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ÖVERLÄMNAS FRÅN
STATSRÅDSBEREDNINGEN

Med vänlig hälsning

Inger Bergström

Speech by Prime Minister Olof Palme at the luncheon
given in honour of the President of the Republic of
Zambia, Dr Kenneth D. Kaunda, on February 13, 1985

M W A I S É N I B A S H I M P U N D U M U L I S H A N I .

This is a greeting in the Bemba language and means:

"Welcome, father of twins, how are you?"

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We have met many times, Mr. President. I particularly remember my official visit to Zambia in 1971, when we stood together at the Victoria Falls - at that time "the frontier of human decency" in Africa. Since then much has changed in your part of the world. Southern Rhodesia is today independent Zimbabwe. Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau and Cap Verde are sovereign countries with majority rule.

Your own role, Mr. President, in these developments has been highly significant. Your commitment to the struggle for independence and majority rule throughout Southern Africa has been as firm and constant as the struggle of the majorities themselves. You have given of your experience and advice. You have provided sanctuary and shelter to the victims of colonialism and minority rule.

You have done this during a time of difficult national reconstruction and development in your own country. You have constantly sought peaceful solutions to the problems of the region, while not denying support to movements who have been driven to use armed force to gain freedom.

Your support has been given at great cost and risk to Zambia itself. I happened to be in Lusaka in 1977 when you had to impose a curfew and a power-cut. Zambia's participation in the United Nations sanctions against Rhodesia involved great economic sacrifice.

Your commitment to freedom in Southern Africa has not weakened. We know of, and we appreciate your active participation and your support for the struggle of the majorities in South Africa and Namibia for self-determination, independence and democracy, indeed for decency.

You come to Sweden, Mr. President, at a time when this struggle enters a new and sensitive phase. Two of South Africa's neighbours have entered into agreements with Pretoria, whose significance we have to study with great attention and seriousness. What I want to point out, and I am sure you agree with me, Mr. President, is that, whatever the motives on the part of South Africa, they do not signal any

weakening of the resolve of these two countries to oppose minority rule in South Africa and to contribute, each in accordance with its national interests, to bringing about a change. This needs to be said in order to avoid harmful misinterpretations. It cannot be repeated too often that the root cause of the conflict in Southern Africa is the abhorrent racial system in South Africa and the desperate attempts of its rulers to preserve the system by all means at their disposal.

When the Foreign Ministers of the Front-line States and the Nordic countries met here in Stockholm in June last year, there was agreement that continued pressure from the outside is absolutely necessary to oblige the minority regime in South Africa to change its course and to initiate action that will in an irreversible manner lead to abolition of apartheid and to democratic rule for all citizens of the country.

At the Arusha conference in September last year we agreed that there will be no real peace in southern Africa until apartheid is eradicated. We noted that no significant changes in that policy had taken place. The constitutional changes in South Africa, involving the mixed-race and Asian minorities, seemed rather to be intended to further divide the people of South Africa and to create new and more refined means of

racist minority rule. It was established that the destabilization policies of South Africa towards neighbouring countries continued with the aim of preserving apartheid in South Africa. Several participants stressed that contacts between South Africa and neighbouring states could not be used to justify attempts to break the international isolation of the apartheid regime.

There are signs that there are winds of change. I do not mean by that the constitutional changes which were rejected even by those who are supposed to benefit from them. Nor do I mean that there has been any reduction in the brutality employed to suppress the protests of the people against the injustices, the rent increases, the forced removals and the inferior education for non-whites. On the contrary, the manner in which black people are deprived of their citizenship is truly shocking.

But we note that UDF exists and can do useful work, that black trade unions increase their membership and become more conscious of their power and more willing to use it for purposes that are related to struggle for liberation from apartheid. We note that the tone has changed in which the question of the release of the great African leader Nelson Mandela is being discussed. We support your call for a release of Nelson Mandela and other jailed nationalist leaders

of South Africa and hope that efforts in this direction will soon bear fruit. The South African Government must realize that it cannot solve its problems by keeping the leaders of the opposition in jail.

Peaceful change may still be possible. But it will have to come soon if violence is not to become unavoidable. Violence, if it comes, will lead to enormous and tragic suffering for all concerned.

So the international efforts to bring pressure on South Africa have to be pursued.

Sweden will do her part. We do what we can to bring about binding economic sanctions decided by the Security Council and applied by all countries of the world. We take measures at the national level to isolate South Africa, hoping that they will be followed by others. I want to tell you, Mr. President, that next week the Swedish Parliament is expected to pass a law confirming and reinforcing the prohibition of new Swedish investments in South Africa and adding some new limitations to contacts between Sweden and South Africa in various fields.

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Sweden and Zambia both work within the United Nations and in other international bodies for a more just global economic order. Your continent, Mr. President, has been severely affected by the world economic crisis in recent years. In addition, large parts of Africa, including your own country, have experienced a drought of exceptional severity. Collective international action is required to change this situation. Practical ways of breaking the present stalemate in the North-South dialogue must be found. Measures have to be taken to alleviate the acute famine as well as to solve the long-term structural development problems in Africa.

Mr. President, I started out by saying that when I first visited your country in 1971, Zambia was surrounded by countries under colonial or minority rule. At that time the prospects of speedy change were very slim.

During the 13 years that have passed since then, we have seen the birth of several independent countries in your vicinity. I want to state again my firm belief that the process of liberation cannot be stopped. Zambia and Sweden both eagerly wait for the remaining two countries in Southern Africa to join the community of independent countries under majority rule.

The negotiations on Namibia's independence in accordance with UN resolution 435 have been under way for almost seven years. Seven years of waiting for substantial commitments on the part of South Africa. It has also been seven years of waiting for genuine pressure on South Africa to be exerted by the members of the established Contact Group. It is an international disgrace that Namibia has not yet achieved its independence. Our policy is to persist in demanding South Africa's withdrawal from Namibia. We feel that sanctions by the United Nations are necessary also to make South Africa co-operate in the case of Namibia. We are committed to continue our support to the Namibian people - now - and also when their day of freedom finally comes.

It is only natural, Mr. President, that as our views are so often identical or similar, our two countries work closely together and maintain most friendly, cooperative relations.

And our friendship with you, Mr. President, dates far back. We came to know you before Zambia's independence, when you visited Stockholm in early 1964. A firm foundation was laid at that time. The co-operation between our governments and countries now comprise extensive contacts in the commercial, development co-operation and cultural fields.

I again bid you, Mr. President, most warmly welcome to Sweden and propose a toast to the prosperity and happiness of the people of Zambia and to the deep and lasting friendship between our two nations and people.