



ORGANIZATION OF
AFRICAN UNITY
Secretariat,
P. O. Box 3241

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أديس أبابا ، إثيوبيا

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OAU COMMITTEE OF NINETEEN

Assistance to the Frontline States



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MIGROFICHE

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INTRODUCTION

The tragic plight of the Frontline countries resulting from the permanent state of war to which they are subjected led to the establishment of the OAU Committee of Ten to help solve all sorts of social problems faced by those countries. The Committee which was recently enlarged to include the Frontline countries as well as other states such as Ethiopia, the Sudan, Nigeria and Zaire, is required to study a series of short, medium and long-term measures proposed in this document with a view to assisting the countries concerned.

In the meantime, the Lancaster House negotiations took place. The peace process thus initiated was to lead to an independent Zimbabwe free from colonial domination and racism.

However, no one sincerely believes that Zimbabwe's accession to independence and national sovereignty will put an end to the problem. Aid to refugees and the development of the economies of the Frontline countries will, for a long time, remain one of the main concerns of our Organization and of the countries involved. Our action should therefore be guided by these permanent factors more so, as the disarmament of the bastion of apartheid in South Africa will require from all of us sacrifice that are much greater than those made so far. In fact, the field of operation will shift to the West and the consequences might even be more fatal and devastating for economies backing liberation movements in Namibia and Azania. The flow of refugees might even be more tragic. As in the past, Africa must take up this challenge. It should more than ever be intensify its moral, material and political support for that is the price to be paid for its total liberation and its rehabilitation in the eyes of history and in its own eyes.

Concrete, realistic and readily applicable proposals based on a new approach to the problem must be made; Governments will no longer be the only concerned with the problem; a vigorous campaign should be launched to make the African masses alive to this tragic plight and stand by their brothers in Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania and Zambia who have so far carried almost alone, the burden of the struggle. This means that while strengthening the traditional set up of their military aid, the OAU Member States should gear their action towards a more global concept of assistance aimed at:

- improving, thanks to a number of specific and urgent action, the inhuman conditions under which live the peoples of this region as a result of the continuous aggression perpetrated against them;
- increasing their collective self-reliance and strengthening their economies as to enable them stand better the repeated attacks of the racist regime of South Africa and its accomplices thus enabling them to provide a sound basis for the struggle of the liberation movements in the region.

II. EMERGENCY MEASURES

First and foremost concern:

- (a) The ever swelling number of refugees crowded in camps, living in terrible conditions and lacking the barest necessities of life such as: foodstuff, clothes, drugs, sleeping equipment, etc.
- (b) The destruction of hospitals, dispensaries, farms, markets, bridges and schools (schools initially planned to accommodate 3,000 pupils are now over-crowded with 20,000 pupils lacking every school equipment).

This situation calls for an urgent action on the part of the Member States of the OAU that may consist in the supplies of:

foodstuffs
clothes
sleeping equipment
drugs
land rovers
fuel, etc.

To meet these needs, two types of assistance would be required:

- a new form of assistance from OAU Member countries aimed at releasing funds for emergency aid.
- Africans should be made alive to this sad situation confront the Frontline States with a view to making them participate in the war effort of their brothers and sisters in this part of the continent.

A. Direct Intervention of States

The participation of the OAU Member countries could take the following forms:

1. Compulsory contribution of 0.05 per cent of the 1978 budget;
2. Despatch of a corps of volunteers including Doctors, Nurses Teachers and so on;
3. Grant of bursaries to nationals of the Frontline States for studies in African Universities, Schools and Specialised institutes;
4. Despatch of military instructors to train troops in guerrilla warfare.

Considering the economic difficulties being faced by our various countries, it would be however unrealistic to put a further financial burden on them.

Similarly, it would be unrealistic to believe that our countries would be able to assemble a sufficient number of volunteers, Doctors, Nurses and Teachers for the Frontline countries in the near future. Although some countries are in the position to provide a considerable number of such staff, the fact is that many do not have enough to meet their own day to day needs.

B. Participation of African Masses

It implies the establishment, in each OAU Member State, of a National Committee composed of representatives of various ministerial departments dealing with this problem and of political, social, religious and trade union organizations.

The aim of this Committee will be to organise and coordinate, at the national level, all activities in conjunction with voluntary assistance and, particularly, with the celebration of the week of solidarity of African Peoples, and with African Fighters' Day. The Committee can be divided into three sub-committees.

1. Sub-Committee to make people aware and informed of the situation.

(a) Composition

This Sub-Committee will be chaired by a representative of the Information Department. The Departments of Education and Social Affairs, Religious Institutions, Youth and Women Organisations and Trade Unions will be represented.

(b) Functions

This Sub-Committee will organize:

- actions that will make people alive to the activities of other Sub-Committees;

- radio and television discussions;
- daily news flashes and weekly broadcast;
- talks in the various parts of towns and villages and at market places;
- projection of films in the cinema halls of towns and in the countryside;
- talks in schools and Universities;
- circulation of tracts and posters;
- publication of documents on Southern Africa in the newspapers

Sub-Committee for Voluntary Aids

(a) Composition

This Sub-Committee will be chaired by a representative of the Department of Social Affairs. The Departments of Health, Education, Trade and Transport, Youth and Women Organizations, Trade Unions and Religious Institutions will be represented.

Functions

The activities of this Sub-Committee will bear on two sectors according to the origin of the aids:

- voluntary aid from people in the form of funds and donations in kind at public meetings, in schools and from people of public and private sector through their respective heads.
- voluntary aid from corporations (business enterprises, banks, pharmacies, industrial establishments, hotels, religious institutions, etc.) coming in as funds and donations

3. Sub-Committee for Various Activities

(a) Composition

This Sub-Committee will be chaired by a representative of the Department of Youth, Culture and Sports. The Departments of Social Affairs and Education, Youth and Women Organizations, Trade Unions and Olympic Committees will be represented.

(b) Functions

This Sub-Committee will organize sports and socio-cultural activities during the "celebration week of the solidarity of African Peoples" which will end by the "African Fighters' Day" scheduled to take place on 21 March of each year. (The date of 21 March commemorates the Sharpeville Massacre)

- Sports Activities

Each National Committee will offer a cup called "STEVE BIKO CUP" for the various sports events.

- Social Activities

Solidarity Marches, bringing together, pupils, students and all active forces of the Nation will be organised. These marches will be winded up with information meetings on events in Southern Africa.

Stamps and badges will be sold during that week.

- Cultural Activities

The following actions are recommended:

- exhibition of art objects
- establishment of a literary prize rewarding the best work written every year on the theme of colonialism, racism, apartheid and battles fought by various peoples for the effective liberation of the continent.

The best work will be published in all the official languages of Africa.

- Organisation of festivals of African songs and recitals. The incomes from these various activities will be paid into the account of "NATIONAL FUNDS FOR ASSISTANCE TO FRONTLINE STATES"

(c) Coordinating Body

At the level of OAU Member States

In order to be effective, all these measures to be taken at the national level should be entrusted to a Coordinating Body headed by the Chairman of the "Committee of 19" and composed of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs or their representatives of the following countries, chosen on account of their interest in the actions to be undertaken:

Chairman: Togo

4 Vice Chairmen: Algeria representing the region of North Africa
 Nigeria " " " " West Africa
 Zambia, Botswana " " " of Southern
 as well as the Frontline States.

They should essentially:

- disseminate widely the objectives of the "OAU Committee of 19";
- bring this document to the knowledge of all OAU Member States;
- inject a new life in the National Committees and coordinate their activities;
- set up an organ to collect funds from National Committees and pay them in the OAU "SPECIAL FUND FOR SOLIDARITY AND ASSISTANCE TO FRONTLINE STATES" special account to be established;

- distribute part of this Fund as financial assistance to these states;
 - collect funds from friendly countries;
 - ensure the financing of transportation of foodstuffs and other donations in kind from donor countries to Frontline States;
 - ensure the purchase of foodstuffs, drugs, clothes, sleeping bags, tents, fuel etc. intended for the Frontline States;
 - get into touch with friendly countries, humanitarian institutions and international organs in order to obtain help in kind in the form of foodstuffs, drugs, etc.
- organise an efficient transport system from each donor country to the safe zones such as Dar-es-Salaam or Luanda from where the donations will be taken to the countries concerned without any risk.

2. Arrangements to be made by the Frontline States

To ensure that the aid collected in Member States is used for the purpose intended, structures must be set-up in each recipient State to receive and distribute that aid.

To this end, a National Committee should be set up. This Committee will be composed in such a way as to ensure an equitable and just distribution of the aid and its safe arrival at destination, should liaise permanently with the OAU Co-ordinating Committee of 19.

This Committee will be informed of the needs of the population, Freedom-Fighters and Refugees as regards foodstuff, drugs, clothes, sleeping equipment, vehicles, etc., in volunteers and education and training.

III. SHORT, MEDIUM AND LONG TERM MEASURES

The measures recommended in the first part of this document were dictated by the population's daily urgent needs which calls for immediate solutions.

Apart from this urgent situation which calls for immediate assistance, action by the OAU Member States should, in the short and medium terms, help all the Frontline States to organize themselves so as to increase their autonomy and collective resistance by consolidating their economies, improving their telecommunication network and developing their means of communications and transport. In the long run, the establishment of an Economic Community embracing all the Frontline States should be considered. This will be the beginning of a larger economic community grouping all the countries in Southern Africa.

A. Short Term Measures

Among the short term measures, priority should be given to the establishment of a "COOPERATION AND GUARANTEE FUND" common to the Frontline States, should be given urgent attention since the other programmes relating to communications and telecommunications infrastructure will depend on it.

(1) The Establishment of a Cooperation and Guarantee Fund

The Cooperation and Guarantee Fund, whose draft statute and draft rules of procedure are appended to the present document, will be financed by:

- An initial amount from the "Solidarity and Mutual Aid Fund to the Frontline States" to be established;
- An annual voluntary contribution made by States to be determined every five years by the concerning council;

- Specific loans;
- Subventions and donations;
- And all other resources.

The Cooperation and Guarantee Fund will be financed by voluntary contributions. In this respect, missions should be undertaken to the Socialist Countries of Europe, Northern Europe, and particularly to the oil producing States in the Middle East so that they may contribute effectively to the implementation of the project in the context of Afro-Arab solidarity.

The Cooperation and Guarantee Fund thus established, should enable the Frontline States, obtain loans at preferential rates with a view to undertaking reconstruction works in their countries where considerable damage had been caused by bombs and the realisation of profitable infrastructures, industrial, agricultural and economic projects. The Cooperation and Guarantee Fund will give its endorsement to the countries concerned in order to facilitate the granting of loans.

(2) The Reconstruction of Social Amenities

The Frontline States should undertake, in the short run, the reconstruction of hospitals, maternity hospitals, schools, houses and all kinds of social amenities destroyed by the air raids of racist forces.

To this end they will submit specific projects, the financing of which will be endorsed by the Cooperation and Guarantee Fund.

(3) Annual Activities to Make People Alive
to the Situation

Priority should also be given to the celebration of an "African People's Solidarity Week" in all the OAU Member States to make the African and International Communities more

aware of the destitution caused by the Liberation war and the atrocities committed against the Frontline States by the racist regime of South Africa and its accomplices.

This "week" will precede a day of big rallies to be known as "Fighters Day"

B. Medium Term Measures

Medium term measures concerning the planned development of the agricultural, industrial and socio-economic communications and telecommunications sectors of the various countries; the projects will be financed with the backing of the Cooperation and Guarantee Fund.

(1) Agriculture and Industry

As regards the agricultural and industrial sectors, these countries are required to draw up agricultural and industrial development projects according to their potentialities.

These projects first aim at supplying the internal market with foodstuffs and other finished products which are essential for the survival of the population. It simply means that priority will be given to the encouragement of and increase in the number of agro-pastoral industries. This also applies to small industrial units likely to be built quickly at the least cost and to meet the real needs of the people.

(2) Area of Socio-Economic Infrastructures.

Attention will be paid to the following in this area:

- construction of dams and drilling of wells for the supply of drinking water and hydro-electric power;
- establishment of collective farms and agricultural co-operations.

(3) Infrastructures of Communications

In this area, the States directly concerned will have to hold consultations and work out a programme in which an in depth research could be based.

It would aim on the one hand, at the reconstruction of the roads, trucks and bridges destroyed by bombs and, on the other, at strengthening, increasing and integrating the various means of communications and transports between these different countries with a view to reducing considerably their dependence on the racist regime of South Africa and its accomplices.

We are concerned, in this case, with integrated development programmes of trunk roads and railways between the various states and with the establishment of a multinational air company.

4) Infrastructures of Telecommunication

Land locked Front Line States should be allowed to open on their neighbours and thus, will no longer depend on South Africa. These countries and the other African countries should necessarily be connected by telephone for a better coordination and a greater effectiveness of the nations undertaken by the OAU.

Taking into account existing telecommunication infrastructures in these countries, and,

5) considering the war being waged continuously in the region, it is advisable to look for less cumbersome equipments which can easily and quickly be installed.

The opening of telephone links can be done at three stages:-

- opening of radio electric circuits on decametric waves (two circuits per link) between the following countries: Angola, Mozambique and Lesotho;
- Angola will be connected to Zambia
- Mozambique to Lesotho

6) Lesotho to Botswana

These connections will enable Zambia, Botswana and Lesotho which are all land locked countries to be in continuous contact with the coastal countries: Angola and Mozambique.

- Opening of a circuit by satellite between the earth stations of Zambia and Mozambique.

- b) Connection between the Front-line countries, the Headquarters of the Coordinating Office and that of the OAU

7) The establishment of these connections, will require:

The opening of two (2) radio-electric circuits on decametric waves between Ethiopia and Zambia;

The opening of a circuit by satellite between the earth stations of Ethiopia, Angola and Lome.

The other Front-line states will pass through Zambia and Angola and will be connected to Addis Ababa or to Lome.

c) Link between the Front-line States and Other African countries

- For the West African zone, a circuit should be established by satellite between Angola and Ivory Coast or Nigeria.
- For the North-African zone, a circuit by satellite between Algeria, Angola and Gambia should be opened;
- For East Africa, a satellite network to be established between Kenya and the Front-line States.

In the field of telecommunications infrastructure projects may be summed up as follows:-

- 6 radio-electric links on decametric waves
- 6 links per satellite (1 circuit per link)

c) Long Term Measures

In the long run, the Front-line States should strive to establish an "Economic Community" with a view to ensuring a greater independence, resistance and opportunities for economic development.

In this connection the O.A.U. should continue its effort to establish an Economic Community grouping the Front-line States, in accordance with the Agreement of the Conference on the Development Coordination of Southern Africa, held in Arusha in the beginning of July 1979.

In the same vein, the policy recommended by the E.C.A. for the establishment of a preferential trade zone grouping the 17 countries of East and Southern Africa should be strongly supported. In addition to the Front-line States, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Mauritius, Malawi and Lesotho should form part of it. This preferential trade zone will

constitute the first stage in the establishment of a larger Economic Community, that could ensure the opening-up of the Front-line States.

A meeting of Ministers of Trade and planning of the 17 countries is scheduled for March 1980, to discuss all the details of the Agreement. The cooperation and Guarantee Fund will certainly promote the establishment of such an Economic Community.

IV. Conclusion

The presence of colonialist and racist regimes in Southern Africa is not only a permanent danger for the oppressed peoples in Southern Africa but also for Africa as a whole.

It is incumbent on the International Community to ~~stannably~~ support the Front-line States, which are daily subjected to the murderous acts of aggression of the minority racist regime of South Africa. In this connexion, Africa solidarity should be positively demonstrated, by providing material and financial assistance to the countries that are victims of aggression. Africa must not remain inactive in the face of these repeated acts of aggression. It should provide rapid and effective aid, in order to meet the present and future needs of the peoples of these countries.

The implementation of the measures proposed in this document will afford everyone the opportunity of making a contribution to the war effort of our brothers in Southern Africa.

All peoples standing for freedom should fully assume their responsibility for the legitimate struggle of the freedom fighters in Namibia and Azania, and resolutely undertake to help them consolidate their victory, which is a decisive stage in the establishment of states free of oppression and racism.



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