

NAMIBIA

Mr. President, I am most grateful to you and to the Council for again giving my country an opportunity to participate in this debate. The situation in Namibia is of concern to us all not least to those of us among the Front Line States and the Contact Group who have worked to change it. The situation directly affects the people of Namibia who have an unquestioned right to freedom and self-determination. It affects the countries of Africa which have worked hard for Namibia's independence. Further delay is in no one's interest. I am confident, Mr. President, that by your experience and understanding you will lead the Council toward a positive result that hastens the day that Namibia shall be free.

The members of the Contact Group have consistently supported applications from persons competent for the purpose who have requested the opportunity to speak at Security Council meetings concerning the situation in Namibia, in order to supply the Security Council with information on this question in accordance with Rule 39 of the Provisional Rules of Procedure. Contact Group members have done so without passing any judgement on the opinions expressed by those persons. They consider it important that the Security Council, which by its previous decisions has engaged itself to seek the holding of free and fair elections in Namibia should provide on an impartial basis opportunities to those who may be parties to those elections to present their views. In this context the members of the Contact Group are transmitting messages from two internal parties.

Mr. President, Canada helped to initiate and to frame the UN settlement plan for Namibia in 1978. My government deeply regrets that the Security Council is still seized of this issue five years later and that the people of Namibia are still unable to exercise their right to self-determination. We understand and share the concerns of the international community which have prompted the call for this Security Council meeting.

The road to the peaceful independence of Namibia has not been straight or smooth. We have found many potholes, and some major roadblocks. Occasionally the road has seemed to wind backwards. Sometimes we have feared that the road might end short of Namibia's independence. But we have made progress. It is in this context, that I should like to join other speakers in complimenting the Secretary-General on his recent efforts to restore momentum towards the implementation of Security Council Resolution 435.