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26th meeting
held on
Thursday, 8 November 1979
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 26th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BOYA (Benin)

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REQUEST FOR A HEARING

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued)

- (a) REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (continued) (A/34/23/Add.6 and A/AC.109/L.1345)

Question of Guam (A/34/23/Add.6 and A/AC.109/L.1345)

1. Mr. HAYDAR (Syrian Arab Republic), Rapporteur of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, introducing the chapter of the Special Committee's report relating to Guam (A/34/23/Add.6), said that he would have preferred the Arabic version to be available before introducing it to the Committee.

2. At the invitation of the administering Power and pursuant to General Assembly resolution 33/33 of 13 December 1978, the Special Committee had sent a Visiting Mission to the Territory in July 1979 to observe the referendum on a draft constitution, which had taken place on 4 August, as well as to observe conditions in the Territory. The Visiting Mission had consisted of the representatives of Sierra Leone (Chairman of the Mission), the Syrian Arab Republic and Trinidad and Tobago.

3. After considering the report of the Visiting Mission (A/AC.109/L.1345), the Special Committee had endorsed the draft conclusions and recommendations contained therein, on the understanding that the reservations expressed by some members would be reflected in the record of the meeting. In paragraph 13 of the report, the Special Committee expressed its appreciation for the co-operation given by the administering Power, which had enabled the Committee to conduct an informed and meaningful examination of Guam, with a view to continuing the process of decolonization towards the full and speedy implementation of the Declaration.

4. As reflected in the text of the conclusions and recommendations, the Special Committee had noted that the draft constitution put to the people of Guam had been rejected. Noting the finding of the Visiting Mission that the options open to the people of the Territory had not been sufficiently explained to them by the administering Power, the Special Committee had recalled that the administering Power had the obligation to ensure that the people of Guam were kept fully informed of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence in accordance with resolution 1514 (XV).

5. Furthermore, recalling the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly concerning military bases in colonial and Non-Self-Governing Territories and recognizing that the presence of such bases could constitute a factor impeding the implementation of the Declaration, the Special Committee had reaffirmed its strong

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(Mr. Haydar, Syrian Arab Republic)

conviction that the presence of military bases in Guam should not prevent the people of the Territory from exercising their inalienable right to self-determination and independence in accordance with the Declaration and the purposes and principles of the Charter.

6. Finally, noting that the military establishment constituted the largest source of employment in Guam,, the Committee had called upon the administering Power to take all possible steps to strengthen and diversify the economy of the Territory in order to reduce its dependence on limited economic activities.

7. The CHAIRMAN said that consideration of the chapter of the Special Committee's report which had just been introduced would be continued at a subsequent meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 90: QUESTION OF SOUTHERN RHODESIA: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

8. The CHAIRMAN announced that Mr. Chinamano, Observer for the Patriotic Front, would make a statement to the Committee.

9. Mr. CHINAMANO (Observer, Patriotic Front)* said that since the Committee had taken up the question of Southern Rhodesia, the Zimbabwe liberation movement had always enjoyed the support of the United Nations. It was now seeking that assistance in its efforts to reach a negotiated settlement. It would be recalled that, following the most recent Commonwealth conference, held in Lusaka in August 1979, the United Kingdom had convened a constitutional conference to try to resolve the Rhodesian problem and had declared that it accepted full responsibility for the decolonization of the Territory, which would be put through the same constitutional process as other former colonies. It must be emphasized that the recognition by the Commonwealth Heads of Government at their meeting in Lusaka of the United Kingdom's legal and constitutional responsibility to grant independence to Zimbabwe did not imply that the Commonwealth was committing itself to backing any constitutional formula or means of granting independence that the United Kingdom Government might present. The Commonwealth had merely associated itself with the United Kingdom's efforts to work out an internationally acceptable formula for the independence of Zimbabwe.

10. In accepting the invitation to attend the London conference, the Patriotic Front had made it clear that it was merely indicating its willingness, as a matter of policy, to negotiate a solution to the problems of Zimbabwe, and had also made clear its rejection of the proposed constitutional outline enclosed by the United Kingdom Government in its letter of invitation to the conference. In fact, that outline was, in both form and content, unmistakably based on the illegal internal settlement constitution. The Patriotic Front had also made it clear that there

* The full text of this statement will be issued as a document.

(Mr. Chinamano, Observer, Patriotic Front)

could be no cease-fire before or during the negotiations, as a cease-fire could only be achieved as part of a comprehensive agreement.

11. Since the Geneva conference on Zimbabwe in 1976, the Patriotic Front had maintained the position that a solution to the problems of Zimbabwe required a comprehensive agreement involving both a constitution and transitional arrangements, including a cease-fire. In other words, it found the United Kingdom Government's insistence on a constitutional conference rather than a peace conference unrealistic, since providing a constitution for Zimbabwe without resolving the war situation could not by itself solve the country's problems. The Patriotic Front, for its part, had repeatedly insisted that the successful implementation of a constitutional formula for independence would depend on the nature of the interim arrangements. It had therefore taken a strong stand in favour of a comprehensive agreement which would not only provide an independence constitution, but would also ensure its successful implementation.

12. It was clear that, in the opinion of the United Kingdom, the case of Southern Rhodesia was no more than an ordinary case of decolonization, the solution of which entailed nothing more than an independence constitution. That simplistic view was shared by the Rhodesian settlers and their minority puppet régime, whose objective in the London talks had been to gain recognition for their illegal independence and to have sanctions lifted unilaterally by the United Kingdom. In other words, as far as they were concerned, the ending of the war was not as immediately important as the granting of a constitution.

13. The insistence on that unrealistic approach had created an atmosphere of distrust, since the Patriotic Front delegation had begun to suspect that the United Kingdom Government was deliberately trying to create problems in order to lure the Patriotic Front into walking out of the talks, thus leaving the United Kingdom Government and the Salisbury régime to work out a bilateral deal. Instead, the Patriotic Front delegation had presented the United Kingdom delegation with an agenda which had included all the items which it believed must be settled by the London conference. The agenda of the conference was in fact the same as that proposed by the Patriotic Front, although the Chairman of the talks, Lord Carrington, had altered the order in which the items were handled, putting the independence constitution first.

14. With regard to the conduct of the talks, Lord Carrington had acted more as a mediator between the Patriotic Front and the Salisbury régime than as a decolonizer. When the Salisbury delegation had arrived in London, it had announced that it had come to negotiate with the British the terms for the recognition of its illegal independence and the lifting of sanctions. At the first plenary meeting of the Lancaster House talks, it had underscored that objective by refusing to say anything on the grounds that it did not believe that any useful purpose would be served by its participation in the plenary deliberations. The Salisbury delegation had then suggested that the talks should be organized in bilateral meetings between the United Kingdom and itself, and between the United Kingdom and the Patriotic Front, a procedure which had immediately been adopted by Lord Carrington. The

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(Mr. Chinamano, Observer, Patriotic Front)

Patriotic Front had expressed reservations with regard to that mode of conducting the talks, but had then decided to accept it, on the understanding that only certain issues would be handled in the bilateral talks while the main issues would be dealt with in the plenary meetings. But no sooner had the bilateral meetings begun than it had become clear that the United Kingdom delegation and the Salisbury delegation were using them to work out a common strategy against the Patriotic Front. As a result of that arrangement, the Salisbury delegation had accepted the United Kingdom constitutional proposals outside the framework of the conference as such, and, once its acceptance had been achieved, the United Kingdom had tried to pressure the Patriotic Front to do the same, with the objective of presenting the Salisbury delegation as conciliatory and reasonable and the Patriotic Front as intransigent.

15. In reality there had not been any negotiations between the United Kingdom and the Salisbury delegation at Lancaster House. In the first place, since Muzorewa had been offered a constitution that was a slight improvement over what he had accepted in the so-called internal settlement, it was obvious that he would have nothing to say against such an offer. In the second place, much of what the United Kingdom was proposing at the Lancaster House talks had already been agreed upon in the bilateral talks conducted by the United Kingdom's Special Representative in Salisbury, Mr. Dereck Day. The Patriotic Front believed, in short, that the United Kingdom and the Salisbury régime had entered the Lancaster House talks with an agreement which they had reached previously, which would explain the docile acquiescence of the Salisbury delegation to anything that the United Kingdom had proposed.

16. In spite of that, the United Kingdom delegation had presented itself as a mediator between the Patriotic Front and the Salisbury delegation, although obviously the fact that it had not found it necessary to report to the participants in the plenary meetings on substantive exchanges that had occurred in the bilateral talks had engendered a feeling of suspicion and had certainly not been helpful in creating the atmosphere of reconciliation which Lord Carrington had urged at the beginning of the Lancaster House conference.

17. The Patriotic Front delegation, for its part, had participated in the Lancaster House conference in a spirit of compromise and objectivity and, despite its serious reservations on certain important aspects of the independence constitution proposed by the United Kingdom delegation, an agreement had finally been reached. The Patriotic Front had disagreed with the United Kingdom on the nature of the Presidency, special minority representation, qualifications for citizenship, the Bill of Rights (particularly the clause on protection against deprivation of property), and so on, but it had accepted the constitution with reservations in a spirit of compromise in order to create a healthy atmosphere of reconciliation. It was thus amazed that certain forces continued to regard it as intransigent and uncompromising. Having been directly involved in the war against the fascist Salisbury régime, the Patriotic Front unquestionably knew the cost of that war to its own people and to the people of the front-line States of Botswana, Mozambique and Zambia, but that did not mean that it could accept any settlement

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(Mr. Chinamano, Observer, Patriotic Front)

formula at any cost. The people of Zimbabwe were determined to rid themselves of the cancer of racism once and for all, and they would not accept anything that did not decisively and irreversibly transfer power from the racist minority régime to the majority of the people as a whole, black, white or yellow, a transfer that would depend upon the nature of the transitional arrangements.

18. In the view of the Patriotic Front, the transitional administration would have to conduct the administration of the country, ensure the cessation of hostilities, establish conditions of peace and security, hold free and fair elections, create conditions in which the process towards genuine majority rule and independence would be irreversible, and organize the return of refugees and the resettlement of all displaced persons. Although the United Kingdom maintained that all those tasks could be accomplished in two months, the Patriotic Front, in a document entitled "Essential requirements for the transition", showed that it would take two months to effect a cease-fire, three months to organize the return and resettlement of displaced persons and to delimit constituencies and register voters, and, finally, one month to campaign for elections. He asked that the document be circulated to the members of the Committee.

19. The Patriotic Front believed that the establishment of conditions of peace and security was a most basic prerequisite for free and fair elections, and that such conditions could only be guaranteed by security forces in which everyone had confidence. It therefore proposed that during the transitional period the security forces should be composed of a combination of the forces of the Patriotic Front and those of the régime, operating alongside a United Nations peace-keeping force. The United Kingdom proposed, on the other hand, that the existing Rhodesian security forces, under the command of a British Governor, should be the only security forces during that period; that would be tantamount to a surrender by the forces of the Patriotic Front to those of the régime.

20. Given the existing alliance between the apartheid régime of South Africa and the Rhodesian régime, the exclusive use of the existing Rhodesian security forces during the transitional period would be clearly favourable to South Africa's strategy of creating a constellation of dependencies - similar to the "bantustans". That would threaten the peace and security not only of southern Africa but, indeed, of the whole of Africa. The security arrangements and the period of two months proposed by the United Kingdom were a recipe for chaos and an invitation to South African military intervention. The Patriotic Front's analysis of the United Kingdom proposals for the transitional period was contained in a document entitled "Patriotic Front Analysis of British Proposals for Interim Period", which he was making available to the Committee.

21. The Patriotic Front called upon all peace-loving people firmly to support efforts aimed at achieving a lasting peace and a just settlement in Zimbabwe with the participation of all interested parties. The situation in Zimbabwe was unquestionably not an ordinary case of decolonization, and no settlement which recognized only one of the warring armies could solve the problem. Nor could a cease-fire be achieved without international supervision.

(Mr. Chinamano, Observer, Patriotic Front)

22. Although some members of the international community might hold the theoretically correct point of view that Southern Rhodesia was a direct responsibility of the United Kingdom and as such fell outside the sphere of responsibility of the United Nations, the United Nations had in fact been involved in the affairs of Southern Rhodesia since the early 1960s, when the liberation movement had first come before the Committee as a petitioner. Moreover, the United Kingdom itself had involved the United Nations in the Rhodesian problem when it had asked it to impose sanctions on the rebel colony after the 1965 rebellion. In 1977, the United Kingdom had asked the Security Council to endorse a plan to introduce United Nations peace-keeping forces to supervise a cease-fire under the so-called Anglo-American plan for Zimbabwe, thus recognizing that the Rhodesian problem was no longer a problem for the United Kingdom alone. The Patriotic Front had proposed a role for the United Nations during the transitional period because it was the only body with the experience and facilities to supervise elections and provide peace-keeping forces, and because, since it included all countries, it offered the best hope for international peace and security.

23. The Patriotic Front did not wish to embarrass the United Kingdom, nor did it believe that anything would be accomplished by acrimonious debate. What interested it was a constructive evaluation of the situation in Zimbabwe in the light of the Lancaster House talks. It therefore called upon the Members of the United Nations to do whatever they could to assist the United Kingdom to devise a transition that would effectively implement the independence constitution without any further bloodshed in the country.

24. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to the proposal of the delegation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, supported by the delegations of Angola and Mozambique, that the statement of the representative of the Patriotic Front should be published as a document of the Committee, taking into account the financial implications mentioned in paragraph 15 of document A/C.4/34/L.1.

25. It was so decided.

26. Mr. KHARLAMOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, despite the moderate tone of the statement by the representative of the Patriotic Front, it confirmed that the process of decolonization in Zimbabwe was encountering difficulties. In view of the lack of time, a date should be set for the debate on the item. Moreover, information received through the press and television did not give a precise and objective picture of the situation, and perhaps the United Kingdom was in a position to give a better idea of the state of the negotiations.

27. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should postpone consideration of the item until the following week.

28. It was so decided.

REQUEST FOR A HEARING

29. The CHAIRMAN informed the members of the Committee that he had received a communication concerning Namibia containing a request for a hearing. In accordance with the usual practice, he suggested that the communication should be circulated as a document of the Committee and considered at a later meeting.

30. It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

31. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee would hold its next meeting on Wednesday, 14 November, and that the draft resolutions concerning, respectively, the question of Guam and the activities of foreign economic and other interests were expected to be submitted at that meeting.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.