

REMINISCENCES ON INTERNATIONAL ACTION FOR FREEDOM OF NAMIBIA

E.S. Reddy

Council on African Affairs, New York, 1946

I arrived in New York in March 1946 for graduate studies. When the Indian passive resistance began in South Africa in June 1946, I was anxious to get information and began to visit the library of the Council on African Affairs frequently. They used to get two weeklies from South Africa - *The World* from Johannesburg and *Guardian* from Cape Town.

Paul Robeson was the chairman of the Council. Dr. WEB Du Bois was provided an office in the building after he left NAACP. I became friendly with Dr. Alpheus Hunton, the research director, and then met Robeson and Du Bois. I was invited to various events at the Council.

The Council held a reception, probably in October, in honour of the Indian delegation led by Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, sister of Jawaharlal Nehru (a friend of Paul Roberson from the thirties in Britain).

Early in November, a delegation led by Dr. A.B. Xuma, President-General of the African National Congress, came to New York to lobby the General Assembly and advise the Indian delegation. The delegation had been organised by the Indian Congresses of the Transvaal and Natal which had been leading the passive resistance movement against the "Ghetto Act". Dr. Xuma seemed as much concerned about stopping South Africa's move to annex South West Africa as with denouncing racism in South Africa. The other members of the delegation also opposed the annexation.

The Council on African Affairs had already, in October, issued a statement opposing the incorporation of South West Africa into South Africa. *The New York Times* published, on 12 November, a letter by Dr. Du Bois, supporting Dr. Xuma.

On Saturday, 9 November 1946, the Council arranged a reception for the delegation and invited representatives of many organisations and the press.

On Sunday, 17 November 1946, the Council organised a meeting at the Abyssinian Church in Harlem to protest racism in South Africa and the proposal to annex South West Africa. Speakers included Mrs. Pandit and Krishna Menon from the Indian delegation, and Dr. Xuma and H.A. Naidoo from South Africa.

On Thursday, 21 November, a picket was organised by the Council at the South African Consulate at 500 Fifth Avenue.

I attended all these events which gave publicity to African opinion in South Africa and South West Africa.



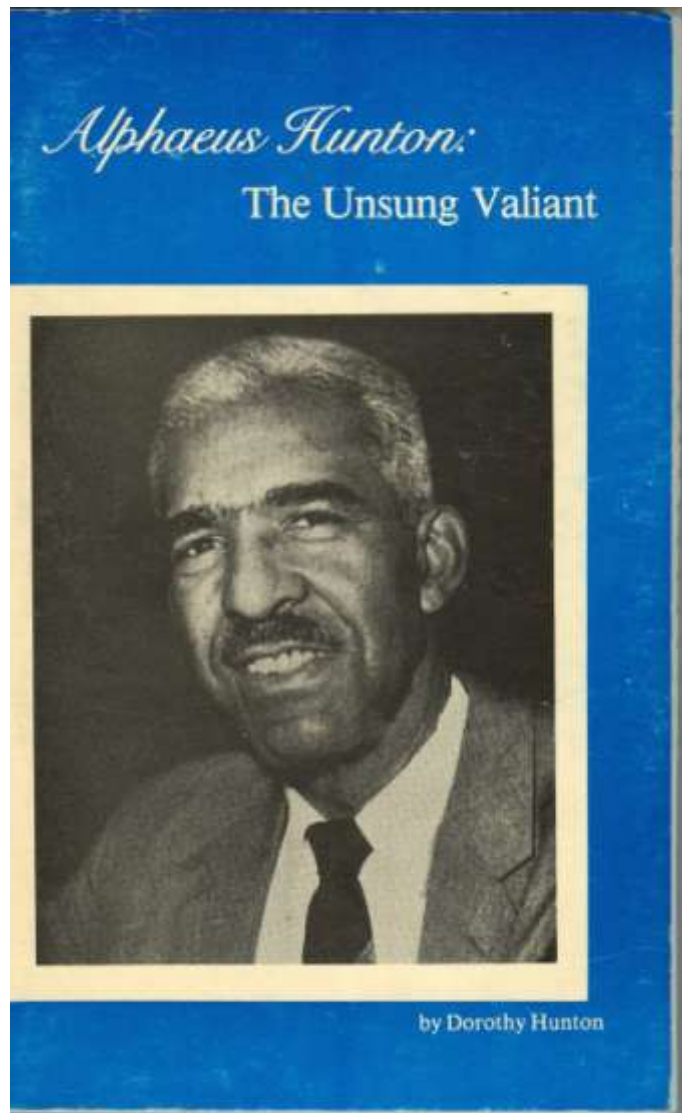
Enuga S. Reddy and Ms. Anasuya Godiwala, Indian students, at the demonstration in front of the South African Consulate in New York, 21 November 1946

Alpheus was publishing a monthly bulletin and producing occasional fact sheets. He prepared a fact sheet on South West Africa to counter South Africa's move to obtain United Nations approval for the annexation of Namibia. The Council also published a pamphlet on South West Africa, by Alpheus Hunton, in 1946.

The Council had an NGO status at the United Nations and he used to go to the United Nations during the Assembly session from October to December. There were hardly any African delegates then – only Egypt, South Africa, Ethiopia and Liberia were members of the United Nations from Africa – but the Indian delegation was helpful. In the United Nations Secretariat, he found Daniel Chapman of Gold Coast in the Department of Trusteeship helpful. [Chapman became the first ambassador of Ghana to the United Nations when Ghana became independent in 1957.]

At that time, most delegates knew little about South West Africa and South Africa's proposal was expected to be easily accepted. But opposition by India and the Soviet Union persuaded many other delegations to express misgivings. Alpheus felt that the information provided by the

Council helped in informing delegations and promoting opposition. The Assembly postponed discussion of the South African proposal and the integrity of South West Africa was preserved.



Cover page of a biography of Alphaeus Hunton by his wife Dorothy, 1986

[Field Marshal Jan Christian Smuts had personally appeared before the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly on November 4, 1946, to move the proposal for the approval of annexation. He presented a document claiming that the wishes of the people had been ascertained, and that the Europeans and majority of "Natives" (208,850 against 33,520) favoured integration. The wishes of the European population had been expressed through the unanimous resolutions of the South West African Legislative Assembly.

"The wishes of the natives had been ascertained in an equally democratic but rather different form, with due regard to their differing tribal organisation and customs... the task of explaining the purpose of the consultation had been entrusted to the most experienced officials, Commissioners who had long resided

among the natives, who understood fully the native mind, and who enjoyed the complete confidence of the tribes."

I mentioned this to Sam Nujoma many years later. He said that his father had told him that the Commissioner-General, mentioned by General Smuts, was cruel. He had been known as "the whip".]

My first discussion with SWAPO, 1965

I believe my first discussion with SWAPO was in Dar es Salaam in 1965.

I had gone to the OAU in Addis Ababa to provide "technical assistance" at the request of its Secretary-General, Diallo Telli – and proceeded from there to Dar es Salaam to meet the Executive Director of the African Liberation Committee and the South African liberation movements (ANC and PAC).

I took the opportunity to meet FRELIMO and SWAPO, though that was not part of mission. At the SWAPO office, Jacob Kuhangua, the Secretary-General, briefed me. He said SWAPO did not boast of chiefs and other eminences, and was a party of the common people.

[I believe that, at that time, both SWAPO and SWANU were recognised by the OAU. SWAPO did not get much attention as SWANU was much more radical in its statements. Michael Scott on behalf of Chief Kapuuo, Kerina and others also used to appear in the United Nations as petitioners.]

[Since then I have met SWAPO leaders numerous times. I will note in this paper a few significant meetings I remember.]

Termination of Mandate by the United Nations General Assembly, 1966

I did not have official responsibility for Namibia - except in a very limited way as secretary of the Committee of Trustees of the UN Trust Fund for South Africa (whose mandate was expanded around 1967 to include assistance to prisoners and their families in Namibia), and later (in 1973) as director of the UN Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africans. But I was in frequent contact with the Secretary-General of the OAU, Diallo Telli (the first Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid), and tried to help on African issues through my friends in the UN and outside. (U Thant, the Secretary-General, and CV Narasimhan, his Chef de Cabinet, appreciated what I was doing.)

Early in 1966, I suggested to Mr. Narasimhan that the Secretariat plan for action after the forthcoming judgement of the International Court. Soon after, I was invited by Mr. Narasimhan to a meeting of several senior officials with Ernest Gross, Counsel for Ethiopia and Liberia before the Court. Mr. Gross was hopeful that the judgement would be partially in favour of Ethiopia and Liberia, and that the Court would confirm the supervisory role of the United Nations and require South Africa to send reports.

The judgement in July, however, proved a great disappointment.¹

I had taken an interest in this matter some time before. I had been contacted by Ronald Segal who had organised the International Conference on South West Africa (Oxford, 23-27 March 1966) which had recommended termination of the mandate. (The Conference was chaired at first by Olof Palme and, after he left, by Ola Ullstein, also of Sweden. Both later became Prime Ministers.). I spoke to a few African delegates about the recommendation of the conference.

The proposal for the termination of the mandate gained support among African delegations. Early September, the Special Committee on Decolonisation proposed that the General Assembly terminate the mandate and that the United Nations assume direct responsibility for the administration of South West Africa. The African Group agreed on a draft resolution soon after, and obtained support of the Asian-African Group for its draft. The General Assembly decided to discuss the issue of South West Africa in plenary meetings as an urgent matter even during the general debate at the beginning of the session.

On 27 September, Ghana introduced the draft resolution, which eventually had 54 sponsors (mostly Asian and African). Under it, the General Assembly would terminate the mandate; decide to assume direct responsibility for the administration of the territory; establish a UN Administering Authority to administer the territory with a view to preparing it for independence; and request the Administering Authority to proceed immediately with its work in the territory.

Most delegations agreed that South Africa had violated the mandate, but felt that it was hasty, impractical and unwise to decide on immediate United Nations administration of the territory.

Achkar Marof, the ambassador of Guinea and Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, spoke to me about the matter. I expressed the view that a resolution which did not get a unanimous or overwhelming vote - a "black and brown resolution" - would not be historic or effective. The Nordic, Latin American and other views should be taken into account and every effort should be made to get Western support. (I felt that this view could best be pressed by a "radical" delegation like that of Guinea so that it would not be easily brushed aside as inspired by the West).

Marof agreed and took up my suggestion in the African Group.

I kept in contact with several delegates apart from Achkar Marof, especially Ambassador Sverker C. Astrom of Sweden, Alfonso Garcia Robles of Mexico, and Lord Caradon of the United Kingdom - and knew the attitudes of the different groups.²

¹ Some people had entertained great hopes about the judgment of the International Court. Pat Duncan, then representative of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, visited Washington in July 1963 and met Robert Kennedy, Attorney-General. He told me that the United States would take strong action after the judgment of the Court.

² These were all good friends with whom I had worked and who had confidence in me. Astrom was the Chairman of the Committee of Trustees of UN Trust Fund for South Africa. Lord Caradon was the Rapporteur of the Group of Experts on South Africa (1964), of which I was secretary. And Garcia Robles was my director in the UN from 1949 to 1956.

I kept the Secretary-General, U Thant, fully informed of my consultations.

Achkar Marof persuaded the African Group to hold consultations with other groups in order to arrive at a draft that most States could vote for.

On 26 October, Mexico introduced amendments to the Asian-African draft on behalf of 21 Latin American States. Under the draft, instead of immediately assuming direct responsibility for the administration of the territory, the United Nations would establish an Ad Hoc Committee on Southern Africa to recommend practical means for the administration of South West Africa “so as to enable the people of the Territory to exercise the right of self-determination and to achieve independence”. The recommendations were to be discussed by a special session of the General Assembly.

Guinea, on behalf of the Asian and African sponsors, accepted all the amendments. Nordic states then supported the resolution as amended.

On 27 October, the Assembly adopted the draft, as amended by Latin Americans, by 114 votes to 2 (South Africa, Portugal), with 3 abstentions (France, Malawi and the United Kingdom) as resolution 2145 (XXI). Lord Caradon made a very friendly statement on behalf of the United Kingdom though he could not vote in favour of the resolution.

Achkar Marof deserves all the credit for this outcome.



Achkar Marof, manager of Ballets Africaine, was appointed delegate of Guinea to the United Nations. He made a significant contribution to international action for freedom in southern Africa. He was later imprisoned and killed by the Sekou Toure government.

His predecessor as Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid and later Secretary-General of Organisation of African Unity, Boubacar Diallo Telli, was an African patriot who made a great contribution to African freedom. He was starved to death in prison by Sekou Toure and is also forgotten.

I felt that Africa and the world have been remiss in not honouring these and other heroes of African freedom whom I have known.

To the best of my memory, the liberation movement in South West Africa was hardly consulted in the negotiations for the resolution. We did not know that at this time, SWAPO had begun preparations for an armed struggle in the territory. SWAPO was represented in New York during this time by Jacob Kuhangua who had come for medical treatment.

I could not pay attention to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee and the discussion at the special session of the General Assembly in April 1967 as I was preoccupied with my work on South Africa and some serious problems in the Secretariat. I was not enthusiastic about the African proposals about a Council for South West Africa and a Commissioner. I felt that they only generate false hopes among the oppressed people, while action to exert pressure on South Africa and its friends was essential.

[The Ad Hoc Committee could not agree on its conclusions; it split four ways. During the special session, the African delegations could accommodate the views of Latin American delegates, not of others. The resolution establishing the Council for South West Africa and the Commissioner for United Nations administration of the territory received 85 votes to 2, with 30 abstentions. Both Western and Communist States abstained and did not accept membership in the Council which remained ineffective.]

Namibia Institute – SWAPO proposal in 1966

In April 1966, Jacob Kuhangua, then Secretary-General of SWAPO, came to see me. (He was then receiving medical treatment in New York and spent a long time in hospital). He brought a draft prospectus for an "institute for the education of South West African exiles in Tanzania" on which he was consulting some friends.

Refugees with little education were coming from South West Africa to Tanzania. The proposed institute was meant to provide academic, vocational and agricultural education to them.

SWAPO may have been inspired by the Mozambique Institute set up by Eduardo Mondlane of FRELIMO.

The African-American Institute had already set up a school at Kurasini, near Dar es Salaam, for southern African refugees. I visited that school, in 1965 or 1966. There were some eighty Namibians there.

I offered to help Mr. Kuhangua in any way I could and suggested that he approach Sweden. I sent a copy of the prospectus to Jan Romare at the Swedish mission to the UN.

[I told Mr. Kuhangua that I had been thinking of a Namibia Institute for a different purpose. A number of Namibians were being educated abroad under UN and other scholarships. They were living in London, New York, Stockholm, etc. - alienated and not using their training for their country.

I felt that a small institute might be set up in Africa, attached to a university, where they could do research and planning for a free Namibia.]

In October 1967, SWAPO circulated the draft prospectus, with very few changes, to members of the Fourth (Trusteeship) Committee of the UN General Assembly, but there was no serious response.

Meanwhile, I was discussing my suggestion for an institute with the Swedish Government, OAU and others.

In 1970, when I was working closely with Ambassador Pastinen of Finland in the Security Council's committee on Namibia, I spoke to him about the proposal for an institute. Later that year, when a proposal for a UN Fund for Namibia was discussed in the General Assembly, Finland suggested that the establishment of a Namibia Institute, perhaps in Zambia, be considered.

In December 1970, I went to Addis Ababa on a UN mission and arranged to go from there to Lusaka in January to discuss the proposal. I met Dr. Goma, then Vice-Chancellor of the University of Zambia (later Foreign Minister).

I asked if he would be interested in the Institute with about 12 Namibian scholars if funds could be provided by Sweden, UNESCO etc.

He welcomed the proposal. But he said that even if grants were provided, there would be substantial hidden costs to the university which was faced with financial stringency. He felt that perhaps a start could be made with the employment of two or three Namibian researchers.

[In 1973, when Sean MacBride asked my advice about a SWAPO request to accept nomination as UN Commissioner for Namibia, I suggested acceptance for one year - and said that if he could initiate two projects in that time, that would be worthwhile. One was the Institute and the other the Decree on the Natural Resources of Namibia which had been suggested by Neville Rubin in a paper for IUEF.

Mr. MacBride took my suggestion seriously. He planned and obtained approval for a much larger and more ambitious institute in Lusaka than I had envisaged.]

United Nations scholarships for Namibians – consolidation of programmes, 1966-68

In 1966-68, I suggested to Achkar Marof that the educational programmes for all southern African territories should be consolidated and that an Advisory Committee of governments set up to advise on policy and promote contributions.

He agreed and took up the matter in the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly.

The Assembly had set up an education programme for South West Africans in 1961 and for persons from Portuguese territories in 1962. Governments offered scholarships and the Department of Trusteeship helped to place candidates. The results were meagre because of language and other problems.

In 1965 the United Nations established a scholarship programme for South Africans. It was administered by the political department, with voluntary cash contributions from governments. This programme was more successful.

Achkar Marof was able to get approval for the consolidation of all three programmes and assistance was extended to Rhodesians.³

Since then, Namibians were able to receive more scholarships, as the consolidated programme received cash contributions as well as offers of scholarships.

I was appointed director of the consolidated programme – United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africans – in 1973.

Sweden, SWANU and SWAPO

It must have been around 1970 when I casually mentioned to Ambassador Astrom of Sweden that SWAPO considered Sweden a SWANU territory. I believe SWAPO did not receive a grant from Sweden, while liberation movements in Portuguese territories did. There were several SWANU students politically active in Sweden, and that seemed to be the only country where SWANU had a base.

Astrom was agitated. He said the misunderstanding must be cleared. He called his assistant and asked him immediately to make an appointment to meet Sam Nujoma, who was then in New York. I believe they met the same day.

Astrom mentioned that SWAPO did not submit a request with details on projects to be financed. I asked him if Sweden can provide technical assistance to SWAPO for the preparation of projects: he said that was possible.

Trial of Toivo ja Toivo and other Namibians

In 1967, one of my main concerns was the Terrorism Act and the trial of Hermann Toivo ja Toivo and 36 other Namibians under that Act.

The Namibians were arrested early in 1967 and taken to South Africa for detention. In the United Nations, there was hardly any condemnation of the detention of the Namibians for a long time.

The Special Committee on Decolonisation met in Africa, 7-19 June 1967. SWAPO petitioners informed it of the detentions, but the Committee did not adopt a resolution or issue a statement of condemnation.

The first condemnation was at the International Seminar on colonialism, Racial Discrimination and Apartheid in Southern Africa at Kitwe, Zambia, 25 July-4 August. I was secretary of the

³ See General Assembly resolution 2349 (XXII) of 19 December 1967.

Seminar and drafted the resolution which was moved by Azzout of Algeria and adopted. (Ambassador Malecela of Tanzania, Chairman of the Committee on Decolonisation, was Chairman of the Seminar.)

The trial in Pretoria began later in August.

Around 4 September, I received a message from Canon Collins that the South African Government planned to rush the trial of the Namibians and hang half of the accused by the end of September.

I spoke to Ambassador Astrom of Sweden: Sweden rushed money to Defence and Aid Fund for legal defence.

I met a member of the Council for South West Africa in the UN corridor and suggested that the Council should take action. He told me half jokingly, "But, Mr. Reddy, the Council is a Government."

Two or three days later, I went with the Algerian delegate, Azzout, to meet Malecela a few minutes before the Committee on Decolonisation was to meet again, and spoke to him about the message from Canon Collins. Members of the Committee had intended to decide to defer discussion of South West Africa as the Council for South West Africa was dealing with the matter. After we spoke to him, Malecela called his deputy and asked him to propose that discussion of Namibia be deferred, except for the detention and trial of the 37 Namibians. The Committee adopted a resolution on this matter on 12 September. Australia and the United States abstained.

The Council for Namibia made no comment until 27 November when it adopted a consensus statement on the trial; India was President of the Council for that month.

[I mention all this to indicate the problems in the United Nations at the time. The Special Committee against was able to respond quickly to developments as it was boycotted by the Western Powers and was able to act as the promoter of an international campaign.⁴ The Committee on Decolonisation was slower as it then had major Western Powers in its membership, and spent much of its time in statements of delegates. The Council for Namibia was ineffective.]

Joel Carlson, attorney for the accused, flew to New York, and came to see me early one morning direct from the airport - and briefed me about the trial. He believed that nineteen of the accused would be sentenced to death.

He needed funds for defence, but was worried about security in the International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa (IDAF) in London. South Africans suspected he was getting funds from that banned organisation, and he wanted funds from other sources.

⁴ I might have found a way to get attention to the detentions of Namibians through the Special Committee, but its Chairman, Achkar Marof, was detained in Ghana for several weeks in the middle of the year because of a dispute between Ghana and Guinea.

I introduced him to Ambassador Astrom of Sweden (Chairman of the Committee of Trustees of the UN Trust Fund for South Africa) and others, and assured him that we would find ways to provide the costs of defence and that no funds were going directly from IDAF.

He contacted Ambassador Goldberg of the United States who was very helpful and, through him, the Lawyers` Committee for Civil Rights under Law. They gave him a small grant (I believe \$ 5,000) and later set up a Southern Africa Programme for legal defence in South Africa and Namibia. George Lindsay, brother of Mayor John Lindsay of New York, was chairman of that programme.

Joel Carlson also saw church groups and got some support from them.

He was very effective in getting attention for the case.

Carlson suggested that the UN should ask for an Advisory Opinion from the International Court on the legality of the trial.

Sean MacBride, then Secretary-General of the International Commission of Jurists, came to New York early in December 1967. He had been persuaded about the desirability of referring the Namibian trial to the International Court.

I was generally very sceptical about reference to the International Court, especially after the judgement in 1966. (Either around that time or next year, Sir Mohammed Zafrullah Khan and Manfred Lachs, two justices of the Court, were appealing to friends in the UN that the Court should be given another case on Namibia so that it can restore its reputation!).

I told Sean that while I was not convinced of the wisdom of going to the Court and many African delegates had little faith in the Court, I would help him to get a fair hearing by key African ambassadors.

I spoke to Ambassador Achkar Marof of Guinea and others. As a result, Ambassador John Malecela of Tanzania (Chairman of the Special Committee on Decolonisation) hosted a dinner at his home for Mr. MacBride. Those present were: Ambassador Marof of Guinea; Ambassador Sverker Astrom of Sweden; Ambassador Sen of India; Ambassadors of Sudan and Yugoslavia; Mr. Djermakoye, head of the Trusteeship Department in the UN; Constantin Stavropoulos, Legal Counsel of the UN and Acting Commissioner for Namibia; Kenneth Dadzie of Ghana, secretary of the Committee on Decolonisation; and myself.

There was a serious and fruitful discussion.

Ambassador Sen of India felt that all means, including legal, should be used and supported consideration for reference to the International Court. Some others agreed but the Africans did not commit themselves. It was agreed to consult further.

But there was enthusiastic agreement to my suggestion that a resolution be pushed in the General Assembly on the trial of Namibians, with efforts to get maximum vote, and that the matter be

taken to the Security Council in January.⁵ Until then, it was not possible to get the Security Council to take up the Namibian issue. I felt that its Western members would find it difficult to oppose discussion if it was presented as a human rights and humanitarian issue - because of the danger of death sentences. Namibia would then become an item on the agenda of the Security Council and it may be easier to press the political issue later. [There was a general feeling that consideration of an issue by the Security Council implied recognition that the situation was a danger to peace and required effective action.]

The strategy worked very well.

I believe Astrom spoke to Ambassador Goldberg of the United States. The United States co-sponsored the resolution in the General Assembly, and spoke on the resolution.⁶ The resolution was eventually co-sponsored by 73 States and was adopted on 16 December by a roll-call vote of 110 to 2, with one abstention. It condemned the trial and called on South Africa to release and repatriate the prisoners. It drew the attention of the Security Council to the resolution and requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the resolution to the Security Council and the General Assembly, the Council for Namibia and the Committee on Decolonisation.

[I helped to publicise the statements by Toivo ja Toivo and Tuhadeleni.]

The Security Council discussed the matter in January, at the request of 53 States, and adopted a unanimous resolution on 25 January 1968 calling on South Africa to discontinue the trial and release and repatriate the South West Africans. As the South African Government did not comply, the Council discussed the matter again in February-March and on 14 March adopted a stronger resolution, also unanimously. It decided to remain actively seized of the matter.

In 1969, it again discussed the matter in March and August, and adopted two resolutions which dealt not only with the trial and the prisoners but with the status of Namibia. It recognised the termination of the Mandate, and declared South Africa's presence in Namibia illegal. Thus it became involved in implementing the General Assembly resolution on the termination of the Mandate. These two resolutions were, however, not unanimous.

Ad Hoc Committee of the Security Council

On 30 January 1970, the Security Council adopted a resolution⁷ in which it declared that the continued presence of the South African authorities in Namibia, and all acts by them concerning Namibia after the termination of the mandate, were illegal. It called upon all States with economic and other interests in Namibia to refrain from any dealings with the South African government with respect to Namibia. It set up an ad hoc committee, consisting of all members of

⁵ We had obtained a virtually unanimous resolution in the General Assembly on 11 October 1963 on the Rivonia trial.

⁶ Nordic countries and Ireland also co-sponsored the resolution.

⁷ Resolution 276 (1970). The resolution was moved by Finland; Burundi, Nepal, Sierra Leone and Zambia were co-sponsors.

the Council, to study ways and means by which the relevant resolutions of the Council could be effectively implemented in the light of the flagrant refusal of South Africa to withdraw from Namibia.

The Sub-Committee elected Terence Nsanze, the ambassador of Burundi, as Chairman. I was appointed deputy secretary of the Sub-Committee. Terence consulted me privately and acted on most of my suggestions. I was also in contact with the ambassador of Finland, Pastinen(?); Finland had a special interest in Namibia because of the Finnish church in Namibia.

Terence was convinced of the desirability of referring the Namibian issue to the International Court for an Advisory Opinion, a course which Finland favoured.

While the Security Council agreed on the termination of the mandate, the Western Powers resisted proposals for pressure on South Africa, except for some small steps taken by the United States. The Conservative Government in Britain was uncooperative and France was also sliding back as it became the major arms supplier to South Africa. Under the circumstances, there was a feeling among delegations that a question to the International Court on the obligations of States, rather than on the legality of termination of the mandate, may lead to a step forward.

I suggested to Terence that the Sub-Committee invite Sam Nujoma and Sean MacBride for consultations before taking any substantive decisions. He agreed and obtained approval by the Sub-Committee.

This was the first time that a leader of the Namibian liberation movement had been invited to the United Nations with the provision of fares and subsistence.⁸

Acting on the Sub-Committee's recommendations, the Security Council adopted two resolutions on 29 July 1970 – 283 (1970) and 284 (1970). In the first resolution, it called on States to declare formally that they do not recognise the authority of South Africa over Namibia, and take a series of measures in the light of that declaration. (These were largely measures already taken by the United States so that it could vote for the resolution). It also requested the General Assembly to set up a United Nations Fund for Namibia to provide assistance to Namibians who had suffered persecution and to finance a comprehensive education and training programme for Namibians.

By the second resolution, moved by Finland, it requested an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice to the question: "What are the legal consequences for States of the continued presence of South Africa in Namibia notwithstanding Security Council resolution 276 (1970)?"

The International Court delivered the advisory opinion on 21 June 1971 – that South Africa was under an obligation to withdraw its administration from the territory immediately and that Member States were under an obligation to recognise the illegality of the presence of South Africa in Namibia and its acts concerning Namibia.

⁸ I had helped arrange in 1968 to invite Oliver Tambo and Canon Collins to a session of the Special Committee against Apartheid in Stockholm in July 1968, as experts with the provision of fares and subsistence.

Sam Nujoma and Sean MacBride were invited under a rule of the Security Council. (TOCHECK)

On July 12, 1971, I sent a confidential note to Ambassador Farah of Somalia (who was then Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid and also member of the Security Council) suggesting a series of proposals for action in the light of the opinion of the Court. Some of my suggestions were accepted by the African members of the Council.

The Security Council adopted resolution 301 (1971) on 20 October, accepting the advisory opinion of the International Court and calling on States to take a series of measures. France and Britain did not vote for the resolution. They rejected the Court's conclusions, while Argentina, Belgium, Italy and Japan had reservations about some of the reasoning of the Court.

After the adoption of the resolution, Argentina introduced a draft resolution, favoured by Western States, to invite the Secretary-General "to initiate as soon as possible contacts with all parties concerned, with a view to establishing the necessary conditions so as to enable the people of Namibia to exercise their right to self-determination and independence". Consideration of this draft was deferred.

UN Fund for Namibia, 1970-71

I do not remember whether the UN Fund for Namibia was first proposed by the UN Council for Namibia or by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Security Council. Finland supported such a fund.

As indicated earlier, on 19 July 1970, the Security Council requested the General Assembly to set up the Fund. On 9 December 1970, the General Assembly – in resolution 2679 (XXV) - decided to establish the Fund. It requested the Secretary-General to report on the development, planning, execution and administration of the fund. In the meantime, it authorised the Secretary-General to make interim grants of up to \$50,000 to enable existing programmes to provide greater assistance.

In introducing the resolution, Finland suggested that the Fund should finance humanitarian and educational assistance, as well as the setting up of a Namibian institute in some African country, possibly Zambia.

I was specially interested in this as I was in charge of the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa which was providing legal assistance to Namibian prisoners, and had some responsibility for the consolidated education programme which provided scholarships to Namibians.

The establishment of a Fund for Namibia, I felt, had merit as an affirmation of United Nations responsibility for Namibia. But I was anxious that there should be careful study and full consultations so that the Fund, when set up, would receive adequate contributions.⁹

⁹ In 1965, the Assembly had decided to set up a special fund for assistance to Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. This had been pressed by Ambassador Tesfaye of Ethiopia in the Committee of 24. There were no consultations with prospective donor countries which felt that the best channels for assistance were UNDP and specialised agencies. There was resistance to "proliferation" of funds etc. The Fund received only \$ 10,000 and had to be abandoned, though there had been support for assistance to those countries.

I tried to promote consultations on the Fund for Namibia, but was not very successful. The main problem was that the proposed fund would duplicate the work of existing funds - the UN Trust for South Africa, UN Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africans and UN High Commissioner for Refugees - which assisted Namibians. The other Nordic countries, especially Sweden, did not support the Fund, as they were against the “proliferation” of United Nations funds.

The Namibia Fund was, however, set up. There were no substantial contributions except from Finland. Potential donors had little confidence in the UN Council for Namibia (which was to make decisions on the Fund). The Secretary-General reported in 1972 that the results of his appeal had been disappointing. As of 30 September 1972, the Fund had only about \$80,000, including \$50,000 allocated from the budget of the United Nations.

UN Secretary-General's Mission to Namibia

The UN Security Council held a special session in Addis Ababa in January-February 1972, at the request of the Organisation of African Unity, to consider southern African issues. The African States hoped that a session in Africa would generate more attention to African issues and facilitate meaningful action.

Kurt Waldheim, who had become UN Secretary-General at the beginning of the year, attended the session.

I was sent to Addis Ababa, a few days before the members of the Security Council and staff arrived by chartered plane, to help in the preparations because of my close relations with the OAU.

After Waldheim arrived, I began sending him frequent confidential notes on attitudes of OAU and non-aligned delegations, and my suggestions on various matters. (They were sent through Robert Muller,¹⁰ director in the Office of the Secretary-General, who accompanied him). Waldheim expressed appreciation, and followed several of my suggestions.

During the debate on Namibia, Argentina proposed the resolution calling for a mission by the Secretary-General on Namibia. The African States were not in favour.

But the Western Powers privately threatened that they would veto or vote down other resolutions if Africans blocked passage of the Argentine draft resolution.¹¹ (George Bush was the United States delegate). The African States were anxious that the session in Africa should not become a fiasco, and were forced to compromise. Two resolutions were adopted on Namibia.

Under the Argentine resolution – 309 (1972) - the Council invited the Secretary-General, in consultation with a group of the Security Council (Argentina, Somalia and Yugoslavia), to initiate contacts with all parties concerned, with a view to establishing the necessary conditions

¹⁰ We had been interns in the United Nations in 1948 and had been friends since then.

¹¹ Diallo Telli, the OAU Secretary-General, told me of the threats.

so as to enable the people of Namibia freely to exercise their right to self-determination and independence.

I had suggested to Waldheim that a mission to Portugal and Guinea-Bissau was more appropriate or useful than one to Namibia. The liberation struggle was more advanced there and a Western Secretary-General could have more influence on Portugal. (I arranged through Diallo Telli to introduce leaders of the liberation movements of Portuguese territories to Waldheim). But he was very anxious about a mission on Namibia.

I prepared a series of background notes for the mission and sent them to the Secretary-General through Mr. Narasimhan and Robert Muller.

(I have sent them to the archives of the University of Cape Town).

Around this time, on February 11, 1972, Judge William Booth of New York City Criminal Court - a civil rights leader and Episcopal layman - went to Windhoek as an observer for the International Commission of Jurists at the trial of 12 people in connection with the recent strike of 15,000 Ovambo contract labourers.¹²

On his return, he came to see me on 22 February 1972, and told me that Africans in Windhoek had great expectations about the UN. He brought back three letters addressed to the Secretary-General: two from Chief Clemens Kapuuo; one from Damara Tribal Executive Council (which opposed the government-appointed chief and supported UN). I sent the letters to the Secretary-General.¹³

I met Judge Booth several times and arranged for him to meet several UN delegates. I got him to record on tape information on the situation in Namibia and his views on the mission of Secretary-General to Namibia, transcribed it, and sent a copy to the Secretary-General.¹⁴

[I was concerned about assistance to the Ovambo labourers and their families. The UN Trust Fund for South Africa arranged funds for legal defence of the 12 under trial, but could not assist the families of strikers.

[I suggested to Peter Katjavivi in London that if an assistance fund was set up in London, I may be able to help encourage contributions. He wrote to me later that a confidential fund was set up. I informed Sweden. I do not recall who else I informed and what the response was, if any.]

I went to London late in February, and then to Geneva, on work of the Special Committee against Apartheid.

¹² Judge Booth became President of the American Committee on Africa later in the year.

¹³ I cannot find the transcript of the tape in my files. Nor the letters from Chief Kapuuo. I may have given them away or lost them.

¹⁴ A few days later, I gave a copy of the transcript to Sam Nujoma in London. He used it in a memorandum to the UN Secretary-General soon after, without credit to Judge Booth.

In London, I met Sam Nujoma at "White House" hotel. He was ill, but we had a long conversation about the Waldheim mission.

(He had written to the UN requesting a meeting with the Secretary-General before the latter left for South Africa. I suggested to C.V. Narasimhan, Chef de Cabinet to the Secretary-General, an unpublicised meeting, perhaps in Geneva, as Waldheim was due to visit Geneva early in March. The appointment was fixed after I left for London).

I suggested in my conversation with Sam Nujoma that Namibia was not vital for South Africa and that South Africa might be flexible if SWAPO agreed that it would not allow the use of its territory as a base by ANC for attacks against South Africa. He was not hostile to the mission seemed to agree with my suggestion, but said later, "But you know we have solidarity (with ANC)".

Then I went to Geneva. I was in the lounge of Intercontinental Hotel with Ambassador Farah of Somalia and spoke to Sam Nujoma both before and after he saw Waldheim. Sam was very happy after the meeting. Waldheim had greeted him warmly - said he knew him while Austrian delegate at UN - and had a very informal and free discussion.

When I offered a drink, on his return from the meeting, Sam suggested that we drink for the success of the Waldheim mission. I said I was not so sure yet!

Waldheim visited South Africa and Namibia from 6 to 10 March 1972. After further consultations with the South African government, United Nations bodies, the OAU and Namibian organisations, he presented a report to the Security Council in July 1972.

The only concrete result of his mission to South Africa was an agreement by South Africa that it would provide facilities to a representative of the Secretary-General – whose task would be to assist in achieving the aim of self-determination and independence for Namibia and to study all questions relevant thereto – to go to South Africa and Namibia and meet all sections of the population of Namibia. Waldheim proposed an extension of his mandate so that he could appoint a representative. The Security Council extended the mandate in resolution 319 (1972) of 1 August 1972.

Waldheim then appointed Ambassador Alfred Martin Escher of Switzerland as his representative. Escher, accompanied by Mr. Chacko from the Secretariat, visited South Africa from 8 October to 3 November 1972. After discussions with South Africa, Escher presented a report to the Secretary-General with conclusions and recommendations agreed with South Africa. The mission proved to be disastrous.

#

Mohamed Sahnoun, Assistant Secretary-General of the OAU came to New York in October 1972 for the session of the General Assembly. One of his main concerns was to strengthen the UN Council for Namibia by ending the system of rotation of Presidency, by getting Western and

Communist members to join it, and by securing the appointment of a full-time UN Commissioner for Namibia.

He spoke to a number of delegates and arranged that elections for the President and officers of the Council for Namibia would be annual as in the case of other UN committees. I believe the first President was from Zambia. The expansion of the Council had to be deferred.

Sahnoun called me soon after the Escher mission report was published; the Chairman of the African Group (Ethiopia?) was present. They asked me for my views and advice. In the next few days I discussed the matter frequently with them and gave a series of notes to Sahnoun.

I also sent notes to the Secretary-General informing him of African reactions, suggesting that he should not endorse the Escher recommendations, let the assignment of Escher expire and seek a mandate to continue his own efforts in the light of the views expressed in the Security Council.

His initial reaction was negative. He said he cannot spend his time on this mission.

But a few days later, he went before the Security Council and did exactly what I had suggested. He told the Security Council that Escher had no mandate to enter into an agreement with South Africa and no agreement had been concluded. The Security Council, in resolution 323 (1972) of 6 December 1972, further extended the mandate of the Secretary-General. But Escher was discharged and the mission of the Secretary-General was formally terminated in 1973.

#

Election of the UN Commissioner for Namibia, 1973

The UN General Assembly decided in 1967, a year after the resolution terminating the mandate of South Africa over Namibia, to set up a UN Council for Namibia and appoint a UN Commissioner for Namibia.

The Secretary-General nominated Constantin Stavropoulos of Greece, the UN Legal Counsel, also as a part-time Commissioner. Perhaps the only achievement during his term was the issuance of travel documents to Namibians so that they could travel to countries which recognised those documents. I believe he was succeeded as acting Commissioner by Mr. Hamid of Pakistan, head of the Department of Public Information.

SWAPO, the African States and the OAU were anxious to secure the appointment of a full-time Commissioner who could be effective. In December 1971, the Secretary-General proposed the appointment of Lord Caradon of Britain. (He must have consulted African States. The choice may have been that of SWAPO). After strong objection by the Soviet Union in the Assembly, he withdrew the nomination.

In April 1973, when I went to Oslo for a UN Conference on Southern Africa,¹⁵ Andreas Shipanga joined me for dinner a day or two before the Conference began. (Moses Garoeb, Administrative Secretary of SWAPO, was leader of the SWAPO delegation to the Conference and Andreas, then Acting Secretary for Information and Publicity, was the deputy leader). He wanted to consult me about the appointment of the Commissioner. He asked me, in particular, about Lord Caradon Britain and Mr. Hambro of Norway (a former president of the General Assembly).

Later in 1973, Sean MacBride met me at a conference in Moscow and said that SWAPO had approached him about the post of Commissioner for Namibia. He asked for my advice. I told him that the post was not high enough for him. But I felt he should accept it for one year and get some results. I suggested the establishment of a Namibia Institute (which I had tried to promote) and a decree for the protection of the natural resources of Namibia (which Neville Rubin, South African lawyer, had suggested in a paper to the International University Exchange Fund - IUEF).

On return to New York, I spoke to Ambassador Ogbu of Nigeria, Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid and member of the UN Council for Namibia. Nigeria was then Chairman of the OAU.

The OAU Secretariat in Addis Ababa tried to block the nomination. Ambassador Ogbu was furious: he immediately flew to Lagos and got the nomination cleared. The General Assembly appointed Mr. MacBride as UN Commissioner for Namibia.

Sean MacBride

Sean took up the proposal for an Institute after he became Commissioner, and developed it into a much bigger project. The Namibia Institute was set up in Lusaka. Its establishment and development is a matter of public record.

I briefed Sean MacBride about the problems with the UN Fund for Namibia. He consulted Sweden and others; his prestige helped. Yet contributions were initially small compared to those to the other two funds. The majority of scholarships to Namibians continued to be given by the UN Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africans which I began to administer from 1973. It took time to build up the Namibia Fund to do something more meaningful.

In piloting the Namibia Institute and the Fund for Namibia through the Council for Namibia, Sean faced difficulties. I arranged a lunch with Ambassador Ogbu of Nigeria and made suggestions on how to present those to the Council. Ogbu, as a senior African ambassador, got them through the Council without any resistance.

This was only at the initial stage. Sean did not need my help later. He did things on a bigger scale than I did.

¹⁵ International Conference of Experts for the Support of Victims of Colonialism and Apartheid in Southern Africa, Oslo, 9-14 April 1973.

Sean took the Decree on Natural Resources seriously. As a lawyer, he knew what to do and he mobilised action by NGOs.

Sean was respected by leaders of governments and loved by NGOs and young activists. But there were problems in the bureaucracy and his status also led to problems.

The Council for Namibia, under the Presidency of Guyana, proposed to organise a seminar in Chile. Sean hated Pinochet's Chile. On a visit to Guyana, he took up the matter with Burnham. Burnham then told the ambassador, in Sean's presence, that there should be no seminar in Chile. That did not endear Sean to the ambassador.

There was an International Conference on "Namibia and Human Rights" in Dakar (5-8 January 1976), opened by the President of Senegal. The President came to the dais with Sean. The President of the Council for Namibia, then a Zambian, tried to go up the dais and was stopped by the guards and there was an argument. That did not endear Sean to the Zambian though he was stopped on orders of Senegalese protocol.

Meanwhile, there was some tension between Mr. MacBride and SWAPO. Sean was very much against the South African invasion of Angola. SWAPO was equivocal because of its cooperation with UNITA which allowed SWAPO to take Namibians from Ovamboland to Zambia.¹⁶ It took several months for SWAPO to change its policy and support MPLA. SWAPO had great respect for Sean despite this.

And, of course, the UN bureaucracy did not really like an independent-minded Commissioner.

So it was time for Sean to leave the bureaucracy. He had stayed too long.

Sean suggested to President Nyerere that Abdul Minty be appointed to succeed him. Nyerere, who liked Abdul who had been advising him on South Africa, agreed. Abdul called me from Europe and I offered to speak to Sam Nujoma who was then in New York. Sam told me again that they would like a Western Commissioner, and Abdul dropped the matter.

Martii Ahtisaari of Finland, then ambassador to Tanzania, was then chosen. (That was also, I believe, on the suggestion of Sean, but I am not certain).¹⁷

¹⁶ Ambassador Ogbu and I met Moses Garoeb in Lisbon in April 1975. Moses was praising UNITA and the support it enjoyed among the tribes in southern Angola.

Later that year, South African troops entered Angola and killed some SWAPO members. Peter Katjavivi issued a statement of condemnation in London. I met Andreas Shipanga in London at that time and he wanted condemnation by the UN. On return to New York, I happened to see Munyongo, Vice-President of SWAPO and asked about action at UN. Munyongo merely laughed.

I believe only the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, Mme. Jean-Martin Cisse of Guinea, condemned the incursion.

¹⁷ I might mention here that soon after the UN decided on the appointment of a Commissioner in 1967, there was consultation at an OAU summit in Algiers. Djermakoye of Niger, then senior African official in the UN, thought that Diallo Telli, then OAU Secretary-General, would be the candidate and would compete with him on seniority. To stop him he persuaded the French African leaders to press that the Commissioner should be a non-African. [The

My visit to Finnish Church in Helsinki

I do not recall the date: it must have been 1970s.

We were providing funds from the UN Trust Fund for South Africa for legal defence or prisoners in Namibia and assistance to their families, through grants to IDAF. IDAF could arrange legal defence but assistance to families was difficult. Sam Nujoma suggested that I should speak to the Finnish Church and gave me the name of the person in Helsinki.

On my next visit to Helsinki, I went to see the Church official. He told me that the Church was doing all it could. Money was not the problem and they did not need a grant from the United Nations.

[I have not found my note on this meeting.]

International Conference in Solidarity with the Struggle of the People of Namibia (Paris, September 11-13, 1980)

After a conference in Amsterdam in 1979 on an oil embargo against South Africa, sponsored by the UN Special Committee against Apartheid with NGOs in Holland, there was a business meeting of solidarity groups. Sam Nujoma spoke to the groups and requested them to organise a conference on solidarity with Namibia in Western Europe.

Plans were then initiated for a conference in Paris. There were problems because of the political orientation of solidarity groups etc. Abdul Minty was active in promoting the conference. I tried to help get it UN support for the Conference..

The preparatory committee had intended that the Conference would be addressed by leaders of the French Socialist and Communist Parties. That would have made it difficult for the Conference to be truly international. I helped to hold up decisions and spoke to SWAPO. Later Mohamed Sahnoun, then Ambassador of Algeria to France, was designated Secretary-General of the Conference, and he managed to change the arrangements. Participation was more impressive than expected.

The Conference was chaired by the Foreign Minister of Senegal, Mustapha Niasse, and the Bureau included ambassadors of India, Nigeria etc. Abdul Minty was Rapporteur.

I attended the Conference with the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, Ambassador B. A. Clark (Nigeria), helped draft the declaration, final report etc., and attended meetings of the drafting committee.

person interested in the post was not Diallo Telli, but Achkar Marof of Guinea, then Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, who told me the story.] This problem did not come up with Abdul, an African, as the suggestion did not go beyond Nyerere, Sean, Sam Nujoma and myself.

All this is not of "historic" significance but I mention this to show the kind of atmosphere we had to work in.

The Conference decided to send a delegation to New York to contact the UN Secretary-General and UN bodies to promote the implementation of its recommendations. The delegation was composed of:

Mustapha Niasse, Foreign Minister of Senegal
George Dove-Edwin, Ambassador of Nigeria to France and Vice-Chairman of the Conference
Mohamed Sahnoun, Ambassador of Algeria to France and Secretary-General of the Conference
Abdul Minty, Rapporteur

Although Namibia was not within my responsibilities at the UN, I did all I could to help the delegation. [I donated the relevant papers to the archive at the University of Cape Town.]

The delegation was in New York early October and met the Secretary-General, President Shagari of Nigeria, the UN Council for Namibia and many others.

Mustapha Niasse, who had left Paris after the opening sessions of the Conference, was in New York for the UN General Assembly and joined the meeting with the UN Secretary-General.

(Apparently, the Federal Republic of Germany exerted pressure on Senegal, and Niasse told the Secretary-General that he dissociated himself from some of the conclusions. He did not attend later meetings of the delegation in New York.).

National Conference: Building Forces against United States Support for South Africa, Washington, 8 June 1981

Ronald Reagan's election in 1980 threatened to set back all our efforts in the United Nations on southern Africa.

I suggested to Randall Robinson of Transafrica that he organise a conference in Washington, with the participation of some African Foreign Ministers and leaders of ANC and SWAPO, to try to prevent the United States from sliding back.

Transafrica, together with other groups, was able to arrange a much smaller conference that I had in mind. Oliver Tambo and Moses Garoeb represented ANC and SWAPO. No African foreign ministers were present.

International Conference in Support of the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence, Paris, 25-29 April 1983

This conference was organised by the Council for Namibia. I was consulted by the President of the Council and the Commissioner because of my experience in organising similar conferences.

I do not remember why I was in the Drafting Committee of the Conference, and whether I helped prepare the draft declaration.

There was a deadlock between SWAPO and Norway (the Western member of the Drafting Committee) about a sentence. SWAPO wanted a sentence calling on participants to provide “concrete” assistance to SWAPO. Norway could not accept that and suggested “humanitarian” assistance. For Norway “concrete” implied” military assistance. SWAPO rejected the Norwegian formulation as that would not cover all the assistance that they need for their struggle for independence. The deadlock lasted for a long time. I suggested “material” assistance; SWAPO accepted that but not Norway.

Finally I asked SWAPO if they would be satisfied with “increased assistance to the Namibian people and SWAPO”; SWAPO agreed and then Norway agreed.

Getting attention to Namibia

Getting attention to Namibia was always a problem for SWAPO. Those who were concerned abroad about Africa focussed their attention on South Africa for various reasons. South Africa was larger with enormous resources. The movement for freedom in South Africa had a long history and inspired pacifists and others. India helped internationalise the South African problem because of discrimination against people of Indian origin in South Africa. There were many South Africans abroad who promoted the anti-apartheid movement. And South Africa was of importance as a “cold war” ally of the West.

When the UN Security Council adopted resolution 435, there was hope that there would be movement towards independence of Namibia. Instead, there were diversionary tactics and little progress.

That is why Sam Nujoma requested solidarity groups in 1979 to organise an international conference specifically on Namibia (which was held in Paris 1980).¹⁸

The International Committee against Apartheid, Racism and Colonialism in Southern Africa (ICSA) was formed by ANC, SWAPO and the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe in 1977. It held its third session in Stockholm, April 11-13, 1980. At that session, Oliver Tambo said that ANC and SWAPO held discussions and agreed to give priority to Namibia. He asked the solidarity groups to do the same. {See ICSA Bulletin for details.]

Again, on the suggestion of Sam Nujoma, an NGO international conference on Namibia was organised in Brussels in 1986. Soon after, India accorded diplomatic status to the SWAPO mission in New Delhi.

A few months later, Abdul Minty told me that Sam Nujoma urged that Abdul, Sahnoun and I should form an informal group to promote international attention to Namibia. I could not help at

¹⁸ There was a conference in Oxford in 1966, organized by the British Anti-Apartheid Movement, an NGO conference in Brussels in 1972 and a smaller conference organized by the NGO Sub-Committee in Geneva a few years later.

that time. Sahnoun and Abdul went to Geneva as advisers to SWAPO during discussions with South Africa (pre-implementation conference?). I do not know of other joint activities by them.

Enuga S. Reddy
February 2008

ANNEXES

MEETING OF A DELEGATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID WITH SWAPO IN DAR ES SALAAM

August 21, 1969

Peter Nanyemba, Chief Representative, said the only way to end apartheid in Namibia was to expel South Africa from Namibia. South Africa was making propaganda in the towns and villages of Namibia by pointing out the weaknesses of the UN and telling the people that UN resolutions were never implemented. The only way to get South Africa out of Namibia was by force.

Ben Amathila, Information Officer, said the United Nations should not seek a dialogue with South Africa, since South Africa said that the only possible settlement was one on its terms. A dialogue was reminiscent of the British and Hitler on the eve of World War II. If the UN could not get rid of South Africa, the people would. There was no possibility of a dialogue.

Mr. Nanyemba said the liberation movements could not supply all the needs such as food, medicine, schools and transport. The UN should help the national liberation movements in southern Africa and should give direct help to the victims in Namibia. In Zambia there were some 3,000 refugees from the fighting in Namibia. The UNHCR helped but it was not enough. Education was required. SWAPO would not refuse any help from the United Nations. However, the time for moral assistance had passed. Material aid was what was required now.

He said there was no intention of forming a Government in Exile, since there was no purpose to this. In any case, it would not help the position of the host governments at a time when South Africa was threatening them.

He said SWAPO had had no contact with UN specialized agencies regarding food, medicine and education.

The Council for Namibia should act more than at present. When in Tanzania, the Council had promised to get implementation of UN decisions but that appeared just to be talk for newspapers.

Mr. Amathila said the Council for Namibia had been given a mandate to establish an administration in Namibia and that was its first task. He realized that the limitations of the Council would not be overcome without the full participation of Security Council members. The Council was a play thing used by South Africa to convince the people of Namibia that the UN was useless. The Security Council had to give the Council forces.

If the Namibia Council did not act it was useless to have such a Council that could not carry out its mandate.

Mr. Nanyemba said SWAPO knew how South Africa felt towards it. If there was any possibility for a dialogue, the Council would know about that, not SWAPO which did not have any idea that such a dialogue was possible.

Mr. Amathila said South Africa had always wanted to annex South West Africa as its fifth province and never changed that intention. South Africa wanted to divide the country into two parts, with the South for the Whites and linked to South Africa. South Africa will never assent to any solution where the Africans were a power to be reckoned with. There was no solution based on a dialogue with South Africa that would keep Namibia intact.

If South Africa would not quit Namibia on its own, the United Nations must do everything to force it out. The people of Namibia, under the leadership of SWAPO, would help the UN to do this. However, UN assistance must be supplementary to that of the liberation movement which would never give up its struggle until Namibia was independent, intact.

Mr. Nanyemba said the Council for Namibia should co-ordinate assistance with the OAU.

Joseph Ithana, Deputy Director of Information, said the UN Council for Namibia was in New York while Namibia was in the southern part of Africa. If the Council came again to Africa, it must be to make its presence felt.

The UN could go to the International Court regarding the Namibian question to get a final answer on the merits of the case.

Mr. Nanyemba said the matter of the Court had only been mentioned because a member of the Committee had raised the matter. Once, the people of Namibia had believed that only the United Nations could save them. But now South Africa had a whip to use on the UN because its own decisions had not been implemented. The people of Namibia would hate the United Nations more because of the non-implementation of its resolutions. The policy of SWAPO was that freedom rested in its own hands.

He said in reply to a question that a Committee of Jurists to expose South Africa's racial policy would be useful. But SWAPO would not get involved with its creation. However, if such a committee wished to consult with SWAPO, it would give it its views.

He said if the UN felt it could not implement a resolution then there was no need to adopt it. The issues should still continue to be raised in the United Nations, but it should be remembered that South Africa did use resolutions that were not implemented to say to the people of Namibia that the UN made promises which it could not deliver and it was therefore useless. Resolutions which helped the people of Namibia should be the ones that were adopted.

The permanent members of the Security Council knew that one way to keep South Africa alive was not to support UN resolutions. Resolutions should not be adopted that could never be implemented. Resolutions adopted on the various trials were helpful and South Africa felt the pressure on such matters.

The real material on what happened in Namibia should come from SWAPO, and that it was prepared to supply to the UN.

Mr. Ithana said South Africa's expulsion from the United Nations would not change South Africa's policies but merely strengthen its hand in taking independent action and assist those who help South Africa. Expulsion would not change the position regarding Namibia, but just make matters worse.

Since a change in the UN Charter was unlikely regarding power for the Afro-Asians and the Latin Americans, assistance to the armed struggle was what was required. It should be remembered, however, that if the struggle was intensified the Big Powers would try to support measures in the United Nations to help South Africa whichever its position. Material assistance should be sent to the liberation movements either through the OAU or directly.

While the issue was kept alive in the United Nations the West would only clandestinely give arms to South Africa. Creation of a Government in Exile would mean that there was no way of keeping the issue alive in the United Nations.

The representatives of SWAPO agreed to consider suggestions that when the Security Council held a meeting on Namibia they would make available immediately to committee members, their reaction to proposals made in the debate and have someone in New York to inform them of their reactions.

Mr. Nanyemba said SWAPO would welcome any scholarships for information purposes or for anything else. The Council for Namibia should prepare a pamphlet and get information from SWAPO on what was happening in Namibia. The pamphlet should show the work of the Council for Namibia and reflect the information supplied by SWAPO.

Mr. Amathila said the problems of southern Africa were one and South African troops were sent to the Portuguese territories and Southern Rhodesia. Once Namibia was independent, the people of South Africa would benefit, since Namibia was the immediate neighbour. A defeat of South Africa in Namibia would benefit all in southern Africa.

Mr. Nanyemba said the liberation movements were as close as one pair of shoes regarding southern Africa as a whole.

He said a UN radio transmitter and UN broadcasts to southern Africa would be welcomed by all liberation movements. The transmitter should be put up in a country close to southern Africa. SWAPO had the trained staff to have a permanent staff work where the transmitter was.

The Council of Namibia must establish some relations with the liberation movements. If it did not want to be associated directly with SWAPO, it could do that through the OAU and the Liberation Committee.

The UNHCR did not recognize SWAPO members as refugees, but regarded them as freedom fighters. SWAPO did not apply for assistance through UNHCR because it knew UNHCR policy.

NOTE ON MY MEETING WITH MR. SAM NUJOMA
Lisbon, March 26, 1983¹⁹

[Abdul Minty and the SWAPO representative in London were also present.]

Mr. Nujoma asked why the Council for Namibia invited South Africa to the Namibia Conference in Paris.²⁰

I explained that the Secretary-General had to invite all Member States. The guidelines for the Conference provide for a Credentials Committee, and any South African delegation was bound to be excluded.

Mr. Nujoma said South Africa was using the invitation for propaganda. He also enquired about the attitude of France.

I explained to him the question of the “host country agreement” and said there was no serious problem. I had made some private approaches and understood that a high representative of the French Government would welcome the Conference.

Mr. Nujoma said he planned to visit France briefly at the end of this month. He had spoken to the French Ambassador in Luanda. The French Ambassador in Lisbon had just called on him to inform him that he would be received by the Secretary of State in the absence of the Foreign Minister. He also intended to see Socialist Party leaders.

As regards Security Council discussion, he said it should take place in the second half of June and may, if necessary, go over into July. He would convey a message from Lisbon to Mrs. Gandhi²¹ requesting her to appoint Foreign Ministers to represent the non-aligned movement.

He emphasised that the Namibia Conference should strongly oppose “linkage”.²² The “Contact Group” had no status. The Security Council should assume authority.

We then discussed the arrangements for the Namibia Conference in Paris.

I conveyed the message that he should try to obtain high-level representatives from Frontline States, etc.

¹⁹ This meeting was during the International Conference in Solidarity with Frontline States and Lesotho (Lisbon, 25-27 March 1983), organized by ICOSA, AAPSO and other NGOs. a conference in Lisbon in defence of frontline States. Foreign Ministers of several frontline States and a number of NGOs attended the conference.

²⁰ International Conference in Support of the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence (Paris, 25-29 April 1983), organised by the UN Council for Namibia.

²¹ Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, was Chairperson of the Non-aligned Movement

²² linkage between independence of Namibia and the presence of Cuban troops in Angola

He said that it was not the practice of African Heads of State to travel outside Africa, except for Non-aligned and Commonwealth summits, unless they were on an official visit to the host country. But he had spoken to the Foreign Ministers and expected them to attend. (He would be meeting the Foreign Ministers in Lisbon the next day and would remind them.) He had also requested the President of Algeria to send his Prime Minister to the Conference. He wrote to a number of Foreign Ministers to remind them.

I also conveyed to him the views of Nordic and other countries - especially on following the procedure of the Sanctions Conference - and the need to press them to attend at a high level.

He also felt that the solidarity groups should be encouraged to participate actively, especially in the Committee of the Whole.

I suggested that attendance of the solidarity groups would depend on encouragement by him. He said he would speak to all the solidarity groups at the Lisbon Conference.

He said he cannot stay through the Namibia Conference since the FRELIMO Congress in Maputo was from 26 to 30 April. He had to leave after the first day but SWAPO would be represented by an effective delegation.

Mr. Minty said that solidarity groups could not stay in Paris for six days. They would be anxious to attend the opening session to hear Mr. Nujoma and speak to him.

After some discussion, Mr. Nujoma agreed to the suggestion that he should address the solidarity groups on Monday (25 April) at about 6.00 p.m. and then there might be a public meeting at UNESCO that evening. The UN and UNESCO will need to be requested for facilities (conference room for meeting with solidarity groups and plenary hall for public meeting) and interpreters.

He said he would call Ben Gurirab²³ and ask him to take up all the matters discussed.

Mr. Nujoma asked Mr. Minty to revive the Continuation Committee of the 1980 Namibia Conference.²⁴ Mr. Minty said he was going to New York the next day and would speak to Ambassador Sahnoun.

(Mr. Nujoma was to meet with the Council for Namibia delegation the next day.)

I referred to the delegation of the Special Committee against Apartheid to frontline States. He said he looked forward to seeing them.

²³ SWAPO representative at the United Nations in New York

²⁴ The conference had requested its President (the Foreign Minister of Senegal), Secretary-General (Ambassador Sahnoun of Algeria) and Rapporteur (Abdul Minty) to present its declaration to the United Nations and take steps to promote action.

