

OPS a MESSAGE



SUBJECT: LESOTHO  
Relations  
March '80

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10 DOWNING STREET

THE PRIME MINISTER

16 December 1983

**PRIME MINISTER'S  
PERSONAL MESSAGE  
SERIAL No: T 219/83**

Dear Prime Minister,

Thank you for your message of 1 December conveyed through your High Commissioner here.

We have been following with close and sympathetic attention the difficulties your Government faces in its relations with South Africa. The South Africans are well aware of our view that they, as the other countries in the Region, should conduct their external relations on the basis of non-violence, non-interference in the internal affairs of neighbouring states and respect for the sovereignty of those states. We have deplored South African attacks and coercive pressures against its neighbours, just as we condemn the use of violence by the ANC or any other political groups to attain their political goals. We have long been convinced of the need for contact and dialogue between the countries of Southern Africa. We have therefore been encouraged in recent months to learn that there has been a series of meetings between representatives of your Government and the South Africans to discuss differences and problems between the two countries.

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I did not myself see the South African Foreign Minister when he came to London but Sir Geoffrey Howe raised with Mr. Botha the concerns you express in your message. Mr. Botha did not agree that South Africa is creating worsening problems for Lesotho. At the same time, he said he believed that outstanding problems between his Government and your Government could be satisfactorily resolved through further negotiations, and expressed the hope that relations would continue to improve. This response leads me to hope that in spite of current difficulties, you and South Africa can, given good will on both sides, reach a settlement of your differences. I am equally convinced that this is best achieved through patient and continuing contact between your two Governments free from outside interference. We have urged the South Africans in this sense and my Government will continue to give every encouragement to this process in the hope that a satisfactory understanding can be reached.

When I was in New Delhi last month for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, your Foreign Minister kindly sent me a summary of the report of the Commonwealth Mission which Secretary-General Ramphal sent to Lesotho in August. The report is still being studied by officials but I am pleased to note that our bilateral technical assistance to your country is already mainly directed towards the sectors identified in the report as of priority. We will be looking for ways in which we may be able to respond to the report's recommendations within the framework of our existing programmes of assistance.

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I can assure you that we shall continue to watch developments in your country with particular attention and that our policies will continue to be directed towards the achievement of greater stability and prosperity in the region as a whole.

Yours sincerely  
Raymond DeLeter

The Right Honourable Dr. Leabua Jonathan, K.C.O.M.