



**ORGANIZATION OF  
AFRICAN UNITY**

Secretariat  
P. O. Box 3243

منظمة الوحدة الأفريقية  
السكرتارية  
ص. ب. ٣٢٤٣

**ORGANISATION DE L'UNITE  
AFRICAIN**

Secretariat  
B. P. 3243

نهرس ابجا .\* Ababa

**COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

Thirty-seventh Ordinary Session

Nairobi, Kenya

15 - 21 June, 1981

CM/1128 (XXXVII)

ORIGINAL : English

REPORT OF THE OAU COMMITTEE OF 19



CM-1128

MICROFICHE

At the Thirty-fifth Council of Ministers meeting in Addis Ababa in February 1981, the Chairman of the Committee of 19, the Foreign Minister of Togo reported on his missions to Angola, to the Scandinavian countries, as well as to the headquarters of several specialised agencies of the United Nations.

Following these reports the Council of Ministers decided that an OAU mission should visit and have discussion on the Southern African issues: Namibia and the Frontline States with six Western countries of U.S.A., Canada, Great Britain, France, Federal Republic of Germany and Italy.

The Togolese Minister, H.E. Anani Akakpo-Ahianyo was accompanied for the North American Mission by the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Angola to the UN, H.E. Elisio de Figueiredo; the Sierra Leone Charge d'Affairs in Washington, D.C., M. Ahmed Sarey-Wurie and the OAU Executive Secretary to the UN, Mr. Oumarou G. Youssoufou.

The OAU delegation, in European countries, was also under the chairmanship of the Togolese Foreign Minister, and was composed as follows:

H.E. Louis de ALMEIDA, Ambassador of Angola to France  
H.E. Omar M. MUNTASSER, Executive Secretary, OAU, Geneva

#### OAU MISSION TO WESTERN COUNTRIES

##### 1. U.S.A.

The United States was the first country to be visited followed by Canada and then Europe.

The group had a short meeting at the Embassy of Togo where they were briefed on the mission by the Foreign Minister of Togo.

At the State Department, the mission was received by the third ranking official, in the Department, Mr. Stoessel, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, assisted by Dr. Chester Crocker, Assistant Secretary of State for Africa.

After a brief welcoming address by Ambassador Stoessely, the Foreign Minister took the floor and made the following points:

The OAU mission intended to discuss United States Southern African Policy. Africa feels that it is in the interest of ALL that a quick solution of the Namibian problem should be found. After South Africa broke up the Geneva Talks on Namibia, Africa would like to exchange views with the Western Countries on how best to resume these talks on the implementation of Resolution 435.

The Minister believed that sanctions were among the factors which could help in solving the problem of Namibia and strongly believed that the sanctions applied to Rhodesia played a role in solving the Rhodesian problem.

The Minister regretted that South Africa has succeeded in blocking all attempts for Namibia's independence, whereas all the other former German colonies of similar status have since become independent.

The South African raids against the Frontline States have now forced these nations into heavy expenses for defence whereas they really would rather invest in the development of their nations.

He expressed appreciation for the positive role played by the United States in the Salisbury investors conference - where the United States pledges paved the way for a major world commitment to invest in Zimbabwe.

In the context of Southern African issues, the Minister felt that the time has come for the United States to extend recognition to the Angola Government. This lack of recognition creates a situation which is not conducive to good relation.

Under Secretary Stoessel responded that the United States Government shares the concern and anxiety of Africa for a quick political solution in Namibia because the United States feels that it is also in its interest that such a solution be found.

United States continues with the visit of Dr. Crocker in Africa to explore for ways to renew the Namibian Talks with the Western Five. The Foreign Minister of South Africa was due in Washington the week the mission was in Washington and, he was to be told clearly the United States position. Following the meetings with him, the Contact Group will meet again to try to work out an acceptable solution. The United States did not feel that sanctions would achieve the anticipated positive results in Namibia.

As for the United States/Angola relations, Mr. Stoessel felt that the presence of Cuban troops makes it difficult for the United States to start normal diplomatic relations with Angola. This position was clearly stated by President Reagan and the Secretary of State Haig.

Mr. Crocker, when asked if he had anything to add, expressed the view that the Reagan Administration does not intend to destabilize Angola and, one of the reasons for his visit to that country was to prove this point.

Mr. Stoessel and Mr. Crocker, while condemning the attacks on Front-line States by South Africa, were unable to explain in reply to a question asked by the delegation of the meaning of "re-enforcing 435". Apparently no decision has yet been taken and during the talks with the South African Minister, later in the week, this will be discussed.

Mr. Crocker mentioned the concern of United States for the minority rights in Namibia - a notion unacceptable to the OAU.

### C O N C L U S I O N

The OAU mission to the United States cannot be considered a failure but rather a very useful exercise. Africa through this mission showed its goodwill and desire for talks to continue so that a solution could be found.

It is clear now that the new United States Administration is moving towards a sympathetic attitude towards Pretoria but it will not be correct to consider that they have closed the doors for dialogue with Africa. At this critical time when the Reagan Administration is in the process of formulating a definitive African policy, it is imperative for the OAU to take very energetic and uncompromising steps to speed the Namibian independence.

The U.S. must be made to understand as the mission did, in no uncertain terms, that the independence of Namibia cannot be stopped and that for the time being, we are more preoccupied by the right of the majority in Namibia. We can discuss the so-called "right of the minority" once justice is done to the vast majority.

The talks in Washington with the South African Foreign Minister and the United States Secretary of State would be discussed later by the Five and, it is only after these talks that a clear opinion will emerge as to how the Namibian Talks would proceed.

South Africa according to the Canadian Minister for External Affairs basically displayed, bad faith in its dealings with the West, but may be, there will be a new start. The outcome of the talks in Washington will show if there are any serious basis for negotiations with South Africa on the Namibian issue.

Mr. McGuigan had noticed a shift in the Reagan Administration's attitude in the past two months. The United States now accepts the responsibility of finding a solution in Namibia. This was not the case when the new Administration first took office.

The Canadian Minister for External Affairs expressed the view that the key to the Namibian problem was overcoming South Africa's bad faith. He plans to work closely with the United States so they can pressure South Africa into serious negotiations.

Conclusion:

The Canadian position is very close to the African position. It is, therefore, imperative for Africa to take advantage of this positive and progressive attitude of the Canadian Government. It is important to point out that not only is the Canadian Government condemning apartheid but it works hard to influence the United States Government to adopt a more positive attitude.

III. GREAT BRITAIN

In London, the delegation was met at the Foreign Office by Mr. Richard Luce, Parliamentary Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Mr. Luce was very receptive to the assurance by the Foreign Minister when he said to him that his prompt receiving of the OAU Delegation was proof of his friendship to Africa. H.E. the Togolese Foreign Minister expressed also to him that the United Kingdom could play an important role in the independence of Namibia because of its past role in Zimbabwe which brought that country to independence through free elections. The Minister told Mr. Luce that Africa as a whole was greatly disappointed by increasing evidence of hostile political position taken on Namibia. The OAU expected Great Britain to explain to its partners that it is not in the interests of anybody to delay the independence of Namibia, and that the African countries need to mobilise their energy to defeat poverty and under-development rather than to combat their aggressors.

The Minister explained to him that the implementation of Resolution 435 of the Security Council is a very important matter as it was endorsed by the World Community. Mr. Luce answered by saying that he was pleased to receive the delegation and that he hopes to visit African countries and Togo soon. He said that he was also proud of being a friend to Africa. Mr. Luce said that he was very much touched by the mentioning of the role of his country in Zimbabwe and he said that the United Kingdom was proud to have the support of the whole Commonwealth and of Africa in getting the parties to reach an agreement. This, he said, was an example to be followed by all other countries in Southern Africa. Mr. Luce said

that although Geneva was disappointing, it made a small step forward in the sense that the parties concerned were sitting at the same Conference table. He added that South Africa at Geneva had other things on its mind and was closely following the political developments which the new American Administration would bring about. He also said that the Foreign Ministers of the Five who met in Rome on the 3rd May, 1981, to review the situation in Namibia reaffirmed their conviction that only a settlement under the aegis of the United Nations would be acceptable to the International Community. They also agreed that continued efforts should be made to bring Namibia to an early independence in accordance with the Security Council's Resolution 435.

Mr. Luce described this resolution as a solid base from which to negotiate and tackle the outstanding problems preventing an agreement. He also said that the Foreign Ministers of the Five had committed their Governments to vigorous action in the effort to bring Namibia to independence at an early date. Mr. Luce said also that the officials of the Five are to meet soon in Washington to consider principles that could be enshrined in the future constitution of Namibia and which would guarantee the rights of the majority and minority. He said, that United Kingdom has some influence on South Africa but that was often greatly exaggerated, "Our influence on South Africa is not as great as you may think", he said. He said that the Five together can exert some important influence on South Africa. He said that he pledged his country to help Africa but that there must be a will shown by both sides. He expressed the view that at Lancaster House, there was a will. Unless there is a will, to reach an agreement we cannot expect results. "We of the United Kingdom, can persuade but cannot force." On Namibia, the United Kingdom has less influence than it had in Zimbabwe.

"In Zimbabwe, we were a colonial power; on Namibia, we can go on trying with our partners of the Contact Group". He concluded by saying that there must be a will on both sides.

After leaving the Foreign Office, the delegation was taken to lunch by Mr. J. A. Sankey, Special Counsellor for African Affairs at the Foreign Office. In addition to the OAU delegation at this lunch, there was Mr. Peter Bottomley, Member of Parliament, Mr. Brian Barder, Head of Southern Africa Department and Miss Julie Ireland of the Central African Department of the Foreign Office. During that luncheon, no specific issue was discussed but a mere repetition and comment on what Mr. Luce, Junior Foreign Minister, whom the delegation had met a few hours before, had to say.

All in all, the Delegation made a very good impression in the United Kingdom as in other capitals it visited. They also stressed their appreciation of the efforts the OAU was deploying.

#### IV. WEST GERMANY

In Bonn, the delegation was received for luncheon by Mr. G. Van Well, Staat Secretariat of the West Germany Foreign Ministry. During the luncheon, Mr. Van Well who had with him high officials of the African Department in the German Foreign Ministry spoke of the attachment of his country to the Security Council's Resolution 435 and that that resolution should constitute a basis from which to proceed. He said that they made clear to the new administration in the United States that they would not be happy with an enrichment of the resolution or of an attempt to giving new interpretations to its operative paragraphs. He said that his Government was not very enthusiastic about holding a meeting on Namibia in Geneva because they knew that the results of the American elections would strengthen the resolve of South Africa to abort the Conference. He also said that his country had learnt to face realities. He added that those opposed to SWAPO are afraid that SWAPO was likely to turn against them and that for this reason, an atmosphere of



confidence should be created. He said that Zimbabwe was an entirely different thing because it was under the responsibility of Britain. The Namibian question is the responsibility of the United Nations. Mr. Van Well said, once again, that an air of confidence was of the utmost importance and that he found the stand taken by the Frontline States very encouraging. He said once again, "We told the United States that we stand by our principles and we cannot change our policy. We want to maintain our good reputation in Africa and we hope that after what happened in Geneva, confidence between the parties will grow." He said that he had contacts with Namibians of German origin in Bonn and that he noted that the people he met wanted to be considered Namibians and not Germans. What they wanted to hear, he said, were guarantees of basic principles. There will be no solution without creating confidence. It is the Africans and the Namibians who needed guarantees and the reassertion of confidence, for the Namibians were always suffering because of the arrogance of South Africa. Time is short and Africa requested the Federal Republic of Germany and its friends to ask South Africa once more if they are willing to go ahead with the Security Council Resolution 435 as it stands approved by the World Community. Africa is right in asking for the full implementation of Resolution 435.

In the afternoon the delegation was met by Mr. Gensher, the Foreign Minister of the Federal Republic of Germany. The Hon. Foreign Minister of Togo, introduced the subject with his customary ability stressing the fact that Africa wants to solve the problem by negotiation, by sitting down together, around the same Conference table, and that Africa expected West Germany to convince South Africa to resume negotiations within the framework of the Resolution 435. The Foreign Minister of West Germany expressed his concern over Namibia and also said that when he met, with his colleagues in Rome he stressed the fact that the Resolution 435 was the only solid basis for solution of the Namibia question. Mr. Gensher also said

that Foreign Secretary Haig made clear to Botha that South Africa is expected to move and to stop stalling. He said that the attacks on Angola were not acceptable and that his country was not shrinking from Resolution 435, and will continue on this path. He said that South Africa by its own obstinacy was not protecting its long-term interests neither those of the white minority. He added that he was not hiding his concern that further delays will make things worse.

About Comrade Sam Nujoma, he said that the Federal Republic of Germany had received him officially when he was in Germany recently and he was told that the Federal Republic of Germany will generously help independent Namibia and that they are doing their best to convince all that a solution must be found to this question. He said to the delegation, that Africa is of great concern to them not because they have people of German extraction in Namibia but because they feel that Africa is a neighbour with whom West Germany can cooperate. "We want to cooperate with Africa and a solution of an independent Namibia is in our interests even if there were no Germans in Namibia." He also said that he wants to talk again with Mr. Nujoma.

#### V. ITALY

From Bonn the delegation went to Rome where the Delegation was received on Wednesday 20th May, 1981, by Mr. Aristide Gunnella, Assistant Foreign Minister and leading member of the Republican Party which forms the present coalition governing Italy. The



Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs of Togo told the Italian Minister that Italy, although not a member of the Contact Group, could not be left out of our fact-finding Mission. The Honourable Minister told him that Italy has a role to play in creating peace in Namibia because Africa wants to live in peace and devote its energy to development and that Italy could try to convince the Reagan Administration which seems to be hesitating about the interpretation of the Resolution 435, that a solution of the Namibian problem could only be found within the framework of Resolution 435. The Honourable Minister in his introduction said that Namibia had to be helped in order to have it as a friend. The Italian Minister said that he was very happy to receive the OAU Delegation and that he felt sure that Namibian independence was forthcoming because this is a historical inevitability. He said that his Government told Members of the Contact Group that South Africa must be forced to accept the Resolution with all necessary guarantees. He also said that the new American Administration did not yet have a very clear policy on Africa. According to him the United States knew that the advice of its European Allies was to be taken into consideration because a prolongation of the drama in Namibia could destabilize the international equilibrium. "I can confirm to you that we are for the application of Resolution 435 and I want you to believe that Italy will listen carefully to new proposals coming from the Africans or from the Americans, proposals that will accelerate the process of independence in the respect of minority rights. We want also to be sure that the majority will be capable of pursuing a policy of economic independence."

VI. FRANCE

Page 13

From London, the OAU delegation flew to Paris on May 16th where we were supposed to meet a high official of the Quai d'Orsay but, since the presidential elections had just taken place and the change in administration was inevitable, no high official was available to meet the delegation. Because of that the delegation decided to come back to Paris at a later stage and proceeded to Bonn.

The delegation, in Paris, met three officials of the New Administration. The First of them was Secretary of the Socialist Party, who was met by H.E. the Angolan Ambassador to France and the Togolese Ambassador to France.

The second was Mr. Claude CHEYSSON, the Minister for External Relations who was met by the OAU Delegation's Chairman, the Togolese Foreign Minister on May 21st and the third official to be met by the delegation was M. SCHEER, Director of Cabinet of H.E. Mr. Claude CHEYSSON, a former French Ambassador to Mozambique.

The position of the New French Administration towards the Namibian question can be summarized by quoting the statement by Lionel JOSLIN before the International Conference on Sactions held in Paris, UNESCO, May 20th 1981.

"La Liberté, les peuples africains savent ce qu'il en coûte pour la conquérir, et je voudrais rendre ici hommage, au nom du Parti Socialiste, à tous ceux qui, sur ce continent ont combattu, et aujourd'hui encore, luttent pour elle."

On this African soil, which has already suffered so much, one country, Namibia, continues to be illegally occupied, in violation of all the international laws.

As regards this territory, the Socialist Party has always recognized the legal authority of the United Nations, and has denounced, on several occasions, the obstacles raised by the Pretoria regime to thwart Namibia's progress to independence. Our party supports Security Council Resolutions 431 and 435 which outline the plan for the settlement of the Namibian question and its modalities of implementation with regard to free elections, under UN supervision. It followed with keen attention the efforts of the United Nations to expedite Namibia's accession to independence as provided for under these two resolutions.

Like all of you, it was indignant at the fact that, once again, South Africa deems it right to question the impartiality of the UN at the Geneva Conference, by throwing suspicion on a draft which had, however, been approved by the five Western Countries, called the "Contact Group".

In fact, South Africa has always looked upon Namibia as her fifth province, which can never be accepted.

Pretoria's approval for the settlement plan was thus nothing but a sham agreement, designed to mislead the various parties concerned.

We had at the appropriate time denounced South Africa's responsibilities for the failure of the Geneva Conference.

We also requested that the countries of the "Contact Group" take steps to ensure that the Pretoria Government finally bears responsibility for its acceptance of the principle of the Settlement plan adopted by the Security Council.

Since the failure of the Geneva Conference, the Socialist Party has followed with unflagging interest in all the measures taken for the proposed settlement. In this regard, it has shown particular interest in the recommendations made by the co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Countries, at its meeting held in Algiers, last month.

The African peoples know at what price freedom can be achieved, and on behalf of the Socialist Party, I would like to pay tribute to all those who fought on this continent, and are still fighting today for this freedom.

Mr. Chairman, as you are aware, a new political situation has changed in France since the presidential elections of 10 May 1981.

The Socialist Party is at the base of this change.

We shall ask the new government to do its possible best to ensure that Namibia becomes independent under the conditions stated in Resolution 435. In effect, for Socialists we are, there can be no procrastinations, no temporizations, and still less alternatives.

We strongly re-affirm the basic principle for any settlement:

"Namibian is illegally occupied; it has the right to independence, and the Namibians to freedom".

The Socialist Party has continued to denounce the apartheid regime as one of the greatest injustices of our time.

It is not only the aggressive policy of the Pretoria Government which is questioned, but the very nature of a power based on racism, which constitutes a permanent threat to peace and a fundamental obstacle to the development of the African continent.

It is false and illusory to pretend, as asserted by the conservative forces, that economic development would bring about the gradual disintegration of the apartheid system.

From experience, it should be observed that this is not true. The fundamental characteristics of apartheid persists even if it changes in form.

We are all aware that the Socialist Party has always been favourable to the application of Sanctions against South Africa, and may I remind you that particularly recommends:

- boycott of all trade with Namibia and in particular the import of uranium,
- decreases in, as soon as technical constraints allow, French imports from South Africa,
- Suspension of all public investments and assistance to private investments,

- without mentioning, of course, a full embargo on weapons. But these sanctions must go hand-in-hand with increased support to the Frontline States seriously threatened by South Africa.

Besides, we would like to see a leftist government give political and diplomatic support and humanitarian assistance to the refugees and the militants of the liberation movements of South Africa and Namibia, which we hail here.

Mr. Chairman, all the Socialists in this country noted with approval the achievement of independence by the peoples of Mozambique, Angola, Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde and, very recently, of Zimbabwe.

I strongly hope that, in a near future, they will be rejoicing with you to see an independent Namibia fully play its role for the development of all the peoples of Southern Africa".

GENERAL CONCLUSION:

The CAU mission to the Six Western Countries was very successful because it gave the opportunity to inform the Western Countries of the great concern of Africa about the independence of Namibia, and the great concern of Africa towards the Pretoria regime's attempt to destabilize the frontline countries, and in particular, Angola.



The unanimity shown at the Security Council by independent Africa, with the support of the Non-Aligned Movement and freedom loving nations all over the world, is a strong element in favour of the OAU demands in international forum on this issue.

The mission deems it necessary for the OAU Executive Secretaries in New York and in Europe (Geneva or Brussels), to go from time to time to brief African Ambassadors in Washington, Ottawa, London, Brussels, Paris Bonn, Rome, so that African representatives in these various capitals could be in position to explain, to their local authorities, the African concern in southern African matters.

It is also very urgent for the other planned missions of the committee of 19 to Socialist and Arab countries to be made so as to sensitize the whole world of the concern of Africa regarding the independence of Namibia and the eradication of apartheid in Southern Africa.

It is recalled that the mission to Socialist Countries is to be chaired by Nigeria and the mission to visit Arab Countries is to be lead by Sudan.

The OAU delegation to the western countries would like to thank all officials from the Western Six who made it possible for the delegation to complete its mission successfully.

LOME : June 1981



AFRICAN UNION UNION AFRICAINE

African Union Common Repository

<http://archives.au.int>

---

Organs

Council of Ministers & Executive Council Collection

---

1981-06

# Report of the OAU Committee of 19

Organization of African Unity

Organization of African Unity

---

<https://archives.au.int/handle/123456789/9850>

*Downloaded from African Union Common Repository*