

April 26, 1982

Letter from South African Defence Minister Magnus Malan to Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon

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Summary:

South African Defence Minister Magnus Malan writes to Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon to thank him for his hospitality to the South African delegation during their visit to Israel. Malan thanks Sharon for "your clear and grave concern over the soviet expansionism in Southern African." He also discusses the signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding.

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Ministry of Defence
Pretoria

26 APRIL 1982

DEFENCE INTELLIGENCE
DECLASSIFIED

Alphonsus de 26/4/82

Standaert

The Honourable Ariel Sharon
Minister of Defence
TEL AVIV

13 JUL 2006

J.A.L. STEINMANN
72563596RE W01

Dear Colleague

Thank you for receiving our delegation in your country and I wish to assure you that the hospitality extended by your charming lady and yourself on your beautiful farm, is sincerely appreciated by Cmdt Marais and his team.

The subjects raised by you and the discussions following from them, as well as the results of the successful Issacom-meeting, has been reported to me in detail. The context of the report I received is positive, and I am pleased that the relationship between our countries in the [redacted] is of a very cordial nature and that all existing programmes are progressing well. The successful visit of your Chief of Staff, Genl Eitan, to the RSA recently, bears further testimony to this.

I also received a full explanation of the incorrect press reports following your interviews and statements in the USA concerning the Southern Africa situation.

On this subject I would firstly like to express my appreciation for your clear concept and grave concern over the Soviet expansionism in Southern Africa and that you are prepared to speak up about this.

My country has continually been under pressure for many years at world forums as a result of this onslaught by the Soviet Union and fortunately the world media to a large extent, is at this stage very biased, if not totally opposed to South Africa. According to our experience even the best attempts to portray facts through the world

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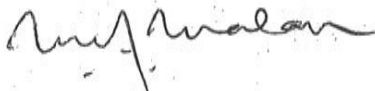
media is more often than not distorted, to have harmful effects for us and this usually ends up in the annual attack on South Africa in the United Nations. My only concern therefore is, that the relations between our two countries in the [REDACTED] may be further exposed and used to the detriment of both of us in the United Nations' debates and the resulting pressures.

With reference to the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) I do not think that there is a misunderstanding as to the importance of this between us. I personally think it is essential and I was instrumental in my former post as Chief of the SADF in drawing up the existing MOU a number of years ago. The present MOU covers all aspects of the existing co-operation between us in the defence area and the adequacy of the provisions therein is born out by the positive relationship between us as referred to earlier in my letter. Where as any new developments in the sphere of defence between us that may need covering by a MOU could be accommodated as an addendum to the existing one, I do not see the need to draw up a new MOU which at some stage must be ratified by our Governments.

Regarding the proposals as to the regular meeting between the Ministers of Defence, I would like to confirm what Cmdt Marais has already indicated to you on my request, namely, that I think it is essential that the Ministers of Defence of our two countries should meet from time to time, but I would prefer this to remain on an ad-hoc basis as the need arises, and that on the executive level however, by-annual meetings in the form of the present Issacom should continue. This method of co-operation was also determined previously when the existing MOU was agreed upon.

Thank you for your kind invitation to visit your country during March, but unfortunately my parliamentary commitments regarding legislation and the budget of my department, will not allow me to be absent from the country for the next few months.

Yours sincerely



M A DE M MALAN
MINISTER OF DEFENCE

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