



# SECURITY COUNCIL OFFICIAL RECORDS

THIRTY-SECOND YEAR

**2044<sup>th</sup>** MEETING: 31 OCTOBER 1977

NEW YORK

---

## CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/2044) .....	1
Adoption of the agenda .....	1
The question of South Africa:	
Letter dated 20 October 1977 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/12420) .....	1

#### NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

Documents of the Security Council (symbol S/. . .) are normally published in quarterly *Supplements* of the *Official Records of the Security Council*. The date of the document indicates the supplement in which it appears or in which information about it is given.

The resolutions of the Security Council, numbered in accordance with a system adopted in 1964, are published in yearly volumes of *Resolutions and Decisions of the Security Council*. The new system, which has been applied retroactively to resolutions adopted before 1 January 1965, became fully operative on that date.

## 2044TH MEETING

Held in New York on Monday, 31 October 1977, at 10.30 a.m.

*President:* Mr. Rikhi JAIPAL (India).

*Present:* The representatives of the following States: Benin, Canada, China, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, India, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritius, Pakistan, Panama, Romania, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela.

### Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/2044)

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. The question of South Africa:

Letter dated 20 October 1977 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/12420).

*The meeting was called to order at 12.30 p.m.*

### Adoption of the agenda

*The agenda was adopted.*

**The question of South Africa:**

**Letter dated 20 October 1977 from the Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/12420)**

1. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with decisions taken by the Council at its earlier meetings, I invite the representatives of Algeria, Botswana, Ghana, Guinea, Guyana, Lesotho, Mauritania, the Niger, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, the Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, the United Republic of Cameroon and Viet Nam to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Bedjaoui (Algeria), Mr. Tlou (Botswana), Mr. Boaten (Ghana), Mr. Camara (Guinea), Mr. Jackson (Guyana), Mr. Molapo (Lesotho), Mr. Kane (Mauritania), Mr. Poisson (Niger), Mr. Garba (Nigeria), Mr. Baroody (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Kamara (Senegal), Mr. Husse (Somalia), Mr. Medani (Sudan), Mr. Kodjovi (Togo), Mr. Mestiri (Tunisia), Mr. Oyono (United Republic of Cameroon) and Mr. Dinh Ba Thi (Viet Nam) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.*

2. The PRESIDENT: The first speaker is the representative of Somalia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

3. Mr. HUSSEN (Somalia): Mr. President, I should like first of all to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of October. Your country's valuable contribution in the past on the problem of South Africa is on record. Mahatma Gandhi, who played a leading role in the struggle against the evils of *apartheid*, was a son of your country. It was India that took the initiative which led to the inscription on the General Assembly agenda of the problem of *apartheid*.

4. Having known you personally from as far back as 1954 when, as a member of a United Nations visiting mission, you came to visit my country, Somalia, then under the United Nations Trusteeship System, I can say that you have been instrumental in the cause of the people's struggle for their right to self-determination and independence. With that background in view, I feel it is a happy coincidence to see you presiding today over the Council. I have every confidence that under your wise guidance the Council will approach the tasks before it in a business-like manner and that its deliberations will bear the desired fruit.

5. My delegation is grateful for this opportunity to join its voice to the many voices of protest which are being raised in the Security Council, and indeed around the world, to express outrage at the most recent actions of the South African racist régime to suppress the forces of reason, moderation and justice within that country.

6. Like the majority of African States, we welcome the unanimity and the strength of current condemnations of the Vorster régime, but it is pertinent to recall with a pessimistic note that there were similar outcries over the Sharpeville and Soweto massacres, over the imprisonment of so many freedom fighters and over the deaths in prison of a great number of opponents of *apartheid* who shared the same tragic fate as Steve Biko.

7. Murder, torture, arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, as well as banning and censorship, are not new tools of a régime which claims to represent and defend so-called Western civilization in southern Africa. However shocking the repressive measures which we are condemning today may seem, similar atrocities have been suffered by countless South Africans of all races whose only crime has been to oppose the institutionalized racism of the régime in South Africa.

8. Third-world countries have long striven to keep this situation before the attention of the world community and to bring about effective international action against *apartheid*, a system repeatedly and universally condemned as a

crime against the conscience of humanity. Unfortunately, those efforts have been frustrated mainly by South Africa's trading partners who have convinced themselves that their economic interest is worth more than the relief of the suffering of the oppressed majority and who have minimized *apartheid's* threat to peace because of their interests there. Consequently, the only movement in the South African situation over the past three decades has been the fulfilment of every prophecy and every fear that has been expressed in anticipation of the potential dangers of *apartheid* as a threat to internal, regional and international peace and security.

9. Be that as it may, let us not for one moment forget that far-reaching changes are taking place within South Africa. Hundreds of dedicated African leaders and leaders of non-African origin in South Africa with countless followers have by their efforts and devotion made known to the world their determination to create an open society with equal opportunities for all. Young Africans imbued with inspired courage have now been stimulated to a new drive of organized protests in the face of the might of the brutal police and Fascist organization of the ruling white minority régime. No one here can fail to be aware that hardly a day goes by without press reports that some of those courageous young people have given their lives in the struggle for a just society. But they are only the spearhead of a national movement which has begun a legitimate struggle for liberation whose momentum will soon reach dimensions to be reckoned with.

10. The exportation of *apartheid* to Namibia and Zimbabwe by Vorster's régime has had the gravest consequences. South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia and its war of repression against the Namibian people are a continuing cause of regional conflict and international tension. Pretoria's full support of the illegal Ian Smith régime in Zimbabwe directly contributes to the long-drawn-out and bloody war which prevents the people of Zimbabwe from exercising its inalienable right to self-determination and independence. In both cases, there is a continuing threat to neighbouring African States, namely, Angola, Zambia, Mozambique and Botswana, which have been the victims of the aggression of the racist minority régime. In both cases, South Africa has with contempt violated the Charter of the United Nations and the resolutions of the Security Council.

11. *Apartheid* plays another baleful role in international affairs. The Pretoria régime's pretence that it represents a bastion of "Western civilization and interest" in the region is an attempt to subordinate an essentially African problem to a big-Power perspective and a thinly disguised ploy which is designed to deflect the attention of the world from the real issue at stake, namely, *apartheid*. Such a pretence and such an attempt must be dismissed with the contempt which they deserve. There must be no mistake about the realities of the southern African situation today. By his recent crack-down on every organization and every leader of the movement for a just society in South Africa, Mr. Vorster has sent a very clear message to South Africa's traditional friends and trading partners. The message to them is that he has nothing but contempt for their unworkable plan to bring about change through friendly relations and economic co-operation and for their futile

attempts to reach negotiated settlements on the fundamental problems of southern Africa.

12. The question which the world community is anxiously awaiting to hear answered is whether South Africa's traditional allies on the Security Council will once again seek shelter behind mere condemnations of *apartheid* and expressions of regret for the fate of its victims or whether they are now prepared to adopt a more positive policy commensurate with the implementation of the kind of measures which the situation demands. My delegation hopes that the measures which the Council is about to take will, at last, be a form of action that matches United Nations principles.

13. In this connexion, the measures announced by President Carter at his press conference on 27 October, following the repressive measures recently taken by the Pretoria régime, fall, in the view of many, far short of the expectations of the international community. The decision of the United States and other Western States members of the Security Council to apply an arms embargo under the auspices of the United Nations is a step forward, in the light of the hitherto well-known position of those Governments expressed by their veto of the application of any form of mandatory sanctions against South Africa. However, we all know that the minority régime in South Africa has already been provided with huge stockpiles of military weaponry by its traditional allies of the Western world. We also know that the Pretoria régime itself possesses a military industrial complex that is capable of producing sufficient quantities of sophisticated arms with which it can stifle the legitimate aspirations of the defenceless majority in South Africa. We had hoped that President Carter would announce stronger measures on behalf of his Administration which would represent an adequate response to the grave situation which is now unfolding in South Africa. My delegation considers that any measures short of full and complete economic sanctions, as provided for by Chapter VII of the Charter, would not only go against the spirit of the Organization but would produce no meaningful results.

14. The most pressing need is for a mandatory and all-encompassing economic and arms embargo against South Africa, with no time-limit, until the objectives of the United Nations are achieved. The frantic arms build-up in that country is obviously aimed at the suppression of the legitimate aspirations of the majority of the people and at their permanent subjugation under the racist minority rule. South Africa's militarism poses a direct threat to the neighbouring independent African States. Those Western Powers that led the scandalous rush to supply South Africa with the most sophisticated weapons, and even with nuclear-weapon capability, now profess dismay over the military monster of their own creation. If they cannot undo the evil of the past, they can at least refrain in the future from maintaining and adding to the military machine which exists for the entrenchment of *apartheid*.

15. My delegation has always supported, and will continue to support, the call for the diplomatic, social and economic isolation of Vorster's régime in South Africa until its ruling minority acknowledges the equality of all men in that beautiful country. In particular, we believe that the

cessation of foreign investment in South Africa and the imposition of trade sanctions would be an important step in bringing home to the Vorster régime the abhorrence of the international community for *apartheid* and its practices. Obviously, economic sanctions would only be effective if all South Africa's trading partners were to act vigorously and in concert. My delegation therefore thinks that it would be a constructive step if those countries were to engage in joint consultations on the modalities of imposing effective economic sanctions on South Africa. In this connexion, it is pertinent to recall the praiseworthy example set by the front-line African States, which have made great national sacrifices in order to comply with United Nations resolutions.

16. It is time that the facts and developments in South Africa were accepted at their true value. The gravity of the situation has increased with the passage of time and leaves us in no doubt that the racist régime in South Africa is determined to maintain unchanged the usurpation of the rights of the overwhelming majority of the people of South Africa by a white minority practising *apartheid*. The statements of all the previous speakers confirm this and all give warning of the explosive situation with which we are now confronted. A solution can be reached only by positive and determined action. The Security Council, the body entrusted by the Charter with the authority to maintain peace and security, alone has the power to take such effective action. The attention of the world community is now focused on the Council and the stage has been reached where postponement will only give Vorster's régime time further to intensify its efforts to silence the forces of opposition to *apartheid* and spread destruction, producing a situation that will be beyond control. Firm action must be taken, and it must be taken now, by the Council under Chapter VII of the Charter.

17. The provisions of the four draft resolutions submitted by the African members of the Council would, if the drafts were adopted and faithfully implemented, cover the main aspects of the present grave situation in South Africa.

18. I should like to conclude my statement by quoting remarks made by Mr. Tambo, President of the African National Congress of South Africa as cited by Mr. Makatini:

"The racists and Fascists in southern Africa for the time being enjoy the support of what they regard as powerful forces. However, we are armed with a just cause and a will to be free." [2037th meeting, para. 75.]

19. Mr. von WECHMAR (Federal Republic of Germany): The events of 19 October which the Security Council has been considering during these past few days are a challenge to all—in South Africa itself and elsewhere—who have worked consistently for a peaceful change in South Africa, for the elimination of racial discrimination and for the effective implementation of the basic human rights for all groups of the people there. The measures taken by the South African Government have dealt a heavy blow to all endeavours to halt the escalation of force in southern Africa. No one who values human dignity and political equality as the unquestionable foundations of any human society can remain indifferent to these developments.

20. Only a few months ago, the Security Council was seized of the situation in South Africa. Just a few weeks have passed since the World Conference for Action against *Apartheid* held at Lagos launched its urgent appeal against *apartheid*. The Government of South Africa, however, has turned a deaf ear to the appeals to see the problem of racial discrimination in its true proportions and to discard any illusions which stand in the way of peaceful change.

21. In the statement which I made before the Council on 30 March last [1998th meeting], I stressed the point that only where a State is ready to honour its commitments and obligations under international law can it hope to enjoy the full and undiminished partnership of other States. We have all exhorted South Africa time and again to change its policy. The bannings, prohibitions, detentions and acts of repression must come to an end. The proponents of *apartheid* in South Africa should realize that repression will rebound upon the white population itself; it will destroy the goodwill of those who up to now have been ready for dialogue and co-operation.

22. The Federal Government is deeply dismayed at the developments in South Africa of which the events at Soweto and the death of Steve Biko are the most tragic results. We are not ready to accept the argument that, since freedom of expression and the freedom to assemble peacefully are not fully acknowledged and are often violated in other parts of the world, therefore—in that context—the recent developments in South Africa should be regarded as less serious.

23. The Federal Republic of Germany has urged the South African Government immediately to rescind the grave measures it has taken. It has called back its Ambassador at Pretoria to report to the Federal Government and is currently assessing the impact of the recent events in South Africa on its bilateral relations with that country.

24. The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany reaffirms its view that the policy of *apartheid* constitutes a serious violation of human rights and an infringement of South Africa's own international commitments. The occurrences in South Africa require a clear response from the international community.

25. At a time when respect for human rights has come to be an international concern, these developments cannot be passed over in silence. The States Members of the United Nations are now called upon actively to oppose a policy which further aggravates the conflicts prevailing in that region, thereby jeopardizing lengthy efforts to bring about a solution without resorting to the use of force. The Security Council must declare in a manner which is binding on all States that the supplying of weapons to South Africa is bound to heighten even further the tension in that area. This supplying of weapons must therefore cease. The Federal Republic of Germany, for its part, has observed a voluntary arms embargo in relation to South Africa since 1963.

26. We consider the acquisition of arms by South Africa in the current circumstances a threat to peace and security. We are, consequently, ready to accept and vote in favour of

a mandatory arms embargo under Chapter VII of the Charter. This is, in our view, a serious and significant decision as it is the first time in United Nations history that such a step is being taken against a Member State. Such a decision is meant to alert South Africa to the gravity of the situation which has been aggravated still further by its most recent measures. South Africa must know that the international community cannot remain idle while such developments are taking place. The decision of the Council should serve as a most serious warning. Yet it should not bar the way to a constructive dialogue, for which there have recently been some encouraging indications, at least as far as the question of Namibia is concerned.

27. The Federal Government is resolved to contribute by all means at its disposal to peaceful changes in the southern part of Africa. It will continue to support all efforts towards a settlement of the Namibian and Rhodesian issues on the basis of negotiations. In collaboration with all other States which are ready to do so, we shall persist in working by peaceful means towards the exercise of the right of self-determination in the whole region of southern Africa so that people of different races can live together in equality and partnership. Only thus can we hope to avoid dangerous conflicts.

28. In the economic field the Federal Republic of Germany has set up, together with its partners in the European Community, a code of conduct for subsidiaries in South Africa of companies located in the Community area. This action is designed to abolish discrimination against black workers, to institute wage equality and to encourage trade union activity. We view this as an important contribution towards overcoming *apartheid*. In a modern industrial society, the social integration of the working population is essential.

29. We are willing to use the economic influence at our disposal to work for changes in an active way. We feel, however—and here I should like to refer to the remarks just made by the representative of Somalia that a complete isolation of South Africa at this time would leave us with no possibility of exercising any influence. My Government does not see merit in ending any political dialogue with the Government of South Africa right now, but it once again urges South Africa to break away from the entanglements of its futile policy of racial discrimination and to resume its place within the community of nations.

30. Mr. LEPRETTE (France) (*interpretation from French*): The recent repressive measures taken by the South African authorities against a number of black organizations and their leaders have deeply shaken the people and the Government of my country. Because they derive from the false logic of the unacceptable, the abominable system of *apartheid*, they cannot but arouse our indignation. My country has always stood for and made a point of scrupulously practising democracy—and *apartheid* is the most flagrant denial of democracy. We believe deeply in the equality of all men. We unreservedly condemn a system which makes ethnic differences the criterion whereby those who hold the power keep the privileges for themselves and share out the worst humiliations.

31. The system of *apartheid* is inadmissible because it is a system which isolates both those who must undergo it and those who practise it, to the latter's profit as they believe. It isolates those who are its victims, in a world which humiliates them and deprives them of the most elementary freedoms and safeguards. But it also encloses the partisans of that policy in an absurd all-or-nothing adventure which today is leading them to the worst excesses and which may carry the country to catastrophe. Steve Biko's death is the most recent of these revolting excesses.

32. The persistence in southern Africa, because of the blindness of those who refuse to initiate essential changes, of a hotbed of hatred and humiliation not only is an unacceptable affront to human dignity, but also is fraught with danger and threatens to bring on an escalation of the violence. Thus, as Mr. de Guiringaud said on 28 September last in the General Assembly,<sup>1</sup> the risk of worsening tension which may disintegrate into racial war continues to grow.

33. My delegation believes that the Security Council must take account of the feelings aroused throughout the world, and particularly in Africa, by the repressive measures taken by the South African authorities. The passing of the months and years swells the legitimate impatience of the African countries, which are even more sensitive than others to the racial discrimination on which the system of *apartheid* is based. In any case, international opinion in general is aroused at the failure to remedy this inadmissible situation. In a word, the question of *apartheid* is no longer the internal affair of an individual State, but a matter of legitimate concern to the entire international community. The international community must therefore now take measures designed to make the South African authorities understand that they must put an end to these practices, which are both reprehensible and dangerous.

34. Our Organization and our countries have repeatedly expressed their disapproval of the South African authorities and condemned the policy of repression. These warnings have gone unheeded. The South African authorities must realize that, through the policy of *apartheid*, they are hindering the birth of a South African nation and thus alienating themselves from the other countries of the continent.

35. No one here would deny that a number of races have made their contribution to the formation of a South African whole, and that all those living in South Africa, regardless of colour, have equal rights to share a common destiny on the same soil. It is hard to understand what twisted logic has led the South African authorities to build an entire policy on the denial of these obvious facts.

36. Today there is need to go further. It is the Security Council's duty to apply itself to that task. The Council will gain in honour if it does so with a wisdom commensurate with its responsibilities.

37. We hope that the measures we adopt may make an opening in what the representative of France last year

---

<sup>1</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-second Session, Plenary Meetings*, 10th meeting, para. 182.

described as "the absurdly closed space of *apartheid*".<sup>2</sup> They must be designed to make the South African Government aware of the extent of its isolation and to induce it to initiate the necessary political changes.

38. I have noted that in their statements a number of African representatives have suggested that some latitude should be allowed for negotiation. France shares their concern. Let us be firm, but let us be wise, as befits the Council. Let us preserve opportunities of arriving at peaceful solutions of the problems of that part of Africa that are in keeping with the legitimate aspirations of all the peoples of the region.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, *Thirty-first Session, Plenary Meetings*, 50th meeting, para. 52.

39. But there is one point on which we must today take an absolutely clear-cut position. In strictly legal terms, there can be no question of denying any country the right of self-defence provided for in Article 51 of the Charter. Nevertheless, the intention here, in the aftermath of the recent crack-down by the South African Government, is to forearm ourselves and to protest against the stockpiling of weapons intended for purposes of internal repression.

40. Taking due account of all these elements and of the legitimate concern of the international community as a whole, my Government has decided to vote in favour of a mandatory embargo on arms shipments to South Africa.

*The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.*

---

## كيفية الحصول على منشورات الأمم المتحدة

يمكن الحصول على منشورات الأمم المتحدة من المكتبات ودور التوزيع في جميع أنحاء العالم - استعلم عنها من المكتبة التي تتعامل معها أو اكتب إلى : الأمم المتحدة ، قسم البيع في نيويورك أو في جنيف .

### 如何获取联合国出版物

联合国出版物在全世界各地的书店和经售处均有发售。请向书店询问或写信到纽约或日内瓦的联合国销售组。

### HOW TO OBTAIN UNITED NATIONS PUBLICATIONS

United Nations publications may be obtained from bookstores and distributors throughout the world. Consult your bookstore or write to: United Nations, Sales Section, New York or Geneva.

### COMMENT SE PROCURER LES PUBLICATIONS DES NATIONS UNIES

Les publications des Nations Unies sont en vente dans les librairies et les agences dépositaires du monde entier. Informez-vous auprès de votre libraire ou adressez-vous à : Nations Unies, Section des ventes, New York ou Genève.

### КАК ПОЛУЧИТЬ ИЗДАНИЯ ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ ОБЪЕДИНЕННЫХ НАЦИЙ

Издания Организации Объединенных Наций можно купить в книжных магазинах и агентствах во всех районах мира. Напишите справки об изданиях в вашем книжном магазине или пишите по адресу: Организация Объединенных Наций, Секция по продаже изданий, Нью-Йорк или Женева.

### COMO CONSEGUIR PUBLICACIONES DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS

Las publicaciones de las Naciones Unidas están en venta en librerías y casas distribuidoras en todas partes del mundo. Consulte a su librero o diríjase a: Naciones Unidas, Sección de Ventas, Nueva York o Ginebra.

---