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10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

24 May 1984

VISIT OF SOUTH AFRICAN PRIME MINISTER:
LETTER FROM PRESIDENT NYERERE

I enclose a copy of a message which the Prime Minister has received from the President of Tanzania about the forthcoming visit of the South African Prime Minister. I shall be grateful for your advice on a reply.

in box

DF

SECRET

Roger Bone, Esq.,
Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

SUBJECT PRIME MINISTER'S
PERSONAL MESSAGE
SERIAL No. F78AA/84

THE STATE HOUSE,
DAR ES SALAAM,
TANZANIA.

cc Ops
Master.

12th May 1984

Prime Minister Mrs. Margaret Thatcher,
10 Downing Street,
London, S.W.1.,
U.K.

Prime Minister.
We shall let you have
a reply. All ve/s

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Dear Mrs. Thatcher,

As you will shortly be having discussions about Southern Africa with Prime Minister Botha of South Africa, it occurred to me that the Tanzanian view of recent events in that area might be of interest to you. You may also find relevant the Communique issued at the end of the Front Line States' Summit Meeting held in Arusha at the end of April, a copy of which I am enclosing with this letter.

Our reaction to the Angolan/South African agreement on the withdrawal of South African troops from Angola, and to the Nkomati Accord between Mozambique and South Africa, is of course shaped by our implacable opposition to colonialism in Africa, and to apartheid. The priority we give to these matters, and the intensity of our feelings, are not shared by peoples and nations outside Africa, yet I know that successive British Governments - and you yourself - have condemned apartheid in clear terms, and have taken part in international efforts to bring South Africa's occupation of Namibia to an end. I therefore think that you will understand the anxiety with which we watch the reactions to recent events on the part of our friends in Europe and America, and our concern that these should not be such as to result in further damage to any of the Front Line States or the Liberation Movements.

Angola and Mozambique are independent sovereign states; they are active opponents of apartheid and of the South African occupation of Namibia. As a result they have for years been subjected to ever increasing South African military attacks and to South African organised, armed, and financed destabilisation activities. The suffering of their peoples, and the destruction of their economies, resulting from these South African activities have been almost beyond computation. And they have come on top of the economic problems which now face all Third World countries. In the case of Mozambique, years of drought and finally a cyclone have been additional difficulties.

The resulting burden has been more than any people, or any state, could bear. Angola and Mozambique have been forced to give way to force majeure - to aggression which they were powerless to defeat, and which the rest of the world was allowing to continue. In order to get South African troops out of Southern Angola, the Luanda Government has had to accept conditions which restrict its sovereign rights within its own territory. In order to get South Africa to promise not to repeat its military attacks on Mozambique and not to continue arming and supplying the M.N.R. bandits, the Mozambique Government has been forced to act as policeman for South Africa against the African National Congress and to change its policy as regards the economic boycott of South Africa.

We in Tanzania do not criticise Angola or Mozambique. On the contrary, we sympathise with both these free African countries. But we are concerned that their need to get a respite from South African aggression should not be used as an excuse for the reduction of the Sports Boycott or other pressures on South Africa. For racialism remains the same evil, and the same danger to international peace, that it has always been. And the South African occupation of Namibia remains as illegal and as oppressive as it has always been.

The Angolan agreement means that the South African troops have less far to go when Security Council Resolution 435 on Namibia is implemented; but the world still has to force South Africa to begin the implementation. The Nkomati Accord does not reduce the support which the African National Congress receives from the majority of the South African people, nor lessen the likelihood of counter-violence inside that country as the majority of the people try to resist the violence of apartheid and eventually to overthrow that evil.

Thus the real problems in Southern Africa have not been tackled, much less solved, by the Angolan and Mozambican agreements with South Africa. All that has happened is that South African aggression has inflicted a defeat upon two of its much weaker neighbours. There is no reason to suppose that South Africa will now voluntarily desist from either direct or covert attack upon other African states - or even from again attacking Angola and Mozambique. On the contrary, there are already strong indications of increasing pressure from South Africa on Botswana and Lesotho. Aggression, like other evils, grows stronger from what it feeds upon.

In the immediate aftermath of successful actions it is not unusual for the aggressors of this world to seek the approval of respected or powerful leaders, and in order to get it they are not usually unwilling to give assurances about their future behaviour. Hitler himself did this after each new bite into the map of Europe.

P.W. Botha is coming to Europe for that purpose now. He is seeking approval for his 'generosity and statesmanship' in withdrawing his troops from Angola for the time being - albeit on conditions. He is seeking approval for having promised not to continue aggressive actions against Mozambique - again on conditions. His purpose will be achieved if despite these actions he is accepted by you and other European leaders as a respected leader of a respectable country. I therefore take advantage of our friendship and the good relations between our two countries to express a hope. It is that you will be able to prevent Britain's usual courteous reception to foreign leaders from being misunderstood by indicating, both publicly and privately, Britain's strong opposition to South Africa's aggressive policies towards other African states, as well as to apartheid itself. And I hope that it will be possible for you to make a clear call for South Africa's immediate and unconditional compliance with Security Council Resolution 435 on Namibia.

This letter comes with my warm personal greetings and good wishes to you.

Yours sincerely,

Julius K. Nyerere