

SUMMARY NOTES OF MEETING BETWEEN THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL : CAPE TOWN, MONDAY, 22 JANUARY 1979

Present

The Honourable R F Botha -	Mr Ahtisaari
Mr B G Fourie	Mr Bomani
Genl. M A de M. Malan	Genl. Phillipp
Genl. J Geldenhuys	Mr Muganda
Mr J D Viall	Mr Omayad
Mr C F G von Hirschberg	
Mr N P van Heerden	
Mr J A Eksteen	

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Minister: I suppose that they could do that. I suppose the United States could do anything, programme one of their satellites all the time, especially on the Northern areas. They would do that because they would wish to catch us out. That's what they would like to do. They would like to catch South Africa out. They would think that we might do all sorts of wrong things there and would wish to prove that we are the culprits of whatever goes wrong there. But these monitoring duties, my friend, will you bear with me, and let me then say to you for one battalion of whom 20% are on leave in Caprivi, which brings them down to 560 active men ...

Mr Ahtisaari: Regarding the military component of UNTAG it is important that we first address ourselves once again to paragraph 3 of the explanatory statement of the Secretary-General in which he stated inter alia "the military component of UNTAG will be built up gradually and will be introduced, for practical as well as other reasons, by stages. The figure of 7500 men - which includes 2300 for logistics - would be the authorized upper limit of the military component, and it is obvious that its actual size at any given time will depend on the development of the general situation, which I shall keep under constant review, undertaking such consultations as may be necessary. Such factors as the cooperation extended by the parties, the maintenance of the cease-fire and the security situation will obviously be very important in this regard. I am also studying means by which at least some of the logistic functions of the military component can be carried out by civilian agencies". In bringing this particular matter to the fore, I should like to state that it is not our intention to establish any preconditions for our consultations on the military component. On the contrary, we feel that it is a part of an issue which should not be allowed to block further consideration of the relevant matters. Coming back now to the study that the Generals have carried out over the last few days, both Gen Philipp and I will be prepared to

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give further consideration to the study circulated yesterday evening in as far as it does not conflict with the Western proposal and the report of the Secretary-General as adopted by Resolution 435. We would, and I hope that you would appreciate that

Minister: That it does not conflict with what?

Mr Ahtisaari: With the Western proposal and the report of the Secretary-General as adopted by Resolution 435. We would, of course, need to give further consideration to the study on our return to New York and to consult with the Secretary-General on the very important matters raised therein. There are also a number of questions raised in the study. Some of these fall within the sovereignty of the neighbouring states. In this connection we note the willingness of your Government to accept reciprocal arrangements concerning deployment in border areas. Mr Minister, we intend to establish further contact with neighbouring states, as I indicated earlier, in the near future to enable me to make necessary arrangements for coordination concerning the provisions of the transitional arrangements. It will be appreciated that I am not in a position at this time to make any commitments on behalf of the neighbouring countries save to repeat that in consultations with the Governments of Angola, Botswana and Zambia, the Secretary-General and I have received reiterated assurances of their fullest cooperation in the implementation of Resolution 435. Mr Minister, I would like to end my comments simply by saying that, subject to the above, I would recommend that we proceed to schedule provisional dates for the emplacement of UNTAG and elections in the Territory as described in the proposal and reflected in the report of the Secretary-General and predicated on Resolution 435. In this connection I would recommend to Secretary-General a provisional date for the commencement of the emplacement of UNTAG effective from 26 February 1979. I would also recommend that

the elections be held during the last week of September 1979 in accordance with the proposal for a settlement and Resolution 435. The dates would, of course, Mr Minister, be subject to confirmation after the Secretary-General has had the opportunity to finalise the remaining consultations and arrangements for the cease-fire. Mr Minister, this was all that I felt that I should say on these issues at the moment. There are a few other comments on some of the other matters we have been discussing. There are at least three I would like to comment on of: the record.

Minister: Thank you very much for your remarks, Mr Ahtisaari. I don't think that I can at this stage usefully discuss the views expressed by you. I have taken note of what you have said and I merely wish to add, I just want to draw attention to an understanding, as we have it, that in the first column of this document, or rather column B, I notice that that is near the exact wording of the Resolution, the exact wording and as I understand it, what follows then is the practical, operational implementation of that exact wording in some stages. Those stages as I see it that follow flow exactly from the exact wording. There are some painful elements in this document for the South African Government but for the sake of, because of the great urgency, the time loss, I am not aware of anything that cannot be overcome so that virtually, subject only to discussion with the Prime Minister I am prepared already to give you now an indication, for the sake of time and because of the urgency of the matter, we don't want to put further obstacles in the way of the operational implementation and I feel that I should say to you that, subject to approval by the Prime Minister, we will probably accept this as the operational implementation of the Resolution in question and I am prepared to do so at this early stage for one reason only really, and that is the time, the time involved. We want to get down to implementation. Secondly, I am concerned, very much, about

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time, objectively speaking. I am glad that you stated that we set as a provisional date from your point of view the 26 February and the last week of September. As the date for the deployment of UNTAG, I take it that that is what our military colleagues call the D-day, the date on which the whole process will start formally, the count-down and the last week of September will be the date for the elections which will be seven months long. We are now today at the 22 January. I realise that there are practical issues still involved but I'll be grateful if UNTAG could proceed to South West Africa as soon as possible so that our count beyond that could start. I feel it my duty to tell you that if we go beyond February then it will not be possible to have an election after September. Not because we want to be intransigent.

I feel very strongly about two matters. One is the deterioration of South Africa's responsibility for the Territory, administrative responsibility, political responsibility, and secondly, the assurance the people demand as to their future. This dispute has now gone on for 32 years and we must now reach the end. It is in the interests of the leaders of Africa, of Southern Africa, the leaders of Angola, Botswana, Zambia, of all of us, irrespective of what differences might exist between other African States and ourselves regarding the internal policies of my Government. South West Africa is now in a new position in the arena of the disputed problems of the Territory or what have you. I wish to urge you, therefore, and remind you that when I was in New York last the Secretary-General and the Five, spokesmen for the Five, urged me very strongly, as you will recall, to agree to a date for UNTAG to come to the Territory, if you remember that. As a matter of fact, there was a time when the Secretary-General suggested emplacement in January, or the first week in February. Well, here I am, I say I accept that now and let us start. So as far as I am concerned we can then move on to some other subjects which you would wish to mention and I'll report to the South African Prime Minister

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on every word, comma, full stop. That is impossible. We abide by the plan. Naturally, we cannot re-negotiate it, I agree with you and leave the matter at that.

Mr Ahtisaari: Minister, the only problem actually I have in this connection, in this particular area, is that this matter was raised and it has all of a sudden become an issue for the simple reason that our interpretation of the wording of that particular paragraph in the Western proposal was different.

Minister: May I have a look at the wording of that paragraph. "All Namibian refugees or Namibians detained or otherwise outside the Territory of Namibia will be permitted to return peacefully and participate fully and freely in the electoral process without risk of arrest, detention, intimidation or imprisonment.". That's the wording. I agree to the wording of that paragraph - I have agreed already, I cannot change it in any case.

Ambassador Bomani: When we met with Secretary Fourie we discovered that we had different interpretations after a long discussion.

Minister: That might be so, but then we must take the plan from the beginning, sentence by sentence and see what interpretations we are going to give to words.

Mr Fourie: Originally there was this idea that there would be a tribunal then subsequently that idea was replaced by the idea that there would be close cooperation between you and Justice Steyn.

Minister: Between you and the Administrator-General. I give you that wording too. There ought to be very close cooperation and liaison between the Special Representative and the Administrator-General on all aspects of implementation. All aspects. So why should I undertake, as Foreign Minister, tasks which the plan designates to you and Judge Steyn. As we sit here today

I do not know whether it would in practice ever be necessary to have a difference of opinion on the interpretation of that paragraph. So I have come to the conclusion, why should the two of us, in advance, before we are certain or sure that a certain difference of opinion might arise as to interpretation, why should we in advance assume that that would be the case and then try to resolve such a situation in advance.

Mr Ahtisaari: Mr Minister, I think it is important to emphasize the uneasiness of the representatives of the UN High Commission for Refugees. What I would like to be in a position to do in Dr Waldheim's report especially when this issue was raised that the confirmation that the Western proposal on this particular issue stands as the text says. I think that is to remove any fears that there might be after discussion on this issue which actually started already in Swakopmund. So that sort of confirmation I think we are in a position to make in the light of your statement earlier.

Minister: That's the way I see it right now. If you insist on giving your interpretation of it you will force me to give mine, naturally. I do not believe that is my duty. I do not believe it is my duty. According to the plan there are a lot of paragraphs in this plan, and I have gone through it on which we, if we now sit here today and go through it with a comb, we might find differences of opinion, but then we are not going to get to the operational implementation at all and because of my experience with this long and painful process - there was a time, just about a year ago, when I was in New York I remember last year in February, when we nearly - not so much you - we were still then negotiating with the Five - when I nearly had to break off all further negotiations because of the Western insistence on 3000. The West insisted on 3000 UN troops. We did not want to go beyond 2000. Had I accepted at that time the Western 3000, we would have perhaps, perhaps, avoided a lot of problems later but as it turned out to be we would have

caused, and the West would have caused a lot of headaches to Gen Philipp who later would then have had to contradict not only us but the West as well etc. The way we solved that at that time was to decide that that figure would be left later, that was the tacit understanding, to the men on the ground. They would know the circumstances, they would know better and there would be consultations and although that figure caused us a lot of headaches subsequently, I think we overcame them successfully. Had we in February, however, insisted on fixed positions we would not have sat here today.

Mr Ahtisaari: I think, Mr Minister, that it is clear that the text to which we are all bound are those of the relevant UN resolutions. I, as you have also indicated, because as the Secretary-General said in New York, the UN did not participate directly in the proposal for a settlement and, therefore, we are not really in a position to comment on any accounts.

Minister: I have given no account. This morning I have given no account.

Mr Ahtisaari: No, no, I appreciate that but I simply wanted to say that even if we sometimes want out of curiosity to find out certain things and we still, if anyone, resolutions, argue the guiding principles for all parties concerned.

Minister: There are some other matters I think on the agenda. As far as the composition is concerned I have sent a message to Dr Waldheim and I will proceed to exchange with him views on that particular subject. I hope that we would be able to overcome any differences that might exist as to that matter. I sincerely hope that we would be able to. Personally I cannot see that any ought to become a decisive stumbling block. I hope not, I hope not. So that, gentlemen, it seems to me, at this stage, if we could now get from you and from Dr Waldheim as soon as possible an indication that D-day would be 26 February,

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that you would be arriving, Gen Philipp would be arriving, I do not know what your arrangements are, how you connect up with each other, on a certain day in February - I don't know whether it is 10 February, 15 February - I would hope and urge you to ask Dr Waldheim to lay down the cease-fire procedure immediately, immediately, as far as I am concerned, let him send it to me or you give it to me tomorrow, today, the day after tomorrow so that we get down to that procedure and get it accepted. I cannot foresee any difficulty there. I am already on record, I have already sent in the South African point of view on that matter. If Dr Waldheim wishes me to repeat it, reconfirm it or do it again de novo, I'll do it again de novo but what I want is the cease-fire procedure to be laid down so that I can accept it as fast as possible.

Mr Fourie: I think the procedure, Mr Minister, has been laid down. It is a question of simply confirming that that is the date.

Minister: Well all right then, whatever it is I just want to get over it. Give me a hurdle so that we can get down to this emplacement. Let us embark. Are there any other matters to be discussed? Gen Malan? Mr Fourie? Brand wasn't there another point to be discussed?

Mr Fourie: Well, the UNTAG thing, it doesn't require any ... the status agreement.

Minister: Are you having problems there?

Mr Fourie: Well no, we reached a point where we agreed to prepare the final draft on a certain basis and as in the case of these things, I take it Mr Ahtisaari would let us know also at the same time what the position is.

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Minister: You see, if we can iron out with Dr Waldheim the question of composition in the next few days, I think if you will be arriving there hopefully not later than Wednesday - I realise that you will be tired, all of you, you will all need to recover the time difference, but I urge you kindly to - and I know you will make every endeavour - so that it is possible that we can by the end of the week announce to the world that this is the programme, that we go ahead.

Mr Ahtisaari: Mr Minister, there is one area which will no doubt affect this trip of mine to the neighbouring countries, and will no doubt influence developments but I will try to make plans to get that off the ground as soon as possible. In that connection I noted the willingness of your Government to accept reciprocal arrangements for deployment in border areas. I hope that that would be done.

Minister: I hope you will not encounter difficulties because I think that the neighbouring states, unless I am wrong in my judgement here, but if I read Dr Kaunda correctly and Pres Neto correctly I think really that they would wish themselves the anguish and the conflict to cease in their own interests also as soon as possible. I think so. You know we have lost four locomotives on the run to Lusaka, so clearly also we don't want to lose more locomotives. You might say it is just nothing, but it is important that I think the unrest should cease and I think everybody wish it, I think Pres Kaunda definitely. I can think of no reason why he would wish it to continue. I can think of no reason why Pres Neto would wish it to continue. So I think that we must not be technical, if we were technical or if we try to be juridically absolutely correct each one sticking to the old, strict, juridical interpretation of sovereignty, of legality of illegality, we would never have come to this point at all. What we are dealing with here is genuine, one situation in Southern Africa where we have reached consensus on all the main issues - on the removal of discrimination, one-man, one-vote

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the country as an entity. I will never forget Mr Salim when he was President of the Security Council, and I had the privilege of addressing the Security Council on another issue it was, but we then discussed in his office, I went to see him as President, he had difficulties to receive me in another capacity, but as President of the Council he could receive me. He then at that stage said to me, "Ambassador, if only your Government would start by committing itself ~~to~~ independence for the Territory as a whole, as a whole, if you could move away from the concept of fragmentation, of Bantustans if further you could agree to a free and fair election and lastly remove discrimination" - I will never forget these were the three points he recommended, he suggested that day. He said we would then see a difference in the attitude of the African group. Now I must say I have not seen much of a difference except whispers that filtered through which will encourage me, which will encourage me. I think so. I would feel that as we have indeed demonstrated in practice in the Territory, although you regard it a null and void, it was of great importance to me for totally different reasons perhaps from yours, to have that election in December on a one-man, one-vote basis where Blacks, Whites and Coloureds could vote on one registration list. That was important. It was done, it happened. I can see no gates, no obstacles to move in that Territory to a successful, peaceful conclusion of this one. Southern Africa needs it. These are my concluding remarks, I wish to thank you and all your staff members for the way in which we could conduct these discussions, for the contributions made by all you staff members in the discussions with Mr Fourie and my staff and Gen Geldenhuys and his staff. Also in Swakopmund where apparently the battle raged quite well at times. That the sides tested each other's patience in hours of argument. Let us depart then if we must on a note of hope and expectation and above all on a basis of a mental resolve that we are now going to beat this.

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Mr Ahtisaari: Minister, I would want on behalf of myself and my colleagues to reciprocate your thanks to them. We have appreciated the cooperative nature of these discussions. I appreciate also what you have said that in a political process it is not really always possible ... at this stage where we are when we haven't even started yet. I think there is an understanding of the basic ground rules and also I think a very firm understanding what I emphasized in our talks in Swakopmund on this. I would find it very difficult if we end up in a situation where implementing Resolution 435 that I myself or Justice Steyn for that matter would appear to be hesitant in any sector of the interests. I think we have to have the principle of impartiality and I must stress this also on both sides. Cooperation is required and I appreciate the offers that have been made in the different discussions which have been carried out by my colleagues, the practical assistance and cooperation on the different stages of implementation. I appreciate that I could hear some firm details and information which we are still waiting for from Windhoek, but that will come later on, to make it possible for us to carry out the rest of the consultations which are required. I think it is a sign of urgency also from our side and from the side of Dr Waldheim that he decided to act promptly on your letter in which your Government accepted Resolution 435, to proceed with these consultations. We are definitely not interested in unnecessary delays. Our consultations still will be carried out and I simply want to assure you that we will try to carry those out as quickly as possible. To make it possible to start with the emplacement and deployment of UNTAG on the strength of that visit. I thank you for all the assistance we have received.

Minister: You are welcome. May I in conclusion ask you one last question. Are you perhaps at this stage prepared to reconsider your statement the other day that some of our military people were uncooperative?

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Mr Ahtisaari: I think that when I talked about the cooperative spirit, I think I had especially in mind Gen Malan. All of us who were in Swakopmund realised what I had in mind because when I talk about the ground rules it is important that we talk frankly, but as I emphasized earlier is important is that the cooperation on the ground has from the beginning been excellent. I would like to make a note of that for the Secretary-General. We have received the full cooperation of all concerned.

Minister: Thank you, Mr Ahtisaari. Could we just for a moment consider what we are going to say to the press.

Mr Ahtisaari: I would propose, Mr Minister

Minister: Or at least what you would be considering telling them yourself.

Mr Ahtisaari: I was planning to tell them that we have finished the consultations and I am returning back to New York to report to the Secretary-General and that there are some issues as indicated by the Secretary-General, like composition of the military component, that require further consultations. I will also say that I foresee a visit to neighbouring countries to finish the consultations on the practical aspects of the implementation and the operational requirements. I am not going to say anything about the dates because I feel the Secretary-General should be given a chance to hear this first from me and not through the press.

Minister: I was just wondering whether it is wise to highlight the subject of the military composition with the press, in the mind of the press. It's just thinking aloud.

Mr Ahtisaari: No, I realise we were both on TV last night. I notice that you

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Minister: I mentioned that as a point but I said that as far as composition and the numbers are concerned I do not foresee any obstacles any longer. I also defended you, although there is a real suspicion in the minds of the people in the Territory against the UN, there is also suspicion in the UN against South Africa and it is a question of now building up trust essential for a successful conclusion of the question. That can only be done on a day to day basis.

Mr Ahtisaari: But I am not, Mr Minister, willing to go into details of the discussions.

Minister: I see. No, I just wanted to have a rough idea of what you intend doing.

Mr Ahtisaari: This is my normal practice, and the press knows it.

Minister: If they ask you how would you characterize the discussions - that is a question we all get all the time, how would you characterize the discussions? Do you intend to reply to that?

Mr Ahtisaari: I have a standard formula that I adopted last time when we visited Namibia in August and I said "businesslike" If one goes further than that I can also say that there is an attempt to get the process started, as soon as possible, without any delay.

Minister: Is there any assistance we can render any of you to facilitate your travel arrangements, etc.?

Mr Ahtisaari: I think we have finally come to the more or less final arrangements.

Minister: If there is nothing more to discuss, shall we adjourn?