

Security Council resolution 568(1985)

21 June 1985 Meeting 2599 Adopted unanimously

6-nation draft (S/17291).

Sponsors: Burkina Faso, Egypt, India, Madagascar, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago.
Meeting numbers: SC 2598, 2599.

Report of the mission. In response to the Council's request, the Secretary-General sent a mission to Botswana from 27 July to 2 August. In its report,(54) the mission stated that the unprovoked military attack on Gaborone had resulted in the death of 12 people and injury to 7 others; several houses, believed by the South African attackers to be occupied by ANC members, had also been blown up. The mission underlined the precarious security situation of Botswana.

Under the circumstances, the Government felt it essential to increase its defence capacity to permit it to patrol its borders. It estimated its immediate defence needs at \$5.9 million. In addition, as a result of the 14 June events, there was a pressing need to improve Botswana's capacity to receive, process and administer its refugee community. Botswana had proposed at the Second (1984) International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa(55) to strengthen its administrative, technical and logistic support to facilitate the reception and screening of refugees, which was later revised in the light of changing circumstances. The revised proposal estimated the cost of strengthening that support to \$5,885,000, which would cover needs for housing, education and vocational training, communication equipment, transport and health facilities.

In spite of the circumstances, Botswana was determined to keep its doors open to South African refugees. The mission said the international community should enhance its assistance to Botswana in order to ensure the refugees' safety, protection and welfare. It concluded that the right of refugee-asylum countries to be secure from attack or coercion by refugee-producing countries—a principle of international agreements on refugees—was at stake.

SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION (September)

On 26 September,(56) Botswana requested that the Council convene to consider and adopt the report. Meeting on 30 September, the Council invited Botswana, at its request, to participate without the right to vote.

Addressing the Council, Botswana said the mission's report confirmed Botswana's 21 June charges and also that the attack was unprovoked and unwarranted. The fact that a state of emergency had been declared in South Africa proved that South Africa's problems were internal and not a consequence of external conspiracy. Botswana had a right to demand compensation for the damage caused to life and property. The 14 June attack was not only a serious challenge to Botswana but to the international community as a whole. Botswana called

for international assistance in strengthening its security, if it was expected to provide security for the refugees residing there.

Madagascar, speaking for the African Group, expressed satisfaction with the mission's report and praised Botswana for providing assistance to refugees from South Africa despite its economic problems and geographical situation. In this connection, Madagascar emphasized Botswana's commitment to continue, as a party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees(57) and a signatory to the 1969 OAU Convention on specific aspects of the problems of African refugees, to honour its obligations as a State of asylum. Madagascar also welcomed the co-operation between the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Botswana.

At the conclusion of the meeting on 30 September, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 572(1985).

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolution 568(1985),

Having considered the report of the mission to Botswana appointed by the Secretary-General in accordance with resolution 568(1985),

Having heard the statement of the Permanent Representative of Botswana to the United Nations expressing the deep concern of his Government over the attack by South Africa against the territorial integrity of Botswana,

Deeply concerned that the attack by South Africa resulted in the loss of life and casualties to many residents and refugees in Gaborone as well as the destruction of and damage to property,

Noting with satisfaction the policy which Botswana follows in regard to the granting of asylum to people fleeing from the oppression of apartheid as well as its respect for and adherence to the international conventions on the status of refugees,

Reaffirming its opposition to the system of apartheid and the right of all countries to receive refugees fleeing from the oppression of apartheid,

Noting further the urgent needs of Botswana to provide adequate shelter and facilities to refugees seeking asylum in Botswana,

Convinced of the importance of international support for Botswana,

1. Commends the Government of Botswana for its steadfast opposition to apartheid and for the humanitarian policies it is following in regard to refugees;

2. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General for having arranged to send a mission to Botswana to assess the damage caused by South Africa's unprovoked and premeditated acts of aggression and for proposing measures to strengthen Botswana's capacity to receive and provide assistance to South African refugees as well as for determining the level of assistance required by Botswana to cope with the situation resulting from the attack;

3. Endorses the report of the mission to Botswana under resolution 568(1985);

4. Demands that South Africa pay full and adequate compensation to Botswana for the loss of life and damage to property resulting from its act of aggression;