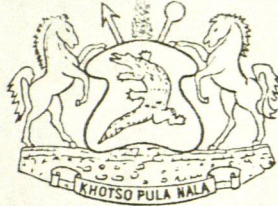


OPS MASTER

SUBJECT: LESOTHO: Relations

March '88



JSL 020/1

HIGH COMMISSION OF  
THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO

10 COLLINGHAM ROAD, LONDON, SW5 0NR. TEL. 01 373 8581/2

NOTE NO. 42/83

PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL No. T/2018/83

The High Commission of the Kingdom of Lesotho presents its compliments to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and has the honour to request the latter to transmit the following message from The Right Honourable Dr. Leabua Jonathan, Prime Minister, to The Right Honourable Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, by its speediest means possible:

BEGINS

Your Excellency,

I take the opportunity to address this message to you, on the eve of the visit to your country, of the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Pik Botha. My hope and confidence is that you and your Government will raise with him the continuing worsening problems which South Africa is creating for Lesotho, and which have now put our very survival at stake.

As you know, after the South African Defence Force raid on our capital, Maseru, last December, our King, Moshoeshe II, appeared before the UN Security Council, which took prompt action by its Resolution 527 of 1982. The Resolution, among other things, called upon South Africa to declare publicly that it was never again going to attack Lesotho, either directly or by proxies. The Resolution also demanded payment by South Africa of reparations for damage to property and loss of lives.

South Africa has up to now defied the Resolution in TOTO and has, instead, continued with an unabating harrassment of Lesotho. The harrassment includes severe border restrictions which have resulted in the hampering of the

smooth flow of goods and public traffic, and the death of people going for medical treatment in South Africa. It also includes an embargo of our security equipment needed for use in the maintenance of our internal security. It further includes cross border incursions into Lesotho by armed bandits from South Africa. Side by side with this, armed South African soldiers are usually seen milling up and down along the borders, in formations which have left our people living near the borders in a state of panic.

The excuse for this harrassment is:

The presence in Lesotho of ANC Refugees, whom the South Africans accuse of being a security threat to them.

Following our repeated explanations that these were not security threats but genuine refugees, who abided by the conditions of their asylum in Lesotho, the South African authorities finally presented us with a list of 68 refugees whom it described as terrorists who should be handed to them, or who should alternatively be deported to other countries. For the purposes of twisting our arm to meeting this demand, South Africa intensified her harrassment. Surprisingly, this has continued even after these people voluntarily left Lesotho for other countries, fearing for their safety.

South Africa is clearly not satisfied, and despite her claims that relations between the two countries are normal, our embargoed equipment has not been released, excepting for a few items: our people are still not able to go into South Africa, excepting for a few with multiple entry visas: cross-border incursions have not abated, and recently South Africa herself has announced that she has arrested eight armed men, who had planted a land-mine on the Lesotho side of our common border, and also opened fire from South African soil, on our Security Personnel.

We also believe that the escalation of South African wrath was caused by the Security Mission which was sent by the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, Mr. Ramphal, and whose report recommended that we should be assisted. In this context, I must also indicate, Madam Prime Minister, that we shall be looking forward to positive British response to that report. I am saying this with full confidence that the British High Commissioner in Lesotho has also kept your Government fully informed about our problems.

As members of the Commonwealth, and as a former British dependency, we maintain that Britain, more than any other country, has an obligation to ensure that South Africa accords Lesotho a peaceful existence. I therefore have to request, Your Excellency, that

- (i) the British Government intervene to persuade South Africa to normalize our relations with her, and to live at peace with us;
- (ii) the South African Government be persuaded to release all our security and other equipment presently in their hands, in order to enable our people to carry out their work. South Africa must also permit passage of our equipment which we are unable to transship from other countries like Mozambique;
- (iii) South Africa must be persuaded to stop allowing its territory to be used as a launching pad for attacks against Lesotho.

In conclusion, Madam Prime Minister, I have to point out that my country is in exactly the same threat in which it was when our Great King Moshoeshoe I sought the intervention of Queen Victoria. I therefore trust that your Government,

under the reign of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II,  
will ensure that Lesotho is saved from the present  
threat, which has already heightened the fears of  
my people, and which could blow up on any day.

Yours sincerely,

LEABUA JONATHAN  
PRIME MINISTER OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO.

ENDS.

The High Commission of the Kingdom of Lesotho avails  
itself of this opportunity to renew to the Foreign and  
Commonwealth Office the assurances of its highest  
consideration.

LONDON

1st December, 1983.

