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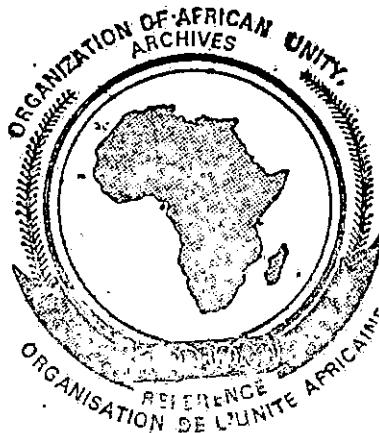
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

TWENTY-SIXTH ORDINARY SESSION

Addis Ababa - February 23-29, 1976

STATEMENT BY THE DELEGATE OF BENIN ON ITEM SEVEN OF THE AGENDA

THE STRUGGLE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND THE AID STRATEGY FOR ANGOLA



ANGOLA AND THE STRUGGLE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

The conscience of independent Africa has been surely tried since November 11, 1975 when Angola proclaimed her independence. Imperialism has endeavoured at considerable cost to shake our ranks. The presence amongst us here today of Comrade Eduardo dos Santos, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Angola, bears eloquent testimony to the fact that Africa, awakened and responsible can neither be bought nor divided.

The wheel of history has turned in Angola and no one can stop it or turn it backwards. History is moving towards progress, towards total liberation from foreign domination culminating ultimately, in a socialist society. This explains MPLA's devotion to the service of the Angolan people as a whole. The People's Republic of Benin bows in reverence to the valiant Angolan freedom fighters who sacrificed their lives to liberate Angola from foreign domination.

The delegation of Benin warmly welcomes to our Organization the Angolan comrades present at this meeting because it is convinced that Angola's participation in the life of the OAU will help strengthen and advance Africa's cause.

Benin is happy about the recognition of MPLA after the strong resistance we faced. The rate at which recognition has been successively accorded cannot fail to cause us concern. We appeal to the Luanda Authorities to appreciate the diplomatic recognition from the imperialist camp for what it is. We should be more vigilant because international imperialism has always managed to adapt itself to any situation in order to maintain itself.

Mr. Chairman and Brother,

Each victory over imperialism ushers in a new struggle; that is why in our opinion, the task of the moment consists in completing the liberation process in the southern part of our continent by liberating the Angolan territory from the aggression of the Vorster clique and achieving independence for Namibia and Zimbabwe through a determined struggle.

It is obvious that the People's Republic of Angola has an over-riding role to play and a very heavy responsibility in this task. The first duty of every Member State of our Organization is to share the burden of this responsibility with Angola.

That is why it is imperative to adopt a strategy for a long term struggle, perhaps a strategy of support for the People's Republic of Angola as an integral part of our struggle against South Africa in particular, for the liberation of the rest of Southern Africa in general.

In view of what is at stake, we should forget the past in order to consider only what will really serve our purpose; we should stick to the present, in order to better prepare the future for the total liberation of our continent.

To this end, the Benin delegation submits the following formal proposals for the consideration of the Committee:

- 1) Recommend to the Presidents of the People's Republic of the Congo and Tanzania to make the necessary contacts to bring about reconciliation between the Governments of Angola and Zaire on the one hand and the Governments of Gambia and Angola on the other without any condition other than respect for the principles governing friendly and brotherly relations between African States.
- 2) Offer material, financial, human and logistic assistance to the People's Republic of Angola until South African troops completely withdraw from the Angolan territory. In this regard:
 - a) Although the country is independent, the liberation struggle still continues so the council should authorise the Standing Committee of the Liberation Committee to provide assistance to the People's Republic of Angola. The form of the assistance should be decided in consultation with the Government of President Neto and this assistance should be provided until an end is put to South African aggression.
 - b) Our respective governments should continue their bilateral aid to Angola in all spheres until the aggressors from Pretoria are expelled from Angolan soil; Benin is ready to send people to fight side by side with the fighters of the MPLA.

- c) The OAU Secretary-General and our respective representatives at the UNO and its Specialized Agencies should do everything to ensure the early admission of Angola and obtain for it a special and urgent assistance from these various organisations.
3. In the very important field of national reconstruction and economic recovery of Angola the support of our Organization is essential. We must identify here the needs of the country in order to make a useful contribution. The Council should therefore invite the OAU Secretary-General to study this matter with the Angolan Authorities and submit without fail a report to the 27th Session showing in what way the OAU Member States can act, either collectively or bilaterally, to help Angola in its national reconstruction and economic recovery. This study should especially take into account the great sacrifices the PRA will be called upon to make as a result of the rear-guard role it will play for the liberation movements of Namibia and Zimbabwe.
- The Council of Ministers will necessarily consider this question during its 27th Session in the light of the Secretary-General's report.
4. Organization and intensification of the armed struggle in Zimbabwe and Namibia as a means of diverting the South African army. The Council should ask the Standing Committee of the Liberation Committee to provide more assistance to the liberation movements, that is the ANC and SWAPO.

We hope that our proposals will receive your attention and that they can be improved upon to ensure the success of our struggle.



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Statement by the Delegate of Benin on Item Seven of the Agenda

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