



Foreign and Commonwealth Office

London SW1A 2AH

25 August 1983

From The Minister of State

The Rt Rev Trevor Huddleston
President
Anti-Apartheid Movement
13 Selous Street
LONDON NW1 ODW

Dear Bishop,

Thank you for your letter of 5 August.

I have now read your memorandum and carefully considered the questions it raises. We covered in considerable detail many of the individual topics in it during our recent meeting (including Namibia, the whole question of sanctions, the Falkland Islands airfield and so on); and others have been dealt with in correspondence between the Anti-Apartheid Movement and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in recent months.

I think it is fair to say that we share the same goals in South Africa: an internationally recognised settlement in Namibia, a reduction of tension and violence in the region, and progress towards a form of government in South Africa based on the consent of the South African people as a whole. We also share your abhorrence of apartheid and of the measures by which this policy is enforced. Where we differ is on the means which are most likely to influence the course of events in Southern Africa and bring about the peaceful achievement of these goals. You would have us disengage completely. Your memorandum urges the Government to review its policy towards South Africa and take the necessary decisions to do this.

In contrast, I do not believe this to be the right approach to the problems of Southern Africa and so I do not accept that there is any need for a change of government policy. In particular, I must stress the Government's firm belief that wider sanctions against South Africa are most unlikely to be effective. Indeed, they would be counter-productive and strengthen opposition to internal reform and remove all prospects of a settlement in Namibia. Nor do we believe that attitudes can best be changed by isolation and ostracism. This does not mean that we are not working for change in South Africa. On the contrary we use regularly and positively our links and contacts as well as a frank dialogue with South Africa to encourage change and reform.

/We are ...



We are committed to this and will continue our efforts. However I am bound to accept that in a difficult and complex situation significant progress is very difficult to achieve.

On the new Falkland Islands airfield, I am glad to repeat my assurance to you that no equipment or materials for its construction will be supplied from South Africa.

As regards the Marconi air traffic control radar, an export licence was granted for this equipment on the understanding that it is to be exported to the authority in South Africa responsible for the control of civil air traffic in Southern Africa. We take very seriously our obligations under the UN Arms Embargo.

I do not remember agreeing to arrange for officials to have a further meeting with you to discuss a memorandum you are preparing on the UN Arms Embargo against South Africa. But I am quite happy that such a meeting should take place. Perhaps you would contact Southern African Department (Jeremy Varcoe on 233 5189 or Nigel Thrope on 233 4954) directly to arrange this.

Your sincerely,
Malcolm Rifkind

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