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but rather to seek, without prejudice to that position, a practical means of implementing the provisions of Resolution 385. Our proposal, therefore, at no point takes any stand that prejudices a long-held legal or political position; rather, it moves between questions of legality as the only effective way to bring about a resolution of the issue.

The positions of South Africa and SWAPO have evolved substantially since April 1977. South Africa, originally unwilling to contemplate any alternative to the Turnhalle conception, has come to accept in the context of an internationally-acceptable solution far-reaching measures involving United Nations involvement in such a manner as to guarantee the impartiality of the electoral process and the necessity of full arrangements to ensure that there will be no intimidation from any source during that process. In the proposals it put forward in December 1977, South Africa acquiesced in the general conception, and in many specifics, of the approach embodied in our proposal. Up to the present time, there have remained some crucial areas of disagreement, including the number and location of the residual element of the South African forces. On these issues, as on others, however, there has been a considerable narrowing of the differences between the parties.

On the SWAPO side, there has been, as well, considerable evolution since the exercise was undertaken. SWAPO's initial position was that the South African administration in its entirety should be removed from the territory. SWAPO was convinced that elections could not be held in the presence of South African forces, that the symbolic presence of even one South African soldier would provide a counter-productive psychological climate in the territory. At the last round of discussions with SWAPO, SWAPO had come to accept, without prejudice to its legal position or to that of the United Nations, that it was possible to envisage an election process free of intimidation in the presence of the *de facto* administration as long as the South African military presence was reduced to a maximum of 1,500 and confined to one base in the south of the territory, and as long as the police were appropriately monitored and supervised, and that these tasks were undertaken by a substantial United Nations civilian and military force. SWAPO, furthermore, indicated a readiness to envisage the release of Namibians wherever they were held in the context of an internationally-acceptable solution. SWAPO has, furthermore, emphasized its commitment to participate in free and fair elections under United Nations supervision and control and to abide by the results of such elections.

I should like to describe very briefly the essential elements of our proposal for a settlement of the Namibian question. On the basis of Resolution 385, we consider that the key to an internationally-acceptable transition to early independence is free elections for the whole of Namibia, as one political entity, with appropriate United Nations supervision and control. To that end, we shall seek the establishment of a substantial United Nations presence, both civilian and military, which we have tentatively called the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), to be led by a United Nations special representative, appointed by and responsible to the United Nations Secretary-General. Working together with the South African Administrator-General, this special representative would have as his primary task to

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