

For immediate release

STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE R F BOTHA
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS :
CAPE TOWN : 20 MARCH 1984

The Minister of Foreign Affairs stated in Cape Town today that the Joint Monitoring Commission decided at a meeting at Cuvelai on 19 March 1984 that, in the light of the progress which has been made in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement, the JMC Headquarters will move to MUPA as soon as practical arrangements have been finalised.

The problems which caused the delay in the Commission's scheduled departure from Cuvelai included the continuing presence of SWAPO elements in the area monitored by the JMC, as well as other violations in terms of the Lusaka Agreement. A number of incidents resulting from SWAPO activities were brought to the Commission's attention and practical action is being taken to counteract SWAPO infiltration. There were, inter alia clashes between mixed JMC patrols and SWAPO elements on 8, 11 and 12 March 1984 in the course of which eight members of SWAPO and two members of the JMC were killed and five members of the JMC were injured.

The South African component on the JMC is satisfied that, at this stage, adequate steps are being taken to resolve violations in terms of the Agreement, including the removal of SWAPO from the area monitored by the Commission.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs expressed South Africa's satisfaction with the cooperative relationship which has thus far been developed between the Angolan and South African components of the JMC.

The statement issued by President dos Santos and President Castro on 19 March 1984 starkly contradicts the spirit and letter of the Lusaka Agreement and the constructive relationship which has developed within the Joint Monitoring commission. In that statement the Angolan and Cuban Governments expressed

"their admiration and solidarity with the heroic struggle being waged by the peoples of Namibia and South Africa under the direction of their sole and legal representatives, SWAPO and the ANC, against the disgraceful apartheid regime, and reaffirm their conviction that such a repugnant regime is historically condemned to disappear."

This language is unacceptable to the South African Government. If this is an accurate reflection of the Angolan Government's views it would, be more consistent for it to negotiate the withdrawal of South African forces from Angola with the ANC. If it wishes to promote a solution to the South West Africa question it would also be more consistent for the Luanda regime to do so with SWAPO. If the Angolan Government is so strongly committed to solidarity with SWAPO's "heroic" struggle, then its current role in the Joint Monitoring Commission makes no sense.

It should be borne in mind that the sole reason for the presence of South African forces in Angola has been to counteract SWAPO's aggression against the people of South West Africa/Namibia. It is also evident from the statement that the Angolan Government identifies itself with SWAPO's aggression against South West Africa and the ANC's violent activities against South Africa.

The Angolan/Cuban statement is largely a reiteration of the positions adopted by the two countries on 4 February 1982 and of the Angolan statement of 26 August 1983.

South Africa's position remains that it is prepared to seek a peaceful settlement to the South West Africa/Namibia question on the basis of Security Council Resolution 435 (1978) within the framework of the understanding reached with the United States and the Western Contact Group. The one remaining issue still to be resolved is the withdrawal of the Cubans from Angola, on the understanding that they will not be replaced by any other hostile forces. Firm agreement will have to be reached on the fundamental requirements of Cuban withdrawal, and a commitment will have to be obtained from the Angolan Government regarding the implementation of such an agreement.

South Africa believes that the proposal which it made on 11 March 1984 for a conference of all the parties involved in the South West African/Angolan conflict would help to create the atmosphere for the resolution of the problems of the region, including the withdrawal of Cuban forces.

However, before there can be any progress on these questions the South African Government will have to obtain an urgent clarification of the Angolan Government's position, in the light of the critical situation which has been brought about by the Angolan/Cuban statement of 19 March 1984. In particular, it will have to establish whether this joint statement constitutes a repudiation of the Lusaka Agreement and whether it indicates a call for the end to the activities of the Joint Monitoring Commission by the Luanda regime.

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