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SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE RELATIONS OF CHILE,  
PARAGUAY AND URUGUAY WITH SOUTH AFRICA

(Issued in accordance with the decision taken by the Special Committee  
at its 336th meeting on 1 November 1976)

I. Introduction

1. In recent years, the attention of the Special Committee against Apartheid has repeatedly been drawn to reports that the South African régime was stepping up its efforts to establish or increase relations with the Latin American countries in order to break through its international isolation. In a report on the implementation of United Nations resolutions submitted to the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly in 1973 (A/9168), the Special Committee indicated that certain Latin American countries which had supported United Nations resolutions on apartheid and some of which had earlier broken off relations with South Africa, were in the process of re-establishing such relations. Subsequent reports of the Special Committee on diplomatic, economic and other relations with South Africa detailed the continuing expansion of links between the apartheid régime and some Latin American countries.

2. Beginning in 1974, the Committee became increasingly concerned over mounting evidence that Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay were rapidly strengthening their political, diplomatic, economic and other links with South Africa. The Committee repeatedly took action aimed at ensuring implementation of United Nations resolutions by the Governments of these countries. In particular, it appealed to Chile in February 1974 not to allow its tennis team to play against South Africa in the Davis Cup Tennis Tournament. In March 1974, the Committee urged the Government of Paraguay to reconsider the proposed visit of the Chief of State of Paraguay to South Africa and the diplomatic relations it maintained with the apartheid régime. In April 1975, the Committee appealed to the Government of Uruguay to reconsider the proposed visit of the Chief of State to South Africa and its diplomatic and consular relations with the apartheid régime. The Committee's efforts, however, were unsuccessful.

3. In May 1976, the International Seminar on the Eradication of Apartheid and in Support of the Struggle for Liberation in South Africa, organized by the Special



Committee in Havana, Cuba, considered the question of increasing relations between South Africa and a number of Latin American countries. In its declaration, the Seminar stated that the Pretoria régime, "in a desperate attempt to ensure its survival", was forging special links with Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay "with a view to establishing a new menacing alliance of régimes insensitive to African and world opinion". The Seminar warned "the actual and potential allies of South Africa that any alliance with apartheid will provoke forthright condemnation and hostility of all freedom-loving Governments and peoples".

4. In its programme of action, the Seminar condemned growing military links between South Africa and Chile. It also noted that South Africa had become a major exporter of capital to a number of Latin American countries, and warned that military and diplomatic links would follow from economic links in such countries as Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. It strongly recommended that such links be opposed through the establishment of solidarity committees in various parts of Latin America so as to focus attention on the extent of their collaboration and to campaign against it.

5. The Seminar recommended that the Special Committee and the Organization of African Unity make a thorough study of relations between Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay on the one hand, and the South African régime on the other, particularly in the military and economic fields with a view to recommending effective action.

6. In a resolution adopted by the twenty-seventh ordinary session of the Council of Ministers in June-July 1976, the Organization of African Unity addressed "a special appeal to Latin American States to reject the efforts by the South African régime to develop political, economic and other relations with them".

7. In the light of the recommendation of the Havana Seminar, noted in paragraph 5 above, the Special Committee against Apartheid requested its Sub-Committee on the Implementation of United Nations Resolutions and on Collaboration with South Africa to prepare the present report.

## II. Growing collaboration with South Africa

8. In recent years, South Africa has made increasing efforts to establish or strengthen relations with Latin America in the hope of breaking through its growing international isolation.

9. Speaking in the House of Assembly in September 1974, Dr. Hilgard Muller, South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, affirmed that South Africa attached particular importance to relations with Latin America because "they are our neighbours on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean" and they have an enormous economic potential, with rich natural resources, including oil. He went on to explain that the Latin American countries "played an important role in the United Nations", implying that South Africa hoped they might sympathize with its position in the Organization. 1/

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1/ House of Assembly Debates (Hansard), 11 September 1974, cols. 2630-2631.



10. The Johannesburg Financial Mail of 22 November 1974 pointed out that Latin America's strategic importance as the western flank of the South Atlantic was an additional consideration in the calculations of the apartheid régime.

11. Since 1973, diplomatic, economic and other relations between South Africa and certain Latin American countries have increased rapidly. By 1976, South Africa had diplomatic relations with 10 Latin American countries; total trade had increased from \$51.9 million to \$140.6 million between 1970 and 1975; and South African public and private interests were financing, or providing capital goods for, a number of industrial development projects throughout the subcontinent.

12. Among the Latin American countries, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay have been particularly receptive to South Africa's efforts to establish a foothold in Latin America. Politically, Paraguay and Uruguay have given support to the apartheid régime by having contact at the highest levels of government and concluding economic and other agreements with South Africa. Economic links have also continued to grow, as the apartheid régime has been able to use its economic power and technological know-how to enter into joint projects for the exploitation of resources in all three countries.

13. Recent reports of growing military links between Chile and South Africa have aroused particularly grave concern.

1. Chile

(a) Diplomatic and consular relations

14. Diplomatic and consular relations between Chile and South Africa were rapidly strengthened after 1973. The South African Minister of Foreign Affairs stated in September 1974 that South Africa had opened an embassy in Chile. 2/ In February 1976, Chile established a consulate-general in Pretoria. 3/ A recent report indicated that South Africa was considering elevating the status of its representative in Chile from that of chargé d'affaires to full ambassador. 4/

(b) Military collaboration

15. During the past year, there have been increasing reports of the establishment of military links between South Africa and the Chilean régime. A group called

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2/ House of Assembly Debates (Hansard), 11 September 1974, col. 2630.

3/ Republic of South Africa, Government Gazette, 5 March 1976. Prior to the elevation of diplomatic and consular relations between the two countries, Chile had honorary consuls in Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg, and South Africa was represented in Chile through its embassy in Argentina.

4/ Chile Democratico, New York, "News from Chile", 6 February 1976. The group also reported that Prime Minister B. J. Vorster was considering a visit to Chile.

"Chile Democratico" in New York has reported that South Africa has appointed a military and a naval attaché to its embassy in Santiago. 5/

16. The same group has also charged that Chile was purchasing arms from South Africa through the military missions attached to some of its embassies in western Europe. 6/

17. It has been observed that an alliance between South Africa and Chile could become the embryo of a broader South African union. The Chilean régime was reported to be a strong supporter of such a union, which would include South Africa along with a number of Latin American countries. 7/

(c) Economic relations

18. Trade between South Africa and Chile has remained small, although increasing rapidly: between 1970 and 1975, South African exports to Chile increased from \$45,000 to \$4.3 million, and its imports from \$1.2 million to \$1.9 million (with a peak of \$13.9 million in 1974). 8/

19. South Africa is also showing increasing interest in investing in Chile. Commenting on this, a recent report in the Johannesburg Financial Mail stated that relations between the two countries had been "getting warmer" since 1974. The report listed several investment projects by South African companies in Chile. For example, Ovenstone Investment, a South African company whose fishing venture had been nationalized, was thinking of returning to Chile. Shaft Sinkers, a manufacturer of mining equipment, was reported to have offered to carry out feasibility studies into gold mining in Chile. Other South African interests were examining the possibility of launching a fertilizer venture. It was also disclosed that a mission from the South African Industrial Development Corporation and Credit Guarantee Insurance Corporation had visited Chile to examine the possibility of extending export credits. 9/

20. The South African régime has shown growing interest in investing in Chilean industry. The South African Mining Counsellor attached to the embassy in Buenos Aires was transferred to Santiago in 1975. 10/ The South African ambassador

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5/ Chile Democratico, New York, "Pretoria-Santiago: Chronology of Collusion", May 1976.

6/ Ibid.

7/ Daniela Sanchez, "The neighbours on the other side of the Atlantic", Tricontinental, vol. XI, No. 100, 1976; EFE dispatch, 26 April 1976.

8/ International Monetary Fund (Washington), Direction of Trade.

9/ Financial Mail, Johannesburg, 8 August 1975.

10/ Financial Mail, Johannesburg, 20 February 1976.



in Chile was reported to have held talks with Chilean officials in October 1975 concerning possible South African investments in the Chilean copper industry. 11/

21. In early 1976, it was reported that a Chilean mission headed by the newly appointed Consul-General in Pretoria had met with South African officials to solicit economic aid to Chile. 12/

(d) Sports exchanges

22. In 1974, a Chilean team played against a South African team in the South American zone of the Davis Cup tennis competition, despite an appeal by the Special Committee against Apartheid to the Government of Chile to prohibit the team from playing. A Chilean team again played against South Africa in the Davis Cup tennis competition in 1975. The match was held in Santiago.

2. Paraguay

(a) Political, diplomatic, consular relations

23. Paraguay was one of the first targets of South Africa's drive into Latin America in the mid-1960s. In 1966, the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Secretary of Commerce and Industries visited Paraguay as part of a tour of several Latin American countries. Following the visit, the South African ambassador in Argentina was also accredited to Paraguay, and consular missions were exchanged between the two countries. 13/

24. Relations between South Africa and Paraguay grew rather slowly until 1974, when they increased dramatically. In April 1974, Gen. Alfredo Stroessner, President of Paraguay, paid an official visit to South Africa - only the third head of State to visit South Africa since the Nationalist Party came to power in 1948. Gen. Stroessner was accompanied by a party of more than 70, including the Paraguayan Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Defence, Finance, Agriculture, and Industry, and over 50 leading businessmen. The visit resulted in the conclusion of agreements on economic, scientific and cultural collaboration. 14/

25. On 11 March 1974, the Special Committee against Apartheid had appealed to the Government of Paraguay to reconsider the proposed visit and the diplomatic relations which it maintained with the South African régime. In his reply of 20 March 1974, the Permanent Representative of Paraguay to the United Nations

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11/ Chile Democratico, New York "Pretoria-Santiago: Chronology of Collusion", May 1976.

12/ Chile Democratico, New York, "News from Chile"; 6 February 1976.

13/ Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, 3 April 1974.

14/ South African Digest, Pretoria, 19 April 1974; Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, 3 and 12 April 1974.



stated that Paraguay had maintained diplomatic and consular relations with South Africa for approximately 10 years. He stated that South Africa had rendered valuable technical assistance to Paraguay in agriculture, medicine and mining, and that Paraguay urgently needed connexions that would enable it to receive all the co-operation possible for its over-all development. The letter declared that the visit in no way implied identification with South Africa's internal policies, and affirmed the right of the Republic of Paraguay to arbitrate the means advantageous to its national interests. A further appeal by the Special Committee on 3 April 1974 was also unsuccessful. 15/

26. In January 1975, links between South Africa and Paraguay were strengthened further. A South African economic mission headed by Mr. Brand G. Fourie, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, visited Paraguay for the purpose of "greater co-operation and the future development of trade as well as strengthening relations in other fields." 16/

27. In August 1975, Prime Minister B. J. Vorster of South Africa paid an official visit to Paraguay - the first by a South African Prime Minister to Latin America, and Mr. Vorster's first trip overseas since 1970. Mr. Vorster was accompanied by Dr. Hilgard Muller, Minister of Foreign Affairs; Gen. H. J. van den Berg, Chief of the Bureau of State Security; Gen. M. Geldenhuys, Chief of the Security Police; and other senior government officials. Mr. Vorster was reported to have said that his visit was another milestone in a long-term South African diplomatic offensive in South America. 17/

28. These visits led to the further rapid growth of diplomatic, economic and other links. South Africa and Paraguay established reciprocal residential diplomatic representation at the embassy level, and exchanged ambassadors in the fall of 1974. 18/ In October 1975, Paraguay established an additional consulate in Durban, and appointed an honorary consul. 19/

(b) Economic relations

29. Trade between South Africa and Paraguay has remained insignificant so far. The Johannesburg Rand Daily Mail estimated that South African imports from Paraguay ran at about R 100,000 a year in 1974, and exports at even less. 20/

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15/ This correspondence was reproduced in document A/AC.115/L.382.

16/ Financial Times, London, 15 January 1975.

17/ The Star, Johannesburg, 13 August 1975.

18/ Republic of South Africa, Government Gazette, Pretoria, 11 October and 29 November 1974. Previously, Paraguay had had only consular representation in South Africa, and South Africa had been represented in Paraguay through its embassy in Uruguay.

19/ Ibid., 24 October 1975.

20/ Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, 4 April 1974.



30. South Africa, however, has played an important role as a source of capital and technological know-how in Paraguay, which the apartheid régime reportedly considers as its "open door" to Latin America. 21/

31. Two agreements between South Africa and Paraguay were signed on the occasion of Gen. Stroessner's visit to South Africa in April 1974. One concerned cultural exchanges and scientific and technological co-operation; the other related to economic co-operation and investment. In terms of the latter agreement, the South African Government would consider providing financial assistance for specific economic development projects undertaken by the Government of Paraguay. The agreement also aimed at encouraging private South African investment in projects of mutual interest to both countries. 22/

32. The Minister of Industry and Commerce of Paraguay, Mr. Delfin Ugarte Centurion, stated following Gen. Stroessner's visit that South Africa was to look for oil, natural gas, bauxite and iron ore in Paraguay, and that the possibility was being considered of collaboration with Paraguayan firms in establishing cellulose, paper and sugar factories. Paraguay would export hard woods, tobacco, frozen meat, soya beans and vegetable oils to South Africa. 23/

33. In January 1975, the South African Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Brand G. Fourie, held talks with Gen. Stroessner and several members of his Government to implement the provisions of the agreement. After the meetings, the Paraguayan Ministry of Commerce and Industry disclosed that South Africa was prepared to grant Paraguay a R 33 million credit for purchases in agriculture, mining, communications and construction. 24/ Among the projects that South Africa had agreed to finance was reportedly the construction of buildings to house the Paraguayan Ministries of Justice and Foreign Affairs. 25/ The mission was also reported to have signed accords to build two sugar-producing plants and to invest in the giant Itaipu hydro-electrical power project, a joint venture by Paraguay, Brazil and Argentina at an estimated cost of R 3,000 million. It was indicated that talks had also been held concerning South African investment in the Yacireta power project; in the exploration for bauxite; and in the building of a paper-pulp plant. Paraguay had offered South Africa beef and timber, and was expected to buy South African farm machinery. 26/

34. Paraguay has also expressed interest in South Africa's hardware and equipment for mass-production school units. Observers indicated that there would be

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21/ Sunday Times, Johannesburg, 12 April 1974.

22/ Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, 12 April 1974.

23/ South African Financial Gazette, Johannesburg, 19 April 1974.

24/ The Star, Johannesburg, weekly airmail edition, 11 January 1975.

25/ Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, 13 January 1975.

26/ Sunday Times, Johannesburg, 26 July 1975; The Star, Johannesburg, weekly airmail edition, 11 January 1975.



"millions" for South African exporters if South Africa obtained a share in the supply of equipment for Paraguay's literacy programme. 27/

35. On the occasion of Mr. B. J. Vorster's visit to Paraguay in August 1975, further agreements were signed for South African loans to Paraguay in the amount of R 4 million for the purchase of agricultural machinery. 28/

36. In August 1976, it was announced that National Process Industries of Johannesburg, a leading South African fertilizer plant builder, was asked by the Paraguayan Government to undertake a feasibility study for a R 96-million fertilizer project in Paraguay. 29/

### 3. Uruguay

#### (a) Political, diplomatic, consular relations

37. Together with Paraguay, Uruguay was also one of the first targets of South Africa's attempt to penetrate Latin America. The South African Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Secretary of Commerce and Industries visited Uruguay in 1966. The visit laid the ground for the subsequent establishment of diplomatic relations, and the appointment of a South African ambassador to Uruguay. 30/

38. The South African economic mission headed by Mr. Brand G. Fourie, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, which visited Paraguay in January 1975, also visited Uruguay. 31/

39. The visit was followed by the establishment of a Uruguayan embassy in South Africa, and the appointment of a chargé d'affaires. 32/

40. In April 1975, the Special Committee against Apartheid considered press reports that the President of Uruguay planned to visit South Africa. The Committee appealed to the Government of Uruguay to reconsider the proposed visit of the Chief of State to South Africa and the diplomatic and consular relations which it maintained with the South African régime.

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27/ South African Financial Gazette, Johannesburg 20 December 1974.

28/ Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, 14 August 1975.

29/ Sunday Times, Johannesburg, 1 August 1976; Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, 13 August 1976.

30/ Rand Daily Mail, Johannesburg, 3 April 1974.

31/ Financial Times, London, 15 January 1975.

32/ Republic of South Africa, Government Gazette, Pretoria, 11 April 1975. The Uruguayan consulate in Durban was closed in December 1975 and its functions transferred to the Consulate in Johannesburg. (Ibid., 16 January 1976).



41. In his reply of 7 August 1975, the Permanent Representative of Uruguay indicated that Uruguay had maintained diplomatic and consular ties with South Africa for a number of years in accordance with its right to enter freely into international relations. He stated that, while his Government attached the utmost importance to compliance with the United Nations Charter and to respect for the recommendations of the General Assembly, it firmly believed that the measures referred to did not constitute an acceptable means of attaining the objectives sought. He reiterated the permanent opposition of the Government of Uruguay to any type of racial discrimination, particularly apartheid. 33/

42. The President of Uruguay did not visit South Africa. However, Prime Minister B. J. Vorster of South Africa paid an official visit to Uruguay following his trip to Paraguay in August 1975, and held talks with the President and other high government officials. In connexion with this visit, it was reported that an important trade agreement had already been concluded between the two countries, and that the Government of Uruguay expected the visit to further strengthen these links. 34/

(b) Economic relations

43. Trade between South Africa and Uruguay has increased rapidly, although remaining small. South African exports grew from \$110,000 to \$1.9 million, and imports from \$500,000 to \$3.7 million between 1970 and 1975. 35/

44. Economic relations between the two countries have advanced rapidly since early 1975. In January 1975, the South African economic mission headed by Mr. Brand G. Fourie, Secretary for Foreign Affairs, reportedly showed an interest in buying Uruguayan beef and rice and in investing in the country's fishing industries. 36/

45. According to one report, the South African Reserve Bank has deposited \$20 million in Uruguay. 37/

46. In August 1976, it was announced that a South African company would build a R 10-million cement factory in Uruguay. All machinery and equipment would be made in South Africa and shipped to Uruguay. The plant, scheduled to be completed in 1978, would produce 500 tons of cement a day. 38/

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33/ This correspondence is reproduced in part in the report of the Special Committee against Apartheid to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session (Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 22 (A/10022), paras. 62-63).

34/ The Times, London, 18 August 1975.

35/ International Monetary Fund, Washington, Direction of Trade.

36/ Financial Times, London, 15 January 1975.

37/ Daniela Sanchez, op. cit.

38/ South African Digest, Pretoria, 6 August 1976.



(c) Sports exchanges

47. In June 1976, it was reported that the Uruguayan Los Teros polo team was touring South Africa. 39/

III. Conclusions and recommendations

48. The information above shows that relations between South Africa on the one hand, and Paraguay, Uruguay and Chile on the other, have increased rapidly in recent years. The Special Committee is seriously concerned that by responding favourably to South Africa's overtures, these three countries are enabling the apartheid régime to penetrate Latin America economically, politically and militarily. The apartheid régime of South Africa is using its relations with these countries to further its foreign policy, which is based on defiance of the United Nations and on attempts to undermine the international campaign against apartheid.

49. The Special Committee is particularly disturbed by reports of growing military links between South Africa and Chile.

50. The international community must warn the three countries of the implications of their continuing violations of United Nations resolutions and increasing collaboration with the apartheid régime. Accordingly, the Sub-Committee suggests that the Special Committee recommend to the General Assembly: (a) that it urgently request Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay to immediately sever all their links with South Africa and to strictly implement United Nations resolutions on the question of apartheid; and (b) that it appeal to all other Latin American and other nations to exert their influence on Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay to heed the call for implementation of United Nations resolutions.

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39/ South African Digest, Pretoria, 18 June 1976.