

THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

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September 20, 1990

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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT
FROM: James A. Baker, III *J.A. Baker*
SUBJECT: Official Working Visit of South African
President F.W. de Klerk

I. SETTING

- o The South African government needs help. President de Klerk has boldly initiated a program of reform and negotiations that has opened an historic opportunity for a peaceful end to apartheid.
- o But, he is paying a political price. The ruling National Party is steadily losing support while gaining neither respite from the violence that stokes white fears nor tangible recognition from the international community.
- o No South African leader has ever been officially received in Washington by a President of the United States.
- o Despite initial misgivings about visiting without receiving a concrete "gesture" of relief from sanctions, de Klerk and his colleagues agreed to a meeting now because they appreciate the value of being given a positive reception here.
- o The South Africans are very concerned to differentiate de Klerk's visit as a head-of-state from Mandela's. They are anxious to convey the sense publicly of an in-depth, working exchange between the two presidents.
- o The visit should play well in South Africa and thereby provide a boost for President de Klerk with his constituency. It also will signal the opposition, left and right, that de Klerk's reform process has strong U.S. support.
- o President de Klerk will almost certainly seek a sign of our intention to begin lifting sanctions when his government meets the conditions of our law.

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PER DOS WAIVER, November 6, 2015

By MM NARA, Date 1/27/2022

- o He may argue that the progress made already, including the August 6 agreement with the ANC that met the ANC's conditions for negotiations to start, means he has fulfilled the spirit of the law.
- o We should be as forthcoming as possible. But de Klerk has not yet fulfilled the legal requirement that South Africa meet at least four of the five conditions of the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act in order to give you the discretion to begin modifying or suspending sanctions after statutory consultations with Congress.
- o Our ability to help de Klerk, and end apartheid, is fundamentally dependent upon maintaining domestic consensus for our policy on this divisive topic. Therefore, while being sympathetic to de Klerk's efforts, it will also be important for you to remain stalwart on the key principles -- opposition to apartheid and violence -- that have enabled us to maintain domestic support for what we are trying to do.

II. OBJECTIVES

- o Strengthen President de Klerk's ability to keep moving forward with reform and negotiations by endorsing the historic steps he has taken.
- o Note our admiration of and support for the rapid acceleration in the process of positive change in South Africa under de Klerk.
- o Encourage de Klerk to persevere in his effort to see South Africa through a peaceful transition to a non-racial and democratic South Africa.
- o Assure him of our support for the negotiating process, and for all South Africans who believe in a negotiated transition to democracy, and of our complete rejection of the use of violence. Emphasize that we will pursue an even handed policy that supports and, when necessary, criticizes both sides.
- o Explore de Klerk's views on the future of the negotiating process and government/ANC cooperation and what role he sees for other blacks, including Chief Buthelezi and the Pan Africanist Congress.
- o Indicate that we understand the need to help the South African economy meet the increased demands that will be made upon it with a political solution. We will begin modifying and suspending sanctions when South Africa meets the conditions of our law.

- o Suggest willingness to consider other ways to offer tangible evidence of support for the reform process. In this regard, express willingness to discuss issues such as South Africa and the IMF, noting however that our ability to move in many areas is constricted by law.
- o Probe on what the United States could do to help efforts to control the violence.
- o Encourage a decision from de Klerk to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty during his visit. Inform him that we stand ready, upon South Africa's accession to the Treaty, to move toward enhancing peaceful nuclear cooperation and urging others to do the same.

III. STRATEGY

- o We should use this visit to cement personal relations between you and de Klerk and respective officials in both governments to sustain our influence with a key party to the process of change in a racially divided South Africa. Note that both you and de Klerk share a common history of legislative experience.
- o Make clear, so as not to leave doubts in the minds of those who accompany de Klerk, that the United States believes strongly that the days of apartheid are long over and that fundamental change must continue.
- o Focus discussion on how the United States and South Africa can work together to further the negotiating process. The South Africans may press you for specific commitments to which we may find it difficult to respond positively because of the political and legal context in which we must operate.
- o Suggest that the international community, perhaps through the international financial institutions, should begin looking at ways to assist the post-apartheid South African economy.
- o Emphasize that you feel strongly about the need to control the spread of nuclear weapons. You want his visit to produce a tangible result of actions taken by both sides. Urge de Klerk to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, stressing our positive response.

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- o Encourage de Klerk to do all he can to end the violence. Stress our willingness to speak out on this matter. Focus his mind on the need to end the upswing in the violence and push on to full-scale negotiations.
- o Urge de Klerk to reach out to as broad a spectrum of Americans as possible and suggest ways he might approach contacts with the Congress and with the press.
- o Brief de Klerk on the Kuwait crisis, the changes in Europe and the Soviet Union and their implications for Africa in general and particularly South Africa. South Africa reportedly had an arms relationship with Iraq in the past, but has pledged to respect sanctions.
- o Highlight South Africa's contribution to the favorable evolution in the southern Africa region, especially the completion of the Namibian independence process and support for President Chissano in Mozambique. Encourage continued South African constructive involvement in the region, particularly Mozambique and Angola.

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