

**September 29, 1977**

**Telegram from the UK Embassy in Vienna to the  
Foreign and Commonwealth Office, on South African  
Statement to the IAEA General Conference**

**Citation:**

"Telegram from the UK Embassy in Vienna to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, on South African Statement to the IAEA General Conference", September 29, 1977, Wilson Center Digital Archive, UK National Archives, FCO45-2131. Obtained and contributed by Anna-Mart van Wyk. <https://wilson-center.drivingcreative.com/document/116632>

**Summary:**

The UK Embassy in Vienna reports on the South African statement to the International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference denying Soviet accusations that the country was developing nuclear weapons.

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TO IMMEDIATE FCO TELNO 279 OF 29 SEPTEMBER

INFO IMMEDIATE WASHINGTON, UKNIS NEW YORK, PRETORIA  
FOLLOWING FROM RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE IAEA  
SOUTH AFRICA AND THE NPT

1. THE FOLLOWING PASSAGE WAS INCLUDED IN THE STATEMENT MADE  
TODAY BY THE DELEGATE OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE 21ST SESSION OF THE  
IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE.

QUOTE NOTWITHSTANDING REPEATED ASSURANCES ABOUT ITS COMMITMENT  
TO PEACEFUL USES OF THE ATOM AND DESPITE REGULAR

INSPECTIONS BY THE IAEA INSPECTORS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN

RESEARCH REACTOR SAFARI ONE AT PELINDABA TO THE FULL SATISFACTION

OF THE AGENCY, TENDENTIOUS ALLEGATIONS HAVE BEEN MADE, WITH

TIRESOME FREQUENCY, THAT SOUTH AFRICA HAS EITHER DEVELOPED OR

IS DEVELOPING A NUCLEAR WEAPON, SUCH ALLEGATIONS COULD, HOWEVER,

ALWAYS BE TRACED TO HIGHLY SUSPECT SOURCES SEEKING POLITICAL  
ADVANTAGE.

2. SUCH WAS THE RECENT PATENTLY SPURIOUS ALLEGATION BY THE  
SOVIET UNION THAT SOUTH AFRICA WAS ABOUT TO EXPLODE AN ATOMIC  
DEVICE-- AN ALLEGATION MADE WITH THE UTMOST CYNICISM AT A TIME  
WHEN THE SOVIET UNION ITSELF WAS ENGAGED IN SUCH ACTIVITIES  
EXPLANATION MARK

3. ONCE AGAIN THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT GAVE ASSURANCES THAT  
IT DOES NOT HAVE OR INTEND TO DEVELOP A NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE

DEVICE FOR ANY PURPOSE, PEACEFUL OR OTHERWISE SEMICOLON THAT

IT HAS NO TESTING FACILITY FOR NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES AND THAT THERE WILL  
BE ANY NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVE TESTING OF ANY KIND IN SOUTH AFRICA.

WE KNOW FROM EXPERIENCE THAT SUCH ALLEGATIONS WILL AGAIN  
BE MADE BY THOSE WHO PREY ON THE FEARS OF MANKIND UNQUOTE

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