

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTIETH SESSION

Official Records



**FOURTH COMMITTEE, 1531st
MEETING**

Tuesday, 19 October 1965,
at 11 a.m.

NEW YORK

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Chairman: Mr. Majid RAHNEMA (Iran).

Statement by the Chairman concerning the control and limitation of documentation

1. The CHAIRMAN referring to the fact that certain statements had been published as Committee documents, drew attention to General Assembly resolution 1272 (XIII), in which the Assembly had urged the representatives of Member States as well as all other members of commissions, committees and similar bodies to co-operate fully with the Secretary-General in the control and limitation of documentation. Hitherto the Committee had had petitioners' statements circulated as unofficial documents but at the present session it had already had two statements by petitioners reproduced as official documents. The Committee was, of course, master of its own procedure but he hoped that members would take full account of the need to co-operate with the Secretary-General in accordance with resolution 1272 (XIII).

AGENDA ITEM 23

Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples: reports 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: Aden (*continued*) (A/5800/Rev.1, chap. VI; A/6000/Rev.1, chap. VI; A/C.4/642 and Add.1-3; A/C.4/646)

HEARING OF PETITIONERS (*continued*)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Abdul Gawee Mackawee and Mr. Khalifa A. Khalifa; Mr. Qahtan Muhammad Shaabi and Mr. Saif Dhalee, representatives of the National Front for the Liberation of the Occupied South of Yemen (NLF); Mr. Shaikhan Abdullah Alhabshi and Mr. Mohamed Ali Aligifri, representatives of the South Arabian League (SAL); and Mr. Mohamed Salem Basendwah and Mr. Ahmad

Abdullah Al-Fadhli, representatives of the Organization for the Liberation of the Occupied South (OLOS), took places at the Committee table.

2. Mr. BASENDWAH (Organization for the Liberation of the Occupied South) recalled that he had addressed the Committee on 13 December 1963 (1515th meeting) after the bomb-throwing incident at the Aden airport. He paid a tribute to the United Nations General Assembly for its adoption of emergency resolution 1972 (XVIII) of 16 December 1963, in which it had urged the United Kingdom Government to take steps to secure the immediate release of the nationalist leaders and trade-unionists, to put an end to all acts of deportation of residents of the Territory of Aden and to lift the state of emergency which had been declared on 10 December 1963.

3. The state of emergency had been in force in the Territory since 10 December 1963. Under the emergency law innocent people were arrested and detained in Aden and in different parts of the area for indefinite periods without trial and were subjected to inhuman torture during interrogation. Even their next-of-kin did not know where they were. The military operations of the United Kingdom troops, air raids and so forth, in Radfan, Fadhli, 'Audhali and other States, had left tens of thousands of the Aden people homeless and many of them had taken refuge in the Yemen Arab Republic.

4. In protest against the presence of United Kingdom troops and civilians in the Occupied South, the repressive measures they had carried out against the people and their aggressive activities, the Aden Trade Union Congress, supported by all the nationalist organizations, had called for a general strike on 2 October 1965. All sectors of the people, in Aden and elsewhere, had responded to the appeal. For the first time in the history of the country, most of the senior civil servants had joined the strikers, not heeding the threats and warnings broadcast on the radio by the High Commission and the Public Service Commission. The United Kingdom troops and police officers had thrown tear-gas bombs and had even fired on the demonstrators causing injuries to many, but instead of intimidating the people they had merely angered them and intensified their determination to rid themselves of the colonial yoke. At noon the British High Commissioner had declared a curfew at Crater and Shaykh, 'Uthman and had left for Socotra, allegedly to discuss the future of "South Arabia" with the Sultan of Mahra State but in reality to arrange for the movement of certain United Kingdom troops to that island. It was known that Socotra was one of the islands that was earmarked to replace the Aden base if the United Kingdom found itself obliged to evacuate the latter and the so-called Aden

Protectorate. The demonstrations had been resumed the following day, 3 October 1965, despite threats and ultimatums. More than 2,000 citizens of Aden had been arrested on those two days and the days that had followed. In the Aden prison some thirty political detainees had been savagely tortured during the night of 2 October. Citizens of the Yemen Republic who had been residing in Aden for many years and whom the people of Aden regarded as their brothers had been deported on the pretext that they were foreigners.

5. According to news coming from Aden, demonstrations by students and workers were still taking place, as, unfortunately, were arrests, detentions and deportations. The whole of South Arabia was now under the control of the British Army. On 1 October sixty United Kingdom officers, who had been brought from the United Kingdom military base in Cyprus, had taken control of the Aden civil airport, which had been declared out of bounds except for passengers and civil aviation personnel. More army officers were being seconded to the civil police force, since the United Kingdom authorities in Aden no longer had confidence in the local police. Several checkpoints had been set up on the main roads in all the ports of Aden. Some main roads were completely blocked at night. Searches of houses, shops, etc. were carried out day and night. Royal Air Force parachutists often raided the residential quarters. In short, the hysterical fears of the British High Commissioner and his assistants and advisers were causing a reign of terror throughout the area.

6. In July 1965 he and Mr. Al-Asnag had deferred a visit to Cairo at the request of the British High Commissioner in order to take part in two interviews on 22 July, during the surprise visit to Aden of Mr. Greenwood, the United Kingdom Secretary of State for the Colonies. During the second interview they had informed him that the only political solution acceptable to the people of South Arabia was that set out in General Assembly resolution 1949 (XVIII). Moreover, if that resolution, which embodied the minimum requirements, was not put into effect very soon, the time was not far off when it would no longer satisfy the nationalists.

7. The Organization for the Liberation of the Occupied South had then been invited by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to send one delegate and one adviser to take part in the Working Party which was to meet in London on 3 August 1965. The so-called South Arabian Federation had been represented in the Working Party by seven delegates, as well as advisers, and the Aden State Government by three delegates, while the Qu'aiti and Kathiri Governments, his own organization and the South Arabian League had each been represented by one delegate and one adviser. Over and above the High Commissioner, one of his deputies and two of his assistants, the United Kingdom Government had been represented by the Secretary of State for the Colonies and four of his advisers.

8. The agenda that his organization had proposed for the proposed constitutional conference had been to a large extent in conformity with that proposed by the Aden Government's delegation, but the agenda proposed by the delegation of the so-called South Arabian Federation had been similar to that proposed

by the United Kingdom delegation. It had been impossible to reach agreement on that issue and the Working Party had finally taken the text of General Assembly resolution 1949 (XVIII) as a basis upon which to try to find common ground.

9. However, the United Kingdom delegation had expressed reservations concerning the three main operative paragraphs of the resolution, thus demonstrating that its Government was not willing to abide by the United Nations decisions. The Colonial Secretary had stated, *inter alia*, that the United Kingdom could not carry out the provisions of paragraph 7 until the constitutional conference had taken place and the acts of violence within the Territory had ceased, whereas those acts of violence were in fact the result of repressive measures on the part of the British Administration and would continue so long as the United Kingdom failed to accept the political solution set out in resolution 1949 (XVIII).

10. With regard to operative paragraph 5, the United Kingdom delegation had said that its Government could not open negotiations on the future of the military base so long as there was no elected central government representing the people of the whole Territory. Moreover, the Colonial Secretary and his advisers had refused to give written assurance that the United Kingdom Government would withdraw its troops from Occupied South Arabia if the first provisional central government to be elected requested it to do so.

11. With regard to elections on the basis of universal suffrage as provided for in operative paragraph 8, the United Kingdom delegation had contended that most parts of the Territory were still too backward for such elections to be held there. The Colonial Secretary and his advisers had apparently intended to hold elections by means of electoral colleges, through which they could have set up a neo-colonialist régime.

12. The United Kingdom delegation had also been unwilling to agree to the inclusion in the agenda of the question of an effective United Nations presence in the area during and after the direct general elections. They had suggested that the reference should be only to a "foreign presence" and that the matter should be left for the constitutional conference to decide.

13. Despite all the efforts that had been made, the United Kingdom delegation had maintained its reservations and had refused to agree to the proposal to invite representatives 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 and of the United Nations Secretariat to attend any constitutional conference that was held. In short, it had been impossible to reach agreement, and when the Colonial Secretary had tried in vain to impose his own proposals, the London talks had finally broken down.

14. In that connexion, he wished to point out that at the last London talks the United Kingdom delegation had been in agreement with the representatives of the people of Aden on the establishment of a central caretaker government before the holding of general elections.

15. Moreover, during the London talks, the delegation of the so-called South Arabian Federation had formulated its position on the basis of instructions from two United Kingdom officials, the Attorney-General of the so-called Federation and the Assistant High Commissioner, who had attended the talks as advisers to the delegation.

16. Thus, it was clear that the British Colonial Office was responsible for the failure of the talks, and not the representatives of OLOS and the ousted Aden Government, as the United Kingdom Government had alleged. Despite the Colonial Secretary's repeated assertions at the London talks to the effect that the United Kingdom Government could not impose any decisions that might be taken, it was quite clear that the only persons who wielded power, whether in Aden or elsewhere in occupied South Arabia, were the British High Commissioner and his advisers and assistants.

17. With regard to the draft resolution now in preparation, he urged that it should be strengthened and, in particular, that it should include a provision calling for the immediate removal of the military bases. He also urged the Committee to state in the resolution that the off-shore islands, such as Perim, Kamaran, Kuria Muria, and Socotra, were an integral part of what the Assembly had referred to in its previous resolutions as South Arabia. The Committee should also indicate how self-determination was to be exercised in Occupied South Arabia, preferably calling a referendum to permit the people to determine their future.

18. His organization would also like to see the League of Arab States co-operate with the United Nations in supervising the direct general elections called for in the United Nations resolutions.

19. The people of Occupied South Arabia were the victims of a war of annihilation; he appealed to the United Nations to bring that war to an end just as it had already halted other conflicts in many parts of the world. If possible, the Organization should send the Secretary-General himself or one of his assistants, with some of the members of the Special Committee, to see what was happening in the area and submit a report. If the United Kingdom authorities in Aden refused to admit them to the Territory, as they had done in the case of the members of the Sub-Committee

on Aden, who had been declared illegal immigrants, that would be another instance of the United Kingdom Government's disregard of the United Nations.

20. The people of Occupied South Arabia wanted genuine independence, not a transfer of power into the hands of puppets. The United Kingdom was a founding Member of the United Nations and must abide by its resolutions. The people of the Territory were determined to continue the struggle against United Kingdom aggression and would not be satisfied until not a single United Kingdom national, whether civilian or soldier, was left in their country.

21. Mr. BHUIYA (Pakistan), recalling that the High Commissioner had announced his intention to set up an advisory committee composed of inhabitants of the Territory, asked the petitioner whether he thought the High Commissioner would succeed in doing so.

22. Mr. BASENDWAH (Organization for the Liberation of the Occupied South) replied that, according to the information he had received from the Territory, the High Commissioner had so far been unable to find anyone willing to co-operate and participate in the activities of such a committee.

23. Mr. BHUIYA (Pakistan) asked the petitioner if he could say how many refugees from the Territory were at present in Yemen or other countries.

24. Mr. BASENDWAH (Organization for the Liberation of the Occupied South) said that, while he had no precise figures, there were certainly no less than 100,000 refugees from Occupied South Arabia in the Yemen Arab Republic and other countries, including Saudi Arabia and Somalia. All those who had left the Territory would, in any case, return as soon as it attained independence.

25. The CHAIRMAN thanked the petitioner for his statement and for his replies to the questions that had been asked.

The petitioners withdrew.

26. The CHAIRMAN said that, in accordance with the decision taken at the beginning of the session, the list of speakers on the question of Aden would be closed on 20 October at 6 p.m.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.