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THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR

2299th MEETING: 31 AUGUST 1981

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2299th MEETING

Held in New York on Monday, 31 August 1981, at 10 a.m.

President: M. Jorge E. ILLUECA (Panama).

Present: The representatives of the following States: China, France, German Democratic Republic, Ireland, Japan, Mexico, Niger, Panama, Philippines, Spain, Tunisia, Uganda, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/2299)

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Complaint by Angola against South Africa:
Letter dated 26 August 1981 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Angola to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/14647)

The meeting was called to order at 12.00 noon.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Complaint by Angola against South Africa:
Letter dated 26 August 1981 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Angola to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/14647)

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): In accordance with decisions taken at the 2296th to 2298th meetings, I invite the representative of Angola to take a place at the Council table and the representatives of Brazil, Canada, Cuba, the Federal Republic of Germany, India, Kenya, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, South Africa, Viet Nam, Yugoslavia and Zimbabwe to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. de Figueiredo (Angola), took a place at the Council table; Mr. Bueno (Brazil), Mr. Morden (Canada), Mr. Roa Kouri (Cuba), Mr. van Well (Federal Republic of Germany), Mr. Krishnan (India), Mr. Maina (Kenya), Mr. Burwin (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Eksteen (South Africa), Mr. Ha Van Lau (Viet Nam), Mr. Lazarević (Yugoslavia) and Mr. Mashingaidze (Zimbabwe) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

2. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to inform members of the Security Council that I received a letter dated 29 August 1981 from the representative of Tunisia [S/14666], which reads as follows:

"I have the honour to request the Security Council to invite Mr. Clovis Maksoud, Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States, to participate in the consideration of the question entitled 'Complaint by Angola against South Africa', in accordance with rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure."

3. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Council decides to comply with this request.

It was so decided.

4. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from Spanish*): Members of the Council have received the text of the draft resolution sponsored by the delegations of Mexico, Niger, Panama, the Philippines, Tunisia and Uganda, distributed in document S/14664.

5. I should also like to draw the attention of members to the other new documents related to this question: S/14661, letter dated 29 August 1981 addressed to the President of the Council by the representative of Cuba; S/14662, letter dated 29 August addressed to the Secretary-General by the representative of Mongolia and S/14663, letter dated 29 August addressed to the Secretary-General by the representative of Kenya.

6. The first speaker is Mr. Maksoud, whom the Council has agreed to invite under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure. I invite him to be seated at the Council table and to make his statement.

7. Mr. MAKSOUD: First of all, I want to congratulate you, Mr. President, on the statesmanlike manner in which you have been conducting the proceedings of this series of important Security Council meetings. I should like also to take this opportunity to offer the condolences of the League of Arab States on the death of president Torrijos and to congratulate the new leadership of the friendly country of Panama.

8. The Council is meeting today because it is seized of the aggression by the racist régime of South Africa against Angola. The reasons that motivate the League

of Arab States in participating in the Council's deliberations are basically twofold. One is the solidarity of the Arab States and the Arab people with the people of Angola and, more emphatically, also with the people of Namibia through their sole legitimate representative, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). That solidarity is dictated by the common aspirations and historical experiences which the Arabs and Africans have had. That community of experiences, as well as the community of aspirations, constitutes a determinant in our joint struggle.

9. We should therefore like to affirm our total solidarity with the Republic of Angola and to condemn in no uncertain terms the aggression by South Africa. And although solidarity constitutes a determining factor moving us to share in this Council's deliberations, perhaps more relevant—inasmuch as our solidarity is assumed, our identity of purpose is reaffirmed, our community of objectives is well known and established—more important and vital is that our input into these deliberations is also motivated by the similarity of our experience: the similarity of the Arabs' experience with Israel—another lingering racist entity—to that of the people of Namibia, Angola and the rest of Africa with the lingering racist régime of South Africa.

10. During the deliberations of the Council, there has been an almost universal consensus condemning the attack by South Africa against Angola. This universality of condemnation, emphatic, unequivocal and inevitably shared by the member States of the Arab League, points to a situation that is becoming ever more dangerous, inasmuch as racist régimes—whether in Western Asia, like Israel, or in southern Africa, like *apartheid* South Africa—behave towards the world community as though they were totally unaccountable to the resolutions of the United Nations, to the imperatives of international consensus and to the moral guidelines that determine international relations and civilized behaviour. It is that total lack of accountability which leads those two remaining racist entities in the world to arrogate to themselves the right to allow their racism to be transplanted, to work at will, to strike at will, whenever and wherever they want.

11. We have seen how Israel has done that in the attack on Baghdad, in its attacks on Beirut and in its repeated ongoing attacks on southern Lebanon. We have seen how the massive acts of aggression by South Africa emerge from its exclusivist idea that it holds within itself the right to violate the independence and territorial integrity of other countries, such as Angola, in the name of hot pursuit and pre-emptive strikes against freedom fighters. We see an amazing correlation in the unfolding behaviour of Israel in Lebanon—in a way, the Angola of the Middle East—and of South Africa in Angola. So we have a situation that is very familiar to the Arab League.

12. We see how, for example, the strikes against Lebanon are said by Israel not to be against Lebanon, in the same manner as the South African representative has stated here that the strikes in Angola are not against Angola but are against SWAPO. In the same way, Israel has struck in Lebanon, not intending to strike at Lebanon but in Lebanon. Whether Angolan women, children and men die in the meantime or whether hundreds and hundreds of Lebanese are killed in Beirut—that becomes accidental and, as Begin has said in his reference to Beirut, merely regrettable.

13. South Africa's attacks are against what it claims to be SWAPO "terrorist bases" in Angola, notwithstanding the fact that SWAPO is the recognized representative of the people of Namibia and that as such it is entitled under the Charter of the United Nations to struggle by all means—peaceful, if possible; diplomatic, if possible; political, if possible; and armed, if necessary.

14. By the same token, when Israel strikes in Lebanon, it strikes the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), its people and refugee camps. It says it is striking the so-called PLO because Israel—alone perhaps—does not recognize the centrality of the Palestinian question and the central authority of the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinian people.

15. So the Security Council is intermittently seized of the aggressions of Israel and the aggressions of South Africa. Hence our familiarity with the problem and our experience constitute an input into the deliberations of the Council because the latter is confronted with patterns of behaviour that are, if not identical, very similar.

16. If we relate our experience of what has taken place in Lebanon with what is taking place today in Angola, it is because the United Nations, and particularly the Security Council, must regain the credibility that comes from international consensus, the effectiveness of United Nations machinery, and the peoples of Africa, the Arab world and the entire world must be able to rely on the mechanisms of the United Nations and its resolutions.

17. Because of the difficulty of enabling the Security Council to become the credible machinery that we want it to be, instead of the United Nations being the anchor of the freedom fighters and a framework for the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of the world who can then resort to the Council to redress their grievances in order to avoid the violence that is the inescapable outcome of the racist régimes' violations of territorial integrity, we find that the credibility of the United Nations is being seriously questioned and at times undermined by the position that the United States takes in order to provide those lingering racist and colonial régimes, whether in South Africa or in Israel, with the encouragement that international law and consensus have denied them. It is that encouragement which we must seek to prevent because, although

this may not have been the original intention, it is interpreted by South Africa and Israel in such a way that any modicum of so-called objectivity on the part of the United States becomes a licence for both South Africa and Israel to conduct the acts of aggression that they have uninterruptedly committed whether in Angola or in Lebanon. It is that encouragement that makes us appeal to the United States to realize that objectivity is not an equidistant position between what is right and what is wrong, between the aggressor and the victims of aggression, between those who violate national and human rights and those who seek to secure these rights.

18. This is not, as Assistant Secretary of State Crocker said in his speech on Saturday, a struggle between whites and blacks. That is a misnomer and in fact a distortion. This is a struggle between the peoples of Africa, the people of Namibia and a racist régime, just as the struggle of the Palestinian people and the Arabs is not against the Jews but against the Zionist racist structure in Palestine. So much for equidistance between what is wrong and what is right.

19. And it is insulting to state that it involves whites versus blacks. It is the white racists versus the moral resilience of the white people within Africa and outside Africa. It is a challenge to the basic foundations of human equality that many whites have championed and that blacks seek to achieve.

20. It is in that context—of the familiarity that we have had in Lebanon and in other places and of the fact that the Palestinians have been targeted, that today SWAPO is being targeted and that Angola is being targeted—that all this constitutes a challenge to the moral, diplomatic and political authority of the Security Council. That is why we plead with all members of the Council to seek to bring about not only universality of condemnation but the measures necessary to inhibit the aggressor, to prevent it from repeating this aggression and to make it respect and become answerable to the higher authority that the United Nations constitutes.

21. Mr. OTUNNU (Uganda): It has been suggested that the Security Council should view the issue before us in its full context. I am in agreement with that approach. I too believe that the Council must examine South Africa's aggression against Angola in all the aspects that make up a full context. What, then, is the full context of the case before the Council?

22. The first thing to appreciate in the full context is South Africa's objectives in committing aggression against Angola. In his book *South Africa in Africa*, Sam Nolutshungu notes simply and clearly that South Africa's aggressive policy is "little more than the extension of its internal conflict—the struggle to make the world safe for apartheid".

23. I need hardly remind the Council that less than a decade ago neither South Africa nor its friends

expected the momentous changes that have irrevocably altered the political geography of southern Africa. They believed then that Portuguese colonialism would remain a durable feature of the region, thus ensuring that a wide belt of southern Africa would indefinitely remain safe for apartheid.

24. The victories of the patriotic forces in Angola and Mozambique took South Africa and its friends somewhat by surprise. Instead of a region safe for apartheid, we now have next door to South Africa the most powerful symbols of dignity and freedom. South Africa and its friends have never reconciled themselves to the new reality created by the triumph of the liberation movements in Angola and Mozambique.

25. The second primary objective of South Africa concerns Namibia. By seeking to eliminate all patriotic elements both within and outside Namibia, South Africa is trying desperately to consolidate its illegal hold on the Territory and thereby to frustrate the process of genuine self-determination. It was not by coincidence that South Africa announced its intention to increase the powers of the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance traitors just as the invasion of Angola was in progress.

26. Clearly, South Africa is taking advantage of the climate of uncertainty created by the equivocation of the Western contact five with regard to the plan for Namibian independence.

27. The third objective of South Africa is to intimidate all the front-line States with the aim of inhibiting their expression of solidarity with the liberation movements and with the refugees who are fleeing from the forces of oppression and occupation.

28. The fourth objective of South Africa's massive invasion of Angola is to impose its grand design of weakening the economies of the neighbouring States in order to make them dependent on South Africa, thereby creating the so-called constellation of States. It is therefore not surprising that, during this invasion as on previous occasions, economic infrastructure and installations have been the major targets for the South African invaders.

29. The second aspect of the full context is that of the reasons for South Africa's feeling free to pursue its objectives with complete impunity.

30. The Security Council must bear a heavy responsibility for this state of affairs. Since its independence on 11 November 1975, Angola has lived as the victim of constant acts of aggression from South Africa. The files of the Council are replete with reports of these incidents.

31. This is the fifth time since 1978 that the Council has considered a formal complaint by Angola against South Africa for an act of aggression. As recently as

23 April 1981, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Angola reminded the Council of the agony and suffering of his country in the face of constant acts of aggression by South Africa. Referring only to the three years covering the period 1978 to 1980, he stated:

"South African armed forces have carried out 1,400 reconnaissance flights, 290 air raids, 56 debarkations of helicopter-borne troops, 72 land attacks, causing the death of more than 1,800 persons and the wounding of about a thousand persons and material damage estimated at \$7 billion." [2271st meeting, para. 16]

In spite of the magnitude of these atrocities and of the suffering, the support that South Africa enjoys from some permanent members of the Council has always ensured that everything except the most perfunctory pronouncements is blocked.

32. The reactions of the Council to recent acts of aggression elsewhere have also served to encourage South Africa's aggressive designs. When Israel, barely a few weeks ago, got away with the invasion of southern Lebanon and the carnage in west Beirut, the message to South Africa was clear, namely, that it too could do the same with equal impunity.

33. We seem to be developing two international legal régimes: one that is all permissive, under which South Africa and Israel operate, and another regulated by the usual rights and obligations, which the rest of the international community observes.

34. The most elementary aspect of the present case is the simple fact that there has been an act of aggression, an act of aggression committed by South Africa against Angola. A clearer example of premeditated and unprovoked aggression would be impossible to find. So clear, indeed, is the situation that South Africa itself, far from denying the action in question, has in fact loudly proclaimed its invasion of Angola.

35. It is surely curious that, in spite of this elementary fact, some members of the Council, and especially those who have spoken of the full context of this case, have not even been able to bring themselves to pronounce the word "aggression".

36. It was very sad to listen to the statement by a permanent member of the Council. From that statement, one would conclude that it is Angola, and not South Africa, which has committed an act of aggression. How can we expect the international community to take the Security Council seriously when a permanent member lets South Africa, the aggressor, go scot-free and instead places Angola, the victim, in the dock?

37. Much has been made of the fact that there is some foreign military equipment and personnel in Angola. What I should like to know is the relevance of

this fact to the act of aggression that has given rise to the complaint before the Council.

38. In any case, what is so unique about having foreign military equipment? The fact is that many of us in the third world depend on external sources for the supply of any military hardware, for the simple reason that we have not yet developed the technology for manufacturing these deadly items. This fact is so basic that the economies of many industrialized nations boom precisely because of their supply of military hardware to the third world.

39. There is no arms embargo against Angola, nor has Angola used its military equipment to commit any aggression. On the other hand, there has been an arms embargo against South Africa since November 1977.

40. It is clear from the details provided by the representative of Angola that the military equipment used by South Africa to launch the invasion against Angola was supplied by Western countries, in clear violation of the arms embargo régime. Instead of focusing on the illegal supply network to South Africa, instead of bringing to book those which are part of that enterprise and instead of condemning the mercenaries in the employ of South Africa, we are being asked to divert our attention to Angola's military equipment. If the mere possession of foreign military equipment by a country or the presence of foreign military personnel on the soil of a country were to constitute sufficient grounds for invasion by another country, the result would not only be absurd but it would also place most countries in the world today under immediate and permanent threat of aggression.

41. Even as the Angolans are mourning their dead and counting their losses, we heard words of comfort and encouragement flowing in the direction of South Africa.

42. It has been said by some Powers that it is not their task to choose between blacks and whites in South Africa. I am afraid that the problem in South Africa is not about choosing between two racial groups. The choice is between the forces of *apartheid* which have brutalized and dehumanized the vast majority of South Africans, on the one hand, and the forces that seek to set them free on the other hand.

43. How can a country that professes democracy remain neutral between an oppressive system that has deprived 80 per cent of the citizens of their basic rights and a movement of the people that seeks to restore those democratic rights? In the full context of South Africa, any notion of neutrality can only mean support for the *status quo* which means support for the system of *apartheid*.

44. Those who view Africa through the prism of big-Power rivalry are so busy looking for foreign presence in Africa that they seem unable to notice that the

Africans are also there. In Africa, we say that when the elephants fight it is the grass that suffers. For the "globalists", Africa is but a patch of grass over which the big-Power elephants fight for strategic locations and mineral wealth and other raw materials. They find it difficult to recognize the fact that we in Africa have our own independent interests, which we seek to protect and enhance.

45. How long will the friends of South Africa protect the aggressor? How many lives must be lost and how much destruction must be caused before the Council is able to take concrete and effective measures against South Africa?

46. The deep sense of frustration felt by the people of Angola was expressed before the Council in April by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of that country when he said,

"in the face of the criminal acts of aggression committed against the front-line countries, which constitute a serious threat to international peace and security, we should like to know how many new acts of violation of the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of our country we must bear before the Security Council finally shoulders its responsibilities, by imposing comprehensive mandatory economic sanctions, because, unless that is done, the very credibility of the Council will be called into question, along with its own resolutions" [2271st meeting, para. 19].

47. The same sentiments were given a powerful echo last Friday in the moving plea by the representative of Angola who said:

"Let me not take back to my people another paper resolution. Let me take back to them a cause for hope and action to end the tyranny by which Pretoria seeks to subjugate southern Africa." [2296th meeting, para. 23]

48. In its resolution 475 (1980), the Council decided

". . . to meet again in the event of further acts of violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the People's Republic of Angola by the South African racist régime, in order to consider the adoption of more effective measures in accordance with the appropriate provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, including Chapter VII thereof".

South Africa's repeated invasions of Angola constitute acts of aggression, breaches of the peace and a grave threat to international peace and security, all within the context of Article 39 of the Charter. The Council is therefore under a clear obligation to apply Article 41 of the Charter and impose comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against South Africa.

49. The people of Angola are making a supreme sacrifice for the sake of freedom and dignity in southern Africa. I take this opportunity to reaffirm the total solidarity of the Government and people of Uganda with the Government and people of Angola. We salute their indomitable spirit. That spirit is best expressed in the words of the great leader, the late Agostinho Neto, who wrote in his poem commemorating the start of the Angolan revolution of 4 February 1961:

"It was then that in our eyes, fired
Now with blood, now with life, now with death,
We buried our dead victoriously
And on the graves made recognition
Of the reason men were sacrificed
For love,
For peace . . ."

And so, the struggle must continue.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.

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