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Chairman: Mr. BOYA (Benin)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

ACCESSION TO INDEPENDENCE OF ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES ON 27 OCTOBER 1979

1. The CHAIRMAN noted that St. Vincent and the Grenadines had attained independence on 27 October. He therefore wished, on behalf of the Committee and on his own behalf, to convey to them best wishes for peace and prosperity.

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AGENDA ITEM 95: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/34/572, A/34/389 and Corr.1)

2. Mr. PARSONS (United Kingdom) said that when his delegation had referred to the question of Belize on 28 November 1978 it had outlined a set of proposals which had been put to the Government of Guatemala in September with the consent of the Government of Belize. If those proposals had been accepted, Belize could have proceeded to the early and secure independence which it had sought for 15 years and which the United Kingdom had consistently supported. Unfortunately, Guatemala had rejected the proposals.

3. The commitment of the United Kingdom Government to bring Belize to independence remained as strong as ever but, regrettably, no progress had been made towards a settlement since the rejection of the proposals.

4. As a result of practical factors - the general election in May in the United Kingdom and the forthcoming elections to be held in Belize in November - negotiations between the United Kingdom and Guatemala had not been resumed. However, contact had been maintained and recently Mr. Nicholas Ridley, Minister of State in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, had had a courtesy meeting in New York with Mr. Castillo Valdes, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala. For its part, the United Kingdom hoped that negotiations with Guatemala could resume in 1980 and it had reason to believe that Guatemala was also keen to resume the negotiations and was prepared to make changes in its current approach. The United Kingdom was also ready to consider any constructive proposals which Guatemala put forward provided that any solution proposed was acceptable to the Government and people of Belize.

5. The CHAIRMAN said that, in accordance with the decision taken at its 17th meeting, the Committee would next hear a statement by Mr. C.L.B. Rogers, Deputy Premier of Belize.

6. Mr. ROGERS (Deputy Premier of Belize) said that the Government and people of Belize were proud that yet another Caribbean country, Saint Lucia, was now numbered among the ranks of free peoples represented in the United Nations.

7. When the General Assembly had adopted resolution 33/36 with the support of 128 Member States, the people of Belize had welcomed that development as a landmark in its struggle to gain worldwide recognition of its inalienable right to determine its own destiny and preserve its territorial integrity. That resolution had clearly and categorically urged the United Kingdom and Guatemala

(Mr. Rogers)

to pursue vigorously their negotiations with a view to settling their differences over Belize, without prejudice to the right of the people of Belize to self-determination, independence and territorial integrity, and requested them to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session on the outcome of the negotiations.

8. It would appear that that international mandate, couched in such unambiguous terms, had not been carried out by the parties concerned, for the Government of Belize had not been invited to participate, and had not participated, in any negotiations or conversations between the United Kingdom and Guatemala, nor was it party to any agreement with the United Kingdom and Guatemala relating to a settlement of the problem.

9. According to recent statements attributed to high-level officials of the Guatemalan Government, Guatemala had not relented in its attempt to annex at least part of the territory of Belize. The Guatemalan Minister for Foreign Affairs, in his statement to the General Assembly on 3 October 1979 had called upon the nations of Latin America to support his Government's unjust claim to part of the territory of Belize, ignoring the fact that the majority of the nations of Latin America, including the Caribbean community, had already signalled their solidarity with the inalienable right of the people of Belize to self-determination, independence and territorial integrity.

10. The objective of the Government of Belize was to attain secure independence with all its territory intact. It was prepared to move to independence either as a result of a settlement of the dispute between the United Kingdom and Guatemala provided that such a settlement recognized its territorial integrity, or under a security arrangement with all its territory preserved. The first alternative was preferable and would seem the likely course, but the possibility of a peaceful security arrangement could not be dismissed. At all events, there would be no cession of land.

11. The Government of the United Kingdom had assured the Government and people of Belize that in the event of a proposed settlement of the dispute between the United Kingdom and Guatemala, the terms of the settlement would be presented to the people of Belize in a referendum so that they could decide whether or not it was acceptable.

12. Belize had secured confirmation from the United Nations, through resolutions 3432 (XXX), 31/50, 32/32 and 33/36, that the principles established in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples applied to Belize to the same degree as to other territories suffering from colonialism and the threat of neo-colonialism. Over the years, the people of his country had applauded the application of those principles to a large number of territories that had become members of the United Nations and other international organizations as a logical end-product of the decolonization process.

13. During the same period, Belize had been making steady and satisfactory progress in the development of an economic infrastructure that would ensure the

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(Mr. Rogers)

pre-conditions for a viable independence. It had established a democracy and developed a mixed economy through which all its inhabitants shared in the wealth they created in a social order that tried to remedy the injustices inherited from the colonial system. It had all been achieved despite the limitations of an inappropriate colonial Constitution that did not allow the constitutionally elected Government fully to exercise the normal functions of a democratic Government.

14. The people of Belize, who had won the right to universal adult suffrage in 1954 and now had an expanded franchise enabling persons 18 years and older to vote, would soon be holding new general elections. It should be stressed that the people of Belize had repeatedly and consistently voted for the party that had as its objective the independence of Belize - the People's United Party.

15. During the year, the Government of Guatemala and its agents had been actively engaged in undermining those democratic practices by interfering in the electoral campaigns to secure the election of candidates opposed to the present Government of Belize and more amenable to manipulation from Guatemala. They were continuing to conduct other subversive activities within Belizean territory and engaging in daily propaganda offensives through the use of powerful radio stations. The Guatemalan Government's activities were not creating a climate conducive to the maintenance of peace and stability in the region, but the crude attempt to intimidate the people of Belize only served to strengthen their resolve to continue the struggle for their national rights. At the same time, the delegation of Belize expressed its solidarity with the people of Guatemala, whose interests were being neglected while their Government spent thousands of dollars on a futile campaign to alienate the people of Belize from love of their homeland.

16. Belize felt particularly bolstered by the support and understanding it received from the General Assembly of the United Nations, from the Caribbean Community, from the Commonwealth of Nations, and from the members of the non-aligned movement. Particularly heartening was the growing support received from its Latin American neighbours who, in the proud tradition of Bolivar, Marti and Sandino, having freed themselves, would not rest until others were free.

17. Belize welcomed the final Declaration of the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, which reiterated the Movement's unconditional support for the Belizean people's inalienable right to self-determination, independence and territorial integrity; condemned all pressure or threats to prevent the full exercise of that right; and supported the right of the Belizean Government and people to make the agreements they considered necessary to enable them effectively to counteract that threat. After demanding full implementation of the resolutions on the subject adopted by the General Assembly, the Conference had also exhorted all States, and especially the members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, to support Belize's speedy progress towards immediate and secure independence, with strict respect for its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

18. Belize should not be asked to pay a price for its freedom by giving up any of its land or territorial sea, since that would leave it weak and sow the seeds of another conflict in a part of the world already plagued by conflicts. Central

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America was convulsed by unrest because of the injustices visited on its peoples. Guatemala's claim to the territory of Belize and the unjustified delaying of its independence because of that claim was yet another glaring example of injustice against a Central American people. However, the forces of change and progress in the region were increasingly recognizing that fact and supporting Belize in its struggle.

19. Belize was seeking to achieve independence as a united sovereign nation with full command in and control over the whole of its territory. It therefore asked the Committee to reaffirm the inalienable right of the people of Belize to self-determination, independence and territorial integrity, to urge the United Kingdom and Guatemala to continue their efforts to conclude their negotiations, and to call upon the parties concerned to refrain from the use or threat of force against the Government and people of Belize to prevent the full exercise of their rights.

20. The Government and people of Belize paid tribute to the magnanimity of the Government and people of Mexico who, in supporting the rights of Belize, had shown that a people's freedom took precedence over the antiquated claims of historical colonialisms. Similarly, they applauded the decision by Mauritania to cease hostilities and withdraw its forces from Western Sahara.

21. Belize was confident that the same spirit of positive peaceful co-existence would bring Guatemala to respect the legitimate aspirations of the people of Belize, who yearned for freedom and claimed the right to be the architects of their own destiny.

22. In conclusion, he said that Belize hoped that with the co-operation of all Member States the twentieth anniversary of the adoption by the United Nations of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples would see the end of colonialism in the Americas.

23. Mr. SAMIL (Afghanistan) said that the adoption in 1960 of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples had been a historic event in the process of decolonization and since then, as a result of the struggle of the peoples supported by the peace-loving, progressive and socialist countries, great steps forward had been made in the decolonization of Territories under foreign domination. Despite those positive achievements, however, there were still some Territories under foreign domination and some peoples deprived of their inalienable right to freedom, independence and self-determination.

24. In southern Africa the imperialists had continued their collaboration with the racist régimes of Pretoria and Salisbury which persisted in their brutality, torture and inhuman practices against the peoples of Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa and their national liberation movements, SWAPO, the Patriotic Front and the African National Congress. While speaking of human rights the imperialists were blatantly violating them and ignoring resolution 1514 (XV). Some Territories were continuing to be used as military bases for armed attacks against the liberation movements and the independent front-line African States, as well as against other

(Mr. Samil, Afghanistan)

sovereign States in Africa, Asia and Latin America. That evil practice, which was impeding the implementation of the Declaration on decolonization and preventing the peoples of the colonized Territories from exercising their inalienable rights to self-determination and independence, deserved the strongest condemnation of the General Assembly and called for effective action under the Charter of the United Nations to ensure justice and world peace and security.

25. The Government of Afghanistan supported the peoples of Sahara in their struggle for independence, integrity and national sovereignty, and had recognized the Government of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic led and established by the POLISARIO liberation movement. His delegation supported the decision adopted in July 1979 by the Heads of State or Government of African countries, calling for a referendum in Sahara and welcoming the peace agreement between Mauritania and the Frente POLISARIO. The Government of Afghanistan called for the total withdrawal of the armed forces of Morocco, thereby putting an immediate end to the occupation of the country.

26. Afghanistan supported the inalienable right of all peoples still under colonial and foreign domination to self-determination, independence and sovereignty, and considered that the application of that right should in no way be delayed by consideration of such factors as size, geographical location, population, limited natural resources or any other circumstances.

27. Although the report of the Special Committee indicated that some of the administering Powers continued to co-operate with the United Nations, regularly transmitting information as provided for in Article 73 of the Charter, some States had, regrettably, ceased to do so, and thus were benefiting from the maintenance of the status quo and exploiting the human and natural resources of the Territories concerned.

28. His delegation once again called upon all progressive and peace-loving forces and the specialized agencies of the United Nations to increase their political, moral and material support to the peoples and liberation movements struggling against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, apartheid and zionism.

29. Mr. WEIBGEN (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that the great number of activities FAO was undertaking with regard to decolonization reflected his organization's commitment to the cause of decolonization. Its Director-General had clearly expressed the approach at the Tenth FAO Regional Conference for Africa held in Arusha, Tanzania, in September 1978, when he had said that FAO was committed to the fight against malnutrition and hunger in Africa on all fronts; that included the fullest support to the OAU and the national liberation movements of southern Africa recognized by it.

30. Referring to resolution 33/41, which urged executive heads of the specialized agencies to formulate, with the active co-operation of OAU, concrete proposals for the full implementation of the relevant United Nations decisions, in particular specific programmes of assistance to the peoples in the colonial Territories and

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(Mr. Weibgen, FAO)

their national liberation movements, he outlined programmes and projects being carried out by FAO in southern Africa as well as those at an advanced stage of planning. Thus, for Zimbabwe a training programme on agriculture and land use had been carried out, at a cost of \$201,000. In early 1978, FAO had provided close to \$14,000 worth of fertilizers, seeds and agricultural equipment to the Patriotic Front in Zambia and \$40,000 to the Patriotic Front in Mozambique for the purchase of cattle and other livestock for refugees.

31. In the United Republic of Tanzania, assistance worth \$66,000 would be provided to the Patriotic Front so that a temporary settlement at Kimbamba could be made self-reliant in food production.

32. Under another project, emergency agricultural assistance valued at \$50,000 was being provided to the Patriotic Front in Mozambique. Negotiations were being continued for the implementation of a \$600,000 project to achieve self-sufficiency in food production for refugees.

33. Under the World Food Programme, assistance was being provided to displaced Zimbabweans in Zambia in a project costing \$1.4 million for 12,000 refugees and in another project costing \$1,579,000 for 29,000 refugees, including 6,000 children. In Mozambique, there was a food assistance project amounting to \$1,467,000 for 18,000 Zimbabwean refugees and another project amounting to \$1,667,000 for the resettlement of 42,000 Zimbabwean refugees. In Angola, food assistance under an \$830,000 project was being provided for refugees from Zimbabwe.

34. With regard to Namibia, FAO, which had been the first United Nations agency to admit Namibia to full membership, had played a major role in the development of the Nationhood Programme for Namibia. Among the projects adopted by the Council for Namibia were nine FAO-executed projects totalling \$1,160,000. In addition to the projects mentioned, in 1978 FAO had prepared a report on assistance for the preparation of training programmes in rural development and related project areas for the United Nations Institute for Namibia.

35. Several projects for Angola had been approved, including two extensions of the food aid programme to the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), totalling \$711,000 and \$371,000, and another project valued at \$767,000, also providing food aid for Namibian refugees in Angola.

36. With regard to South Africa, he singled out a project estimated at \$287,000 for the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), as well as mentioning other projects being carried out in Tanzania and Zambia.

37. For the International Anti-Apartheid Year and the International Year of Solidarity with the People of Namibia, FAO had carried out certain special activities, including studies on agricultural techniques and on the effects of apartheid on African rural family life and nutrition in South Africa. It had also prepared a special publication on apartheid, which had been submitted to the Special Committee against Apartheid. In December 1978, an FAO mission had visited Angola and agreed to launch a series of missions in 1979 to formulate action

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(Mr. Weibgen, FAO)

projects designed to rehabilitate the key sectors of agriculture, forestry and fisheries damaged in the wars of liberation.

38. FAO had now a rational and implementable programme of assistance to liberation movements and believed that, apart from its assistance to individual movements, there was a need for general programmes in which some or all of the movements might participate. In keeping with that goal, two major project proposals had been devised.

39. In conclusion, he stressed the close co-operation between FAO and OAU and emphasized FAO's commitment to contributing in its field of competence to the efforts of the international community in the decolonization process.

40. Mr. AKL (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that the contribution of UNESCO to the fight against colonialism and racism comprised specific assistance in the areas which came within its purview and information.

41. In its assistance activities, UNESCO was actively collaborating with the national liberation movements and the Organization of African Unity. During the 1977-1978 biennium, UNESCO had allocated some \$220,000 from its regular budget for the salaries of teachers at schools set up in Zambia and Angola by the liberation movements, for the purchase of equipment, materials and supplies for the schools of the different movements, and for fellowships for study abroad awarded to candidates nominated by the liberation movements. Likewise under its regular budget, UNESCO had held a literacy seminar in Lusaka for SWAPO which included the study of strategies, methods, techniques and content for a literacy programme in independent Namibia.

42. Moreover, UNESCO and UNDP had carried out six educational projects for liberation movements in southern Africa, namely: training courses for electricians and language courses at the Namibia Health and Education Centre in Zambia, operated by SWAPO; improvements to capacity and quality at an educational centre established by SWAPO in southern Angola for refugees from Namibia; assistance in education at various levels to the African National Congress; assistance to the Pan Africanist Congress to give South Africans access to education at different levels; funding for the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe to pay for salaries, fellowships, materials and supplies; and an increase in resources available for the liberation movements as a whole.

43. As to information and research activities on apartheid, racism and colonialism, UNESCO was using the mass media and its own publications to disseminate information on the goals of the liberation movements and was carrying out research on the underlying causes of all types of domination. Results of the studies and research had been issued in such publications as Mucheke: Race, Status and Politics in a Rhodesian Community; Southern Rhodesia: the Effects of a Conquest Society on Education, Culture and Information; and Namibia: the Effects of Apartheid on Culture and Education. An analysis was about to be published on the role of the press in different countries in relation to racial questions and

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discrimination in southern Africa. In line with resolution 3 of the World Conference of the International Women's Year, a study was under way on the consequences of apartheid for African women, which analysed the job pyramid, the effects of apartheid legislation on family structure, the situation of women in urban areas, the effects of migrant labour on women in the bantustans and the problem of domestic service. UNESCO was also preparing two international legal instruments for the fight against racism and colonialism by the international community. The first, the UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, was a critical synthesis of scientific, anthropological, historical and legal data on the question of race. The second, the Declaration on Fundamental Principles concerning the Contribution of the Mass Media to Strengthening Peace and International Understanding, to the Promotion of Human Rights and to countering Racism, Apartheid and Incitement to War, contained principles and outlined methods for more effective assistance to the struggle against racialism.

44. In connexion with the International Anti-Apartheid Year, studies were being prepared on the role of the black press in South Africa, the contribution of women to the liberation struggle in Africa, the methods used by South Africa to establish a propaganda and lobbying network in various countries, the form in which the ideology of apartheid was presented in textbooks intended for white South Africans and the problems of research into the social sciences in South Africa.

45. With regard to the Nationhood Programme for Namibia, it should be remembered that the United Nations Council for Namibia had asked UNESCO: to prepare plans for a new education system, at a cost of \$135,700; to award scholarships for the training of teachers and educational staff, at a cost of \$62,300; to execute a training programme in communications and equipment, at a cost of \$396,000; and to carry out a study on the participation of women in development, at a cost of \$159,900.

46. At the twentieth session of the General Conference of UNESCO Namibia had been admitted to full membership in UNESCO.

47. Mr. BOCOUM (Mali) recalled the statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of his country to the General Assembly to the effect that the right of peoples to self-determination had become a universal guiding principle in that it was a principle of general mandatory law and a standard accepted and recognized by the entire international community.

48. With regard to the question of small Territories now before the Committee, he said that the Territories were characterized by their sparse populations, small size and lack of viable economic structures. They were further distinguished by their exceptional geographical location. However, those factors should in no way obstruct the implementation of the principle of self-determination. It was unacceptable that certain administering Powers exploited such factors to delay for an indefinite period the exercise of the right to self-determination by the peoples of the small Territories. His delegation felt that that was the root of the problem and that it was not true, despite the claims of some speakers, that those peoples rejected their right to self-determination.

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(Mr. Bocoum, Mali)

49. His country stressed the responsibility of the administering Powers in the decolonization process in general and in the decolonization of small Territories in particular, in conformity with Article 73 of the Charter, and denounced once again those administering Powers which established systems of authority aimed at giving the appearance of change when in reality they simply enabled the administering Powers to hold the Territories as appendages. Some administering Powers resorted to manoeuvres to make the peoples of the Territories afraid of independence, which explained those peoples' passive attitude when visiting missions of the United Nations arrived. The enthusiasm of peoples for their independence was further diminished by the existence of obsolete economic structures and threats of annexation. There was also the reprehensible attitude of certain administering Powers which had not completed the independence process in some of the Territories under their jurisdiction.

50. At the current stage of struggle for the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples it was necessary to go beyond the mere affirmation of support and solidarity, and all necessary measures should be taken to enable the peoples of colonial Territories to avail themselves of their right to self-determination. The United Nations could strengthen the important role which it had played in that connexion through such measures as the preparation of specific assistance programmes aimed at boosting the subsistence economies in the Territories, the strengthening of the role of the specialized agencies in development efforts, and the frequent dispatch of visiting missions. His delegation was convinced that such measures would thwart the activities of the economic interests which dominated the economies of the small Territories and which exploited their natural resources and populations on a disproportionate scale, thus impeding the implementation of the principle of self-determination. All peoples, large and small, had an equal and sovereign right to freedom and respect for their dignity. His country, for its part, reiterated its wish to work towards a solution which would bring about self-determination and the independence of peoples still under foreign domination as soon as possible.

51. The CHAIRMAN said that, in accordance with the proposal made by the delegations of Benin and Angola, and taking into account the financial implications set forth in paragraph 15 of document A/C.4/34/L.1, the statement made by the representative of Algeria would be reproduced in extenso as a document of the Committee.

52. It was so decided.

53. Mr. BEDJAOU (Algeria) said that in Western Sahara a stubborn Power, which raised again the disturbing spectre of expansionism, was engaged in a hopeless war against a people that was fighting, suffering and dying. The international community meanwhile was calling for the freedom of that people and refused to recognize the right of conquest. The origin and dramatic vicissitudes of the decolonization problem in question were well known to all, as were the numerous resolutions and declarations adopted since 1966 with a view to enabling the Saharan people to exercise effectively their right to self-determination.

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(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

54. The independence of Western Sahara had been blocked by the forces of its neighbours at the time when independence was about to be attained, following the withdrawal of the administering Power. The cause of the Saharan people was the cause of the international community, as it tested the basic principles of the international community, and the cause of the Organization of African Unity, which, by virtue of its constitutional commitment to achieve the complete decolonization of the continent, viewed support to African peoples struggling for their national liberation as an essential undertaking. It was also the cause of the United Nations, which, in conformity with its Charter and in keeping with its affirmed principles, sought to protect the right of all colonial peoples to genuine self-determination. Finally, the cause of the Saharan people was the cause of the non-aligned movement, one of whose basic objectives had been and continued to be the struggle against colonialism and the constant support of the national liberation movements.

55. The problem of decolonization in the Sahara was of great concern to international and regional bodies, since over the years it had reached proportions which threatened the peace and stability of the entire region. The use of force in order to attempt to stifle the right of the Saharan people to self-determination was fundamentally incompatible with the ethics of international relations; by refusing to endorse the policy of blocking the decolonization of the Western Sahara, the international community was in fact supporting the resistance of the Saharan people to the elimination of its national existence. The struggle of the people of the Territory, the sympathy it had evoked in Africa, in the non-aligned movement and in the entire world, and the support it had elicited, had made it possible over the years, and following a number of victories, to block the annexationist policies and destroy the argument that the case was closed.

56. The undeniable success of the Saharan fighters had made all regional and international forums aware of the real nature of the problem and had alerted them to the fact that at issue was a problem of decolonization which was being hampered by military occupation by a neighbouring country. At the same time, there was increasingly wide recognition of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic, and of the Frente POLISARIO as the sole legitimate representative of the Saharan people. At the present time 34 States in Africa, Latin America and Asia had recognized the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic and other States had announced their intention to do so. The Saharan people owed their victories mainly to their own efforts, bravery and sacrifice. Their successes at the international level were merely the reflection of their complete control over the political and military situation in the country, which had now for the most part been liberated, except for a few enclaves in which the occupation troops had barricaded and entrenched themselves in camps. The diplomatic situation, which was expressed by the strong support of the international community for the cause of the self-determination of the Saharan people, was in perfect harmony with the situation prevailing in Western Sahara. 1978 had been a decisive year for an objective assessment of the situation, since, beginning in the summer of that year, certain changes in the political attitude of one of the two occupying States and the decision of the Frente POLISARIO to maintain a cease-fire had offered new possibilities for a negotiated solution. A process had begun which seemed to open

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up new possibilities for putting an end to a situation of war and tension. At the same time, the Organization of African Unity, meeting in Khartoum, had decided to establish an ad hoc committee of Heads of State to define the framework of a just and lasting solution.

57. In December 1978, at its thirty-third session, the General Assembly adopted a resolution, welcoming the cease-fire declared by the Frente POLISARIO with regard to one of the two occupying States, reaffirming "the inalienable right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination and independence" and reiterating its fervent hope that the Organization of African Unity would find a solution to that problem, in accordance with the right of peoples to self-determination, by the time the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly convened.

58. Fully assuming its responsibilities, the Organization of African Unity at the sixteenth Summit Conference, had established general guidelines for a just and lasting settlement, based on the inalienable right of the Saharan people to self-determination, in accordance with the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee. That decision had been taken by OAU with due regard for the realities of the situation, which had been fully described. It had confirmed, for example, that the question of Western Sahara was a decolonization problem, and that it did not originate in a conflict between the Moroccan occupier and Algeria - a country which was in no way involved. It had rejected the tripartite Madrid agreement and had solemnly reiterated the right of the Saharan people freely and directly to decide their own destiny. Mauritania had officially recognized that right and had voted in favour of the decision of the African Heads of State.

59. In the context of its co-operation with the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations should firmly support Africa in its historic and courageous decision.

60. Mauritania, for its part, had recognized the wisdom of the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee of African Heads of State and had unreservedly supported the OAU decision; it had also completely fulfilled its commitments and, on 5 August, had signed a peace agreement with the Frente POLISARIO, recognizing the Frente POLISARIO as the sole legitimate representative of the Saharan people and accepting the territorial integrity of Western Sahara. Morocco, on the contrary, had rejected the OAU decision, had raised doubts about Mauritania's right, as a sovereign State, to conclude a treaty on that matter and had sent its army into that part of the Territory which Mauritania had been preparing to evacuate. Those war-like activities had clearly revealed that Morocco not only was refusing to seek a just and peaceful solution in accordance with the Monrovia decisions, with regard to the Saharan territory it had been occupying illegally since 1975; it was trying to render the peace agreement signed by Mauritania in respect of the rest of the Territory, null and void.

61. Those few, who thought that Morocco's expansionist policy would stop at the division of the Territory in 1976, were now discovering that that process had merely been a prelude to other activities aimed at escalating the annexation of the Saharan Territory by force. The extremely serious problem thus created was

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dangerously compounded by many other conflicts arising from the 1975 occupation; it represented a new challenge for Africa, for the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and for the entire international community. Morocco was attempting to institutionalize the anschluss policy, without regard for the OAU decisions for ethical international relations, for Mauritania's sovereign right to negotiation or for the fundamental rights of the Saharan people. When expansionism took such a free, untrammelled course and became a danger for everyone, the people involved could not ignore the challenge to their own freedom.

62. In violating frontiers which it had considered sufficient to ensue its own territorial integrity, Algeria had demonstrated that its so-called territorial integrity had time and again served to conceal what eventually emerged as a clearly defined policy of expansionism. The new incidents of aggression were an insult to the African continent, inflicted harm on the Saharan people and had an even more serious effect on OAU efforts to find a solution compatible with the legitimate aspirations of those people. In September 1979, the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries had also supported the OAU decision and had praised Mauritania and the Frente POLISARIO for the peace agreement they had reached; it had also strongly deplored the persistence and expansion of Morocco's armed occupation of Western Sahara.

63. Accordingly, it was up to the United Nations, as guarantor of the freedom of peoples, to intensify its vigilance over the grave situation in that part of Africa and to show once again its firm support for the struggle of the Saharan people. In so doing, it would demonstrate its loyalty to its ideals and principles, it would encourage the efforts of OAU, it would do justice to a people struggling for their freedom and it would not disappoint the hopes that all peoples had placed in it. In those circumstances, the Committee's consideration of the question of Western Sahara during the thirty-fourth session assumed special importance and revealed the need for the entire international community to assume its responsibilities.

64. Henceforth, any attempt to exacerbate the conflict between Morocco and the Saharan people would inevitably create dangerous turmoil and great suffering in northern Africa, and perhaps in a large part of the continent as well.

65. The problem of the decolonization of Western Sahara was a genuine by-product of a war for national liberation, which was different from any kind of subversive or ideological war. The Frente POLISARIO had repeatedly proposed holding negotiations with Morocco in order to reach an appropriate solution in the spirit of the United Nations Charter and that of the Organization of African Unity, and in compliance with recent resolutions adopted by both organizations.

66. Political problems required political solutions, but Morocco had responded to the Frente POLISARIO's willingness to end the war by increasing its armaments, expanding its territorial annexation, calling upon Powers outside the African continent and, more serious still, on a super-Power which would henceforth guarantee Morocco its military support. Morocco had thus demonstrated its intention to elevate a colonial conflict to the international level, with all the disastrous

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consequences such a change in the nature of the problem could have for the entire region. The military dangers inherent in the internationalization of the conflict were thus added to the political challenge presented to the authors of the historic Monrovia decision.

67. It could not be overemphasized that the problem of the decolonization of Western Sahara was a political problem, which required a political solution. In order to reduce the tension involved in that increasingly explosive situation, the United Nations must launch an urgent appeal to Morocco, and Morocco must heed that appeal and enter into negotiations with the Frente POLISARIO. The draft resolution sponsored by 40 delegations, which had just been submitted to the Committee, took account of the urgent need to initiate political negotiations with a view to restoring peace and of the fact that such peace must necessarily be based on Western Sahara's right freely to decide its own destiny, on negotiations with the Frente POLISARIO and on respect for the principles and objectives of the Charters of the United Nations and of OAU.

68. The people of Western Sahara wanted to be masters of their own destiny, and the close ties of civilization, religion, tradition and language that linked them to other peoples to the south, east and north did not authorize the leader of any of those neighbouring countries to vitiate the clearly defined national identity of that proud and free people. Just as the colonizers of earlier times had lost out, so today's invaders would meet defeat.

69. Mr. LOPES CABRAL (Guinea-Bissau) pointed out that the international community had recently celebrated the collapse of dictatorial régimes in Africa and Nicaragua, as well as the independence of Saint Lucia and its admission to the United Nations. Other peoples, such as those of Saint Vincent, would also join the Organization shortly. Such encouraging events undoubtedly reflected the will of the entire international community to end the oppression which still afflicted certain peoples and to strive to create a world of peace and freedom. However, the historical importance of such events lay primarily in the irreversible nature of national liberation struggles; it was the inexorable tide of history that had resulted in independence for most countries and in the recovery of their rightful place in the concert of nations.

70. The great revolutionary, even unbelievable transformations that occurred daily would not have been possible without an element that was indispensable to all creativity: freedom of thought and of action, the basic prerequisites for the complete fulfilment of the individual. It was therefore superfluous to stress the importance and value of freedom, which could not be translated into mathematical terms. Recent history showed that there was no such thing as great or small peoples, that the spirit of a people was not reflected in the dimensions of their territory and that no force in the world could halt a people's drive for freedom. National liberation struggles in Asia, Latin America and Africa had proved time and again that the victory of a people struggling for their independence was inevitable.

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71. It was in that context that the irreversible nature of the Saharan peoples' struggle for liberation must be understood. For several years, the international community had been confronted with the serious problem arising from a member State's decision to extend its frontiers to include another people's territory and to rule that people. By disregarding United Nations resolutions and occupying Western Sahara, Morocco, which itself until recently had been dominated by imperialism was jeopardizing peace and security in that part of Africa. That situation, which was contrary to the interests of the Moroccan people in more than one respect, had evoked resistance by the Frente POLISARIO, which was the creation of the combined interests and aspirations of the Saharan people.

72. The armed struggle for national liberation courageously waged by the Saharan people was not directed against the Moroccan people; its basic objective was to counter the expansionist aims of the Moroccan Government and to promote one of the basic principles of the Charter, namely, the inalienable right of all people to self-determination and independence, a right upon which, moreover, the Moroccan people had based the legitimacy of its struggle for independence. In 1978, the General Assembly had adopted two resolutions on the problem of Western Sahara and had expressed its concern at the Moroccan Government's persistence in blocking initiatives designed to achieve a peaceful settlement of the conflict. That concern had been fully justified by Morocco's refusal to participate in the peace effort initiated by the Frente POLISARIO when it declared a unilateral cease-fire in part of the disputed territory. The desire for peace of the Frente POLISARIO had led to the signing of the Algiers agreements; it had enabled the people of Mauritania to withdraw from an unjust and fratricidal war and to renew an age-old friendship, in keeping with the purest tradition of the Maghreb.

73. In contrast to the constructive attitude of the Saharan and Mauritanian peoples, Morocco stubbornly refused to comply with the decisions taken at the sixteenth Summit Conference of the Organization of African Unity and, in annexing the part of Western Sahara previously occupied by Mauritania, it was exacerbating the already explosive situation prevailing in the region. The consequences of Morocco's behaviour would inevitably be disastrous, since the Frente POLISARIO would not retreat regardless of the obstacles and their many victories already foretold the complete liberation of the Saharan people. Hence the diplomatic recognition of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic and the growing support it enjoyed from the international community.

74. The United Nations should continue to devote special attention to the problem of Western Sahara, which was, first and foremost, a problem of decolonization; whose speedy solution depended on the strict application of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

75. The Moroccan leaders, for their part, must try to remember the process of liberation of their own country and to understand that the concept of greater Morocco, which had created so many problems in the region and which continued to fuel such ill will, must be relinquished once and for all.

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76. Mr. COMTEH (Sierra Leone) drew attention to the statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of his country in the General Assembly. That statement demonstrated the hope Sierra Leone placed in the realization of the objectives of the United Nations in accordance with resolution 1514 (XV) concerning the inalienable right of all peoples to self-determination. Unfortunately, that hope had not yet been universally realized.

77. Referring specifically to the question of East Timor, his delegation considered it very significant that Portugal continued to refer to itself as the administering Power of East Timor and that it had further expressed its desire to fulfil its solemn obligation to the people of that Territory. Sierra Leone shared the concern of Portugal and other countries about the untold suffering of the inhabitants of that Territory as a result of military occupation by Indonesia. According to the reports received, more than 200,000 people, including women and children, had died since Indonesia occupied the Territory in November 1975. Nevertheless, some members of the Committee had asserted that that situation involved a process of integration, while others continued to refer to the options provided under resolution 1514 (XV). In a letter dated 30 November 1975, addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Portugal, as the administering Power, had stated that it could not accept any claims of independence or of integration that were not consistent with United Nations principles on decolonization. Meanwhile, Portugal had been prevented from performing its obligations by the military occupation of the Territory. In his statement to the Committee, the representative of Portugal had again appealed to Indonesia to withdraw its forces for humanitarian reasons in order to enable the administering Power to fulfil its solemn obligation and to enable the indigenous inhabitants of East Timor to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence, for all they needed was the opportunity to do so.

78. His delegation's guiding principle on issues of decolonization had always been based on respect for the wishes of the inhabitants of colonial territories; Sierra Leone had never approved of the acquisition of territory by force, and it considered the interests of all colonial peoples to be sacred; nor would it condone any action that endangered human lives or destroyed the cultural heritage of a people, as was now the case in East Timor. In his delegation's opinion, the invasion and occupation of East Timor by Indonesia was no less objectionable than the occupation of Namibia by South Africa.

79. Accordingly, his delegation wished to reiterate its appeal to the Government of Indonesia to respect the decisions of the United Nations and to withdraw immediately from East Timor so that the inhabitants of the Territory could freely exercise their right to self-determination.

80. Turning to the question of Western Sahara, he said that his Government had consistently supported every initiative and effort to seek a just and lasting solution to the question on the basis of the principles and the resolutions of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations. He recalled that the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, held in 1979 in Monrovia, had emphasized the exercise of the right of self-determination by the people of Western Sahara in a general and free

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referendum. In a message dated 9 June 1979, the President of Algeria had informed the President of Sudan that Spain, the administering Power, had only recently emphasized that it had never transferred sovereignty over that Territory. That decolonization problem called for an urgent political and peaceful solution, based on respect for the principles and resolutions of the United Nations and the OAU on the subject, through the exercise of the right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination.

81. The International Court of Justice in its advisory opinion on the question had found no legal ties of such a nature as might affect the application of resolution 1514 (XV) in the decolonization of the Western Sahara, and in particular, of the principle of self-determination through the free and genuine expression of the will of the people of the Territory.

82. In August 1979 Mauritania, which had been one of the claimants to the Territory, had signed a peace agreement with the Frente POLISARIO under which Mauritania had renounced all claims to that portion of the Territory under its control.

83. In the light of those considerations, his delegation called on Morocco to have the political courage and honesty to co-operate with the OAU and the United Nations, to let the people of the Western Sahara led by the Frente POLISARIO, their sole representative, exercise their right to self-determination.

84. Mr. OULD MOCTAR (Mauritania) said that his country recognized the inalienable right of all colonial countries and peoples to self-determination. Any exclusion of small Territories from the implementation of that right for geographical, economic or human reasons could not be justified. Mauritania recognized the contribution which the Special Committee had made to the work of the Committee, and strongly supported the sending of visiting missions to dependent Territories.

85. Turning to the question of Western Sahara, which was of direct relevance to his country, he drew the Committee's attention to documents explaining Mauritania's position, in particular, documents A/34/47 (S/13503).

86. Mauritania had always been a link between Africa to the north and the southern Sahara on account of its geographical and political situation. That situation conferred a special and delicate responsibility on the first military Government, which it had solemnly undertaken to discharge.

87. Given that situation, Mauritania's moves to restore peace had cleared the way for the talks which the present Government was holding in its quest for world peace. It was in that spirit that Mauritania had signed the agreement with the representatives of the Frente POLISARIO, reaffirming the right of colonial countries and peoples to independence.

88. Finally, Mauritania reaffirmed its firm desire to participate in all attempts to bring peace and stability to the Maghreb.

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89. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to three draft consensuses on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (A/C.4/34/L.5), Tokelau (A/C.4/34/L.6) and St. Helena (A/C.4/34/L.7), and a draft resolution on the question of the New Hebrides (A/C.4/34/L.8). In accordance with normal practice, the three draft consensuses had been prepared in consultation with the Chairman of the Special Committee, and were based on that Committee's recommendations. He reminded the Committee that once it had approved draft resolution A/C.4/34/L.8, the General Assembly would have to take appropriate steps to send a visiting mission to the Territory, to observe the elections, which were to be held on 14 November 1979. The Committee should take a decision on the draft resolution without delay. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to take a decision on the draft resolution at its next evening meeting.

90. It was so decided.

91. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that Australia should appear in the list of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/34/L.8, and that India, Indonesia and the Philippines had also become co-sponsors.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.