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# Statements and Speeches

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## CANADA REAFFIRMS ITS ABHORRENCE OF APARTHEID

A Statement to the Security Council of the United Nations, New York, March 30, 1977, by Mr. William H. Barton, Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations

We are meeting in response to the request of the African Group that the Security Council consider the question of South Africa, in the context of the General Assembly's Resolution 31/6 of November 9, 1976, on the subject of *apartheid*, and the Security Council's Resolution 392 (1976) of June 19, 1976, concerning the violence at Soweto.

To say that this is not the first or second time the Security Council has taken up a subject related to the policies of South Africa is a considerable understatement. Over the past 17 years, the Security Council has repeatedly had to turn its attention to the policies of the Government of South Africa. It has examined the African policies of *apartheid* and so-called separate development in the light of Sharpeville and Soweto. It has been obliged to comment on the continuing occupation by that Government of Namibia, an international territory, and on its attacks on neighbouring African states in defence of that occupation. The Security Council has similarly deplored South Africa's refusal to live up to its international obligations under the UN Charter to respect the mandatory sanctions of the UN against the illegal regime of Southern Rhodesia.

All of these questions are still before us, but the core of the complex of problems involved in the question of South Africa is the policy of *apartheid* of the Government of South Africa, and it is on this issue that I intend primarily to focus my remarks today.

The Charter of the United Nations established as one of our fundamental purposes the achievement of international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, religion or language. Today, more than 30 years after those words of hope were written into the Charter, the task of developing international respect for basic human rights remains before us, largely unresolved.

But in one area of human rights we can point to real progress -- the colonial era is virtually ended. The change of regime in Portugal in 1974 foreshadowed the end of that period of African history wherein the fate and future of African peoples were decided by the foreign minorities. In Southern Africa there remain now to be resolved only the colonial situations of Namibia and Rhodesia. These are on their way to solution, whether by the peaceful means which the UN Charter urges us collectively to pursue or, I fear, by violence if we fail in our efforts.

But what about the situation in South Africa itself? One perceives there policies and attitudes that resemble in all the most negative aspects those of the colonial era in Africa. And yet this is not a colonial situation; this is a situation in which people of different origins have been sharing for some 300 years a large and prosperous land but have not been sharing the privileges and obligations of common citizenship in an equitable manner.

The Canadian Government has spoken out time and again about its abhorrence of the *apartheid* policies of South Africa and of the pattern of institutionalized racial discrimination that is established under them. The *apartheid* system is cruel and demeaning in that it infringes upon the daily life and possibilities of the great majority of the citizens of that country. They are not permitted to participate fully in the economic, social, political and cultural life of their country on equal terms with all other citizens. Their lives are circumscribed by a web of legislation that prescribes which jobs they may hold, on which level, and at what salary, what kind of education is available to them and to their children, where they may live, whether they must live separated from their families, with whom they may meet, and in what circumstances. The cruelty of the system lies not only in the daily persecutions and repressions of African and other non-white peoples but also in the fact that men and women can hope to live a peaceable life only by accepting the inferior and unequal role assigned by that society, and accept it as the lot in perpetuity for their children and grandchildren for generations to come.

A direct and unacceptable development of *apartheid* is the policy of "Bantustanization". The Canadian Government, along with all other member states of this organization, has rejected the so-called independence of the Transkei, the first offspring of the "Bantustan" system. We have done so because it purports to present as self-determination a system that allocates to 80 per cent of the population of South Africa rights in only 13 per cent of that territory. Frequently the territory allocated to the blacks is poor and incapable of being developed. Furthermore, the Bantustans are divided up into

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as many as ten unviable tiny parcels of land with no contiguous areas and separated by land reserved for use by whites. The Bantustan policy also discriminates cruelly against the millions of urban Africans who have not seen or who have not been directly attached to any homeland, and whose present and future attachment lies with the industrialized city in which they work and to the townships from which they commute long distances each day of their working lives. This is no solution for the future needs of all South Africans. These artificial economic divisions, furthermore, make no sense in a sophisticated national and international economy that demands increasing regional economic integration rather than the contrary.

The violence that took place at Sharpeville years ago and last year at Soweto (the latter resulting in at least 400 deaths) was not the result of outside instigations, as has been alleged by South Africa; rather, it reflects the profound discontent and frustration of the majority and their determination to obtain the justice they have been so long denied. They look to the north and see that all their African neighbours have obtained the right to rule themselves. That does not mean to say that these countries have achieved perfect societies - no country can claim that distinction. The challenges of development in Africa are great, and the problems severe. But each country in its own way is seeking ways of bringing the fruits of development to all of its citizens. The disadvantaged citizens of South Africa demand nothing more than the same basic human rights, and they will not rest until they have achieved their goal.

The events at and following Soweto constituted a terrible human tragedy. But the greatest tragedy of all has been the South African Government's reaction to these events. Thousands of people were detained without charge or were arrested for no other reason than their status as social, religious or political leaders. Scores of them have been brought to trial under the repressive body of *apartheid* legislation. As many as 18 are said to have died during interrogations and captivity, and there are indications that large numbers of others have been tortured or subjected to undue coercion.

We recall that, in October 1974, the representative of South Africa said here, in this body, that it was the intention of his Government to do away with discrimination on a racial basis. We have waited in vain for meaningful action. Some minor changes have taken place, and they must be welcomed, but only to the extent that they presage a change of mentality within the South African Government. It has remained evident, however, that in reality, no effort is being made to begin dismantling *apartheid* or removing from it even its harshest and most repressive aspects. On the contrary, the Government has continued to add to the body of repressive legislation that

supports the system. Recently it indicated the intention to severely restrict the freedom of the press. That action, if pursued, would constitute a severe blow to the very limited body of freedoms existing in South Africa and to one valued by all South Africans. We have noted that consideration of the pertinent legislation has been deferred for a year in the expectation that the press will discipline itself. These moves towards control of the press seem to us ominous, as they will jeopardize the possibilities that a free press offers to the South African population for analyzing its situation and seeking solutions to its pressing problems.

It is important to recognize that the key element in the evolution of South African policies in the direction we all want to see is the attitude of the South Africans themselves - and by that I mean the totality of the population. I have no doubt that, over time, the pressures induced by the events in Soweto and Sharpeville, the solidarity demonstrated by white university students for their black and coloured comrades, and the increasing level of active resistance to social and economic abuse will be the decisive element in changing the present policies of the Government.

This, of course, does not relieve us of the responsibility to do everything within our power that we collectively deem appropriate to support the efforts of the people of South Africa to achieve self-determination and to promote the objectives that we have identified and, one hopes, will agree upon in the course of this debate.

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Canada, for its part, in 1973 voluntarily placed an embargo on the sale of military equipment to South Africa and in 1970 extended this embargo to the export of spare parts for such equipment in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions. Canada is, furthermore, a major contributor to the United Nations and other multilateral non-governmental funds that have been established to provide education, training and humanitarian and development assistance to the African peoples of Southern Africa. We discourage sporting contacts with South Africa by refusing any moral or financial assistance to Canadian individuals and teams that decide to compete in South Africa and to any sporting event held in Canada in which South African teams participate. We support international actions on this subject because sport in South Africa, by law, has been and is still organized on a racial basis, contrary to the Olympic principle.

We also engage in major programs of co-operation with the independent countries of Southern Africa in order to contribute to the development of these countries and to assist in their task of

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building societies with social and economic justice for all their citizens. These will stand as proof that there is no foundation for the racist arguments of minority regimes that stability, justice and civilization will be undermined should the majority African peoples of their countries be permitted a full and equal voice in the government of those countries.

An essential element of Canadian foreign policy is that we trade in peaceful goods with all countries, even those with whose politics we are in profound disagreement, subject to our obligations under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Canada will, of course, continue faithfully to implement all mandatory decisions of the Security Council in accordance with the obligations under the UN Charter. The Council will be influenced in its decisions by the nature of future developments, as they effect not only South Africa itself but also Zimbabwe and Namibia, and in that respect the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs said recently: "It is my judgment that, if there is not some movement, clear and visible in the foreseeable future, then we run the real risk in Southern Africa or seeing a very bloody conflict erupt...".

The Canadian Government believes it is essential at this stage to take fullest advantage, and to make constructive use, of any influence that can be brought to bear on the Government of South Africa by those countries that maintain relations with it. In this group of countries, let us be frank, the United States is pre-eminent and we are impressed by the resolve expressed by the new Administration to use its best efforts to achieve our common purpose. In our view, the Council as a whole should do everything possible to take advantage of it. Of course, we cannot be sure of the outcome, but that, in itself, cannot help but influence the future policies of governments whose position on these issues will be decisive.

We believe that the Security Council at this moment has the possibility to take a significant and constructive step. We hope that it will have the courage and wisdom to do just that. It is for this reason we consider it important that the Security Council, for a period, depart from the kind of approach that has so far proved ineffective, and instead adopt a declaration of principles on Southern Africa that will serve as a statement of purpose for all members of this Council in terms of our objectives in Southern Africa. The adoption by consensus of such a declaration will serve a dual purpose. It will, on the one hand, serve as an unequivocal declaration to the Government of South Africa of our intentions. On the other, it will serve as a clear description for the citizens of our countries of the policies of Security Council members towards these unresolved problems and thereby as a vehicle to mobilize public opinion towards our objectives. In other words, in pursuing this

course of action, we shall be enlisting the active support of all members of the Council in working towards a resolution of the problems of the area.