org.za/un/reddy/defence.html)

Meeting with Kaiser Matanzima at:  
[www.anc.org.za/un/reddykmatanzima.html](http://www.anc.org.za/un/reddykmatanzima.html)

Missions of the Chairmen of the UN Special Committee to Nordic countries, 1975-182, Notes on consultations, at:  
[www.anc.org.za/un/reddy/missions.html](http://www.anc.org.za/un/reddy/missions.html)

Please see also:

Oliver Tambo's letters to me, 1964-1981, extracts, at  
[www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/or/or-es.html](http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/or/or-es.html)

My letters to Oliver Tambo, at  
[www.anc.org.za/un/reddy/letters\\_to\\_tambo.html](http://www.anc.org.za/un/reddy/letters_to_tambo.html)

They contain more detailed information on certain matters than these reminiscences.

I have also provided many documents and notes to the ANC websites. I will be referring to some of them in these reminiscences.

I will begin with a brief account of my own early interest in the South African liberation movement - and then proceed with the reminiscences. They are not arranged chronologically or in any other special order, but by certain actions or themes.

## REMINISCENCES – PART I

### *Beginning of my interest in South Africa*

I come from a political family in Andhra Pradesh, South India. My father was a follower of Gandhi and president of the Congress in our small town, Gudur, for many years. He went to prison for three months in the individual satyagraha in 1941. My mother gave all her jewellery to Gandhi when he visited our town in 1933 during a tour to collect funds for the uplift of Harijans (untouchables). I came under Gandhi's influence from my family and from the Hindi teacher in school.

When I went to college, I came under the influence of Jawaharlal Nehru, socialism and Marxism like many of the young people at that time.

In late 1943, a cousin of mine brought three pamphlets from South Africa. He had gone to the United States as a student in 1939 and left after the United States entered the war. He had to take a boat to Argentina, from there to Cape Town and Durban and then to India. He spent a few days in Durban.

One of the pamphlets was by Dr. Yusuf M. Dadoo about Indians, another by Peter Abrahams about mine workers going to Johannesburg (*egoli*). The third was by Bill Andrews, leader of the Communist Party – I do not remember the subject. I read them with great interest.

Around that time, Indian newspapers carried news about the movement by Africans and Indians against racial discrimination. I recall an article by Yusuf Dadoo – with a photograph of Yusuf with a Stalin pipe – in an Indian communist weekly.

Nehru – he was released from prison in 1945 – called on Indians in South Africa to identify with the Africans. He had often expressed this view since 1927 when he represented India at the International Congress against Imperialism in Brussels and met J.T. Gumede, President-General of the African National Congress (ANC), James La Guma and D. Colrairie, the South African delegates.

### *Council on African Affairs*

I came to the United States in March 1946 for further studies when the “Ghetto Bill” was introduced by General Smuts and Indian Congresses decided on passive resistance. I wanted to get news from South Africa as there was little in the American press.

Kumar Goshal, an Indian revolutionary who came into exile in America in the 1920s, was a member of the Board of the Council on African Affairs led by Paul



Robeson.<sup>1</sup> He told me that I could go to the Council's reading room at 23 West 26<sup>th</sup> Street and look at South African newspapers.

I began to frequent the Council on African Affairs. Passive resistance began in June 1946. The Council received *Bantu World* and *Guardian*, two weeklies from South Africa. I studied all I could find on the Indian passive resistance and other developments in Southern Africa such as the Mine labour strike.

I was greatly impressed by the leadership of Dr. Yusuf Dadoo and Dr. G.M. Naicker, their call for unity with the African people, the courage and heroism of the passive resisters, including many women, and their faith in the ultimate triumph of justice over the powerful oppressors. I read also about the new spirit among the Africans and the great African mine workers' strike in August 1946.

My life came to be involved with South Africa since then.

The Council on African Affairs was perhaps the first solidarity movement for the African and other non-white people of South Africa. I came to know the Council and its leaders – Paul Robeson, Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, and especially Dr. Alpheus Hunton, the educational director and later the Executive Director. I attended the huge mass meeting organised by the Council at the Madison Square Garden on June 6, 1946, to denounce racial discrimination in South Africa and call on the United States government to support African freedom.

Through the Council, I also had my first contact with the South African liberation movement. A delegation led by Dr. A. B. Xuma, President-General of African National Congress, arrived in New York in November 1946 to lobby at the United Nations General Assembly which was to consider the Indian complaint concerning the treatment of Indians in South Africa, and to advise the Indian delegation. The delegation included H. A. Naidoo and Sorabjee Rustomjee of the Indian Congresses and Senator H. Basner, a Senator representing African voters. The Council organized a reception for the delegation on 8 November, a meeting with a number of trade unions and other organizations, and a public meeting at the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem on 17 November. I attended these events and led a few Indian students to a demonstration organized by the Council in front of the South African Consulate on 21 November.

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Goshal, on arrival in the United States in the 1920s, did odd jobs for a living and was an actor for some years. He became a writer and lecturer in the 1940s and was doing well when I met him. He was later “blacklisted” and faced hard times.



Ms. Godiwala and I, Indian students, at a demonstration in New York on November 21, 1946

I also went to Flushing Meadows to attend the United Nations meetings where the Indian complaint was discussed. I suppose I am the only person who followed the discussion of South Africa at the United Nations from 1946 to 1994.

*Employment in the United Nations*

I was an intern at the United Nations in the summer of 1948 and then applied for a job at the UN. I had received M.A. in international relations from NYU in February 1948 and had enrolled for a doctorate at Columbia University.

In May 1949 I obtained a position in the Section for Middle East and Africa (in the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs) – at the lowest professional level. We were four officers in the Section. I did most of the research. The assignment gave me an opportunity to read newspapers from South Africa and clippings on South Africa from British papers. The United Nations Library received *Guardian* and its successors. So I knew about the Congresses and their struggle.

### *Atmosphere in the United Nations Secretariat*

In September 1952, India and 12 Asian and Arab countries requested that the General Assembly discuss "The question of race conflict in South Africa resulting from the policies of apartheid of the Government of the Union of South Africa."<sup>2</sup> This was after the African National Congress and the South African Indian Congress jointly launched the Defiance Campaign.

The acting head of my Section, a Greek diplomat, called me for a chat in the course of which he said that discussion of apartheid would be a violation of Article 2 (7) of the UN Charter on domestic jurisdiction.<sup>3</sup> I said that was a matter of interpretation of the Charter and that the newly-independent countries had their own interpretation. Next day, he transferred me from research on South Africa to research on Middle Eastern questions on the ground that I was too opinionated and not objective.

The UN General Assembly not only included apartheid on its agenda and discussed it, but adopted a resolution. It established a three-man commission to study the situation in South Africa. And the acting head of my Section was assigned as its Secretary!

He then almost begged me to help. I prepared a few papers as background for the Commission. I mention this to illustrate the atmosphere in the UN and its Secretariat in those days.

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<sup>2</sup> Strangely, Ethiopia and Liberia, the two black African States, were not among the signatories of that letter.

<sup>3</sup> Article 2(7) of the United Nations Charter reads: "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII."

The Commission submitted three excellent reports. But it was disbanded in 1955 as the paragraph proposing its extension did not receive a two-thirds majority.<sup>4</sup>

***Appointment as Principal Secretary of Special Committee against Apartheid***

In November 1956 I was sent to Cairo as political officer with the United Nations Emergency Force (as assistant to Dr. Alfonso Garcia Robles, the director of my Division, who later received the Nobel Peace Prize). That was a valuable experience.

After my return in March, I was assigned to research on the Middle East. Some time later, may be in 1960, there was a reorganization of the Division and I was assigned to research on the Far East.

When the General Assembly decided in November 1962 to establish a Special Committee on apartheid – and I was appointed its “Principal Secretary” on 9 March 1963 – I was working on the Far East. I had not worked on South Africa for several years, except for the preparation of a long background paper for Hammarskjöld’s mission to South Africa in 1961. I had to rush to catch up on developments in South Africa before the first meeting of the Special Committee on 2 April 1963

Though I was not working on South Africa, I had kept up an interest in developments there. I continued to receive the successors of the banned *Guardian* in circulation from the UN Library.

I met Bishop Ambrose Reeves at a party in New York in the late 1950s. I recalled he called for support to Ronald Segal’s *Africa South*.

A junior delegate of Ceylon (Doraisamy) asked me for fresh ideas for a speech on apartheid as the speeches in the annual debate in the Assembly had become routine and dull. I wrote a speech in which I suggested that it was not enough to discuss apartheid once a year. The Secretary-General should follow the developments and make an annual report to the General Assembly.

Hammarskjöld was against that suggestion. Dr. Ralph Bunche, his representative on the Assembly Committee, spoke to the Chairman and prevented a decision..

**Look for Ceylon speech**

Later, in 1961, I suggested to a Syrian delegate to propose the setting up of a committee on apartheid. I do not know if that had any influence on the decision in 1962 to set up the Special Committee.

I had kept up an interest in the colonial problem and met a number of “petitioners” from colonial territories – starting with Indonesia in the 1940s. I met

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<sup>4</sup> The United States opposed the extension of the Commission and was joined by some of the Latin American States.

the leader of the UPC in the Cameroon (Felix-Roland Moumie) several times; he was later assassinated in Geneva. I met the Algerians in Cairo in 1956-57 and later in New York. [The Algerians set up a provisional government in 1958. They offered to take me to their liberated areas, but I had to decline.] Eduardo Mondlane of Mozambique was a colleague in the UN Secretariat and we lived in the same housing project, Parkway Village in the Queens. I met Mario Andrade from Angola and George Silundika from Southern Rhodesia in 1961-62. I valued the friendship of these leaders of colonial movements, and learnt from them about the situation in Africa.

I attended some meetings of the American Committee on Africa and the Episcopal Churchmen for South Africa in New York.

Oliver Tambo came into exile in March 1960 and visited the United States around November. He met the non-aligned group at the United Nations.<sup>5</sup> The group set up a sub-committee on South Africa, chaired by the ambassador of Burma, U Thant. After Hammarskjöld died in 1961, he was elected Acting Secretary-General of the United Nations and was a great help.

I used to visit the office of a couple of correspondents – Donald Grant and Mary Hagen – on my way to lunch to chat about developments in the Congo etc.<sup>6</sup> One day when I was at their office, Oliver Tambo came in and we spent a few minutes together. That was the beginning of our long friendship.

Vusumzi Make also arrived in the United States. That was the time of the short-lived United Front of ANC, PAC, the South African Indian Congress and the South West Africa National Union. He was given a job in the Ghana mission to the United Nations and stayed on New York for about a year. I met him a few times and became friends but we did not have much discussion on the situation in South Africa as I was not dealing with South Africa in the United Nations.

When the General Assembly decided in a resolution 1761 (XVII) of 6 November 1962 to establish the Special Committee, the director of my Division, a British academic, expected to be appointed the “Principal Secretary” of the Committee. He asked me if I would be interested in the position of Assistant Secretary. I told him I was not, as we did not agree on the matter before the Committee.

After the decision of the General Assembly on 6 November, the President of the Assembly consulted the different geographical groups on the membership of the

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<sup>5</sup> At that time, petitioners were given hearing on trusteeship and colonial issues, but not on apartheid (as South Africa was independent and a member State). Potlako Leballo had appeared in 1962 but as a petitioner on Basutoland, a colonial territory.

<sup>6</sup> Mary Hagen was then correspondent of *Patriot* (daily) and *Link* (weekly) of New Delhi, edited by a left Socialist. Donald, correspondent of *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, was harassed for reporting an interview with Yasser Arafat. Mary and Donald left the United States and settled in Ireland.

committee. No government from the “Western European and Other group” (that included Australia and New Zealand) agreed to join, presumably because the Committee was set up under a resolution calling for sanctions against South Africa. This was the first committee of the United Nations to be boycotted by the West.

The membership of the Committee was announced on 18 February 1963.<sup>7</sup> It included 5 African States (Algeria, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, Somalia), three Asian countries (Federation of Malaya, Nepal, Philippines), two from Latin America and the Caribbean (Costa Rica, Haiti) and one from Eastern Europe (Hungary).<sup>8</sup> Its mandate under the General Assembly resolution was:

- “(a) To keep the racial policies of the Government of South Africa under review when the Assembly is not in session;
- (b) To report either to the Assembly or to the Security Council or to both, as may be appropriate, from time to time.”

Most people expected that the Committee would be useless in dealing with the “perennial problem” of apartheid. They were to be proved wrong within a few months.

The director of my division was no more interested in being appointed Secretary of the Committee.

On 9 March 1963, the head of my department, Evgeny Kisselev (whom I had met in Cairo when he was Soviet ambassador to Egypt), called me and offered me the post of “Principal Secretary.” I was a “P-4 officer” at that time, three levels below a director. I believe no one at that level had been a secretary of a General Assembly committee until then.

I told Mr. Kisselev that I would accept the post. It was a serious challenge and I would do my best. I told him that this may be a lifetime assignment as I believed that the whole of Africa must be liberated before South Africa can be free (because of the economic and other involvement of Western Powers). He promised me full support.

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<sup>7</sup> It was named the “Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa.” The title was shortened some years later to “Special Committee on Apartheid” and subsequently changed to “Special Committee against Apartheid.”

<sup>8</sup> The composition of the Committee was interesting. The President tried to choose countries which were not appointed to the Special Committee on Decolonization in 1961. United States and Britain had opposed inclusion of Ghana, Guinea and Indonesia as members of that Committee as they were considered “too radical”. They were offered membership in the committee on apartheid: Ghana and Guinea accepted, but Indonesia refused. Asia was represented by smaller countries. Most of the Latin American countries were not interested. The Eastern European Group chose Hungary, which was very unpopular in the United Nations at that time.

Dr. L.A. Fabunmi, a Nigerian colleague in my carpool, and Hubert Noel, a Frenchman, were assigned as my deputies. Dr. Fabunmi left after a few months to become director of the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (and later ambassador). Mr. Noel did not agree with our approach to apartheid, but worked faithfully and we became good friends. He was transferred a couple of years later, and died at an early age of a heart attack. A few months later, I was also assigned Gil Evans, a junior (entry level) officer, was assigned as an assistant. He was the son of Luther Evans, former Director-General of UNESCO and head of Library of Congress. A fine person, he left the United Nations around the end of the year to work in Basutoland. Miss Florencia Witt, a most junior secretary from Ecuador, was assigned to me; she turned out to be excellent.

I had no experience of servicing a UN committee. I knew no official language other than English.

I did not know how to arrange the first meeting of a committee. It was necessary to reserve conference services, call each one of the eleven delegations to secure their approval for the date and time, etc.

***Consultation on Choice of Officers of the Special Committee and arrangements for the First Meeting of the Committee***

Fortunately, the Algerian ambassador, Abdelkader Chanderli, whom I knew, proved most helpful. He and his assistants helped us to arrange an informal meeting of the Committee members at the end of March, to agree on arrangements for the first meeting etc. I also got advice from a senior colleague in my department.

Meanwhile, I heard that a few delegates had agreed on a slate of officers: Achkar Marof, deputy in the Guinean mission, as Chairman; Ambassador Fernando Volio Jimenez of Costa Rica as Vice-Chairman; and Privado Jimenez, second ambassador of the Philippines, as Rapporteur.

I did not know them then, except that I had seen Achkar Marof who had been very active, along with the delegate of Ghana, in annoying the colonial powers in the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly, which dealt with trusteeship and colonial questions.

I mentioned to Dr. Fabunmi that the Committee should have, for its prestige, the heads of mission as officers. If the level is below that, other countries would send junior delegates to the Committee.

I was also concerned that the election of the Philippines may not be good for the image of the Committee. In May 1962, the UN Special Committee for South West Africa sent its Chairman, a Mexican ambassador, and the Vice-Chairman

(Victorio D. Carpio of the Philippines) on a mission to South West Africa and there was a scandal.<sup>9 10</sup>

Dr. Fabunmi spoke to the Nigerian ambassador, Chief Simeon Adebo. Chief Adebo called a meeting of the African members of the Committee and proposed that Boubacar Diallo Telli, the Guinean ambassador, should be the chairman of the committee. Diallo Telli decided that a non-aligned country should be the Rapporteur and pressed the representative of Nepal, M.P. Koirala, a former Prime Minister of Nepal, to accept.

Mr. Koirala was also ambassador to Washington and stationed there. He was leaving for Nepal could not attend the first meeting. It was agreed that he would be elected Rapporteur and that his deputy in New York, Ram Malhotra, would be acting Rapporteur in his absence.

All the delegations were represented at the highest level at the informal meeting. Chanderli presided and got the slate of officers approved. Several procedural matters were also decided.

I suggested to the meeting not to ask the Secretariat to produce any papers and to have all papers on developments in South Africa in the name of the Rapporteur. If the Secretariat had to produce the papers in its name, I would have to “objective” and give the views of the oppressed people as well as that of the South African government. The report of the Committee would then include the Secretariat paper; summary of the speeches of the delegates which would be repetitive; and conclusions. Such a report would not be effective enough.

I had also in mind that I would have great difficulty in getting any paper cleared in the Secretariat – with a British director and Soviet head of department.

The procedure I suggested was agreed and the first meeting was scheduled for 2 April.

### ***Statement of Secretary-General U Thant at the First Meeting of the Committee***

I sent a private message to the Secretary-General, U Thant (through his Chef de Cabinet, Mr. C. V. Narasimhan), that precisely because the Western Powers boycotted the Special Committee, he should make it a point to open the first

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<sup>9</sup> On 26 May 1962, a communiqué was issued in Pretoria in their names, as well as those of the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of South Africa, that they had found no evidence of a situation in the Territory constituting a threat to international peace or that that the Territory was being militarized or that there was a gradual extermination of the population. They repudiated the communiqué after returning to New York.

<sup>10</sup> Privado Jimenez, the first delegate of the Philippines, and his successors proved to be excellent. Mr. Nanagas, one of his successors, was Rapporteur for several years, and Ms. Maria Lopez was chairman of the Sub-Committee on Women and Apartheid.



meeting of the Committee, and show interest in its work, and not send an assistant. He readily agreed and I was asked to prepare the draft of a short opening statement by him.

Since the adoption of the sanctions resolution in November 1962, Prime Minister Verwoerd and other South African ministers made insulting statements about the United Nations and its Asian-African members. So I included a sentence in the draft for U Thant that he was concerned about those statements.

“I wish to add, on this occasion, that the attitudes of the South African Government and its leaders, as disclosed in recent statements concerning the role of the United Nations, is also a matter of concern to us.”

The director of my Division asked that I should delete this sentence. The draft then had to go through the head of the department, Kisselev, to the Secretary-General. When I told Kisselev about the instruction of the director, he ignored it and retained the sentence. U Thant made one revision to the draft - to say that the South African attitudes were a matter of “serious” concern.

I prepared a “scenario” for the opening meeting – election of officers, procedural decisions, etc., and it went off smoothly.

After that meeting, the director told me that he would no more supervise my work and that I should deal directly with the head of the department.

### ***First Meeting of the Officers of the Special Committee***

A day or two later, we had a meeting of the officers of the Committee.

I was rather apprehensive. The Chairman, Diallo Telli of Guinea, was French-speaking and I knew no French. This was a few months after the Chinese attack on India and the President Sekou Toure of Guinea was rather pro-Chinese.

We had to get an interpreter for the meeting and produce a few papers in French. Hubert Noel was kind enough to agree to interpret at later confidential meetings.

Diallo Telli suggested that we obtain a paper on the terms of reference of the Committee – a legal interpretation based on the text of the resolution and the statements of sponsors. This was a normal practice.

I had already obtained a memorandum from the Office of Legal Affairs on the terms of reference, especially on a few questions I asked. They were as usual conservative. They did not think, for instance, that the Committee could hear petitioners. So I suggested to Diallo Telli not to ask me for a paper on the terms of reference and the officers agreed.

The officers decided to recommend to the Committee that the Chairman write a letter to the South African Government, through the Secretary-General, for its cooperation, and a letter to all member states for information on action they took or intended to take in the light of General Assembly resolution 1761 (XVII) which requested them to apply various sanctions against South Africa.

I then briefed the officers about the situation in South Africa – the escalation of repression, mass arrests and detentions, plans for Bantustans etc. The Security Council had not discussed the situation in South Africa since 1960 (after the Sharpeville massacre) and I suggested the Committee should call for renewed discussion by the Security Council as the highest organ of the United Nations concerned with threats to the peace. The Committee might submit an interim report to stress the gravity of situation and the urgent need for action. That seemed to me the best way to get attention to the problem.

My suggestions were accepted by the officers and endorsed by the Committee at the next meeting.

After the meeting of the officers, Diallo Telli told my deputy, Hubert Noel, that he was impressed with my statement and that I must be a high official of the United Nations. I saw him the next day and told him that I was not a high official. I would give my best to the Committee but he should use his status and prestige to protect me and get action in the Secretariat and the General Assembly. He understood and there was never any breach of confidence.

### ***Request by Special Committee for my Advice***

At the same meeting of the officers, Diallo Telli said: “The committee is composed of small delegations and we have many committees to follow. We do not have time to study developments in South Africa. We would like you to follow the situation and make suggestions for action. We will then decide on your suggestions.”

From then on, almost all suggestions for action came from me. They may be approved or disapproved by the Chairman or officers or the full Committee; they were, in fact, almost always approved, occasionally with minor revisions.

I undertook not only the research but all the preliminary consultations with delegates, as well as liberation movements, anti-apartheid movements and others. (If my personal correspondence became known, I might have faced disciplinary action in the Secretariat. I risked my job many times.)

I wrote the extensive reports of the Committee, as well their conclusions and recommendations; many documents in the name of the Rapporteur on the situation in South Africa and international action; proposals by officers to the full

Committee; speeches of the Chairman and Rapporteur and sometimes of other members; and most resolutions of the General Assembly.

There has never been such servicing of a political committee by the Secretariat. That was only possible because of the Western boycott, and the confidence that developed between me and the members of the Committee, especially the Chairman and the Rapporteur.

### ***First Interim Report of the Special Committee***

I rushed preparation of the draft interim report of the Special Committee (to the General Assembly and the Security Council) focusing on the massive repression and the threat to the peace, and calling for action by the Security Council. It was approved by the full Committee on 6 May 1963, with hardly any amendments. We then sent the report to the editors for publication as an official document in different languages.

Almost immediately after the adoption of the report, and before the official document came out, Diallo Telli and several African ambassadors left for Addis Ababa to attend the preparatory meetings of the Summit Conference of Independent African States.

African States were sharply divided from 1960 and this was the first meeting attended by all. It set up the African Liberation Committee in Dar es Salaam and the Organization of African Unity (OAU).<sup>11</sup>

### ***Endorsement of the Report by the Summit Conference of African States***

Diallo Telli asked me to send the interim report of the Special Committee to Addis Ababa by pouch or through other African ambassadors leaving later for Addis. But despite our best efforts, the document did not reach Addis before the Political Committee concluded discussion on South Africa.

Diallo Telli was elected Chairman of the Political Committee. In the resolution on South Africa, prepared by the Political Committee and endorsed by the heads of State, the Conference decided “to support the recommendations presented to the Security Council and the General Assembly by the Special Committee.” It agreed to despatch a delegation of Foreign Ministers “to inform the Security Council of the explosive situation existing in South Africa.” It designated foreign ministers of four countries - Liberia, Tunisia, Madagascar and Sierra Leone – to represent the whole of Africa before the Security Council. The four were chosen because they were “moderate” and were expected to have some influence on France, Britain and the United States – the three veto-wielding Western Powers.

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<sup>11</sup> The African Liberation Committee was established before the OAU which came into existence after the ratification of its Charter later in the year.

The summit ended on 25 May which was observed until the 1990s as “Africa Liberation Day.”

Diallo Telli became interested in the post of Administrative Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, set up by the Conference, and went on a visit to several African countries to secure support. He did not return to New York until the last week of June 1963.

### ***Forged Letter in the Name of Chief Luthuli***

In March, I had met George Houser, Executive Director of the American Committee on Africa. I had attended some ACOA meetings and knew him. We discussed how to get attention to the Special Committee, as it was generally regarded in the United Nations as useless.

I asked George whether he could get a message from Chief Luthuli to the Committee. We also talked about a possible appearance of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., before the Committee. Chief Luthuli and Dr. King had issued a joint appeal for sanctions against South Africa on Human Rights Day (December 10, 1962); it was sponsored by ACOA.

About the end of April, one evening I received a letter, in the name of Chief Luthuli, addressed to the Secretary-General. I thought this came out of my suggestion to George Houser. I rushed copies to the Secretary-General and to Diallo Telli without reading it carefully. I was most embarrassed to find that the letter – opposing sanctions, attacking Arab States etc. – was clearly a forgery.<sup>12</sup>

I gave a copy to Robert Resha in July. Sometime later, Oliver Tambo conveyed to me a message from Chief Luthuli repudiating the letter and expressing high appreciation for the Special Committee.

### ***Request by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., for a Hearing***

George Houser did contact Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and the Special Committee received a letter from him requesting a hearing. The Committee agreed but,

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<sup>12</sup> Please see my reminiscences about Chief Luthuli for details.

A forged telegram, addressed to the Secretary-General, arrived in February. It was sent from Livingston in the name of Tennyson Makiwane, and read: “NORTHERN RHODESIA REFUSES TO ASSIST ANY MORE REFUGEES FROM SOUTH AFRICA CONSIDER THIS A TRAITOROUS ACT IN THE LIBERATION OF AFRICA IMPLORE YOU TO INTERCEDE WITH KAUNDA ON BEHALF OF SUPPRESSED MILLION”. This time I recognized the forgery immediately.

despite several calls to his representative, we could not get a date when he would be available.<sup>13</sup>

### ***Letter from Special Committee Leads to Action by Several States***

As for the letter from the Special Committee to member States asking for information on action they had taken or contemplated:

Such letters used to receive very few replies. We were anxious that we should get a substantial number of replies for the prestige of the Committee. Diallo Telli began meeting fellow ambassadors and telling them: “My friend, we have not yet received a reply to the Special Committee. Please send it soon.” And we publicized the replies received. As a result we received a large number of replies reporting action against South Africa, including action in response to resolution 1761 (XVII). Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia closed their consulates. Several African countries enacted laws imposing sanctions against South Africa. India, which had already imposed a trade embargo in 1946 and closed its High Commission in the 1950s, imposed further restrictions.<sup>14</sup>

The Special Committee’s letter and approaches promoted or hastened action by countries which voted for resolution 1761 (XVII) on sanctions. One result was that South African planes could no longer overfly Africa. They had to take the longer route “around the bulge” to Europe.

### ***Meeting with Adlai Stevenson, United States Representative***

In June 1963, the United States Mission to the United Nations called me several times to enquire when Diallo Telli was returning – as the United States Representative, Adlai Stevenson, wanted to see him to deliver a message.

As Diallo Telli was indefinitely delayed, they suggested a meeting of Ambassador Stevenson with the Acting Chairman of the Special Committee (the Costa Rican Ambassador, Fernando Volio Jimenez).

Stevenson said the United States was seriously concerned about South Africa and would cooperate with the Committee, though it did not support sanctions. It had other ways of dealing with the situation. [I wondered if he was suggesting that the CIA can change the regime in South Africa.]<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The United States Government was concerned that the appearance of Dr. King before the Special Committee would bring the American race problem into the United Nations. President Kennedy conveyed the concern to Dr. King.

<sup>14</sup> Egypt, the only African country with a diplomatic mission in South Africa, had closed its legation on May 30, 1961, when South Africa proclaimed a republic.

<sup>15</sup> See note on the meeting in Annex I

African governments, which had been sharply divided since 1961, came together at the Addis Ababa Conference in May 1963 and decided to form the Organization of African Unity. The Kennedy Administration wanted to respond with a positive gesture – and the boycott of the Committee was over.

### ***Letter to Specialized Agencies of the United Nations***

Around this time, we sent a letter, signed by the Costa Rican Acting Chairman, to the heads of specialized agencies requesting their cooperation.

The legal officer of UNESCO protested to the UN official in charge of relations with specialized agencies. He said that only the UN Secretary-General should address the director-general of UNESCO and it was against protocol for the Chairman of a committee to write to him. [I did not know the protocol and learnt later that the Chairman of a Committee writing to UNESCO was not improper.] The UN official, British, spoke to my British director who called me for an explanation. [This was one way the bureaucracy operated, bypassing the Russian head of my department.] I said I did not know the protocol and would speak to the Costa Rican ambassador.

At the next session of the General Assembly, we inserted in the resolution on apartheid a paragraph inviting “the specialized agencies and all Member States to give to the Special Committee their assistance and co-operation in the fulfilment of its mandate.” [Resolution 1978A (XVIII) of 16 December 1963.] That was the end of that problem.

### ***Visit of Patrick Duncan***

Patrick Duncan came to New York and appeared before the Special Committee on 8 July. He was then a PAC representative, stationed in London before going to Algiers. He told me that he had been assured in Washington – by Robert Kennedy - that the United States would exert pressure on South Africa after the International Court delivered its judgment on the South West Africa case (Ethiopia and Liberia vs. South Africa). In his statement before the Special Committee, he did not condemn the main trading partners of South Africa but criticized Czechoslovakia for trade with South Africa. That was quite unbalanced and did not create a good impression. But we developed a friendship and began to correspond.

### ***Visit of ANC delegation***

A delegation of the ANC came to New York soon after and appeared before the Special Committee on 10 July. The delegation was composed of Duma Nokwe, Tennyson Makiwane and Robert Resha. Makiwane spoke for the delegation since he was the only one not banned in South Africa and could be reported by the South African press.

The United States Government gave a restricted visa to Duma Nokwe, restricting him to an area near the United Nations Headquarters. I did not know about this until much later.

Robert Resha, who was then in charge of Western Europe and the United States, stayed on for some time and we became good friends.

### ***Hearing of Miriam Makeba***

Somewhat before these hearings, in my anxiety to get publicity for the Committee, I thought of a hearing with Miriam Makeba. I contacted her through a colleague who lived in the same building with her. But her agent advised her against an appearance. I mentioned this to Robert Resha and he was able to persuade her to appear. He may have helped her with a short speech. She appeared on 16 July 1963. The blurb on her next record mentioned that she had appeared at the United Nations. Her appearance was not harmful to her professionally, as the agent had feared.

She appeared again before the Special Committee in March 1964.

### ***Second Interim Report of the Special Committee, July 1963***

As I said earlier, Diallo Telli returned to New York towards the end of June 1963. He told me a few days later that he was holding a press conference at the Overseas Press Club and that it would be on TV. I suspected he spent money to engage a public relations firm in his campaign for the post of Secretary-General of OAU. But there was no coverage on TV.

About that time, I heard from a friend in the press that the United States intended to announce an arms embargo against South Africa. I prepared a second interim report as an urgent matter, focusing on the military build-up in South Africa. The report had three annexes: (a) a note on developments since 6 May; (b) a note on expansion of military and police forces in South Africa and supply of arms and ammunition to South Africa; and (c) a note on repressive legislation.

The second interim report was approved by the Special Committee on 16 July.

Reports of the Committee were generally discussed and approved in closed meetings.<sup>16</sup> To get publicity to this report, it was decided to hold a press conference on 18 July to “release” the report.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> If any delegate had difficulties with any passage, the Chairman would suggest that the reservation be recorded in the summary record of the meeting and the report would be approved unanimously. As the summary record was restricted, the Committee gave the impression of unanimity.

It so happened that President Julius Nyerere of Tanganyika was at the United Nations that day and was due to meet the press in another conference room in the same area. He was delayed and so we had a room full of correspondents.

That morning's *New York Times* had carried the transcript of a press conference by President John F. Kennedy on the previous day in Washington. He had implied that South Africa's racial policy was a "threat to the peace." I inserted in Diallo Telli's opening statement high praise for what Kennedy said.<sup>18</sup>

Telli's press conference would have received hardly any attention in the Western media but for the fact that the US State Department began contacting delegations at the United Nations to tell them that Kennedy did not mean a threat to the peace under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.<sup>19</sup> *New York Times* carried a story on that on 20 July and, of course, mentioned Diallo Telli's statement.

On 19 July, Diallo Telli met President Kennedy in Washington, to deliver a message from the President of Guinea, Sekou Toure, as his special envoy. Kennedy told him that he did not mean a threat to the peace under Chapter VII of the Charter – and that made a front-page story in the *New York Times*.

Diallo Telli got plenty of publicity and he became convinced that I was good at public relations!

I must say that I developed good relations with several correspondents at the United Nations – e.g. representatives of Reuters, Associated Press, New York Times, Press Trust of India, Boston Globe etc. When delegates approached them for personal publicity, they would rarely get it. But when I told them that a report would help people being persecuted in South Africa, they were always sympathetic and helpful. [Many stories were sent from the UN but unfortunately, the head offices discarded many of the reports or beamed them only to Africa.]

### ***Meeting of the Security Council, August 1963***

On 11 July 1963, 32 African States requested an early meeting of the Security Council to consider the "explosive situation" in South Africa.

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<sup>17</sup> Normally the report would be transmitted by the Chairman to the Secretary-General and published as an official document after some delay for editing and reproduction.

<sup>18</sup> Diallo Telli said: "...the Special Committee notes with great satisfaction the important statement by the President of the United States of America, on 17 July, that the racial policy of South Africa, firstly, is inimical to the future of South Africa, secondly, is repugnant to the United States, and thirdly, constitutes a threat to the peace."

<sup>19</sup> The Western Powers were strongly opposed to any determination of a threat to the peace as that would open the way to sanctions.



Diallo Telli planned to appear before the Security Council and present the Committee's report. That was normal practice. But President Nyerere told him that the four Foreign Ministers felt that they alone were authorized to represent the whole of Africa and that he should not appear.

The four Foreign Ministers and the two African members of the Security Council (Ghana and Morocco) were involved in the negotiations on a resolution. Diallo Telli could only get information on the negotiations from the Indian ambassador who was a member of the Security Council.

The resolution of the Security Council on 7 August, which appealed for a voluntary arms embargo, referred to the Special Committee in a positive way. It said:

*"Noting with appreciation the two interim reports of the Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of South Africa contained in documents S/5310 of 9 May and S/5353 of 17 July 1963."*

We now had to work on the annual report of the Special Committee to the General Assembly and the Security Council.

### ***First Report to the Special Committee, September 1963***

I do not know how I produced a long and comprehensive report on apartheid and the developments in the previous year, and a series of conclusions and recommendations – in less than a month with little help. [Patricia Tsien drafted one chapter on education. Gil Evans was helpful. But almost all the report was drafted by me.]

It was a rather unusual report for a UN Committee – readable, unequivocal and almost like a book of an anti-apartheid group or writer. We even produced an index – but it was deleted in the printed edition of the report as it would set a precedent which others cannot follow. The report was approved by the Special Committee on 13 September.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> The officers of the Special Committee highly appreciated our services and inserted in the report:

“The Special Committee wishes to express its appreciation to all the members of the Secretariat assigned to the Committee who discharged their duties with remarkable efficiency and devotion. It wishes to note with pleasure the outstanding and able services rendered by the Principal Secretary, Mr. Enuga S. Reddy, which facilitated, to a large measure, the fulfilment of the Committee's task.”

A summary of the report was later published as a pamphlet with a photograph of Diallo Telli and that too was without precedent.

In my draft for recommendations, there was one calling for an oil embargo against South Africa. As the Costa Rican Vice-Chairman had hesitations about this, it was changed to read that an oil embargo *be considered*.<sup>21</sup>

Another recommendation was to appeal to governments to contribute to assistance for the families of political prisoners as they were facing serious hardship. I had read in the British press a short item that Canon Collins, head of the Defence and Aid Fund for South Africa, was concerned that detentions and trials in South Africa had increased so greatly that public contributions were not adequate to meet the needs. I had hardly expected this unprecedented recommendation to be approved. At the meeting of the officers, Diallo Telli turned to the Vice-Chairman who suggested adding the words “for humanitarian reasons.” The officers approved the recommendation with that amendment and subsequently the whole report was approved by the full Committee.

Oliver Tambo, who came to New York at the end of September or early October, had reservations about this recommendation. He felt that it would divert attention from any proposal for sanctions against South Africa. Major Western Powers may contribute some funds for assistance and claim that they had taken effective action against apartheid. He agreed only after several discussions I had with him and a meeting with Diallo Telli in December. I felt that assistance was politically important. If any prisoners broke down because their families were in distress, that would be bad for the morale of the movement. I assured Oliver that we would see to it that donations for humanitarian assistance do not protect the major Western Powers from condemnation for their collaboration with South Africa. I told him that I did not expect any contributions from governments as a direct result of a United Nations resolution. But Canon Collins might find Foundations more receptive when he approached them for funds.

Assistance to political prisoners and their families became one of the most important actions of the United Nations on South Africa. Oliver Tambo had no hesitation in supporting it after returning to London and speaking to Canon Collins and others.

### ***General Assembly condemnation of Rivonia Trial***

I was somewhat concerned that some delegations may argue that the General Assembly should not consider the situation in South Africa since the Security Council was dealing with it.<sup>22</sup> But no delegation raised the problem.

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<sup>21</sup> I read in the South African press soon after the publication of the report that some South African oil tankers were diverted from Iran. Their intelligence was apparently very poor then; it improved later.

I heard in September from Mary Benson, then in London, that the leaders of the ANC, arrested in Rivonia on 11 July, would soon be charged. I suggested to Diallo Telli that when they were charged, we should propose an emergency discussion and resolution.

On October 9, 1963, at breakfast, I heard on the radio that Nelson Mandela and others had been charged (in the Rivonia trial). I called Diallo Telli and rushed to the UN.

Diallo Telli managed to get the African Group to meet at 11. I was waiting outside the conference room (the meetings of the group were restricted to members). When the delegates came out after the meeting, Chanderli of Algeria told me that they had decided to approach the Secretary-General immediately and to have an emergency discussion in the Special Political Committee that afternoon. He asked me to draft a resolution. I took a draft out of my pocket and gave it to him.

The Special Political Committee had met on 1 October 1963 to decide on the order of discussion of agenda items. On the proposal of Diallo Telli, it had decided to take up apartheid first. The Committee had received a telegram from Oliver Tambo, then Deputy President of ANC, requesting a hearing; it was granted without objection.

It so happened that the Special Political Committee was meeting on the afternoon of 9 October to begin discussion of apartheid. On the proposal of Diallo Telli, the Committee heard Tambo on the trial of Mandela and others, in view of its seriousness, and agreed to hear him again later for a fuller statement.

On 10 October afternoon, Diallo Telli introduced a resolution based on my draft, with 55 co-sponsors. As a general rule, the Committee does not vote on a resolution until a day after its introduction in order to give time to delegations to study it and consult their governments. The Committee decided in this case to dispense with that and vote immediately in view of the seriousness of the situation since the accused were threatened with death sentences. The resolution, with one revision deleting a reference to the threat to peace, was adopted by 87 votes to 1, with 9 abstentions. The only negative vote was cast by Portugal; South Africa did not participate in the Committee. The countries abstaining were: Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Netherlands, New Zealand, Panama, United Kingdom and the United States of America.

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<sup>22</sup> Article 12, paragraph 1 reads: "While the Security Council is exercising in respect of any dispute or situation the functions assigned to it in the present Charter, the General Assembly shall not make any recommendation with regard to that dispute or situation unless the Security Council so requests."

The Committee's resolution then had to go to the Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly before being adopted as an Assembly resolution. The Committee decided to report to the General Assembly the next morning in view of the urgency of the matter.

It so happened that Secretary-General U Thant was giving a dinner to the heads of delegations that evening. I was invited to the dinner. Diallo Telli and I went around to all the delegations which had abstained, requesting them to vote in favour.

The matter went before the Plenary on 11 October. A roll call vote was requested and the States which had abstained announced, one by one, vote in favour to the cheers of delegates. The resolution was adopted by 106 votes to 1, with only South Africa opposed. The delegation of Portugal left the Assembly Hall to avoid voting.<sup>23</sup>

This was during the Kennedy Administration. When the matter was brought up in the Special Political Committee, the United States asked Diallo Telli if he knew that the accused included Communists. I believe the United States never defended a Communist after the cold war started. I had already informed Diallo Telli that so far as I knew there were two Communists among the accused. And Diallo Telli told the United States that he was aware that there were Communists but that did not make any difference to the African position.

It was, therefore, specially significant that the United States voted for the resolution.

Robert Resha told me later that when Mandela appeared before the Court, Advocate Bram Fischer informed him about the General Assembly resolution and that Mandela was greatly moved. That gave me great satisfaction.

### ***Reception in honour of Oliver Tambo, Bishop Reeves and Miriam Makeba***

As I mentioned earlier, Oliver Tambo came to New York to follow the discussion of the South African problem in the General Assembly.

Bishop Ambrose Reeves also came to New York to appear as a petitioner before the Special Political Committee on 17 October. I had met him at an airport hotel in New York in September as he was visiting the United States and worked out the details.

I told a meeting of the officers of the Special Committee that I would like to arrange a reception for Tambo and Reeves, and Miriam Makeba who had

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<sup>23</sup> Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Panama and the United States changed their votes and voted in favour. Portugal, Spain, Honduras and Paraguay were absent.

appeared in July before the Special Committee. I would bear the costs and make all arrangements, but would like to have the reception in the name of the Chairman so that ambassadors would attend. They decided that the reception would be in the name of the three officers and shared the cost of printing the invitation.

[Robert Resha had told me that Oliver Tambo had asked to see Dag Hammarskjöld, the UN Secretary-General when he went to London in mid-May 1960 to meet the South African Foreign Minister to make arrangements for his visit to South Africa.<sup>24</sup> He got an appointment with Dr. Heinz Wieschoff, the director who accompanied the Secretary-General. Wieschoff warned Tambo that he should not tell the press about the meeting and that he would deny that he met Tambo. I wanted to show that we treated the leader of the liberation movement with respect. It is perhaps ironic that I got into trouble in 1984 for arranging a meeting of a UDF delegation – Murphy Morobe and Zac Yacoub - with the Secretary-General when six South African leaders took refuge in the British Consulate in Durban. The British Foreign Secretary refused to meet the delegation and I felt that a meeting with the Secretary-General would be a source of encouragement to the opponents of apartheid. I also helped the delegation to meet several Foreign Ministers then attending the General Assembly. The spokesman of the Secretary-General told the press that it was an accidental meeting and that was carried by the South African media to discredit the delegation which had informed the press about the meeting. I told Reuters how the meeting was arranged and what really happened. Shortly after, the Secretary-General decided not to extend my contract and replaced me with a former ambassador of Pakistan.]

I had found that I could get a location for the party on the third floor of the General Assembly building (“press bar”) at little cost and obtained tax free liquor with the authorization of the head of the department – so that the cost to me was moderate.

I was pleasantly surprised that many ambassadors came to this very modest reception, including the British and American ambassadors.<sup>25</sup> The Secretary-General, U Thant, came with Ralph Bunche and others.

It so happened that this reception was on the day before Bishop Reeves was to speak before the Special Political Committee. The British ambassador spoke to Bishop Reeves and requested him not to be too harsh on the British Government when he spoke as petitioner. Bishop Reeves told me that he could not meet even senior officials in Britain, and that he was inclined to be harsher! (He was not.)

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<sup>24</sup> Eric Louw, the Foreign Minister, was representing South Africa at the Commonwealth Summit, as Prime Minister Verwoerd was recovering from an assassination attempt.

<sup>25</sup> The American ambassador was Francis T. P. Plimpton. The British ambassador was Sir Patrick Dean.

A reception in honour of a leader of a liberation movement at the UN Headquarters was unprecedented. I arranged receptions at the United Nations many times in honour of Oliver Tambo, as well as other leaders of liberation movements (e.g. Amilcar Cabral, Marcelino dos Santos) and leaders of anti-apartheid movements and other persons invited by the Special Committee. No one followed the precedent for many years and even then very rarely.

### ***The “Nordic Initiative”***

One of the main concerns of Oliver Tambo at the UN General Assembly session in 1963 was a “Nordic initiative”, elaborated by Per Haekkerup, the Foreign Minister of Denmark, in the General Assembly in September 1963. Haekkerup said that while Denmark supported pressure on South Africa, there must also be a carrot to reassure the whites. And the United Nations should plan peacekeeping to avert conflict during a transition.<sup>26</sup>

Oliver Tambo was very much concerned that attention was being diverted from the oppression of Africans to the fears of the whites and the liberation movement was being pressed to make concessions. “Even after a conflict”, he told me, “we need to go a tent and agree on an armistice. When we sit down with the white rulers who are in power, we can make concessions on the period of transition etc., but we cannot be expected to make concessions in talks with the Nordic countries or the UN.” He always foresaw a negotiated settlement.

On 4 December 1963, the Security Council adopted a resolution in which it requested the Secretary-General “to establish under his direction and reporting to him a small group of recognized experts to examine methods of resolving the present situation in South Africa through full, peaceful and orderly application of human rights and fundamental freedoms to all inhabitants of the territory as a whole, regardless of race, colour or creed, and to consider what part the United Nations might play in the achievement of that end.”

Oliver Tambo left for London with apprehensions, as reflected in a note by him to the ANC before this Security Council resolution, which was published in *South Africa Freedom News* in January 1964.<sup>27</sup>

### ***The Expert Group on South Africa (EGSA)***

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<sup>26</sup> UN peacekeeping was at that time rather unpopular in Africa as it did not prevent the assassination of Patrice Lumumba.

<sup>27</sup> Tambo wrote: “The idea of a body of experts is born of the feeling that the white man's fears should be considered. But the issue before the United Nations is not what is being done to the white man, but what the white man is doing to the African. The only complaint before the United Nations is that apartheid is an inhuman policy. There is no other problem. It is to this problem that the United Nations should devote its attention. It is only when South Africa's whites are becoming exposed to a possible danger that the United Nations would be justified in addressing itself to their complaints.”

The Secretary-General appointed a Group of Experts with Mrs. Alva Myrdal of Sweden as Chairman. I was offered the post of secretary. I accepted it partly in the hope of reassuring Oliver Tambo. For the next four months I had two full-time jobs as secretary of two very active committees – the Special Committee and the Group of Experts.

The Group elected Mrs. Myrdal as Chairman and Sir Hugh Foot (later Lord Caradon) as Rapporteur. We had adjacent offices and spent much of the day together. Mrs. Myrdal and I got along very well. (She had been Swedish ambassador in India and had developed friendship with Pandit Nehru. She wore Indian raw silk clothes.) She was then, I believe, a member of Parliament and had the rank of ambassador. She had been a senior official of the United Nations in the 1940s and then of the UNESCO when South Africa left the organization because of its declaration and publications against racial discrimination and the “South African Way of Life.”

She was not pressing for any peacekeeping operation or concessions by the liberation movement. In fact, she was uncompromising in opposition to racialism and did not want any thinking on racial lines. She hated to use the terms “white” and “non-white.” [I learnt this from her, though it was impossible to avoid those terms in writing about South Africa.] She was a voracious reader and learnt much about South Africa within days.

I arranged a meeting between the Group and Diallo Telli. It went very well and was followed by a meeting of the Group with the Special Committee on 9 March 1964.

Around that time, the Group consulted Oliver Tambo of ANC who came to New York to appear before the Special Committee, and Nana Mahomo of PAC who was in New York. Later when the Committee visited London, it also met Dr. Yusuf M. Dadoo, representative of the South African Indian Congress.

Sir Hugh Foot had retired from government service – he had been Governor-General of Nigeria - and was then all for a crusade against apartheid. (His son, Paul, was, I heard, a Trotskyite). He was persuaded by Ronald Segal that there should be sanctions against South Africa.

### Refer to resignation of Djerdja

The Group agreed to recommend a national convention, an education programme, etc., but it was difficult to agree on sanctions. The Swedish government had not supported sanctions and Mrs. Myrdal felt she could not support a call for sanctions. On the other hand, Sidi Baba (Morocco), an African member, could not afford to sign a report without a call for sanctions.

I tried several formulations in a search for one which all could accept and we had to adjourn without agreement. The next day, Mrs. Myrdal told me that she could not sleep the previous night but came to a decision. The Group agreed that day on the formulation that if the South African Government remained intransigent “the Security Council, in our view, would be left with no effective peaceful means for assisting to resolve the situation, except to apply economic sanctions. Consequently, we recommend that the Security Council should then take a decision to apply economic sanctions...” The Group recommended that the Council undertake an urgent examination of the logistics of sanctions by experts in the economic and strategic field, particularly in international trade and transport.”

Soon after we retyped the report and dispatched it to the Secretary-General in New York, a delegation of the Special Committee arrived in London to attend the International Conference on Sanctions against South Africa, and to hold hearings. We had no rest.

I offered to show the report of the Group confidentially to Oliver Tambo. He was also very busy because of the sanctions conference. He came to my room at Russell Hotel with Robert Resha at 5 a.m., looked carefully at the conclusions and was relieved and satisfied.

### ***Mission to London and Geneva in February 1964***

I went to London and Geneva earlier on an official mission in February 1964.

I informed Oliver Tambo about my trip. He wrote to me that people in London were excited about the UN resolution on assistance to families of prisoners and that I should meet them.

I was in London on 9-10 February. I stayed at Gloucester Hotel which was near New Africa House, owned by Ghana, where the ANC was provided an office.

Oliver Tambo arranged a reception for me at his modest residence at North End, mainly with volunteers of the anti-apartheid movement and a few ANC people.

On his instructions, Robert Resha took me to Canon L. John Collins (head of Defence and Aid Fund for South Africa) and to Mrs. Clara Urquhart of Amnesty International. I believe Clara was a South African. I heard that she was the leader of the effort to get a Nobel Peace Prize to Chief Luthuli.

Resha also took me to Dr. Yusuf Dadoo, who was living in a rather miserable basement apartment in St. John Street (?). We did not talk very much then. He was watching a cricket match on TV and we drank Scotch.



In Geneva, my mission was to consult on assistance to the families of political prisoners and refugees. I met the head of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). I felt he had little sympathy for the liberation movement and the prisoners. He said that ICRC did not need any funds for its activities concerning prisoners in South Africa.

Then I met the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a Swiss, who was rather conservative. He told me that UNHCR was providing and would continue to provide legal protection to South African refugees. The Deputy High Commissioner, Prince Sadruddin Khan, was much more sympathetic. (He had a feeling for Africa as there were many Ismailis in Africa.)

As my consultations with ICRC and UNHCR were not fruitful, I had to think of new arrangements for assistance to political prisoners and their families, and to refugees.

I believe that it was on this mission that I first met Sean MacBride, the Secretary-General of the International Commission of Jurists and Chairman of Amnesty International. Geneva was a small town and there were no traffic jams. One could go from end of Geneva to another in a taxi in less than ten minutes at a cost of less than \$5. The air was so fresh after New York that I used to go out of the hotel and take deep breath.

I had the impression that the ICJ was a Western organization involved in the cold war. But MacBride had changed that image.

During the conversation, I made a reference to the Irish freedom movement. His eyes suddenly brightened. He told me that his father had fought with the Boers in the Anglo-Boer War and he had therefore access to people in the South African government. He had used that for good purpose.

We have been very close friends since then.

[Sometime later Peter Benenson, Secretary-General of Amnesty International,<sup>28</sup> came to see me at my hotel in Geneva. He tried to persuade me that Amnesty would be the best channel for UN assistance to South Africans. It was an international body which had consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council. He had good relations with Canon Collins and could work with him.

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<sup>28</sup> Amnesty International was founded by Peter Benenson in 1961. Sean MacBride was its Chairman.

I passed through London on the way back. Canon Collins told me that he would not like funds channeled through Amnesty. Joe Matthews of ANC said that the ANC preferred the Defence and Aid Fund.<sup>29]</sup>

***Special Committee Hearings in March and its Report on Trials and Death Sentences in South Africa***

In March 1964, the Special Committee held hearings in New York. The focus was on repression in South Africa and death sentences.

The Committee heard Miriam Makeba again on 11 March. I prepared a speech for her, and quoted a song on sanctions which Vanessa Redgrave composed and sang at an anti-apartheid rally in London. A song in a speech at the United Nations would have been unprecedented and would have attracted attention. We wondered what the interpreters would do when Miriam sang the song. But none of us knew the tune and she merely read it.

Oliver Tambo and Tennyson Makiwane came to New York and appeared before the Committee on 12 March. (The Group of Experts also met them).

A meeting was scheduled to hear Nana Mahomo of PAC. The members of the Committee were waiting for the meeting to begin. Nana telephoned me to say that he could not come to the meeting because of very serious developments in South Africa; they had learned that South Africa was developing biological weapons and working on a nuclear weapon. This was a spurious excuse; the press had reported that already around November 1962.

Nana Mahomo was working with Irving Brown, head of the African-American Labor Centre set up by AFL-CIO, as his protégé. They felt that the Special Committee and the anti-apartheid movements were not worthwhile. The task was to reach the centres of power – the Western establishments.<sup>30</sup>

On 23 March 1964, the Special Committee approved an interim report to the General Assembly and the Security Council recommending that the Security Council demand that South Africa halt current trials and refrain from executing persons sentenced to death.

It also approved an appeal to Heads of State, organizations and eminent personalities to exert all their influence to induce the South African Government to refrain from executing political leaders sentenced to death and to spare the lives of others threatened with death penalty in current trials.

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<sup>29</sup> Amnesty was not assisting prisoners who had engaged in violence. It also had a policy that one-third of the people assisted by it should be from the West, one-third from the Communist –ruled countries and one-third from other countries; it thereby earned the wrath of the Soviet Union.

<sup>30</sup> Mr. Mahomo, however, appeared before the UN Group of Experts on South Africa. [Refer to AFL-CIO resolution.](#)

There were many replies, including a message on behalf of the Pope.

Around the end of April 1964, Mary Benson sent me the full text of the statement from the dock by Nelson Mandela on 20 April. We published it as a Special Committee document in its four official languages. It has been reprinted by the UN several times for wide distribution. It was also published by the ANC and others and had a great influence in promoting the anti-apartheid movement.

***International Conference on Sanctions against South Africa, and the Hearings of the Special Committee delegation in London***

The International Conference on Sanctions against South Africa, organized by the British Anti-Apartheid Movement (with Ronald Segal as Convenor) was held at Friends House on Euston Street, London from 14 to 17 April 1964.

A 7-member delegation of the Special Committee arrived on 13th at 2.00 a.m. to attend the Conference. It included Diallo Telli, Chairman of the Special Committee, Ram Malhotra of Nepal, Rapporteur, Emeka Anyaoku of Nigeria etc.

I received a message that they would like to hold hearings in London.

The UN Information Centre in London found a meeting room at Church House for the hearings. It contacted interpretation service in London and Paris but no interpreter was available. (Diallo Telli, the Chairman, needed a French interpreter).

Robert Resha came to my hotel in the evening and I asked for his help. He made several phone calls and found an interpreter who was coming to London for another conference and was available on 13 and 18 April when the Special Committee would be holding hearings. We then made a list of organisations and individuals who should be heard and he called them. Resha did not have an address list. He relied on his memory for all the telephone numbers.

[The Pac was not in the list. I saw Elias Ntloedibe at the Sanctions Conference and told him about the hearings, but no request was received from the PAC.]

I sent a telex to New York about the arrangements and the delegation was informed before it arrived in London.

I met with the delegation on arrival. There was a question about hearing Ms. Ruth First, a Communist. She had arrived recently in London after detention and solitary confinement in South Africa for 117 days. I said her name was proposed by Robert Resha and that satisfied the Chairman.

The hearings were impressive. The delegation heard on 13 April:

Mrs. Barbara Castle, M.P. Honorary President of the AAM, accompanied by Abdul S. Minty, honorary secretary; The Reverend Canon L. John Collins, Chairman, Defence and Aid Fund, Christian Action, London; Barney Desai, President, Coloured People's Congress of South Africa; and Ms. Ruth First.

It heard on 18 April:

The Reverend Canon J. Joost de Blank, former Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town; A. Manchanda, accompanied by Rashid Yousuf and Mohamed Tickly, representing the Committee of Afro-Asian Caribbean Organizations, London; Thabo Mbeki, South African student and son of Govan Mbeki, an accused in the Rivonia trial; Dr. Yusuf M. Dadoo, representing the South African Indian Congress; Leon Levy, National President and official representative abroad of the South African Congress of Trade Unions.

It received written memoranda from the organisations and published them as official documents of the Special Committee.

The delegation was not entitled to summary records of its meeting. It did not even have an information officer, so that there was little publicity. We had, however, arranged to tape the proceedings. I worked day and night after return to New York to produce a verbatim record of the hearings. (I believe no secretary of a UN Committee had ever done this). It was published as document A/AC.115/L.65.

I had to rush back to New York after the hearings as the Expert Group report was to be released on the 20th and I had to help get it maximum publicity.

### ***Security Council Resolutions in June 1964***

On May 22, 1964, the Special Committee approved a second interim report calling for discussion of the situation by the Security Council. The report of its delegation to the Sanctions Conference in London and the report of its hearings in London were attached.

The Security Council met early in June, at the request of African States, as the judgment on the Rivonia trial was expected within days.

The two African members (Morocco and Ivory Coast) introduced a draft resolution, prepared by me, to urge the South African Government: (a) to renounce the execution of the persons sentenced to death for acts resulting from their opposition to the policy of apartheid; (b) to end forthwith the trial in

progress, instituted within the framework of the arbitrary laws of apartheid,<sup>31</sup> and (c) to grant an amnesty to all persons already imprisoned, interned or subjected to other restrictions for having opposed the policy of apartheid, and particularly, to the defendants in the Rivonia trial. It was adopted on 9 June by a disappointing vote: 7 in favour and 4 abstentions. The three major Western Powers (France, United Kingdom and the United States) and Brazil argued that it was not appropriate as the matter was *sub judice*.

The Council continued to consider other aspects of the situation, including the report of the Group of Experts.

We received news of life sentences in the Rivonia trial early in the morning on 12 June. Robert Resha came to my office with a statement by Chief Luthuli. He said he had received the statement and had been authorized to revise it in the light of the sentence by the judge. He corrected the first sentence to read:<sup>32</sup>

“Sentences of life imprisonment have been pronounced on Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, Ahmed Kathrada, Govan Mbeki, Dennis Goldberg, Raymond Mhlaba, Elias Motsoaledi and Andrew Mlangeni in the ‘Rivonia trial’ in Pretoria.”

The revised text was typed in my office. We had to arrange to introduce the statement into the records of the Security Council. The two African members of the Council – Ivory Coast and Morocco – were French-speaking. Sidi Baba of Morocco who had been a member of the Group of Experts and knew some English, agreed to read it into the record of the Council. The statement was thus released first at the United Nations in New York.

The main recommendation of the Group of Experts was that South Africa should be asked to convene a national convention of the representatives of all the people, and that the Council should arrange for an expert study of the logistics of sanctions, as the United Nations had no choice but to apply economic sanctions if South Africa did not respond positively.

The Security Council, in its resolution of 18 June 1964, ignored the recommendation for a national convention and endorsed only a general statement of the Group that “all the people of South Africa should be brought into consultation and should thus be enabled to decide the future of their country at the national level.” It set up a Committee of Experts, nominated by all the members of the Council, to undertake a technical and practical study as to the feasibility, effectiveness, and implications of measures which could be taken by the Security Council under the United Nations Charter.

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<sup>31</sup> The Rivonia trial

<sup>32</sup> There had been an expectation of death sentences to some of the accused.

It was clear that there would be no agreement in this committee, consisting of diplomats speaking for their governments rather than independent experts. The Committee was sharply divided and approved a report with majority and minority views at the end of February 1965. That report was never considered by the Security Council.

The resolution of 18 June had a paragraph on death sentences and the Rivonia trial, now that the trial had ended. Paragraph 4 read:

- "4. Urgently appeals to the Government of the Republic of South Africa to:
- "(a) renounce the execution of any persons sentenced to death for their opposition to the policy of apartheid;
  - "(b) grant immediate amnesty to all persons detained or on trial, as well as clemency to all persons sentenced for their opposition to the Government's racial policies ;
  - "(c) abolish the practice of imprisonment without charges, without access to counsel or without the right of prompt trial."

Resolutions for the release of political prisoners had a nearly unanimous vote since 1963.

The resolution also requested the Secretary-General to set up an educational and training programme for South Africans.

### ***Italy and the Aircraft Industry in South Africa***

After the UN Security Council resolutions on the arms embargo against South Africa in 1973, and especially when the British Labour Government imposed an arms embargo, the South African government was anxious to set up an aircraft industry.

It purchased Aermacchi MB 326 M planes from Italy and obtained licences to manufacture them. This plane had Rolls-Royce engines but an Italian company could transfer the licence. Italian immigrants were recruited for the industry and spare parts were obtained from Italy.

The plane was named Impala-I in South Africa. The South African press reported this deal in 1965. The Special Committee then reported to the General Assembly. It also took up the matter repeatedly with the Italian Government. (I found out privately from an Italian diplomat that the Italian government – I believe Saragat - did approve the deal). Italy responded by repeated flat denials. It also complained to the UN secretariat against me because the Centre against Apartheid published a statement by Abdul Minty before the Special Committee which referred to the matter.

Some years later, an improved version of the plane—Impala-II—was produced in South Africa. Press reports indicated that this was also Italian. Again, Italy denied any deal.

Italy informed the Special Committee on 18 September 1974 and 24 March 1977 that it was applying a strict embargo on arms to South Africa since the Security Council adopted resolution 311 in 1972 for a stricter embargo. (Italy, then a member of the Security Council, voted for the resolution). It avoided any reference to the resolutions of the Security Council in 1963 and 1964 calling for an arms embargo.

After the Security Council decided on a binding arms embargo in November 1977, the Special Committee wrote to both Italy and the UK asking them to investigate jointly how South Africa obtained licences to manufacture an Italian plane with British engines. There was no reply.

In 1978, the Italian Ambassador approached Ambassador Harriman, Chairman of the Special Committee. He said Italy did not want to reply to the Committee. But because of good relations with Nigeria, he wanted to inform Ambassador Harriman that Italy sold the first version of the aircraft but not the second.

As the matter was pursued, Italy finally sent a formal letter to the Special Committee on 26 September 1978 giving that information. It claimed it had strictly implemented the embargo since 1972. It disclosed:

“The licence for the production of the South African version of Aermacchi MB 326M (“Impala I”), was ceded *una tantum* by contract between the Italian firm Aermacchi and Atlas Aircraft of South Africa as long ago as 1964. The Impala I was produced under licence by Atlas, entirely in South Africa since the late sixties. Under the clauses of the manufacturing licence, Aermacchi continued to provide Atlas Aircraft with some more advanced components of the MB 326 until 1972. The last export licence related to this contract was issued by the Italian authorities prior to the adoption of Res. 311 (1972), although the operation took place at a later date, and it concerned four airframes of the MB 326K model produced by Aermacchi (and not complete planes, as has been erroneously published)... Following the ban imposed by the Italian authorities in 1972 on export licences for armaments supplies to South Africa, Atlas Aircraft has developed autonomously its own version of the MB 326K, which is known as “Impala II”, and whose design derives only partially from the Italian prototype...

“As for the Rolls-Royce “Viper” engines... the licence was ceded by Piaggio S.p.A. (and not by FIAT, as it was at times erroneously stated) to Atlas Aircraft in 1964 contextually with the cession of the licence for the MB 326. For many years, that engine has been produced entirely in South

Africa; thus the revocation of its licence would have the same irrelevant effects as that of the licence for the MB 326.”

The Special committee expressed appreciation and published the letter as a document. I was told by Mr. Fisher, assistant to Ambassador Harriman, in June or July 1979 that the Italian Ambassador approached the Foreign Ministry in Lagos and wanted to know what action had been taken on that letter. There were reminders from Lagos to the Nigerian mission at the United Nations.

I believe Italy was anxious to get a “good conduct” certificate from the Nigerian Ambassador because it was negotiating sales of aircraft to Nigeria. Looking back, I believe that if Italy did not issue false denials in connection with the licences and supplies from 1964 and announced its imposition of a strict arms embargo in 1972, perhaps the Special Committee would have commended it for its action on the arms embargo and other measures it had taken.

### *My Visit to Cairo and Algiers, June 1964*

The absence of death sentences in the Rivonia trial was a great relief. I was exhausted and went on home leave from July to September. The opening of the next session of the General Assembly had been postponed from the normal date in September to November, following the general elections in the United States.

In July, Diallo Telli was elected Administrative Secretary-General of the OAU. I was not present at the meeting of the Special Committee on 30 July where he bade farewell.

On the way back from home leave, I visited Cairo and Algiers at my own expense.

In Cairo, I stayed at the Semiramis Hotel and met representatives of several liberation movements. The Egyptian Government provided offices and maintenance grants to representatives of all African liberation movements. Some (e.g. ANC) were affiliated to the Afro-Asian People’s Solidarity Organization (AAPSO); some others (e.g. PAC) were not.

The ANC representative was Mzwai Piliso whom I met for the first time. He represented ANC in the Afro-Asian People’s Solidarity Organization.

The PAC representative was Ahmed Gora Ebrahim. I had seen him in the office of Nana Mahomo in Trafalgar Square, London, earlier that year. The PAC was not affiliated to AAPSO.



[The PAC leadership in Basutoland (Potlako Leballo) had become pro-Chinese that year. It expelled Patrick Duncan, its representative in Algiers; he was strongly anti-Communist and had criticized China in a bulletin. It also expelled Nana Mahomo and even asked Egypt to arrest him when he went there for the OAU summit in July.]

Gora, who represented PAC in China for a few months, was transferred to Cairo as head of the office. He was wearing a Mao jacket. We had dinner on the Nile and spent a few hours together.

The UN had recently published a second pamphlet on the Special Committee which included photographs of people who had appeared before the Special Committee delegation in London. Gora objected particularly to the photograph of Mrs. Ruth First and asked: what had she done?

The leader of UDENAMO of Mozambique came to see me. He tried for almost an hour to convince me that Eduardo Mondlane cannot be the leader of the liberation movement and potential head of State because Mozambique could not have a white American as a first lady.

In Algiers, Robert Resha took me to Hotel Aletti, and we met several times. He had very good relations with the Ben Bella government.

I had dinner with Pat Duncan and his family in the villa which the government had given them. It was rather sad as he had been expelled from PAC. (He left for London soon after and passed away in 1967.).

**CHECK MY CORRESPONDENCE WITH PAT DUNCAN**

When Diallo Telli left New York, it was expected that Chanderli of Algeria would become the next chairman of the Special Committee. But he was transferred at the end of August and Algeria did not seek the post. [Achkar Marof of Guinea was interested and was elected in September. That helped his promotion to head of mission.]

Algiers was full of revolutionary spirit and revolutionaries from many countries were there. But it was also Islamic. From my hotel window, I could see women passing by in very thin veils, with latest Paris fashions underneath. I was told that Muslims could not order liquor at the bar; Resha and I could.

### ***Election of Achkar Marof and Inaction in the General Assembly***

I returned to New York and found that nothing had been done in my office about the next annual report of the Committee. I had to start from scratch.

I produced a report including information on all political trials and details of repression. It was the longest report of the Special Committee.

Achkar Marof of Guinea was elected second chairman of the Special Committee on September 24, 1964.

He had been manager of *Ballets Africaines* of Guinea before being appointed deputy in the Guinean mission to the United Nations. He was active on the colonial problem and was elected chairman of the Fourth (Trusteeship and Decolonization) Committee of the General Assembly in 1963. He knew English well.

We became good friends. I wrote many speeches for him. It was a delight to hear him deliver the speeches – in English or French.

Under the leadership of Diallo Telli, the Special Committee gained prestige in the UN and outside. The strategy of the Committee was worked out during Marof's term as Chairman.

The Labour Party came to power in Britain in October or November 1964 and announced an arms embargo. Harold Wilson, the Prime Minister, had addressed an anti-apartheid rally in Trafalgar Square on Sharpeville Day, 1963, and had called for an arms embargo. (Chief Luthuli had appealed for the embargo). After announcing the embargo, which did not affect earlier contracts, the British government was not prepared to take any further action against South Africa.

There was thus a deadlock.

Sir Hugh Foot, now Lord Caradon, was appointed Minister of State and Representative to the United Nations. He came to my office and told me about his limitations. I said that I understood but suggested that he should at least not say that Britain would never take action. He agreed and said: "Never say never."

In 1964, the General Assembly was paralyzed because of a crisis concerning contributions to peacekeeping operations. The Soviet Union refused to contribute to the cost of the operations and it was recognized that a challenge to its voting rights, expected from Albania, could disrupt the United Nations. The Assembly did not discuss the agenda items and avoided a vote.

### ***Appeal for Assistance to Political Prisoners and Their Families***

As I said earlier, I was anxious to find a way to promote assistance to political prisoners and their families.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> In the Special Committee report of September 1963 and the General Assembly resolution of December 16, 1963, I made a mistake of proposing assistance to the "families" of political prisoners through appropriate "international" agencies. Before the vote on the resolution, the Secretary-General told the General Assembly that he would approach the International Committee of the Red Cross and the UNHCR.

I obtained memoranda from the Defence and Aid Fund, Amnesty International, and the Joint Committee on the High Commission Territories (Margaret Legum),<sup>34</sup> about their work to assist victims of apartheid. I also obtained information from the World Council of Churches. The Division of Inter-Church Aid of WCC, headed by Prof. Z.K. Matthews, had collected funds to provide assistance to families of prisoners and refugees.

In October 1964, the Special Committee sent an appeal to governments, through the Secretary-General, to make contributions for assistance through these voluntary organizations. The appeal was drafted in such a way as to recommend especially the Defence and Aid Fund which was greatly favoured by the ANC and was by far the main source of assistance.

I was anxious that there should be response to the appeal – for the prestige of the Special Committee if for nothing else. I sent a message to the Indian Government for a small contribution. Immediately after receipt of the appeal, India announced a contribution of \$5,000 to the Defence and Aid Fund. (Swaran Singh was the Foreign Minister.)

I wrote a personal letter to Mrs. Alva Myrdal of Sweden requesting a contribution.

In January 1965, Sweden informed the United Nations of a grant of \$100,000 to Defence and Aid Fund and \$100,000 to World Council of Churches. **Add information from Sellstrom that Sweden had decided earlier.** [The Defence and Aid Fund had approached Sweden for a contribution. Mrs. Myrdal had met Prof. Z.K. Matthews around February 1964 to discuss the education programme.]

Several substantial contributions, mostly to Defence and Aid Fund, were announced in the next few months.

Earlier, around March 1964, Canon Collins called together several groups from Western Europe and the United States and formed the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa (IDAF), as he was concerned that grants would only be given to international organizations.

The body which was providing most of the assistance was the Defence and Aid Fund, a British organization. The need was not only for assistance to the families of prisoners; legal assistance to the prisoners was a much greater need in terms of cost. I made the mistake as I had little information and no contact with the Defence and Aid Fund in 1963.

<sup>34</sup> This Committee, led by Mrs. Margaret Legum, helped refugees in Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland. It tried to settle refugees permanently in jobs or helped them to obtain education locally if possible – or move them to Zambia where there were greater opportunities. More than 30 percent of its budget in 1964-65 was contributed by the Government of Norway.

The collection of governmental contributions was the first achievement during the term of Achkar Marof as Chairman. Very soon, governmental contributions became the main source of funds for assistance to the political prisoners and their families.

### *Vuyisile Mini*

In 1964, the Special Committee repeatedly denounced death sentences and executions of political prisoners in South Africa, convinced that they would make a peaceful solution difficult. But South Africa went ahead with executions.

In October 1964, Vuyisile Mini and two colleagues – Wilson Khayinga and Zinakile Mkaba – were sentenced to death in March. Their appeals were rejected in October. and they were executed on 6 November 1964.

C.V. Narasimhan, Chef de Cabinet to the Secretary-General, called me and said that U Thant, who felt strongly about death sentences, wanted to make a statement. I told him that I would urge U Thant not to make a statement. The Special Committee was meeting at that time. The Chairman, Achkar Marof, was denouncing the execution and the Committee would issue a communiqué. The statement by the Secretary-General would seem mild in comparison. More important, we may need the good offices of the Secretary-General at a later date and the South African Government should not regard him as hostile.. I believe a statement was made on behalf of the Secretary-General by a spokesman.

I have felt somewhat guilty for a long time that we did not do enough to save the life of Mini, the great patriot, trade unionist, singer and composer. I had returned only a few days before the death sentence from my home leave and was working day and night on the annual report of the Special Committee. I did not know much about Mini and did not receive the freedom songs he had composed.

It is most probable that we would not have been able to save his life whatever we did, because of the situation in South Africa at that time.

In fact, public pressure by the United Nations might have been counter-productive. We tried to avoid public statements when John Harris, the leader of the anti-racist sports movement, was sentenced to death for planting a bomb in the railroad station in Johannesburg which resulted in the death of an old woman, but he was executed. Achkar Marof made a statement after his death, comparing John Harris to John Brown. It was published in *Transition*, a literary journal in Uganda. I cannot recall any other United Nations speeches being published in a literary journal.

I believe it was in 1984 that I happened to see Joe Slovo in London and reminded him of the anniversary of the death of Mini. *African Communist* published an article about him.

In 1985, after my retirement from UN, I attended a reception at the United Nations for Little Steven and his group - Artists United against Apartheid - who had produced the "Sun City" record. After the reception, I happened to meet some of the members of the group, especially Danny Schachter, at lunch in the United Nations cafeteria.

I told them about Mini, the composer and singer of freedom songs, and suggested some recognition to him. They were interested and I took them home and gave them all the information I had.

Soon after, they produced a book about the record - *Sun City* - which had a wide circulation. It was dedicated:

*To the memory of  
VUYISILE MINI  
Trade union activist, musician, and composer of Freedom Songs  
In November 1964, he and his co-defendants went to the gallows in South  
Africa, singing his songs.  
and  
To all those who have died for the freedom of South Africa*

I do not know if South Africa now has suitable memorial for Vuyisile Mini.

### ***Need for Comprehensive Strategy and Action***

Ronald Segal and others were arguing that international sanctions was the only way for the solution of the South African problem. We had obtained a General Assembly resolution in 1965 that “action under Chapter VII of the Charter is essential in order to solve the problem of apartheid and that universally applied economic sanctions are the only means of achieving a peaceful solution.” But we had reached a deadlock on sanctions. Should we be merely writing reports and passing resolutions on sanctions which would not be implemented?

I saw the issue somewhat differently. A liberation movement needs many types of assistance – for instance, sanctions to weaken the enemy, arms and military training, funds for propaganda and political work, fares to attend conferences, maintenance for the activists, assistance to prisoners and their families as well as refugees and political exiles, scholarships etc. We should work to obtain assistance for the whole range of needs.

Most non-aligned countries had little trade with South Africa, but could assist the liberation movements. Quakers could not provide military aid but could provide humanitarian assistance. Governments and non-governmental organizations should be invited to contribute to the maximum in accordance with their policies and preferences.

I believe it was in late 1965 or early 1966 that I spoke to Oliver Tambo about our strategy. I told him that calling for sanctions as the *only* solution – putting all eggs in one basket – was not wise as we had reached a deadlock on sanctions. I favoured a range of actions – some of which can be approved by the General

Assembly where we had a large majority – while effective sanctions need decision by the Security Council where three Western Powers had the veto.

He replied that the ANC had not said that the sanctions was the only solution. Liberation can only be obtained by the liberation struggle. Sanctions to weaken the enemy were the best help to the liberation struggle. Material assistance to the liberation movement to prosecute the struggle was also important.

From then, I used to stress that we need to act on three fronts:

1. Sanctions and boycotts to weaken the enemy
2. Assistance to the liberation movement
3. Publicity to promote sanctions and assistance

Sanctions, I began to stress, would reduce the bloodshed and suffering in the inevitable process of liberation.

That was important. In Algeria, with one million whites, nearly two million oppressed people died in the liberation struggle. In South Africa, with four million whites, the casualties could be enormous unless international sanctions were imposed.

There had been concern for many years that the policies and actions of apartheid South Africa may lead to a “race war.” The letter from Asian-African countries in 1952 proposing the discussion on apartheid defined the item as “the question of race conflict resulting from the policies of apartheid of the government of the Union of South Africa.” Fortunately the policies of the ANC, the nature of the struggle and international action averted a race war.

### ***Some Speeches of Achkar Marof***

Marof felt frustrated and angry that the Western Powers were paying no attention to the Special Committee and his statements. In April 1965, after delivering one of the speeches I prepared, he added invective against the United States and others. That got no attention at all.

Later I prepared a rather lengthy statement for him – on the increasing collaboration by Western Powers with South Africa. It got little attention at the UN. But *Le Monde* carried a report about the speech. And the full text was published in a Christian monthly in France.

Marof was delighted and asked for more. I prepared two more speeches. The members of the Committee complained privately that they were being lectured. But the speeches got attention outside.

Jean Paul Sartre quoted extensively from one of his speeches when he spoke at the launching of the French committee against apartheid, led by Maitre Jean-Jacques de Felice.

I arranged with ACOA to publish a collection of Marof's speeches as a pamphlet.<sup>35</sup>

### ***My speech in Die Burger, 1965***

In 1965, I attended the National Conference on South African Crisis and American Action, organized by the American Committee on Africa and other organizations in Washington from 21 to 23 March. I prepared a speech and gave a copy to Reuters at the United Nations before going to Washington.

A few days later, Matthys Botha, the South African ambassador, came to me in the Delegates' Lounge and showed me that my speech was on the first page of *Die Burger*. That was an achievement in his view. The conclusion of my speech which *Die Burger* reported was:

“A really peaceful solution in South Africa can only come with the agreement of the Afrikaners, and not against their resistance. I would like to hope that by a study of the lessons of their own history and the realities of the present day South Africa, and by the pressure of informed world opinion, they will soon begin to look ahead to the promise of the future instead of harping on the outmoded traditions of the past.

“Let us, therefore, never tire of repeating that we seek no humiliation of the Afrikaner people, that we look forward to a society where the interests of all men and women are respected, that we do not seek to impose any external solution but stand ready to help in the fulfilment of a solution based on the wishes of all the people of South Africa, and that we are determined to do all we can to see to it that this problem is solved without delay.”

### ***My Contacts with South African Officials***

I might, at this stage, refer to my personal relations with South African officials. During the course of my work, I often met with South African diplomats and other officials as well as Africans who were not with the liberation movement. Our struggle was not against the whites or Afrikaners. The meetings were sometimes helpful to me in understanding the situation in South Africa. They might possibly have had a little influence on South African policy.<sup>36</sup> I used to

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<sup>35</sup> See [http://www.anc.org.za/un/marof\\_index.html](http://www.anc.org.za/un/marof_index.html)

<sup>36</sup> It may be that my meetings may have convinced them that we did not view the United Nations scholarship programme, or administer it, as a political programme. The South African Government did not take any action against that programme.

inform the Chairmen of the Special Committee, and often ANC leaders, of my meetings.

U Thant, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, was very much against apartheid but maintained polite relations with South African diplomats and attended South African receptions. (Dr. Ralph Bunche, a senior official in the UN, did not).

In 1963, soon after the Special Committee started functioning, I saw the South African ambassador, Matthys Botha, approaching the Philippine delegate to enquire when the Committee planned to meet next. I happened to see him the next day in the Delegates Lounge and told him that if he wanted such information, he can call me any time. The information was not secret and South Africa was entitled to it as it was still a member of the United Nations.

In 1964, U Thant, acting on a request from the Special Committee, called the South African ambassador to request him to convey an appeal against for an end to political trials and death sentences. I was asked to be present. Mathys Botha started by expressing his appreciation for my cooperation. U Thant was somewhat taken aback, but smiled and said that he was glad. I mentioned this to Diallo Telli, the Guinean Chairman of the Special Committee. He was very surprised and asked which side I was. But he soon understood and continued to have confidence in me.

Around that time, John Barrett, Counsellor in the South African mission, was transferred and he gave a farewell reception at his residence. I was invited and went to the party. I was the only non-white at the reception and many of the South Africans crowded around me. [That was the only South African reception I attended.] The Counsellor later became director of the South African Institute of International Affairs and I met him at the Wits University in 1991.

I mention these to underline two things. First, I wanted to show – I suppose it was the influence of Gandhi – that we hated apartheid but did not hate the Afrikaners and the whites. Second, I was a “civil servant.” While I had strong views on South Africa and what I could do to help the liberation movement and spoke freely to the leaders of the liberation movement, I wanted to be clear that I had no illusion that I was in any way leading the revolution.

Around 1967, the United Nations Secretariat published, at the request of the Special Committee, a report on foreign investment in South Africa, showing the growth and distribution of investment, and the profits. The Special Committee could use it to condemn the Western countries which continued to invest in South Africa, thereby becoming partners in apartheid.

My office received a call from the South African mission requesting fifty copies. Apparently their Foreign Ministry thought the paper was useful to promote



investment in South Africa. I told them that I did not have 50 copies and gave them a smaller number. Some people in my office were surprised that I did not refuse.

At the invitation of the South African mission, especially David Tothill, I had lunch with Dawid De Villiers, the South African counsel in the Namibia case at the International Court of Justice, and met a Parliamentary delegation. [I avoided meeting South African officials or Bantustan leaders in my office].

The United States Department of State had an exchange programme with South Africa and used to call me to find out if I could meet their invitees. I met them whenever I was free.

I also met several liberal whites from South Africa. I remember, in particular, Edgar Brookes, a delightful story-teller; and a director of the South African Institute of Race Relations.

In early October 1975, I received a call from David Tothill that Kaiser Matanzima and two others (a Coloured person and Dr. M.B. Naidoo, an Indian geography professor at University of Durban-Westville) who were on a visit to the United States, especially to make contacts at the United Nations, would like to see me. I did not want to receive them in my office to avoid any publicity that I met the head of a Bantustan. I agreed to have lunch with them in a restaurant outside the UN. During that lunch, I found the date when the South African Government planned to declare Transkei independent. That helped us to arrange to have Oliver Tambo speak at the United Nations and a resolution denouncing the “independence” of the Transkei adopted by the General Assembly on the same day, October 26, 1976.

In the 1970s, on my visits to Geneva, David Tothill, then South African ambassador there, invited me a few times for lunch. I had lunch with him once and he presented me a bottle of South African brandy.

Pik Botha, when he was ambassador at the United Nations, invited me for a dinner. Fortunately, I sent regrets. I found later that the dinner was for some leaders of Bantustans.

In 1982, I received a call from the South African ambassador for lunch with the official in charge of the United Nations desk in the Foreign Ministry. The day before the lunch, I happened to host a lunch for Bishop Tutu and a few African ambassadors. I explained why I accepted the invitation and asked them if I acted right. They all agreed that I had done right.

When I went to South Africa in 1995, the former head of the United Nations desk, Mrs. Annemarie Fernc, called the Indian High Commission several times to invite me for lunch. I was reluctant at first, as I did not remember her name, but agreed when I went to Pretoria. She was then Director, Project Management,

South African Communications Services (Information department). I had a very pleasant lunch with her and David Venter, head of the Services. She thanked me for helping her to meet Johnny Makatini, the ANC representative at the United Nations. I did not remember that I had arranged that.

David Tothill was now in the Foreign Ministry and we met again.

### ***PAC Complaint against the Defence and Aid Fund***

A.B. Ngcobo, then Treasurer of Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), appeared before the Special Committee on 19 April 1965.

In a private meeting with the Chairman of the Special Committee, Achkar Marof, and myself, he complained that the Defence and Aid Fund was discriminating against the PAC and providing little assistance to PAC political prisoners and their families. Marof suggested that I discuss the matter with Canon Collins as I was soon visiting London.

In London, I spoke to Oliver Tambo first. He said the PAC complaint was unfounded. He was firm that the Defence and Fund should assist all political prisoners, irrespective of their political affiliations.

Canon Collins told me that PAC families were receiving more assistance from the Dependents' Conference in Cape Town than ANC families. There were more PAC families in need and the Dependents' Conference was more favourable to PAC.

I told Canon Collins that I had seen a request by PAC to another organization for assistance to the family of Sobukwe, the PAC leader. I asked him if PAC had approached him. He said they did not. I suggested that he call the PAC representative in London, ask why they did not inform him of the needs of Sobukwe and his family, and discuss PAC complaints.

I also spoke to Matthew Nkoana, PAC representative in London, and informed me of my conversation with Canon Collins.

There were no further complaints by PAC against the Defence and Aid Fund (later IDAF) until the 1980s.

I believe that there was no discrimination in providing assistance to families of PAC political prisoners in South Africa. The PAC was, however, suspicious as

the sympathies of Canon Collins were with the ANC and he was very friendly with Oliver Tambo and Robert Resha among South African exiles. The staff of D&A included Ms. Phyllis Altman and Ms. Rica Hodgson, who were associated with the ANC, and there was no PAC member.<sup>37</sup>

The bulk of the costs of D&A were for legal defence of political prisoners. More money was provided for ANC cases such as the Rivonia Trial than for PAC cases. I felt that was reasonable because of the nature of cases and the of the accused.. D&A could not allocate an equal amount of money to PAC trials at that time – as, for instance, for those accused of killing white vacationers (Bashee River murder trial).

PAC tended to claim many prisoners whose affiliation to PAC was doubtful and whose names were not known to the PAC in exile.<sup>38</sup>

D&A did provide substantial funds to assist ANC leaders in exile. For instance, it paid mortgages for the residences of at least two ANC l leaders in exile. Canon Collins gave funds to ANC leaders for assistance to refugees and for political purposes.<sup>39</sup>

### ***My Visit to Organization of African Unity in Addis Ababa***

Diallo Telli and I kept in contact after he left the UN and became Secretary-General of the OAU. He frequently sought my advice and assistance.

It was said that President Sekou Toure of Guinea always arranged that the deputy in the Guinean mission would report against the head of the mission.

The relations between Diallo Telli and Marof were not good. I made it clear that I was a friend of both and respected both – and they accepted that.

Diallo Telli wrote to the UN Secretary-General in 1965 requesting him to send me to the OAU Headquarters in Addis Ababa for technical assistance.

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<sup>37</sup> My own experience has been that Phyllis and Rica tried to be fair to the PAC.

<sup>38</sup> I told the PAC in the late 1970s that the longest serving political prisoner was a member of the PAC but that I could not find the name. It was only then that the PAC found the name and claimed the longest serving political prisoner in their publicity.

<sup>39</sup> Once I asked Nana Mahomo of the PAC the reasons for the dissolution of the United Front. One of the reasons he gave was that the ANC was not informing the PAC of money it received from D&A or sharing it. Yusuf Dadoo told me later that the PAC was receiving support from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

I went to Addis Ababa in July 1965 for two weeks and then to Dar es Salaam to meet liberation movements.<sup>40</sup> Telli came to the airport to receive me and provided a car for my transport. He was most hospitable and I spent much time at his home with his family.

I went to the OAU office daily and spent time with the political officers and document officers, advising them on research, editing etc. I also spent much time with Diallo Telli discussing possibilities for greater cooperation by the OAU with UN and its agencies, and action with regard to southern Africa. I prepared drafts of a formal letter to the UN Secretary-General and several other papers.

I developed close friendship with Mohamed Sahnoun, the Algerian Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs. Also with two Ethiopian political officers - Samuel Alemeyahou and Amare Tekle - who were working on southern Africa under Sahnoun. [Samuel was active in the movement against the Emperor and was later imprisoned.]

On my visit to Addis Ababa in 1965, I advised the OAU Secretary-General, Diallo Telli, to seek greater cooperation between the OAU and the UN than had existed between regional organizations and the United Nations.

The cooperation agreements with regional organisations covered little more than reciprocal representation at meetings. OAU needed assistance from the United Nations.

I helped draft the request from the OAU to the UN. I also sent memoranda to the UN Secretary-General U Thant and his Chef de Cabinet, Mr. C.V. Narasimhan, suggesting close relations. They were very helpful and the UN General Assembly endorsed proposals for close cooperation.

U Thant and Mr. Narasimhan arranged with UNITAR to provide training for four officials of the OAU (in 1966 or 1967).

UN and OAU cooperated closely on many issues - including decolonisation, Namibia, apartheid in South Africa, and African economic problems.

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<sup>40</sup> Shortly before I left for Africa, Marof called me one day and we met in the UN Delegates lounge. Miriam Makeba was with him. She said that nothing was happening in South Africa – and that I should tell the liberation movements to fight, to kill. Marof also suggested that while he was making radical speeches, they were doing nothing in South Africa.

I told them that I would not tell anything to the liberation movements but would convey their messages.

Miriam had a fighting spirit. She gave money to PAC until they had a financial scandal. I told her to be above the ANC-PAC division, but she was, at that time at least, more friendly to PAC, considering it more militant.

***Visit to Dar es Salaam to Meet Liberation Movements***

Dar es Salaam was a small town – somewhat like a district headquarters in India. It had three good hotels and no room was available. I arrived shortly after 2 p.m. and no restaurant was open until evening. I spent the night at a miserable hotel. Duma Nokwe and the ANC helped to move me to Seaview Hotel on the outskirts of the town next day.

The first evening I met Alfred Kgotong (pseudonym) and Duma Nokwe at the former's home for drinks. Moses Mabhida came in from Morogoro when I was there, rather dishevelled after a long trip in the jeep. The home was in a project which was very much like Soweto. In Dar, that was progress in housing, while in Johannesburg it was forced segregation.

The next day Potlako Leballo and Peter Raboroko of PAC came for lunch at Seaview. I also met Joaquim Chissano of FRELIMO Youth League and Jacob Kuhangua, Secretary-General of SWAPO at their offices.

People used to tell me that the PAC people were difficult, but I got along well with them. They were articulate and fun to spend an evening with, especially if I had some alcohol.

That was a very useful visit – for my education and for my work.<sup>41</sup>

I returned via Cairo and Algiers. The atmosphere in Algiers had changed after the coup by Houari Boumeddiene.

***Seminar on Refugee Problems, Uppsala, 1966***

In 1966, I attended the “International Seminar on Refugee Problems in Southern and Central Africa” organized by the Nordic Institute for Africa and the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation (26-28 April 1966).

The International University Exchange Fund was the most active participant at the Seminar. I met Lars-Gunnar Eriksson of Sweden, the new Director of IUEF, and Oysten Opdahl of Norway, the outgoing Director, at the Seminar. Another participant was Cato Aall of Norway who was most resourceful in organizing refugee assistance in Zambia.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Please see annex for my notes on consultations with liberation movements.

<sup>42</sup> Cato Aall was then full-time secretary of the International Refugee Committee of Zambia (IRCOZ) and represented several Norwegian organisations. He would rush to meet refugees as soon as they arrived, prepare projects for settlement and other assistance, and apply for funds from Norway. Norway was traditionally the main source of assistance for refugees.

[The IUEF had been established in 1961 or 1962 by Nordic student organizations, with financial support from the governments of Norway and Sweden, to provide scholarships for refugees from South Africa. It was located at the headquarters of the International Student Conference in Leiden, Netherlands. When CIA financing of ISC became known and created a scandal, the IUEF dissociated itself from the ISC and moved to Geneva.]

I had seen Mr. Opdahl earlier in London where he was meeting with IUEF scholarship holders in the lobby of Russell Hotel. I was impressed with the way IUEF operated the programme in contrast to what seemed to me the bureaucratic way of the United Nations. I was later to develop close relations with Mr. Eriksson and the IUEF. On that, later.

At the Seminar, after reports on the situation of refugees in southern Africa, discussion centred on the proposal that refugees should be provided assistance for education in African countries except for courses not available in Africa. It was argued that they would be happier and would be most easily adjusted in Africa. Almost all the participants seemed to hold that view.

I disagreed and said that student refugees from the ghetto in Johannesburg would feel more at home in Harlem, New York, than in some African capital. They wished to go Western countries for study. Some Indian South Africans preferred to go to India. Moreover, Western countries were responsible for the situation in South Africa and should bear the burden.

[I felt that Western countries did not want to provide facilities for South African students who could not return to their country after their studies.]

I spoke to Professor Z. K. Matthews, then with the World Council of Churches, expressing my concerns and hoped he would support me. But he avoided expressing any opinion on the matter in his statement.

The Seminar recommended that scholarships should be provided primarily for study in Africa. This was endorsed by a Seminar organized in cooperation with the Organisation of African Unity in Addis Ababa next year. [The OAU established a Bureau for the Placement and Education of African Refugees – BPEAR]. It became the policy of the United Nations for its scholarships to southern Africans. Students in Britain and the United States were less likely to get full scholarships. Many of the applicants received partial scholarships or advised to go to Africa for study.

I prepared a detailed report on the discussion at the Uppsala Seminar from my notes. The report is among my papers at the archives in the Yale University Library.

The Seminar was very useful for me since the United Nations had initiated a scholarship programme for South Africans in late 1965. I was able to obtain much information on refugees in southern Africa and educational assistance to them. On return to New York, I sent a note to Secretary-General U Thant on 19 May 1966 on "Problems of South African Refugees (with reference to possible UN Assistance). The Note is attached as an annex to this Part of the Reminiscences.

### ***Canon Joost de Blanc and Bishop Reeves***

Canon Jooste de Blanc – he became a Canon in London after retiring as Archbishop of Cape Town – visited the United Nations around 1966, probably to deliver petitions for release of prisoners.

I arranged a lunch for him to meet Marof. I briefed Marof that he is an elderly person and conservative.

During the conversation, Marof asked him about the prospects in South Africa. The Canon answered that violence was the only way, as in Vietnam. My briefing was all wrong!

Bishop Reeves visited the UN some time later and I arranged a lunch for him with Marof. Most of the conversation was about Vietnam; I believe he had recently returned from a visit to Vietnam.

Marof could get along with people, irrespective of their status and age.

### ***Visits to OAU in 1966 and 1967***

I went to Addis Ababa again in 1966 and 1967 to attend OAU meetings. In 1967, I was the representative of the UN Secretary-General as U Thant could not attend. [My suit case was lost on the flight. I bought an ill-fitting suit in Addis and tried to keep inconspicuous.]

The OAU meetings, except for the ceremonial opening session, were closed to the public. The liberation movements could not attend. [They were admitted as observers only from the Summit in Rabat in 1972.] I was allowed to attend all meetings except one meeting which was restricted to Heads of State because of a crisis. The meetings used to go on late into the night.

Diallo Telli used to reserve for me a double room at Ethiopia Hotel. He used to provide a car and a typewriter and request me to prepare drafts for resolutions on southern Africa.

Some representatives of liberation movements – e.g. Duma Nokwe of ANC and George Nyandoro of ZAPU in 1966- used to come to my room and I could brief

them about what was going on. I was embarrassed that I was more privileged than they were.

Duma had a draft for a resolution on South Africa. I showed him the draft I had sent and told him that the language in his draft was such that it had no chance of being adopted. He said that he was speaking to Foreign Ministers and was sure it would be adopted. Eventually no one sponsored his draft and the resolution was based on my draft. Drafting resolutions is a skill and the liberation movements did not have much of a status at that time. They developed the skills and attained status some years later.

Again, in 1966, I went to Dar es Salaam to meet the liberation movements and the Africa Liberation Committee. I met the Tanzanian Executive Secretary of the Liberation Committee, and the Nigerian Assistant Secretary. I also met Ms. Frene Ginwala, who was then editor of *The Standard*.

On this visit to OAU, I drafted a letter from Diallo Telli to the UN Secretary-General requesting technical assistance, especially for the training of OAU staff, and took it to New York. C.V. Narasimhan, Chef de Cabinet to the Secretary-General, arranged with UNITAR to organise and fund a programme to train a few OAU staff members in New York and Geneva. Four officers came for training in New York that year.

### ***UN Information Campaign against Apartheid***

Returning to the work of the Special Committee:

In 1965, Emeka Anyaoku came to New York as First Secretary in the Nigerian mission and we became good friends. He was elected chairman of the Subcommittee on Petitions of the Special Committee.

I wrote a speech for him proposing that the United Nations should take a series of actions for the widest publicity on the evils of apartheid. His statement, at the meeting of the Special Committee on April 7, 1965, was well received and all his suggestions were endorsed by the full committee. The speech made front-page news in the Nigerian newspapers.

Robert Resha was apprehensive of UN getting into an information campaign. He said they had confidence in me. But some day, if the United Nations published an article by another official or a commentator outside that was unacceptable to the liberation movement, it would be very difficult for the movement to contradict the UN. He was also concerned that we may use “experts” who are not loyal to the liberation movement.

I soon realized the importance of the information campaign.



Around this time I was on a panel with the director of the Africa Division(?) of the United States Department of State. When asked why the United States Government was not taking stronger action against South Africa, he said that anti-apartheid had no lobby of consequence while supporters of the South African Government had.

I realized that a UN Information Campaign (and the broader international campaign against apartheid endorsed a year later) could enable the Special Committee and the Unit on Apartheid to reach the public, contact anti-apartheid groups and other NGOs and encourage them. Western governments with their democratic traditions would find it difficult to take any action to restrict these groups though they were often in opposition to their governments. We were able, over the years, to widen and strengthen our contacts and cooperation with anti-apartheid groups in Western countries, to great effect.

### ***Enlargement of the Special Committee against Apartheid***

Tewfik Bouattoura, the Algerian ambassador who succeeded A. Chanderli in 1964, felt strongly that the Special Committee would be ineffective unless the major Powers were included in its membership. He also pressed that all southern African problems should be handled by one committee.

I was afraid that the membership of the major Western Powers in the Special Committee would only bring "cold war" into the committee and paralyze it, unless they were prepared to support sanctions against South Africa. The Special Committee was able to achieve significant results because of its unanimity, and the Secretariat was able to help without "neutrality". That would be lost if the Western Powers were in the committee.

There was logic in the proposal for a single committee to deal with southern African problems as they were interrelated and, in our view, constituted a threat to the peace. But there were vested interests and bureaucratic problems which made merger of the committees impractical.

But on the insistence of Bouattoura, the Special Committee recommended in 1964 and 1965 that the committee be enlarged to include the big powers and other major trading partners of South Africa. (Other members were not convinced but did not want to oppose Algeria). The General Assembly decided on 15 December 1965 to enlarge the Special Committee by the addition of six members, to be appointed by the President of the General Assembly on the basis of the following criteria:

- "(a) Primary responsibility with regard to world trade;
- "(b) Primary responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations for the maintenance of international peace and security;
- "(c) Equitable geographical distribution."

The President of the General Assembly, Amintore Fanfani of Italy, wrote to the countries concerned. None of the big powers or the major trading partners, except the Soviet Union, agreed to join the Committee and no enlargement took place.

The consultations on enlargement impeded the work of the Committee; there was even a question as to the legality of the Committee functioning without new members. On the other hand, the Special Committee showed that it welcomed the major trading partners and could condemn them for refusing even to consult on effective measures against apartheid.

### ***United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa***

In 1965, after several governments announced contributions to the Defence and Aid Fund and the World Council of Churches, the Costa Rican Vice-Chairman suggested to me that we should consider setting up a United Nations Trust Fund for contributions. Many governments, he said, do not make grants to non-governmental organizations, but could contribute to a UN fund.

I spoke to C.V. Narasimhan, Chef de Cabinet to the Secretary-General, and he convened a meeting with the Legal Counsel and the Controller to consider the suggestion. It was agreed that a trust fund could be set up with a committee of trustees to decide on grants to voluntary organizations. We agreed on a committee of ambassadors at UN so that there would be no travel and other costs. I could act as secretary of the committee of trustees and administer the fund, with no additional staff, so that there would be no administrative costs. The UN would waive the usual requirement of 14 percent for administrative costs.

I included the establishment of a trust fund in the recommendations in the draft of the annual report of the Special Committee, stressing that the fund was for humanitarian purposes and was no alternative to action to eliminate apartheid.

We arranged that the resolution for the setting up of the trust fund would be moved by Nigeria (then considered a moderate country) and seconded by Sweden. The resolution – 2054 B (XX) of 15 December 1965 - was approved by 95 votes. Only South Africa voted against and Portugal abstained.

The Secretary-General appointed Chile, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan and Sweden as members of the Committee of Trustees. The Committee always elected the Swedish ambassador as the Chairman and the Nigerian ambassador as Vice-Chairman. We felt that it was important to have a Western country as chairman so that it would be difficult for the South African government to accuse the committee of making grants for political activities.

The choice of Sweden was most fortunate. The first chairman, Sverker C. Astrom, in particular, deserves great credit.

Contributions to the Trust Fund totalled about \$50 million before it was dissolved in 1994. Direct contributions to the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa (IDAF), encouraged by the Committee of Trustees and the Special Committee against Apartheid, were many times more.

I have written about the Trust Fund in a separate paper. But I must mention one fact here.

Sweden was the largest contributor to the Trust Fund, followed by other Nordic countries. They accounted for much more than half the contributions.

Around 1968, Mr. Astrom told me that Sweden intended to increase its contribution substantially. I said that that would make the Trust Fund seem like a Nordic Fund. Moreover, direct contributions to Defence and Aid Fund were best as that would avoid delays and the restraints at the UN.

Sweden followed my advice and began increasing direct contributions to Defence and Aid Fund much more than contributions to the Trust Fund.

The Trust Fund could not be used for information activities. But Sweden agreed that Defence and Aid Fund could use their direct contributions for information.

### ***UN Educational Programme for South Africa***

After the Security Council decided on an education programme, the Secretary-General asked George Ivan Smith to make a survey of the needs and report with recommendations. An Australian, he had been head of the UN office in Dar es Salaam and was liked by Presidents Nyerere and Kaunda.

He visited southern Africa to consult governments and organizations, and also consulted organizations in Europe. He prepared a report recommending a large programme with a director and office at headquarters and local offices in southern Africa. He suggested Prof. Z.K. Matthews as director.

The Secretary-General then consulted specialized agencies at a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Coordination. The UNESCO was anxious to take over the programme. I sent a note to the Secretary-General giving reasons why it should be in the UN in New York. He was able to secure agreement of the Director-General of UNESCO (Rene Maheu) with some difficulty.

I felt that the estimates of refugee students in the report of George Ivan were exaggerated, and that the administrative costs of the arrangements would be far too high. I was also concerned that if Prof. Matthews left the WCC, its work of assisting families of political prisoners may be jeopardised.

It was already late in the year and the new academic year had started. So I suggested a modest initial programme for the first year at a cost of about \$200,000. I suggested that the Secretary-General request the main potential donors – Britain, United States, Sweden, Norway and Denmark – to contribute that amount and gave amounts to be requested from each. (I believe \$50,000 each for Britain and the United States and \$35,000 each for the Nordics). The Secretary-General followed my advice.

No contributions came for several weeks and I was surprised.

The Swedish ambassador, Sverker Astrom, invited me for lunch one day. I found that they suspected that someone in the Secretariat (a senior African official) had cut down the programme which they considered important. I explained what had actually happened. All the contributions came very soon. The principal director of my department – M.A. Vellodi, an Indian – was appointed director of the programme in addition to his other duties. It was arranged that the Fellowship Office would administer the programme and that no administrative costs would be charged.

I had heard from Mary Benson that the children of some of the leaders in the Rivonia trial were at college age. I wrote to Oliver Tambo. I also asked Robert Resha if any of them needed scholarships. He enquired and told me that they had all obtained help, probably from the Soviet Union and other Communist countries.<sup>43</sup>

The next year the contributions were low and the programme remained at the same level.

Sweden had in mind that the UN should handle all scholarships for South Africans – which meant that they would no longer support the International University Exchange Fund which had earlier received Nordic contributions and set up a scholarship programme for South Africans. I told Mr. Astrom that that would be unwise and explained why. [For instance, if Joe Slovo applied for a scholarship, directors in the United Nations may refuse it as he was white. An NGO would be more flexible. It could also act faster.] Swedish support to IUEF continued.

In 1968, the programme for South Africans was consolidated with earlier programmes for South West Africa and Portuguese territories which were based on offers of places and scholarships by various governments, most of which were not utilized because of language and other problems.

At my suggestion, Achkar Marof, as Guinean delegate, proposed setting up an Advisory Committee to promote the programme and advise on policy matters – so

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<sup>43</sup> Many years later I arranged scholarships for a few of the graduates of Soviet institutions to obtain qualifications from Britain.

that decisions were not left to civil servants - and the General Assembly endorsed the proposal.

After Mr. Vellodi left, the programme had come to be run without political sense. A large number of scholarships were given to people expelled from liberation movements who had settled in Kenya (as they were deported from Tanganyika). They were not serious students and the scholarships became maintenance grants.

I did not want to be involved in the programme at that stage - as I was too busy with other work – except for recommending a few people who had suffered persecution for opposition to apartheid.

I was appointed director of the programme in 1973 when the then director passed away – and made several changes.

### ***Torture and Ill-treatment of Political Prisoners***

We had been concerned with reports on conditions in Robben Island and other prisons.

Miss Diana Russell, a South African student, brought to me around February 1964 a bunch of affidavits (with names omitted) on torture and ill-treatment in police custody and in prisons.<sup>44</sup> I suggested to her to request George Houser to send them with a covering letter so that we could publish them as a petition.<sup>45</sup>

Later some more affidavits came from Ruth First in London.

In 1966, people at the Defence and Aid Fund – Canon Collins, Phyllis Altman, Rica Hodgson – asked me to take up the issue of prison conditions at the UN and call for improvements. I found that a little difficult.

The Special Committee had reported on the treatment of political prisoners but did not ask for better treatment. It was demanding the unconditional release of all

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<sup>44</sup> Diana was the daughter of J. Hamilton Russell, a former member of Parliament who had been active in protests against 90-day detentions and torture in South Africa. She was a student in America and I suggested a covering letter by George Houser to protect her security. She has since been active in the feminist movement, especially against pornography, and lives on the West Coast.

Her brother, David Russell, a student at Princeton, came to me some time later. He was distressed about the situation in South Africa and wanted to do something. I suggested to him that there were many people who could protest abroad, and that he should not endanger his chances of going back to South Africa. Every spark of resistance in South Africa is more valuable than a flame abroad, I said. He did leave for South Africa and became prominent in non-violent protest. He later became a bishop in the Cape.

<sup>45</sup> They were published in document A/AC.115/L.53 on 5 March 1964

political prisoners – in fact, declaring that they should be in power. How can we then ask that Nelson Mandela should be issued long pants instead of short pants? I have been in general against petitions and appeals to the South African government.

The Guinean chairman could not possibly move a resolution for the amelioration of prison conditions. I approached Zain Abd-el Zain, the delegate of the Federation of Malaya. He refused, saying that his country was no less committed than Guinea.

Then, at my suggestion, the Special Committee sent all documentation on prison conditions to the Commission on Human Rights with a suggestion that it institute an international judicial investigation. There was the advantage that the Commission included major Powers and South Africa did not regard the Commission as illegal. [Meanwhile, Defence and Aid Fund published a good pamphlet on prison conditions.]

The move proved worthwhile. Even before the Commission took up the matter, South Africa allowed the International Committee of the Red Cross to visit the prisons.<sup>46</sup> We even heard that the government distributed chocolate to prisoners.

The Commission set up an “Ad Hoc Working Group” to investigate the situation. Instead of prominent jurists, it was made up of delegates to the Commission. It continued until 1994, with several expansions of mandate, and produced many annual reports.<sup>47</sup>

The Special Committee continued to follow the situation. It published a long report on maltreatment and torture of prisoners, drafted by me, in the name of the Rapporteur (Barakat Ahmad of India) and several shorter documents.

Many years later, I commissioned M. D. Naidoo to prepare a paper on the torturers – in order to include them in a list under the International Convention for the Suppression and Punishment of Apartheid.

### ***Publicity on Political Prisoners***

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<sup>46</sup> It never allowed the ICRC to visit detainees who were not sentenced; torture was mainly in police custody.

<sup>47</sup> I helped the Group by suggesting persons to be interviewed, especially former prisoners who had come into exile. Ruth First and Rosalynde Ainslee were engaged as consultants to draft their reports.

The verbatim reports of the hearings before the Ad Hoc Working Group have not been published after the first two years. They are probably in the UN archives in Geneva. They are a useful source material for historians.

In the course of my work, I came to know the names and background of numerous persons imprisoned, banned and exiled. I felt a closeness to them. They became my friends even if I had never met them.

In June 1968, when I went to London with the Special Committee (and felt that I may not be able to continue in my job because of problems in the Secretariat), I requested Canon Collins to arrange a party for me with South Africans in London who had been banned or imprisoned. Eighty of them came; I met many of them for the first time. That was one of the most moving days of my life.

The South African government and media gave only the numbers rather than the names of the accused in many political trials. They were non-persons. I made it a point to include all available names in our documents. I prepared an index of all trials and prisoners, as well as the banned and the banished. This was not easy in the days before the computer, but I never felt that it was below my dignity to do clerical work.

Once I heard a couple of correspondents laughing at strange African names in a Special Committee document. I decided to publish not only names but biographical particulars – the profession, number of children etc. - so that they would be seen as human beings of varied persuasions.

I published a series of biographical notes of prisoners and the banned in UN documents and publications – and persuaded the International Defence and Aid Fund to publish a book about them.<sup>48</sup>

### ***Action by the Commission of Human Rights and the Economic and Social Council***

The Commission on Human Rights had paid little attention to apartheid in South Africa until the Special Committee requested it consider prison conditions in that country. It was concerned with discussing general norms rather than specific cases of violations of human rights.

Our letter encouraged the Asian and African members of the Commission to focus on apartheid. The Commission not only set up the Working Group but appointed a special rapporteur on apartheid – Mr. Ganji of Iran – who submitted a lengthy report. He came to me for help and I gave him a long draft on conclusions and recommendations.

Since then the Commission has been very active on apartheid and adopted many resolutions. Its reports and proposals went to the Economic and Social Council

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<sup>48</sup> *Prisoners of Apartheid: A biographical list of political prisoners and banned persons in South Africa*, published by the International Defence & Aid Fund in cooperation with the United Nations Centre against Apartheid, October 1978

and through it to the General Assembly. They were discussed in the Third Committee of the Assembly, while the reports of the Special Committee were discussed in the Special Political Committee (until 1976 when the Assembly decided to take them up directly in the Plenary). There was much duplication, but some significant initiatives came from the Commission, the Economic and Social Council and the Third Committee.

### ***Securing Support from Nordic and Other Smaller Western States***

After my work with the Group of Experts and contacts with Sweden, I became convinced that it was possible to secure support from smaller Western States and isolate the major Powers which were the main collaborators with the apartheid regime and which were blocking further international action. No Western State had voted for General Assembly resolution 1762 (XVII) on sanctions, so that major Powers were not isolated. And all Western States argued that only the Security Council could impose sanctions.

I felt that expulsion of South Africa from the United Nations should not be pressed as several countries which voted for resolution 1761 (XVII), especially Asian countries, were against expulsion; they felt strongly about universality of the UN because of the question of representation of China.<sup>49</sup> The Nordic and other Western governments were also concerned that if South Africa was expelled that might set a precedent to enable Arab States to press for the expulsion of Israel.

In 1965, I drafted a resolution that did not call for sanctions but declared that sanctions were the only peaceful means to solve the situation and requested the Security Council to consider sanctions. I consulted Ambassador Astrom of Sweden on the draft before giving it to Marof. At the suggestion of Sweden, I deleted the “request” to the Security Council. The revised draft read:

“Draws the attention of the Security Council to the fact that the situation in South Africa constitutes a threat to international peace and security, that action under Chapter VII of the Charter is essential in order to solve the problem of apartheid and that universally applied economic sanctions are the only means of achieving a peaceful solution.”

Marof agreed and the draft was introduced in the Special Political Committee of the General Assembly.

Before Sweden was due to speak in the Special Political Committee, there was some commotion in the Swedish delegation. Sverker Astrom had received instructions only an hour before to support the resolution and the draft of his speech was undergoing revisions almost until he was called.

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<sup>49</sup> Western States were concerned that expulsion of South Africa would set a precedent and that it would be followed by demands for expulsion of Israel.



Sweden and Denmark voted in favour at that session.<sup>50</sup> Finland, Iceland and Norway abstained. They voted in favour of an identical paragraph in resolution 2202A (XXI) of 16 December 1966 at the next session of the General Assembly.<sup>51</sup> The number of smaller Western countries voting in favour of this formulation increased from session to session and soon formed a substantial majority of Western States.

Since then, until I retired, the Chairman and I consulted Nordic countries on resolutions on apartheid at every session of the General Assembly before the drafts were discussed by members of the Special Committee and sent to the African Group and the Non-aligned Group which submitted them to the General Assembly.

### *Japanese – honorary whites?*

In the early 1960s, African delegates tended to attack Japan more strongly than Western States for collaboration with South Africa, because Japan was an Asian country. The news report that South Africa granted Japanese the status of "honorary whites" was a sore point.

Around 1966, the Chairman of the Special Committee, Achkar Marof, departing from my draft, made a violent attack on Japan in the Special Political Committee, for becoming "honorary whites". I guessed Japan would reply at a subsequent meeting.

I briefed Ambassador Marof that the "honorary white" status implied only that Japanese could stay in white hotels and "white" areas. There were very few Japanese in South Africa, many of them businessmen and the South African government wanted trade with Japan. The Japanese were bound by other racist laws, such as that on mixed marriages, etc. I gave him a statement to use in case Japan replied to him.

The Japanese ambassador spoke in the Committee and immediately Marof responded with my notes, indicating that he was fully aware of the implications of the status. Then he went on extempore:

"I know a Japanese cannot marry a white in South Africa. The Japanese women are so beautiful and why should any Japanese want to marry a white anyway?"

This climax of the speech went very well - except for those in the room who knew that the Japanese ambassador had a French wife!

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<sup>50</sup> The proposal was adopted in General Assembly resolution 2054A (XX).

<sup>51</sup> The other Western States voting in favour of resolution 2054A (XX) were Greece and Spain. Ireland joined them in voting for resolution 2202A (XXI).

Prince Kaya, a Counsellor in the Japanese mission to the United Nations and a member of the Royal family, invited me to lunch and asked me why Japan are being attacked when Sweden, which also trades with South Africa, was being praised. [Japan had no diplomatic mission in South Africa, but only a Consulate, while Sweden had a legation.]

I told him that Japan should follow Sweden in declaring that it would implement sanctions if there was a mandatory decision by the Security Council. (If many countries make such declarations, we isolate the Big Three.) Also that Japan should make contributions for assistance to political prisoners (UN Trust Fund) and for scholarships to South Africans.

I also reminded him that Japan was a victim of racism and the first country to oppose racial discrimination internationally at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. I suggested that they should recall that.

They followed my advice in later speeches and contributed to the United Nations funds for South Africa.

I also suggested to Prince Kaya that Japanese delegates should say that they are proud to be Japanese and do not want to be "honorary" anything. On that I did not succeed.

I went with Ambassador Ogbu on a mission to Tokyo in 1974. In our meeting with Japanese Foreign Minister, Ogbu suggested that Japan should reject the "honorary white" status. The minister only said that Japan never asked for that status.

[There was really nothing to reject. The "honorary white" status was a term invented by the media. There was no law or agreement mentioning that.]

### ***Beginning of Multiple Resolutions on Apartheid***

In 1969 – when Marof had been succeeded by Abdulrahim Abby Farah of Somalia as chairman of the Special Committee – the draft of the resolution included a clause calling on all States to terminate airline and shipping line connections with South Africa.

The Nordic States told me that they could not support the resolution with this clause. SAS was flying to South Africa and Nordic shipping lines (especially Norwegian) were going to South Africa. Nordic States take the UN resolutions seriously and implement the resolutions they vote for. On foreign policy matters

they try to obtain consensus among the political parties and agreement among Nordic countries. That was not possible in a few days. [In fact, it was many years before SAS stopped flights to South Africa.]

I tried to persuade Mr. Farah to drop that clause as even some African States – e.g. Kenya, Congo – had not terminated airline connections with South Africa. He said the resolution was the best way to persuade those African States.

The Nordic States abstained on the resolution and felt unhappy, as it was difficult to explain the abstention on a resolution against apartheid to their public opinion.

But soon I found a solution.

In October 1970, President Kaunda of Zambia, then Chairman of OAU, came to the United Nations for its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary meetings. He was going from New York to Paris, on an OAU mission to try to persuade France to impose an arms embargo against South Africa. After American and British embargoes, France had become the principal supplier of military equipment to South Africa. Diallo Telli and Mohamed Sahnoun accompanied President Kaunda.

After consulting with them, I drafted a resolution on an arms embargo against South Africa which was adopted as an urgent matter before consideration of other aspects of action against apartheid. It received a very large majority.

It then occurred to me that it would be desirable to prepare separate resolutions on different aspects of the problem to obtain maximum support for each. A series of resolutions became the practice since that time. [Earlier we had only two resolutions, one on apartheid and another on the Trust Fund for South Africa.]

There were resolutions on various aspects – e.g. arms embargo, release of prisoners, sports boycott, programme of work of the Special Committee, etc. – and then one resolution which included the most controversial provisions which even the Nordic countries could not vote for. That came to be known as the “omnibus” resolution. It included condemnations by name of States collaborating with South Africa, support for armed struggle etc. The other resolutions have always been adopted unanimously or with overwhelming majorities.

### ***The Brasilia Seminar and Establishment of the Unit on Apartheid***

In 1965, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to organize an International Seminar on Apartheid in consultation with the Commission on Human Rights and the Special Committee.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> General Assembly resolution 2060 (XX). The seminar had been proposed by the chairmen of the two bodies.

In the consultations, it was decided not only to invite a number of governments to nominate participants, but also to invite some others as individuals. The individuals included Robert Resha (ANC), Peter Raboroko (PAC), Canon Collins and Ronald Segal.

The Seminar was held in Brasilia from 23 August to 4 September 1966.<sup>53</sup> It adopted a report and a series of recommendations.

One of the recommendations of the Seminar was that the United Nations Secretariat should set up an information unit for publicity against apartheid.

The UN Office of Public Information (OPI) was upset, as such a unit was against the UN policy on information. Dag Hammarskjöld, former Secretary-General of the UN, had said that the UN should not do propaganda even for itself.

Gol Obhrai, the Indian director of OPI, approached Mr. Narasimhan to try to stop any such decision by the General Assembly and I was called for consultation.

I asked Mr. Obhrai if there would be any problem if the Special Committee produced the information and requested the OPI to disseminate it. He said that was acceptable. I had to work out an alternative and see that it was adopted instead of the formulation at Brasilia.

In the report of the Special Committee, I included a long passage calling for an international campaign against apartheid under the auspices of the United Nations – with action by governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations and individuals on a range of issues. In the context of that campaign, the Special Committee recommended the establishment of a Unit on Apartheid to work under the guidance of the Special Committee. I briefed Achkar Marof and arranged a meeting with the Secretary-General. I wrote notes for both – and there was agreement.

We had in mind no great expense. I agreed to head the Unit also<sup>54</sup> and asked for only one additional officer to assist me. We hoped to obtain papers from prominent people opposed to apartheid at little cost.

Marof then went to the Third Committee of the General Assembly where the recommendation of the Brasilia Seminar was discussed and got the formula approved.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> I did not attend the Seminar as I was on home leave.

<sup>54</sup> I was then Chief of Section for African Questions in the political department and the Unit on Apartheid was within the Section.

<sup>55</sup> Paragraph 13 of General Assembly resolution 2144A (XXI) read:

"13. Requests the Secretary-General to establish a unit within the Secretariat of the United Nations to deal exclusively with policies of apartheid, in consultation with the

The concept of an international campaign against apartheid was endorsed by the General Assembly and had a significant political effect. The passage I had drafted became the strategy of the Special Committee, though it arose out of a bureaucratic problem.

### ***A Question from Robert Resha***

In 1966 or 1967, Robert Resha asked me a question. He said: “We have many foreign-owned factories in South Africa – e.g. automobile factories in eastern Cape. We can bomb them. Some white foreigners will die. What do you think the international reaction will be? We are consulting friends about this.”

I said that my own feeling was that there would be a hostile reaction even in countries like Sweden, which were helpful to us. (Precedent of reaction to events in Stanleyville). I stressed, as I did many times, that the liberation movement should not undertake any act of terrorism or violence merely to get international attention. We in the United Nations would make sure that the struggle gets continuous attention. If we do not, we are failing in our job.

### ***Contribution by Arthur Hughes to the UN Trust Fund for South Africa***

The largest non-governmental contribution to the Un Trust Fund for South Africa was by Arthur Hughes, an American artist.

He attended the Sharpeville Day meeting organized by the American Committee on Africa and other organizations at St. Mark’s Methodist Church in Harlem, New York.

Achkar Marof, Chairman of the Special Committee, was one of the speakers.

A few days later, I received a letter from Arthur Hughes that after the speech by Marof, he had decided to sell the stock in General Motors which he had inherited and to donate the proceeds (\$50,000) to the UN Trust Fund. The UN Trust Fund, however, was not exempt from the United States income tax. So we arranged that he would donate the money to the Africa Fund (associated with the American Committee on Africa) and that the Africa Fund would donate it to the UN Trust Fund.

### ***European Conference against Apartheid, 1967***

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Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa, in order that maximum publicity may be given to the evils of those policies.”

The French Liaison Committee against Apartheid organized a European Conference against Apartheid in Paris on 6-7 May 1967.

French Committee had been inaugurated a year or two earlier by Jean-Paul Sartre. Its Chairman, Maitre Jean-Jacques de Felice, was a progressive lawyer who had defended Bella Bella, the former President of Algeria some years earlier.

At the Conference, I met Albie Sachs and Ms. Staphanie Kemp who were staying with de Felice. Stephanie was very much under the effect of her jail experience. Breyten Bretenbach, whom I had probably met once before, spent much time with me. I came to know his Vietnamese wife, Yvonne. One of the events at the Conference was a cultural evening at which Raymond Mazisi Kunene read his poems.

Achkar Marof, the Chairman of the Special Committee, was due to attend the Conference, but his government refused him permission to travel. (That was perhaps the beginning of his troubles with his government). Instead, the Vice-Chairman, Ambassador Luis Demetrio Tinoco of Costa Rica, represented the Special Committee. The speech of Marof was read by Daniel Mayer, a prominent liberal in France.

Sartre could not attend the Conference as he was at the International Tribunal on Vietnam. He sent a message.

### ***Role of International Action Secondary***

At the beginning of 1967, Abdulrahim Abby Farah, the new Somali ambassador, was elected Rapporteur of the Special Committee.

In February, I drafted an appeal for the observance of Sharpeville Day (the UN International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination) and gave it to him. He added a sentence to say that international action was necessary as the oppressed people of South Africa could not liberate themselves or something to that effect. I could not argue with him at that stage. I requested the delegates of Algeria and Nigeria to get the sentence removed when it came before the full committee for approval. But they failed to intervene.

Shortly after, *Spotlight on South Africa*, published by ANC in Dar es Salaam, carried an editorial criticizing this attitude without mentioning the Special Committee.

To undo the damage, I wrote a passage in Marof's message to the European Conference against Apartheid in May stressing that our role was secondary to that of the liberation movement. I elaborated that in Marof's paper for the Kitwe Seminar in July-August.

The following is the relevant extract from the paper for the Kitwe Seminar:

“... the main role in the liberation of southern Africa should rightfully go first to the oppressed people themselves. The international community can assist them and help create the conditions in which they can secure the liberation with the least possible violence and delay, but it cannot aspire to deliver liberation to them. The efforts of the international community should only complement the efforts of the oppressed peoples. As I stated in my address to the European Conference against Apartheid in Paris on 6 May 1967:

‘The struggle for freedom in South Africa is certainly the right, the responsibility and the privilege of the people of South Africa. They have not abdicated their struggle or asked for freedom as a gift from the rest of the world. Whatever we do at the international level - whether as governments or in anti-apartheid movements and other popular organizations - we need to recognize in all humility that our role is but secondary. We do not aspire to liberate - which would be tantamount to substituting ourselves to the South African people - but to assist the liberation, as that is our duty if we are loyal to our own convictions. We can discharge this duty only if we avoid any pity or paternalism and remain at all times responsive to the needs and desires of the liberation movement.’”

This was appreciated by the ANC, and quoted in *Sechaba*. Oliver Tambo, in his statement before the Special Committee in Stockholm on June 18, 1968, said:

“We attach a great deal of importance and we are very much appreciative of the statements such as you, Mr. Chairman, have made, emphasising that the leadership of the struggle against apartheid is in the hands of the African people themselves, of the liberation movement, and that the world should pay due regard to their opinions and their views and that they should be respected not as Heads of State but as heads and leaders of people. This has not always been our experience and we are grateful for the fact that you have made this point.”

***Seminar on Southern Africa, Kitwe, Zambia, 24 July to 4 August 1967***

In 1966, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to organize an International Seminar on Apartheid, Racial Discrimination and Colonialism in Southern Africa – in consultation with the Special Committee against Apartheid and the Special Committee on Decolonization. I had suggested this Seminar in order to emphasize that the problems in Southern Africa were interrelated. I hoped that the Seminar would recognize that the South African Government was the main source of conflict in Southern Africa, and recommend greater support to the liberation movement in South Africa.

Organizing this Seminar proved to be quite difficult.

Early in 1967, Apollo Kironde, the Ugandan ambassador, was appointed a director and my supervisor – and I had serious problems with him.

John Malecela, the Tanzanian Chairman of the Special Committee on Decolonization, had hoped to have the Seminar hosted by his Government, but they did not agree – and we had to look for another country. Fortunately, Zambia agreed. But Zambia faced serious economic and transport problems due to the crisis over the unilateral independence of Southern Rhodesia under Ian Smith. The Seminar was to be in Lusaka, but while my colleagues and I stopped on the flight at Entebbe, we were paged and asked to go to Ndola – and the Seminar was held in Kitwe. Achkar Marof was detained by the Government of Guinea and could not attend.

Member governments of the two committees were invited to the Seminar. In addition, the liberation movements from southern Africa, as well as some organizations and individuals (e.g. Michael Scott) were invited as observers. One of the invitees – on the suggestion of Malecela and Marof – was the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, represented by James Forman.

I felt that the invitations to the liberation movements – their leaders were invited to the Brasilia Seminar as individuals – was a step forward. But Ronald Segal was very critical of designating them as “observers”. But the liberation movements were quite happy. They had, in practice, all the rights of full participants as the Seminar did not vote.

Malecela suggested that we obtain a paper from Eduardo Mondlane. I arranged a consultant contract with a fee of \$500, a fairly large sum at that time. He produced an excellent paper on racism in Portuguese colonies.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Mondlane came to see me in my office on his next visit to New York and expressed surprise that I could arrange the contract. We had known each other as he had been a junior official in the UN Secretariat and lived near me. He had been reprimanded for asking his secretary to type the speech of a petitioner from a colonial territory (I believe Uganda).

He told me that the Committee on Decolonization visited Africa annually, and the liberation movements were asked to appear before it. There was no action on their requests and the



The Conference Hall in Kitwe was ready only a few minutes before President Kaunda arrived to open the Seminar. Chief Luthuli had just died: Kaunda made reference to him, wiped his tears and led the conference in singing “Nkosi Sikelele.”

With the agreement of Zambia, Malecela was elected Chairman.

The Seminar lasted two weeks in July-August 1967. Oliver Tambo came and we had a private meeting. He left shortly after the Conference began. Alfred Kgokang conveyed his apologies to me and said he had some urgent business. We soon found that ANC and ZAPU guerrillas were moving into Southern Rhodesia.

There were many speeches and recommendations. I will refer only to a couple of things now.

James Forman began his speech by referring to the link between colonialism in Africa and racism in America. The United States Ambassador raised a point of order that he should be asked to limit to the agenda. Malecela, who disliked the ambassador, let Forman proceed. Forman’s speech made front page news in the local paper.<sup>57</sup>

But more important was the Algerian position that all the southern African issues, which were threats to the peace, should be considered by a single committee of the United Nations.

Tewfik Bouattoura, the Algerian ambassador from 1964, was adamant on two points.<sup>58</sup>

First, that the Special Committee against Apartheid cannot be effective without the participation of the Great Powers. [As noted earlier, the Special Committee obtained a General Assembly resolution in 1965 for the enlargement of the Committee to include the Great Powers. But the Western Powers did not agree to join and there was no enlargement].

Second, he felt strongly about the need for a single committee. I told him that his proposal had merit but would be difficult to implement. But he was not convinced.

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Committee would come again next year. He felt that the Committee was exploiting the liberation movements to get junkets to Africa.

<sup>57</sup> I told Jim that the SNCC could appear as petitioners in the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly on the colonial problems in southern Africa. They followed the suggestion later in the year.

<sup>58</sup> Bouattoura married shortly after. The couple went on a vacation to the seacoast and he drowned. [He had a great fear of drowning.] He was in coma for more than year before he died.

The report of the Kitwe Seminar did not endorse the proposal for a single committee but suggested that consideration be given to the matter.

After we returned to New York, I held a reception to the staff who had worked with me at Kitwe. During the party, one officer from Department of Trusteeship and Decolonization said, I thought as a joke, that I should prepare for my Section being absorbed by his Department. I replied, also in a joke, that the opposite might happen.

This was reported to the head of his department (from Niger) who suspected that there was a plot by me.

The draft resolution on apartheid prepared by me and approved by the Special Committee for the next session of the General Assembly, contained a paragraph endorsing the declaration of the Kitwe Seminar. It was repeatedly blocked in the African Group by the delegate of Niger and no resolution emerged for many days. Most of the delegates did not know what the problem was.

The head of the Trusteeship Department sent his officers to the Special Political Committee (where they had no business) to spy on me and make propaganda against me. He had lunch with the Algerian ambassador and told him that I was misleading them; the ambassador replied that he does not take instructions from me but from his government. He also told the Secretary-General that I should not be sent to the OAU. I could not go to OAU for three years.

Ambassador Abdurrahim Abby Farah of Somalia, who was piloting the resolution in the absence of Marof, could not understand why Niger opposed any mention of the declaration of the Kitwe Seminar. After I explained the reason to him, he managed to get the draft from the Group with a mention of the report of the Kitwe Seminar, but without any endorsement of the declaration of the Seminar.

### **Dr. Raymond Hoffenberg**

I happened to visit London shortly after Dr. Raymond (Bill) Hoffenberg and his wife Mary came out of South Africa in 1968 on an exit permit. Canon Collins introduced them to me. Bill and Mary were among the many fine people I was privileged to meet during the anti-apartheid campaign.

Dr. Hoffenberg, consultant physician at Groote Schuur Hospital and senior lecturer in the Department of Medicine at University of Cape Town, was Chairman of the South African Defence and Aid Fund which provided legal defence for political prisoners. It was banned in 1966. He a member of the Liberal Party.

Dr. Hoffenberg himself was served with arbitrary banning orders in July 1967. They confined him to the magisterial district of Wynberg and Cape Town and prohibited him from belonging to any organization or from attending any gathering, including a social gathering of more than one other person, or from writing or making any statement for publication. He was specifically prohibited from taking any part in the affairs or activities of any student society or organization, and from entering any African area, factory or printing premises. He was required to report to the police every Monday. He was permitted to continue his duties at the Medical School only until the end of the academic year in mid-December 1967.

The banning order provoked very widespread protests in South Africa and abroad. I had reported the unfounded allegations of the government and the protests in detail in the annual reports of the Special Committee against apartheid.

After numerous appeals to the Government to withdraw the restriction order met with adamant refusal, Dr. Hoffenberg and family left Cape Town for the United Kingdom on 25 March 1968.

I met Bill and Mary again in New York in September 1969, and we corresponded for some time.

Bill prepared for us a paper on discrimination in the field of health and Mary sent me a paper on the death of Imam Haroun in prison.

Bill wrote to me that the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) was in need of funds for its scheme for the education of political prisoners (prison education scheme). The United Nations could not make a grant directly to NUSAS because of accounting problems. At my suggestion, Bill requested Amnesty International to act as an intermediary and send us a request for a grant. A modest grant was approved by the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa.

Bill also helped to send some of our publications to NUSAS.<sup>59</sup>

### ***Special Committee's Session in Europe, 1968***

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<sup>59</sup> Dr. Hoffenberg (1923-2007) was later Professor of Medicine at Birmingham University (1972-85), President of Royal College of Physicians (1983-89), and President of Wolfson College, Oxford (1985-93).

I met him again at a reception of the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa in London in 1990.

The Special Committee obtained approval by the General Assembly for a session in Europe during 1968, which was designated as the International Year for Human Rights. It decided to visit Stockholm, London and Geneva "to hold discussions with Governments, specialized agencies of the United Nations, other nongovernmental organizations opposed to apartheid, as well as individuals prominent in the struggle against apartheid on means to promote an international campaign against apartheid..." It said in a communiqué on 18 April 1968:

"In deciding to visit Stockholm, the Special Committee had in mind the contribution of the people and Governments of the Scandinavian countries to the struggle against apartheid, including the generous contributions made by them to United Nations programmes for assistance to the victims of apartheid..."

"The Special Committee decided to visit London, not only because of the activities of a number of public organizations in the United Kingdom - such as the Anti-Apartheid Movement and the Defence and Aid Fund - in the struggle against apartheid, but also because of the problem created in this struggle by the special relations between the United Kingdom and South Africa.

"The visit to Geneva will be devoted to discussions with specialized agencies of the United Nations and a number of non-governmental organizations opposed to apartheid."

I visited the three cities from 29 April to 6 May for consultations on arrangements for the session.

The Swedish Government was very helpful. It provided facilities in the Parliament building for the Committee's meetings. It suggested that the Committee to meet all the major political parties in Sweden during its visit.

In London, the anti-apartheid movement was most helpful. It contacted many organizations and individuals to encourage them to participate in the meetings of the Special Committee.

The Special Committee visited Stockholm from 15 to 19 June, London from 21 to 26 June and Geneva from 26 to 28 June. The formal meetings of the Special Committee were called special sessions and were conducted like seminars. There were no official records for the meetings, but the information officer sent detailed reports for press releases in New York. The meetings in Geneva were informal.

Participants in the meetings in Stockholm included members of Governments and Parliaments, as well as several prominent individuals from all the Nordic countries.

For these meetings, the Centre against Apartheid commissioned two papers at the request of the Special Committee:

1. Paper by Oliver Tambo on “The present stage of the struggle against apartheid in South Africa;”<sup>60</sup> and
2. Paper by Canon L. John Collins on “Assistance to the victims of apartheid.”

A paper was also presented by Prof. Gunnar Myrdal.

The three major political parties (Socialist, Liberal and Moderate) hosted lunches or dinners for the Special Committee. These events reflected the consensus in Sweden against apartheid in South Africa.

I arranged for a visit by the Chairman of the Special Committee, Achkar Marof, to Uppsala to meet with the Director of the Hammarskjold Foundation, Dr. Sven Hamrell, and lay a wreath at the grave of Dag Hammarskjold. It was a courageous gesture by Marof as Guinea had denounced Hammarskjold after the assassination of Patrice Lumumba in the Congo. That was appreciated by Sweden.

The agenda in London was comprehensive. It included sanctions against South Africa; the special responsibility of the major trading partners of South Africa; moral, political and material support to the South African liberation movement; and a campaign of information against apartheid. Participants included leaders of a number of organisations. Twelve of them presented memoranda and they were published as official documents of the Special Committee. The organizations were: the United Nations Association of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, led by Humphrey Berkeley; the Anti-Apartheid Movement, led by David Steel, M.P. and leader of the Liberal Party ; the World Campaign for the Release of South African political Prisoners, led by Dennis Brutus; the South African Non-Racial Open Committee for Olympic Sports, also led by Dennis Brutus; the Africa Bureau, led by the Rev. Michael Scott; the Movement for Colonial Freedom, led by Lord Brockway; the Irish Anti-Apartheid Movement, led by Prof. Kader Asmal; the African National Congress of South Africa, led by Joseph G. Matthews; the Pan Africanist Congress of South Africa, led by Vusumzi L. Make and Barney Desai; the South African Indian Congress led by Ms. Frene Ginwala; the Coloured People’s Congress, led by Alex La Guma; the South African Congress of Trade Unions, led by Ms. Phyllis Altman; the International Defence and Aid Fund, led by the Rev. Canon L. John Collins; the British Council of Churches, led by Paul Oestreicher; and the French Anti-Apartheid Movement, led by Maitre Jean-Jacques de Felice.

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<sup>60</sup> At that time, the PAC was under suspension by the Organisation of African Unity and did not protest that only the leader of the ANC was requested to prepare a paper.

I heard that PAC militants at a camp in Zambia had tried to prevent the Zambian army from entering the camp and began reading the quotations of Mao Tse-Tung. The PAC was then expelled from Zambia.

In Geneva, the Special Committee had informal consultations with officials of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Labour Organisation, as well as the Geneva Anti-Apartheid Movement, represented by its Chairman, Pasteur Bungener and its Secretary, Mr. Bovet; the International Commission of Jurists represented by Mr. Sean MacBride, Secretary-General; and the World Council of Churches represented by Jean Fischer and Canon Burgess Carr.<sup>61</sup>

A number of suggestions for action emerged from the discussions, especially in London. The Special Committee included them in its report and obtained endorsement by the General Assembly. For instance, resolution 2396(XXIII), adopted by Assembly on 2 December 1968, included the following provisions:

7. Calls upon all States and organizations to provide greater moral, political and material assistance to the South African liberation movement in its legitimate struggle;
8. Expresses its grave concern over the ruthless persecution of opponents of apartheid under arbitrary laws and the treatment of freedom fighters who were taken prisoner during the legitimate struggle for liberation, and :...
  - (e) Declares that such freedom fighters should be treated as prisoners of war under international law, particularly the Geneva Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War of 12 August 1949:
  - (d) Requests the Secretary-General to establish and publicize as widely as possible:
    - (i) A register of persons who have been executed, imprisoned, placed under house arrest or banning orders or deported for their opposition to apartheid;
    - (ii) A register of all available information on acts of brutality committed by the Government of South Africa and its officials against opponents of apartheid in prisons;
9. Commends the activities of anti-apartheid movements and other organizations engaged in providing assistance to the victims of apartheid and in promoting their cause, and invites all States, organizations and individuals to make generous contributions in support of their endeavours ; ...
11. Requests all States to discourage the flow of immigrants, particularly skilled and technical personnel, to South Africa;,,,
12. Requests all States and organizations to suspend cultural, educational, sporting and other exchanges with the racist régime and with organizations or institutions in South Africa which practise apartheid;

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<sup>61</sup> I did not attend the Geneva meetings. I had met the Geneva anti-apartheid committee earlier. Pasteur Bungener was director of the Geneva Africa Institute. Another leader of the group was a South African scientist at CERN, ...

I must make special mention of the proposal for a sports boycott against South Africa. Until then, we had reported on actions by sports organizations in excluding South Africa, but had not called for a boycott to avoid criticism that it was governmental interference in sports. By 1968, however, the South African Government had interfered more and more blatantly to enforce segregation in sports and hamper the non-racial sports bodies.<sup>62</sup>

From 1968, the Special Committee devoted much attention to promoting a boycott of sports teams and sportspersons from South Africa. It developed close cooperation with the South African Non-Racial Committee for Open Sport (SAN-ROC). The sports boycott, involving millions of people, became a significant component of the campaign against apartheid and the Special Committee was able to make a significant contribution in promoting it.

### ***Oliver Tambo in Stockholm***

The session in Sweden had originally been planned for late May, to include the Africa Liberation Day on 25 May. But Achkar Marof said he had to stay in New York in May to look after the sale of the building of the Guinean mission. It was difficult to find hotel accommodation in Stockholm in June. The government found accommodation at Hotel Foresta and some delegates had to share rooms. I shared a suite with Oliver Tambo.

Oliver arrived the evening before the first meeting of the Special Committee where he was scheduled to speak. He had not prepared a speech and began working on it at the hotel.

I was waiting on the terrace with my secretary and the information officer so that my secretary could type the text for the interpreters and the information officer could prepare the press release. Oliver was so meticulous and such a perfectionist that it was almost 3 a.m. when he finished and the sun was rising in the Nordic summer.

After the Special Committee session was over the Social Democratic Party took him as its guest. While the Chairman of the Special Committee had been received by a Minister, Oliver was received by the Prime Minister. I believe he asked that the Swedish Government should consider providing direct assistance to the ANC. He had said at the meeting of the Special Committee:

“We have appealed for direct assistance to the liberation movement, precisely because in the final analysis it is the liberation movement, it is the people of South Africa, acting politically, that will destroy apartheid, and if the world is so concerned about the destruction of apartheid and the

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<sup>62</sup> Until the 1960s, there were no laws against mixed sport as such: segregation was the "custom", with a few occasional mixed games in Cape and Natal. Racism was enforced by the white sports bodies and administrators, with assistance from the government and local authorities.

removal of that scourge from mankind, the task of doing that rests on the liberation movement and there is every reason why we should come to Sweden as an organisation, as a liberation movement, and ask to be directly assisted. We have asked the United Nations to authorise this so that individual governments and peoples and countries will have no excuse for refusing us direct assistance.

“the emphasis must shift from sympathising with the victims of apartheid to supporting these victims in their struggle to conquer racism.”

Next year, when Olof Palme became Prime Minister, the Swedish Government decided to make direct grants to the southern African liberation movements for humanitarian and social purposes.<sup>63</sup> The Swedish Parliament declared that assistance to liberation movements was compatible with international law; that was based on the provisions in the resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly. The ANC, however, did not receive a grant until 1972.

### ***Luthuli Memorial Fund***

I had organised a special session of the Special Committee in Stockholm in June 1968, and was anxious to have some concrete results emanating from the session. I wrote to Ambassador Sverker Astrom of Sweden before the session suggesting that Sweden consider the establishment of a Luthuli Memorial Fund and announce it during the session. (Chief Luthuli had died in July 1967). Astrom said that Sweden would consider a modest Fund in the name of Luthuli in the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation.

Later, when I met Robert Resha of the ANC in London, he told me that the ANC had a memorial in mind, that a group was working on plans, and that we should not cross wires.

Oliver Tambo said at the Special Committee meeting in Stockholm:

“The African National Congress is working on plans to honour his[Chief Luthuli] memory, and when these are announced it is our hope that the world that knew and supported his leadership will participate in paying lasting tribute to his life and work.”

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<sup>63</sup> Until then, the Swedish Government made grants to other organizations such as the United Nations, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Defence and Aid Fund, the World Council of Churches, the International University Exchange Fund and the Amnesty International for assistance to political prisoners and their families, scholarships to student refugees, and refugee relief.

The Government gave no grants to the ANC to assist it in the struggle for freedom. The Social Democratic Party of Sweden gave small grants to the ANC.



The Special Committee invited Oliver Tambo and Canon Collins, among others, to the Stockholm session. I had suggested a private meeting in Stockholm to discuss all needs for assistance and the channels, in order to increase assistance and secure better coordination. I had in mind that humanitarian and educational assistance was not enough: we should move further and secure assistance for political aspects of the struggle. The meeting was arranged at Per Wastberg's cottage outside Stockholm and I had to take people secretly without other members of the Special Committee being aware. The meeting was attended by Oliver Tambo, Canon Collins, Sverker Astrom, Achkar Marof of Guinea (Chairman of the Special Committee) and Edwin Ogebe Ogbu of Nigeria (Vice-Chairman of the Committee of Trustees of the UN Trust Fund for South Africa).

Oliver Tambo explained that he had in mind a fund "as broad as" Luthuli's vision - and that it would not be limited to assistance to ANC.

As a result of the consultation, Mrs. Alva Myrdal announced to the Special Committee next day - our private meeting was on a Sunday - that Sweden would consider a contribution to the Luthuli Memorial Foundation when the ANC established it. Ambassador Marof stopped in Copenhagen on the way to London and obtained a similar commitment from Denmark.

Until that time, none of the Nordic Governments made direct contributions to liberation movements. The Nordic Socialist Parties made small contributions. (That meant that the liberation movements got arms from the East, and humanitarian assistance for families of prisoners and scholarships from the Nordic countries. They received little support for travel, political activities, propaganda). I thought the Luthuli Foundation was a step forward.

I suggested to Oliver Tambo that the ANC should establish the Luthuli Memorial Fund soon and undertake projects – e.g. medical aid, information, research institute etc. They could be at the level of about \$50,000 for the first year. Contributions would increase in subsequent years as the Foundation proved itself.

But the ANC took a long time to set up the Foundation. Mr. Yengwa, who was appointed director, gave Sweden an unrealistic budget of 500,000 thousand pounds. Sweden said it would consider a grant of 16,000 pounds – about what I had expected. But when they found little was happening except for administrative costs for a secretary, office and travel, they gave up.

Meanwhile, in 1969, the Swedish Government decided - possibly as a result of discussions of Oliver Tambo with Olof Palme in June 1968- to make direct contributions to liberation movements for economic and social projects. That was a breakthrough and I was anxious to get other governments to follow the example. Since most governments - including Nordic governments - find it difficult to give money directly to liberation movements, and since Parliaments ask for accounting, I thought that a non-military OAU Fund in Addis Ababa - distinct

from the OAU Liberation Fund in Dar es Salaam - was the best approach. (The ANC was against a UN Fund for liberation movements).

More on the OAU Fund and the Luthuli Memorial Fund later.

### ***Oliver Tambo, Barney Desai and the PAC***

On the way to Stockholm for the session of the Special Committee, I stopped in London. Barney Desai had invited me several times for dinner, and I accepted his invitation this time. I went to his flat rather late. His wife was there putting the children to sleep. I spoke to her for a few minutes. She seemed harassed.

Then I went down to meet Barney. He was in a room with several PAC people. The room was rather dark and they were listening to a tape of Malcolm X and shouting in approval of violent anti-white statements. One of them was making a gesture as if sharpening a sword. I was very disturbed.

I returned from Stockholm to London on the same flight as Oliver Tambo and we had a long chat.

I told him that I was very disturbed to see Barney at home. His wife had probably met him when he was well off managing movie theatres and influential in the Coloured community – he was elected to the City Council - but now she was miserable as a refugee.

Barney – Rissik Haribhai - was an Indian in Johannesburg and had long been active in politics. He went to Cape Town and became the leader of the South African Coloured People's Congress which was associated with the ANC in the Congress Alliance. He came into exile in 1963. I heard that the ANC resented that he spoke to the press in Dar es Salaam instead of acting under ANC guidance.

About 1966, ANC condemned a statement made by Barney in Norway about the armed struggle.

Soon after, Barney joined the PAC and became a senior member of the organization.

In London, the African diplomatic corps held a reception for the Special Committee. At that reception Barney rather hesitantly greeted Oliver but Oliver responded with great warmth.

I mention this because Oliver was always courteous to members of the PAC as individuals, despite strong political differences.

In 1975, the Special Committee organized a Seminar in Paris. Oliver arrived a day late. Elias Ntloedibe, the PAC representative, said that he had met Oliver at the Nairobi airport and Oliver told him to represent the ANC until he arrived!

Some ANC leaders disapproved of Oliver's courtesy to the PAC. They said that the PAC was using his courteous remarks for propaganda. Apart from the Communists, Robert Resha and Johnny Makatni were most hostile to PAC. In 1982, the Chairman of the Special Committee hosted a luncheon for Archbishop Trevor Huddleston and others who were awarded gold medals for their contribution to the campaign for sanctions against South Africa. He invited leaders of the ANC and the PAC. Johnny Makatini did not inform Oliver and took him away to another appointment so that the ANC was absent.

Oliver told me, when we met at a conference in Lisbon in 1983 that he would not waste time denouncing the PAC. Johnny,<sup>64</sup> he said, was carrying on his own war with the PAC.

## ANNEX I

### SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE POLICIES OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

#### **Letter from the Acting Chairman to Members**

20 June 1963

Sir,

The Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, H.E. Mr. Adlai Stevenson, visited me today, in my capacity as the Acting Chairman of the Special Committee, in connexion with the letter dated 11 April 1963 from the Chairman of the Special Committee to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Member States (A/AC.115/L.5).

He stated in response to the Chairman's letter that the United States Government was happy to cooperate with the Special Committee in the performance of its work.

The attitude of the United States toward the policies of apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa had been explained by Ambassador

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<sup>64</sup> Johnstone Makatini, ANC representative in the United States and head of foreign affairs department of the ANC.

Francis T.P. Plimpton in his statement before the Special Political Committee of the General Assembly on 19 October 1962, when he said that the United States was unalterably and irrevocably opposed to apartheid in all its aspects, and that the United States believed that each Member State can and should take measures which, given its particular circumstances, would be most effective to bring about the result that we all desire.

The United States Government recognizes the extreme seriousness of the situation in the Republic of South Africa. Its anxiety and concern about the situation is increasing day by day.

The United States has made almost continuous representations to the Government of South Africa to persuade it to abandon the policies of apartheid and to fulfill its obligations under the United Nations Charter. The United States will continue to use its best efforts toward that end through all available official and unofficial means.

The United States Government is continuing to enforce the policy of forbidding the sale to the South African Government of any arms, whether from governmental or commercial sources, which could be used by that Government to enforce apartheid either in South Africa or in Southwest Africa.

The United States will be happy to make available to the Special Committee any information in its possession relevant to the mandate of the Special Committee, as appropriate.

I informed Ambassador Stevenson that I would convey the substance of his statement to the Special Committee.

I intend to announce the contents of this note at the next meeting of the Special Committee. It is not being released to the press until the next meeting.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed)

Fernando VOLIO Jimenez (Costa Rica)  
Acting Chairman

## ANNEX II

### **MY CONSULTATIONS WITH LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN DAR ES SALAAM, AUGUST 19, 1965**

***Consultation with African National Congress of South Africa [Duma Nokwe, Alfred Kgokong (pseudonym)]***

**NEED FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION:**

I suggested that they make a plan, in collaboration with other liberation movements for a vocational institute, so that finance can be sought. I also suggested apprenticeship in printing etc., and placing candidates abroad for technical training.

They said the African Liberation Committee gave \$60,000 for South Africa – two-thirds for the ANC and one-third for PAC. The Committee has practically recognized SWAPO as the only liberation movement for South West Africa, and FRELIMO for Mozambique. It is moving towards recognition of MPLA for Angola.

It would be easiest if ZANU was declared illegal as it split away after the Liberation Committee was formed.

United States: They had direct contact with Ambassador Leonhart, and occasionally with others. John Blacken used to deal with students. He was transferred to Washington and came back recently on a visit.

ANC protested recently to US as they “stole” some students. US gave a list of ANC students who were given scholarships.

Liberation Committee gives money only for specific purposes – e.g. to send to South Africa etc. The budget has to be detailed and that creates a security problem. It gives no money for publicity. There is need for some help for publicity. The Liberation Committee, however, encourages movements to get funds from abroad. Material can be sent to the movement, addressed to “African Liberation Committee for (name of movement)” so that the movement can take delivery tax free after clearance with Foreign Office. That is no problem.

***Consultation with the Representative of FRELIMO (Joaquim Chissano)***

There are about 12,000 Mozambican refugees in Tanzania.. The Tanzania Christian Council, with support from World Council of Churches etc., has set up a camp to care for them. There are a few problems. FRELIMO would like the children to study Portuguese so that they may readjust, but they are thinking of “resettlement.”

In Malawi, there are about 8, 500 refugees, including over 2,000 on the island. Transporting them to Tanzania is expensive, even if Malawi allows that. Portuguese are able to go and meet the refugees, and persuade them to return. There is no relief work by Christian Council.

The struggle inside Mozambique is going on well. It can be sustained. There are many recruits from inside, and people are not fleeing from the country any more.

But there is problem of supplies which would be simpler if there was a port. All military and other supplies have to be carried a long way across the river on the border. But this route is safe as it is near mountains and any planes can be shot at.

But in the liberated areas, Portuguese closed schools and shops and ran away. The people need things like soap. They cannot be supplied from Tanzania as Tanzania does not accept Portuguese money. (It can be used in Malawi through some traders). Some things can be purchased across battle lines, but their priority is for the needs of the fighters.

FRELIMO will get a radio soon so that it can issue daily bulletins of the struggle. It is receiving support but problems and needs increase.

It does not want to pay attention to the rival organization,<sup>65</sup> as it wishes to concentrate on the struggle.

***Consultation with Mr. Eldridge of African-American Institute (and visit to their institution at Kurasini)***

When a candidate applies for admission, the Institute has to ask him whether he is registered with the Tanzanian Government. The government will give him registration only if he is approved by a liberation movement. Thus, all students are sponsored by liberation movements.

Most of the students are from Mozambique and South West Africa. Many of the Mozambicans stay at the Mozambique Institute nearby. Hostels in the Institute are nearing completion.

The Mozambique Institute conducts primary education, and the AAI helps with English instruction in the afternoon. AAI takes them when they reach level of Standard VI.

Originally AAI tried to operate as a scholarship scheme, but it did not work as no students could be fitted into odd places offered by the government in its schools. It branched out from English instruction into a full school which goes up to "O" level.

Mr. Eldridge is against expanding to "A" level because facilities will have to be greatly expanded. Those who graduate from "O" level can go to U.S. colleges or Zambia or Haile Selassie College in Ethiopia or Lovanium, but not other African institutions or Britain.

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<sup>65</sup> UDENAMO

It takes about two years to train South African J.C. graduates to “O” level.

I asked him why most AAI students went into humanities. He said the candidates (except for some girls) usually did not want technical training.

The cost in the school: Food is 4 shillings a day (compared to 3 shillings in other local schools). Adding clothing etc., it comes to 1800 shillings a year. If operating costs and amortization for buildings were included, the cost is roughly about \$2000 a pupil.

They resent turnover or disappearance of students because of other offers, e.g. from UN.

### ANNEX III

#### **PROBLEMS OF SOUTH AFRICAN REFUGEES (WITH REFERENCE TO POSSIBLE UN ASSISTANCE) Note to the Secretary-General U Thant, May 19, 1966**

(The following is based on consultations with a number of non-governmental organizations in Uppsala, London and Geneva; with the UNHCR<sup>66</sup> staff in Geneva; and the OAU Secretariat).

The refugee problem in Southern Africa may be divided into two categories: (a) The mass exodus from the Portuguese territories; and (b) the movement of relatively few refugees from South Africa, South West Africa and Southern Rhodesia.<sup>67</sup>

The refugees from Portuguese territories have moved across national boundaries, but largely remain within their tribal areas. The UNHCR has cooperated with Governments and voluntary agencies to resettle them on land. Some refugees from Mozambique have returned after a period of time: the rest may be permanently settled in Tanzania.

The UNHCR has appealed for more funds and is setting up a special fund for refugee education. Unless there is a new and larger exodus of refugees, it would seem that the matter can be handled adequately by the UNHCR. The host countries are cooperative and the refugees are willing to be resettled.

The problems are quite different as regards the refugees from South Africa, South West Africa and Southern Rhodesia. The number of refugees is small—perhaps

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<sup>66</sup> United Nations High Commissioner of Refugees, Geneva

<sup>67</sup> There are now about 250,000 refugees from Angola, mainly in the Congo, and 14,000 refugees from Mozambique in Tanzania and Zambia.

about a thousand in Central and southern Africa. But they are mostly young men who are highly political. They cannot be “resettled” on land. A large percentage desire education and subsequent employment.

The United Nations has begun to assist the South African refugees through the education programme and the Trust Fund. But a number of problems remain to be dealt with.

### ***Location of South African refugees***

There are about 70 South African refugees in Basutoland, about 60 in Swaziland and perhaps two or three hundred in Zambia, Tanzania and other countries in Central Africa (not counting “freedom fighters”).

### ***Refugees in Basutoland and Swaziland***

The refugees in Basutoland and Swaziland have no means of support and need relief. The UN Trust Fund should soon be able to provide the necessary funds for relief.

For some time, voluntary organizations have contemplated an airlift of these refugees, but the plans have not developed as no African country was willing to receive them. Perhaps the United Nations can persuade some African countries to receive these refugees as it will soon be in a position to provide for their maintenance. The matter may perhaps be taken up after the UN Trust Fund concludes arrangements with the UNHCR for relief.

Meanwhile, the Basutoland authorities are levying substantial taxes on relief payments by voluntary agencies. This problem may perhaps be taken up with the authorities at the time of the independence of the territory, expected to be October 1966.

There may be a small increase in the number of refugees in these territories, as several South African students have enrolled in non-racial schools there and may not return to South Africa.

### ***Refugees in Bechuanaland***

Bechuanaland is essentially a transit centre for refugees from South Africa. However, many refugees have been held up in the territory for long periods: Zambia insists on prolonged investigations before admitting the refugees and has recently been very reluctant to admit them. The refugees are mainly in three camps supported by voluntary organizations. (The Trust Fund should soon be able to provide funds for maintenance). Long waiting and uncertainty has had psychological effects.



The UN Education and Training Programme has so far had no contact with these refugees. If funds are available, it should attempt to arrange for scholarships while the refugees are in Bechuanaland. The UN office in Bechuanaland should be instructed to help, as the Lusaka office has been.

### *Refugees in Zambia and Tanzania*

In Zambia and Tanzania, relief for refugees is being provided by voluntary organizations. The UN, as well as a number of embassies and the African-American Institute, provide scholarships.

Both Zambia and Tanzania, formerly very liberal on South African refugees, have become very strict. (Zambia regards itself as mainly a transit centre). The refugees face many difficulties.

The recognized liberation movements—the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress—are able to assist their followers with scholarships. But the refugees find difficulty in obtaining travel documents: at best, they get documents which do not have a provision permitting their return and these are not acceptable to other Governments.

A particularly serious problem has arisen with “dissidents”. This group includes (a) a sizeable number who had been expelled from the Pan Africanist Congress in the past two years because of changes in leadership; and (b) refugees who claim to belong to one of the two organizations in the hope of getting assistance and later try to seek opportunities on their own.

As Zambia and Tanzania admit only refugees belonging to the two recognized political groups, and for whom the groups take responsibility, they tend to declare these dissidents “prohibited immigrants”. (The P.A.C. has apparently pressed the Governments to expel the dissidents). Under the agreement among the East African countries, a “prohibited immigrant” in Zambia or Tanzania is automatically prohibited in Kenya or Uganda. Kenya, for its part, has admitted hardly any South African refugees.

The rivalries among the political groups and the problem of dissidents have, in fact, contributed to the increasingly negative attitude of Zambia and Tanzania toward the South African refugees.

I spoke to representatives of ANC and PAC in London and told them that their sectarian attitudes were harming all refugees. While they can be strict about security and membership in the underground, they need not create difficulties for other compatriots who are interested in education, etc. I mentioned this problem to Mr. Diallo Telli<sup>68</sup>: he said he was aware of the problem and suggested that I

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<sup>68</sup> Diallo Telli was then Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity.

should use my personal friendship with leaders of both groups in Dar es Salaam to persuade them to adopt a better attitude.

### ***Refugees in other African countries***

Occasionally refugees are stranded in other countries, after leaving Zambia and Tanzania. (These seem to be mainly P.A.C. dissidents).

Recently, 18 arrived in Ethiopia and were soon asked to leave. Voluntary organizations intervened with the Ethiopian Government and the expulsion was delayed. Two found jobs in E.C.A. and six are now being considered for scholarships.

Some others are stranded in the Sudan.

### ***Problem of asylum and travel documents***

This problem was discussed in detail in the Uppsala Seminar. It came up at my meeting with the legal office of the UNHCR

The Uppsala Seminar decided that it would be useful to arrange another seminar in Africa, with the participation of African Governments and voluntary agencies, to consider the matter. One suggestion was that African Governments may share the responsibility by deciding that each country would grant a number of passports to the refugees. The UNHCR office is interested in this problem: it has already made passports based on the refugee convention available to various Governments free of charge.

It may be recalled that the report on the UN Education Programme for South Africa provided that the Director would take up the question of travel documents with the host Governments. No action has so far been taken. As this problem has already come up in the case of some applicants granted UN scholarships, some action should soon be taken. It would seem appropriate for the Secretary-General to suggest to the host Governments to take a more humanitarian attitude, especially as the numbers are small and the UN is relieving the burden on the host Governments. The Director of the Education Programme and the UNHCR can then follow up.

### ***Placement in educational institutions in Africa***

The Education Programme was expected to try, as much as possible, to place refugee students in educational institutions in Africa.

But this has proved very difficult. Zambia has few places available. In Tanzania, there is the difficulty of language. Kenya has stopped admissions, pending a

review of the whole question of refugees (especially in connection with the problems after completion of studies).

Discussions with Governments and educational institutions are essential, but this cannot be done in each individual case, or even for each programme, separately.

### ***Problem of employment of refugee graduates***

For the present, there are perhaps adequate scholarship opportunities for South African refugees. But the problem of employment is becoming serious. Voluntary organizations, and countries which have provided scholarships, are concerned about employment, and wonder if the United Nations can help. The first large group of South African refugees will graduate this year and the numbers will increase year by year.

The graduates would prefer to work in Africa and Africa has the need for technical personnel. But the South African refugees find it difficult to obtain suitable employment. They are regarded neither as expatriates nor as nationals. Governments often prefer to employ Europeans on contract as they will have no permanent obligations and as salaries are partly covered by foreign aid.

The question of employment was discussed when the UN Education Programme was being formulated, but deferred to a later date. Perhaps the United Nations can use its good offices to promote employment of refugees by national governments, or in developments programmes supported by United Nations agencies. A roster of available refugee manpower may perhaps be maintained at E.C.A. for the use of Governments. (It now has a roster of Africans available for employment in other African States). The UNESCO may perhaps help in placing graduates in teaching positions.

This problem may perhaps be studied soon in the UN and discussed at the next ACC<sup>69</sup> meeting.

### ***Summary***

To summarize the main points in the above, the following might be considered:

- (a) Urgent efforts to obtain contributions for the Education Programme for South Africa;
- (b) Suggestion by the Secretary-General to African Governments (particularly Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya) that they should take a more humanitarian attitude to the problems of the refugees, especially with regard to travel documents, non-party refugees, etc., to be followed up by UNHCR and the Director of Education Programme;

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<sup>69</sup> Administrative Committee on Coordination, composed of the heads of the United Nations and its specialized agencies

- (c) Discussion with Bechuanaland and Basutoland in September about the problem of South African refugees;
- (d) Greater effort by the Education Programme for South Africans with respect to
  - (i) arrangements to provide scholarships for applicants now in South Africa;
  - (ii) contact with refugees in Bechuanaland; (iii) placement in African institutions; and (iv) study of the problem of employment.
- (e) Study of problem of employment of African refugee graduates in general and discussion with specialized agencies;
- (f) Coordination of all special educational programmes operated by the UN (and the proposed UNHCR fund for education).