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STATEMENTS AND SPEECHES

Canada's Role in Southern Africa

Notes for a speech
by the Right Honourable Joe Clark,
Secretary of State for External Affairs,
to the Canadian Council
for International Cooperation

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Canada

It is customary for a speaker to congratulate the organizers of a Conference, but I hope you will not consider it merely custom for me to praise your determination to broaden the coalition against apartheid.

What is new today is not the evil of the apartheid system, nor the moral outrage it arouses, but rather the fact that world opinion is crystalizing now in a way that no regime in Pretoria can ignore. Our challenge is to find effective and sustained measures to build that pressure for change. Obviously, that will require continued new actions by Governments, but we should recognize that the strength of the pressure so far has been its growing base in international opinion. Pretoria can attempt to dismiss political actions by known adversaries, but it cannot ignore a consensus that steadily includes new critics, some of them silent or acquiescent before, some of them motivated by the calculation that apartheid, as well as being morally wrong, is bad for business. In that context, I want to discuss some of the challenges we face in broadening the consensus in Canada against apartheid.

But before I do that, let me repeat the position of this Government of Canada. It was stated, clearly and early, by the Prime Minister in the General Assembly of the United Nations on October 23, 1985. Let me quote two key sentences:

"... If there are not fundamental changes in South Africa, we are prepared to invoke total sanctions against that country and its repressive regime. If there is no progress in the dismantling of apartheid, our relations with South Africa may have to be severed absolutely."

In that spirit, the Prime Minister played a leading role in the Commonwealth meetings in Nassau and London, and we have raised the issue of apartheid at the Economic Summit, the founding meeting of La Francophonie, and in countless bilateral meetings. Canada has acted on all the Commonwealth sanctions drawn up at Nassau and London. That means we ban airline links, new investment,

agricultural imports, new loans, tourism promotion, imports of uranium, coal, iron and steel, and place restrictions on Visas. We have terminated a longstanding agreement that prevented double taxation between our two countries. The Prime Minister has gone personally to southern Africa, to demonstrate our support for the Front Line States, and to announce practical measures of assistance.

We intend to continue to play a leading role in taking new measures ourselves, in seeking to organize concerted action by several governments, and in persuading our friends and Allies to act against apartheid.

No international question has occupied more of my time, nor the Prime Minister's, than consideration of a means by which Canada can help fight apartheid. Mr. Mulroney's conversations in Africa this month have intensified his conviction that Canada must do everything we can to end that evil system. That is a purpose to which the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, and the government of Canada are committed absolutely. That is understood in the Front Line States; it is understood among countries like India who are allied with us on this issue; and indeed, it is understood among the leaders of other Western countries, who may have a different view of the means to achieve progress against apartheid.

We made two strategic decisions earlier on. The first was that, if Canada was to exert any real influence against apartheid, our bottom line position had to be clear; if nothing else works, we will end our diplomatic and economic relations with South Africa. The second decision was that Canada's influence against apartheid could be better employed by building steady international pressure than by suddenly and dramatically ending our own relations. Our influence with others is greater than our trade with South Africa, and we intend to steadily exert that influence while we gradually restrict that trade.

In my discussions with Canadians about South Africa, I find no support for apartheid. The regime is generally seen as reprehensible and wrong. But I do encounter three concerns that must be faced. One is a

general scepticism about the effectiveness of sanctions anywhere. A second is the question as to why, in a world where human rights are too regularly violated, South Africa is singled out. The third is an apprehension about the methods and the motives of the African National Congress. Those concerns sometime mask more suspect sentiments, but each issue is legitimate itself, and must be addressed if we are to continue to build the consensus in Canada against apartheid.

Reservations about sanctions are shared by many of the most articulate opponents of apartheid in South Africa, and by other serious people everywhere in the world. Let me summarize their concern. Sanctions can be circumvented. They were in the case of both Rhodesia and the Soviet Union, and the ingenuity of the sanctions-busters has been mobilized again in South Africa. Sanctions distort and restrict the international trade and payment system, upon which world prosperity depends. They can harm some of the victims of apartheid, and certainly impose some price upon countries invoking sanctions. Their burden falls unequally upon the nations most exposed to South Africa, most vulnerable to retaliation.

Certainly, it seems to us that a policy based solely on sanctions would not mount the pressure we need. For one thing, we see little likelihood of the governments of major economies applying sanctions on the scale that would be required to force Pretoria to change. That result may come in time, and certainly Canada will use our influence to build the weight of sanctions, but it is not realistic to expect an impenetrable wall to be set up suddenly, or even quickly.

On the other hand, sanctions are one of the few peaceful options open to countries opposing apartheid. They are visible and tangible proof to the average South African that the world sees their system as repugnant, and they demonstrate to the victims of apartheid that other nations are prepared to do more than talk. The current set of sanctions has undoubtedly contributed to the growing stream of private decisions to take money out of a system that is evidently less stable. Sanctions add to the cost and to the inconvenience of maintaining apartheid.

In any discussion of sanctions, it is worth noting that South Africa itself imposes on its neighbours sanctions and restrictions on trade that have an impact beyond any barrier the West has placed in the path of South Africa.

Canada's policy also involves scholarships to blacks, support to NGO's, helping the victims of apartheid, a code of standards affecting Canadian businesses operating in South Africa, and other measures. Coupled with sanctions, these constitute an effective package; without sanctions, the other measures would have little effect. Indeed, in the quarter century since South Africa's departure from the Commonwealth, when the rest of the world avoided sanctions, Pretoria avoided change. If there has been some movement recently, it is partly because sanctions have been introduced. The question now becomes: What further sanctions will be effective, at what pace, in the company of what other measures?

The question of singling out South Africa is easier. South Africa singles out itself. Apartheid is a unique system of racial prejudice built into the Constitution. That deliberate constitutional inequality is even more offensive in a society which otherwise pretends to respect the standards of Western democracies and free societies.

Human rights questions are of primary concern to a country like Canada. The Prime Minister has raised specific questions directly and personally, in Korea, in China, in Zimbabwe, in meetings with Soviet leaders. I do the same, and sometimes we are successful.

The problem is more difficult in countries that make no pretense to freedom, and operate isolated or limited economies, as in the case in the Soviet system. But I have worked as hard to free Danylo Schumuk from prison in the Soviet Union as I have to free Nelson Mandela in South Africa. And certainly I do not accept the implication that we must have free societies behind the Iron Curtain before we can insist on real movement towards equality in South Africa.

On that point, you will recall that, a year ago, President Botha promised that he would release Nelson Mandela when Anatoly Shcharansky, Andrei Sakharov, and a South African officer captured in Angola were released. We did not accept that linkage. Mr. Mandela should have been set free for South African reasons, whatever the fate of other prisoners in other countries. But since Mr. Botha raised the point, it is worth noting that Mr. Shcharansky is free in Israel; Mr. Sakharov is free in Moscow; why is Nelson Mandela still in prison in South Africa?

I have met three times with representatives of the African National Congress, most recently in Ottawa with Mr. Makatini, their foreign policy spokesman. The Prime Minister and I both look forward to meeting Mr. Tambo in months to come.

Canadian critics of the ANC condemn both its resort to violence, and the association of some of its leaders with the Soviet Union. Those are genuine concerns, which limit seriously the ability of ANC spokesmen to reach Canadians who profoundly oppose apartheid. Let me deal with both briefly.

The whole region of Southern Africa is caught in a downward spiral of violence. The root cause of that violence is apartheid, and that spiral will not be broken until apartheid is dismantled. That can happen violently or it can happen peacefully. As the Prime Minister said at Victoria Falls, we do not support violence. Canada is doing everything we can to promote peaceful change. At the same time we can understand that so oppressive a system as apartheid, when peaceful means have changed or closed, gives rise to violent opposition.

The African National Congress had fifty years of non-violent history until they were banned in their own country. Their leadership includes many who are moderate, and some who are not. If countries like

Canada turn away from the ANC, that would make everyone immoderate, and not only add to the prospect of violence, but give credence to the Marxist component. Soviet influence grows in violence and in vacuums, and it is profoundly in the interest of the West to seek to stop that violence, and fill those vacuums.

Representatives of the African National Congress will be part of the solution in South Africa, whenever it comes, however it comes. Canada's whole purpose is to encourage a peaceful solution that results in freedom and equality in South Africa. We are more likely to achieve both peace and freedom by dealing with the ANC than we are by leaving them to extremes.

As has been noted, the world's purpose is to bring South Africa to its senses, not to its knees. We are seeking to change an evil social system, not cripple a strong economy. Canada would welcome more trade with a South Africa free of apartheid. We pray that the prejudice ends before violence disrupts all order in the sub-continent. With that in view, we must all seek means to keep lines open to all parts of South Africa - black and Botha, Buthelezi and Tambo, Mandela and Afrikaner. The worst result would be for us to cause the Botha Government to change its view, and then not have the channels to effect that change. Mr. Diefenbaker, a quarter century ago, spoke not only of the repugnance of apartheid, but also of the "Light in the Window" that would welcome a South Africa without apartheid.

As I watch Pretoria's Ambassador to London come home to run against his President's Party, as I see Gavin Relly travel to Lusaka to meet the ANC, I ask myself, "If I were a Minister in the Government of South Africa, and decided what we were doing was wrong, and I wanted to change it, not just protest, whom would I talk to, where in the world outside South Africa could I seek support?" The dilemma is that, as we isolate a repugnant regime, as we must, we also reduce the opportunities for that regime to change.

The best response to that dilemma was the Eminent Persons Group of the Commonwealth, who offered a route to change. Their overture was rejected, violently, and that moment was lost. No one believes that distinguished group can be reconstituted, but the idea it represented should not be abandoned. As you consider sanctions here, as you discuss the isolation of South Africa, please also consider ways to keep lines open, to keep the light in the window.

The second theme of your conference is regional development, and the question of supporting the viability of South Africa's neighbours becomes more important every day. That support must be moral as well as tangible, which is why the Prime Minister travelled personally to the Front Line States.

We have increased substantially our direct development assistance to Zimbabwe, Zambia, and Botswana and, through the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference, to Mozambique, Angola, Lesotho and Swaziland. We are committed to provide \$400 million in bilateral assistance to Southern Africa over the next five years.

We attach particular importance to SADCC which brings together nine states in a cooperative effort to develop the regional economy and to reduce their economic dependence on South Africa. Canada was a partner in SADCC from the beginning and is a major contributor to it. Our assistance has steadily increased. We expect to disburse approximately \$30 million a year over the next five years to SADCC.

Since 1983 Canadian development assistance totalling almost \$140 million has been approved to twenty-one SADCC projects. An additional nine projects worth almost \$30 million are in the pipeline. We are involved in regional agricultural projects, the strengthening of SADCC institutions, and capital investments in energy, transportation and communications.

SADCC's commitment to developing alternative transport routes to those through South Africa is central to its objective of increasing regional economic independence. The success of this goal is nowhere more important than in Mozambique, where Renamo guerrillas have disrupted internal agricultural production and transport links vital to the region.

Canada has provided large-scale food aid and relief to Mozambique. Through SADCC we are a major contributor to the rehabilitation of the Nacala rail line and we are monitoring closely plans to upgrade Beira. We call on South Africa to cut off support for Renamo, leaving Mozambique free to develop unhindered.

In Mozambique, the NGO community is carrying out several projects, including a bilaterally-funded rural development project administered by CUSO. Among other projects, expansion of an earth satellite station and a study of the food distribution system are in progress.

The government will look sympathetically at the question of further aid to Mozambique. I understand that the recent Canadian mission to Mozambique organized by the NGO community was very successful. My colleague, the Honourable Monique Landry, and I have received the mission's report and will be considering its recommendations. Mme Landry will be discussing the situation in Mozambique with Minister of Information Hunguana next week in Ottawa.

We are also working closely with SADCC and some of the individual states to encourage private Canadian investment in the region. This will include the provision of appropriate forms of government assistance.

It is important that we coordinate our efforts with other countries who are committing significant resources to aid and development in the region, so that our programs reinforce one another. In particular, we want to work closely with the Non-Aligned Fund for Africa, and earlier this month in New Delhi, I discussed with Prime Minister Gandhi arrangements by which Canada and the Fund for Africa can work together.

In the short space of the last two years a lot has changed respecting South Africa. Western nations have begun along the path to sanctions. The ANC is accepted increasingly as an interlocutor, Barclay's Bank and other enterprises are pulling out. Dissent is growing within the white community in South Africa. There is more focussed and coordinated attention to the requirements and the development of the Front Line States and the South African regime has changed some of its petty apartheid and other laws. But there is also a great deal that has not changed. Systematical racial discrimination rests at the core of South Africa's policy. Black South Africans cannot vote or live as equals in their own country. The press is muzzled, children are imprisoned, violence has increased. The

sober warning of the Eminent Persons Group is as true and compelling as ever. They warned that, "the alternative to a negotiated settlement would be appalling chaos, bloodshed and destruction, it could be the worst bloodbath since the Second World War".

Canada had introduced sanctions. We are increasing our help to SADCC and to the Front Line States. We are dealing with the ANC, cooperating with the Fund for Africa, persuading our Allies to increase pressure and applying our influence within the Commonwealth, and the proper podiums of the United Nations. We will continue to take new measures, preferably in concert with others, so their impact will be greater and the steady pressure against apartheid will continue to build.

Two questions preoccupy us. Whether real change will occur before catastrophic violence and what Canada can do to speed that change. No one can answer the first question and the Prime Minister and I will welcome your responses to the second in your deliberations.

Thank you very much for your attention.