

June 12, 1985

**Letter from South African President P.W. Botha to
US President Ronald Reagan**

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Summary:

Letter from South African State President P. W. Botha to Ronald Reagan, which discusses South Africa's relations with Mozambique and Mozambique's move away from the Soviet Union. Argues that the West is not supplying enough economic and technical assistance to Mozambique or South Africa, and says that more aid will be necessary to help dissuade foreign interests from depleting the countries' resources.

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Transcript - English



Tuynhuys
Kaapstad

12 / 6 / 85

Dear Mr President

I wish to thank you for your letter on the occasion of the first anniversary of the Nkomati Accord.

The South African Government is committed to the fulfilment of the Nkomati Accord and I can assure you that we shall pursue our efforts to bring about a ceasefire and peace in that unhappy country. It is only by achieving a ceasefire that political stability and economic progress can be achieved.

High level contact between the South African and Mozambique governments continues. My Foreign Minister was in Maputo on 14 March 1985, for discussions in the context of the Joint South African/Mozambique Security Commission set up in terms of the Nkomati Accord. He was in Maputo again on 20 March 1985 for discussions with President Machel and on 9 April 1985 I received high-level emissaries from President Machel in Cape Town. My Foreign Minister, Minister of Defence and four Deputy Ministers were again in Maputo on 9 May 1985 to look seriously at areas of further bi-lateral co-operation together with Mozambique Ministers.

It is clear from recent discussions with the Mozambique Government that they do not wish to continue with the process of dialogue with Renamo initiated through the Pretoria Declaration of 3 October 1984. They have, however, re-iterated their offer of amnesty to members of Renamo who are prepared to lay down their arms.

I would, however, be less than frank, Mr President, if I did not state that it is the view of both the Mozambique as well as the South African Governments that not enough is being done by the West in terms of economic and military assistance to Mozambique and to support the efforts by both of the Governments to stop the machinations of influential

industrialists and financiers who do not have the best interests of Mozambique at heart.

Mr President, South Africa's resources are limited and our priorities must naturally lie within our own borders. Nevertheless, given the size of our Gross National Product, I am sure, that you will agree that we are doing more than our fair share towards trying to wean Mozambique from Moscow.

There can be little doubt about my personal commitment to the Nkomati process. I would urge the United States Government to take an even closer look than it is at present, at the opportunities presented in Mozambique for a resounding victory over the Soviet Union and its allies and the implications for the West of failure to capitalise on the situation.

Mr President, Secretary of State Shultz's speech on 16 April 1985 addresses some of the positive developments which are currently taking place in South Africa. Although I welcome this recognition of what to us are profound changes in South Africa, affecting South Africans of all colours and political persuasions, I am constrained to point out a lack of real perception in the understanding and analysis of the forces currently at work in South Africa and how much the South African Government has done and is still doing in terms of sincere and observable reform. If the United States Government is in any doubt about the effect of this reform process, it need look no further than the outcome of recent political by-elections in which the South African Government has suffered significant electoral setbacks which do not augur well for the very survival of my Government at the next General Election. Mr President, you have personally, in public statements, recognised that the major part of the unrest in South Africa does not revolve around black/white conflict but is in effect violence by black people against moderate black people. It is overwhelmingly the black people who are suffering and dying but it remains the responsibility of my Government to maintain law and order so that the reform process can go forward and that the forces of revolution can be defeated.

Given the stark realities of the situation in South Africa, I ask you, Mr President, to consider realistically on what basis my country should be governed. The drive towards urbanisation which has been sweeping through Africa and other third world countries, has not left South Africa untouched. Many factors including drought, famine and the current world-wide recession have contributed to the mass movement of people towards the cities but many millions of them remain ethnically bound.

On the other hand there are also many millions of black people in South Africa who moved to the cities one or two or more generations ago and who have built up urban communities

which no longer have ties to their original homelands. It is the problems and pressures created by these and many other circumstances which my Government is trying to solve through the reform process. We are trying to create equitable structures and institutions to accommodate the legitimate desires and aspirations of all of the communities in our society.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

P W BOTHA
STATE PRESIDENT OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

President Ronald Reagan
WASHINGTON DC
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Tuynhuys

Kaapstad

12/6/85

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State President of the Republic of South Africa

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