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MEETING BETWEEN A SOUTH AFRICAN DELEGATION LED BY THE
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE HONOURABLE R F BOTHA,
AND A UNITED STATES DELEGATION LED BY DR C CROCKER,
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS :
SANTA MARIA : SAL ISLAND : 31 OCTOBER 1984

MINISTER BOTHA welcomed the American delegation and said that there had been a number of disappointing events on the Mozambique front. South Africa had a peace agreement with the Maputo Government but there had been set-backs. He would like to hear the views of the United States delegation on developments in Mozambique, South West Africa and Angola.

DR CROCKER said that he would like to hear about the latest developments in Mozambique. He had brought Angola's proposals concerning Cuban withdrawal to see how South Africa would regard them. The United States would leave them for South Africa to consider and to decide where and how South Africa and the United States should meet again.

MINISTER BOTHA said that there was an element of urgency in the Mozambique situation and it would therefore be best to discuss it first. He had brought a set of documents which might be useful to the United States, including the Nkomati Agreement, various press statements and the working document No. 6. That had been the point which had been reached when the Commission meeting had adjourned. It was alleged that Fernandez had told Portuguese newspapers that he would take over Mozambique. Chissano then had to deny that the two sides were talking. Each side took up hard

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positions in public. Radio Maputo went out of its way to deny that talks were taking place with RENAMO. Fernandez had a strong argument. How could he persuade his commanders in the bush that the talks on the future of the country would be successful if Machel denied that such talks were taking place. THE MINISTER believed this argument to be true and had put it to Veloso. He replied that if radio was so effective why didn't Fernandez use the same means to put his side of the story. This was, however, a different situation. Fernandez demanded that before the two sides continued, FRELIMO should issue a statement admitting that the talks were taking place. FRELIMO said that they could not comply with this demand.

MINISTER BOTHA said that there were one or two other points which should be mentioned concerning the cessation of propaganda and the role of the Red Cross. Just when the various parties had been at the point of reaching agreement, Pinto and D'Almeida Santos made telephone calls to Fernandez in the Union Buildings requesting him to ask for an adjournment of the meeting. THE MINISTER said he did not know whether the Portuguese Ministers had made the calls or whether the calls had been made to them. Fernandez then told Louis Nel that the Portuguese wanted RENAMO and FRELIMO to go to Lisbon. Veloso wanted to stay in Pretoria to continue the meeting but Fernandez insisted that the Commission adjourns. This intervention by Portugal would make the Portuguese very unpopular in Africa. South Africa, for its part, would wish to know why the Portuguese Government acted in this way.

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DR CROCKER asked whether the Portuguese had not simply wanted to play a role.

MINISTER BOTHA replied that he thought that Bulhosa, who was still very rich, and who knew D'Almeida Santos and Pinto, was behind these events. THE MINISTER thought that Fernandez was in his employment. Fernandez must have reported to Bulhosa and Bulhosa phoned Pinto. South Africa had heard that at one stage Portugal had warned Machel that if a European country and not the racist South African regime was behind the agreement it would stand a better chance of success. South Africa had tried hard to solve this problem but outsiders are now intervening to obstruct our efforts to achieve peace. THE MINISTER said that he had once confronted Fernandez who had reacted in an arrogant fashion. THE MINISTER had wanted to go to Lisbon to see Soares with a message from President Botha. He had wanted to find out what was up. He had arranged to leave on the 12th of October at short notice. He had not wanted to by-pass anyone. D'Almeida Santos approved of this plan but the MINISTER was advised at the airport that the Portuguese no longer wanted him to go. He had accordingly cancelled his proposed visit to Portugal. THE MINISTER said that he had told Vieira and Ambassador Fourie what had happened. FRELIMO was not surprised. They had warned us on occasion against outside intrigue and foreign financial interests. THE MINISTER said that he had worked hard to save the next session of the Commission. FRELIMO agreed to a statement containing a reference to a meeting between the "same parties" which had participated in the earlier meetings but Fernandez insisted on a specific reference to

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RENAMO. This, FRELIMO could not accept because, although it would have been a correct factual statement, the Maputo Government could not be seen to have capitulated to a blunt demand that it should broadcast the statement and have it published in all the Mozambique papers. THE MINISTER would endeavour to pursue the matter when he returned to South Africa. THE MINISTER had asked Silvino da Luz to send a message to Veloso that Gen Malan and he were looking for ways out of the current problem. In the meantime they should remain calm and not make any statements. Veloso had suggested that they should continue discussions and the war at the same time.

MINISTER BOTHA said that he had no doubt that RENAMO was receiving aid from somewhere. The situation in Mozambique is not as good as Veloso claims. The Swazi Foreign Minister had been with him the preceding Monday. Large numbers of Mozambicans were crossing the border. It was very difficult to know what the facts were. One thing was certain, the food position in Mozambique was getting worse. THE MINISTER said that he had wanted to meet with President Machel. South Africa was concerned about the quality of decision making. However, it would not give up its Mozambique initiative because it was too important, even if South Africa had to go behind Fernandez' back. South Africa would not allow a man like Bulhosa to wreck the whole effort. THE MINISTER thought that it might be useful if the United States could tell President Machel that the present deadlock could and had to be resolved. The Mozambicans should not do anything impulsive in the meantime. THE MINISTER was concerned that they might try to do things to upset the progress.

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DR CROCKER said that South Africa was saying that the problem was not with the Agreement but with who was speaking to whom?

MINISTER BOTHA replied that this was not entirely the case but it was essential to get peace and then perhaps the two sides could solve the more difficult political problems. RENAMO had demands which were unacceptable to FRELIMO and vice versa.

DR CROCKER asked what Veloso had said with regard to RENAMO's political demands?

MINISTER BOTHA replied that RENAMO claimed it was fighting because FRELIMO was destroying African culture and values and the free economy. Veloso had said that they were not against these concepts. However, Fernandez wanted more than Machel was prepared to give. A ceasefire might create a positive atmosphere and mutual trust. It was needed to bring about an improvement in the economy. Once the advantages of peace become visible the two sides would be more inclined to resolve their political differences.

DR CROCKER said that the United States had contacted the Portuguese within a few days of the Minister's phone call. The United States had tried to find "where they were coming from". It had found that Pinto's people were saying incredibly hard-line things, which reminded the United States of some of South Africa's earlier positions. These people were advising RENAMO to stall and adopt a new line.

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Soares had fully agreed with the United States and had called a Cabinet meeting at which Portuguese policy toward Mozambique had been confirmed publicly. Pinto had been exposed.

MINISTER BOTHA asked about D'Almeida Santos. He recalled that Pinto had sent a man to ask him to visit South Africa as an official guest. THE MINISTER had been prepared to invite him. There was no cohesion in the Portuguese Government. The question was why had D'Almeida Santos done it? The truth of the matter was that some members of the Portuguese Government did not support their own Prime Minister's policies.

DR CROCKER agreed that there were divisions in the Portuguese Government. RENAMO would continue to play games as long as these factions existed. The Mozambican Government had been very concerned about Portugal's role and did not know what to do with the ex-colonial power. It had many hang-ups in this regard. The Portuguese right could only infiltrate Mozambique if they had internal parties to support them. The question was, how could a faction in Lisbon compete against South Africa's regional diplomacy? The United States could not understand how this could happen. South Africa had to have instruments of persuasion which it could use. Could it not control the traffic through its territory to Mozambique?

MINISTER BOTHA said that there was a lot of traffic from Portugal to Mozambique and South Africa which is difficult to control. It is not easy to check on each individual

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visitor and to find out what his intentions were. The Portuguese knew what was going on. They had been able to call an adjournment while he and the Mozambicans had been talking in his own Ministry. There was a huge traffic to Mozambique, but not through Komatipoort. South Africa's eastern border was controlled but Swaziland was open. There was no flow to and from Natal either. THE MINISTER said that South Africa had heard of people in the Mozambican Government who might want to return to an alliance with Moscow.

DR CROCKER replied that he had no doubt about this. Some people hoped Machel would fail. The question was, how should everyone proceed? He was confused. South Africa was working flat out but the war was getting worse. The question was, what was the relation between the military and the political sides? Does the USA have a role to play?

MINISTER BOTHA said that people had to tell Fernandez to come to his senses. The United States should speak with Portugal and request them to tackle Fernandez.

DR CROCKER asked whether there was a specific message which Soares should give to RENAMO?

MINISTER BOTHA replied that he should tell them that Portugal did not support the destruction of Mozambique. South Africa wanted to save Mozambique and to stop it from turning to Moscow. Portugal should tell RENAMO that they could achieve their goals by helping Machel to move away from Moscow. Machel could not remain a Marxist if he

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cooperated with South Africa economically. RENAMO was not being asked to forfeit its goals if those goals encompass development, stability, security and national reconciliation. South Africa could guarantee its security. There was a vast difference between this and interfering. He had sent his Ambassador to ask Foreign Minister Gama whether the Portuguese had interfered in the peace talks. They owed South Africa an explanation, although South Africa did not want to sour relations. South Africa would need Portugal to return to Mozambique to help rebuild the economy. THE MINISTER had approved a credit of five million rand for the purchase of chickens. However, the Mozambicans had apparently butchered some of the chickens because of food shortages and given them the wrong feed. They had made elementary mistakes. They could not even handle a problem of this nature let alone the complicated question of finding peace.

DR CROCKER asked how long matters would be adjourned?

MINISTER BOTHA replied that he had asked the parties to wait for his return and in the meantime to cool it. South Africa had not given up.

DR CROCKER asked whether the Minister thought that the parties were beginning to give up?

MINISTER BOTHA replied that Hungwana was the worst of the lot. He had been under so much stress that it had been necessary to call in a doctor on one occasion. Excessive stress would certainly take its toll.

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DR CROCKER asked what the origin of the stress was? He felt that it was that they had thought that there was a way out by confiding in the Western and South African option but the situation was getting worse. South Africa and the United States were the only one's who could solve their problems.

MINISTER BOTHA observed that Frelimo misread the Nkomati Agreement. It was not intended to stop the war, but simply to stop cross-border support. South Africa had wanted stability. Nkomati had not made a difference because either RENAMO was stronger than South Africa had thought, or FRELIMO was weaker than had been thought.

DR CROCKER asked how South Africa could explain the military situation?

MINISTER BOTHA replied that South Africa had made a commitment to stop support from its territory. FRELIMO had not undertaken to destroy the ANC and South Africa had not undertaken to destroy RENAMO. South Africa wanted peace. A year ago the parties would not have touched this agreement. Now they are visiting South Africa regularly for up to five days. FRELIMO was desperate. Veloso said last week they would turn to sources outside Mozambique if this initiative did not succeed. He said he was referring to the possibility of getting more arms, not to calling in foreign troops. Their survival is at stake but they wished to avoid humiliation. Fernandez has smelled victory. He might even have Arab elements supporting him. There was a

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long relationship between the Arab royal houses, Zanzibar and Maputo. Someone was telling RENAMO to try to win. This frightened FRELIMO. Veloso probably sensed that Moscow would not be able to help. The food situation was desperate. The port situation was desperate. But even if RENAMO wins, Mozambique will lose. FRELIMO will then in turn carry on the war. In the end the whole southern Africa will pay the price.

DR CROCKER observed that the MINISTER had said that the agreement had been meant to cut off support not to stop the war. Could South Africa not do more?

MINISTER BOTHA replied that it could not do more without sending in troops.

DR CROCKER noted that South Africa was saying RENAMO had a veto.

MINISTER BOTHA replied that even the United States could not exert sufficient pressure on Portugal or other elements. The question was, what was beneath the surface? Who was behind RENAMO? There were other forces. South Africa had not given RENAMO a veto but it could not push them to the conference table if there was pressure from other quarters on RENAMO not to agree to a ceasefire.

DR CROCKER suggested that the MINISTER might ask his friends in Munich about support for RENAMO.

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MINISTER BOTHA replied that Bulhosa lived in Brazil but had good contacts in the Arab world.

DR CROCKER asked what was coming in from these sources?

MINISTER BOTHA replied that Veloso had claimed that help was coming in from other sources.

DR CROCKER asked what these Arab sources were? Was it Oman?

MINISTER BOTHA said that it might be Saudi Arabia as well.

DR CROCKER said that the United States had good intelligence resources there.

MINISTER BOTHA asked whether he could find out if there were any links?

DR CROCKER promised to get back to him in this regard.

MINISTER BOTHA said that there were two important things at the moment. Firstly, the Portuguese Government must get Pinto, or someone stronger, to talk to Fernandez and secondly, Machel should be reassured.

DR CROCKER said that the United States would do what it could. It would feel the pulse in Maputo and try to be helpful. Portugal and Machel would ask whether Pretoria was doing enough to deny RENAMO a veto.

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MINISTER BOTHA replied that threatening RENAMO did not work. It was necessary to get through to the commanders in the bush and to persuade them that they would not be persecuted, that there would be a better and more secure life for them in a peaceful Mozambique.

AMBASSADOR FOURIE said that South Africa could give a categorical statement that RENAMO was not receiving aid from the Republic. If any proof could be presented that South Africa was helping RENAMO, regardless of the Department involved, President Botha would be able to take the necessary steps.

GENERAL MALAN added that the South African Defence Force had stopped its aid a week before Nkomati. He could assure the United States that the Defence Force had not given RENAMO any help. It had cut its connections and this had caused problems. The SADF had been into Mozambique once or twice to collect the leaders for the the current talks, but this had been with the permission of the Mozambican Government. RENAMO received no assistance from South Africa but RENAMO nevertheless thought they could win. The United States should put pressure on RENAMO's outside sources. It should put pressure on the Germans. Machel was sincere and although the parties were miles apart, progress had been made. There were lots of problems ahead but it was essential to keep outside forces away. Fernandez had to be cut down to size.

DR CROCKER asked for clarification on the following point. When South Africa said that help from outside sources had

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to be stopped, was it talking about financial help? What did South Africa mean by that? How could financial aid help with a guerrilla war.

GEN MALAN replied that these sources were promising support for the future. He doubted that any weapons were coming in from any quarter. South Africa had helped by flying things in before Nkomati. However, he did not know whether FRELIMO was winning the minds and hearts of the people.

MINISTER BOTHA observed that FRELIMO was in trouble. Nevertheless he thought he could help Machel to establish himself as an authentic African leader. That's why he had insisted that RENAMO should recognize him.

MINISTER MALAN asked how long it had taken the United States to get warring sides together in other situations around the world?

DR CROCKER said that South Africa would have to build in steps. The United States did not want to take over South Africa's role, but it had to understand what was going on so that it could be helpful. How did the war shape up? How was RENAMO managing to succeed? The United States had not expected the military situation to become worse.

GEN MALAN replied that one was talking about banditry in Mozambique, not about great offensives. All one had to do in revolutionary warfare was to break down the existing authority. It was much more difficult to be in command. RENAMO would not be able to run the country either.

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However, a ceasefire could be arranged, the economic infrastructure could be re-established and everyone would be aware of the benefits of progress.

MINISTER BOTHA said South Africa was doing this in its own interest and in the interest of the region as a whole. South Africa would be able to assist the Mozambican economy without too much expense. It would leave no stone unturned. However, Mozambique was a big country and undeveloped with a traditional society. FRELIMO had misjudged the situation.

DR CROCKER said that he did not wish to argue with what South Africa had just said. However, the situation was deteriorating and the United States found it difficult to explain to those who said that it was South Africa's fault.

MINISTER BOTHA replied that only an idiot would think South Africa wanted the war to continue. MINISTER BOTHA added that South Africa found it easier to deal with Africans than with non-Africans. The Africans were nationalists. South Africa could work with them but these other people had other interests.

MINISTER MALAN said that it was necessary to get the bona fide leaders together. Would it not be possible to eliminate the foreigners?

MINISTER BOTHA confirmed that it had been easier for him to work with Dlakama than with Fernandez.