

A. K. M. Abdus Sabur

SOUTH AFRICAN STRATEGY IN NAMIBIA : AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY*

Introduction

Namibia—the victim of worst human repression and rapacious plunder of the contemporary history by the racist regime of South Africa, which continues to illegally occupy the territory—has always been a matter of serious concern to the international community. The United Nations activity in regard to Namibia has acquired such gigantic proportions that today it stands unsurpassed by its activity on any other issue which she has grappled so far.¹ The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Organization of African Unity (OAU), Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) also employed significant efforts to bring about a solution resulting in Namibia's independence. The United Nations in 1946 rejected South Africa's proposal for annexation of Namibia and asked the former to surrender the territory to the United Nations trusteeship. In view of South Africa's non-compliance to United Nations resolutions, its mandate was terminated in 1966 and the following year the United Nations set up the United Nations Council for South West Africa (later, renamed United Nations Council for Namibia), which till now serves as the *de jure* government of Namibia. The United Nations took another important step in 1973 by recognizing the South West Africa

*An earlier version of the paper was presented at the UN Regional Symposium on Namibia held at Singapore during 6-10 May 1985.

1. Suresh Chandra Saxena, *Namibia : Challenge to the United Nations*, Sundeep Prakashan, Delhi, 1978, p. 7.

People's Organization (SWAPO) as the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people. Further intensification of international efforts to bring an end to illegal occupation of Namibia resulted in the adoption in 1978 of United Nations Security Council resolution 435, apparently accepted by both SWAPO and South Africa. The resolution is widely known as the United Nations plan for Namibia. It calls for a cessation of hostilities between SWAPO and South Africa, withdrawal of South African troops, and free elections in Namibia supervised by the United Nations to decide the future of the country.² Since the adoption of Security Council resolution 435 it remains the only basis for an internationally acceptable settlement.

The initial optimism, as generated by the adoption of Security Council resolution 435 soon turned to be shortlived as its implementation has been blocked by the racist regime in Pretoria in one way or another. The inordinate and inexcusable delay in gaining the goal of Namibian independence caused by South Africa's intransigence coupled with its policy of aggression towards the front-line states of southern Africa, has been the focus of growing international concern during the past few years. In this backdrop an attempt is made in this paper to study the Namibia issue since the adoption of United Nations Security Council resolution 435. Part I of the paper highlights the recent strategy of South Africa towards the Namibia issue, while in part II an assessment is made of the role played by the international community *vis-a-vis* the issue in general and South African strategy in particular. Finally, the prospects for the future have been explored and some approaches for strengthening world-wide efforts for the independence of Namibia have been made.

I

South African Strategy

South Africa's acceptance of Security Council resolution 435 in no way indicated her willingness to offer independence to Namibia.

2. Patrick O'Meara, "South Africa : No New Political Dispensation", *Current History*, March, 1984, p. 131.

In fact what prompted at that time her reluctant acceptance of the resolution was the possibility of further isolation in the international community. Non-acceptance could result in more harsh actions by the United Nations while her Western supporters could face severe embarrassment in defending her. Moreover, the racist regime was facing sharp criticism from the Western public opinion and the Governments and business circles in the West were in great troubles in justifying their relations with Pretoria. South African acceptance of the United Nations Security Council resolution 435 was thus designed to disarm the critics of *apartheid* in the West while providing the vested interest groups with "moral argument" in favour of the continuation of their overt and covert linkages with the Pretoria regime.

While accepting the resolution formally, South Africa embarked upon a multi-pronged strategy with a view to thwarting the implementation of the Security Council resolution 435 and prolong its illegal occupation of Namibia as long as possible. The main element of this strategy was to discredit the United Nations by questioning its objectivity and neutrality and subsequently to challenge the authority of the universal organization of peace. The *apartheid* regime accused the United Nations of not being an honest broker in the sense that it has already taken sides in the dispute by recognizing SWAPO as the "sole legitimate representative of the Namibian people". In Pretoria's view this "collective legitimization" gives SWAPO electoral and propagandist advantages. As the United Nations was biased in favour of SWAPO it could not be expected to impartially implement the United Nations Security Council resolution 435.³ It was a cover for South Africa's real concern which was that SWAPO would inevitably win an independent and neutrally supervised election.

3. Christopher Coker, "Peacekeeping in Southern Africa : The United Nations and Namibia", *The Journal of Commonwealth Comparative Politics*, vol. 19, No. 2, July 1981, pp. 174-186.

South Africa later on demanded that in order to assure its unbiasedness the United Nations must rescind its recognition of SWAPO as the "sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people".⁴ In addition, it also demanded that the soldiers of the United Nations Task Force who will monitor the election must wear the uniforms of their own national armies and not the blue helmets of the United Nations as the latter in Pretoria's view would give SWAPO a psychological advantage; the Task Force should be composed of members of the five Western countries and Nigeria.⁵ All these were designed to divert the focus of attention from the main issue, *viz*, the immediate independence of Namibia to peripheral issues and to discredit and undermine the authority of the United Nations as the mediator in the dispute.

In 1982 South Africa introduced a totally extraneous factor to the issue. It demanded the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola as *sine qua non* for the independence of Namibia. It may be noted that Cuban troops have been in Angola right from 1975 and Security Council resolution 435 on Namibia was adopted in 1978. None asked for Cuban withdrawal from Angola then Evidently the South African racist regime, faced with tremendous pressure from the international community to end its illegal occupation of Namibia, brought up this alien issue only to scuttle the United Nations plan on Namibia. It may also be recalled that when there was no Cuban troops issue South Africa had other pretexts and it is widely believed that when there would not be Cuban troops in Angola it would find out other pretexts to block Namibian settlement.

Immediate support to this demand by the US Vice-President George Bush and Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker led some analysts to believe that Washington authored this linkage between a Namibian settlement and Cuban withdrawal.⁶ whoever may have

4. Kenneth Grunday, "Namibia in International Politics", *Current History*, March, 1982, p. 131.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 131-132.

6. Hari Sharan Chhabra, "A Compelling Issue" *World Focus*, June, 1983, p. 6.

authored the "linkage concept", it was a well-thought political trick designed to block the Namibian settlement. It was known to the authors of this concept that Angola would not and could not consider the withdrawal of Cuban troops from her territory primarily in view of systematic raids by South Africa and United States-South Africa backed Unita forces on her territory. The United Nations also could not accept the linkage concept because the Cuban presence in Angola was in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. More importantly, if the linkage concept was accepted, it would be

South African strategy has been to divert the focus of international attention from the main issue of independence of Namibia and to undermine and discredit the authority of the UN as the mediator.

the first time in the history of the United Nations that the decolonization was linked to an extraneous factor. The United Nations could not risk to create such a precedence that could be used by others to thwart the process of decolonization.

However, had South Africa been genuinely interested in a Namibian settlement, the linkage issue could also have been resolved. It is widely believed in the international circles, and Luanda herself also dropped indications—that the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola is possible if genuine guarantee of the latter's security from South African aggression and subversive activities of the United States-South Africa backed Unita forces of Savimbi is assured.⁷ Instead, by significantly escalating its military activity in Southern Angola, increasing its support of Savimbi, South Africa has created a situation on the ground that makes it almost impossible for the Angola Government to consider concessions on the issue. Thus, the presence of Cuban troops in Angola—a non-issue in Namibian settlement—became the most

7. See, Mohammad Shamsul Huq, "The Agonies of Namibia : An Analysis of the Problem and Search for a Solution", *BISS Journal*, vol. 5, No. 4, October, 1984, pp. 502-503.

stumbling block in the way of the achievement of independence by Namibia. Parallel with the "linkage strategy" the South African racist regime designed to bring about a sham independence in Namibia under a puppet regime. With this end in view, the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) chaired by Disk Mudge was established in 1977. Despite the backing of *apartheid* state machine, a "humane camouflage" and wide coverage in Western propaganda, it could not emerge as a significant factor in Namibian politics not to speak about a counter balance to SWAPO.

After the collapse of the DTA puppet government, Pretoria announced the proposal of a State Council to consist of so-called internal parties of Namibia barring SWAPO with the purpose of drafting a "constitution" for the Country. As most of the so-called internal parties other than the DTA rejected the initiative it ended with a fiasco. In November 1983, the racist regime came out with another dirty trick to further stall Namibia's independence under the guise of "internal" solution. This time a new political coalition as an alternative to SWAPO was initiated in the form of a Multi-Party Conference (MPC). According to the prevailing thinking in Pretoria, the MPC and not the Security Council resolution 435 will be the basis for a settlement of the Namibian question.⁸

While playing with a political settlement, South Africa continues to suppress the Namibian people. The massive South African military build-up has turned Namibia into a garrison state. The deployment of 100,000 South African troops⁹ made the citizen-soldier ratio 12:1—enough to terrorize the general population. Fifty per cent of the population live under martial law. There have been numerous cases of torture of civilian detainees under interrogation, "disappearance" extrajudicial executions.¹⁰ All these are being done to suppress the

8. See, *The Economist*, March 30, 1985, p. 24.

9. For details see, United Nations General Assembly, *Document No. A/AC.109/784*, 3 August, 1984, pp.3-5.

10. *Ibid.*

Namibian people, their vanguard SWAPO, and their struggle for the independence of motherland.

1981-1982 was marked by a new and more aggressive phase in South Africa's strategy. Modelled after Israel's Lebanon strategy, the new South African posture sought to use economic coercion, support for anti-government forces in neighbouring countries, subversion and direct military action to neutralize the Governments that might consider aiding anti-South African forces, particularly the SWAPO. In 1982, this aggressive strategy reached a crescendo with military and economic aggression across every one of South Africa's frontiers, Angola being its worst victim. Pretoria's aggression against Angola was primarily designed to liquidate SWAPO's military presence in that country. It also sought to topple the MPLA Government and to instal a puppet regime or at least to compel Luanda to refrain from providing SWAPO with shelter and military-political assistance. Pretoria's actions against other neighbours were aimed at suppressing South African patriots—the African National Congress in particular—and at economic destabilization, to ensure the countries remain vulnerable through their dependence on South Africa. Thus on the military front South Africa's strategy is designed to defeat SWAPO and the front-line States militarily prior to a negotiated settlement, if at all such a settlement takes place.

II

Role of the International Community

Since the adoption of the United Nations Security Council resolution 435, the international community continued and intensified its efforts through the United Nations as well as other international fora, notably the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), and the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), with a view to creating favourable conditions for the implementation of the resolution. Activities of the international community were pursued in the following directions :

1. Continued condemnation of South Africa for its illegal occupation of Namibia.
2. Prevention of South African military build-up in Namibia and the brutal suppression of its people and the rampant plunder of its resources.
3. Rendering moral, political, material as well as military support to Namibian people to carry on struggle against *apartheid* under the leadership of SWAPO—the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people—for the independence of their motherland.
4. Prevention of South African and some other Western enterprises from exploiting Namibia's resources—mineral resources in particular.
5. Condemnation of systematic South African aggression against its neighbours and providing the latter with political as well as material and military support in defending their motherland.
6. Thwarting the South African attempts to bypass the United Nations which are aimed at imposing a neo-colonial arrangement in Namibia under the guise of "internal settlement".
7. Preventing South Africa and the United States from relating the question of Namibia's independence with alien and extraneous issues, such as the presence of Cuban troops in Angola.
8. Influencing Western Governments, Reagan Administration in particular to exert pressure on the *apartheid* regime for the immediate settlement of the Namibia issue.
9. Intensification of diplomatic efforts including dialogue with Pretoria with a view to bringing about a peaceful settlement of the problem.
10. Mobilisation and consolidation of international opinion against the racist regime.
11. Finally, total isolation of the *apartheid* regime in Pretoria by the use of comprehensive mandatory sanctions against it under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations to ensure its compliance with the resolutions and decisions of the United Nations pertaining to the granting of independence to Namibia.

The outcome of these efforts was mixed. South Africa continues to be condemned consistently in all international fora with Third World participation for its illegal occupation of Namibia and the suppression of its people, aggression against its neighbours and for blocking a negotiated settlement to the problem. Rampant exploitation of Namibia's mineral resources has not only been condemned but in a recent United Nations General Assembly resolution 39/50 adopted on 2 December 1984 in its thirty-ninth session it was declared that "all the foreign economic interests operating in Namibia are liable to pay damage to the future lawful Government of an independent Namibia".¹¹

Along with political and diplomatic support, material assistance, including military assistance was rendered to SWAPO and the front-line states in repulsing South African aggression. While military assistance could not make SWAPO and the front-line States strong enough to pose a military challenge to the racist regime, the diplomatic efforts generated universal condemnation of Pretoria's aggression against its neighbours. The United States was at last compelled to give away to international pressures and the United Nations Security Council could adopt a resolution (545) by 14 to nil (with United States abstention) condemning South Africa's continued military operations of Southern Angola, demanding her unconditional withdrawal and redress for any material damage suffered by Angola.¹² International efforts to a certain extent lessened Pretoria's military pressure on her neighbours. At the same time, part of Angolan territory still remains under the occupation of South Africa and the threat of further aggression against the front-line states still persists.

"Internal settlement" plan of the racist regime with a view to bypassing the United Nations was vehemently opposed by the international community. General Assembly resolution 39/50 condemned and rejected the puppet MPC as a political stratagem through which

11. United Nations General Assembly, *Document No. A/RES/39/50*, 25 January, 1985, p. 8.

12. Mohammad Shamsul Huq, *op. cit.*, p. 501.

"Pretoria attempts to impose a neo-colonial settlement",¹³ reaffirmed that the only parties to the conflict in Namibia are, on the one hand the Namibian people represented by the SWAPO, and on the other the racist regime, which illegally occupies Namibia.¹⁴ The same resolution also reiterated that the United Nations has direct responsibility for Namibia until independence.¹⁵

Under tremendous pressure from the Non-Aligned countries and its African members in particular, the United States was neutralized in the Security Council on the "linkage" issue. It contributed to the adoption of resolution 539 by the Security Council on 28 October 1983 by a vote of 14 to nil with I abstention (the United States) which rejected South Africa's insistence on irrelevant and extraneous issues and reiterated that Security Council resolution 435 was the only basis for a peaceful settlement to the problem.¹⁶ But South Africa, supported by the United States, did not accept the resolution and is still insisting on its linkage issue. As a result, all efforts of the United Nations Secretary General to initiate fruitful negotiations with the Pretoria regime were frustrated. Similarly comprehensive mandatory sanctions under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter also were blocked by the three Western permanent members of the Security Council. The international community reacted to all these with sharp criticism against the collaboration of Western countries with the racist regime and the Reagan Administration was obviously its main target. Thus, the Seventh Non-Aligned Summit Declaration condemning the United States policy of "constructive engagement" pointed out that the United States proclamation of the racist regime as "a friend and ally has encouraged it in its intensified repression of the South African people, its escalating aggression against its

13. United Nations General Assembly, *Document No. A/RES/39/50*, 25 January, 1985, p. 8.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

16. United Nations General Assembly, *Document No. A/AC.109/784*, 3 August, 1984, p. 8.

neighbours and its determined intransigence over Namibian independence".¹⁷ While some Western countries seem to be responsive to outside criticism, the Reagan Administration still continues to stick to its own.

It is worthwhile here to briefly outline the main economic interests of the West in general and the United States in particular which are largely considered as the main source of South African strength and resultant intransigence and also the weakness of the overall international response. South Africa and its illegally occupied territory Namibia has always been a paradise for the foreign investors. Thanks to the policy of *apartheid* there is a plentiful supply of cheap labour and usually rigid law and order enforcement. Exchange controls on non-residents were ended in 1983.¹⁸ Investment under the *apartheid* regime was and still remains highly profitable. A 1983 survey suggested that the rate of return in mining in South Africa was 25 per cent against 14 per cent in the rest of the world, while in the manufacturing industry it is 18 per cent against 13 per cent.¹⁹ Another study concerning Namibia have shown that over 60 per cent of the country's GDP is appropriated as company profits before taxes.²⁰

The conditions, exclusively favourable for foreign capital created by *apartheid*, coupled with the fact that Namibia is the third largest producer of minerals in Africa attracted a significant number of Western investors from both sides of the Atlantic. Statistical information on the Namibian economy is hard to obtain ; figures that are released are carefully selected by the *apartheid* regime. However, already available data show how deeply the West is involved in exploiting the resources of Namibia. Among the South African based corporations involved

17. K. Subrahmanyam, "Security Balance : How About a Peacekeeping Force?", *World Focus*, June, 1983, p. 17.

18. *The Economist*, March 30, 1985, p. 32.

19. *Ibid.*

20. *Namibia in the 1980s*, (British Council of Churches and Catholic Institute of International Relations, London, 1981), pp. 33-34.

in Namibia, the largest investor is the Anglo-American Corporation, whose affiliate, *De Beers*, controls the Consolidated Diamond Mines of South West Africa Ltd. (CDM). Other major transnational corporations operating in Namibia are: the Tsumeb Corporation Ltd., which is controlled by Gold Fields of South Africa, a subsidiary of Consolidated Gold Fields, Ltd. of the United Kingdom; and the Newmont Mining Corporation of the United States; and Rossing Uranium, Ltd., in which the Rio Tinto Zinc Corporation Ltd. (RTZ) of the United Kingdom owns the majority equity capital. The total capital investment of the big three (Rossing Uranium Ltd., CDM and the Tsumeb Corporation) is nearly 40 per cent more than the country's GDP for 1983.²¹ They account for about 95 per cent of mineral production and exports and hold approximately 80 per cent of the mineral assets of Namibia.²² Other corporations based in Western Europe which operate or invest in Namibia include two of the largest international banking companies, Barclay's Bank (UK) and the Dresdner Bank (Federal Republic of Germany); two of the seven largest Western petroleum companies, British Petroleum Company and the Shell Transport and Trading Company, Ltd., which is part of the Royal Dutch Shell Group.

North American Corporations with extensive operations in Namibia include the Standard Oil Company of California and Texaco, Inco, the Mobil Oil Corporation and Hudson's Bay Company of Canada.²³ These are, of course, an incomplete list of Western corporations which are involved in exploiting Namibia's human and natural resources.

Besides, South Africa is a major source of strategic raw materials such as chrome, platinum, vanadium and manganese procured by the West.²⁴ Western countries remain South Africa's major trade partners. While Japan is South Africa's biggest export customer and Germany

21. United Nations General Assembly, *Document No. A/AC.109/782*, August 2, 1984, p. 4.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

23. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

24. See, *The Economist*, March 30, 1985, p. 33; *South*, June, 1983 pp. 15-17.

its biggest import supplier, the US still remains the leading trade partner with over \$2 billion of total business in 1984.²⁵

Along with economic inducements Pretoria's racist leaders, as in the past, are still continuously endeavouring to impress upon the West, particularly the United States by the abundant resources South Africa can offer for the protection of Western interests in terms of deterring both the indigenous nationalist and leftist forces as well as the growing influence of the USSR in Africa. With this end in view, Pretoria is fostering a cold war atmosphere in the region as well as beyond it, while justifying its occupation of Namibia to the West stressing that it serves the common Western-South African interests.

Economic inducements coupled with its anti-communist thrust the South African policy have had immense effect in shaping western policy towards apartheid in general and the Namibia issue in particular.

South African leaders are continuously trying to convince the West that the USSR is intending "to control the fossil fuel resources of the Middle East and the mineral resources of Southern Africa," and that the latter identified South Africa as a target area and wishes "to use the Republic because of its strategic position and mineral wealth, to achieve world domination".²⁶ Prime Minister P. W. Botha in a statement emphasizing South Africa's strategic importance and its anti-communist stance called upon the West to strengthen the *apartheid* regime and help make it a "bastion against communism."²⁷

Economic inducements coupled with the anti-communist thrust in South African policy have had immense effect in shaping Western policy towards *apartheid* in general and the Namibia issue in particular.

25. *The Economist*, March 30, 1985, p. 33.

26. *South*, June, 1983, p. 15.

27. Patrick O'Meara, "South Africa : The Politics of Change", *Current History*, March, 1981, p. 114.

It made the Western countries at least tolerant of the *apartheid* regime and its illegal occupation of Namibia. It was overtly manifested in Reagan Administration's new approach to the *apartheid* regime in general and the Namibia issue in particular.

New policy formulated by the United States Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Chester Crocker, and known as the policy of "constructive engagement" was a significant departure from the policy of the Carter Administration which maintained a distance from *apartheid* and ostensibly sought to influence Pretoria by applying pressure. According to Mr. Crocker's perception *apartheid* would not be ended by ostracism.²⁸ So, he talked of ending "South Africa's polecat status in the world and restore its place as a legitimate and important regional factor" with whom the United States can "co-operate pragmatically".²⁹

In practice, this policy resulted in a wider co-operation between the United States and South Africa on a number of issues with far-reaching consequences. Having a more favourable Administration in Washington, Pretoria became more and more intransigent on the Namibia issue. With United States patronage Pretoria successfully blocked the already far from satisfactory activities of the Contact Group (comprised of Canada, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom and United States) to arrange a United Nations supervised elections in Namibia. The United States support to the "linkage concept," brought the negotiation process to a deadlock. The United Nations Security Council initially could not adopt a resolution condemning the South African flagrant aggression against Angola as the resolution was vetoed by the United States. All these provided evidence of what the Organization of African United called an "unholy alliance" between Washington and Pretoria.³⁰ Though some Western countries, notably, France did not support the United

28. *The Economist*, March 30, 1985, p. 16.

29. Anirudha Gupta, "Major Powers : Washington-Pretoria Axis", *World Focus*, June, 1983, p. 19.

30. Kenneth Grunday, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

States approach to Pretoria, they neither could influence the Reagan Administration nor could take any separate initiative against Pretoria. Moreover, some European Powers, notably Britain, while loud in their condemnation of *apartheid*, have been cautious, in actual policy. It was quite obvious during P. W. Botha's tour of Europe this year³¹. Western diplomacy on Namibia as the Namibians themselves perceive, "has been full of pitfalls and thinly concealed traps which have been set to lure the oppressed Namibian people into a neo-colonial arrangement."³² Not only the Namibians, the racists in South Africa also clearly understand this which has always tempted them to commit any sort of crime against the people of Namibia as well as the people's of the front-line states with a high degree of impunity.

The above discussion has demonstrated both the strength and weakness of international efforts designed to ensure South Africa's compliance with the Security Council resolution 435. These efforts have mobilized the international community and the world public opinion against *apartheid* and its illegal occupation of Namibia. Numerous resolutions were adopted condemning South Africa and Western collaboration with it. The racist regime in Pretoria has been the target of literally universal condemnation. It came as a moral boost to SWAPO and the frontline States when their overall situation has been subject to increasing pressure from South African aggression. However a harsh reality that has to be recognized is that this universal condemnation could not bring any positive change in South Africa's policy regarding Namibia. Pretoria could afford to ignore the international community with a high degree of impunity. A number of reasons lie behind it. Being the regional super-power South Africa remains militarily invulnerable. A recent study of military balance in Southern Africa suggests that South Africa's military potential far exceeds that of all her neighbours taken together. In addition it has also been developing nuclear technology with the

31. See, *The Guardian*, March 31, 1985.

32. Randolph Vinge, "The Namibia File", *The Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No. 2, April, 1983, p. 360.

help of certain Western firms.³³ Despite the fact that the patriots of Namibia are causing a certain degree of damage to the occupied army in Namibia, still then, available data show that Namibia still pays to Pretoria.³⁴ Namibian minerals not only pay the military bill but also offer high hopes of lucrative economic returns over time. As seen from Pretoria, continued military occupation is justified from the economic point of view. Pretoria has little concern for international condemnation and economic sanctions as long as its trading partners in the West hold the line and the three Western permanent members of the United Nations Security Council continue to block any harsh measure under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter. All these added more and more intransigence to South Africa's

The Western world in general and the US in particular did not find it compulsive for them to take such measures that could compel the racist regime in Pretoria to come to terms with the international community.

position. Now it is consolidating its hold over Namibia rather than granting independence to the country. It seems that ruling circles in Pretoria both in power and outside it reached a conclusion that Namibia should be and could be retained under *apartheids* control. The Western world in general did not find it compulsive for them to take such measures that could compel the racist regime in Pretoria to come to terms with the international community. Instead, the United States probably irrationally found it expedient to co-operate with racist regime at the expense of the Namibian people. The situation is so frustrating that it led the SWAPO President Dr. Sam Nujoma to a sad conclusion that "prospects for Namibia's independence were bleak".³⁵ One may add

33. K. Subrahmanyam, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16.

34. For details see, *South*, June, 1983, p. 15.

35. *The Bangladesh Observer*, April 20, 1985.

that the Namibian problem is far from peaceful settlement and it will continue to remain so unless and until a major breakthrough specially in the attitude of the West in general and the United States in particular took place.

III

Concluding Observations

Given the long suffering of the Namibian people under the most inhuman rule by *apartheid*, given the suffering of the people of the front-line states from South African aggression, given the current level of the mobilization of international support in favour of the Namibian people and given the fact that the Western Powers—despite how mighty they are in terms of economic and military potential—do not live in isolation in a highly interdependent world, it is not only necessary but also possible to initiate further actions against the racist regime in Pretoria with a view to compel it to refrain from aggression against its neighbours and to end its illegal occupation of Namibia. First and foremost responsibility of the international community now is to secure the end of systematic raids by Pretoria against her neighbours. In this regard, diplomatic actions in and outside the United Nations could be combined with provision of the SWAPO and the frontline states with necessary economic and military assistance in repulsing South African aggression. It is obvious that even with outside assistance it would not be possible for either SWAPO or the front-line states to challenge the military machine of *apartheid* in the foreseeable future. But it would, of course, decrease their suffering and let them increase the cost of *apartheid's* military adventure. Besides, as we have seen Namibia still brings profits to Pretoria. Part of SWAPO's strategy must be to increase the cost of South Africa's military occupation of Namibia to such an extent that would turn the country into an unviable colony at least from strictly economic

point of view. If this happens, it would mark a significant achievement in the struggle for the independence of Namibia.

However, the focus of attention of the international community must remain, as before, the total isolation of the racist regime in Pretoria as it is the only possible method by which the intransigent *apartheid* regime could be compelled to come to terms with the Namibian people. In this regard, future diplomatic moves must be mainly designed to influence the attitude of the Western government policies towards *apartheid* in general, and the Namibia issue, in particular. Past experience has bitterly demonstrated that economic sanctions against Pretoria cannot be effective enough to cause any real damage to it without the unequivocal participation of the Western countries. To create real pressure on Pretoria it is imperative to enlist Western participation in sanctions against her. Therefore, moves should proceed in this direction, despite the fact that some Western Governments the Reagan Administration in particular, are far from agreeing to such an arrangement. Some developments are far gradually taking shape, which in future, would make the Western Governments receptive to pressure for change in their policy *vis-a-vis* Pretoria.

There is a growing apprehension among certain European Powers that their larger economic interests in Africa could be jeopardized by the too rigid South African policy. In addition, it would create a climate most favourable to the Soviet Union to gain in her influence in the continent with the least strain on her military-economic resources. Recently one Western analyst expressed apprehension that South Africa "would become the instrument for fulfilling its own worst nightmare: introducing the communist Powers as a major force into Southern Africa, and as an ally of African nationalism".³⁶ Such a line of thinking is gaining strength in the Western mind and it could very well influence the policy makers in their dealings with the Namibia issue. These apprehensions prompted a number of European

36. R.R. Ramchandani, "Economy : Reckless Plunder", *World Focus*, June, 1983, p. 26.

Powers to change at least some highly unpopular aspects of their policy regarding the Namibia issue. France has already called for a settlement of the Namibia problem on the basis of Security Council resolution 435 and opposed the linkage concept. The Federal Republic of Germany, too, has begun to develop a new line towards linkage concept. Britain as well is maintaining an ostensible distance from the *apartheid* regime. Any future diplomatic move should grasp the disappointment in Europe with the Reagan Administration's policy towards Namibia and the European apprehension of the growing influence of the USSR in Africa and take advantage of them. Condemnation, of course, makes the United States and her allies

The focus of attention of the international community must remain, as before, on the total isolation of the racist regime in Pretoria as it is the only possible method by which the intransigent apartheid regime could be compelled to come to terms with the Namibian people.

morally weak and defensive in putting argument in favour of their co-operation with the racist regime but cost almost nothing in material terms. The time has come when it is not only necessary, but also possible to bring the message to Washington that it could no longer underwrite *apartheid* without seriously jeopardizing wider American interests in other parts of Africa. Ever growing United States interests in Africa provide the countries of the continent with that leverage. Recently the volume of United States trade with Nigeria has nearly surpassed that with South Africa.³⁷ In addition Nigeria is now the second largest supplier of oil to the United States with a supply of 2.4 million barrels a day.³⁸ United States private business has spread out in Zaire, Kenya, Sudan and Guinea, particularly in mining and manufacturing sectors. Even in Angola, there

37. Anirudha Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

38. Patrick O'Meara, "South Africa : The Politics of Change", *Current History*, March, 1981, p. 114.

are hundreds of millions of dollars of United States investment.³⁹ All these cannot be ignored for long by the people in Washington who formulate United States African policy.

Another factor that should be taken into account by the Western leaders is that public opinion in the West is progressively turning against Pretoria regime. The United States, in particular, is witnessing an "anti-apartheid revival". The anti-apartheid movement in the United States influencing quite important sections of the American populace "precipitated one of the most successful single-issue lobbies in recent American politics".⁴⁰ Europe is also being slowly influenced by the new wave of anti-apartheid movement. All these developments *en bloc* created favourable conditions for the use of political and economic influence on the West, the Reagan Administration in particular with a view either to making them exert pressure on the Pretoria regime for granting independence to Namibia or to make them join the rest of the world in implementing comprehensive mandatory sanctions against the racist regime under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations to ensure its compliance with the Security Council resolution 435. Such moves seem to be in the offing. The extraordinary meeting of the Non-Aligned Co-ordination Bureau on Namibia held in New Delhi during April 19 to 21, 1985, already urged the NAM members "to use their political and economic influence on the Western countries to exert pressure on Pretoria regime for early and unconditional withdrawal of her troops from Namibia"⁴¹ The need of the hour is, of course, complete cohesion in the ranks of the Non-aligned Movement, its African members in particular.

39. Anirudha Gupta, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

40. *The Economist*, March 30, 1985, p. 15.

41. *The Bangladesh Observer*, April 22, 1985.