

USSR and Southern Africa

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Soviet Union and Southern Africa: the issues of ensuring regional security

Trying to impede the deepening of the acute political and socio-economic crisis the racist regime of South Africa in the framework of the so-called "total strategy" resorts widely to repressive measures aimed at fighters against apartheid inside the country and at the neighbouring African states, which support their struggle.

Lately racists have passed from the open backing of armed bands in Angola and Mozambique and anti-government groupings in Zambia and Zimbabwe to direct aggressive actions against the neighbouring African states. The military adventurism has become an integral feature of South African regime. At the same time, in spite of the universal condemnation of apartheid as a crime against humanity, the aggressiveness of the racists tends to increase.

As a result of these a tense, explosive situation, which continues to persist and represents a serious threat for international peace and security of African states, has arisen in Southern Africa. As it was repeatedly stressed, the main cause of a conflict in this region is the existence of apartheid in South Africa, the ignoble system, which violates all norms of human morality and generally accepted principles of international relations.

Denying to grant independence to Namibia, illegally occupied by its forces, and carrying out a direct aggression and subversive actions against Angola, Mozambique and other independent African countries the regime of South Africa defies all the world.

The Soviet Union has repeatedly spoken for activization of collective searches of the ways of unblocking the conflict situation in Southern Africa with participation of all those, who not in words, but in deeds call for securing independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of African states, for liquidation of the insane apartheid system.

In particular, the fundamental principles of the comprehensive system of international security, put forward by the 27th Congress of the CPSU, provide for: in political sphere, the true political settlement of international crisis and regional conflicts; in humanitarian sphere, the eradication of genocide, apartheid, propagation of fascism, and other sorts of racial, national or religious exclusiveness, as well as of discrimination on these grounds.

At the same time it is necessary to point out that in the Soviet Union the situation in Southern Africa is considered not in the light of confrontation between East and West, as many western politicians try to present, but as a logical process of struggle between the forces of national and social liberation, from one side, and the forces of colonialism, racism, and neocolonialism from the other. The current conflict in this area of the world is, primarily, the result of development of the internal socio-economic and political process in the region, the natural consequence of decomposition of the exhausted vicious system of social relations itself.

Nevertheless, the conception of confrontation between East and West is actively propagandized by supporters of the bankrupt policy of "constructive engagement" between USA and RSA. For some people in USA it serves as a pretext for interference in the region, giving financial and military aid to bandit forces in Angola. This conception offers the Pretoria regime the possibility to shift off the responsibility for unsettled conflict to two superpowers and, thus, to extend its existence. Both in Washington, and in Pretoria they fan for many years the myth of Soviet military threat to sea routes of the West around the Cape of Good Hope, the "total expansion of communism" in Southern Africa in order to deny the West an access to strategic minerals. And all these measures are taken to declare that this region is the sphere of the vital interests of the United States, and that Pretoria is its historical ally.

Meanwhile, even people not possessing profound military knowledge, realise that in the nuclear-missile age, if the Third World War breaks out it will have a transient character and its outcome will not be so much dependent on regular supplies of the needed mineral resources, as it was during previous world wars. In these conditions the idea to intercept goods traffic around the Southern tip of the African continent, including oil supplies from the Middle East, itself has become out of date from the military point of view. It is notable that members of the consultative group, which prepared their report on the USA policy towards South Africa to the Secretary of State, G. Shultz, in January 1987, have admitted that the danger for these sea routes is minimal and that the possible consequences of cessation of some strategic minerals supplies can not be considered as a "sufficient ground" for defining the USA policy towards South Africa.

For the Soviet Union, the Secretary General of the CPSU Central Committee, M. Gorbachev, said, while meeting a group of foreign affairs minis-

ters of Frontline States of Southern Africa, that the Soviet Union has not any particular interests, except for a desire that peoples and countries of the region receive, at last, the possibility to solve the issues of their development, their internal and external affairs, in a sovereign way, in the atmosphere of peace and stability. We consider the cause of the Southern African nations to be the just one, take their part, provide them with help and support. It will be so in future also.

The Soviet Union has no so-called "vital" interests in Southern Africa. Our country has at its disposal a big amount of mineral resources, by which are so rich the entrails of this region, and the Soviet Union is not interested in the undermining of the world economic relations. The Soviet Union doesn't seek to infringe upon somebody's legitimate interests including interests of the western countries in the region. Here I must specify that we reject the conception of division of regions to the spheres of influence, at the same time we accept that some states in course of established historic or other ties, nevertheless could have legitimate interests in correspondent countries. In this regard we expect our opponents in the region to recognize our legitimate interests in this region and to pass from the policy of confrontation to the searches of a mutually acceptable solution with respect of the objectively present political realities.

The problem of ensuring regional security in Southern Africa is a multifaceted one. It includes the liquidation of the apartheid system in South Africa, settlement of the Namibian problem, and ensuring the security for independent states of the region, and creation of prospects for their normal socio-economic and political development. These problems are so interrelated that solution of each of them is linked inseparably with the solution of the main problem, namely, the eradication of the apartheid system. Although ten years ago existed the opinion, according to which settlement of the Namibian problem could be achieved irrespective of the development of the internal political situation in South Africa, nowadays it is difficult to find a specialist, who makes bold to assert that without resolute measures of the international community the decolonization of Namibia could be realised before the liquidation of the apartheid system.

The political settlement in the region is possible if it is based on the following principles: firstly, the unconditional respect of the sovereignty, independence, the right of every nation to choose independently the way for development; secondly, the respect of the legitimately elected governments; thirdly, the respect of obligations and agreements, concluded between states in full accordance with the international law.

From the Soviet point of view, in order to achieve the just political settlement in Southern Africa it is necessary to put an end to aggressive actions of Pretoria against independent African states, to ensure granting of

independence to Namibia in accordance with the corresponding resolutions of the United Nations, to liquidate the regime of apartheid in South Africa, which represents the initial cause of the conflict situation in the region.

The Soviet Union maintains friendly relations with the states of this region of the world, and has treaties on friendship and co-operation with Angola and Mozambique.

Between the USSR and these states commercial, economic and cultural relations continue to develop. For example, in Angola the construction of a hydroelectric scheme "Capanda" with hydro power plant with production capacity of 500 thousand kW has been started. The effectuation of this project, biggest since independence, will allow to double the output of verbiage of the Republic. Soviet organizations render Mozambique their assistance in the field of coal-mining development, having begun the co-operation in development of two coal-fields for production of up to 4,5m/t of top grade coal per year, and two coal-mines with total production capacity of 0,5m/t per year. A ship-repair yard in Maputo has been made operational. They have built or prepared for construction factories for automobile repairs, tractor repairs, farming machinery repairs, etc. in Angola and in Mozambique. Soviet organizations are also engaged in creation of joint construction enterprises in Angola.

The conduction of complex researches (hydrogeological, hydrological, soil studies, and geobotanical) by Soviet organizations is of great importance for development of farming schemes. Such researches are under way in Mozambique and in Zambia. During the study of water resources in the Limpopo valley some underground water resources were found, and water-wells for securing safe water for local population were built. With technical assistance of Soviet specialists approximately 400 wells were built or reconstructed in Zambia, securing water for more than 30 per cent of the population of the droughty Eastern province of the country. Soviet organizations participated in construction and development of fish-catching and processing facilities as well as of port facilities in Angola and in Mozambique.

In Mozambique there have been completed work on the General Scheme of farming development and complex use of Limpopo valley, provided for the area of 8m/ha. According to this project, the area under irrigation schemes will be enlarged up to 250 thousand ha, or 3,7 times. In Angola they have completed irrigation scheme projects for various provinces of the country. They comprise of creation of special irrigation services, reconstruction and building anew some hydro facilities, organization of water supplies for pastures, etc.

During the visit to the USSR of Angolan President Dos Santos in May 1986 they have discussed in details issues of bilateral co-operation in economics and trade, examined the ways for further upgrading its efficiency in such priority areas as energetics, construction, farming, mining, off-til-

ing, health services, training of national personnel. But the realization of these and many other projects is held up by an unstable internal political situation in these countries, what speaks once more for the fastest political settlement in the region.

In this regard and facing the direct and indirect aggression from RSA towards Angola, Mozambique and other Frontline States, the assistance in the field of strengthening their defence capabilities, provided by the USSR, appears to be of the utmost importance.

In accordance with its obligations under international treaties, and in conformity with the known resolutions, adopted by the UN Security Council, the Soviet Union speaks for resolute suppression of the aggressive encroachments on sovereignty and territorial integrity of the People's Republic of Angola. Taking into consideration the growing aggressiveness of Pretoria towards Angola, the Soviet Union sticks firmly to its principled position, agreed on during the trilateral Soviet-Angolan-Cuban consultations in Moscow in January 1986, during which the readiness of the USSR to take co-ordinated steps for defending independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, was confirmed.

They do not stop subversive actions against the People's Republic of Mozambique. Despite the "Nkomati Accord" RSA continues to render assistance to banditry mobs of the so-called "Mozambique National Resistance", supplying them with arms and military equipment. The Soviet Union supports the decision of the heads of states and governments of the non-aligned countries, adopted in Harare, to render diplomatic, political, financial, and material support to the people and government of Mozambique for strengthening its defence capabilities, and reconstruction of its economy.

During discussions with the group of ministers of Frontline States of Southern Africa in Moscow in April 1987 the Soviet side reaffirmed its unshaken solidarity with the Frontline States, suffering from direct and indirect aggression of racist RSA, which seeks to destabilize situations in these countries, to undermine their economies. In this verbatim that Frontline States' ministers expressed their gratitude to the people and to the government of the Soviet Union for support of their goals in the struggle against the remnants of colonialism and racism in Africa.

By joint efforts of representatives of many countries and peoples the United Nations Organization managed to draw an internationally accepted basis for peaceful settlement of the Namibian issue. Its main points are in the resolutions of the UN Security Council No 385 of 30 January 1976, and No 435 of 29 September 1978. The political mechanism of realization of these resolutions has also been drawn up. But up to nowadays the people of Namibia are still under yoke of colonialism and disgusting apartheid system.

The main reason for continued shameless Pretoria's disregard of UN de-

cisions, further atrocities on the occupied territory, policy of destabilization of independent countries of the region, is that it enjoys the direct connivance and open support of its allies in the West. Sometimes, on advice from the same allies, Pretoria adopts a "peacemaking pose", trying to show off its peace-loving and readiness for settlement of the problem, but on the grounds, which are insulting to the countries of the region, and unacceptable because of this.

A real stumbling-block on the way of political settlement appeared, when the USA began their attempts to link the solution of this issue with Cuban internationalists' withdrawal from Angola, where they stay on request of the sovereign government and in full conformity with paragraph 51 of the UN Charter. The international conference for immediate independence for Namibia, which took place in July 1986 in Vienna, evaluated these attempts as rude and arbitrary interference into affairs of Angola, aimed at delaying granting independence for Namibia and at derailment this issue into the sphere of global confrontation between East and West, for not considering this problem as a decolonization issue, which is to be solved in accordance with the UN Charter, and with the Declaration on granting independence to colonial countries and peoples.

The Soviet Union, constantly following its principled line towards full and final eradication of colonialism and racism in all its forms and appearances, speaks firmly and consistently for realization, without further delays, and without further conditions, by Namibian people of its unseparable right for self-determination and national independence in a single and territorially integral Namibia, including Walvis Bay, and off-shore islands, for immediate and complete withdrawal from its territory of all armed forces and of administrative bodies of South Africa.

USSR supports governments and peoples of all the states of the world, which speak for immediate introduction of comprehensive mandatory sanctions against South Africa for its effective isolation in political, economic, military, and cultural fields. There is no other exit for the international community in the situation present nowadays at the South of African continent.

The Soviet Union greets the decision of Vienna International conference for immediate independence for Namibia, which urges all the states, organizations and UN bodies, intergovernmental organizations, and individuals to activise political, diplomatic, military and material assistance to Namibian people, represented by SWAPO, in its struggle for self-determination. What concerns the USSR, it has constantly given, and will give full support to the just struggle of the people of Namibia under the leadership of its legitimate representative, the South West Africa People's Organization, which is accepted as a sole and authentic representative of the people of Namibia.

We are sure that the just cause of Namibian people will win, and Namibia will get a genuine independence. But to accelerate this process, from international community new co-ordinated and urgent efforts for further pressure

on the regime of apartheid are needed. We also think that the whole process of political settlement is to be under constant and effective control of the Security Council. The duty of United Nations is that all efforts are to be taken for putting an end to another manoeuvres of racist South Africa and those states, which put artificial blocks in the way of Namibia's self-determination.

In its policy in the region of Southern Africa the Soviet Union always came from the assumption, that problems of South Africa and Namibia are, in their essence, colonial ones. Approach towards apartheid in South Africa as to the system of colonial racial domination, so as to special type of colonialism, has a principled importance. According to our opinion, openly racist, colonial character of Pretoria's regime, massive by their scale repressions, not only cannot let to consider the issue of apartheid to be the internal question of South Africa, but, quite oppositely, give all the grounds for qualifying apartheid policy and practice as a crime against humanity, in struggle against which any means are legitimate.

That is why in full agreement with the decisions of United Nations and Organization of African Unity the Soviet Union recognizes the right of national-patriotic forces of South Africa and Namibia to get self-determination and independence for their peoples by means of armed struggle. For decades ANC used the tactics of non-violent action. South African patriots were forced to take arms only after racist regime campaign of mass terror and repressions was unleashed. The same kind of situation was in Namibia.

The Soviet assistance to ANC is multilateral. Friendly ties with long history are maintained between ANC and CPSU. As tokens of solidarity with the freedom fighters of Southern Africa they hold in the Soviet Union conferences, meetings, and film shows. Organizations of Soviet public play great role in these manifestations of solidarity, they also provide scholarships for studies in the USSR for young ANC activists. They send to ANC goods of general use, food, clothing, medical equipment and medicine, transportation equipment, teaching aids, etc. USSR, Ukraine, and Byelorussia regularly contribute to the International Defence and Assistance Fund for Southern Africa, and Soviet Peace Foundation gives constant assistance to OAU in its struggle against racism and colonialism in Southern Africa.

In response to appeal from Harare forum, the Soviet Union decided to contribute 65m roubles to "AFRICA" fund, to create three centres of vocational education in Frontline States for training 400 qualified workers in each of them yearly, and to give additional 1 100 scholarships for studies in Soviet universities to countries of the region, ANC and SWAPO.

Soviet state immutably supports the right of all nations to determine their socio-economic state of today and to build their future without any outside interference. The attempts to deny this sovereign right to peoples, to get a social revenge against countries, liberated from the colonial yoke, against national liberation movements are hopeless and doomed to failure.

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