

Mogadishu-Tel Aviv-Pretoria Axis

Recently, the President of the Somali National Movement, Ahmed Mohammad Selanyo, published an extensive memorandum on the prevailing political conditions in Somalia, and the political and military accomplishments of the SNM in the armed struggle against the regime. Below we print one section of this memorandum which details the recently established connections between Siad Barre's regime, Pretoria and Tel Aviv:

Alliance with the racist regimes of South Africa and Israel

After failing in the face of the armed struggle waged by our people and having lost the sympathy of most peace-loving forces of the world, the regime proceeded to establish a desperate alliance with the racist regimes of South Africa and Israel that are hostile to all human values. Barre entered into these notorious alliances at a time when the mass struggle led by the ANC and SWAPO is escalating in South Africa and Namibia against white minority rule, and international support is forthcoming to the people of southern Africa.

Indirect contacts between Barre's regime and Pretoria started in 1979, through a Somalian businessman. Direct contact started on February 12, 1984, when an ATAIR plane arrived in Mogadishu. Onboard was a South African delegation consisting of officials from the Foreign, Defense and Commerce Ministries, in addition to civil servants of the South Africa airlines. According to reliable sources, the South African delegation met with Barre's deputy and the Defense Minister, and discussed matters pertaining to South Africa's aircraft using Somali's airports and air space, in return for economic and military assistance to Barre's regime. These preliminary negotiations were followed by a visit paid by the Somali Defense Minister to Pretoria, May 16-19, 1984. The Somali Defense Minister met with his South African counterpart, and visited some military installations and factories which produce military hardware.

In September 1984, a South African delegation, made up of five officials, visited Mogadishu and met with the Somali Defense Minister, Mohammad Ali Sametar. Contacts were furthered when the South African Foreign Minister Pik Botha visited Mogadishu on December 17, 1984, and met with Barre. Later it was confirmed in South Africa that the final touches were put on the accord that permits the racist regime of South Africa to use Somali territory and air space. It seems that there is an economic and military treaty between the two regimes. According to this accord, South Africa would grant loans to Somalia within two years, repayable after 12 years, in addition to economic assistance to the regime.

In a meeting between South Africa's Foreign Minister and Barre, the issue of selling to South Africa the oil now given to Somalia by Saudi Arabia, was discussed. Reports indicate that Barre granted the South African regime the right to have its air and naval forces visit the Somali port at Casmayo.

South Africa provided Barre with seven counterinsurgency experts. These mercenaries remained in Somalia for three weeks. They visited the Somali air base located 20 miles northwest of Mogadishu. There they met ten Rhodesian pilots who fly eight Hooker-Hunter planes and three training aircraft given to Barre by Abu Dhabi in 1983. The Rhodesian training group is led by a South African citizen. Some Somali officials have acknowledged the presence of these mercenaries in Somali, under the cover of being experts. Reports indicate that the leader of the mercenaries is in the process of buying eight MIG-21 aircraft for South Africa. These planes have been grounded at Somali airports due to lack of spare parts.

It seems that the accord between Barre and the racist regime of South Africa includes repair of Barre's military vehicles and equipment. In addition, it covers things such as extending Casmayo's airport runway and training military intelligence officers. Reliable sources confirm that the delivery of weaponry to Barre started in March this year. Planes packed with weapons arrived in Mogadishu after nightfall. From there, the cargo is transferred by truck. Other sources in Mogadishu add that Barre's regime has granted South African ships anchoring rights in the port of Casmayo.

It seems that the racist regime of South Africa assumed the role of middleman between Barre and the Zionist state. Reports from Somali indicate that General Abdel Rahman Hussein, chief of the militia forces and Barre's son-in-law, secretly visited Israel in February 1985.

The road between Tel Aviv and Pretoria now passes through Mogadishu. This road is crucial since the weaponry imported by South Africa from the US secretly finds its way to South Africa via Israel. It is known that the Israeli role is not limited to providing weapons to South Africa. Israel also participates in military operations launched by the South African regime against African national liberation forces. Also the South African airlines transfers raw materials, as well as finished and semi-finished products, from South Africa to Israel. These products are then re-exported to Western European markets.

The unholy alliance between the dictatorship of Siad Barre, and the fascist regimes based on apartheid and Zionist racism, not only poses a great danger to the liberation struggle of our people. It is also a serious threat to the peoples of the Horn of Africa, Red Sea, Middle East and all Africa. This is particularly so as it threatens the struggle of the people of South Africa and Namibia led by the ANC and SWAPO. The unholy alliance is also dangerous because it threatens the heroic struggle waged by the Palestinian Arab people, to return to their land and establish an independent national state, under their united leadership in the framework of the PLO. This malicious alliance also threatens the nationalist states and the forces of national liberation and social progress throughout the Arab world and Africa, and all the forces struggling for freedom, progress, and peace throughout the world. For all these reasons, we call upon our brothers of the Arab and world liberation forces to exert all efforts to foil this malicious conspiracy.