

# **The Last Authority**

*Three Decades of Nigeria's Contribution to the  
Liberation Struggle in South Africa*

By

**Oboshi Agyeno**

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Liberation Struggle in South Africa**

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## **DEDICATION**

To my mother and the Motherland.

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## Foreword

History records the events of the past relating to particular places or subjects, preserved as a guide for the future. History ensures that the legacy of the past is secured as part of the inheritance of future generation. It is therefore empirically important that while recording such history, deliberate steps should be taken to ensure the inclusion of the most infinite details that enables the inquisitive mind to have a better knowledge of the event, how it happened and who played major roles therein, the various *dramatis personae* that are worthy of mention and preserved for posterity.

The Apartheid regime in South Africa, remained one of the ugly pasts of colonialism in Africa and one whose history must be fully detailed without any form of dilution as Africa was united in the fight for freedom for South Africa. The oppressive administration of the white supremacist regime in South Africa became more vicious at a time when most of Africa had gained independence. It was therefore little wonder that the rest of Africa having attained political freedom almost at the same time, were collective in the quest to join forces to ensure that the remaining vestiges of colonialism in Africa was totally eliminated.

The Sharpeville massacre of March 1960 provided African leaders with the needed impetus for collective action against the evil of Apartheid regime in South Africa. Reacting to the Sharpeville massacre, the Nigerian Prime Minister at the time Alhaji Tafawa Balewa, in 1961, just at the threshold of Nigeria's independence wrote to the leadership of the African National Congress,

extending a hand of support, a position subsequent Nigerian leaders sustained until the final liquidation of Apartheid. In the case of Nigeria, the initiative by the various Nigerian government widened the scope of engagement to include participation and contribution of every Nigerian both in cash and kind towards the liberation struggle in South Africa. The Nigerian government went the additional mile to provide hundreds of Nigerian international passports to many members of South African freedom fighters whose passports had been confiscated by the leadership of South Africa who now had to travel under Nigerian passport in their quest for freedom for their country. Many South African students were given scholarship which enabled hundreds of South African students to continue their education in Nigerian higher institutions.

Unfortunately, the post-apartheid history of South Africa had avoided the leading role played by some African countries, in particular Nigeria in the liberation struggle. Nigeria was so involved in the liberation struggle and the impact of its support so profound that there is no single African country that would claim to provide the kind of influence that Nigeria brought to bear in the liberation struggle. Nigeria's role in the anti-apartheid movement was so great that it earned Nigeria the membership of the Frontline States, an appellation used to describe a coalition of countries in southern Africa that shared proximity with South Africa, but most importantly countries whose government and people dedicated their sovereignty, resources and emotions to fight the white minority regimes propelling apartheid in South Africa. Nigeria was considered a Frontline state and a great ally of the oppressed people of South Africa in appreciation of her leadership role and near



physical presence in most decisions of the Frontline States in the fight against apartheid.

It is this missing link, and inappropriate documentation of the role of Nigeria in the struggle to defeat apartheid that prompted Dr. Agyeno to embark on this project. He has therefore taken all the necessary steps, to provide some of the details on the contribution by Nigeria and some other countries, in particular the frontline states towards the liberation of South Africa from Apartheid regime. He shared the view that if the Nigerian role and those of other African states were properly documented, it would have gone a long way to correct the mind set of many South African youths, many of them born after the death of Apartheid and who had failed to acknowledge that they were not alone in the struggle but that other African leaders worked tirelessly towards the emancipation of South Africa. The effort by Nigeria, saw to the expulsion of Apartheid South Africa from the Commonwealth in 1961. It also underscored the consequences for Nigeria when she took some bold steps towards the nationalization of some of the tangible assets of the British government in Nigeria, to the dismay of many from the west. That step by Nigeria signified to the global community Nigeria's readiness to take every measure necessary towards dismantling apartheid and to do whatever it takes to win freedom for South Africa. Dr. Agyeno further posited that were the South African youths better educated, they would have extended a hand of friendship to Africans who came to South Africa after the collapse of Apartheid instead of the resultant xenophobia that greeted the Africans as well as Nigerian migrants to that country. The young South Africans saw the African migrant as a threat to their newly acquired freedom and therefore the unfriendly attitude towards

them even when the African migrants are legitimate residents and with verifiable means of livelihood. The action of the South African Youths and the deliberate neglect from the South African elite was contrary to the Pan African spirit that pioneered the liberation struggle, and worked for their liberation, the spirit every South African should be expected to cherish.

The role of diplomacy in the liberation struggle was not left out, as the book underscored the role of Nigerian diplomacy at all levels in the collective fight for the liberation of South Africa. Nigerian diplomats in major capitals of the world lobbied and solicited support from their host governments to join in the struggle and to give support for the South African course.

Dr. Agyeno took time to provide information about the economic capabilities of South Africa which at the time was the economic power house of Southern Africa, a position it still occupies till date. The location of South Africa made it possible that major neighboring states are dependent on South Africa for its access to the sea, a position it exploited effectively in its relations with those states while the apartheid system lasted.

It is a book every lover of history would like to have.

Ambassador John Chika Ejinaka

# PART 1: INTRODUCTION



Ref: FFS.27

CABINET OFFICE,  
LAGOS,  
NIGERIA.

4th April, 1961.

Sir,

Alhaji Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, Prime Minister, has directed me to thank you for your kind letter of the 19th of March and to assure you that on his part, the battle against apartheid has just begun.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(A. Ahmed Kari)

Ag. Principal Private Secretary  
to the Prime Minister.

Mr. M. Herbstein,  
P. O. Box 258,  
Abeokuta.

A letter confirming Nigeria's commitment to end apartheid  
immediately after independence

# Introduction

*History, despite its wrenching pain cannot be unlived,  
but if faced with courage, need not be live again.*

Maya Angelou

*"Khawuleza mama, hurry mama don't let them catch you"*

Miriam Makeba 1961

On a cool November spring in South Africa, an annual conference was underway in one of the most prestigious Universities where papers on xenophobia, black on black violence and other regional conflicts are being discussed. The African hall, which was incidentally the venue where six papers were presented by predominantly foreign scholars and students was full to capacity. The paper presentations on that particular day would have just been as the day before it, but on this day, there were more disturbing perspectives on the presentations around xenophobia. The conversation veered towards that period of the liberation struggle, when the African brotherhood was prominent against apartheid and indeed when Africans got each other's back. While the discussion was still being reflected on the subject matter and the debate generating the needed attention from the audience, there was a jaw dropping silence among the foreign participants at the African Hall when a guy who I would later come to identify as Dlamini, blurted out in the middle of the argument that 'nobody helped us during apartheid, and with a spat he went further to ask on top of his voice;

‘where were other Africans during our darkest moment’? Dlamini was outwardly referring to his own understanding of how he thought black South Africans were deserted by other African countries during apartheid. He gave the impression that majority black South Africans were abandoned by fellow Africans during apartheid. The response of Dlamini elicited a thunderous applause across the hall.

As expected, some voices in the hall grew louder and I couldn’t help but notice that these voices were coming from Nigerians and other foreign participants who were trying to concur to the narrative of African solidarity during the anti-apartheid movement. That didn’t make any difference because the session became rowdy as the young South African students that made half of the population in the hall kept applauding Dlamini as he spoke so eloquently, raising his voice above any other, about what he thought he knew of the liberation struggle and how apartheid in South Africa was fought and won. In my startled concentration, I heard him say that it was only Julius Nyerere of Tanzania that offered them land to cultivate and a place to stay when many of them had to go on exile during their period of oppression, humiliation, desolation and isolation that became the hallmark of the majority in apartheid South Africa.

No doubt, majority of native South Africans were isolated during the apartheid regime, but not isolated by other African countries. Since Dlamini mentioned Julius Nyerere of Tanzania as the only African in his memory that supported native South Africans during the liberation struggle, I quickly interjected and asked him if he knew the place of Samora Machel of Mozambique, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, General Murtala Muhammed of Nigeria, and Seretse

Khama of Botswana in the schema of the liberation struggle?. He was about to answer the question with a smirk of assurance on his face when the program director and time keeper insisted the session was over.

During tea-break, I saw Dlamini sitting at a table sipping coffee while talking on his cell-phone. I cautiously made my way to where he was enjoying some snacks and asked if I could share the table with him. He says if you want, with a hand gesture to suggest I take a seat! Now anyone could notice that Dlamini was popular with the audience and participants at the conference. I would later understand that he is a known activist and a local champion of post-apartheid South Africa. As I sat beside him, I went straight to question why he thought that only Julius Nyerere gave respite to native South Africans during apartheid.

He answered with a more relaxed tone, leaning backwards to rest his back on the chair's splat. Of-course there were leaders like Kwame Nkrumah and Muammar Gaddafi he said, who were there for the oppressed people of South Africa. I nodded in acceptance of the two leaders he mentioned while still asking him if he knew the contribution of Nigeria to the liberation struggle. I got a shiver at his response. Dlamini insisted that Nigeria did nothing for South Africans and if any, it was the late General Sani Abacha of Nigeria who was planning to send weapons to the freedom fighters to engage in armed conflict against apartheid shortly before he was 'killed', and that plan never materialized. According to Dlamini, the 'gift' from Sani Abacha of Nigeria would have given the freedom fighters an edge in the liberation struggle had he not suddenly died.

I tried to explain to him that there were several African actors in the liberation struggle of South Africa that changed the course of the anti-apartheid movement to the advantage of the oppressed majority of South Africa, but he seemed to care less. The conversation got me perplexed, and more surprising was that the ignorance displayed by Dlamini was shared across a large number of native South Africans, especially those referred to as the 'born free'. The born free are a generation of large youth population of South Africans who were born around the end of apartheid or when democracy and majority rule was ushered into South African political space. The born free are young, curious and gullible, they make up about 40% of South Africa population. They are among the students that filled up the African hall when the arguments of whether other Africans supported the natives during the anti-apartheid movement or not. The born free are very impressionable.

Anyway, my inquisitiveness got me asking a broad spectrum of the South African demography of their impression of the role of Nigeria during apartheid. So many do not know what Nigeria did and very few acknowledged the contributions of Nigeria. You could see that those who knew about Nigeria's contribution during the liberation struggle were the population that left South Africa on exile during apartheid, who unfortunately do not see it as their responsibility to tell the youngsters stories of Nigerian comradeship or even document the assistance or value they got from Nigeria or other Africans when on exile to those countries. Besides, these set of South Africans were noticeably few and quite elderly.

Nevertheless, after acknowledging superior arguments from some scholars who came to join our conversation, Dlamini



unapologetically conceded that some help did come from African countries during apartheid and apart from the Julius Nyerere angle, whom he said gave them land to live and cultivate for food as exiles in Tanzania, Dlamini also added that Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Muammar Gaddafi of Libya should be applauded because these personalities also gave support in cash and kind to the liberation struggle. He made this statement with the confidence of a typical South African involved in activism. What then could have happened to the history of notable individuals and countries who stood against apartheid, and yet are not even political or religious leaders but ordinary citizens spread across Africa who gave enormous material and psychological support to the liberation struggle?

Those class of people or country didn't bother Dlamini. I decided to further stir the conversation around the contributions of Nigeria to the liberation struggle from a different angle to test his sense of history. I asked Dlamini if he knew about Chief Emeka Anyaoku of Nigeria who contributed significantly in enthroning democracy in South Africa, and who incidentally holds a national award in South Africa of 'the status of a Supreme companion of OR Tambo (Gold)'; which is South Africa's highest honour for a non-South African? He responded that he would have known if there was any significant support from any such Nigerians in that regard. He went on to say that, 'the ANC can decide to honour whoever they please, and it does not reflect the wishes of the people'. He did not know who Chief Emeka Anyakou is, and does not pretend to care whatsoever.

The highest honour bestowed on Chief Emeka Anyaoku was given to him during the presidency of former president Thabo Mbeki. Chief Emeka Anyaoku was the Secretary General of the

Commonwealth of Nations and worked assiduously during that period to dismantle the blocks of apartheid in South Africa and ensure a peaceful transition to democracy and majority rule. Regardless of the position he held with the Commonwealth, he was before then a foreign affairs minister in Nigeria for a brief period of time, and has mediated individually and through official capacity, to resolve the crisis between the ANC and the Inkatha Freedom party of Mangosuthu Buthelezi, which ignited internal conflicts and violence among factions of the two parties and their supporters. This led to killing of Africans by Africans and that was seen as a dent on the spirit of the anti-apartheid movement. The crisis undermined the liberation struggle from the African perspective and thanks to the interventions of people like Chief Emeka Anyaoku, it was resolved and some normalcy and purpose returned that will eventually usher South Africa into democracy.

Well, many 'born free' South Africans do not know about the history of the liberation struggle. Shortly after the conference, I was gripped by a sense of guilt not because Dlamini's outburst jolted me to the reality that Africans know very little about Africa, but that knowing very little about African history by Africans themselves has influenced the kind of peculiar challenges in the relationship that the continent is currently contending with. From insecurity, underdevelopment, distorted coexistence and irresponsible leadership. The system that was built after democracy and majority government was enthroned in South Africa, downplayed the place of history in the education of its future generations. This is prevalent in the life of the native South African. These South Africans are not aware of some historical truth that have shaped their present configuration as a country, nor do they care to understand the

historical significance of Pan Africanism displayed on their behalf by African countries in the past.

Yet, Pan Africanism is evidently acknowledged among native South Africa as a means to an end, an end that could showcase the good in our Africanism, from the colour of the skin to the originality of thoughts, deeds, aspirations and relationships. The lack of emphasis on South Africa and many other African countries in teaching history in schools and other institutions of knowledge and learning has disturbingly increased in proportion. It is also responsible for the indignities of self-hate persona and inability to manage diversity ascribed to Africans in domestic and international politics. Little knowledge on the positive impact of past exchanges within the continent and inability to use such knowledge to build a modern, united and interconnected societies by Africans themselves is arguably the original sin of the black race.

In fairness to the first generation of political leaders in South Africa which consist of Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki, subsequent political leadership of South Africa disregarded important historical facts that should be embedded in the heroic narrative of African resistance to oppression and colonialism in modern democratic South Africa. Perhaps, the multifaceted challenges that confronted these leaders in building a modern and inclusive society, distracted them from exploiting the value of African comradeship already laid down by previous leadership to construct a knowledge driven society that draws strength from the past to build a cohesive future.

Many people in South Africa do not have an idea that Nigeria was a core member of the liberation struggle and instrumental to a lot of

persuasion that ended apartheid. To this end, I had to do something, anything but stay silent over a rich historical element on African solidarity, brotherhood and unity of purpose displayed during the liberation struggle. The liberation struggle was a period when Nigeria projected the Africanist paradigm of its foreign policy, which was expressed meaningfully in South Africa during the anti-apartheid movement. But deliberately or by default, that part of history of African solidarity and resistance was and is still being ignored by those who benefited the most from the Africanist posture of Nigerian foreign policy first hand, and those who should know better what Nigeria contributed during such period. Some accounts of such contributions are documented and others acknowledged by not only the first generation leaders of South Africa, but by other African leaders and historians. Even the simplest oral tradition of storytelling in Africa could have passed down and communicated this aspect of Africa's rich and impressive history of resistance to the young and increasing population of the people of South Africa. Alas, that part of history is silent in South Africa.

There have been several accounts of assistance that some African countries deployed to end apartheid in South Africa, as there is no denying the role Nigeria played. How come then that the contribution of Nigeria is obviously absent in the narrative of anti-apartheid movement in South Africa? That aspect of history of Nigeria contributions against apartheid in South Africa is muted across the length and breadth of the country, on the streets, by its government, people and the national sentiment of South Africa. It is strange that the lacuna created by the ignorance of African solidarity and resistance by native South Africans themselves, have invariably made South Africans to think that other Africans living in South

Africa are sabotaging the South African interest. Over time, this situation has made Africans to live perpetually in fear and anxiety of discriminatory and intolerant behavior by South Africans, instead of having a sense of camaraderie which should have normally been ignited by the history of friendship cultivated by past African citizens which gave a sense of purpose, brotherhood and *Ubuntu*.

It is the impression of this author that if African history is told by those who lived it and those who knew how African ancestors cooperated and intermingled with each other in the past, then perception of Africans will change about themselves in more accepting ways, and the intolerance they have for diversity and contradictions will begin to diminish. Individually or collectively, it should be known for a fact that African countries deployed enormous resources to support the people of South Africa against apartheid. The attempt to be silent on such solidarity and supports in itself is a recipe for grievances and lack of accommodation for each other.

So in my disappointment and disbelief with the level of ignorance on the role played by some African countries particularly Nigeria during the liberation struggle, I set out to interview the people of South Africa from Pretoria to Limpopo, the Free State to Kwazulu Natal. The born free' generation and a large number of the elderly to my astonishment weren't acquainted with the contributions of other African countries in what appeared to be the last political struggle for the dignity of the black race in Africa by Africans. Many in South Africa do not have knowledge on how the liberation struggle was won. To them, the intermittent revolts, strikes and civil disobedience against the draconian rule of apartheid carried out by

the natives living within South Africa itself was the silver bullet. Little did they know that some of these strikes, boycotts and demonstrations were planned and executed from outside of South Africa, with the support of the 'friends of freedom'

As far as most South Africans know or think, those who fought bravely inside South Africa did it alone and successfully without help from anywhere but by the good fortunes of the ancestors. Even some of the elderly who were young during such period were either reluctant to admit knowledge of assistance that the oppressed people of South Africa received from outside of South Africa, or were plainly also ignorant of it. After some deep reflection, the idea to excuse such ignorance became acceptable because the period when the dark cloud of ruthless oppression, discrimination and servitude hung directly over majority of South Africans, the country was pretty much closed out from the rest of the world. This could be the reason why many native South Africans aren't aware of the contributions of Nigeria or other 'friends of freedom' against apartheid South Africa. There could be other reasons to this ignorance, some of which shall be interrogated as we move along. However, the seeming ignorance of the contributions of African countries in ending apartheid became the inspiration for this book.

The 'Last Authority' captured as the title of this book is figurative and deliberate for many reasons. First, South Africa was the last country in Africa to gain political freedom or what others will prefer to call independence from erstwhile colonial administration in the continent. Put succinctly by Olayiwola Abegunrin (2009) in describing the history of colonialism in Africa, 'the white settler regime in South Africa was the last white rule regime to surrender

power to an African majority government in the continent'. Secondly by its location, South Africa is the last country located at the bottom tip of the African continent where land meets marine. Indian oceans to the east and the Atlantic Ocean to the west.

Lastly, the three decades in focus by this book reflects the last era that Nigeria successfully flexed its political, economic and diplomatic muscle and implanted the Africanist agenda on the international arena to restore, prevent or dissuade the indignity of the African person. Whether it is to end apartheid or salvage war torn countries from civil wars and annihilation, Nigeria in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s was the last period that many remembered in deeds and words of how truly powerful and manifest Nigeria was in Africa. The chapters put forward will highlight some of the contributions made by Nigeria to the people of South Africa against white minority rule, a regime that was to be the last political stronghold of European incursion in Africa. This is a historical narrative of the liberation struggle in South Africa from the paint, brush and canvas of Nigeria.

\* \* \*

The Republic of South Africa is a sovereign state and many of its ardent citizens aligned with the black consciousness movement of Steve Biko will prefer to call Azania. Without argument however, South Africa is fondly nicknamed 'Mzansi' by majority of its young population and indeed the natives. Mzansi is a slang word used by the aboriginal people which connotation means 'the South'. It is by every description a very unique country in Africa with a climate like no other and certainly the most industrialized yet. South Africa is

the last country at the tip of the southern-most part of the continent of Africa where the expanse of its land is located between the Atlantic oceans to the west and Indian oceans to the east. The only country in Africa blessed to have the vastness of its land surrounded and touched by these two great oceans.

It is also the last country in Africa to gain political independence by the majority to decide and determine their future from white minority administration in 1994. Indeed, the process of attaining freedom or independence of majority South Africans did not come cheap. Those who sacrificed everything to accomplish majority rule and democracy for self-actualization of the natives in Mzansi did it at a great cost, many paid the supreme price for such freedom. As would be expected in such instances by the oppressed people of Mzansi, very deliberate efforts have been put in place to immortalize those who risked everything to make sure that true democracy, majority rule and freedom to the people was achieved.

The names of Pixley ka Isaka Seme (founder of what is now known as the African National Congress) Albert Lithuli, Oliver R Tambo, Govan Mbeki, the famous Nelson Mandela, Thabo Mbeki, Solomon Mahlangu, Stephen Bantu Biko, Robert Sobukwe, Chris Hani, Tebeho Mashinini, etc. have all played heroic roles in deliberately fighting for freedom of their people in different ways, time, space and season. The struggle for such freedom by these personalities and others demanding for self-determination from the white minority administration in Pretoria at the time, revealed one of the most horrific, oppressive, inhuman and sinister system of subjugation ever recorded in recent memory within the continent of Africa. It also revealed one of the most remarkable and perhaps the



last of the stories of purposeful leadership by Africans to liberate Africa, and of African resistance and solidarity against foreign political oppression, and promoting the dignity of the black race.

Apart from the very gallant and sustained effort to liberate the people of *Mzansi* from the evil system of apartheid by South Africans themselves, the collaboration and contributions of other sister African countries in particular, and the international community in general, was significant if not pivotal in overthrowing the apartheid regime in South Africa and indeed the Southern Africa region as a whole. The exploits of African countries in the anti-apartheid movement have been often told by foreigners or from the position of an outsider looking in, instead of the other way around.

Apartheid was a sinister arrangement of official discrimination, illegitimate domination and denial of rights to majority of South Africans which by implication offended the sensibility and civility of the black race. It was a constitutionally racial oppression that was heaped on the black majority of South Africa and which was introduced by the National Party in 1948. 'Apartheid denied the most basic democratic and human rights to some 87 percent of the population. The majority of South Africans have been barred from the right to vote, to own land, to live outside specially designated "Bantustan" and urban 'group areas', or to hold certain industrial and other jobs reserved for whites' (Steven Clark,1993:9).

During the entire period apartheid lasted, the aboriginal people along with other people of colour residing in South Africa were forced and obligated to live in a cluster which the apartheid regimes called the homeland or Bantustan. This homeland was to be a

separate country made up of habitation of squalor within South Africa and which will belong to the natives, while the white minority confiscated and occupied all the rich agricultural land and shared it among themselves. The native majority lived in cluster of shanties and forced to inhabit a sparsely allocation that constitute only thirteen percent of South African's land. In contrast, the whites lived, farm and controlled a vast expanse of land that is two times the size of Netherlands. The whole idea about the Bantustan was to remove the blacks from the urban areas, and remove the right to self-determination from the natives, and push them out of sight so they don't mix with white communities, except with permission. The Population Registration Act in 1950, the Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act of 1970 among others therefore, sealed the implementation of this policy of segregation. ([www.sahistory.org.za](http://www.sahistory.org.za))

The impact of the policy of segregation in South Africa through several Acts by the National Party was to simply deprive and remove the choices, power and identity of the native majority by enacting different laws under apartheid that will strip the natives of their place to access any political rights, factor of production, and even the right to keep their language. The Soweto uprising in 1976 that witnessed the barbaric killings of school children who were demonstrating the substitution of their mother tongue in schools with Afrikaans as the medium of instructions was another milestone in the gamut of apartheid policies in South Africa which the natives vehemently resisted.

The natives of South Africa had put up a strong resistance to apartheid and its draconian policies across the country. There was

no other way to resist these policies than to fight for their inalienable rights with uncommon perseverance and insist that human rights has a universal application. It was thus inhumane to deprive a black man or woman the right to vote or reside anywhere they deem fit, but allow the minority unfettered access to vote and be voted for. It was on this moral breadth that the fight for liberation kept occurring either through careful planning or sporadically. Fortunately, many African countries who were opposed to these injustices had shown solidarity in contributing to the success of such resistance.

The contributions of some notable African countries gave the impetus for the blacks in South Africa, who were naturally in majority to record the series of successes that gave the liberation struggle a pass mark and an example of an African led civil resistance against colonialism on a global scale. During this period, African countries displayed a strong sense of solidarity and shared interest with the oppressed people of South Africa. The quest for freedom in South Africa became a collective responsibility and interest which manifested in the support the native majority of South Africans received from regional and national governments and people of Africa.

Unfortunately, over many decades of enjoying the fraternity and monumental support from Africans to end apartheid in South Africa, inadequate knowledge and information are available to South Africans themselves on the extent of assistance and contributions they receive during the liberation struggle. This is particularly true about the contributions of African countries in fighting for the freedom of South Africa and the confrontation with the white minority government in Pretoria during such period.

Young South Africans on whose shoulders is the future of *Mzansi* are not aware of how the liberation struggle was executed and won through the support provided by other African countries.

Among the friends of freedom are African countries like Nigeria that played an influential role in closing the chapter of apartheid in the continent. The ignorance displayed by young people across the length and breadth of South Africa and the perceived silence by the government of South Africa who are incidentally the biggest beneficiaries of the liberation struggle, will not change the fact that the liberation struggle was a fight to liberate the people of *Mzansi*, of which several African countries contributed their quota. There is no denying the fact that South Africa and its people enjoyed the benevolence and spirit of Ubuntu from other Africans before, during and shortly after apartheid was eradicated.

Ubuntu for a black man or woman, is an idea that many have argued originated from Africa or have captured the essence of African civilization more than any other. It is the thinking that explains the nature and substance of African political, social, economic, environmental, spiritual and communal understanding of life. Ubuntu is fixated on the concept of humanity and yet more concern with how this human being thrive, relate and perceive other humans in his or her community.

Ubuntu is therefore a tale of African humanism and the projection of the African character. In Mandela's wisdom, he opined that 'Ubuntu is a profound sense that we are human only through the humanity of others; that if we are to accomplish anything in this world, it will in equal measure be due to works and achievement of

others'. The above statement with the benefit of hindsight suggest that Africa can only make rapid and remarkable progress when Africans work together. It indeed shows the interconnectivity of human life for so long and in varied ways that the concept of Ubuntu from the African perspective over the years have come to bear a global viewpoint or application.

Ubuntu can therefore be applied to governance, entertainment, science and technology, law and every angle of human circumstance and conditions. This is what gives Africans a group identity and it does not matter the location, belief, ethnicity and religion of a person, Ubuntu aligns the hope, expectations, aspirations and development of the black race into one sturdy and unified agenda. Ubuntu is the African version of being your brother's keeper, a translation that speaks of the significance of communal responsibility that escorts a black man or woman, where ever he or she may be. This is deeply rooted in African orientation and could be interpreted in several ways, yet speak of the same thing.

It is on this basis that Nigeria in particular and other African countries did not look away when their kin in South Africa were under the evil machination of apartheid. Nigeria, united with other African countries confronted apartheid with all they got. Yet many years later, the history of such unity and solidarity in resistance to foreign domination and oppression was silenced, misconstrued, cleverly removed, diluted or outrightly denied. It is expedient to document the information of such solidarity for South Africans and every global citizen to know and learn from it. The silence in African collaboration, solidarity and unity among Africans themselves will

later have its consequences across the continent, in which the manifestations of some of consequences are particularly seen in South Africa.

Information about the role played by several countries in the continent of Africa during the liberation struggle need to be recognized through storytelling at least, and at best, through folklore and songs, which are Africa's basic logic of communication. These stories should be widely acknowledged in forming the camaraderie needed in African unity. This is necessary for the simple reason of aligning the past to the future, so that the native majority of South Africans will know that some countries if not the entire continent of Africa was with them during their darkest moments. This is important to consider as a subtle way in improving relations among Africans living in South Africa in particular, and black solidarity across the world.

It is also necessary to change the mindset of people like Dlamini on what he thought he knew about the history of the liberation movement. After all, the older generation of South African leaders like Nelson Mandela and Thabo Mbeki have acknowledged the contributions of Nigeria to the liberation struggles at different occasions in the past (Nigerian Voice Newspaper 3013). However, statements of Nigerian contributions to the liberation struggles are made in isolation and not to the crowd that should appreciate such effort. There is a strong level of ignorance among South Africans who often hold true that they were betrayed by other Africans when they needed help during apartheid. Even the involvement of the frontline states (FLS) in ending apartheid is only spoken passively.