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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 20th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BOYA (Benin)

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1. Mr. SCHRÖTER (German Democratic Republic) said that, by adopting, on the initiative of the Soviet Union, resolution 1514 (XV) containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the United Nations had given an impulse to the struggle for national and social liberation. The German Democratic Republic welcomed the admission of Saint Lucia to the United Nations and the accession of the people of Kiribati and St. Vincent to independence.

2. While reviewing the positive changes achieved, however, Member States should identify the obstacles that were still impeding the elimination of colonialism, racism and apartheid in many of the dependent Territories. Important resolutions in that regard had been adopted again during the current year by the Organization of African Unity and by the non-aligned countries, which warned that the administering Powers in the various colonial Territories of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean ignored the peoples' desire for independence. Western Sahara, Micronesia and what were commonly called the "small Territories" in the Pacific, the Atlantic and the Indian Ocean, must be granted the right to self-determination and independence in accordance with the Declaration and with the help of all those who championed peace, international security, détente and social progress.

3. Efforts made in that direction, however, encountered the opposition of influential forces which were trying to hold on to those Territories in the interests of international monopolies or in order to install and develop military bases there. That applied, in particular, to the small Territories in the Pacific and Indian Oceans which figured in the plans of NATO, although their inhabitants aspired only to freedom and peace. The Special Committee of 24 and the General Assembly had repeatedly condemned the existence of military bases in colonial Territories. For its part, the German Democratic Republic could not accept the forced installation of foreign military bases in a Territory as a pre-condition for pseudo-independence. That applied to the only remaining Trust Territory, Micronesia, where the Administering Authority was carrying out a policy dictated by strategic imperatives. Under cover of the trusteeship mandate conferred upon it by the United Nations, it sought to keep the 115,000 inhabitants of the islands in a state of colonial and economic dependence.

4. The economies of the colonial Territories were under the complete control of imperialist monopolies, which exploited their resources unscrupulously with the consent of the colonial Powers. The right of peoples to independence and self-determination, however, included the right to dispose freely of their natural resources. By subordinating that right to their own economic and political interests, States and monopolies were violating the Charter and the Declaration and were impeding the process of decolonization. There had also been attempts to impose upon the people of such Territories certain forms of political

(Mr. Schroter, German
Democratic Republic)

organization, for manifestly neo-colonialist ends. It was for the people concerned to determine for themselves how their sovereignty should be exercised, and any attempt to bypass General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) must be vigorously opposed.

5. The German Democratic Republic was convinced that the free exercise of the right to self-determination and independence was a prerequisite for the strengthening of peace and the prevention of further tension. It favoured the elimination of colonialism in all its forms, and reaffirmed its solidarity with all peoples struggling for independence and self-determination. If the process of decolonization could be completed by the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, in 1980, a great contribution would have been made to détente and to the strengthening of international peace and security.

6. Mr. DE FIGUEIREDO (Angola) said that since his people had themselves had to fight for independence, they felt deep solidarity with those who were struggling against imperialism and colonialism, in particular the people of East Timor, led by their party, FRETILIN. Apart from the colonial past which they shared with the people of East Timor, their sense of the unity of the third world, and their commitment to the principles of self-determination and independence, the Angolan people regarded any struggle against imperialism and colonialism as an extension of their own revolution. For that reason they deplored the fact that, like Western Sahara, East Timor remained subjected to colonialism, since Indonesia had invaded and occupied it illegally, despite the resistance of the people and of FRETILIN. In addition to the military operations carried out with arms and war matériel supplied by the United States, France and the Federal Republic of Germany, the occupation forces had maintained an information blockade, had decimated the civilian population and had brought it to the point of starvation. According to the Australian Council for Overseas Aid, aid intended for the Timorese was not finding its way to them. The people of East Timor and FRETILIN were, however, continuing the fight, and it was the duty of the international community to work effectively for the implementation of the various United Nations resolutions concerning East Timor, so that the people could decide their own future through a referendum or elections held under the auspices of the United Nations.

7. On the question of Belize, the General Assembly, at its preceding session, had adopted by 127 votes to 1, resolution 33/36, of which his delegation had been a sponsor and in which the Assembly had urged the Government of the United Kingdom, acting in close consultation with the Government of Belize, and the Government of Guatemala to settle their differences over the Territory, while recognizing that it was the responsibility of the United Kingdom, as the administering Power, to take all necessary steps to enable the people of Belize to exercise freely and without fear their right to self-determination and to a firm and early independence. In contrast, another draft resolution aimed at glossing over the real issue, namely the right of the people of Belize to self-determination, had been resoundingly defeated in the Fourth Committee.

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(Mr. de Figueiredo, Angola)

8. Eighty years earlier, the United States of America had occupied Puerto Rico. The argument of the United States Government that the Fourth Committee was not competent to deal with the situation was inadmissible, for it was an issue which was at the very core of the existence of the United Nations. In August 1979, the Special Committee of 24 had adopted a resolution (A/AC.109/589) which, inter alia, reaffirmed the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence, condemned the persecution, harassment and repressive measures to which those struggling for the independence of Puerto Rico had been subjected, and demanded that the armed forces of the United States terminate their operations in Vieques. It was unacceptable that military considerations should be used in order to subject the people of Puerto Rico to oppression and to deny them their human rights and their right to self-determination.

9. Angola was also opposed to the establishment or maintenance of foreign military bases and installations not only on Guam, but everywhere where their presence impeded the free exercise by the people of their right to self-determination.

10. Finally the countries of the third world, particularly those in the Pacific region, refused to serve as dumping grounds for the West's nuclear waste or as a testing area for its nuclear and military matériel. His delegation was therefore convinced of the need to apply the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples to the entire Pacific region, whose islands and peoples were militarily exploited by the imperialists, their status vis-à-vis the Trusteeship Council notwithstanding.

11. Mrs. ELMIGER (World Health Organization) said she wished to supplement the information contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (A/34/208/Add.1).

12. At its thirty-second session, held in May 1979, the World Health Assembly had adopted a number of resolutions on health assistance to national liberation movements recognized by OAU (SWAPO, the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania). The Assembly had, inter alia, requested the Director-General of WHO to intensify all necessary support to such national liberation movements, to ensure that technical co-operation with them was provided in the most expeditious and flexible way, and to obtain additional aid from member States. Under another resolution, the Director-General was requested to reject any co-operation with the so-called black majority régime of Zimbabwe and to continue and intensify assistance to the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe, as the sole representative of the Zimbabwean people. Finally, the World Health Assembly had requested the Director-General to intensify assistance to the front-line States -- particularly, Lesotho and Swaziland -- and to give them special priority in the WHO Regional Programme for Africa. The Executive Board and the World Health Assembly would continue to examine progress in the implementation of those resolutions.

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(Mrs. Elmiger, WHO)

13. In the sphere of public information, WHO had published several documents on the health consequences of apartheid, including its effects on children and on mental health. A monograph on the social consequences of the policy of apartheid was in course of preparation. In addition, a report on the consequences of apartheid for women would be submitted to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women in July 1980. In conclusion, WHO had made arrangements to allow representatives of national liberation movements recognized by OAU to participate as observers in sessions of the World Health Assembly and in WHO regional meetings. Namibia had been admitted to WHO as an associate member in 1974.

14. Mrs. NUSSBAUMER (International Labour Organisation) said that ILO action to assist southern Africa had commenced in the early 1960s and had increased steadily ever since. A Declaration concerning the Policy of Apartheid had been adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1964. That Declaration, which had emphatically condemned South Africa's racial policies, had called upon the Director-General to submit every year to the International Labour Conference a special report on the position of law and practice in regard to Convention No. 111, concerning discrimination in respect of employment. ILO was thus the first organization to have permanent machinery to study the situation concerning apartheid.

15. In June 1975, the International Labour Organisation had adopted amendments to its own rules of procedure and the rules relating to regional conferences convened by ILO, in order to enable national liberation movements recognized by OAU to be represented at such conferences and to permit the representatives of such movements to attend meetings and participate in discussions.

16. Since the 1960s, the International Labour Office had published a large number of studies on apartheid. In 1977, it had issued a study on problems of labour and discrimination in Namibia and a study on "Labour Conditions and Discrimination in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe)".

17. In the sphere of technical co-operation ILO, in collaboration with the National University of Lesotho and the University of Swaziland, had conducted an in-depth study of migratory movements in southern Africa. The project had been financed by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities. An ILO consultant had played an active part in a seminar on migratory labour in southern Africa organized by the Economic Commission for Africa. That had resulted in a draft charter of rights for migrant workers in southern Africa, which had subsequently been approved by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. That activity had been financed from the ILO regular budget.

18. With regard to assistance to national liberation movements, the International Institute for Labour Studies had held a seminar for them on economic and social questions. Another seminar, on equality in labour, had brought together 27 participants nominated by national liberation movements recognized by OAU. The participants had insisted that trade-union organizations from southern Africa should

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(Mrs. Nussbaumer, ILO)

play an active part at ILO conferences and meetings. Finally, a vocational training project for 60 representatives of the African National Congress and the Pan-Africanist Congress of Azania was in progress.

19. As part of the programme of technical co-operation for the benefit of Namibia and Zimbabwe, a mission composed of four experts had had talks with representatives of SWAPO, ZAPU and ZANU on the question of priority assistance to the national liberation movements. Following those talks, a project to train skilled industrial and railway workers had been implemented. The costs of the project, amounting to an estimated \$2 million, were being met by UNDP. In 1977, with funds from the ILO regular budget, ILO had awarded a study fellowship to Mr. Yaotto, the Secretary of Labour designate for Namibia, and to two of his fellow-countrymen. ILO was carrying out a programme to train administrators, and another project aimed at amending Namibia's labour legislation. The establishment of a vocational training centre for Namibia had also been approved.

20. In 1977, ILO experts had taken part in a course on the development of manpower, held at the Institute for Namibia in Lusaka and financed by the Ford Foundation. In 1978, ILO had organized a workers' education course and had provided the Institute with teaching materials. A study on labour legislation in Zimbabwe was under way with a view to eliminating discrimination in employment. That project was being carried out by an international consultant, in co-operation with two national experts.

21. All those projects had been devised in consultation with OAU and were in accordance with General Assembly resolutions and the recommendations of the Fourth Committee.

22. Mr. NEYTCHIEV (Bulgaria) said that progress in the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples had been achieved after a prolonged and arduous struggle waged by the peoples of colonial Territories with the support of all the opponents of colonialism, including, at the United Nations, the Special Committee of 24. That struggle was entering a decisive phase. Imperialist and neo-colonialist countries were engaged in all kinds of manoeuvres to impose on the peoples of southern Africa puppet régimes which would serve as a screen for the plundering and exploitation of the natural and human resources of those Territories by the transnational corporations and would defend the economic interests of capitalist monopolies. Attempts by colonialist States to pervert the essential qualities of the great popular liberation movement and to pose as the benefactors of the colonial peoples would, however, deceive no one. The fact that millions of people were still condemned to shameful bondage, 19 years after the adoption by the General Assembly of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, was irrefutable evidence of the insincerity of the colonial States, with their professed devotion to universal ideals and respect for human rights.

23. The efforts of those States to spread the idea that the people of certain colonial Territories preferred colonial status to freedom and independence were

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(Mr. Neytchev, Bulgaria)

doomed to failure. In that connexion, it would be noted that it was only the inhabitants of colonial Territories where the administering Powers had important economic interests and conducted vast military operations who bore the yoke of colonialism gladly. The peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America were well aware, as were the socialist countries, that the forces of imperialism and colonialism had perfected more refined means of achieving their ends. They included the fomenting of conflict between newly independent countries, the dispatch of arms and mercenaries to prop up their allies, and the creation of military groups and alliances among countries where pro-imperialist régimes were in power. Nor had they abandoned such traditional methods as military intervention, interference in the internal affairs of independent States and violations of their sovereignty.

24. The People's Republic of Bulgaria continued to oppose policies which ran counter to the tide of mankind's historical development. He reaffirmed his country's solidarity with those peoples fighting for their national liberation, in particular in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa and condemned any manoeuvres designed to impose upon those peoples decisions which could trigger off new conflicts in the region, in particular attempts to use the London talks to compel the Patriotic Front to accept constitutional and other provisions which were not in accordance with the principles, purposes and goals of the United Nations, nor with the legitimate aspirations of the vast majority of the Zimbabwean people.

25. The reports that South Africa had detonated a nuclear device, if true, provided further confirmation that the racist régimes in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa represented a serious threat to peace and security not only in the region, but throughout the world. It was a warning to all those who collaborated with those régimes.

26. His delegation was convinced that the peoples of the island colonial Territories in the Pacific, the Indian and the Atlantic Oceans had the same legitimate right to self-determination and national independence as did those of Zimbabwe, Namibia, Belize and other Territories still under colonial domination. General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) should be fully implemented without any preconditions. Taking advantage of the limited size, geographic isolation and economic dependence of the small Territories, the administering Powers continued to impede the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, especially where important military or strategic interests were involved. The few reforms effected, rather than being geared towards real independence for those Territories, were aimed at preparing the population for some form of disguised dependent status.

27. The General Assembly should therefore once again urge the administering Powers concerned to take immediate measures for the full transfer of power to the indigenous populations and their freely elected representatives and to dismantle their military installations in those Territories.

28. His delegation was ready to lend its support to all United Nations efforts to allow the peoples of all Territories, large and small, to express their wishes freely and to exercise fully their right to self-determination and independence,

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(Mr. Neytchev, Bulgaria)

in accordance with the spirit and letter of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

29. Mr. PALMA (Peru) said that the admission of Saint Lucia to the United Nations and the accession of St. Vincent to independence confirmed the historical value of the work on decolonization done by the United Nations, in particular the Special Committee of 24 and its Sub-Committee on Small Territories.

30. His delegation was greatly concerned by the situation in Western Sahara. The problems of that Territory had assumed proportions which not only jeopardized the stability of the area, but also represented a threat to international peace and security. An impartial and just review of the situation, and a solution acceptable to all the parties to the dispute, were therefore needed. Any solution should be based on the affirmation of the right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination. The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU, meeting in Monrovia in July 1979, had adopted a decision in which it had affirmed the need to create a proper atmosphere for the establishment and maintenance of peace in the region, to enable the people of Western Sahara to exercise their right to self-determination, to convene a meeting of all the parties concerned in the dispute, and to establish a special committee to work out the modalities and supervise the organization of a referendum with the co-operation of the United Nations. The implementation of that decision would prevent further bloodshed and would ensure respect for one of the fundamental principles of international law embodied in the Charter, namely the right of peoples to self-determination.

31. His delegation therefore appealed to all the parties involved to agree to the implementation of the OAU decision. It was convinced that a peaceful solution would best serve their real interests and would herald an era of peace and close co-operation among the countries of the region.

32. Mr. SEIFU (Ethiopia) said that his country fully supported the inalienable right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination and independence, in accordance with the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Pursuant to that position of principle, the Provisional Military Government of Socialist Ethiopia had on 24 February 1979, extended official recognition to the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic. That decision had been vindicated when OAU, recognizing the right of the Saharan people to self-determination, had decided on the modalities for the exercise of that fundamental right.

33. His delegation commended the Government and people of Mauritania on having renounced any claims to Western Sahara and on having withdrawn from the Territory. That was a positive contribution towards the exercise by the Saharan people of their right to self-determination and independence. It was to be hoped that Morocco would agree to reconsider its position and implement the decisions taken by the African leaders at Monrovia, thus enabling the people of Western Sahara to decide their own destiny and promoting the peaceful development of the peoples of the region.

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(Mr. Seifu, Ethiopia)

34. The States Members of the United Nations should make renewed efforts to meet the urgent educational and training needs of the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories, especially in southern Africa. Almost all independent African States had, to varying degrees, experienced shortages of skilled manpower at the time of their independence. That had prevented them from ridding themselves completely of the colonial yoke and from laying the foundations of a strong and independent economy which would guarantee the long-term well-being of their peoples. Similar difficulties were bound to arise when the peoples of southern Africa achieved independence, unless the international community helped them to prepare for that event.

35. Ethiopia offered a wide range of educational and training facilities and assistance to the oppressed peoples of southern Africa. In order to assist the United Nations and SWAPO to train skilled workers for an independent Namibia, students from the United Nations Institute for Namibia were currently undergoing on-the-job training in various Ethiopian Government ministries and organizations. Zimbabwean students were also receiving technical training in Ethiopian institutions. In addition, in 1978 and 1979, Ethiopia had made modest contributions to the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa.

36. Mr. MIR NOTAHARI (Iran) said that the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 1514 (XV) had been motivated by the desire of the international community to put an end to colonialism and foreign domination in all their forms and manifestations, since they impeded the economic, social and cultural development of the colonial peoples and challenged the aspirations of the United Nations for peace. The right to self-determination had been recognized as one of the most fundamental human rights.

37. The Islamic Republic of Iran, which was firmly committed to the principles set forth in resolution 1514 (XV), believed that the people of East Timor should be given an opportunity to exercise their legitimate right to self-determination and independence.

38. With regard to Western Sahara, it was regrettable that all the international community's efforts to enable the Saharan people to achieve independence had failed, as a result of Morocco's illegal occupation of the Territory. The opposition of the Saharan people to foreign occupation and integration with a neighbouring country had been unequivocally confirmed by the Visiting Mission that had been sent to the Territory by the Special Committee of 24 in 1975. The International Court of Justice, in its advisory opinion of 16 October 1975, had emphasized that there were no ties of territorial sovereignty between Western Sahara and Morocco or Mauritania that might affect the application of resolution 1514 (XV). On 14 November 1975, however, Western Sahara had been partitioned between Morocco and Mauritania under the terms of the so-called Madrid Agreement. That Agreement had no legal validity and contravened General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV) and the obligations set forth in the Charter of the United Nations.

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(Mr. Mir Motahari, Iran)

39. His Government believed that the Saharan people should be free to determine their future political status and that any solution to the problem of Western Sahara should be based on the freely expressed will of the people of the Territory. He endorsed the decision taken by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU in Monrovia that a proper atmosphere should be created for the peaceful decolonization of the Territory.

40. Iran extended its moral and political support in their just struggle to the Saharan people, under the leadership of their sole authentic representative - the Frente POLISARIO - to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence in order to restore peace and security in the region. His Government welcomed the peace treaty concluded between Mauritania and the Frente POLISARIO, and called upon the other party to the conflict to adopt a similar course of action.

41. Mr. KADOBEYE (Burundi) said that during the current session of the General Assembly the United Nations was called upon to find a judicious, comprehensive and practical solution for those instances of colonial domination which still existed throughout the world, especially in Africa, so as to carry out its noble mission, set out in Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations.

42. There were many who made tremendous human and material sacrifices in their continued struggle to rid themselves of the colonial yoke and to exercise their legitimate right to self-determination. He considered the problem of Western Sahara to be particularly important. It merited a speedy, decisive and practical solution, going beyond the traditional resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in successive sessions. His delegation's position on the matter had always been clear - it supported all peoples fighting for their freedom. The time had come to grant official recognition to the Frente POLISARIO as the sole authentic representative of the Saharan people and the only one capable of defending the legitimate rights of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic.

43. Four years after the Madrid Agreement, by which Spain had allowed Morocco and Mauritania to partition Western Sahara, the Saharan people still had to make costly sacrifices to defend their freedom wrested from the Spanish occupier. On 27 February 1976, the day following the Spanish withdrawal, the Frente POLISARIO had solemnly declared the existence of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic, and had announced at the same time that the so-called Madrid Agreement was null and void. Thanks to the unconditional support of all those who cherished peace and justice and its own determination to do its utmost to defend the sacred cause of its people, the Frente POLISARIO had scored many victories over the colonialist and expansionist forces. Mauritania had been wise enough to withdraw from the conflict in time, and had renounced all its claims to that part of Western Sahara under its domination with the signing of a peace treaty with the Frente POLISARIO on 5 August 1979. That laudable act should serve as an example to Morocco, which persisted in saddling itself with the costs of an unjust, neo-colonialist war, and was mistakenly becoming embroiled in a conflict of which the outcome was likely to prove a disagreeable surprise.

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(Mr. Kadobeye, Burundi)

44. The treaty concluded between Mauritania and the Frente POLISARIO, and the recommendations adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU at its latest session in Monrovia, marked a turning-point in the quest for a political solution to the crisis in the region. The determination of OAU to discharge its responsibilities towards an African people seeking recognition of and respect for its legitimate rights had been endorsed by the non-aligned countries, which, at their latest summit meeting in Havana, had endorsed the right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination and independence, and had deplored the extension of Morocco's armed occupation in that part of Western Sahara formerly under Mauritanian administration.

45. To crown the efforts made on behalf of the people of Western Sahara, the United Nations, the highest forum for concerted international action, should fully assume its responsibilities towards the Saharan people, and do its utmost to ensure their accession to complete independence. The United Nations could then pride itself not only on having gained a new member, but above all on having brought peace and security to that part of Africa.

46. Mr. VARELA QUIROS (Costa Rica) said that the striking transformation of the political map of the world and of the very composition of the United Nations was certainly due to the Organization's activities, and to its constant efforts to speed up the process of decolonization. There was no doubt, however, that it was also due to the relentless and courageous struggle to achieve freedom waged by those peoples under colonial domination. The process of decolonization had more often than not been slow and arduous, since the administering Powers had always striven, by every means at their disposal, to impede, or at least to retard, it.

47. All peoples had an inalienable right to self-determination, which should be exercised freely and genuinely in all Territories which were under foreign occupation or were the object of other countries' designs. He appealed to all the parties to the dispute in East Timor to settle their differences by allowing the Timorese people at last to exercise their right to self-determination. He made the same appeal with regard to the former Spanish Sahara, the population of which should also be able to accede to independence, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter and with General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV).

48. The long history of decolonization showed that conflict had always existed between oppressors and oppressed. The modern world was an unjust one, in which there were those who fought to defend what they considered to be theirs, and others who fought to realize their ideal of freedom. For that reason, Costa Rica, which believed fervently in peace, had submitted a proposal to the General Assembly regarding the establishment of a University for Peace. He trusted that all peace-loving peoples would endorse that proposal, so that future generations might live in a just and peaceful world.

49. Mr. PFIRTER (Argentina) said that, in common with the rest of the international community, his Government was deeply disturbed by the situation in Western Sahara, to which a definitive, just and lasting political solution had to be found.

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(Mr. Pfirter, Argentina)

50. His delegation reaffirmed the three principles which any attempt to put an end to the serious situation in Western Sahara had to respect. First, any solution had to be in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and with other relevant decisions of the General Assembly. That meant that the exercise of the rights of all parties, including those of the Saharan people, must be guaranteed. Some clarification in that regard would be useful. In the first place, it should not be forgotten that, while ethnic and cultural characteristics were important, they were not the sole, nor indeed the basic, criterion in determining the future of colonial Territories, as United Nations practice in such matters showed. The present political map of Africa was ample proof of that. Moreover, in the case of Western Sahara, as in that of other colonial Territories, the principles set out in resolution 1514 (XV) should be applied selectively and in a manner which was not incompatible with the particular characteristics of the Territory, including its history. There was no single universally valid formula for decolonization, as the International Court of Justice had confirmed in its advisory opinion of 16 October 1975 on the question of Western Sahara, although it had recognized the right of the Saharan people to self-determination.

51. The second principle was that there should be a reaffirmation of the responsibility of the United Nations for the former Spanish colony, and also of the competence of the Organization of African Unity which, at its latest summit conference in Monrovia, had established machinery for finding a solution to the conflict.

52. Third, it must be recognized that any solution must necessarily be achieved by negotiation between the parties. His country, which had recently given further proof of its adherence to the fundamental machinery of negotiation established by the Charter of the United Nations, appealed to all parties, and more specifically to their leaders, to take appropriate measures to arrive at a definitive, just and lasting solution to the problem, one which would be acceptable to the international community and which would safeguard peace in a region with which his country felt itself linked by many firm ties of co-operation and fraternal friendship.

53. Mr. FOURATI (Tunisia) said that the small colonial Territories deserved as much attention as southern Africa. Even if the questions considered by the Committee seemed disparate at first sight, they all derived from the same phenomenon, colonization, of which they were different manifestations. In that context, he pointed out that the problems which arose from the area of a Territory, its geographical situation, the size of its population and the viability of its economy should in no way serve as a pretext for hindering or postponing the implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). Having said that, it was appropriate to give careful consideration to all the options available to the Territories involved and to ensure that the Committee's decisions were in conformity with the legitimate aspirations and vital interests of the populations concerned. It was therefore important to ascertain their views on the spot, in co-operation with the administering Powers. His delegation recommended that a dialogue between the parties involved should be initiated in respect of small Territories such as the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), which were the subject of a dispute over sovereignty.

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(Mr. Fourati, Tunisia)

54. The report of the Special Committee of 24 indicated that tangible progress had been made in a number of Territories. New legislative and executive bodies had been established, although sometimes those bodies were not fully representative and did not have real authority to take decisions. Moreover, the reforms carried out in certain Territories were often hesitant, and their inadequacy was a serious handicap to progress towards self-determination and independence. His delegation considered that it was the duty of the administering Powers to transfer power to bodies elected by universal suffrage within reasonable time-limits. They should also strengthen the infrastructure of the Territories, promote their economic and social development and encourage the education and training of personnel. In addition, they should refrain from any attempt to threaten the territorial integrity of those Territories. Finally, they should co-operate fully with the United Nations by receiving visiting missions.

55. As a member of the Special Committee of 24 his country had taken part in numerous visiting missions. It accordingly emphasized the importance of such missions, which made it possible not only to grasp the reality of the specific problems of each Territory and to formulate adequate recommendations, but also to ascertain the wishes of the population with regard to their future status. For example, the inhabitants of Tokelau and the Cayman Islands had communicated their apprehensions regarding a change in their political status to the visiting missions in which his country had taken part. In such cases, the dispatch of further visiting missions would help to dispel the misgivings felt by the population, while in other cases they would provide an assurance that the aspirations attributed to the population of certain Territories were authentic. His delegation urged those administering Powers which had so far refused to co-operate with the United Nations to adopt the approach of those which had welcomed visiting missions in the Territories they administered.

56. In connexion with decolonization in southern Africa, his delegation was gratified by the increasing role of the specialized agencies and international organizations which, through specific programmes, had extended the scope of their assistance to the struggling peoples of southern Africa. It asked them to intensify their efforts to enable the liberation movements to continue their struggle and to pursue the economic and social development of the liberated regions. It also invited them to give urgent economic and other assistance to the front-line States, to enable them to support the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe and in Namibia. Finally, it urged them to take an active part in the work of decolonization.

57. Mr. DUNFEY (United States), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, deplored the attempts made by the representative of an Eastern European country to raise before the Fourth Committee the question of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The Charter stipulated quite specifically that responsibility for Trust Territories lay with the Security Council and the Trusteeship Council. Thus, the Trusteeship Council reported annually on the Territory concerned to the Security Council. Furthermore, the remarks made by the representative of the German Democratic Republic contained numerous inaccuracies.

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(Mr. Dunfey, United States)

58. During the debate, several speakers had mentioned Puerto Rico. An attempt had already been made to raise the question at the previous session, and the Fourth Committee had sought the opinion of the Legal Counsel of the United Nations. The substance of his opinion (A/C.4/33/15) was that the question of Puerto Rico was not a question before the Fourth Committee since it was not on the list of Territories to which the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples applied. Since no new circumstance had arisen since the previous session, the Committee must abide by the opinion of the Legal Counsel, which it had, moreover, accepted, and must not bypass its mandate. His country fully respected the right of the Puerto Rican people to self-determination, as President Carter had reiterated and as had been shown by a resolution only recently put before the United States Congress.

59. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to draft resolutions A/C.4/34/L.2/Rev.1, A/C.4/34/L.9, L.10 and L.11.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.