

Eighth Ordinary Session
of the OAU Ad-hoc Committee
on Southern Africa
Arusha, Tanzania
28 April 1992

INTRODUCTORY REPORT (STATEMENT) BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL
OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY TO THE
8TH SESSION OF THE OAU AD-HOC COMMITTEE ON SOUTHERN AFRICA

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ARUSHA, TANZANIA: 28 APRIL 1992

MR. CHAIRMAN,

1. THIS DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE IS MEETING AT A VERY CRUCIAL MOMENT FOR THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA. THE COUNTRY IS NOW AT CROSS ROADS. WE STAND AT THE THRESHHOLD OF THE BIRTH OF A NEW SOUTH AFRICA, LIBERATED FROM RACIAL TYRANNY, UNITED AND OFFERING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL ITS PEOPLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO AND PARTICIPATE FULLY IN ITS GOVERNANCE. WE ARE AT THE THRESHHOLD OF THE EMERGENCE OF A SOUTH AFRICA WHICH WILL BE A POSITIVE FORCE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN REGION AND, WITH TIME, EVEN BEYOND. WE ARE INDEED AT THE THRESHHOLD OF A NEW SOUTH AFRICA, WHICH ONCE FULLY FREE FROM THE SHACKLES OF RACIAL BONDAGE AND EMERGES AS A DEMOCRATIC, NON-RACIAL AND UNITED COUNTRY, WE SHALL BE HAPPY TO WELCOME IN OUR OAU FAMILY OF NATIONS.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

2. THESE PROSPECTS FOR SUCH A SOUTH AFRICA ARE VERY REAL INDEED. IT IS WHAT WE WISH FOR ALL SOUTH AFRICANS. IT IS WHAT WE WISH FOR OURSELVES. IT IS WHAT AFRICA HAS BEEN FIGHTING FOR ALL ALONG. ABOVE ALL, IT IS WHAT THE SOUTH AFRICAN PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THE BLACK MAJORITY HAVE BEEN FIGHTING FOR, FOR SO LONG AND FOR WHICH THEY SACRIFICED SO MUCH. BUT WHILE WE DRAW OPTIMISM FROM THE GROUND WE HAVE COVERED, FROM THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE DIRECTION OF CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA, IT IS AN INCONTESTABLE FACT THAT THE GOAL OF A DEMOCRATIC, NON-RACIAL AND UNITED SOUTH AFRICA HAS YET TO BE ACHIEVED. CONSEQUENTLY, OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION MUST COMBINE BOTH OPTIMISM AND CAUTION.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

3. SOUTH AFRICA IS, TODAY, A SOCIETY IN TRANSITION. THE MAJORITY OF THE ANTI-APARTHEID FORCES ARE CONTINUING DIALOGUE WITH THE GOVERNMENT WITHIN THE CODESA FRAMEWORK, WITH A VIEW TO ELABORATING ELEMENTS OF A FUTURE CONSTITUTION FOR THE COUNTRY AND WORKING OUT TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS TO DEMOCRATIC RULE. WHILE APPRECIABLE PROGRESS IS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN MADE, THE NEGOTIATIONS ARE FAR FROM CONCLUSION.

4. LAST MARCH, THE GOVERNMENT CALLED FOR A REFERENDUM CONFINED TO THE WHITE POPULATION. WE EXPRESSED STRONG RESERVATION TO A WHITES-ONLY REFERENDUM BECAUSE IT GAVE THE WHITES THE MISPLACED IMPRESSION THAT THEY ALONE COULD DETERMINE THE FUTURE OF SOUTH AFRICA. WE WERE, NONE THE LESS, ENCOURAGED THAT THE WHITE POPULATION CHOSE THE DIRECTION OF PEACE IN THEIR OVRWHELMING SUPPORT FOR THE GOVERNMENT AGENDA OF NEGOTIATIONS ON CONSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR A NEW SOUTH AFRICA. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESULTS OF THAT REFERENDUM IS THAT IT CONFIRMED THE GOVERNMENT IN THE CODESA PROCESS AND ON THE PATH TO CHANGE.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

5. THE FORMATION OF CODESA AND THE AGREEMENT OF THE MAJORITY OF THE ANTI-APARTHEID FORCES TO EMBRACE IT AS A FRAMEWORK FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT HAS HAD GREAT IMPLICATIONS, NOT ONLY TO THE EVOLUTION OF THE PROCESS OF CHANGE IN SOUTH AFRICA, BUT MORE SO, TO THE ATTITUDE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TOWARDS SOUTH AFRICA. THE RESULTS OF THE MARCH REFERENDUM HAVE COMBINED TO ALTER FUNDAMENTALLY HOW THE REST OF THE WORLD VIEWS THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT AND ITS MANAGEMENT OF THE PROCESS OF DISMANTLING APARTHEID.

6. IN EUROPE, NORTH AMERICA AND ASIA, STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO REMOVE A VARIETY OF SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA. THE UNITED NATIONS RESCINDED THE SANCTIONS AGAINST "PEOPLE TO PEOPLE" CONTACTS. IN AFRICA, MANY COUNTRIES HAVE RESUMED CONTACTS WITH SOUTH AFRICA.

ALL THESE DEVELOPMENTS - OF LIFTING SANCTIONS AND OF RESTORING CONTACTS - ARE BASED ON THE BASIC ASSUMPTION, INDEED IF NOT ASSERTION, THAT THE SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA HAS UNDERGONE FUNDAMENTAL TRANSFORMATION AND THUS IT IS NO LONGER A TENABLE POSITION TO CONTINUE ISOLATING THAT COUNTRY.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

7. THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY HAS NOT PRETENDED TO BE OBLIVIOUS OF WHAT HAS TAKEN PLACE IN SOUTH AFRICA. ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS, WE HAVE WELCOMED THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND THE PROGRESS MADE THUS FAR TOWARDS ELIMINATING APARTHEID. WE HAVE, AT THE SAME TIME, CAUTIONED AGAINST LETTING THE EUPHORIA OF THE MARGINAL GAINS CLOUD OUR COLLECTIVE JUDGEMENT ON THE REALITY ON THE GROUND IN SOUTH AFRICA. WE HAVE RIGHTLY URGED CAUTION IN OUR CHARACTERIZATION OF THESE ACHIEVEMENTS. IT IS THIS SYNERGY OF RECOGNIZING CHANGE BUT CAUTIONING AGAINST EXAGGERATED OPTIMISM AND URGING PRAGMATISM, WHICH HAS BROUGHT US INTO ACCEPTING THAT "PEOPLE TO PEOPLE" CONTACTS WITH SOUTH AFRICA SHOULD RESUME. IT IS ALSO THE SAME PATH OF CAUTION WHICH HAS BEEN AT THE CORE OF OUR DETERMINATION THAT, WHILE IMPORTANT CHANGES HAVE TAKEN PLACE, A POINT OF IRREVERSIBILITY IN THE PROCESS OF DISMANTLING APARTHEID HAD NOT BEEN REACHED.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

8. YET, IN REALITY, IN THE LIGHT OF THE EVOLVING SITUATION IN SOUTH AFRICA, THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAS ALL BUT ABANDONED THE REGIME OF SANCTIONS. SOME AFRICAN COUNTRIES HAVE RESUMED CONTACTS, EVEN ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA. ALL THESE HAVE HAPPENED IN THE ABSENCE OF A COORDINATED AND COLLECTIVE POSITION OF AFRICA. DESPITE OUR REPEATED PRONOUNCEMENTS, WE SEEM TO HAVE LOST THE INITIATIVE OF LEADERSHIP ON THE QUESTION OF SOUTH AFRICA. ALL THIS HAS, IN MY VIEW, ARISEN FROM OUR OWN UNCERTAINTY AND DOUBT OVER HOW TO HANDLE THE ISSUE OF RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA.

9. THIS IS WHY, I AM OF THE VIEW THAT THIS MEETING SHOULD COME OUT WITH DEFINITIVE SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO HANDLE THIS ISSUE AND WHAT KIND OF RELATIONS AFRICAN COUNTRIES SHOULD NOW HAVE WITH SOUTH AFRICA. THE MORE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION TO BE ANSWERED IS WHETHER TIME HAS COME TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA. IF INDEED SO AT WHAT POINT, AND WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THOSE RELATIONS? A CLEAR DIRECTION, IN THIS REGARD WOULD REMOVE THE DOUBT AND AMBIVALENCE IN WHICH MANY AFRICAN COUNTRIES NOW FIND THEMSELVES AND GIVE A CLEAR MESSAGE TO OUR SUPPORTERS ELSEWHERE IN THE DIRECTION TO PROCEED.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

10. SINCE PRESIDENT DE KLERK BEGAN TO ADOPT HIS REFORM MEASURES, AND IN PARTICULAR AFTER HIS DECLARED DISPOSITION TO NEGOTIATE A NEW POLITICAL DISPENSATION, AFRICA'S CONCERN AND DETERMINATION ALL ALONG HAS BEEN TO ENSURE THAT ALL IS DONE TO HOLD MR. DE KLERK COMMITTED TO THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT NOTHING IS DONE TO TOPERDO OR UNDERMINE THE PROCESS OF CHANGE. TO THAT EXTENT, WE HAD INSISTED THAT ALL FORMS OF PRESSURE ARE MAINTAINED IN COMPLEMENT OF THE PROCESS OF DIALOGUE. MORE SPECIFICALLY, WE HAVE PROCLAIMED ON MANY OCCASIONS THAT, UNTIL AND UNLESS A POINT OF IRREVERSIBILITY IN THE PROCESS OF DISMANTLING APARTHEID IS IN EVIDENCE, ALL FORMS OF PRESSURE, INCLUDING SANCTIONS, AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA, SHOULD REMAIN IN PLACE PARTLY TO BACKSTOP THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS. IN THE LIGHT OF THE SITUATION AND MORE PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE UNILATERAL MEASURES BEING TAKEN BOTH IN OUR CONTINENT AND BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, IN MY VIEW, TIME HAS COME FOR AFRICA TO DETERMINE CONCLUSIVELY WHAT WOULD CONSTITUTE IRREVERSIBILITY AND AT WHAT POINT WE THINK IT WOULD BE DEEMED TO BE IN PLACE. THIS DETERMINATION BY AFRICA THROUGH THIS COMMITTEE IS CRUCIAL IF WE ARE TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP ON THIS ISSUE. IF WE DO NOT DO THAT; IF WE ALLOW AMBIGUITY AND UNCERTAINTY TO PREVAIL, THEN I AM AFRAID EVENTS MAY OVERTAKE US AS THEY DID AFTER THE ABUJA AD HOC COMMITTEE SESSION LAST YEAR.

11. EVEN WITH ITS PRESENT LIMITATIONS, CODESA REPRESENTS THE MOST EMBRACING FRAMEWORK IN THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATING THE FUTURE OF SOUTH AFRICA. WE HOPE THAT IT WILL BE POSSIBLE FOR THE CONVENTION TO BUILD ON THE PROGRESS OF ITS FIRST SESSION AS IT PREPARES FOR CODESA II NEXT MONTH. IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT THAT EFFORTS BE MAXIMALLY DEPLOYED TO BRING THOSE THAT REMAIN OUTSIDE THIS FRAMEWORK INTO THE PROCESS. THE FORMATION AND GOING INTO OPERATION OF AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT WILL, IN MY VIEW, BE A WATERSHED DEVELOPMENT. IT WILL MARK THE FIRST TIME THAT SOUTH AFRICANS, OF ALL RACES, WILL HAVE JOINED IN A PARTNERSHIP FOR CHANGE IN THEIR COUNTRY. EVEN WITH ITS INITIAL LIMITATIONS, OPERATING AS IT WILL BE, IN AN APARTHEID ENVIRONMENT, THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT WILL CONSTITUTE A CLEAR SIGNAL THAT FUNDAMENTAL CHANGE IS POSSIBLE IN SOUTH AFRICA. THIS WILL BE AN EVENT TO RECKON WITH AND EVEN IF WITH SOME LINGERING DOUBTS WHICH WILL BE INEVITABLE, AFRICA WILL HAVE TO TAKE SERIOUS NOTE OF IT. IN MY VIEW, THE EMPLACEMENT OF THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT, CHARGED WITH SUPERVISING TRANSITION TO DEMOCRATIC RULE, INCLUDING THE HOLDING OF FREE AND FAIR ELECTIONS UNDER UNIVERSAL ADULT SUFFRAGE ON A COMMON VOTERS ROLL, WILL MARK THE BEGINNING OF AN IRREVERSIBLE MARCH TOWARDS THE ENDING OF APARTHEID. THIS MEETING COULD, THEREFORE, COME OUT WITH A CLEAR VIEW THAT ONCE AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT IS IN PLACE, THE PROCESS TOWARDS THE DISMANTLING OF APARTHEID WILL BE DEEMED TO HAVE REACHED THE PIVOTAL STAGE TOWARDS IRREVERSIBILITY AND THAT AFRICA AND THE REST OF THE WORLD WILL ENTER INTO PARTNERSHIP WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN SOCIETY AND HELP STEER IT TOWARDS THE FINAL DESTINATION OF A NONRACIAL, DEMOCRATIC AND UNITED SOUTH AFRICA.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

12. WHILE WE LOOK FORWARD TO REACHING THAT STAGE IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST APARTHEID, THE CONTINUING DISUNITY AMONG THE BLACK MAJORITY IS A MATTER OF PRESSING CONCERN. I AM CONCERNED

THAT, DESPITE THE FORMATION OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT, DIFFERENCES, AMONG THE PARTIES, STILL REMAIN. THIS HAS NOT ONLY MADE IT DIFFICULT FOR THE ANTI-APARTHEID FORCES REPRESENTING THE BLACK MAJORITY TO FORGE A COMMON POSITION IN THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT BUT IT HAS EXERCEBATED TENSIONS AND PERPETUATED REGRETTABLE DIVISION AMONG THEM.

13. AS WE SEE PROSPECTS OF THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE PROCESS OF NEGOTIATIONS GETTING BRIGHTER, WE SHOULD URGE ALL THE ANTI-APARTHEID FORCES TO SUBORDINATE THEIR DIFFERENCES TO THE LARGER OBJECTIVE OF ENDING APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA AND EMBRACE EACH OTHER IN A COALITION FOR PEACE WITHIN THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. THIS COMMITTEE SHOULD URGE THE LEADERS OF ALL THE ANTI-APARTHEID FORCES, IN PARTICULAR THOSE OF THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS OF THE ANC AND PAC, TO SPARE NO EFFORT TO PROMOTE HARMONY, CONCORD AND UNITY AMONG THE BLACK MAJORITY. FOR ULTIMATELY, THE POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA WILL REQUIRE TOTAL COHESION, UNITY OF PURPOSE AND SINGLE-MINDED DETERMINATION OF ALL IN IT, TO TRIUMPH AS A NATION, IN FREEDOM AND LIBERTY. AT NO MORE CRUCIAL TIME THAN THIS DOES THE BLACK MAJORITY NEED UNITY AND TO SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE. THIS COMMITTEE SHOULD NOW EXAMINE SERIOUSLY HOW AND WHAT IT AND THE OAU GENERALLY CAN DO TO BRING THE BLACK LEADERSHIP TOGETHER AND PROMOTE UNITY.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

14. ONE OF THE RESULTS OF THE CONTINUING DISUNITY, THOUGH NOT EXCLUSIVELY ATTRIBUTABLE TO IT, IS THE ISSUE OF THE UNABETTING VIOLENCE IN THE TOWNSHIPS. OF COURSE, THE DUPLICITY AND COMPLICITY OF SOME SECTORS OF THE GOVERNMENT SECURITY FORCES, IN FANNING, FINANCING AND EVEN GETTING DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE VIOLENCE, MUST RESOLUTELY BE CONDEMNED. THE GOVERNMENT HAS THE PRIMARY AND INESCAPABLE RESPONSIBILITY TO MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER IN THE ENTIRE COUNTRY. CLEARLY IT HAS NOT FULFILLED THIS RESPONSIBILITY. WHILE WE MUST RIGHTLY HOLD THE GOVERNMENT PRIMARILY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VIOLENCE AND ITS CONTINUATION, WE CAN NOT

FULLY EXONERATE SOME ELEMENTS OF THE BLACK COMMUNITY FOR THE EXTENT AND INTENSITY OF THE VIOLENCE. WE HAVE RIGHTLY CONDEMNED THE VIOLENCE AS NOT ONLY WASTING AWAY INNOCENT LIVES AND VALUABLE PROPERTY BUT UNDERMINING THE STRUGGLE AGAINST APARTHEID AND SOWING SEEDS OF FUTURE ENDEMIC DIVISION IN THE COUNTRY. THE VIOLENCE SERVES NO ONE BUT THE PERPETRATORS OF APARTHEID AND THE FORCES OPPOSED TO THE STRUGGLE AGAINST IT. THIS IS WHY THIS MEETING SHOULD RENEW ITS DEMAND TO THE GOVERNMENT OF MR. DE KLERK TO TAKE THE NECESSARY MEASURES TO REEL IN AND PUNISH THE RENEGADE SEGMENTS OF THE SECURITY FORCES WHICH ARE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN PROMOTING VIOLENCE. EQUALLY, THAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD SHOW GOOD FAITH IN PROMOTING CHANGE BY DECLARING ITS RESOLVE TO STEM THE TIDE OF VIOLENCE IN THE TOWNSHIPS AND TAKE REQUISITE ACTION TO THIS EFFECT. IN TANDEM WITH THIS, WE SHOULD CALL UPON THE BLACK LEADERSHIP TO COME TOGETHER IN A COMPACT TO END VIOLENCE. IN PARTICULAR, WE SHOULD URGE THE PARTIES SIGNATORY TO THE NATIONAL PEACE ACCORDS SIGNED IN SEPTEMBER, LAST YEAR, TO DO ALL IN THEIR POWER TO END THE CARNAGE WHICH HAS BLED THE TOWNSHIPS SO MUCH. THIS IS THE TIME FOR IMAGINATIVE AND CREATIVE THINKING AS WELL AS OF DETERMINED LEADERSHIP. ALL THESE SHOULD BE ALIGNED IN THE SERVICE OF PEACE IN SOUTH AFRICA.

MR. CHAIRMAN,

15. AS A CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURE, THIS COMMITTEE SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER THE PROPOSALS OF BOTH THE ANC AND THE PAC FOR THE INVOLVEMENT OF INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS TO MONITOR THE SITUATION OF VIOLENCE. THESE, IN MY VIEW, ARE PROPOSALS WORTHY SERIOUS CONSIDERATION. WE SHOULD SEE WHAT ROLE, IF ANY, AFRICA CAN PLAY IN SUCH AN UNDERTAKING INCLUDING CONSIDERING THE KIND OF OBJECTIVES, WE WILL SEEK TO ACHIEVE WITH SUCH MONITORING. HERE I SHOULD MENTION THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE ANC, COMRADE NELSON MANDELA HAD ON APRIL 3 TELEPHONED ME WHEN I WAS IN NEW YORK PROPOSING UN/OAU MONITORING FORCE IN THE TOWNSHIPS. I

DISCUSSED THE MATTER THE SAME DAY WITH THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL, DR. BOUTROS BOUTROS GHALI. AS I SAID TO THE ANC PRESIDENT SUCH INVOLVEMENT WILL REQUIRE THE COOPERATION OR AT LEAST THE NON-OPPOSITION OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT.

16. IN CONCLUSION, THE COMMITTEE WILL RECALL THAT, AT ITS 7TH SESSION, IN ABUJA, LAST YEAR, A DECISION WAS TAKEN TO REVIEW THE STRUCTURE, COMPOSITION AND MANDATE OF THE MONITORING GROUP, INCLUDING ITS LOCATION. IT WAS ALSO DECIDED THAT CONSULTATIONS ON THE RECONSTITUTION OF THE MONITORING GROUP WOULD BE CONDUCTED, IN THE MAIN, ON THE BASIS OF THE VIEWS OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND THE PAN-AFRICAN CONGRESS OF AZANIA. SUBSEQUENT TO THE ABUJA MEETING, I SENT OUT NUMEROUS REMINDERS TO THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS SOLICITING THEIR VIEWS ON THE GROUP. I BELIEVE THAT THE LEADERS OF THE ANC AND PAC WILL BE SUBMITTING THEIR VIEWS ON THIS ISSUE AT THIS SUMMIT.

MR. CHAIRMAN,
EXCELLENCIES,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

17. THESE ARE SOME OF THE ISSUES ON WHICH CLEAR GUIDANCE IS NEEDED.

I THANK YOU.