

At this point, Abdul Minty urged that I should speak to President Mandela who has said that whatever time I came back I should call him.

Telephone Conversation with President Mandela

I called President Mandela in Cape Town - (27-21-6899121), our conversation lasted from 2040 to 2055 hours local time (corresponding to 2240 to 2255 hours South Africa time).

President Mandela informed me as follows :

(i) He had telephoned President Clinton and asked him what would be his attitude if my candidature were presented. The President of the United States told President Mandela that he could get back to him. But Clinton did not come back. However, Ambassador Jelly, South Africa's Permanent Representative at the United Nations was informed by his counterpart - Ambassador Marlene Albright (now designated as Secretary of State) that "things do change". (This, according to President Mandela was the response to his message and what it means is that the United States will not veto me this time around.

(ii) He has spoken to President Chirac who had raised the issue of the language. Then Chirac promised to send an emissary because it was not appropriate to discuss the issue in detail over the phone. The envoy of President Chirac did come to South Africa and met him. The emissary explained that France will not support any candidate who does not speak French. President Mandela told the envoy that to make the election of the Secretary General dependent on the language basis was unreasonable. He urged the envoy to send a message to President Chirac to reconsider his position and that he would also himself take up the matter with Chirac. He has however not spoken to Chirac since his envoy came to see him. Neither has he heard anything from the French Head of State.

(iii) He has spoken to Mwalimu and South Africa is prepared to nominate my name for consideration by the Security Council. He has also talked to President Biya, the OAU Current Chairman.

(iv) He has also talked to President Diouf (N.B. when I met the Senegalese Head of State in Dakar last Monday, December 02, he did tell me that President Mandela had telephoned him and has spoken in favour of my candidature). The President of Senegal had informed him that he was going to present his Foreign Minister Mustapha Niasse as a candidate but he was concerned that China would veto him since Senegal has no relations with the Peoples Republic of China, having established diplomatic ties with Taiwan.

President Mandela concluded by emphasizing that he is prepared to present my name on behalf of South Africa.

I thanked President Mandela for his great confidence in me and his support. I then briefed him on our assessment of the French position here. It was clear, I pointed out, that thus far France is determined to insist on the language factor. It was thus important to establish whether they are going to stick to this position and veto me. If that is the case, then there is no point of having my name submitted. I did not see what can be gained through a confrontation. I therefore urged the President to get in touch with President Chirac with a view to persuading him at least not to be so negative. President Mandela agreed with my assessment and promised to get in touch with President Chirac tomorrow.

Further telephone conversation with Abdul Minty

At 2100 hours, Abdul Minty telephoned me. I briefed him on my discussion with Mandela and underscored the importance of consultations with the French. About 30 minutes later, Abdul Minty telephoned again from Pretoria. This time he informed me that they will start tomorrow working to mobilize the members of the Security Council by contacting the Governments either at President's level, Ministerial level or Ambassador's level. Put succinctly, South Africa is prepared to pursue the issue with determination and deliberate speed. We agreed that tomorrow I shall be in Lome, Togo which is my next stop.

N.B. In the course of the night, I telephoned separately Ambassadors Mwakawago and Legwaila and briefed them on the evolving situation i.e. the South African initiative and my discussions with President Mandela.

Other Engagements

(1) As already stated, among the appointments of the day was a meeting in my hotel suite with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania, Hon. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete. This took place from 1215 to 1330 hours.

(2) From 1500 to 1615 hours, I met in my hotel suite with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uganda, E. Kitagaya. We reviewed developments in the Great Lakes Region, Burundi, my meeting with President Mobutu in Cap Saint-Martin near Nice as well as the developments in Zaire proper.

(Notes by Professor Johnson)