



General Assembly Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/38/254
S/15801
27 May 1983

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Thirty-eighth session
Item 58 of the preliminary list*
REDUCTION OF MILITARY BUDGETS

SECURITY COUNCIL
Thirty-eighth year

Letter dated 25 May 1983 from the Permanent Representative
of Mozambique to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General

On Monday, 23 May, my country was viciously attacked by the Air Force of the minority régime of South Africa. A South African Air Force formation of approximately 16 airplanes violated my country's territory. It was about 7:20 in the morning when the airplanes dropped their lethal load over the peaceful civilians and inhabitants of Matola, who at that hour of the morning were leaving their homes for work.

As a result of this violent and hateful action, six civilians, among them three women, one of whom was in her last month of pregnancy, two children, two and five years old respectively, a South African citizen, and two workers of SOMOPAL (a jam and fruit juice processing plant) were killed.

In addition, this barbaric action of South African aggression against the peaceful population left 40 civilians wounded and destroyed 14 houses, one factory and one nursery school.

Although only civilians were massacred and their patrimony was destroyed, the South African régime consistently uses the alleged presence of the African National Congress (ANC) in Mozambique as merely a strategy of the South African régime to intimidate and terrorize the countries in the region, forcing them to surrender to its hegemonic intentions.

* A/38/50/Rev.1

The goal of the régime of South Africa is to compel all the African countries to accept passively the practices of segregation and racial discrimination that are common in South Africa.

The fact is that ANC has existed for more than 70 years now, and its creation in 1912 significantly preceded the creation of the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO).

It is a well-known fact that the armed struggle of the people of South Africa started in 1961, three years before we had developed our own armed struggle, which reached its climax with the overthrow of the Portuguese colonial government in Mozambique.

When our country proclaimed its independence in June 1975, the struggle of the South African people was far advanced and reports of the results of the ANC's military strategies in South African territory were usually published in the international press.

It is also an irrefutable fact that the life-term sentence that was given to Nelson Mandela in 1961 can be considered a direct result of the incontestable progress of the armed struggle of the South African people.

In fact, since the racist régime assumed power in South Africa, it has declared a war against the majority of the South African people. As a result, the world started learning such odious massacres like that of Sharpeville, Gogolito, Langa and Soweto.

The growth and proliferation of repressive acts and legislations against human rights which are in effect in South Africa are the real causes of this ongoing internal unrest that has been going on inside South African territory long before there was the People's Republic of Mozambique.

The South African strategy of using indiscriminate violence against neighbouring countries is an unjustifiable method which it has resorted to in an attempt to divert the attention of the international community from the crucial conflict that has spread all over the country. Basically, this strategy consists of diverting attention from the nationalistic nature of the conflict, and claiming that the South African régime is the victim of armed conspiracy organized by its neighbouring countries.

The armed struggle in South Africa has been for many years an undeniable reality. It is not through gratuitous and wanton acts of violence against neighbouring countries that the defenders and promoters of apartheid will defeat the struggle of the majority of the people of South Africa in their search for human dignity.

The People's Republic of Mozambique is a peaceful country and is proud of its love for peace. In its relations with other countries, it professes the principles of respect of sovereignty, mutual advantages, reciprocity of benefits, and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States.

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Based on its principles, the People's Republic of Mozambique recognizes the universal equality of human rights and opposes racial discrimination and apartheid.

The People's Republic of Mozambique expresses solidarity with the South African people and will continue to support them in their struggle to end apartheid.

The Government of the People's Republic of Mozambique salutes His Excellency Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Daniel Arap Moi, President of the Organization of African Unity, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, President of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and Mr. Edem Kodjo, Secretary General of the Organization of African Unity, in their courageous decision vehemently to condemn the attacks and aggression of South Africa against Mozambique.

The People's Republic of Mozambique salutes the socialist countries which have already offered military aid to help in the defence of our capital, and we are grateful to know that many other countries have already made clear that they will not be passive witnesses to a second Beirut.

The People's Republic of Mozambique salutes all countries that have demonstrated their solidarity with the People's Republic of Mozambique and with the Mozambican people. We salute all those countries that have condemned this latest racist aggression.

In pursuance of the instructions of my Government, I would be very grateful if this letter were circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under item 58 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) José Carlos LOBO
Ambassador
and Permanent Representative
