

5. AFRICA

Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister on Visit to Frontline States

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Text of report of interview with Anatoliy Adamishin, USSR Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, by Ludmilla Bilichenko:

A Deputy Foreign Minister, Anatoliy Adamishin, has just returned to Moscow from a tour of several African countries. Here's the interview he has granted to our correspondent Ludmilla Bilichenko. You'll hear an English transcript of the interview: The first question was, what was the main purpose of your tour?

[Adamishin: voice to translation] I've toured the three frontline states of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, mainly in order to hand over to the leaders of these countries an oral message from the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party, Mikhail Gorbachev, on key problems of the current international situation, on problems of how to maintain and strengthen peace and stop the arms race. I must say at once that the statesmen and political leaders I met on this tour viewed it for a good reason - as a display of the Soviet Union's solidarity with the African countries that are fighting against racism and apartheid at this tense and complex period in their history, said Anatoliy Adamishin.

[Announcer] What were the main issues discussed during your meetings with the leaders of the frontline states was the next question.

[Adamishin] The major topics were those raised in Mikhail Gorbachev's message. I must say that the African nations, just as other non-aligned countries, pay increasing attention to the problem of preserving peace. They do not stand on the sidelines of dealing with problems that the entire humanity is concerned with because they realise that the current state of military hardware, the accumulated stocks of armaments, are such that any conflict can be fatal for all the states. Not a single state can sit it out on the sidelines.

I have to admit that the African leaders, and I've met the heads of state and government of all the three countries, support the Soviet initiatives. I heard statements to the effect that these are honest, sincere proposals, that these leaders trust the General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, Mikhail Gorbachev, and that they can see that the Soviet Union is trying to promote peace not only verbally but by actions.

As I see it, said Anatoliy Adamishin, this is very important because I could often hear talk in these countries about an equal responsibility of the two great powers, as they call them - the USSR and the USA - for the world tension. No one said this during my tour because the leaders I talked to can see that the Soviet Union is really championing peace and has really put forward proposals on all the main issues of the current international situation, whereas the USA and other Western countries [words indistinct] of cases are only making verbal declarations but do not move to meet the Soviet Union half way. I was told that such a line of conduct by the West seriously disturbs the African states.

[Announcer] And the next question. It is not surprising, apparently that one African representative within the Delhi Six is the chairman of the Revolutionary Party of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, whom you met during your visit to Tanzania.

[Adamishin] Yes, indeed, I had a very interesting conversation with Chairman Nyerere, or (?teacher0 Nyerere as he is called in Tanzania. The conversation was interesting and instructive for me. We had it just before he flew to Mexico for a session of the Delhi Six. We discussed wide-ranging international problems and later I saw with satisfaction that the decisions of the Delhi Six meeting contained the call for actually exactly what the Soviet Union is pressing. For example, this covers stopping nuclear

tests. As you know the Soviet Union has refrained from such tests unilaterally for a whole year, thus running a certain risk, including a military one. And one, as our General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, has declared, the Soviet Union will maintain its moratorium till the end of this year, proclaimed by the UN as the year of peace.

[Announcer] And the last question. During your tour of Africa you also visited Zimbabwe, the country that will soon be the venue of a non-aligned summit. Did the leaders of this country raise issues facing the coming summit during your conversations with them?

[Adamishin] The issues of the summit itself were not raised during these conversations. That is a matter of concern for our Zimbabwean friends. They are actively preparing for the summit from the political and organisational angles. And we wish them success in holding the conference which, I must say, they will be hosting in the difficult situation of a constant threat from their aggressive southern neighbour, the Republic of South Africa. At the same time we discussed issues that are important both for the Non-Aligned Movement and for the international life as a whole, that is, issues of promoting peace, returning to easing tensions and containing the arms race.