

United Nations

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION

Official Records*



FOURTH COMMITTEE

4th meeting

held on

Thursday, 8 October 1981

at 10.30 a.m.

New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 4th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. JAMAL (Qatar)

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REQUESTS FOR HEARINGS

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Distr. GENERAL

A/C.4/36/SR.4

28 October 1981

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 94: ACTIVITIES OF FOREIGN ECONOMIC AND OTHER INTERESTS WHICH ARE IMPEDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES IN NAMIBIA AND IN ALL OTHER TERRITORIES UNDER COLONIAL DOMINATION AND EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE COLONIALISM, APARTHEID AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (continued) (A/36/23 (Part III); A/AC.109/652 and Corr. 1, 655, 656, 658)

1. Mr. DOKOMOS (Hungary) welcomed the admission of Vanuatu and Belize to the United Nations. The experience of their long struggles for independence and national sovereignty should allow them to make a special contribution to the Committee.
2. In spite of the progress made in eliminating colonialism, a great deal remained to be done by the international community: Namibia's long and trying struggle had not yet led to its emergence as an independent country, while numerous other Territories continued under colonial administration. At the same time, neo-colonialism, with its sophisticated methods of exploitation, had made its appearance. Economic exploitation, an especially persistent form of colonialism, continued to affect liberated peoples, in sectors where their vulnerability was greatest, long after they had won independence.
3. Namibia provided many characteristic examples of blatant colonial exploitation. Document A/AC.109/656, concentrating mainly on the mining industry, demonstrated convincingly how South African and Western firms, often with government assistance, were quickening the tempo of their plunder of Namibia. The benefits of the remarkable 6 per cent annual growth rate of the country were not being enjoyed by those who produced the wealth; the wages of Africans remained below the poverty line and there were no laws restricting the outflow of profit and making reinvestment mandatory. The mining industries, whose output in Namibia had advanced in the last decade at more than twice the rate of the gross domestic product as a whole, were increasingly attracting foreign investors there as elsewhere, whose goal was to drain the country's wealth before it attained independence. One of the main issues before the Committee was the exploitation of Namibia's huge reserves of uranium, chiefly by a South-African-based corporation and its Western partners. Such collaboration could enhance the nuclear potential of the racist régime and represented a great danger for international peace and security.
4. The most important conclusion to be drawn from the deplorable facts in the report was that the selfish interests of the giant corporations were being buttressed by the foreign policy decisions of the imperialist States. Such a situation was totally at variance with the United Nations resolutions condemning the plunder of human and natural resources by foreign economic interests, and progressive anti-colonialist forces should unite in efforts to make those resolutions more effective.

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5. Mr. GARCIA ALMEIDA (Cuba) welcomed the representative of Vanuatu and Belize, two nations each of which symbolized one more victory over colonialism.

6. The activities of foreign economic and other interests that were impeding the implementation of the Declaration took on special significance in the dangerous political climate that prevailed. The work of the Committee provided all States with an opportunity to take steps to force the South African colonialists and their Western allies to respect the international consensus on the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia. One important step would be to compel the developed countries which were plundering the natural resources of Namibia and other colonial Territories to change their policies. The viability of a negotiated solution should be weighed in the light of the repeated failure of the Security Council to adopt effective sanctions, owing to the use of the veto by those who were benefitting from the colonial policy of the racist régime.

7. While the international community's efforts were flagging, the activities of foreign economic interests in Namibia were thriving. That even included long-term research and investment, which was an indication of how confident they were that their criminal exploitation of Namibia's resources would be tolerated. There had been a recent upsurge in an often-disguised foreign involvement in the mining sector in Namibia, an ominous development in the case of uranium, of which Namibia and South Africa between them would soon account for half the world's production. The real reasons behind South Africa's intransigence - and Western complicity - concerning the independence of Namibia were not hard to find.

8. There could be no viable economic co-operation between the developed nations and the third world as long as the imperialist industrialized countries pursued a policy of foreign investment in Namibia and South Africa that necessarily increased inequality and exploitation and furthered their own hegemonistic pretensions. It was no secret that the new United States Administration had recently strengthened its ties with the despicable apartheid régime in an aggressive alliance based on common political ideas and economic interests. The economic facts behind the relations of the United States and Western European countries with South Africa had to be understood before steps could be taken to alter those relations.

9. The activities of foreign interests in small colonial Territories, with rare exception, served to prolong the colonial status of the inhabitants, who had been conditioned to identify their well-being and progress with their colonial dependence, and had been hampered in developing those sectors of their economy which might serve as a basis for stable interdependence with other countries in their areas. If the unjust world economic order presented difficulties for independent nations of the third world, what future could be in store for those small dependent Territories which did not even have the possibility of devising development or investment plans in their own interests?

10. The specialized agencies and other organizations in the United Nations system which had co-operated with the Organization of African Unity, the national liberation movements and some of the small Territories in the formulation of assistance programmes were to be commended. All Governments should support such assistance, which, if greatly expanded, could become an effective weapon in the struggle against colonial domination.

(Mr. Garcia Almeida, Cuba)

11. Military activities which were impeding the implementation of the Declaration were taking on particular significance. A military build-up in South Africa had culminated in the recent cowardly attack on Angola, which the racist régime would not have dared to mount without United States support. The international community had spared no efforts to put a halt to such dangerous aggression, but the veto exercised by South Africa's ally had made it impossible to take drastic steps. Moreover, the United States had not been dissuaded from pursuing covert operations against Angola, Zambia and Mozambique and provocative naval manoeuvres in the Atlantic and Caribbean, nor had it moderated the arrogant tone it used in dealing with developing countries. Its actions were reminiscent of the ways of fascism.

12. Cuba would make every sacrifice to fulfil its international duty to assist the heroic Angolan people in defending their sovereignty and revolutionary achievements. South Africa's obvious strategic objective was to maintain the status quo in order to annihilate SWAPO and hold other African nations to ransom with its military and nuclear potential. The non-aligned countries, in a communiqué issued at the current session of the General Assembly (A/36/566-S/14713), had reaffirmed their support for SWAPO as the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people and had called upon all Member States to render increased material, financial and military assistance to SWAPO in its struggle.

13. In the small Territories, military bases and manoeuvres were a common feature. The Committee should adopt resolutions insisting on the dismantling of military bases and condemning military activities in dependent Territories.

14. It was time for United Nations resolutions to provide the basis for a world-wide mobilization against régimes espousing the use of force. Times had changed: the world community was now composed of a majority of peace-loving nations and imperialist countries could no longer act with impunity.

15. Mr. SORENSEN-MOSQUERA (Venezuela) said that the persistence of the activities of foreign interests in Territories under colonial domination constituted one of the most serious obstacles to the liberation of colonial peoples, by seriously jeopardizing their economic viability and independence. Well documented evidence was available on the activities of transnational corporations in southern Africa which impeded the process of decolonization and gave way to new forms of domination.

16. In the case of Namibia, their greed for natural resources was obvious and their illegal exploitation of the rich uranium deposits was a further cause of continuing concern. The increased investments in the uranium industry reflected the interest of certain States not only in ensuring access to current sources of supply but also in developing new sources in order to preserve those of the developed and other "politically stable" countries. The systematic plundering of Namibia to further South African and other foreign economic interests had been

(Mr. Sorensen-Mosquera, Venezuela)

established in hearings on the matter. Venezuela condemned that illegal exploitation and hoped for the rapid and effective implementation of Decree No. 1 for the Protection of the Natural Resources of Namibia.

17. South Africa also controlled a considerable portion of the world reserves of uranium and was thus able to influence the supply and price of uranium on the world market, a factor which contributed to the acceptance by the Western Powers of the odious policy of apartheid under the inadmissible pretext of the need for guaranteed access to strategic minerals.

18. His delegation strongly condemned the activities of the transnational corporations and the countries which supported them and maintained economic relations with the apartheid régime; it also supported all measures to subject them to control, including the adoption of a binding code of conduct.

19. His delegation had always supported the resolutions on the subject adopted by the Commission on Transnational Corporations and strongly condemned the minority racist régime of South Africa for perpetuating the inhuman system of apartheid and for its illegal occupation of Namibia. It hoped that the General Assembly would adopt a resolution condemning those illegal actions.

20. Mr. LOZINSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the continuing attention given by the United Nations to the problem of foreign exploitation which prevented the elimination of colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination was fully justified. The predatory exploitation by imperialist monopolies of the natural resources of peoples under colonial and racist subjugation, and exploitation of the peoples themselves, was the major barrier to the ultimate liberation of such peoples. It took those countries a long time to overcome the effects of that exploitation even after achieving political independence.

21. The United Nations had repeatedly condemned the growing activities of foreign economic, financial and other circles which continued to exploit the human and natural resources of dependent Territories and to co-operate with the South African racist régime. He drew attention in that connexion to General Assembly resolution 35/28. United Nations decisions also provided for specific measures to end the foreign co-operation which impeded the elimination of colonialism and apartheid, but some western States, primarily the United States and certain other NATO countries, persisted in violating the relevant General Assembly resolutions, particularly resolution 35/28. They did so mainly because their economic and strategic military interests required the preservation of colonialism and racism in dependent Territories. The Pretoria régime served not only to preserve colonialism and racism in southern Africa but also as a base for attacks on independent African countries. It was well documented that extensive economic co-operation with Western countries and their monopolies had resulted in a continuing rise in the economic and military potential of South Africa. The influx of foreign capital had political as well as economic motivations since it served to strengthen South Africa's position.

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(Mr. Lozinsky, USSR)

22. Apologists for the transnational corporations alleged that those monopolies benefitted the Territories and countries in which they operated, but the fact was that most of their profits went to foreign shareholders. Nor was it a secret that the exploitation of the vast mineral resources of southern Africa yielded super-profits to those corporations at the expense of the inhuman exploitation of the slave labour of the black African population, whose income was only a fraction of that of the white population.

23. Foreign economic interests continued to play a dominant role in the economy of the small island colonial Territories and blatantly exploited their natural and human resources. The activity of foreign monopolies, supported by the ruling colonial Powers, impeded the development of independent national economies in those Territories and made it difficult for them to prepare themselves for independence.

24. For the same reasons the Western Powers and their monopolies were striving to block Namibia's independence and to ensure its continuing exploitation by foreign capital, and had also contributed substantially to increasing the military potential of the Pretoria régime. The Western Powers continued to co-operate with South Africa in violation of the Security Council arms embargo.

25. The unrelenting military activity of the colonial Powers in dependent Territories, which they exploited for reasons of global strategy in a manner threatening international peace and security, was a cause of serious concern. The Western military bases in dependent Territories in the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic Oceans and in the Caribbean were used for suppressing the national liberation struggle and for interfering in the internal affairs of independent States. Those bases were one of the major obstacles to the realization by those peoples of their inalienable right to full independence.

26. He drew attention in that connexion to the General Assembly's Plan of Action for the Full Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (resolution 35/118, annex, para. 9), and noted that the imperialist Powers continued to flout the United Nations by further expanding their military activity in colonial and other dependent Territories. A striking example of that was the efforts of the United States in Micronesia to strengthen that Territory's role as a strategic base in the Pacific, thereby threatening the security of the entire region.

27. An immediate threat to international peace and security was posed by the illegal occupation of Namibia and its exploitation as a military base for systematic acts of aggression against sovereign African States with a view to destabilizing the situation in those countries.

28. The Soviet Union stood firmly behind the colonial peoples in their quest for liberation and supported their independent development. Recognition of the rights of peoples to national liberation and social progress was one of the aspects of Soviet foreign policy, which dated back to the very foundation of the Soviet State and was reflected in the country's Constitution.

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(Mr. Lozinsky, USSR)

29. The Soviet Union held that colonialism in all its forms and manifestations was incompatible with the United Nations Charter, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the principles of international law.

30. The Soviet Union condemned the plundering of southern Africa and of the small colonial Territories by foreign monopolies as one of the major obstacles to the full implementation of the Declaration. It supported the call of the African States for an immediate end to all economic co-operation with the Pretoria régime and considered it essential that the Assembly should condemn those specific countries which continue to co-operate with South Africa in vital areas. The Soviet Union had supported General Assembly resolution ES-8/2 and the plan of action adopted by the International Conference on Sanctions against South Africa held in Paris in May 1981. It also supported strict observance of the arms embargo imposed by the Security Council against South Africa and favoured the adoption by the Security Council of a resolution on the imposition against South Africa of comprehensive and binding sanctions in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter.

REQUESTS FOR HEARINGS

Question of East Timor (A/C.4/36/2/Add.4-7)

31. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee of the receipt of four communications containing requests for hearings on the question of East Timor and suggested that they should be circulated as Committee documents.

32. It was so decided.

Question of Western Sahara (A/C.4/36/4/Add.1)

33. Mr. LEVITTE (France), referring to the request for hearing of the Association des Amis de la République Arabe Sahraouie Démocratique (A/C.4/36/4/Add.1) said that that organization was a private one which spoke only on its own behalf. Only his delegation expressed the views of the French Government.

The meeting rose at noon