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ADDIS ABABA

ORGANISATION DE L'UNITÉ
AFRICAIN
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COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

Sixteenth Ordinary Session

Addis Ababa - February/March 1971

CM/376

REPORT OF THE OAU CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE FOR THE
LIBERATION OF AFRICA TO THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF
THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS



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The O.A.U. Co-ordinating Committee for the Liberation of Africa held its 18th Regular Session in Moshi, United Republic of Tanzania, from the 15th to the 18th February 1971, in the course of which it examined the reports of the Executive Secretary and of the three Standing Committees on General Policy, Defence and Finance, as well as the memoranda submitted to it by the various Liberation Movements. The Committee also interviewed the representatives of the Liberation Movements. The Republic of Uganda was absent. The Committee observed that growing interest is being shown in the liberation struggle judging by the large number of countries which attended the meeting as observers:- Burundi, Kenya, Ghana, Libya, Mauritania, Central African Republic, People's Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Sudan.

2. This report embraces the activities during the period between the 17th Regular Session which took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in August 1970, and the present Session, and deals briefly with the following subject-matters:-

(i) General Remarks,

(ii) The situation in dependent territories, namely:-

Angola, Mozambique, Guinea (Bissau), South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Comoro and the so-called French Somaliland (Djibouti),

(iii) Other matters

3. The deliberations of the Committee were guided by the opening statements of the Out-going Chairman of the Committee, His Excellency, Ato Ketema YIFRU, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, the newly-elected Chairman of the Committee,

Honourable Isael ELINAWINGA, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Republic of Tanzania, and the Assistant Administrative Secretary-General of the O.A.U., His Excellency, Mr. M. A. SAHNOUN, who represented the Administrative Secretary-General. The Ambassador of Somalia in Tanzania and leader of the Somali delegation, His Excellency, Brigadier-General A. Farah ALI, was elected Rapporteur of the Conference.

GENERAL REMARKS

4. The Committee noted with satisfaction the strides of progress made by the respective Liberation Movements which have been actively engaged in the armed struggle during the period under review. It also observed with interest the strenuous efforts being made by the others to engage new recruits for training and to further intensify their propaganda machinery.

5. The Committee condemns the so-called constitutional reforms planned by Portugal's authoritarian government to grant greater autonomy to its "overseas territories". This move provides evidence of the failure of the policy of the Portuguese colonial administration to hold on tenaciously to these territories. The Committee re-affirmed the point of view according to which only the total liberation of these territories would be acceptable.

6. The Committee also condemns the NATO powers for their continued military assistance to the colonialist and racist regimes in Africa as a result of which the Portuguese have been able to launch new major offensives with the use of heliborne operations and to intensify air bombardments of the civilian African population. The Committee considers that this new phase in the armed struggle requires an increased assistance to Liberation Movements particularly to MPLA, FRELIMO and PAIGC. Accordingly it calls upon Member States to pay their contributions and settle their arrears to the Special Fund.

7. The Committee noted the report submitted by the Guinean Representative concerning last November's invasion of that country and recommends to the Council of Ministers to give particular attention to the grave developments obtaining in some of the fronts, where the enemy, due to increased military pressure by nationalist movements and the demoralisation of its own troops, has desperately resorted to overt aggression against the territorial integrity of O.A.U. Member States fully committed to the support of the liberation armed struggle.

8. The Committee rejects the alleged readiness of the South African regime to conduct a plebiscite in Namibia in order to ascertain the wishes of the Namibian people as South Africa has no sovereignty on this territory and its presence there is illegal. In this connection, the Committee associates itself with the resolution adopted by the U.N. Security Council on the matter.

9. The Committee welcomes the decision taken by the General Conference of the UNESCO (XV - XVI Sessions) to reinforce its activities within the sphere of its competence, in order to lend assistance to the African peoples engaged in the liberation struggle. In view of the significance of this development, the Committee appeals to Member States of the O.A.U. to support this overture during the forthcoming Session of the Executive Board of UNESCO.

10. The Committee took note of the statement made by the representative of the United Arab Republic to the effect that President Anwar Sadat has pledged his continued support, on the same lines as his predecessor in office, the late President Gamel Abdel Nasser, for the relentless pursuit of the struggle against all forces of imperialist and colonialist aggression. The Committee appreciates the fact that the U.A.R. has always stood against colonial domination

and foreign occupation of any parts of the African Continent. The Committee wishes to express its sincere gratitude to the People, the Government and President Sadat of the United Arab Republic for the contribution of 100,000 (Egyptian Pounds) the U.A.R. has undertaken to make to the Special Fund of the Liberation Committee, in spite of the difficult situation arising from the continued aggression and the occupation of parts of its territory by the Israeli forces.

THE SITUATION IN DEPENDENT TERRITORIES:

A. TERRITORIES UNDER PORTUGUESE DOMINATION:

11. Notwithstanding the difficulties and obstacles encountered by the freedom movements in those areas where fighting has been taking place, the level of progress made in some parts has been maintained whilst in other parts it has been gathering momentum.

12. The armed struggle in Mozambique, Angola and Guinea (Bissau) has been characterised chiefly by a re-organization of the offensive of the nationalist forces in larger formations, the creation of new fronts in every military region thus causing more widespread of enemy troops and the preparation of conditions which would prove conducive to the eventual launching of a successful urban guerrilla warfare.

13. There is growing evidence of demoralisation among Portuguese troops judging by the ever increasing number of deserters. In a bid to counteract the effect of their losses, the enemy has intensified air raids with the use of conventional bombs, napalm and defoliants and has also resorted to destroying crops as a means of compelling the population in liberated areas to abandon the struggle.

ANGOLA

14. The Committee welcomes with satisfaction the statement made by the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the effect that Presidents Mobutu and Ngouabi will meet soon to discuss ways and means of combining their efforts for the intensification of the liberation struggle in Angola.

(a) F.N.L.A.

15. The Committee noted that since the FNLA submitted its report on its military activities rather late, it could not possibly carry out a study of the movement's activities at the present session.

(b) M.P.L.A.

16. MPLA activities were characterised by generalised operations on all the fronts and the frustration of the enemy offensives which were primarily aimed, at stopping and containing the onward march of MPLA in the Central Plateau (towards Bie, Malange and Lunda areas) and, secondarily, at neutralising and destroying the supply route cutting through the third Region (Mexico). The natural barrier - Cuanza River - on which the enemy counted to prevent the advancing MPLA forces to West, was crossed by detachments which operated intensively beyond this river.

17. After examining the supplies and transport difficulties arising from the long distances that the MPLA forces have to cover, the Committee authorised the Executive Secretariat to take concrete measures to combat the situation.

MOZAMBIQUEFRELIMO

18. The Portuguese general offensive in the three Provinces of Niassa, Tere and Cabo Delgado (operation Gordian Knot) has faded away and the enemy has attained only a very limited part of its objectives which has no bearing on the general conduct of the armed struggle in Mozambique. FRELIMO forces have started to take the initiative in areas under their control.

GUINEA (BISSAU)P.A.I.G.C.

19. PAIGC continues to intensify its military action against the enemy and is paving the way for the armed struggle in the islands and the urban areas.

B. OTHER TERRITORIESZIMBABWE

20. The Committee welcomes the move by ZAPU and ZANU, which both operate in Zimbabwe, to form a common Front. The Committee is conscious, however, of the difficulties likely to hinder the formation of a common front, when there are dissensions within the leadership of liberation movements. It therefore considers that it is necessary for every Movement to find a solution to its internal problems before entering into negotiations aimed at forming common fronts.

21. The Committee appeals to the leaders of ZAPU to settle their differences as quickly as possible, and gives them until the 17th Session of the Council of Ministers to report back on the progress made in this regard.

22. In other territories nationalist Movements have continued to engage in underground activities, creating bases amongst the population and surveying routes and points of infiltration.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

23. Having examined the report presented by the Executive Secretariat on the need to establish Rehabilitation Centres for the injured and disabled in the wars of liberation, and realising the positive impact that such action would have on the morale of the freedom fighters, the population of the liberated areas and the armed struggle in general, the Committee approves the establishment of such Centres and recommended that an international campaign be launched through OAU and its Member States for necessary assistance.

It recommended also that, for a start, the cost of these centres be partly met through the newly created "OAU Assistance Fund for Struggle against Colonialism and Apartheid", as called for in OAU Resolution CM/209 (XIV) and resolution NAC/Conf.3/Res.6 of the Lusaka Non-Aligned Conference.

24. The Committee decided to grant immediate financial aid to: FRELIMO, MPLA and PAIGC. The Congolese delegation requested the Committee that a financial and material assistance be also granted to the FNLA so that it may intensify its struggle in Angola. The Committee decided that such assistance will be granted to FNLA only when the Standing Committee on Defence would have been examined the report submitted by the FNLA.

25. On a dialogue with the Pretoria regime:

In connection with the proposal aimed at starting a dialogue with South Africa, the Committee wishes to draw the attention of the Council of Ministers to the seriousness of this question.

26. The Committee welcomed the statement made by the representative of Libya, attending as observer, to the effect that his country had fully paid all its contributions and arrears to the Special Fund.

27. Motion of thanks

The Committee expressed its deep gratitude to His Excellency President Mwalima Julius Nyerere, to the government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania for the warm and fraternal welcome extended to all delegates, observers and officials of the Executive Secretariat, as well as to all Liberation Movements. The Committee also congratulated His Excellency Mr. Isael Elinawinger, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Republic of Tanzania for his invaluable contribution to the work of the Committee, as well as for the efficient manner in which he successfully conducted the deliberations of the 18th Session of the Committee.

1971-06

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