

ADDRESS TO MEMBERS OF UMKHONTO WE SIZWE  
BY COMRADE ALFRED NZO, SECRETARY-GENERAL  
OF THE ANC - SEPTEMBER, 1979

Comrades Commanding Personnel of Umkhonto we Sizwe,  
Comrades Members of our Heroic People's Army.

It gives us great pleasure to convey to you the revolutionary greetings of our President, Comrade Oliver Tambo, of the National Executive Committee and of the entire membership of the African National Congress.

It is indeed an exciting experience to be with you to share our thoughts on the problems of our revolutionary struggle and of the general anti-imperialist movement of the peoples of the world.

Comrades, only a few days ago the MPLA Party of Labour laid to rest the supreme leader of their revolution, the heroic son of the Angolan people and of the whole of Africa, an international servant of democratic and peace-loving mankind, a ruthless combatant against imperialism and world reaction, Comrade President Antonio Agostinho Neto.

The grievous loss sustained by the Angolan people through the untimely death of Comrade Neto is finally a loss for our organisation and people, for the peoples of Southern Africa and their vanguard organisations - the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe and SWAPO of Namibia.

It was a fitting tribute to his genius and unbending determination as one of the foremost strategists and tacticians of our present day revolutionary epoch that leaders and representatives of many progressive states and political parties joined the Angolan people in Luanda to bid farewell to Comrade Agostinho Neto. Representatives of our organisation, led by Comrade President Oliver Tambo, were part of this international contingent.

To the African National Congress, to our people's army Umkhonto we Sizwe and to our fighting people, President Neto was a fellow combatant and one of the leading cadres among the forces that are locked in battle against the apartheid fascist

regime, for the national and social liberation of the oppressed people of South Africa.

For almost two decades Comrade Neto has stood side by side with the African National Congress, coming to our aid when the need arose and always unwavering in his commitment to the strengthening of the combat ties between the African National Congress and the MPLA Party of Labour and our respective peoples for the revolutionary renewal of our two countries.

Comrade Neto will live forever in the hearts and minds of our people as the fighter who tamed the arrogant and aggressive South African apartheid regime in the battlefields of Angola and at a grave hour for the entire African continent led the Angolan people in their victorious struggle to expel the South African forces of colonial occupation and expansionism. That historic victory served as the guarantee for the success of our own struggle as well as those of the people of Namibia and Zimbabwe under the leadership of SWAPO and the Patriotic Front and defeated the oppressive international imperialism which aimed to recolonise Africa.

Comrade President Agostinho Neto has departed from our midst but his revolutionary ideas and teachings shall always be with us. We shall always be inspired, by his example of untiring struggle for a better life to new victories in the struggle of our own people.

We pledge that the African National Congress shall always be loyal to its firm commitment to the unity of our parties and peoples.

We pledge that we shall always remain firm to our commitment to destroy fascist power in our country which even now stands ready poised to commit further acts of aggression against the People's Republic of Angola and other Front-line states and continues to pose a threat to international peace and security.

We pledge that we shall never abandon the ranks of the world anti-imperialist movement.

The African National Congress, Umkhonto we Sizwe and millions of our fighting people bid fare-

well to a revolutionary fighter, Comrade Antonio Agostinho Neto.

Comrades, the world we live in is continuously rocked by revolutionary changes and upheavals as peoples in many parts of our globe destroy one after the other barricades of reaction and fascist oppression. Some of the anti-people regimes that until recently had been thought to be impregnable arsenals capable to act as focal points of imperialist aggression in defence of imperialism's vast economic and strategic interests. This was particularly the case in Iran during the reactionary rule of the Shah. This was also the case during the existence of the 40-year fascist Somoza dynasty which has recently fallen to blows of the revolutionary people of Nicaragua.

The Pol Pot reactionary regime in Kampuchea is no more and the pro-imperialist clique which formerly ruled in Afghanistan has long been destroyed. These were preceded by the defeat of American imperialist aggression in Vietnam which ushered in a new era of unity and strength for the entire Vietnamese nation: which under the banner of socialist Vietnam is building a new life of happiness and social progress.

On the African continent, the defeat of Portuguese colonialism ushered in the dawn of genuine people's power for the peoples of Mozambique, Angola, Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe, a development which imperialism saw as posing a serious threat to its vast interests on the whole continent of Africa and in particular southern Africa.

All these events were motivated by one common desire, the desire of the various people to get rid of reactionary rule and build a new life free from fascist oppression and exploitation, a system that is nurtured by imperialism and reaction.

It goes without saying that these developments have greatly strengthened the forces that stand guard over the people's vital interests.

Comrades, an interesting feature of these developments is that every time the people successfully strike a blow against their oppressors, there

are always signs of the visible weakening of the positions of imperialism and this has a direct impact on the position of the fascist regime in our own country. One of the bitterest blows ever to fall on the head of the regime of terror in our country was the fall of the Shah followed by the severance of all relations between the new Iran and South Africa. This meant inter-alia, that the regime was deprived of 90% of its international oil supplies.

This has been followed by a noticeable panic reaction within the ranks of the white ruling class as the energy crisis has become sharpened and aggravated. Feverish attempts to discover local sources of oil have so far proved abortive. The regime is now pouring huge sums of money on its oil-from-coal project, SASOL, which even after completion will not fully meet the energy requirements of the sophisticated military industrial complex in South Africa.

It should also be remembered that countries such as Nigeria have already taken steps to punish the international oil monopolies such as British petroleum by nationalising their assets in Nigeria on the discovery that British petroleum was collaborating with the apartheid regime.

We applaud the actions of Iran and Nigeria in enforcing the embargo on the apartheid regime as concrete actions of solidarity with the struggle of our people. These developments provide further proof of the direct interconnection between the international solidarity movement and the development of our internal struggle which has been on the upsurge especially in the last few years.

It is in the background of these favourable world developments that the revolutionary movement is gaining momentum in South Africa and in southern Africa as a whole.

Our enemies, faced with this deepening crisis, have fully mobilised their resources and supported by international reaction are engaging in a desperate counter offensive in a vain attempt to halt the march to freedom by millions of our people in southern Africa. This reactionary counter offensive

has intensified since the fall of Portuguese colonialism which turned the balance of forces firmly in favour of the revolutionary movement of the peoples of the whole continent of Africa and its southern Africa region.

- (a) The racist regimes and their allies aim to physically destroy and liquidate the liberation movements in southern Africa both within their respective countries and also in their areas of sanctuary inside the territories of the Front-line States.
- (b) Simultaneously they aim to compel the neighbouring independent states to turn against the liberation movements. To achieve this purpose, as we all know, they have resorted to repeated military raids deep inside Angola, Mozambique, Zambia and Botswana, killing hundreds of people and destroying property.
- (c) Imperialism is busy creating such forces among the Black oppressed people as would replace the white minority regimes as the guarantors of imperialism's hegemony in southern Africa in exchange for high sounding titles and a life of luxury for a handful of the Black traitors.
- (d) At the same time, imperialism is continuing to pour military and economic support into South Africa and Rhodesia to ensure that the racist regimes in these countries even under black skins, remain continuously the principal factor for the content and pace of any process of decolonisation.
- (e) Through political and ideological subversion, the enemies seek to separate the revolutionary movements from their natural allies, the socialist countries, especially the Soviet Union,

Cuba and the German Democratic Republic.

On an international plane, the attempts to destabilise certain sectors of the progressive movement are going on all the time. This was clearly demonstrated before the convocation of the Non-Aligned conference in Havana, when every conceivable attempt was made to disrupt the event. Intrigue, lies, blackmail and intimidation were resorted to but to no avail. The Havana conference of the Non-Aligned states turned out to be not only the biggest that the movement has ever held in its history but also, as reports have clearly indicated, the anti-imperialist content of this movement was further deepened. New states including the progressive forces of the people of Zimbabwe were admitted into membership of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Comrades, the failure of the imperialist strategy in Southern Africa is reflected by the growing momentum of the liberation struggles of the peoples of the region under the leadership of their vanguard organisation, the African National Congress in South Africa, the Patriotic Front in Zimbabwe and the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) in Namibia.

The prestige of the African National Congress has never been as high as it is now in our country since the decade of the 50s. A clear testimony of this is contained in a report written by a visitor from abroad after a visit to South Africa in June of this year. He says in part "It seems that at this stage in South Africa the ANC has become the most important political organisation" Now student organisations proudly announce themselves as ANC organisations. Older and more thoughtful analysts say that the ANC after a period of low internal activity has again started to organise itself well since Soweto. Interesting to note that the large movement of Gatsha Buthelezi with its 200,000 members, mainly peasants and workers, has not shown a dislike for the ANC. Such comrades, is the state of affairs.

The growing activity of our underground political organisation and the frequent successful

assaults by our heroic people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe have increased the faith of the masses of our people in the inevitability of the victory of our revolutionary struggle under the leadership of the African National Congress.

During the past year Umkhonto we Sizwe has pounded enemy targets with increasing frequency and the enemy has been forced to admit to the superiority of the tactics of our armed cadres. This was particularly the case after the successful assault against the Moroka police station by the heroic unit of our people's army. Attempts to dampen the impact of this action including false reports of arrests of our cadres involved in the action have not had any impact whatsoever.

During the same period, the strike actions by the Black working class for better wages have gone on unabated. The manoeuvres of the Riekert and Wiehahn commissions whose recommendations have been especially directed at blunting the growing militancy of the Black working class have been exposed and rejected. The resistance of the rural masses in the Bantustan enclaves is growing as they mount their struggles against the imposition of ruinous taxes, against the growing economic misery of the majority in the so-called independent Bantustans, against removals on the basis of ethnic origin, against the escalating reign of terror designed to impose the authority of the anti-people puppet regimes in the so-called independent Bantustans. The conditions are fast maturing for the development of a massive movement of the people throughout the country in opposition to the fraud of Bantustan independence.

The organised resistance of the youth against the distortions of Bantu Education and other forms of repression directed against the youth continues unabated. Concrete organisational forms rallying an increasing number of the youth into the arena of struggle are the order of the day.

The task of our revolutionary movement is to channel the growing resistance of our people into a single mighty stream by intensifying the mobilisation of all sections of the oppressed population.

This will ensure the defeat of the enemy strategy aimed at weakening the strength of the people's resistance through the devious manoeuvres of the Bantustan fraudulent independence, of the 3-tier system of government aimed at divorcing the Coloured and Indian sections of our population from the united Black national liberation movement and of the Riekert and Wiehahn commission designed to blunt the militancy of the Black workers. Heightened political activity of the masses of our people will create a favourable breeding ground for the growth of our people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe.

To achieve the above stated tasks, our movement and the people's army must itself be united as never before. It is this unity which will sharpen the many-pronged onslaught of our people against the fascist monster, for seizure of power. It is unity which will enable our movement to successfully discharge their internationalist obligations towards the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe, SWAPO of Namibia, the POLISARIO Front of Western Sahara, the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), the FRETELIN Movement of East Timor and all other people struggling for a better life.

FORWARD TO CERTAIN VICTORY!

AMANDLA! MATLA!

ALL POWER TO THE PEOPLE!

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"WORLD WIDE SUPPORT FOR THE STRUGGLE FOR NATIONAL LIBERATION IS A STRIKING FEATURE OF INTERNATIONAL CONCERN FOR JUSTICE, HUMAN DIGNITY AND PEACE. IN TURN NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS FEEL A NATURAL IDENTITY WITH THE CAUSE OF LIBERATION EVERYWHERE..."

- COMRADE PRESIDENT O.R. TAMBO -

(in a statement to the Sixth Conference of Non-Aligned countries).