On 13 November the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed Resolution 439 calling upon South Africa to cancel its unilateral plans for elections in Namibia and to cooperate with the Secretary General of the United Nations in implementing an electoral process acceptable to the world community. If South Africa refuses, the UNSC warned that it would "initiate appropriate actions under the Charter of the United Nations, including Chapter VII thereof, so as to ensure South Africa's compliance with [elections under UN supervision and control]." Progress is to be reported by 25 November.

On 15 November, Lutheran World Ministries, conscious of the aspirations and opinions of church leaders in Namibia, resolved "to urge the U.S. government to cooperate fully with the spirit of UNSC Res. 439 by supporting whatever sanctions become necessary to bring about South Africa's immediate compliance with UN Security Council resolutions designed to bring justice and peace to Namibia."

Congregations and individuals are encouraged to express their views on this matter immediately to the following government personnel:

1. The President of the United States
   The White House
   Washington, DC 20500

2. The Secretary of State
   U.S. Department of State
   Washington, DC 20520

3. The U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations
   U.S. Mission to the United Nations
   799 United Nations Plaza
   New York, NY 10017

4. Their representatives in Congress
   a. Both of their Senators
      United States Senate
      Washington, DC 20510
   b. Their District Representative
      House of Representatives
      Washington, DC 20515

This is the political and economic action required at this time. For many years the United States government has refused to believe that its people will support economic sanctions against South Africa in the interest of majority rule and independence in Namibia. The U.S. government still hesitates to take such action and needs to hear the will of the people. Those who have followed the Namibian situation closely are convinced that the majority of those who have learned about the repression and injustice which exists in that land want to see change brought about without further violence and recognize economic sanctions as the only strategy left toward that end. There will be dissenting voices as well. Both have a right and a responsibility to be heard.

NAMIBIA

Liturgical action has been advocated for years and continues to be essential, particularly intercession for those who suffer and those who oppress, for those in decision-making positions in the international community, for leaders in the church and in the liberation movements, and for all who seek justice and peace in the world.

Many persons from the Lutheran community have applied to the United Nations to serve in a transitional assistance group (UNTAG) supervising the electoral process. Whether any of them will be able to serve depends on South Africa's withdrawal from the territory so that international supervision and control of elections will be possible. Only then will the UN be able to put together UNTAG. These applicants have demonstrated great patience but understandably are disappointed that South Africa frustrated the plans of the UN, plans which once appeared so close to implementation.

A record of the last 30 years of more than a century of difficult struggle for freedom by the people of Namibia begins on the next page. While it emphasizes United Nations relationships, it is important to note that throughout this period, the churches of Namibia have played a leading role.

It is followed on the back page by the four relevant articles of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, which outlines what may be the last political recourse to all-out war in the land called Namibia.
Representatives of the Namibian people petitioned the United Nations (UN) to place the territory at that time known as South West Africa under the UN Trusteeship Council.

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) declared Namibia to be international territory but did not direct that it be placed under UN authority.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) organized in 1963 recognized the South West African Peoples Organization (SWAPO) as Namibia's liberation movement.

The UN General Assembly (UNGA) ended South Africa's mandate in Resolution 2145.

The UNGA established the UN Council for Namibia to administer the territory and demanded the withdrawal of South Africa's (SA) police and military force. Independence was projected for June, 1968.

The UN Security Council (UNSC) endorsed UNGA Resolution 2145, declared SA presence in Namibia to be illegal and demanded SA withdrawal by October, 1969.

The ICJ ruled SA's presence in Namibia was illegal and that UN member states were obliged to abstain from dealing with SA over Namibia. The UNSC endorsed the ICJ ruling and declared that SA's refusal to withdraw would create conditions detrimental to the maintenance of peace and security in the area. Britain and France abstained.

An "Open Letter to the Prime Minister of South Africa" by Bishop Leonard Avala and Rev. Paulus Gowaseb focused international attention on the activity of Namibian churches in the liberation struggle.

UNSC judged the situation in Namibia to be prejudicial to the maintenance of peace and security in the region, threatened "effective measures" to bring about compliance with UN resolutions, and instructed its Secretary General (UNSG) to open discussions with all parties concerned about Namibia. The UNSG and his special emissary went to Namibia for talks, but they proved to be fruitless.

The UNGA appointed Sean MacBride the first full-time UN Commissioner for Namibia (UNCN) and recognized SWAPO as the authentic representative of the Namibian people.

The UNCN enacted a decree on Namibia's Natural Resources, which was later endorsed by the UNGA. The decree was designed to protect Namibia's vast mineral resources. The UNSC called for SA's withdrawal, release of political prisoners, return of exiles and threatened "appropriate measures" if SA did not comply by May, 1975.

SA failed to comply with UNSC resolution of 1974. The United Kingdom (UK), USA and France vetoed a UNSC resolution which called for a mandatory arms embargo against SA.

In a move to manipulate an "internal settlement", the SAG organized a constitutional conference (familiarly called The Turnhalle Talks [TTT] because of its meeting place). Delegates to this conference were not democratically chosen and dubbed "puppets" or even "stooges" of the SAG by Namibian patriots, church leaders and most of the people. TTT produced a tribally based constitution which would in reality continue white minority rule.

In January the UNSC unanimously passed a comprehensive resolution, UNSC Resolution 385, demanding free elections under the supervision and control of the UN for the whole of Namibia as one political entity, the release of political prisoners, the return of exiles and the withdrawal of SA's troops and administration, threatening action if SA did not comply by 31 August. SA did not comply and again the UK, USA and France vetoed a draft resolution calling for an arms embargo.

The UN Institute for Namibia opened in Lusaka, Zambia to train civil servants for a future independent Namibia. Mr. Martti Ahtisaari, Finnish ambassador to Tanzania, was elected UN Commissioner for Namibia.

The Five Western members (5WM) of the UNSC (USA, UK, FRG, France and Canada) initiated a process of negotiation among several Namibian groups, of which the SAG and SWAPO were chief, in order to implement the provisions of UNSC-R385.
The UNGA adopted a Nationhood Program calling for the UN and its specialized agencies to coordinate a program of assistance for an independent Namibia.

SAG appointed Martinus Steyn as Administrator General (AG), similar to a commissioner of colonial days of Namibia.

SAG disbanded TTT and withdrew TTT constitution. TTT leaders organized a political party, "The Democratic Turnhalle Alliance" (DTA).

On 4 November, UNSC unanimously ordered a mandatory arms embargo against SA because of its repressive racial policies occasioned by mass bannings and detentions of government critics.

1978. Some DTA units employed private police to protect leaders and to harass SWAPO. Riots, violence and murder followed. Steyn invested himself with extraordinary powers to detain indefinitely any person or group of persons without legal recourse (Proclamation AG-26).

24 April - 5 May. Special Session of UNGA on Question of Namibia.


25 April. SAG accepted proposal of 5WM to implement many provisions of UNSC-R385. Proposal called for UN peace-keeping force, a civilian corps to supervise and control elections called UN Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG), release of political prisoners, return of exiles, reduction—not complete withdrawal—of SA military.

5 May. SWAPO called its executive committee to meet with 5WM to seek agreement on proposal.

4 May. SA Army invaded Angola, attacked refugee camps at Kassinga; massacred over 700 women, children and men; destroyed hospital, schools, storage facilities.

6 May. UNSC condemned SA raid, implied economic sanctions if SA did not withdraw from Angola immediately. SA complied.

12 July. SWAPO accepted proposal of 5WM.

13 July. AG Steyn issues proclamation empowering him to expel "undesirable residents".

14 July. The Rev. Edward Morrow, Vicar General of Anglican Church, Laureen, his wife, and Lydia, their daughter, and the Rev. Heinz Runke, Roman Catholic priest, were expelled.

27 July. UNSC passed two resolutions. UNSC Res. 431 instructed the Secretary General to submit recommendations for implementing the proposal of 5WM to which both SAG and SWAPO had agreed. UNSC Res. 432 expressed the judgment that Walvis Bay should be an integral part of an independent Namibia.

29 August. The Secretary General submitted his recommendations. South Africa objected to the date of elections and the size of the UN peace-keeping force and UNTAG.

20 September. B.J. Vorster submitted his resignation as Prime Minister of South Africa, announced that the SA Cabinet rejected the recommendations of the UNSG, and would implement its own plan for an "internal settlement" by sponsoring its own elections and bringing Namibia to independence by 31 December, 1978.

20 September. UNSC Res. 435 adopted, accepting the Secretary General's recommendations and calling for a meeting to assess progress on 23 October, threatening sanctions if SA did not comply.

15-17 October. Foreign ministers of 5WM visited new Prime Minister of SA, Pieter Botha, in an attempt to persuade SA to call off its unilateral elections and accept UNSG recommendations. SA, for all practical purposes, refused. SA agreed simply to attempt to persuade the winners of the internal elections to invite the UN to implement its plan in 1979.

23 October - 10 November. UNSC met often, with Africans pressing for the SC to judge that SA's continued presence in Namibia constitutes a threat to international peace and security and, therefore, economic sanctions should be imposed, and the West holding out to give SA another chance to agree to an internationally acceptable settlement.
18 November. UNSC passed Resolution 439 (see pg. 1, paragraph I) by a vote of 10 in favor and 7 WM abstaining. Canada spoke for 5WM stating, among other things, "It would be a mistake to interpret our abstention as a lack of sympathy for the resolution or the direction in which it points the Council in the event South Africa fails to cooperate."

CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS, CHAPTER VII, ARTICLES 39-42

Article 39. The Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measures shall be taken in accordance with Articles 41 and 42, to maintain or restore international peace and security.

Article 40. In order to prevent an aggravation of the situation, the Security Council may, before making the recommendations or deciding upon the measures provided for in Article 39, call upon the parties concerned to comply with such provisional measures as it deems necessary or desirable. Such provisional measures shall be without prejudice to the rights, claims, or position of the parties concerned. The Security Council shall duly take account of failure to comply with such provisional measures.

Article 41. The Security Council may decide what measures not involving the use of armed force are to be employed to give effect to its decisions, and it may call upon the Members of the United Nations to apply such measures. These may include complete or partial interruption of economic relations and of rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio and other means of communication, and the severance of diplomatic relations.

Article 42. Should the Security Council consider that measures provided for in Article 41 would be inadequate or have proved to be inadequate, it may take such action by air, sea, or land forces as may be necessary to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such an action may include demonstrations, blockade, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of Members of the United Nations.

NEWS REPORTS FROM SOUTHERN AFRICA

As news is reported from Southern Africa, a discerning listener or reader will note the source of the news. Salisbury in Rhodesia and Pretoria in South Africa consistently report the views of their governments. A free press is rare any place in the world. Control of the media is one of the early objectives of a threatened government.

Rhodesia and Namibia are in war situations, and war is full of moral ambiguities. Under the best of circumstances, armies may have undisciplined units or troops. Moreover, in war as in blackouts, floods and earthquakes, marauders, bandits and looters are prevalent.

Every war is accompanied by propaganda campaigns. The epithets and slogans which are employed are not helpful in discovering valid identity. One person's "Marxist terrorist" is another person's "Christian freedom fighter" . . . One person's "Defender of the Christian free world" is another person's "racist fascist oppressor." Moreover, all sides have access to all kinds of weaponry. Murder by Soviet made guns is not proof of guerrilla guilt. When weapons or planes manufactured in the West are used, they are seldom identified that way in reports reaching this country.

God is color blind. White, "colored", and black casualties are equally deplorable.

Civilian deaths are especially deplorable whether they occur in refugee camps or mission compounds.

Finally, the situation in Southern Africa is fluid, changing daily. Yesterday's negotiable options become tomorrow's uncompromising demands. What might have been a viable proposal one month becomes unacceptable the next.