

The Fifth Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organisation for African Unity (OAU) held in Algiers from 13 to 16 September 1968 was most successful and historic. Its significance was further enhanced by the fact that the supreme leaders of the fighting liberation movements of Southern African and Guinea-Bissau held fruitful joint discussions on common problems.

The following is the joint statement by:

James Chikerema Vice President of ZAPU (Zimbabwe)

Sam Nujoma President of SWAPO (South West Africa)

Amilcar Cabral Secretary General of PAIGC (Guinea-Bissau)

Aghostino Neto President of MPLA (Angola)

O. R. Tambo Acting President General of the ANC (South Africa)

It was submitted to the OAU Assembly by Comrade Tambo.

WE SHALL WIN

Mr. President, Your Imperial Majesty, Your Royal Majesty, Your Excellencies and Distinguished guests:

Allow me on behalf of the liberation movements, the revolutionary fighters and oppressed peoples of our countries, to express profound thanks to the Organization for African Unity for the opportunity afforded to us to address this august assembly at this critical moment in the history of our dear continent. The links between the O. A. U., the liberation movements and the peoples they represent are vital and therefore we are affected by every crisis that this mighty organization goes through; we rejoice at

its every triumph. When, as now, the O.A.U. completes five years of its existence as a rapidly growing, active and dynamic organization in the teeth of opposition by powerful forces, we cannot but rejoice.

When such an occasion is made more auspicious by the accession to the O. A. U. of the Independent African States of Swaziland and Mauritius, there is cause for even more rejoicing. When in addition, the Fifth Assembly takes place in revolutionary Algeria which has suffered so much for the freedom of Africa and attained so brilliant a triumph in the victory of its revolution, our joy is boundless.

The fact that Africa is faced with great and continuing problems is no reason to minimise in any way the successes that have been achieved to the chagrin of our enemies.

We Are At War!

The liberation movements and over thirty million oppressed Africans that they represent are at war. On the one side are the armies of white supremacy united in the unholy alliance of Portugal, Rhodesia and South Africa. On the other are the liberation movements with their guerilla forces which are bravely challenging the vastly equipped military machines of White supremacy which have the direct and indirect support of imperialist powers such as Britain, United States, France, West Germany, Japan and Belgium.

The struggle for freedom in Mozambique, Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Guinea-Bissau is being intensified. In each case, the struggle involves the training and building of liberation armies; providing them with weapons of war, providing medicines, types of food and equipment necessary to survive harsh conditions such as deserts, floods and cold. We have to build propaganda organizations both inside and outside our countries capable of maintaining the support of the population; inspiring them with noble aims and tasks of the struggle. We have to develop highly efficient underground movements capable of functioning under the noses of our enemies in conditions where the simple distribution of a leaflet carries the death penalty, as in South Africa under the "Sabotage" Act.

The efforts of the liberation movements have been impressive

These days, it has become fashionable even for some African states to flout or circumvent the obligations of the O.A.U. Charter by referring to their problems and the necessity to have relations in one form or another with our enemies in Portugal, Rhodesia and South Africa. This is an issue so vital to the future of our people that we must be forgiven if our frankness takes precedence over etiquette.

Let us say at once that we are not unmindful of the problems and difficulties that beset our fellow Africans in many states as a result of the neglect and exploitation by former imperialist powers. Nor are we to be thought as dreamers living in a fairy-cloud cuckooland.

We understand the realities of the situation faced by some countries. But we feel that there should be a scrupulous avoidance of any words or actions aimed at dealing with that situation which may in the circumstances amount to betrayal of our peoples. It is inconceivable that some Africans should achieve happiness on the basis of the tears and grief of other Africans. In any event, the states of White supremacy which appear impregnable today are headed for inevitable defeat at the hands of aroused peoples and we must make it clear that no agreements or arrangements entered into at the expense of our people with our enemies will have much hope of survival.

There exist circumstances that require that we should express ourselves strongly on this matter particularly in the light of what is clearly a well-planned offensive by South Africa and its allies against the liberation movement and the African States.

Because of the tendency to underplay the role of Portugal in the Unholy Alliance of Salazar, Smith and Vorster, the following facts need to be emphasized.

Firstly, Portugal is encouraging massive foreign investments in the colonies. The Portuguese government has declared that "*If we encourage the Western Powers in the exploitation of the resources in our territories, these powers shall be more convinced of the need to assume their military defence*". Secondly, their trade links with Rhodesia have been used by the imperialist countries to undermine and defeat the sanctions resolutions against the Smith regime.

Thirdly, the Portuguese government has launched a diplomatic offensive aimed at winning their support for its African forces.

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Expansionist Apartheid

The nature of Apartheid as a system of oppression and exploitation of the African people in South Africa is notorious enough. But recently, it has become clear that the Republic of South Africa has embarked on a complex and many-sided offensive against the liberation movements and the independent African states. The policy of South Africa has been a carrot and stick policy.

On the one hand, South Africa has absurdly presented itself as an altruistic state interested only in developing friendship with African independent states with the intention of promoting trade and technical aid. Despite all the inherent absurdities of a policy of oppressing Africans at home while making friends with them across the borders and abroad, white South Africa is pursuing its aim skilfully and relentlessly. The strategic object of this aspect of the South African government's policy is to create a series of client states which will provide a base directed against the liberation movements and the independent states of Africa. So that in fact the aid and trade ultimately have military and strategic aims in view. But in case the carrot of aid and trade does not achieve its aims, South Africa has other weapons, in her armoury. In various parts of the continent, there is evidence of subversion supported by South Africa and its allies in Rhodesia and Portugal.

Intelligence groups have been set up in many countries: assassins, saboteurs and mercenaries are to be found wherever they can fish in troubled waters. Bribery and corruption of people through offers of aid the enemy will not hesitate to use. We feel that more attention should be paid to this aspect of South African aggression. A powerful propaganda campaign has been mounted by Radio South Africa and other agencies with the aim of denigrating the O.A.U. and supporters of the liberation movement whilst praising to the skies those who are prepared to sell their soul for a mess of pottage. And standing as a grim support for direct aggression against independent states whether in the form of threats or action is the formidable military machine which now costs hundreds of millions of pounds (sterling) to maintain and develop. Already this machine is active in Zimbabwe, Namibia, Angola and Mozambique. In South Africa itself, the military

manoeuvres code-named "Operation Sibasa" were obviously intended for sinister purposes. The White supremacists in Southern Africa are bold and aggressive to the point of madness.

This is perfectly illustrated by their attitude on the questions of Zimbabwe. South African military forces were requested by Ian Smith to help in the fight against the ZAPU-ANC forces in August 1967. Since then, the South African forces have been greatly expanded and the intervention has been more blatant.

A few days ago, Vorster, the fascist Prime Minister of South Africa reported that in his talks with Mr. Thompson, the British Commonwealth Secretary, he had made it clear that South African military forces will go wherever they are wanted and wherever there are "terrorists". He also made it clear that the forces sent to intervene in Zimbabwe will not be withdrawn. This leads us to another matter which we feel requires careful re-examination by states and governments of Africa.

Britain And Zimbabwe

One of the most intractable problems faced by the O.A.U. and the liberation movements in the last few years has been that of Zimbabwe. The question was brought into sharp international focus by the action of the Ian Smith group which engineered the so-called Unilateral Declaration of Independence. In reality this declaration represented the determination of White supremacists to continue the oppression and exploitation of the African people which has gone on ever since the end of the nineteenth century. But the course of events blurred this reality and make it possible to predicate strategy and tactics on the basis that Britain the colonial power was responsible not only for what had happened but had to act against the Ian Smith group by sending troops to put down that regime. The initiatives taken by the O.A.U. at the United Nations and elsewhere were based on this assumption. Britain was afforded an opportunity to demonstrate its good faith in spite of what we all knew of her imperialist policies both past and present.

The past three years have been very instructive. The tactics of the O.A.U. drove the British imperialists into a corner from which they tried to wriggle out by means of evasions and prevarications. As hundreds of Africans were killed, detained and restric-

ted by the Smith regime. Britain held talks with the regime and indulged in fruitless legalisms. In fact, Britain now stands exposed as an accomplice of Ian Smith and his group, as an oppressor of the African people.

Furthermore, the people of Zimbabwe are now engaged in a big armed struggle for total independence from both Britain and Ian Smith. The aim of this struggle is to drive out of the country all foreign and hostile troops.

In the light of these facts, it does seem as if the time has come to examine whether or not we have not accomplished all that could be expected from previous policies and tactics. Perhaps the duplicity and perfidy of Britain has been sufficiently tested and even proved. It might now be dangerous to the development of the liberation struggle to predicate that struggle on the basis of Britain as the sovereigns administering power or to call for her troops in this situation. *Any British troops in Rhodesia now could be solely there to frustrate the armed forces of liberation.* This assembly is an appropriate place and this session meets at the appropriate time to examine and possibly make the necessary re-appraisals in this matter. The General Assembly of the United Nations meets in a few days time. In the New Year a Commonwealth Conference is due to take place in London. The pretensions of Britain must no longer be allowed to parade under cover of mandates provided by these bodies.

Aid From The O.A.U.

In our struggles the aid and support of the O.A.U. plays a considerable role. It is in our humble opinion vital that such support must be given to real movements that are effective and have support of the masses. This issue need not be surrounded by a whole host of technicalities and complicated reasoning. As the fighting spreads and becomes more developed this issue will be resolved on the basis of concrete evidence. We welcome the practice of sending O.A.U. missions to the fighting zones to see for themselves what is actually taking place. There are also other methods which do not depend on press reports or even the claims of organizations that should enable realistic assessments to be made regarding those movements which are real and those that are bogus and corrupt. As we speak now, new organizations

are being announced in various countries in Southern Africa. This technique of apparently revolutionary organizations sponsored by the imperialists to disrupt established movements is one to be watched with extra care. The limited resources of Africa must not be wasted on ineffective movements. An armed struggle particularly requires strong disciplined movements with a single military command and capable of ensuring proper security of operations. This cannot be produced by administrative means. It is a serious political task.

A welcome development is the growing unity, co-operation and co-ordination of the struggles in countries that are still unliberated especially in Southern Africa. The unholy Alliance of Portugal, South Africa and Rhodesia must be confronted by the united forces of liberation of Southern Africa and elsewhere in Africa. This is a perspective that we are energetically pursuing.

The aid and assistance needed in the war are considerable. And it is not just a question of the volume which must be commensurate with the demands of the struggle, but more and more we are now confronted by the need for speed. The situation in the fighting zones is constantly changing. Africa must therefore find means to ensure that there are swift responses to requests for help and in the facilities provided. Delays and red-tape should not stand in the way of victory in the battles we are fighting.

Over thirty million Africans are not represented as states in the Assembly of the O.A.U. Our faith in the O.A.U. rests in the justified belief that *nothing*, not even national or state interests will ever make Africa forget those oppressed Africans for one minute. If we did not believe this, we would not be here.

On our part, in the name of our people, we are determined to fight and make the kind of sacrifices which made revolutionary Algeria free and independent in a struggle against one of the world's great powers. We shall carry on the fight no matter how long or difficult it may be. We shall win because Africa must be freed.