

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION

Official Records*



THIRD COMMITTEE

7th meeting

held on

Wednesday, 12 October 1983

at 10.30 a.m.

New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 7th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. CHAVANAVIRAJ (Thailand)

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DISTR. GENERAL

A/C.3.38/SR.7

17 October 1983

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 82: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME FOR THE DECADE FOR ACTION TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/38/106)

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AGENDA ITEM 87: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (continued) (A/38/106, A/38/253, A/38/288, A/38/323, A/38/371 and A/38/415)

(a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (continued)

(i) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE (continued) (A/38/18)

(ii) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/38/393)

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(c) STATUS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE SUPPRESSION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF APARTHEID: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/38/391)

1. Mr. LUNGU (Zambia) said that while efforts had been made by the world community towards improving racial harmony, there still remained grave threats to peace and security, particularly in South Africa, where the Pretoria régime continued to pursue its abhorrent policy of apartheid.

2. The South African régime's diversionary tactics designed to misinform the international community on the real objectives of apartheid had not succeeded, and efforts by the racist régime to set the black majority against the Asian and Coloured minorities by giving the latter groups so-called voting rights also would not succeed in deflecting the black majority from its struggle for self-determination and independence.

3. Apartheid was actually a time bomb which could only be defused by the elimination of the racial policy and by granting to the oppressed black majority their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.

4. The South African régime had also extended its apartheid policy to Namibia and had remained intransigent on the implementation of the United Nations Plan which

(Mr. Lungu, Zambia)

provided the framework for that territory's independence. The people of Namibia, under the leadership of SWAPO, their sole and authentic representative, were fighting and would continue to fight against apartheid and against the racist régime's illegal occupation of their country. Zambia and the other front-line States supported the oppressed peoples of South Africa and Namibia because they were fighting for peace and for the establishment of a just society in which people of all races could live together in harmony.

5. In its desperate attempts to discourage such support, the racist régime continued to destabilize the front-line countries, as had been reported in document A/38/371, S/15944. Such acts of destabilization against independent countries of Africa would in no way halt the struggle for liberation being waged by the people of South Africa and Namibia inside their respective countries. Zambia therefore appealed to the international community to provide increased assistance to the national liberation movements of South Africa and Namibia. In addition, the international community should adopt concrete and effective measures for realizing the full, universal implementation of United Nations decisions and resolutions on apartheid, decolonization and self-determination, including the implementation of measures contained in the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.

6. Zambia continued to urge South Africa's allies and friends to use the leverage they had to persuade the South African régime to abandon apartheid and to honour the inalienable rights of the oppressed black majority in South Africa and Namibia. South Africa's Western allies should understand that the safety of their investments and other interests in South Africa and Namibia would continue to be in jeopardy so long as South Africa persisted in its policy of apartheid.

7. He also urged that Israel allow the people of Palestine to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence in their own homeland. In the long run the survival of the régimes both in Tel Aviv and Pretoria depended on their compliance with the decisions of the United Nations aimed at resolving problems in the Middle East and South Africa.

8. Mr. FURSLAND (United Kingdom) said that the statement made by the representative of Greece on 7 October on behalf of the 10 Member States of the European Community, had reflected his delegation's views on racism and racial discrimination in general, on the apartheid system in South Africa and on the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. The United Kingdom shared the Secretary-General's assessment, as expressed in his report on the Conference (A/38/426). As Ambassador Charry Samper had said, Member States should build on the achievements of the Conference with a view to restoring the consensus which prevailed at the start of the Decade, and make concerted efforts to eliminate racism and racial discrimination wherever it existed. A concerted approach was particularly important because racial discrimination existed in varying degrees in all societies. Recognition of those evils was the only way to make progress towards their elimination.

(Mr. Fursland, United Kingdom)

9. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had a central role to play in the elimination of racial discrimination. If it was to play that role effectively, there must be mutual confidence between the Committee and the States parties to the Convention. This meant that the Committee must not exceed its mandate. His delegation had therefore been surprised and distressed that at its summer session the Committee had seen fit to adopt an opinion relating to the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), welcoming and supporting the relevant resolution of the United Nations aimed at finding a peaceful solution of the dispute. That opinion fell outside the terms of article 15 of the Convention. The Committee was not the proper forum for discussion of political issues and it should not allow itself to be turned into a political battleground. Its intrusion into the political arena had shaken the United Kingdom's confidence in it, and he hoped and trusted that it would not be repeated.

10. The General Assembly, for its part, should avoid introducing contentious political issues into its resolutions on the Committee's work. He hoped that the sponsors of the relevant resolution at the current session would take account of the views of all regional groups and that, as a result, consensus could be restored. The Assembly should also give serious and constructive consideration to the Secretary-General's report (A/38/393), which set out three recommendations for improving current reporting procedures under the Convention. His delegation believed, in particular, that the Secretary-General's first recommendation - for extending the periodicity of reports from two to four years - would greatly assist States parties and the Committee in fulfilling their respective responsibilities.

11. Self-determination was a universal principle which was being denied in southern Africa, the Middle East, Afghanistan and Cambodia. In Namibia, a settlement still had to be reached. But, as the Secretary-General had noted in his report to the Security Council (S/15943), substantial progress had been made and many difficult issues had been resolved. Major efforts should be made to build on existing progress and bring about Namibia's independence.

12. Regrettably, the past year had not seen similar progress in the Middle East. The tragic loss of life there had resulted from the fundamental failure to achieve a reconciliation of the rights of all States in the region, including Israel, to a secure existence, with justice for all peoples, including recognition of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination.

13. The occupation of Afghanistan by foreign military forces was continuing to deprive its people of that right as well. The international community had witnessed continued resistance to the régime in Afghanistan against overwhelming odds and the flight from Afghanistan of three million or more of its nationals. The occupation had imposed not only great suffering on the people of Afghanistan but also a great burden of refugees on some of its neighbours. Much the same was true for the Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia. The note (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1982/L.4) prepared for the meeting of the Commission on Human Rights had concluded that both of the alleged reasons for the Vietnamese intervention had disappeared and that immediate withdrawal could therefore be demanded.

(Mr. Fursland, United Kingdom)

14. The denial of the right to self-determination to the peoples of Namibia, the Middle East, Afghanistan and Cambodia had led to the violation of many other fundamental rights, including the right to life, which applied with equal force to the peoples of all those areas, as it had done to the people of Saint Christopher and Nevis, who had been admitted to membership in the United Nations earlier in the session. The principle of self-determination was indivisible, as set out in the Covenant, and the United Kingdom would continue to uphold it wherever it was threatened or violated.

15. Mr. FREYBERG (Poland) said that the abhorrent phenomena of racism, racial discrimination and apartheid had become closely linked with the struggle for international peace and security, for racism was one of the major causes of conflict and war. That clear relationship imposed specific obligations on all countries. Every State had the duty to discourage all manifestations and practices of colonialism as well as racism, racial discrimination and apartheid, as contrary to the right of peoples to self-determination and to other human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Government and the people of Poland condemned and rejected those practices and had given their support to all efforts by the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the Non-Aligned States and representative bodies of world public opinion to eliminate them.

16. Poland's binding legislation effectively prevented any manifestations of racism, racial discrimination and apartheid in all their forms, and prohibited Polish nationals from being recruited and serving as mercenaries assisting the South African racist régime.

17. The First Decade had shown some progress in combating racism and racial discrimination and had given fresh impetus to the world-wide movement for national independence of the peoples under colonial and racial enslavement. Yet the results of the Decade and the status of implementation of its Programme of Action were still far from satisfactory, particularly with regard to southern Africa. The effects of apartheid were only too evident: the continued illegal occupation and exploitation of Namibia, occupation of parts of southern Angola and threats and acts of aggression against Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia and Lesotho.

18. How far the Programme of Action remained an unfulfilled dream was also illustrated by the racism reflected in Israel's criminal actions against the Arabs, in particular the people of Palestine and the population in the occupied Arab territories. Poland was also profoundly concerned by the revival of racist sentiments and manifestations of racism and neo-fascism or neo-nazism in a number of Western States.

19. The Programme of Action must also be applied to the social status and treatment of numerous population groups in many Western countries. The situation of migrant workers and their families in those countries clearly demonstrated discriminatory treatment and a gross violation of human rights.

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(Mr. Freyberg, Poland)

20. Racism and racial discrimination could be eliminated only if all members of the international community without exception condemned them as much in deed as in words. The crux of the matter was reflected in General Assembly resolution 37/40, which expressed serious concern at the fact that Western States and other trading partners of South Africa were continuing to collaborate with the racist régime of South Africa and that such collaboration constituted the main obstacle to the abolition of the South African régime and the elimination of the inhuman and criminal system of apartheid.

21. The eradication of racism, racial discrimination and apartheid depended on the universal ratification and strict observance of international conventions. For its part, Poland continued to be a faithful party to all international instruments designed to eliminate those practices. Few Governments could match that record, especially some of the NATO countries which had so far failed to ratify important international instruments. Not a single Western European State had ratified the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

22. As long as political, economic and military collaboration with the racist régime of South Africa persisted, there could be no meaningful progress in eradicating the evils of racism. Poland would spare no effort in contributing to their eradication and therefore fully supported the idea of launching the Second Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.

23. Mr. CICANOVIC (Yugoslavia) said that the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had been held in an atmosphere of strained international relations and general awareness that there had been little success in carrying out the noble goals of the Decade. Nevertheless, the end of the racist régime in Rhodesia and the achievement of the national independence of Zimbabwe should give the peoples of Namibia and Azania the moral strength to persevere in their own struggle for the realization of their independence and human dignity. Broad action was required to achieve the implementation of the United Nations Plan for the independence of Namibia and the elimination of the policy of apartheid of the racist régime of South Africa. His delegation therefore supported the Programme of Action that had come out of the Second World Conference and hoped that those States responsible for keeping alive the abominable régime of South Africa would eventually recognize the truly important consequences of their policy. Any Member State of the United Nations that was reluctant to comply with the principles set out in the documents of the Second World Conference could hardly claim to have a sincere and genuine interest in the promotion of human rights throughout the world.

24. In Yugoslavia, the Decade had been used as a framework for the adoption and strict implementation of further measures aimed at the creation of conditions for free and balanced development of all nations and nationalities within the country. At the international level, Yugoslavia had given full support to all people struggling for self-determination, such as the people of Palestine and those fighting colonialism, racism, racial discrimination and apartheid. In addition,

(Mr. Cicanovic, Yugoslavia)

Yugoslavia had expressed concern about national or ethnic minorities, including migrant workers and their families and about existing forms of racism and racial discrimination and growing manifestations of fascist, neo-fascist and nazi organizations and groups.

25. Starting from the premise that ratifying or acceding to the major international human rights instruments was a first step towards the elimination of racism, racial discrimination and apartheid, and having become a party to all of them, Yugoslavia believed that those instruments should be universally accepted. It was therefore gratified by the positive trend reflected in the reports contained in documents A/38/390 and A/38/391 and particularly pleased by the accession of Namibia to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. In that connection, his delegation fully supported the activities of CERD and the interest of its members in issues such as non-discrimination against minorities and migrant workers. It also fully supported the need for regular reporting to CERD as envisaged in article 9 of the Convention. The failure of some States parties to report to CERD was a pressing problem and his delegation hoped that CERD would be able to solve it in the near future. Other bodies entrusted with overseeing the implementation of other human rights instruments which might encounter the same problem should study the experience of CERD because its suggestions for a solution could be useful.

26. Mr. MI GUOJUN (China) said that since the beginning of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, peoples all over the world, and particularly in the African continent, had scored victories against the old colonialist and racist forces. After protracted struggles, the heroic peoples of Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe had shaken off the colonial yoke and achieved national liberation and independence, leaving the traditional forces of colonialism and racism besieged from all sides. By declaring the Decade, formulating its Programme and convening the 1978 World Conference, the United Nations had lent powerful support to the peoples of Africa in their struggles against racism, racial discrimination and apartheid.

27. Although there had been some divergence of opinion on the issues discussed at the Second World Conference, the results were on the whole positive and significant. The adoption of a Declaration and Programme of Action and the recommendation that a Second Decade be declared were bound to give impetus to the struggle against racism all over the world, especially in southern Africa. The concerted efforts of the African, Arab and other developing countries had been instrumental in achieving the positive results of the Conference. Those concerted efforts would continue to play a role in the future struggle against racism until the final goal stipulated in the Programme for the Decade was reached.

28. The international community must not become complacent, however - it was still faced with a challenging task. Discrimination based on race, colour and ethnic origin persisted in South Africa and was a matter of concern in some other countries. Like all moribund reactionary forces, the nearer the racists approached their doom, the more brutal and cunning they became. In South Africa, the racist

(Mr. Mi Guojun, China)

régime was arresting and murdering large numbers of patriots and black leaders. There were thousands of blacks in South African prisons, many of whom had been tortured and subjected to other forms of inhuman treatment. The racist régime continued to use such tricks as bantustanization, "constitutional reform" and the codification of race relations in an attempt to legalize and perpetuate the evil system of apartheid. It had extended that policy to Namibia and had launched military assaults on the neighbouring African States in an attempt to force them to abandon support for the just struggle against racism.

29. By such perverse acts, the South African racist régime not only caused endless suffering to the people of South Africa but also seriously threatened peace and stability in southern Africa and throughout the continent. It was only natural that the international community had strongly condemned South Africa and called for sanctions against it, but it was deplorable that in order to maintain its vested interests in southern Africa, one super-Power had become the racist régime's chief patron and that some Western countries had adopted a negative attitude towards sanctions. It was precisely because of the support and assistance provided by some international interests that the South African régime remained strong.

30. The Israeli authorities also pursued a policy of aggression and expansion, deprived the Palestinian people of their right to return to their homeland and to establish their own State and discriminated against and ruthlessly suppressed the people in the illegally occupied Arab territories. Israel had long been in collusion with the South African racist régime, notably in the military field, where the two were engaged in an adventure of "nuclear co-operation". That adventure had strained the tolerance of the international community to the limit.

31. In order to achieve the goals set forth in the Programme for the Decade, a comprehensive analysis of the issues of racism and racial discrimination and their causes should be made, with emphasis on the problems in southern Africa and priority measures should be taken to liberate the thousands of innocent people suffering from those evils.

32. His delegation endorsed the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the Second World Conference. The Government and people of China had consistently supported the peoples of Africa and elsewhere in their just struggle against racism and racial discrimination, participated in all United Nations activities aimed at eliminating racism and racial discrimination, strictly observed the relevant United Nations resolutions and resolutely followed a policy of no trade whatsoever with the South African régime. China was a party to the international conventions against racial discrimination, discrimination against women and apartheid, and would continue to abide by them.

33. Mr. KHARLAMOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the proclamation in 1973 of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had been a landmark in the struggle for the eradication of discrimination against individuals on the basis of race, colour or ethnic origin. The measures undertaken within the framework of the Programme for the Decade had enabled the international

(Mr. Kharlamov, USSR)

community to intensify its efforts to eliminate racism, apartheid and the remnants of colonialism. As a result of the selfless struggle waged during the Decade, a number of colonial territories had acceded to political independence, and condemnation of the crimes of racists and their protectors had become practically universal. The Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had been a giant step towards the realization of the goals and tasks of the Decade, and the Conference's appeal to the General Assembly to proclaim a Second Decade should be universally supported.

34. The continued existence of racism and colonialism violated the dignity and worth of the individual and the international community should not tolerate the continued existence of the system of apartheid.

35. Having reduced the indigenous population to slavery, the repressive racist régime of South Africa had turned the country into a huge concentration camp, and Robben Island, where it had incarcerated and was torturing the opponents of apartheid, had become infamous. The illegal occupation of Namibia continued, despite numerous United Nations resolutions. In addition to suppressing the opposition of the people within the country, the Pretoria régime was carrying out aggression against the independent African States and jeopardizing peace and security in the region. In 1983 alone, South Africa's aggressive acts had led to the death of 10,000 citizens of the People's Republic of Angola.

36. The apartheid régime would have collapsed under the weight of its own crimes long ago were it not for the massive economic, military, political, and diplomatic support channelled to it by the imperialist Powers, with the United States in the lead. In defiance of United Nations resolutions, the United States, its closest NATO allies and the transnational corporations were steadily pouring capital investments into the South African economy. Direct American capital investment alone had risen to \$14.6 billion in 1982, and over 400 American companies had branches in South Africa. Dropping all pretence, the United States had openly brought South Africa into the ranks of its strategic allies.

37. The United States and South Africa were united by a common hatred of peoples struggling for national independence and social progress. In exchange for protection, the apartheid régime gave imperialist monopolies a unique opportunity to extract huge profits through the exploitation of Africans and the plunder of natural resources. The international community had been justified in charging the imperialist Powers as accomplices in the crime of apartheid for their co-operation with South Africa. American support for the apartheid régime caused consternation throughout the world, as evidenced by the condemnation of the "constructive co-operation" of the United States with South Africa at the Seventh Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries.

38. Israel's increasing co-operation with South Africa, including co-operation in the nuclear field, constituted an alliance which presented special dangers. According to Newsweek, the atomic bomb which had been exploded by South Africa in 1977 had been constructed largely with the help of Israel. Effective measures were needed to ensure the total isolation of the South African régime.

(Mr. Kharlamov, USSR)

39. Israel's policy of aggression, expansion and ruthless suppression of the inalienable rights of the Arab peoples, including the Palestinians, was a glaring manifestation of racism. The massacres at Sabra and Shatila, which had been orchestrated by Israel, and the efforts to exterminate the Palestinians were on the same level as fascist war crimes. Those who financed and armed the aggressor and provided it with a political smokescreen to justify its actions also bore responsibility for those crimes. The just demands made at the Second World Conference for an end to racial discrimination against the Palestinians and other inhabitants of the Arab territories occupied by Israel must be met without delay.

40. The emergence of racism in a number of other parts of the world was also cause for deep concern. Racial discrimination derived its vitality from social orders based on the exploitation of man by man. The severity of the racial problem in the United States was well known - it could be seen in virtually every sphere of activity. Blacks, Indians and other non-whites were still outcasts, and their attempts to improve their situation were met with savage opposition from those in power: eloquent examples were the persecution by the authorities which had led to the dastardly murder of that outstanding fighter for racial equality, Martin Luther King, and the bloody reprisals against dissenters in Miami, Boston, Washington, D.C. and other cities. Racial discrimination was practised widely against migrant workers from Asia, Africa and Latin America. In fact, the American press had reported that workers in a camp for migrants near San Diego had been hitched to carts in place of horses, leading to several deaths.

41. The Second World Conference had expressed deep concern about the intensification in a number of Western countries of the activities of racist groups and neo-nazi and fascist organizations. Indulgence of racial discrimination at home was combined with disdain for the efforts of the international community to eradicate racism. A number of Western countries had declined to participate in the implementation of the Programme for the Decade and had voted against the resolutions adopted within the framework of the Decade. The United States and Israel had flatly refused to take part in the Second World Conference and the United States had still not ratified the international instruments dealing with racism and apartheid.

42. Despite the stubborn opposition of those who for many years had been trying unsuccessfully to undermine the significance of the Decade, the Second World Conference had broken ground for the intensification of the international community's efforts to achieve the early eradication of racism, apartheid and the remnants of colonialism. The Conference represented a new and important stage in the struggle against racism and racial discrimination; it had also illustrated the significant contribution made by the non-aligned and socialist countries to the realization of the goals and the tasks of the Decade.

43. The Soviet Union continued to advocate the strict implementation of the demands contained in the Programme for the Decade and hoped that the General Assembly would adopt a resolution that would help achieve the eradication of racism and colonialism. The Assembly should also call on those countries which had not

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(Mr. Kharlamov, USSR)

yet done so to become parties to the international conventions on the elimination of racial discrimination and apartheid. Moreover, the efforts of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to facilitate the implementation of the Programme for the Decade must continue.

44. The obstructionism of the United States with regard to United Nations efforts to eliminate all forms of racism had been reflected, inter alia, in the statement by the United States representative at the Committee's sixth meeting. In essence, he had attempted to whitewash racism and apartheid and to defend South Africa and other racists. He had used terms such as "hypocrisy" and "cynicism" frequently in his speech to describe the struggle against racism, but they applied more accurately to the attempts of his country to discredit the heroic struggle of the populations of South Africa and Namibia against apartheid and to represent the exploitation of the victims of racism and colonialism by American monopolies as a boon to world prosperity.

45. Mr. INFANTE (Chile) said that the consideration each year by the General Assembly of the items related to racism and racial discrimination was a sad reminder that people were still being victimized by practices which threatened their dignity as human beings because of their colour or race. The most recent effort of the international community to correct that unjust situation had been the Second World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination at which arduous negotiations had led to the adoption of the Declaration and Programme of Action, which his country had supported with some reservations. His delegation was pleased that that Declaration and Programme of Action had been adopted without a single dissenting vote.

46. The President of the Conference had stated that it had achieved a moral consensus. That consensus should contribute to the achievement of tangible results during the Second Decade.

47. Chile's position was based on the principles of freedom, equality and dignity for all human beings, to which it had given effect early in the nineteenth century by becoming the first country of the Americas to abolish slavery. Since the eradication of racial discrimination was unquestionably linked to the principle of the self-determination of peoples, that goal could not be achieved without eliminating the vestiges of colonial domination which prevented some peoples from fully exercising their rights. Chile reiterated its rejection of the odious practice of the policy of apartheid applied by South Africa and supported the efforts of the Secretary-General to find a solution to the problem of Namibia in the light of Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

48. His Government also repudiated the emergence of neo-colonial systems which oppressed and subjugated peoples after independence in open violation of the inalienable right to self-determination and the full exercise of sovereignty. Situations such as those in Afghanistan and Kampuchea which persisted despite the adoption by the General Assembly of resolutions condemning the aggressors also constituted a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms

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(Mr. Infante, Chile)

of international law. Chile once again strongly rejected the aggression against the peoples of those countries and expressed solidarity with them in their struggle to recover their inalienable rights.

49. In the same spirit of respect for the right to self-determination, Chile supported the efforts to achieve a solution to the Palestinian problem. As the Chilean Minister of Foreign Affairs had stated in the plenary, the objective of a just and a lasting solution could be attained only through realistic approaches based on recognition of the rights of all States of the region, including Israel, to live within secure and internationally recognized boundaries, and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to establish its own sovereign State.

50. Chile was pleased that another five States, including Namibia, had become parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. His delegation attached special importance to the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Its function of examining reports submitted by States Parties to the Convention enabled the United Nations to assess advances in the fight against racial discrimination. However, its work should be strictly confined to the terms laid down in article 8 of the Convention: it should be strictly objective and devoid of political considerations. The report of CERD, which was before the Committee, clearly reflected the politicized attitude adopted by two of its members during the consideration of Chile's sixth periodic report. Their capricious and distorted interpretation of the situation in Chile, which was outside the competence of CERD, had been compounded by their refusal to consider the report submitted by Chile. It seemed to his delegation paradoxical, to say the least, that those who had been entrusted by the international community with the function of monitoring progress in the elimination of discrimination, has assumed discriminatory attitudes towards a State Member of the United Nations based on political considerations. That attitude created a serious precedent for the work of the Committee and contributed nothing to its accomplishments.

51. Ms. ABU LUGHOD (Observer for the Palestine Liberation Organization) said that for many delegations, it was seen as unfortunate that year after year the Committee had to discuss the little progress made in ensuring that the Palestine people exercised their right to self-determination, despite the numerous resolutions adopted and activities undertaken by the international community to guarantee that right. For the Palestinians, the principal victims of zionism, it was worse than unfortunate, it was catastrophic, and she therefore wished to discuss the exercise of that right from their point of view.

52. Some delegations might consider that the exercise of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people was conditional upon a military posture by the Zionist aggressor and the willingness of that aggressor to make concessions. Others might believe that zionism was the national liberation movement of the Jewish people. They should ponder the fact that there had never been a national liberation movement which had most of its people, by choice, living outside of a land they claimed as theirs. Perhaps zionism did not speak as the real voice of the Jewish

(Ms. Abu Lughod, Observer, PLO)

people. She knew of no liberation movement which had an agency which referred it to its activities as "colonization" as did the Jewish Agency. Thus, zionism, in its very essence, was a deviant pattern of colonization which sought either to exploit or expel the native population. At a time when almost all countries had been freed from the shackles of colonialism, support for a colonial movement could hardly be justified.

53. It could be seen, from Zionist thinking, that safeguarding the civil and religious rights of the Palestinians was regarded as a threat to the success of the Zionist project; consequently, it would be fatal to permit the Palestinian people political rights. As long as zionism continued to provide the justification for an exclusively Jewish State, therefore, the only solution was to achieve the withdrawal of Israeli troops and settler-vigilantes and to create an independent Palestinian State, a democratic State in Palestine where Jews, Christians and Moslems lived together with the same responsibilities and privileges under the law.

54. During the invasion of Lebanon, statements from Israeli soldiers referred to all Palestinians as terrorists. The Palestinians were struggling to liberate Palestine, using every means, including armed struggle, as a legitimate means to that end. They struggled to liberate Palestine with pens, books, paint-brushes and with song. However, they were told that those were terrorist tools. Those tools were regarded as revolutionary because they defended the concept of Palestine, a concept which former Prime Minister Menachem Begin had found to be intrinsically dangerous.

55. Fortunately, the independent Asian countries had never supported the Zionist project, though they did support the principles of equality and justice. The fraternal African countries had succeeded at last in throwing off the shackles of colonialism and had supported the Palestinians in their struggle for independence and sovereignty. The Latin American continent had been united in its support for a partition of Palestine which would lead to an independent Jewish State and an independent Arab State with the rights of each people clearly defined in General Assembly resolution 181 (II), and the Palestinians sought their support in bringing about the independent Palestinian State. The European countries, many still colonial Powers at the time of the partition resolution had not brought their full diplomatic, political and economic weight to bear in favour of the realization of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination, to return to their homes and property and to establish an independent State in Palestine.

56. There had been sporadic recognition of the rights of the Palestinians. However, some countries were not convinced that the PLO really represented the collective will and aspirations of the Palestinian people and that it was their sole and legitimate representative. The PLO therefore encouraged, indeed challenged, the international community to press for the withdrawal of Israel from all territories occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem, so that a free and democratic election, or at least a referendum free from external pressure and interference, could be held in order to determine beyond any doubt the support of

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(Ms. Abu Lughod, Observer, PLO)

the Palestinian people for the PLO and their aspiration for an independent State. Her delegation hoped that at the current session, those countries would not insist on the formulation "their right to an independent State, once they so wish".

57. Her delegation wished to thank the majority of the States Members of the United Nations that had actively participated at the International Conference on the Question of Palestine held recently in Geneva. The Final Document adopted by that Conference reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. The Conference had also adopted by consensus a Programme of Action which she believed all countries had the duty to implement if they wanted a political solution to the question of Palestine and to guarantee the Palestinian people the same rights which they, as independent peoples and nations, enjoyed.

58. Finally, her delegation reiterated its support for the brave freedom fighters of Namibia, and their sole, legitimate representative, SWAPO, in their struggle to rid themselves of the oppressive violence of the racist régime which illegally occupied Namibia.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.