

April 28, 1989

Press Release, SWAPO Dismisses South African Charges of Amassing Troops on Angola-Namibia Border

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<https://wilson-center-digital-archive.dvincitest.com/document/118291>

Summary:

SWAPO press release dismissing South African claims of instigation of violence as an attempt to influence the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) against SWAPO. SWAPO asserts that South Africa hopes to encourage UNTAG to let South African forces off of their bases so that they can attack SWAPO without reprimand.

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South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) of Namibia



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NAMIBIA: SWAPO DISMISSES SOUTH AFRICAN CHARGES

Luanda, 28 April 1989 (NAMPA) -- SWAPO has dismissed South African allegations, as a "red herring", that it is amassing troops on the Angola-Namibia border poised to go into the territory.

The President of SWAPO, Sam Nujoma, categorically rejected the South African charges "with the contempt they deserve" and described them as a "red herring" aimed at diverting attention from exposure of the massacres, reign of terror and atrocities being committed by its rampaging troops in Namibia.

Nujoma added that the charges are designed to dupe the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) so that South African troops are not confined to base and instead let loose on the pretext of guarding against an "illusionary SWAPO invasion".

The SWAPO leader was reacting to the South African charges made through the office of the UN Special Representative, who summoned the SWAPO representative in Windhoek, Niko Bessinger, on 26 April.

Bessinger, a member of the Central Committee of SWAPO, who is based in the Namibian capital, was confronted with charges submitted to UNTAG by South African Brigadier Generals Louw and Meyer alleging that SWAPO was amassing troops in large numbers on the border poised to go into Namibia.

In addition, the South Africans have stated that alleged SWAPO arms caches must be located and dug up before the implementation of Resolution 435 can proceed.

In rejecting this other new South African charge as yet another attempt to create confusion and derail the implementation of Resolution 435, Nujoma said "UNTAG is welcome to investigate the claims and avoid its earlier blunder when it acted on false South African charges which led to the recent fierce fighting in Namibia, following the UN licensing of South African military attacks on peacefully regrouping SWAPO guerrillas."

UNTAG, he pointed out, has its men in southern Angola who have been verifying the redeployment of SWAPO armed cadres, who were inside Namibia, to Angola and monitoring their confinement north of the 16th Parallel. The same UNTAG contingent has seen more than 1300 PLAN fighters who left

Namibia for Angola, following the Mount Etjo Agreement of 9 April. They should, therefore, be in a position to find out the truth, he said.

Bessinger had similarly informed the UN Special Representative's office that UNTAG has its own observers on both sides of the border, but was told that UNTAG did not have a verification of its own of the South African claims and promised to look into the matter.

Nujoma reiterated SWAPO's commitment to the implementation of Resolution 435, saying that "that is why we made the difficult decision to redeploy in Angola our troops who have been inside the territory - for over 22 years of the protracted armed struggle. We have done our part. UNTAG must also seriously take up its responsibility to ensure that Resolution 435 is implemented according to schedule."

(NAMPA)

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