

“... Our Women Will Deal With Them”

STATEMENT BY COMRADE PRESIDENT
O.R. TAMBO AT THE OPENING SES-
SION OF THE FIRST CONFERENCE OF
THE ANC WOMEN'S SECTION IN EXILE,
HELD IN LUANDA FROM THE 10TH TO
14TH SEPTEMBER, 1981.



Comrade President O.R. Tambo

Comrade Sam Nujoma, President of SWAPO of Namibia,
Comrade Alfonso van Duzem Mbinda, Secretary of the Central
Committee for External Relations of MPLA-Party of Labour, mem-
ber of the Central Committee,
Comrade Joao Hailonda, Representative of the OAU,
Comrade Maria Jose da Gama, Member of the National Executive
Committee of OMA,
Members of the Central Committee of the MPLA-Party of Labour,
Members of the Diplomatic Corps,
Comrades, representatives of the Socialist countries,
Comrades, delegates to the First Conference of the Women's
Section of the ANC,
Militants of Umkhonto we Sizwe and of PLAN,
Comrade Chairman and Comrades:

On behalf of the leadership and the general membership of
the ANC and its allies, on behalf of the women and other op-
pressed and exploited people of South Africa, and on behalf of
the heroic militants of Umkhonto we Sizwe, we wish to express

deep appreciation of the facilities, arrangements and provisions made for the holding of this First Conference of the ANC Women's Section in Luanda, the heroic capital of this heroic country. We particularly wish to thank the Angolan Women's Organisation (OWA) which has made detailed preparations to ensure the success of the Conference.

CONFERENCE HONOURED

Comrade Chair and comrades, we had hoped to have this Conference honoured with the presence of Comrade President Jose Eduardo dos Santos. It has been explained that as a result of pressure of national and international work, at the last minute it proved impossible for him to be with us this morning. We are grateful to Comrade President Sam Nujoma for his presence, and for opening this Conference. His presence makes this Conference a most important event for the women and people of South Africa. I should like, on behalf of our women and of the ANC, to thank all those who have spoken at the opening session of our Conference.

Today the South African fascists, not content with their illegal occupation of Namibia, in fact because of their illegal occupation of Namibia, have criminally invaded Angola and are occupying parts of its territory. The Angolan people are engaging these fascist invaders with great heroism. They are fighting not only in defence of the independence and territorial integrity of their country, but also in defence of the right of the peoples of Africa to national and social liberation.

BARBAROUS INVASION

The barbarous invasion of Angola is the invasion of Southern Africa; this war is a war against the OAU. It is the United Nations itself that is under attack, because the starting point of this criminal invasion is the defiance by the South African regime of the decisions of the United Nations over a long period of time. It is a war that has filled the oppressed and exploited people of South Africa with bitter indignation and has reinforced their determination to destroy these fascists at all costs, no matter how long that takes. Angola has been the scene of the most fierce battles fought in Africa in the course of the past six years.

Angola is honoured today in Namibia and South Africa, in Southern Africa and on the continent, and is admired among the progressive forces of the world as the symbol, the embodiment, the expression of Africa's resolute determination not only to fight and win victories against the colonialists, fascists,

racists and imperialists, but also to consolidate and fight to the last child in defence of those victories. In this connection, we hail the heroes of FAPLA. We salute the women of Angola who have suffered the worst in these years of war, beginning from 1961 to date.

But comrades we must do more than honour and admire the heroism of the Angolan people and their dedication to the cause of liberation and independence. We want to appeal today to the OAU, the leaders of this continent, the Heads of State of African countries, collectively to take over the defence of Angola, and with the support of the genuine friends of Africa to lead the struggle to drive the invading fascist forces out of this country and pursue them beyond the southern borders of Namibia into our territory, where our women will deal with them.

TRUMPET SOUND

The messages that have been received have been more than a mere inspiration to us in South Africa. They have been received as a trumpet sound summoning the women of South Africa, the women of Africa, the women of the progressive world to the battle front, where maximum sacrifices are made. I can have no doubt that our heroic ANC women will respond to this summons and will use this Conference, held in Angola, to work out the strategies for ensuring that the struggle is waged at the highest possible level for victory in the shortest possible time.

The heroism of the Namibian struggle has united mankind. A small people - small in numbers but giants in spirit - have taken on the fascist might of the South African racists and are fighting irresistably towards the defeat of these fascists, this fascist power. The enemy has had to resort to conscription, not from his four and a half (4½) million citizens, but from the few Namibian people. But he has had to resort to conscription because he cannot cope with the power of SWAPO and the People's Liberation Army of Namibia.

The size of the invasion into Angola defines the might of the people of Namibia, led by SWAPO. We have seen enough of liberation struggles to know that no matter how powerful the enemy might appear to be at any given time, his defeat is certain, and it is not a mere case of wishful thinking to say that we are assured of the victory of the Namibian people.

SOLIDARITY DUTY

Conscious of our internationalist and solidarity duty to support the Namibian struggle, we, the ANC, have sou-

ght to escalate our own struggle in South Africa. There is no doubt that the struggle is constantly reaching new levels, but as yet not to the extent which would force the fascists to retreat from their adventures outside our borders and return to defend themselves within our borders. In our struggle we are also conscious of the fact that there can be no possible peace for any country in Southern Africa, and no end of wars, until the war of liberation in South Africa has been fought and won.

We therefore bear a sense of responsibility ourselves for the criminal invasion Angola is experiencing today. We feel we could have spared the Angolan people this horror by crushing the enemy at our own home, at our own base. But we shall spare no effort in ensuring that our struggle advances in leaps and bounds until victory is won by the people of South Africa and therefore by the people of this whole continent and of the progressive world.

CATASTROPHIC COURSE

Comrade Chair and comrades, the current atmosphere in international relations is characterised by severe tensions which clearly indicate a dangerous drift towards world war 3. This catastrophic course is being pursued with relentless determination by the Washington trio, headed by President Ronald Reagan. Like Hitler's Germany, Reagan's USA is making heady preparations today for world conquest and world domination. It is organising a global military build-up of pro-imperialist, fascist, racist and other reactionary forces. It is promoting regional wars in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. It is producing and supplying to its favoured allies the most sophisticated weapons of war. These will soon include the neutron bomb. It is proceeding on the basis that these wars will be fought away from the United States territory. It is even dreaming of a nuclear invasion of the Soviet Union and the Socialist countries. The fact has not yet dawned upon Washington that it might not escape the consequences of a world war as easily as it did those of World War II.

These global designs of the Washington Administration, which take in and encompass Southern Africa, have their regional counterpart in the strategies of the South African fascist regime which are centred on the preservation of a criminal system through armed force, conquest and domination.

In this connection, it is of interest to note that within the regional sphere, the P r e t o r i a r e g i m e, like

its fond ally in Washington, is promoting, training and equipping puppet armies and counter-revolutionary groups whose criminal task is to install in the various countries of Southern Africa, puppet governments of the Bantustan variety, in place of people's governments committed to genuine independence and social progress.

The support of the Reagan Administration for the continued occupation of Namibia and the invasion of Angola by the South African regime is without any reservations. And so, United States imperialism is yet against assuming responsibility for aggression, massacres and horrible atrocities and crimes that are committed against peace-loving nations and peoples, against the peoples of Angola and Namibia, against Africa and the Palestinian people, and against all opponents of colonialism, fascism and racism.

It is in this context that the special attachment of the Reagan Administration to the South African racists should be understood. South African fascists in turn, isolated and facing inevitable defeat, have lost no time in exploiting the Reagan regime's commitment to colonialism, fascism, racism, zionism and even nazism - anything criminal. The result is that in the perpetration of its barbarous crimes the South African regime feels free to tell any lie whatsoever, secure in the knowledge that the Reagan Administration will swallow it "hook, line and sinker."

MONSTROUS CRIMES

The racist regime can commit crimes of any degree of monstrosity, assured that Reagan will leap to its defence; it can advance any theory, however ludicrous, and the Reagan Administration will adopt it. The regime is apparently able to pull the Reagan Administration by the nose, mesmerizing it with such 'magic' words as: 'terrorism', 'communism', 'Cubans', 'Russians', 'total communist onslaught', 'strategic minerals', 'Cape sea route'. Playing on these words, Botha has turned into a resolute racist. In consequence, the famous Constitution of the USA, as reflected in the policies of the Washington Administration, is beginning to look like a rather unclean carbon copy of the infamous Constitution and legislative enactments of Racist South Africa (RSA).

The growing international isolation of President Reagan's Administration is precisely the triumph of Botha's tactics. At the same time it is a victory for the progressive forces who are beginning to isolate the enemies of the peoples of the world, an achievement which reflects the greater unity of those forces.

REVOLUTIONARY CRUCIBLE

By her protracted and stubborn resistance to the imperialist onslaught, Angola has become a revolutionary crucible where indissoluble bonds of unity, solidarity and proletarian internationalism are being reinforced. It is the meeting point of internationalists. Here, we find supporters of the cause of independence and liberation; we meet fellow combatants; we meet the friends of the African revolution. If Botha is complaining about the presence of Soviet citizens and Soviet personnel in southern Angola, if he and his allies are worried about the presence of the people of Cuba in this country, we on the other hand salute the Soviet Union and the Soviet people; we salute Cuba and the Cuban people; we salute the Socialist countries; we salute the African countries; we salute our friends everywhere in the world and welcome them in our midst, especially in times of trouble, c r i s i s and war.

It was precisely the brutal invasion of this country by the racist South African army in 1975 which drew the conscious world into Angola in the first instance. It is the continuing aggression against this country and the continuing illegal occupation of Namibia which is drawing the conscious world to where the war is being fought, in southern Angola. And if the racists and fascists persist in their international crimes against the peoples of Southern Africa, let them not be surprised if they should some day wake up to find Soviet citizens, Cuban citizens, African and other citizens, not merely in southern Zimbabwe or southern Namibia, but on the outskirts of Pretoria! Africa will apologise to no one for having friends in the world. Africa will be guilty of suicide, if, when threatened with death by a criminal, it did not call for the support of its friends.

Comrades, A n g o l a will regain her territorial integrity; Namibia will be independent under the leadership of President Sam Nujoma and SWAPO of Namibia; S o u t h e r n Africa will be liberated by our heroic women, youth, workers and the general masses and by the forces of our people's army, Umkhonto we Sizwe, and there shall then be peace and security in Southern Africa and renewed progress in Africa.

A LUTA CONTINUA!

A VITORIA E CERTA!