

TALE UNDER MIDDAG TIL ÆRE FOR STATSMINISTER ROBERT
MUGABE, ZIMBABWE, PÅ AKERSHUS SLOTT

Mr. Prime Minister - Mrs. Mugabe - Distinguished Guests:

It is a great honour and pleasure for me to welcome you
Prime Minister and the other members of your delegation,
including prominent members of your Cabinet, to Akershus
Castle tonight.

2.

It is also with special pleasure I welcome you Mrs.
Sally Mugabe. Through active participation in Zimbabwe's
struggle for independence, you have won for yourself a
name of international renown.

In addressing you here tonight, Prime Minister Mugabe,
I welcome you both as the great leader of newly independent
Zimbabwe and as a most prominent spokesman for the
hopes and aspirations of all the peoples of southern
Africa.

Few peoples have had to bring so heavy sacrifices in
the struggle for freedom and human dignity as has the
people of Zimbabwe. The heroic role which you yourself

played in this struggle, Mr. Prime Minister, is well known to us. In our view you were equally courageous when you seized the opportunity of moving the tragic conflict away from the battle-field and on to the negotiating table.

The outcome of the Lancaster House talks was a victory for reason and for vision and political courage. Your personal victory on the occasion was crowned by the overwhelming vote of confidence which you got from your people in the elections which followed.

The freedom fighter who was elected the first Prime Minister of independent Zimbabwe has emerged as a man

4.

of healing and reconciliation. To be able to forget and to forgive are essential qualities of true leadership. Yours has been the leadership of a true statesman.

Thus Zimbabwe today - to the international community - stands out as an example on how the remnants of colonialism and racial discrimination can be removed from the whole of southern Africa.

It is our sincere hope that a peaceful way can still be found both to independence and majority rule for Namibia and to the abolition of the degrading system of apartheid in South Africa.

To that end pressure must be brought to bear on the minority regime in Pretoria. Norway supports concerted actions by the international community in this regard. We stand ready to play our part.

Norway has been impressed by the regional co-operation initiated by the independent African states of the area to lessen their economic dependence on South Africa. We have already given financial support to these programmes, and we will continue to do so.

As an expression of our moral and political support for the just cause of your struggle, Norway gave humanitarian assistance to the Zimbabwean patriots in their struggle for independence and majority rule.

It was thus logical for Norway to stand ready to assist independent Zimbabwe in the tremendous tasks involved in the resettlement of thousands of refugees and in the economic, social and political reconstruction of a country ravaged by years of war.

Zimbabwe can rely on our continued support. As our most inspiring talks this afternoon have already confirmed, there is an interesting potential for the further strengthening of the good relations between our two countries through an expanded economic co-operation, including trade.

Norway sympathizes, Mr. Prime Minister, with your dedication to ensuring that the masses of your population are going to share in the fruits of independence and development.

This is, as a matter of fact, the political philosophy on which our own country has been built. And this is the philosophy behind Norway's involvement in the efforts of the international community to attain a new and more equitable economic world order.

There can be no peace and stability in a world which tolerates mass poverty, mass unemployment, mass ignorance and an ever-widening gap between its "haves" and "have-nots".

8.

Enlightened self-interest should tell us so. In this world of ours we are all dependent on each other and we all have responsibilities towards each other. The vast problems to which I have referred, require global solutions and soon.

That was the important message of the Brandt Commission. The Norwegian government associated itself with the Commission's conclusions and we strongly believe that its report is indeed a "program for survival".

Therefore I must express concern at the lack of progress in establishing a more equitable economic world order in general and in particular at the failure so far to

launching the scheduled global negotiations. I do hope, however, that the forthcoming north-south meeting in Mexico will show some progress.

Norway has based its relations with Third World countries on the recognition of shared concerns and shared interests. I have with satisfaction noted during the talks I have had with you, Mr. Prime Minister, that this is a good basis for the relationship also between Norway and Zimbabwe.

Let me then, Ladies and Gentlemen, conclude my remarks by inviting You all to join me in a toast to His Excellency Prime Minister Mugabe, to the prosperity of the Zimbabwean people and to the friendship between our two nations.