



SP to KK
4/4/89.

Tuynhuys
Kaapstad

Tuynhuys
Cape Town

4 April 1989

Dear Mr President

Thank you for your message of 4 April 1989, regarding the conflict in the northern part of Namibia.

The situation is extremely grave and I share your concern about the needless loss of human life. I can assure you that SWAPO alone must accept responsibility for the carnage.

I realise that we have often differed in the past, but in this case I earnestly appeal to you to consider the incontrovertible facts surrounding the present conflict. According to captives, SWAPO commanders instructed SWAPO personnel to cross the border en masse from Angola on the night of 31 March 1989 and on subsequent days. They are heavily armed with semi-automatic rifles, mortars, anti-tank weapons and ground-to-air missiles. They were instructed to establish bases in Namibia in flagrant contravention of agreements reached and endorsed by the Security Council.

Your Excellency, I assume you are aware of the fact that SWAPO undertook to retire north of latitude 16°S where they would be confined to bases monitored by the United Nations Transitional Assistance Group. This is an absolute obligation which cannot be ignored, just as my Government has given certain undertakings which it too is obliged to honour.

Surely you would not require my Government to fulfil its obligations and allow SWAPO to flout its obligation.

I repeat, Mr President, this obligation to confine itself to base north of latitude 16°S has been endorsed by the Security Council of the United Nations. If any one party should now deviate from its specific obligations, the whole peace process will disintegrate. I give you the assurance that we will fulfil our obligations and I appeal to you to use your influence to persuade the SWAPO leadership to halt immediately any further incursions from Angola into Namibia. The SWAPO leadership should instruct its commanders to confine SWAPO personnel above latitude 16°S, in terms of the applicable agreements. I am not asking more or less than that SWAPO should comply with its obligations. I am sure that the SWAPO leadership is able to convey instructions to their personnel who have illegally crossed the border, to surrender peacefully. In this case arrangements could be made to have them transported safely to designated posts in Angola, north of latitude 16°S.

I again wish to stress that it will not be possible to complete the peace process successfully unless each party complies with its obligations.

Mr President, I reiterate; I stand ready to continue to comply with our obligations. I expect SWAPO to do the same in the interest of the region as a whole.

I attach a copy of a letter dated 2 April 1989 from the Minister of Foreign Affairs of South Africa, addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for your information. Of course you would have heard that the Special Representative of the United Nations in Namibia, has confirmed in a report despatched to the Secretary-General on 3 April 1989, that SWAPO personnel are in fact infiltrating from Angola into Namibia and carrying with them heavy arms.

Thank you for your personal interest in this very important matter. I am indeed concerned that unless SWAPO can be persuaded to halt its continuing incursion into Namibia, that all of us in Southern Africa will soon be faced with a situation of escalating conflict with incalculable consequences for the region as a whole.

Please accept, Mr President, the assurance of my highest consideration.



P W BOTHA

STATE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF SOUTH AFRICA

His Excellency Mr Kenneth D Kaunda
President of the Republic of Zambia
LUSAKA



MINISTER VAN BUITELANDSE SAKE
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

89.04.02

Excellency,

With reference to our telephone conversation of 1 April 1989, I have to inform you that a grave situation has arisen on the Northern Border of South West Africa/Namibia as a result of continued and escalating violation by SWAPO of the agreements signed in New York on 22 December 1988 by the Peoples Republic of Angola, the Republic of Cuba and the Republic of South Africa.

The incontrovertible facts are:

1. During the night of 31 March 1989 and on 1 April 1989 an estimated 600 - 800 SWAPO elements crossed the border from Angola into Namibia. This figure could be as high as 1 000. They are heavily armed, with AK-47 semi-automatic rifles, mortars and even ground to air missiles. These elements entered the Territory in their uniforms.
2. On the basis of information obtained from those captured, SWAPO elements were ordered to cross into South West Africa/Namibia in uniform and under arms, inter alia in order to establish bases in Namibia. They claim that their commanding officers informed them that, as a ceasefire was in existence they need not fear resistance. Should resistance be encountered, the United Nations would take care of them. Reliable information indicates that between four thousand and five thousand SWAPO elements are presently below latitude 16°S.

Mr Secretary-General, this inexplicable action on the part of SWAPO constitutes a clear violation of agreements reached between South Africa, Cuba and Angola. These agreements were endorsed by the Security Council. We are clearly dealing with a situation where SWAPO is flouting those agreements and is defying the Security Council.

In addition, SWAPO has of course violated the written undertaking it gave to you to cease all hostilities as of 1 April 1989.

I trust you will agree that this is an intolerable situation. The Republic of South Africa has acted strictly in terms of its commitments and will continue to do so.

It is significant, Mr Secretary-General, that at the time of writing no statement has been made by the leadership of SWAPO on this cynical disregard of its obligation to you, the Security Council and the international community at large.

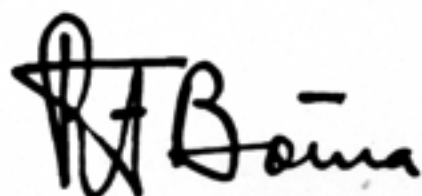
One cannot help feeling compassion for such unnecessary carnage of SWAPO elements who could have re-entered Namibia quite legally to participate peacefully in the political process, according to the agreed procedures of which they had obviously not been informed. The leadership of SWAPO will have to account for their callous disregard for human life and contempt for international agreements. They will have to explain their action and its dire consequences to the people of Namibia. SWAPO's leadership should urgently be brought to its senses.

As you are aware, SWAPO was required by this time to have all its personnel confined to bases north of latitude 16°S. These bases should in terms of agreement be monitored by UNTAG. I should be grateful to learn whether UNTAG is, in fact, monitoring such bases and to enquire whether the monitoring reports could be made available to me.

The Administrator-General will continue to act in concert with your Special Representative regarding the steps considered necessary to deal with the situation. I was in the Territory on 31 March and 1 April 1989 where I met with your Special Representative and his staff. I have a deep understanding of the onerous task assigned to them, particularly at this time of such threatening crisis.

I trust Mr Secretary-General that you and the Security Council will make it possible for my Government to continue to co-operate and fulfil its commitments in terms of the agreements. I appeal to you and to the Security Council to take a firm and clear stand on this act of defiance by SWAPO.

Please accept, Excellency, the renewed assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R F Botha'. The signature is stylized with a large initial 'R' and a long horizontal stroke.

R F BOTHA

His Excellency Mr Javier Perez de Cuellar
Secretary-General of the United Nations
United Nations Plaza
NEW YORK

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