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September 10, 1981

The Honorable
R. F. Botha
Minister of Foreign Affairs
and Information
Cape Town

Dear Pik:

I am responding to your letter of July 29 and writing to you in connection with a message which you will receive soon from the Contact Group.

Lest there be confusion between us on these questions of the utmost importance, let me set out for you our position on the Angola question as it relates to a Namibia settlement. As I have said in my letters of July 5 and July 19, Angola cannot be part of a Namibia settlement plan under UN auspices. The Contact Group members recognize the de facto relationship that exists on the ground between Namibia and Angola. Furthermore, they recognize that, whatever is said publicly, your readiness to proceed to a settlement in Namibia is dependent on coordinated movement on Cuban withdrawal from Angola. Our allies do not, however, consider Angola to be on the agenda of the Contact Group, per se.

You should be assured that there is no change in the U.S. position as stated in my July 5 letter. To address the concerns of our Contact Group partners, we are not asking them to join in our understanding with you on the Angolan track of our strategy, but this does not alter that understanding. Consequently, Angola will not be addressed in the forthcoming Contact Group message to you, and I suggest it would be helpful if you did not raise it in your response or in other communications with the Contact Group.

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There is a second issue, Pik, that we need to be completely clear about. You state your understanding that U.S. efforts to achieve Cuban withdrawal "would at the commencement of Phase III succeed so that their withdrawal would by then have been achieved or would be in progress." This goes beyond what I indicated to you in my July 5 letter on what is politically feasible. We seek "a specific commitment to a schedule for Cuban troop withdrawal coordinated with the transitional security arrangements in Namibia." The goal, in other words, is to achieve overall coordination of Cuban withdrawal with the unfolding of the Phase III, including the steps envisaged in the UN plan.

I hope you will appreciate that success will depend on our developing leverage on the Cuban issue as the Namibia process moves forward. We cannot commit ourselves to achieving results on Cuban withdrawal "at the commencement of Phase III."

It will, of course, be necessary to consult with you further on how progress on the two tracks of our strategy can best be coordinated in terms of timing. But I believe for now it is essential that we avoid formulations that would remove the tactical flexibility we will need to achieve the success which is of such interest to us both.

I will be proceeding on the above basis within the Contact Group.

With warm regards,

/s/

Alexander M. Haig, Jr.