CHAPTER IV

UNITED NATIONS AND NAMIBIA

The settlement of Namibian question within the framework of United Nations was essential to obtain international recognition. The five Western countries informed South Africa in 1977 that "only a final settlement which is based upon the conditions of Security Council Resolution 385 (1976) can obtain international acceptance". 1 Since both the parties agreed to a negotiated settlement, it was necessary for UN to give its blessing to negotiations process.

Security Council passed Resolution 431 on July 27, 1978. This resolution took note of the Western proposal for a settlement and requested the Secretary-General of the UN to appoint a Special Representative for Namibia and to submit a report with recommendations for the implementation of the proposal in accordance with Security Council Resolution 385 (1976). 2 This meant that the UN had taken up the Contact Group's proposals and prepared detailed measures for their actual implementation. The 'Contact Group' played a


role in the continuing negotiation process. The five Western countries voted for it whereas Soviet Union abstained.³

Resolution 432 was also adopted in this meeting. This resolution declared that "the territorial integrity and unity of Namibia must be assured through the reintegration of Walvis Bay within its territory".⁴ South Africa was annoyed by it and reiterated its claim to Walvis Bay. The ambiguous dealing of Western powers helped in the success of previous negotiations. South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) was reassured that Walvis Bay would be part of independent Namibia. South Africa was allowed to believe that the disposition of the bay would be decided through bilateral negotiations between Pretoria and the government of independent Namibia, taken up at South African convenience and without UN pressure.⁵

3. It was supposed that Soviet Union would vote against the resolution which had taken note of the Western proposal. When the time came, the Soviet representative yielded to the pressures of the Front Line States (FLS) and abstained. Ibid.


Waldheim's Report:

United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim submitted his report to the Security Council to break the deadlock and to start the process of negotiations on August 30, 1978. This report was based on the observations of Martti Ahtisaari who had visited Namibia on August 6, 1978 on a sixteen day fact-finding mission.\(^6\) He assessed the practical requirements of the UN monitoring group. The recommendations proposed a UN Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG) consisting of a civilian component of 1,860 and a military one of 7,500. Both these figures were substantially higher than that envisaged by either SWAPO or South Africa. The civilian component was to assist the Special Representative in ensuring that the elections were free and fair and to cover the proposed 400 polling stations.\(^7\) The military component was to:

1. monitor the ceasefire, the restriction of South African and SWAPO troops to base, the phased withdrawal of all

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6. The UN Commissioner for Namibia, Martti Ahtisaari, relinquished his post and was appointed as Special Representative on Namibia to the UN Secretary-General. UN Document S/12827, August 29, 1978.

but 1,500 South African troops and the restriction of those 1,500 to specified locations;

2. prevent the infiltration of Namibia's borders;

3. monitor the demobilisation of citizen forces, commandos and ethnic forces and the dismantling of their command structure.  

The report made it clear that South Africa wanted to hold elections in December 1978 and because of this it wanted to shorten the transitional period. It left the final date of independence to be decided by the elected constituent assembly. It noted that the transitional period would start on the date of approval of this report by the Security Council and the elections would be held seven months later. The report envisaged that UNTAG would be in place for about a year as there was no specific period of time for the elected constituent assembly to adopt a constitution and go for independence.

Walheim's report was greeted by SWAPO. It proposed to sign a formal ceasefire with the South African regime to initiate the transitional period. But South Africa rejected


9. Ibid.
the need for such a large force to supervise elections. Because it had no faith on the neutrality of UNTAG. It opposed Secretary-General's timetable for the elections. It was interested to hold elections before the end of 1978. In a letter to the Secretary-General, the South African Foreign Minister R.F. Botha wrote,

Two years ago, the leaders of the Territory told the South African Government that they were ready for independence and that they wanted it at the end of 1978. It is something we cannot deny them. South Africa at that time accepted that South West Africa would become independent on 31 December 1978. It is something which cannot be delayed any longer. No one has the right to thwart the will of the people.10

The reason to hold elections before the end of 1978 was not to give time to SWAPO to organise itself for elections. The longer SWAPO organised itself for the elections, the harder it would be for the DTA to form government at independence.11 They proposed to shorten the time-table for the transitional electoral period to four months for that reason. In a letter to Waldheim, the South African Foreign Minister wrote that the Pretorian regime had accepted the


Contact Group's proposals 'nothing more, nothing less'.

He stated, "We are prepared to adhere to that decision but not to go along with interpretations inconsistent with the proposal."  

The South African Prime Minister, B.J. Vorster, resigned on September 20, 1978. That time he formally rejected the Waldheim's report on implementation of Contact Group's proposals. He announced that South Africa would go ahead with internal elections in Namibia in December 1978 'in order to establish unequivocally who had the right to speak for the people of South West Africa'.

United Nations Plan:

Secretary-General Waldheim's report was endorsed by Security Council Resolution 435 on September 29, 1978. This formally converted the Western Plan into a United Nations Plan and was known as the 'UN Plan'. This

12. Quoted in Peter H. Katjavivi, n.8, p.122.

13. Quoted in Ibid.


15. Appendix 3(V).
resolution was repudiated by Prime Minister Botha on the very next day. Hence, the Foreign Ministers of five Western countries reached in Pretoria on October 14, 1978 to negotiate with South African officials. This high level discussion came to an end with a compromise on October 19, 1978. The South Africans, while sticked to their plan of elections in Namibia, agreed to reopen negotiations on the supervision by the United Nations.\(^{16}\) The Foreign Ministers of Western countries thought that they would be able to persuade Botha to drop the internal elections plan in Namibia. But they did not succeed. In this context, David Owen, the British Foreign Minister, stated,

> There was no way that we could stop Pieter Botha... he was going ahead with this internal settlement. Therefore the only thing we could salvage was an agreement that we would not rule out UN elections and that he internal elections would be done by him and would have no relevance.\(^{17}\)

It was also decided that South Africa would persuade the constituent assembly to agree to the UN Plan. This

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proposal was just the opposite of the original proposals endorsed by the UN Security Council. This decision to hold elections in Namibia in December 1978 by South Africa "amounted to a de facto rejection of the UN plan and created serious credibility problems for the West". 18

This was a major setback of the UN's attempt to settle the problem through negotiations and defeat of Western diplomacy. The agreement encouraged the Pretorian regime to promote Turnhalle members as elected leaders although the Western countries declared that they would not recognise the elections. It became clear that in the face of open defiance of South Africa, the Western countries were not ready to take any stringent action like sanctions against South Africa. 19

This agreement was rejected by SWAPO and the African countries in the UN. On November 13, 1978 the UN Security Council condemned South Africa's decision to go ahead with


internal elections. The 'Contact Group' abstained. Western credibility with the African states was damaged by this vote.

The elections were held for the constituent assembly in Namibia against the wish of UN, SWAPO and other smaller parties from December 4 to 8, 1978. Even the white Federal Party did not take part in the elections. The intention of South Africa was to test the potential of Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) in Namibia even without the participation of SWAPO. This was just to know the position before, in case the UN sponsored election would be held in Namibia. As the result was encouraging, South Africa transformed the constituent assembly into a national assembly and


gave the new body both legislative and some limited executive powers to rule over Namibia.24

South Africa also pressurised the Western countries and the Secretary-General of the UN to include this internal government formed by DTA in the negotiations process. The DTA got some legitimacy when its delegates were received by the Western countries and it was allowed to open offices in the Western countries including the United States, France, West Germany and Britain.25 The Namibian nationalists rejected to participate in the national assembly. For them "participating in the Assembly would amount to de facto recognition of this election, and would be tantamount to political suicide for any nationalist movement".26


Attempts to Implement UN Plan:

There were repeated attempts by the 'Contact Group' and the United Nations to implement the UN Plan after the elections for the constituent assembly in Namibia. But South Africa created hurdles in it by raising new issues or problems time and again. In January 1979, Martti Ahtisaari, the UN Special Representative, visited Namibia with Lt-General Prem Chand, the Commander of UNTAG's military component. He started consultations on the requirements for the deployment of UNTAG. In February 1979, the UN Secretary-General sent ceasefire letter to be signed by SWAPO and South Africa. The intention was to initiate implementation of the UN Plan. Ahtisaari was hopeful that the signing of a ceasefire between South Africa and SWAPO was possible by the end of February.27.

The ceasefire was scheduled to start on March 15, 1979. But the South Africans objected to the arrangements for monitoring SWAPO fighters and the composition of the UNTAG

military contingent.\textsuperscript{28} The ceasefire letters were not signed by the concerned parties. Both SWAPO and South Africa requested that the UNTAG military component should be from countries which were friendly or at least not hostile to them. The publications of a report in February by the UN Secretary-General setting a ceasefire date for March 15, 1979 was taken as an opportunity by South Africa to ignore many previously agreed conditions and to start 'a campaign to eliminate SWAPO from future arrangements'.\textsuperscript{29}

SWAPO clearly stated that its 2,500 guerrilla forces should be confined to bases inside Namibia.\textsuperscript{30} In its comments and recommendations to the UN Secretary-General, it mentioned,

[The] SWAPO guerrilla army, being mobile has no permanently structured bases. Therefore, for the purpose of implementing UN Plan, it has been


\textsuperscript{29} Paragraph 11 of UN Secretary-General's report talked of restricting SWAPO armed forces to bases inside Namibia and in neighbouring countries where they would not be monitored by UN forces. In Paragraph 12 it was requested to Angola and Zambia to ensure that the transitional arrangements were respected. Paragraph 13 mentioned about the assurances received from the neighbouring countries in relation to it. Geisa Maria Rocha, n. 25, p. 111.

agreed upon during the negotiations between SWAPO and the Five that specific bases will have to be identified to which SWAPO armed forces would be confined.... SWAPO will provide military liaison officers in order to ensure effective coordination and consultation with the military component of UNTAG.31

But South Africa insisted that SWAPO forces would be confined to bases outside Namibia in neighbouring countries and be monitored there.32 This brought the UN plan to the verge of collapse. This idea of South Africa was in contrast to the report of UN Secretary-General.

The report of the Secretary-General of UN was in all respect similar to Western plan. But South Africa told that it was a deviation from the provisions of Western plan.33 Official western sources stressed that it was made clear to South Africa in February 1978 that the monitoring of SWAPO bases in neighbouring countries by UNTAG personnel could not

31. SWAPO's Comments and Recommendations to the UN Secretary-General on the Implementation of the UN Plan (Luanda), February 10, 1979.


33. Interview with Peter H. Katjavivi, Vice-Chancellor, University of Namibia, Windhoek, Namibia, November 23, 1994.
be guaranteed. Military operations against SWAPO bases in Angola by the South African military during March came at a time when the negotiations were at an extremely delicate stage. In March 1979, South Africa complained about this SWAPO bases inside and outside Namibia to Ahtisaari when he visited South Africa. After their summit on Namibia in Luanda in March 1979, the Front Line States (FLS) demanded to free SWAPO bases outside Namibia from UN monitoring. It created hurdles in the negotiations process of Namibia.

The General Assembly was convened to discuss Namibian situation in May 1979. The policy of South Africa was attacked heavily in this session. The resolution called upon the Security Council to convene urgently to take enforcement measures against South Africa under Chapter VII. The West abstained expecting that the visit of the British envoy, Richard Luce, to South Africa and Namibia might give


35. Andre du Pisani, n.27, p.5.

36. Geisa Maria Rocha, n.25, p.111.
a new thrust to the negotiations. 37

Proposal for a DMZ:

South Africa refused to accept the proposal that SWAPO had its forces permanently inside Namibia who could be confined to bases within that country. They also feared that SWAPO forces outside Namibia might cross into it during the electoral process. Waldheim's report was not accepted by South Africa. Therefore, the 'Contact Group' and UN proposed the creation of a demilitarised zone (DMZ) along the Namibia/Angola border. The British government played a leading role in initiating this DMZ proposals and contacting South African government with the intention of winning its approval for it.

The proposal for DMZ was the outcome of James Murray's visit to South Africa. 38 It was designed to meet the objections of South Africa. This proposal of DMZ was first

37. This resolution was adopted on May 31, 1979 by 118 votes in favour and sixteen abstentions. Andre du Pisani, n.27, p.5.

38. James Murray was appointed special envoy for the five Western countries in July 1979. He was the permanent representative of Britain to the UN in Geneva. He visited South Africa in August 1979. His appointment was seen as "a concerted western attempt to end the acrimony engendered by Waldheim's ceasefire plan". Free Elections in Namibia, n.34, p.5.
suggested by President Neto of Angola in July 1979, when Secretary-General of UN Waldheim visited Angola. It was mentioned in Neto's proposal that a fifty mile wide demilitarized zone would be set up on both sides of the Angolan-Namibian border. Joint UN-Angola and UN-Zambian police forces would monitor the area in order to prevent SWAPO guerrillas from penetrating Namibia during the elections and to weaken the forces of the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA).

But the idea of DMZ, which was evolved finally by Western powers and South Africa without consulting SWAPO, was totally different from that of President Neto. This new idea was strategically more advantageous to South Africa. It imposed severe restrictions on SWAPO. It provided for South Africa to retain "selected locations" in the DMZ, each consisting of a military base, its supporting airfield, its population centre, and the "immediate environment", lands


40. Since 1975 UNITA was opposed to the Angolan government. For details see Robert Rotberg, Suffer the Future (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980).

41. For details see Free Elections in Namibia, n.34, pp.6-8 and Namibia, the Facts (London: International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, 1980), p.66.
within a radius of five kilometres from the perimeter of the installation or population centre. The plan proposed for the presence of UN troops in the DMZ. On the other hand, it did not propose to have SWAPO bases in that DMZ.42

SWAPO was further pressurised in the Geneva "simultaneous consultations"43 held from November 13 to 19, 1979. This Geneva ‘simultaneous consultations' was called by the UN Secretary-General. It tried to accommodate South Africa. The negotiating parties and the FLS were invited to it. "Internal parties" of Namibia were also invited to this negotiations due to the pressure of South Africa. This gave credibility and recognition to the structures created by South Africa in Namibia.44 In the process South Africa wanted to increase the credibility and acceptance of DTA in the international negotiations process.

The interpretation of the concept of DMZ by South Africa was different from that of SWAPO although both of

42. Andre du Pisani, n.27, pp.4-7.
43. During the Geneva talks, South Africa detected "better appreciation of the Republic's position from the United Nations officials". For details see Namibia/SWA Prospectus, n.1, p.32.
44. Geisa Maria Rocha, n.25, p.114.
them accepted it. South Africa stipulated that agreement must be reached on a number of points, including the number of South African bases in the DMZ, the disarmament of SWAPO personnel, and SWAPO's abandonment of all bases inside Namibia. This stand of South Africa was opposed by Sam Nujoma in Geneva on November 16, 1979. To SWAPO this would give undue advantage to South African army which had occupied Namibia illegally.

General Prem Chand, newly appointed Commander of UNTAG, visited Namibia, South Africa and the FLS in February 1980 to consult on the DMZ proposals. A report was published by the United Nations Secretary-General on the visit and presented to South Africa for consideration. June 15, 1980 was suggested as the target date for the implementation of the UN proposals.

Despite provocations, aggressions, delays and demands, SWAPO was determined to implement the UN plan. As a result, it further conceded twenty South African bases and five of

45. Andre du Pisani, n.27, p.6.
46. For details see Namibia, the Facts, n.41, p.66.
UNTAG's seven battalions to be deployed in the DMZ. In a letter, dated June 20, 1980, the Secretary-General of UN accepted most of the demands of South Africa. According to his letter, SWAPO would be allowed seven selected locations in Angola and Zambia. South Africa's proposal for twenty bases in the DMZ was accepted.

The governments of Angola and Zambia assured that there would be no infiltration of SWAPO personnel from their territories after the ceasefire. Five of UNTAG's seven battalions would be deployed in the DMZ. It was assured to South Africa that after the acceptance of the DMZ and the implementation of Resolution 435 (1978), there would be no SWAPO base in Namibia. It was mentioned that the UN plan would only include the parties involved in the Western settlement plan. It would also observe complete impartiality in the implementation of the plan. In spite of all these, if South Africa would not be ready to believe the assurances given to it and to accept the proposals, then "one must assume", as a Western diplomat said, "they are

trying to buy more time or else are not serious about going ahead with Resolution 435".\(^{51}\)

Despite the fulfilment of its demands, South Africa, after two months of receiving Secretary-General's letter, complained about the partiality of UN to SWAPO. It also complained about the violent activities of SWAPO which took place due to the delay in the implementation of the plan. Moreover, South Africa demanded to include the leadership of Namibia in all future negotiations. This demand was meant to include its protege, DTA, in the negotiations.\(^{52}\)

The victory of Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe created doubt in South Africa about the ability of DTA to defeat SWAPO. The victory of SWAPO in Namibia would be a threat to the political survival of Botha.\(^{53}\) So Botha regime thought of taking heavy military action on SWAPO bases and stopping all international negotiations to set itself right politically inside South Africa. In 1979 and 1980, South African army

51. Even to the minds of Western countries this letter of Secretary-General went far ahead to satisfy the demands of South Africa. *Namibia, the Facts*, n.41, p.67.

52. Interview with Penny Uukunde, SWAPO activist, Windhoek, Namibia, November 22, 1994.

took many military actions in southern Angola in the name of 'pre-emptive strikes' or 'hot pursuit operations'. In June 1980, many army actions were carried in the name of 'operation smokeshell'. According to the government-controlled South African television news, this involved the biggest combined operation by South African forces since World War II. 54

The Security Council adopted Resolution 475 on June 27, 1980 condemning South Africa for its aggression in Angola.55 It demanded the withdrawal of military forces from Angola. In a letter, dated June 30, 1980, the permanent representative of South Africa to the UN informed the President of Security Council that the combat team engaged in the operation against SWAPO had commenced its return to base.56

In February 1980, Zambia complained about the attack of South African aircraft and troops on its territory. It


called for an urgent meeting of the Security Council in a letter, dated April 8, 1980. The Security Council condemned this aggression of South Africa on Zambia and demanded the withdrawal of South African forces from Zambia in its Resolution 466 of April 11, 1980.57

In the meantime, the negotiations process went on slowly. South Africa provided excuse for delay in claiming that the UN wrongly recognised SWAPO as the sole and authentic representative of Namibian people. The General Assembly was the only body of the UN which had recognised SWAPO. It was known to South Africa that the resolutions of the General Assembly were not binding on the member states.58 Pretoria assumed this stance even though the 'Contact Group' made clear that its efforts were under the aegis of the Security Council.59

58. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Information of South Africa, in a letter, dated March 10, 1981, to the Secretary-General of UN, stated, "In any event, resolutions of the General Assembly except for certain minor procedural matters, are not binding on any Member State". See General Assembly Document A/36/124, March 11, 1981, paragraph 2.
Pre-implementation Talks:

This kind of reaction of South Africa was a stalling device in the negotiations process. As a response to this kind of reaction, SWAPO organised an International Conference in Solidarity with the People of Namibia in Paris from September 11 to 13, 1980. The final document of Paris Conference noted that the five Western countries had failed to bring a speedy transfer of power to the people of Namibia in accordance with the Security Council Resolution 435. It demanded to put an end to the mediating role of five Western countries. The declaration stated,

The Western Powers enabled the South African regime to defy the plan, by once again failing to exercise pressure on it, and by embarking on protracted talks which tended to undermine the integrity of United Nations resolutions and the status of SWAPO, and the authority of the Council for Namibia. They enabled the South African regime, under the cover of these talks, to consolidate its hold over the Territory, to create puppet institutions and to undermine the territorial integrity of Namibia. The increased militarization of the Territory and its use as the base for aggression against independent African States has, in fact, heightened the threat to international peace and security.60

SWAPO, with the support of non-aligned countries, decided to ask for a special meeting of the Security Council not later than October 15, 1980 to impose comprehensive mandatory sanctions, including an oil embargo, against South Africa in order to enforce its compliance with Security Council Resolutions 385 (1976) and 435 (1978).61

The Secretary-General of United Nations sent a UN mission to South Africa in October 1980. He promised to solve the controversy of the impartiality of UN and the inclusion of the internal parties like DTA in the negotiations process after the signing of ceasefire, when all the parties would be in equal position. This would put an end to the violence created by SWAPO. In spite of it, the "question of the creation of trust" was raised during the visit of UN mission by South Africa.62 No dates were fixed for the implementation of the UN plan. On the other hand, SWAPO's request for a meeting of the Security Council was avoided and another meeting, described as "pre-implementation talks", was scheduled to be held in Geneva in

61. Ibid.
January 1981.63

The strategy of South Africa was to give certain legitimacy to DTA as a negotiating partner in this 'pre-implementation talks'. SWAPO opposed this idea of South Africa. A compromise was achieved as a result of which the DTA, AKTUR and some other politically insignificant groups were included in the South African delegation. The delegates assembled in Geneva on January 7-14, 1981 under the auspices of the UN.64 It was attempted to bring South Africa and SWAPO together in order to iron out obstacles and "to secure from agreement on a date for a ceasefire to begin implementing Resolution 435 (1978) and to achieve Namibia's independence before the end of 1981".65 It was interesting to note that Brian Urquhart, the Under Secretary-General, who chaired the meetings, offered for the UN to take steps to break its ties with SWAPO in exchange for South Africa's agreement on a

63. Ibid.

64. The South African and Namibian delegates were led by South African Administrator-General, Danie Hough, and President of SWAPO, Sam Nujoma, respectively. The meetings were attended by observers representing the Front Line States, the 'Contact Group', the OAU and Nigeria. Namibia: A Direct United Nations Responsibility, n.30, p.219.

65. Ibid., p.219.
date for a ceasefire.66

In this 'pre-implementation meeting', South Africa tried "to promote the DTA and encourage direct talks between it and SWAPO, thus 'Namibianising' issue".67 On January 13, 1981 in the middle of the meeting, Danie Hough, South African Administrator General in Namibia, announced that it was "premature to proceed with the discussion of the setting of a date for implementation".68 South Africa and DTA accused the UN of being biased in favour of SWAPO. In reality South Africa had considerable economic and military presence in Namibia. So it could easily influence the voters in Namibia. Sam Nujoma, in this context, said,

It is absurd that the colonial power which in actual fact in responsible for organizing the elections should be the one to demand impartiality from the United Nations. It is rather that the United Nations and the international community should require assurances from South Africa".69


67. Peter H. Katjavivi, n.8, p.124.


South African delegation complained that the UN had disqualified itself from supervising free and fair elections in Namibia because of its recognition of SWAPO. Brian Urquhart rejected these allegations and urged the parties not to lose sight of the main objective of the meeting. But South African delegation continued to question the United Nations' partiality. SWAPO reiterated its willingness to sign a ceasefire and agree to a date for implementing Resolution 435(1978). Therefore, this meeting failed to achieve its main objective.

As a result of the collapse of this Geneva 'pre-implementation meeting', South Africa started aggression against the FLS in an intensified manner in the beginning of 1981. South African military started the attack on an unit of the Angolan army stationed in the Kunene province on January 15, 1981, the day Geneva talks finally broke down. Major General Charles Lloyd, who was commander of South African forces in Namibia, warned that South African Defence Force (SADF) would step up its operations against SWAPO bases in Angola even if this meant clashing with Angolan

government forces.71

After the collapse of Geneva talks South Africa increased the number of troops in Namibia. By March 1981, following the dispatch of 20,000 more men as troop reinforcements and of armoured cars and howitzers, the number rose to 100,000.72 "In addition, South Africa has raised the so-called multi-racial 'Namibian' army and police force... the South West African Territory Force (SWATF) and the South West African Police (SWAP)".73 This massive militarisation in Namibia reflected the growing threat posed to South Africa by the liberation struggle of SWAPO.74 There was also increase in the aggression against neighbouring independent African states. These kinds of developments went on increasing despite the repeated condemnation of the

71. Apartheid's Army in Namibia, n.54, p.48.

72. UN Security Council Resolution 385 was adopted in January 1976. At the beginning of 1976, when South Africa invaded Angola, there were estimated to be 16,000 South African troops in Namibia. Sunday Telegraph (London), March 22, 1981 and for details see General Assembly Document A/AC.131/L.223, November 10, 1981.


74. Interview with Peter H. katjavivi, n.33.
majority of the members of the UN. In the process, South Africa had shown no sign of relaxing its military hold over Namibia.

On the other hand, the UN General Assembly in its March 1981 special session adopted ten resolutions condemning South Africa and calling the Security Council to impose comprehensive sanctions. The five Western countries abstained on all these resolutions. In April, they vetoed four Security Council resolutions calling for sanctions, oil embargo and measures to strengthen arms embargo against South Africa.75 By the end of 1981, there was a threat to the peace and security in the entire region.

Western Powers' Veto to Security Council Resolutions:

On April 10, 1981, the African countries requested an urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider the question of Namibia in the light of the persistent refusal of South Africa to comply with the resolutions of the Security Council.76 The intention was to apply more effective pressures and to embarrass the West. On April 22, 1981, the

75. Cyrus Vance, n.21, p.279.
Security Council started the debate on Namibia. Niger, Tunisia and Uganda, the three African members of the Security Council, sponsored five draft resolutions to meet the challenge created by South Africa.\(^{77}\)

But the draft resolutions were vetoed by Britain, France and the USA saying that the sanctions would finish all the prospects for future negotiations with South Africa.\(^{78}\) In this context, the representative of France said,

>We believe that the adoption of such measures would run counter to the goal we seek, which is the resumption and intensification of negotiations designed to ensure that Namibia accedes peacefully to independence.\(^{79}\)

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77. The imposition of mandatory economic and political sanctions, including an oil and arms embargo, was put forward in Draft Resolution S/14459. The economic and political sanctions affecting all aspects of diplomatic, consular and trade relations were covered in Draft Resolution S/14460. Draft Resolution S/14461 asked for the imposition of a comprehensive oil embargo that would restrict the direct and indirect supply of petroleum and petroleum products to South Africa and occupied Namibia. An arms embargo, covering the sale and transfer of weapons, ammunition, military and paramilitary equipment, and vehicles and their spare parts, was covered by Draft Resolution S/14462. A committee of the Security Council to monitor the implementation of the substantive resolutions was proposed to be established in Draft Resolution S/14463. See Security Council Document S/PV.2276, April 29, 1981.


79. Ibid., p.17.
The Western countries planned for a fresh round of negotiations with South Africa. The representative of the USA confirmed this by saying,

We have already undertaken consultations in Africa and we have met at a high level with other members of the Contact Group in London. With these actions we continue the process begun years ago by our predecessors. We will continue that process in the next few days with discussions of the Namibia problem at the ministerial level with our colleagues in the Contact Group in Rome. The next step will be the preparation of specific proposals which we would hope to discuss with the parties concerned in the near future.... Following the meeting of the Contact Group at London last week, my Government participated in a joint statement that Security Council Resolution 435 (1978) continues to provide a solid basis for a transition to an independent, stable Namibia... It is for that reason that we could not support the draft resolutions. We do not believe that economic sanction are an effective means of influencing political policy.80

After the voting, the leader of the African countries in the Security Council, Ambassador Olara A. Otunnu of Uganda, expressed the frustration of the majority of the members of the UN in the policy of West to rescue South

80. Ibid., pp.22-3.
Africa from isolation and punishment. He expressed his dissatisfaction and stated,

What have we witnessed today? The weight of those votes has been cast not to reinforce the global consensus, not to facilitate the independence of the people of Namibia but, instead, to strengthen the hand of the illegal occupying power, to rebuff the peaceful plea of the people of Namibia... (a negative vote) is to give comfort to the forces that have been intransigent and that have flouted every decision of this Council.

The Organisation of African Unity (OAU) backed this call for sanctions although it was disastrous for many countries of southern Africa. As it was a strategy chalked out of desperation instead of strengthen, the OAU could not decide the future course of action once it was vetoed in the Security Council. It hesitated to call for an emergency

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81. Ugandan Ambassador Olara A. Otunnu said, "We have indicated to this Council that it has a responsibility under Article 41 of the Charter. We have indicated the measures to be taken by this Council-peaceful measures - because we are implementing the first principle of the Lusaka Manifesto and peaceful pressure. We have not asked the Council to send any military contingent to South Africa - even though we know that some members of this Council have sent military contingents to intervene in instances of foreign occupation that have lasted for more than three years... we did not come to this Council to ask that an ounce of blood be spilled... we came to this Council asking for peaceful methods of change; asking that peaceful pressure be applied in order to dislodge the illegal occupying power from Namibia." Ibid, pp.28-30.

82. Ibid., p.31.
special session of the General Assembly which was supposed to be held immediately after the failure in the Security Council. But it was decided in June 1981 OAU Summit of Nairobi to convene the emergency special session of the General Assembly in September 1981.

**Emergency Special Session of the General Assembly:**

The emergency special session of the General Assembly on Namibia was held on September 3-14, 1981. The resolution condemned South Africa for its continued illegal occupation of Namibia and firmly rejected the manoeuvres of the West aimed at undermining the international consensus embodied in Security Council Resolution 435 (1978). It called on the countries to supply financial and military assistance to SWAPO and FLS in order to enable them to defend their sovereignty and territorial integrity against the renewed acts of aggression by South Africa.

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83. This provision had been clearly mentioned in the resolution of the General Assembly adopted in March 1981. See General Assembly Document A/RES/35/227 J, March 6, 1981.

84. Geisa Maria Rocha, n.25, p.129.

85. The resolution was adopted on September 14, 1981 by 114 votes to none with twenty-five abstentions. See General Assembly Document A/RES/ES-8/2, September 14, 1981.
Instead of passing a 'Uniting for Peace' resolution in the General Assembly, the Security Council was asked to impose sanctions on South Africa. The Soviet Union wanted to pass such resolution in the Security Council. As a result, African-sponsored resolution was put forward in the General Assembly accordingly to get the support of the Soviet Union in the Security Council. But this provision of the resolution weakened it. It shifted the responsibility and authority to Security Council where it was exposed to the veto of West.86

This resolution called upon all states "in view of the threat to international peace and security posed by South Africa, to impose against that country comprehensive mandatory sanctions in accordance with the provisions of the Charter".87 It strongly urged states to cease, individually and collectively, all dealings with South Africa in order to isolate it politically, economically, militarily and culturally.88 This voluntary boycott of South Africa would be

86. The original draft resolution contained in Document A/ES-8/L.1/Rev.1 of September 10, 1981 strongly urged all states to impose sanctions under Chapter VII. See Geisa Maria Rocha, n.25, pp.133-4.


88. Ibid., paragraph 14.
monitored by the UN Council for Namibia.\textsuperscript{89} The deputy delegate of Canada expressed the dissatisfaction of the 'Contact Group' in relation to this resolution. He said,

\begin{quote}
Our objective remains to secure a peaceful internationally recognized settlement. We do not believe that the resolution before us will contribute to that objective.\textsuperscript{90}
\end{quote}

The resolution reflected the suspicion of African countries that the 'Contact Group' would not take care of their problems and pressurise South Africa to solve these problems. Most of the African countries, including the sponsorers of the resolution, could not meet the requirements of the resolution because of their dependence on South Africa.\textsuperscript{91} But still they proposed for such comprehensive mandatory sanctions.

The Western countries were pressurised by the majority of the UN members. To divert the attention, they reported progress on the negotiations. The US administration claimed

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{89} Ibid., paragraph 16.
\item \textsuperscript{91} Interview with C.G. Hennings, Director, Documentation Centre, University of Durban-Westville, Durban, South Africa, November 15, 1994.
\end{itemize}
substantive progress in the negotiations on the question of Namibia. They were optimistic because the South African regime agreed to accept Security Council Resolution 435 (1978) as the basis for a Namibia settlement\(^92\) and the new proposed constitutional guarantees for the whites.\(^93\) This led to a series of activities in the United Nations Council for Namibia.

**United Nations Council for Namibia:**

The United Nations Council for Namibia held its plenary meeting at Bangkok from May 21 to 25, 1984.\(^94\) The meeting condemned the South African regime for its repressive policy, practice of apartheid and violation of human rights in Namibia.\(^95\) The detention and imprisonment of SWAPO freedom fighters.


\(^94\). It was held in pursuance of the General Assembly Resolution 38/36C of December 1, 1983. General Prem Tinsulanonda, Prime Minister of Thailand, inaugurated this meeting. General Tinsulanonda drew the attention of the international community to the fact that the question of Namibia had been under consideration by the General Assembly since 1946 and since remained one of the unresolved problem of the world organisation. See *Extraordinary Plenary Meetings of the United Nations Council for Namibia, Bangkok, Thailand, 21-25 May 1984* (New York, 1985), p.26.

fighters was denounced and the immediate and unconditional release of them was demanded.

As per the request of the General Assembly, the Council of Namibia reviewed and reported on the social conditions, political developments, military situation and activities of foreign economic interests operating in Namibia. In relation to social conditions, the Report stated,

the division of population into ethnic groups is the principal means by which the South African regime seeks to perpetuate white power, prevent unity among black Namibians and maintains a pool of cheap black labour for South African and other foreign interests operating in the territory as well as local white businesses. In addition, the African population has been forced into the poverty-stricken 'homelands' which serves as reservoirs of cheap labour to be exploited by white minority and transnational corporations operating illegally in Namibia, particularly in the so-called 'Police Zone'.

On the political developments, the Report wrote,

the struggle for national liberation and independence waged by SWAPO has the popular support of the Namibia people. South Africa's attempts to consolidate its illegal occupation of Namibia through the creation of illegal institutions inside the territory and the detention and repres-

sion of Namibian nationalists have failed to weaken the determination of the Namibian people to rid themselves of the illegal South African occupation.97

The Report, on "the military situation in and relating to Namibia," said,

a variety of military, para-military and police units are deployed in Namibia to strengthen South Africa's illegal occupation and the apartheid system. These include 'counter-insurgency forces', which comprise of the permanent force, the citizen's force, national servicemen, commandos, and various paramilitary police forces; conventional forces (army, navy and air forces); and 'support forces' (commandos, logistical support and service units, medical corps etc.). The size of the South African force in Namibia is generally estimated 100,000 approximately one soldier to every 12 members of the Namibian population. The actual number of troops increases considerably when preparations are made for military attacks on neighbouring Angola. Before each of these acts of aggression, additional troops are mobilized and moved in to the territory.98

In relation to the "activities of foreign economic interests


operating in Namibia", the Report stated,

the foreign economic interests involved in the exploration of Namibian resources include some of the world's largest corporations and financial institutions from South Africa, Western Europe and North America. This report of the United Nations Council for Namibia drew the attention of the international community over the political, social and economic repression of the blacks of Namibia by the South African regime upon the strength and use of its naked armed might in total disregard of the United Nations and the international community. About the role of the United Nations Council for Namibia, therefore, David F. Gonzales said,

through the years, the United Nations Council for Namibia has carried out a praise-worthy task that highlights the interests of the international community in the present status and future inde-

99. The Geographic Distribution of Affiliates of Transnational Corporations in Namibia including Affiliates of Single and Joint Ventures was as follows: Canada 7, France 6, Federal Republic of Germany 5, Hong Kong 3, Italy 2, Netherlands 5, South Africa 197, Spain 1, Switzerland 3, United Kingdom 73, United States 33, and Total 335. See Report of Standing Committee II of the United Nations Council for Namibia - Activities for Foreign Economic Interests Operating in Namibia (United Nations, 1984).

100. Ibid., p.3.
And the Bangkok Declaration stated,

The United Nations Council for Namibia, for its part, is determined to keep the question of Namibia in the forefront of international attention in order for the territory to achieve independence without further delay. It resolves to take advantage of every opportunity in every forum to remind the international community of the unimaginable plight of the Namibian people to mobilize support for their deliverance from this ordeal without having to countenance further prevarication and duplicity on the part of the Pretoria regime.

The seminar, held at Montreal, Canada from July 23 to 27, 1984, paid tributes to the historic and courageous struggle of the people of Namibia under the leadership of SWAPO. It observed that the day was not far off when the people of Namibia would be able to regain their independence despite all the obstacles to it.


103. It affirmed, "Namibia is a direct responsibility of the United Nations and condemns all attempts by South Africa to bypass the United Nations through puppet institutions or so-called regional settlements." Seminar in North America on the Efforts by the International Community to End South Africa's Illegal Occupa-
Campaign for Sanctions:

In 1985, the pro-sanctions camp got an upper hand putting the anti-sanctions camp at the back seat for their intensified campaign. The call for sanctions was heard in many international forums and the national deliberations of most of the countries. By that time the US Congress started discussing a sanctions package. Canada placed 'limited but muscular economic sanctions' on South Africa, and France suspended new investment'.

At a summit meeting for Commonwealth Countries, held at Nassau in Bahamas in October 1985, it was decided to defer the introduction of sanctions and to establish an Eminent Persons Group (EPG) to visit South Africa and explore the possibilities of establishing a non-racial representative government by negotiations. The EPG was initially well...

...Continued...


received by the South African government. It was allowed to consult all shades of opinion and held talks with Nelson Mandela in prison and with other ANC leaders in Lusaka. The EPG seemed to have been making significant progress when discussion with South African government was abruptly abort-
ed by raids on alleged ANC bases in Botswana, Zimbabwe and Zambia, launched by South African forces in May 1986. With the failure of the EPG's mission to South Africa, increasing international pressure was built up on both the Commonwealth and the European Economic Community (EEC) to impose wide-ranging sanctions against South Africa.

The champion of this "no-sanction-business" was Britain's Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, who observed to-

106. The European Community decided at its June 1981 meeting in Paris that 'in the next three months, the Community will enter into consultation with the other industrialized countries on further measures which might be needed, covering in particular a ban on new investments, the import of coal, iron, steel and gold coins from South Africa'. The Community agreed to stall action till September on the British plea that Pretoria should be given one more chance to negotiate reforms. Transcript of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's Press Conference following the European Community Summit in the Hague on June 27, 1986 (New Delhi: British High Commission), cited in Anirudha Gupta, "Sanctions Against South Africa: Some Issues and Implications", India Quarterly (New Delhi), July-September 1986, p.274.

wards the close of the Commonwealth Meeting that sanctions would only harm the blacks and FLS. Therefore, she would not like to be accused of causing 'greater hardship to the people of South Africa'.\(^\text{108}\) Thatcher also warned that imposition of sanctions would hurt the British economy as well as render some 250,000 British workers jobless. In addition to giving a new angle to the sanction debate, she picked up this theme to impress British voters.\(^\text{109}\)

This stand of Thatcher in London Commonwealth Meeting on August 3-6, 1986 was attacked by Canada, Australia, India, Zimbabwe, Bahamas and Zambia, the other six members of Commonwealth. The fruitless visit to South Africa by British Foreign Secretary, Geoffrey Howe, in late August 1986, described by Lord Fenner Brockway as "a colossal humiliation".\(^\text{110}\) On the eve of his departure for London, Australia's Prime Minister, Bob Hawke, asserted that "peremptory dismissal" of Geoffrey Howe's mission would intensify pressure in Europe for effective measures against Preto-

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108. The Statesman (Delhi), August 5, 1986.
110. The Times (London), September 5, 1986.
The Canadian Prime Minister, Brian Mulroney, was more forthright and called for a Commonwealth initiative on sanctions. As a result, despite British reservations, the Commonwealth Mini Summit agreed to initiate a package of economic sanctions against South Africa. These included a ban on all new bank loans to the South African public and private sectors; a ban on the import of uranium, coal, iron and steel, and withdrawal of all consular facilities in South Africa, except for their own nationals or third countries to whom they rendered consular service.112

The British government agreed to impose limited sanctions on a voluntary basis, i.e., a ban on new investment, a moratorium on the promotion of tourism to South Africa and acceptance of any EEC decision to ban imports from South Africa.113 Stronger measures were taken by many other countries, especially in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe.

111. The Times, August 1, 1986.
112. For the full text of the Communique see Indian Express (Delhi), August 6, 1986.
113. Ibid.
some of whom had total embargoes.\textsuperscript{114}

Backed by such impressive steps in favour of sanctions, the Eighth Non-aligned Summit at Harare, held in September 1986, unanimously adopted a charter of economic measures against South Africa.\textsuperscript{115} The range of sanctions was extended to cover vital sectors of the South African economy. For the first time, Non-aligned Movement (NAM) agreed to work out a plan of action to support the FLS because of their total dependence on South Africa for supply routes, transport and energy.\textsuperscript{116} It established an AFRICA (Action For Resisting Invasion Colonialism and Apartheid) Fund under the chairmanship of India to assist the FLS to enforce against South Africa and to cope up with any retaliatory measures by the Pretoria regime. It strongly condemned the prolonged illegal occupation of Namibia by South Africa and outrightly rejected the linkage of Namibian independence to the withdrawal of the Cuban troops from Angola. It also decided to set up an eight-nation team to attempt persuading the gov-


\textsuperscript{115}. See \textit{The Statesman}, September 6, 1986.

\textsuperscript{116}. Anirudha Gupta, n.106, p.275.
ernments of USA, UK, West Germany and Japan to impose an economic boycott of South Africa. 117

**Initiatives in the United Nations:**

This created an environment to bring a resolution in the Security Council in June 1986 to enforce mandatory sanctions against South Africa. The discussion continued for three days but the resolution was at the end vetoed by the United Kingdom and United States. 118 The South African Foreign Minister Botha said on the British television,

> The stand that Britain, America, Germany and to a certain degree France is taking is in the interests of those Governments. They are concerned about unemployment - the hundreds of thousands of jobs that might be lost. 119

The EEC Summit held at the Hague on June 27, 1986 also rejected the proposal for immediate sanctions against South Africa. The West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl after the meeting stated that he had opposed the call for sanctions because "there are no examples in history when economic


118. See *Hindustan Times* (New Delhi), June 20, 1986.

119. Ibid.
sanctions had any success whatsoever".¹²⁰

The United Nations-sponsored International Conference for immediate independence of Namibia held at Vienna in July 1986 appealed to the Security Council to approve mandatory sanctions against the apartheid regime of South Africa. It called upon the international financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and commercial bankers not to reschedule the loan repayments of South Africa and provide fresh loans.¹²¹

The UN Council for Namibia took a number of initiatives to enforce the provisions of Decree No.¹²² by investigating the possibility of starting legal proceedings in the domestic courts of states against corporations or individuals involved in the exploitation of the natural resources of Namibia. On July 14, 1987 it initiated proceedings before


¹²²: On September 27, 1974, the UN Council for Namibia enacted Decree No.1 for the Protection of Natural Resources of Namibia. Its first major legislative act was promulgated to be a domestic law of Namibia. The Decree provided that no person or corporation might exploit any natural resource situated within the territorial limits of Namibia without the permission of the Council. Namibia in the News (United Nations, New York: Office of the Commissioner for Namibia), vol.II, no.21/88, p.6 and for Decree No.1 see Appendix 3(II).
the District Court of the Hague against the Dutch uranium enrichment company, URENCO, and the Netherlands government which was one of the owners of URENCO.\textsuperscript{123}

They were accused of processing Namibian uranium in violation of the Decree. The defendants, URENCO and the Netherlands government, presented their case on May 3, 1988. It was a vital case as it had far-reaching consequences for Namibia, for those companies which were illegally exploiting its natural resources and for the authority of the UN. The Netherlands recognised the right of the Council of Namibia to promulgate its Decree No.1 and accepted that it could be applied in the Dutch Courts.\textsuperscript{124}

In November 1987, after the examination of the annual report of the Special Committee against Apartheid,\textsuperscript{125} the General Assembly adopted a number of resolutions.\textsuperscript{126} International solidarity with the liberation struggle in South

\textsuperscript{123} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{124} See Ibid., pp.7-8.


\textsuperscript{126} General Assembly Resolutions 42/23 A-H, cited in Ibid., p.3.
Africa, the implementation of comprehensive mandatory sanctions and, pending such sanctions, the application of coordinated and strictly monitored measures, the strengthening of the oil embargo, and the need for concerted international action against apartheid were focused by these resolutions.

The Security Council also reacted to events in South Africa and the southern African region. At a meeting held on March 8, 1988, the UN Security Council failed to adopt a draft resolution that would have imposed selective mandatory sanctions on South Africa. But it adopted resolutions against the planned execution of the "Sharpeville Six" and the aggression against Angola.

On November 16, 1987, the leaders of Angola, Botswana, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe called for international action to defeat Pretoria's invasion of Angola. At the meeting held at Luanda, they condemned South Africa's war against Angola and called for help from the OAU to drive

127. S/19585, cited in Ibid., p.3.
South Africa's forces out of Angola. 130

In the field of the sports boycott of South Africa, the International Convention against Apartheid in Sports 131 was adopted in 1986. This was opened for signature in 1987 and ratified or acceded to by the requisite number of states before April 3, 1988, the day on which it was enforced.

The United Nations Vocational Training Centre for Namibia trained a large number of Namibians to run their country after independence. Its activities represented a comprehensive development oriented programme of assistance. As a result of these programmes, significant progress was made in the field of education and training, and Namibians were able to overcome the deplorable effects of the apartheid education system. 132

In 1988, the Council for Namibia established a field


132. The United Nations Vocational Training Centre for Namibia, located in Sumbe, Angola, was established by the Council for Namibia in 1978. It became operational in 1984. Interview with Elsie Shinedima, SWAPO activist, Windhoek, Namibia, November 22, 1994. She was working as political instructer in Hayniyek Training Centre, Angola.
attachment programme for the formally educated young Namibians to practise their skills and gain the necessary practical work experience. It was designed under this programme to place Namibians on-the-job training in a number of countries, especially Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. 133

In a meeting of the Council for Namibia on May 6, 1988, the President of SWAPO, Sam Nujoma, called on the Council for Namibia to intensify its political actions and attempt to go to Namibia, even if it could go only as far as Botswana. Elaborating on that call, the representative of Botswana proposed that the Council should organise a "long march" through Botswana's Kalahari desert to the border of Namibia, in order to dramatise the Council's determination to demonstrate its authority over the territory. 134

The Special Committee considered the question of the Namibia in its plenary meetings held on August 3-8, 1988.

133. See Namibia in the News, n.122, p.9.

The Committee had the documentation on Namibia prepared by the UN Council for Namibia before it.\textsuperscript{135} It took into account the resolutions and decisions of the International Conference for the Immediate Independence of Namibia, held in Vienna from July 7 to 11, 1986,\textsuperscript{136} the Luanda Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the United Nations Council for Namibia in Luanda on May 22, 1987,\textsuperscript{137} and the Final Communiqué of the Ministerial Meeting of the UN Council for Namibia, held in New York on October 2, 1987,\textsuperscript{138} and stressed the urgent need for their implementation.

At the conclusion of the debate, the Special Committee adopted a consensus on the question\textsuperscript{139} and reaffirmed that


the UN plan, elaborated in Security Council Resolutions 385 (1976) and 435 (1978), was the only internationally accepted basis for a peaceful settlement of the Namibian question. It strongly rejected the policies of "Constructive Engagement" and "Linkage", which had encouraged the racist regime of South Africa to continue its illegal occupation of Namibia, and called for their abandonment so that the resolutions and decisions of the United Nations on the question of Namibia could be implemented. It deplored the continuing collaboration of Western countries with the racist regime of South Africa in the political, economic, military, nuclear, financial, cultural and other fields and called for the immediate cessation of all such collaboration. 140

The Special Committee strongly reaffirmed that the natural resources of Namibia, including its marine resources, were the inviolable heritage of the Namibian people. It condemned the activities of all foreign economic interests operating in Namibia and demanded that those interests should immediately withdraw from the territory, as they constituted a major obstacle to Namibia's independence.

140. Decolonization, n.136, p.20.
The Committee reaffirmed that such interests would be liable to pay damages to the future legitimate government of an independent Namibia.\footnote{141}{Ibid., p.20.}

The Committee strongly recommended that the Security Council should respond positively to the overwhelming demand made by the international community by immediately imposing comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against that regime under the terms of Chapter VII of the UN Charter.\footnote{142}{Ibid., p.21.}

**Steps in the General Assembly:**

The General Assembly at its forty-third (1988) session in the disposition of the item entitled 'Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples' referred the following items to the Fourth Committee for its consideration:

- Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73(e) of the Charter of the United Nations;

- Activities of foreign economic and other interests which are impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in Namibia and in all other Territories under colonial domination and efforts to
eliminate colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination in southern Africa;

- Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations;

- United Nations Educational and Training Programme for southern Africa;

- Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories.143

The General Assembly also decided that the question of Namibia should be considered directly in its plenary meetings, and that the hearings of the organisations concerned would be held in the Fourth Committee.144 In conjunction with the item on foreign economic activities, the

143. Ibid., p.4.

144. Thirty-five delegations, who participated in the general debate, gave their statements between October 5 and 10, 1988. The majority of the representatives condemned the activities of foreign economic and other interests in colonial territories and considered them to be a serious impediment to the implementation of the Declaration. They affirmed that administering powers created new forms of colonial dependence and domination in non-self-governing territories through concessions to foreign corporations. These foreign transnational corporations exploited the territory's natural resources and its labour force, and assisted South Africa in perpetuating its illegal and racist repression of the territory and its denial of political independence to Namibia. The Security Council was called upon to adopt comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against the South African regime under Chapter VII of the Charter. Ibid., p.4.
Committee considered the item "Military activities and arrangements by colonial powers in Territories under their administration which might be impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples". 145

The member states were asked to impose voluntary sanctions. They called for decisive measures that would terminate foreign investments in the territory. The representatives called for strict compliance with Decree No.1 for the Protection of the Natural Resources of Namibia, 146 enacted by the UN Council for Namibia. They expressed their continuing support for the Council and its work. 147

145. With regard to the item on military activities of colonial territories, representatives denounced South Africa for its escalating militarisation of Namibia and its use of the territory as a staging ground to commit acts of aggression against neighbouring states. Such activities were a major threat to peace and security in the region. They denounced the military and nuclear collaboration of some countries with South Africa and condemned the emplacement of military bases and installations by colonial powers in trust and non-self-governing territories. They called for their immediate dismantlement. See Ibid., pp.6-8.


147. In the general debate of the Special Committee and the UN Council for Namibia, the observer of the SWAPO and 85 delegations participated. Many speakers stated that "the international community must not let down its guard, rather it should keep the option of possible recourse to comprehensive and mandatory sanctions."
The General Assembly extended the appointment of the United Nations Commissioner for Namibia for a one-year term beginning on January 1, 1989 by its decision 43/311 of November 17, 1988. It adopted the following five resolutions on the question of Namibia on November 17, 1988 by approving the draft recommendations submitted by the UN Council for Namibia.148

The Fourth Committee approved the text of the recommendations prepared by the Special Committee on October 10, 1988 and submitted it to the General Assembly for adoption.

...Continued...

against South Africa if the current talks fail. They re-emphasised that the question of Namibia was one of decolonisation and not one of East-West confrontation". Decolonization, n.136, p.15.

148. Ibid., p.16.

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The recommendations of the Fourth Committee was adopted by the General Assembly at its 59th plenary meeting on November 22, 1988. By its Resolution 43/29 of November 22, 1988, the General Assembly condemned the activities of foreign economic and other interests in the colonial territories, which impeded the implementation of the Declaration on decolonisation; the policies of governments that continued to support, or collaborate with, those foreign economic and other interests engaged in exploiting the human and natural resources of the territories; and the collaboration of certain Western and other countries with the racist minority regime of South Africa, in the nuclear field. 149

The General Assembly, by its decision 43/410 of November 22, 1988 on military activities and arrangements by colonial powers in territories under their administration, deplored that the colonial powers with military installations in territories under their administration had taken no

149. The Assembly called upon those and all other governments concerned to refrain from supplying, the Pretoria regime, directly or indirectly, with installations, equipment or material that might enable it to produce uranium, plutonium and other nuclear materials, reactors or military equipment; and to take urgent, effective measures to terminate all collaboration with the racist regime of South Africa. This resolution was adopted by 133 votes to 9 with 14 abstentions. Ibid., p.8.
steps to withdraw immediately and unconditionally their installations and to refrain from establishing new ones, despite its repeated requests. The relation of the IMF and World Bank with South Africa was regretted and the discontinuance of such relation was called upon. Speakers appealed to all states, institutions, organisations and individuals to pledge increased financial support for the 'United Nations Educational and Training Programme' for southern Africa.

The General Assembly devoted its meetings to the consideration of the item, 'Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples', on November 21-22, 1988. The representatives of 23 delegations made their statements in the general debate.

150. The General Assembly condemned South Africa for its military build up in Namibia, its persistent acts of aggression and subversion against neighbouring African states, and its use of mercenaries to suppress the Namibian people and carry out its attacks against independent African states. It demanded the urgent dismantlement of all military bases in Namibia and called for the immediate cessation of the war of oppression waged by the racist minority regime against the people of the territory. This decision was adopted by 128 votes to 12 with 15 abstentions. Ibid., p.9.

151. They requested member states to provide or continue to provide the inhabitants of colonial territories with financial assistance and scholarships, as well as training facilities for both secondary and post-secondary education. Ibid., p.11.
They pointed out that the failure to achieve independence for Namibia through the UN plan, contained in Security Council Resolution 435 (1978), was due to the intransigent attitude of South Africa, which continued its illegal occupation of Namibia and the exploitation of its human and natural resources. They rejected the extraneous issues which had been used by Pretoria as a pre-condition for Namibia's independence.152

On December 22, 1988 the General Assembly adopted by 135 votes to 1 with 20 abstentions a draft resolution (Resolution 43/47), by which it declared the years 1990 to 2000 'the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism'. It requested that the Secretary-General should submit a report to the Assembly at its forty-fourth session in order to enable it to consider and adopt an action plan aimed at ushering in, in the twenty-first century, a world free from colonialism.153

The Pressure on South African Economy and Sanctions:

The purpose of sanctions was to supplement the armed

152. Ibid., p.18.
153. Ibid., p.18.
struggle which the Africans had started against the Pretoria regime, not to replace it. 154 The blacks faced greater economic hardship as a result of the sanctions. In response to the Commonwealth's threat of sanctions Foreign Minister Botha said that the blacks would pay. He was referring to blacks both in neighbouring countries and in South Africa. 155 But South Africa tried its best to avoid the destabilisation of the black population as it would lead to spontaneous violence, particularly because of its strained resources to maintain law and order in the country.

South Africa faced an acute shortage of skilled labour for its industry because of its racist policies. The problem of the growing demands of technicians, engineers, craftsmen, etc. became more acute as many white professionals and technicians left the country making the South

154. "South Africa is neither Fascist Italy of the pre-war period, nor is it Israel where any external threat tends to unite the Jewish population on a war-footing. In the context of South Africa, sanctions can only widen the divide between Blacks and Whites; pressed by economic hardship the White minority may become more insular and resentful of external pressure, just as in the wake of sanctions the Blacks may feel more confident about the world's active involvement in their struggle". Anirudha Gupta, n.106, p.276.

African economy more dependent on the skilled labour available among the blacks. The spreading of education among the blacks facilitated this need of the economy. 156

But these educated Africans took the leadership in opposing the Pretoria regime. In black opinion poll in South Africa 90 per cent urban blacks were found to be totally opposed to emergency and an overwhelming majority in support of sanctions. 157 The education became a focus of protest and militant mobilisation. 158

There was a rapid advance in South Africa's industrial-manufacturing sector. But the manufacturing was not self-generating in terms of capital accumulation and industrial output. Apart from the state-run heavy industries like coal, iron and steel, the manufacturing in the private sector was limited to light-industries, food processing and consum-


South Africa aimed at raising enough revenue from mining, foreign capital and trade to sustain and expand its manufacturing capacity. So the state generated surplus capital by way of (i) inviting foreign investors in the mining and manufacturing sector, (ii) raising revenue from profits and dividends, and (iii) determining the priority sectors for foreign investment.

The South African economy was heavily dependent on mining industries. It was dependent on the import of intermediate and capital goods. But its own exports classified as manufactured were mainly processed agricultural and mineral products.

The role of foreign banks was important in mobilising international credits for investment in South Africa. Such inflow of foreign capital was essential for South Africa to expand its manufacturing sector, pay for capital imports,


and secure long-term planning to its priority sectors.\textsuperscript{162}

Hence, cut in the flow of foreign loans and larger fluctuation of commodity prices in the world market affected the South African economy adversely to a great extent. The dealings of these banks were mainly depending on their independent assessment of South African regime's capabilities to ensure the safe return of their investments.\textsuperscript{163}

Following the adoption of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act in October 1986, South Africa-United States trade dropped by almost 30 per cent over the first nine months of 1987, from US $2.6 billion to US $1.9 billion in the same period of 1986.\textsuperscript{164} South Africa's imports from the United Kingdom increased from US $1,270 million in 1986 to US $1,587 million in 1987. During the same period, its exports to the United Kingdom decreased from US $1,319 million to US $1,174 million.\textsuperscript{165} South Africa's exports to the Federal

\textsuperscript{162} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{163} Whenever there was violence or industrial unrest, the investment of foreign capital was showing a decreasing trend. In the process, South Africa had a vested interest in attracting foreign capital by controlling the blacks unrest particularly in the urban areas. Interview with C.G. Hennings, n.91.

\textsuperscript{164} The Citizen (Johannesburg), March 8, 1988 and Appendix 2 (Table I).

Republic of Germany declined to US $1.25 billion in 1987 from US $1.55 billion in 1986, while South Africa's imports from that country increased from US $2.2 billion to US $2.6 billion.\textsuperscript{166} Measures taken particularly by Denmark, France and the United States contributed to the reduction of South Africa's revenue from coal exports. Its coal exports, which increased from 29.9 million tons in 1982 to 45 million tons in 1986, declined to 39 million tons in 1987.\textsuperscript{167} The establishment of the Office of South African Coal Industry in the United Kingdom to work against sanctions in that country was indicative of the growing crisis in the South African coal industry.\textsuperscript{168}

All these led to drastic reductions in domestic investment, a process referred to as 'internal disinvestment'.\textsuperscript{169} Gross Domestic Fixed Investment fell in real terms in every year from 1981 to 1987, though there was a slight recovery.

\textsuperscript{166.} Financial Times (London), March 18, 1988.
\textsuperscript{167.} The Star (Johannesburg), January 26, 1988.
during 1988. By 1985, levels of investment had fallen so far that they were not sufficient even to maintain capital stock. At the end of 1987, the President of the South Africa Foundation stated, "lack of confidence is again and again emerging as the most important single factor inhibiting growth".171

The white South Africans started feeling the effects of sanctions and the counter-measures those were taken to counter the sanctions. They were affected more and more by the additional measures which were taken. For example, South African passengers to New York must go by way of western Europe, and the cheapest round-trip ticket had risen 48 per cent to 2,509 rand ($1,129).172

The sanctions also contributed in resulting an inflation rate of more than 17 per cent. This had direct impact on high income whites who found it increasingly difficult to purchase imported luxury items. The tightly rationed for-

171. Quoted in Ibid., p.18.
exchange, the rise in import taxes made their conditions worse. As a result, the whites started to emigrate. In the first five months of 1986, 2,157 whites left South Africa. Most of them were skilled workers.173

South Africa's Finance Minister Barend du Plessis admitted that sanctions hurt by tying up billions of dollars in non-productive strategic stockpiles, retarding the growth of the economy and creating unemployment.174 The eight Commonwealth ministers, who met in Lusaka, expressed their conviction that sanctions were an effective weapon against apartheid.175 In 1986, Len Abrahamse, President of the South Africa Foundation, in this context, said,

Even the suggestion of limited sanctions has a severe effect on business confidence, but their "message" is more loudly heard by South African businessmen than by the government.176

The openness of South Africa's economy, its limited number of major trading partners (five countries, that is,

the United Kingdom, United States, West Germany, Japan and Italy, purchase or provide around 80 per cent of exports and imports between them) and its geographic isolation from them made it the perfect target for trade sanctions.\textsuperscript{177} It was clear particularly in the embargoes on the supply of arms and oil. Although South Africa started building up its own arms industry, it was not able to develop the high-technology weapons of modern warfare and was forced to buy from the black market. As the \textit{Washington Post} wrote, "informed estimates are that the markup for arms purchased on the international black market range between 20 per cent and 100 per cent".\textsuperscript{178} The effect of this embargo was visible in 1987 during the invasion of southern Angola by South Africa in support of UNITA. When South Africa was attempting to capture the strategic town of Cuito Cuanavale, it was unable to replace its airplanes vulnerable to anti-aircraft fire. As a result, South Africa was forced to withdraw.

The Shipping Research Bureau estimated that South Africa had to spend about $2 billion per year to overcome


the oil embargo. The bans on imports from South Africa was meant to reduce the amount of foreign exchange available with the Pretoria regime. On the whole trade sanctions substantially hampered the South African economy. In this context, H. Meyer, Director of Swiss National Bank, rightly said,

South Africa's difficulties are not comparable with those of other developing countries; its problems are political... South Africa is not facing a currency crisis but a political crisis.

This pressure on South African economy with SWAPO's consistent struggle and continued initiatives in the UN in a changing world political scenario paved the way towards Namibian settlement which has been discussed in the next Chapter.


181. Quoted in Merle Lipton, n.176, p.59.