

Prime Minister

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THE COUNCIL OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL
Rome April 7-9, 1987

The situation in South Africa is a matter of grave concern to us all. In less than a month the white population of South Africa will go to the polls. This election where less than one fifth of the population cast their ballots, is another clear manifestation that nothing has changed in South Africa. All attempts to prevail upon the South African Government to recognize the urgency of abolishing the apartheid system by peaceful means have proved fruitless.

At the same time our repeated calls for the adoption by the Security Council of comprehensive and mandatory sanctions against South Africa, have met with vetoes in the Council.

Apartheid is a flagrant violation of the most basic human rights. Events have only strengthened the belief that the South African Government will only abolish apartheid when it feels it has no choice. The case for sanctions against South Africa is a strong one.

The international community has a clear responsibility to act against apartheid and South Africa's aggression against the people of Namibia and the Frontline States. The adoption of sanctions would send a powerful message to South Africa that apartheid cannot be reformed, but must be abolished.

This was our conviction, also at the meeting of the Socialist International in April last year, in Botswana.

The Norwegian Government and the other Nordic Governments are now implementing measures by which a Nordic trade boycott against South Africa within short will become a reality.

In Norway, the Law on economic boycott against South Africa and Namibia entered into force on 20 March this year.

It includes:

- a general ban on imports into Norway of goods originating in South Africa and Namibia,
- a general ban on exports from Norway to South Africa and Namibia, and
- a ban on the carriage of crude oil by Norwegian vessels to and from South Africa and Namibia and by any foreign vessel which is at the disposal of Norwegian companies or any person domiciled in Norway.

We are, of course, aware that an economic boycott of South Africa by Norway, or even all the Nordic countries, alone will have only limited impact. We are convinced that strong signals are needed to manifest disapproval of the apartheid system and to express solidarity with those who work for change in South Africa. We believe that there is a need to lead the way, even if other countries so far do not follow. Increased international pressure is the only avenue left to defeat and eliminate apartheid by peaceful means. The international community must shoulder its responsibility and bring increased pressure to bear on the regime in South Africa. Mandatory sanctions adopted by the UN Security Council remain the most effective means by which to exert such pressure on the South African Government.

This fact should be sufficient as a moral obligation to all UN member countries.

The UN Charter specifically mentions economic boycott measures as a means of pressurizing the Member States to comply with

internationally accepted norms. Very few countries are self-sufficient in all important areas. South Africa is not. We have to make it clear to the regime that the outside world will not accept that the oppression continues. This calls for the strong efforts of the Socialist International, to exert all the political pressure that we can create and command.

At the last UN General Assembly, Norway initiated a resolution on an oil embargo against South Africa. In this resolution, which was adopted by a great majority, the Member States are requested to ensure the complete cessation both of the supply and shipping of oil and petroleum products to South Africa and Namibia. My Government has accepted to chair an intergovernmental committee which has been established to monitor the supply and transport of oil and petroleum products to South Africa.

Thereby we have also created a practical basis for the oil exporting countries which have adopted an oil embargo against South Africa. It makes it possible to take the necessary countermeasures against ships and shipping companies which continue to transport oil to South Africa contrary to the boycott policies of the exporting countries. I believe this decision is an important step towards broader and more comprehensive international sanctions against South Africa.

We hope that these measures also will help to bring about the adoption by the UN Security Council of effective sanctions against South Africa. We will continue to intensify our efforts inside and outside the United Nations to speed up the abolition of the apartheid system.

It is of the utmost importance that the negative measures taken by individual countries and the international community against the regime in Pretoria, be matched by equally important support for the trade unions, churches and other community groups inside South Africa that work tirelessly for peaceful change in their country. We must also fully realize that South Africa's neighbours are in a very difficult situation and that their difficulties will increase together with the mounting pressure on

the South African Government. It is our responsibility to assist them in the best possible way. We will cooperate with other groups of countries to increase this support.

May I strongly appeal for continued struggle against the inhuman system of apartheid. Let us not give in. The international community has a moral obligation to create an atmosphere conducive to peaceful change by showing determination in the fight against apartheid. The South African regime must clearly feel that the international community is no longer willing to idly watch the developments in South Africa and accept the continued suppression of the black majority. By being firm in our actions we will hasten the downfall of apartheid and shorten the suffering in South Africa. We should all join forces to achieve this goal.