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EIGHTEENTH SESSION

Official Records



**FOURTH COMMITTEE, 1494th
MEETING**

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Chairman: Mr. ACHKAR Marof (Guinea).

Requests for hearings (continued)

REQUESTS CONCERNING OMAN (AGENDA ITEM 78) (A/C.4/604/ADD.2) (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to a request for a hearing on the question of Oman (A/C.4/604/Add.2). He suggested that if there were no objections, the request should be granted.
2. Mr. KING (United Kingdom) said that he would not request a formal vote on the matter but would like to remind the Committee that, though it was by now an established procedure for the Fourth Committee to grant hearings to petitioners from Non-Self-Governing Territories, his Government was opposed to such hearings. The present case, however, was different: Muscat and Oman was not a Non-Self-Governing Territory, but an independent sovereign State. The question, therefore, was whether the Committee should give a hearing to dissidents who were in rebellion against their established Government. That practice could be of considerable significance, for countries who were members of the Committee might one day find themselves in the position of hearing petitioners, perhaps living in exile, against their own Governments.
3. Mr. KHALAF (Iraq) pointed out that the United Kingdom representative had made similar remarks when the question of Southern Rhodesia and South West Africa had come up for discussion. His delegation did not agree with that point of view.
4. Mr. HASHIM (Sudan) said that he would have been more impressed by those remarks if they had been made by a speaker from Oman.

The Committee decided to grant the request for a hearing.

AGENDA ITEM 23

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 (chapter on Territories under Portuguese administration) (A/5446/Rev.2, chap. II; A/C.4/618 and Add.1; A/C.4/620; A/C.4/L.781 and Add.1 and 2) (continued)

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.4/L.781 AND ADD.1 AND 2 (continued)

5. Mr. CABAL (Brazil), speaking in explanation of his vote at the previous meeting on draft resolution A/C.4/L.781 and Add.1 and 2, said that his country still believed in the right of territories to self-determination and independence and did not accept the Portuguese thesis that the African Territories under its administration were overseas provinces of Portugal. Nevertheless it had doubts about the expedience of a General Assembly resolution requesting the Security Council to implement its own resolution of 31 July 1963 (S/5380).^{1/} It was the Security Council's business to appraise the results of its resolution and to act on the basis of its findings. His delegation had therefore abstained from voting on the present draft resolution. It still hoped that Portugal would be willing to put the provisions of the resolution into effect.
6. Mr. POL VARGAS (Costa Rica) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution in accordance with its consistent anti-colonialist position. He reminded the African delegations that, as his country had once been a colony, he understood and sympathized with their point of view.
7. Mr. KING (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had abstained from voting on the draft resolution for the same reasons as those it had expressed in the Security Council in explaining the United Kingdom's abstention on the Council resolution.^{2/} His country shared the African concern over the Portuguese administration of its Territories in Africa. It recognized the principle of self-determination for all peoples and considered that Portugal should put that principles into effect in those Territories, but it held that it was not for the United Nations to tell Portugal in detail how and when to act and it had therefore disagreed with some of the sub-paragraphs of operative paragraph 5 of the Security Council resolution.
8. There was much in draft resolution A/C.4/L.781 and Add.1 and 2 with which his delegation agreed. His delegation did not wish its abstention to imply that United Kingdom support of self-determination had diminished; his country had set an example in the Territories under its own administration. His dele-

^{1/} See Official Records of the Security Council, Eighteenth Year, Supplement for July, August and September 1963.

^{2/} Ibid., Eighteenth Year, 1049th meeting.

gation regretted that the draft resolution included no reference to the Secretary-General's report (S/5448 and Add.1 and 2)^{3/} regarding the conversations which the African States had held with Portugal. His delegation had hoped that those conversations would be fruitful and suggested that the dialogue should be resumed. Though years of United Nations debate had achieved nothing, the more direct approach might produce results.

9. His delegation had been unable to support operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution since the Security Council resolution to which that paragraph referred made recommendations, not decisions, and was couched in the language of Chapter VI of the Charter, whereas operative paragraph 1 referred to it as though it were written in the context of Chapter VII. His delegation's doubts about the appropriateness of the draft resolution were reinforced by Article 12 of the Charter.

10. Mr. CADIEUX (Canada) said that he wished to express once again his country's sympathy with the Africans in the Portuguese Territories and its regret that Portugal had ignored its obligations to those Territories. The wording of the draft resolution had, however, caused his delegation some difficulties. In particular, operative paragraph 1 was ambiguous and imprecise. It lay with the Security Council itself to decide what steps it should take; moreover, the situation did not yet call for punitive sanctions. For those reasons his delegation had abstained from voting on the draft resolution.

11. Mr. McCARTHY (Australia) said his delegation had in mind the observations of the representative of Ghana in introducing the draft resolution (1490th meeting) that one of its main purposes was to bring into play means suggested by Chapter VI of the Charter. It was on his delegations's understanding that action under Chapter VI was contemplated and that the use of the word "measures" in operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution had no special significance, that it had taken its present position and had voted in favour of the draft resolution. His delegation had very much in mind the observations of the Secretary-General on the recent discussions between Portuguese and Africans as reported in document S/5448 of 31 October 1963. It was a matter of regret that the draft resolution did not include any reference to those conversations, to which his delegation attached great importance. His delegation had not agreed with the reference in the last preambular paragraph to the implementation of the resolution as "the only means of obtaining a peaceful solution of the questions of Territories under Portuguese administration." Reference to "a peaceful solution" was seen as a vital one and should be the overriding objective. The Australian delegation had doubts about the propriety of the request to the Security Council. However, his Government disagreed profoundly with the Portuguese doctrine of self-determination. For his delegation, the principle of self-determination must be based on the unshakable belief that any people had the inalienable right to self-determination and meant quite simply the right of any people to choose for themselves the form of government which they, as a free people, decided might suit best.

12. Mr. MEHR (Afghanistan) said that his country did not consider the Portuguese Territories to be overseas

provinces but colonies. His delegation had therefore voted in favour of the draft resolution, as it had done in the case of previous General Assembly resolutions on the subject. He hoped that the rulers of Portugal would put the provisions of the resolution into effect and thus prevent such fighting as had taken place in Algeria, for example.

13. Mr. YATES (United States of America), explaining why his delegation had abstained on the draft resolution, said that operative paragraph 1 in part contained a request to the Security Council to take up the matter of Portuguese Territories again. That part was acceptable to the United States. However, the second half of the paragraph, by asking the Council to adopt measures to give effect to its own decisions contained in a resolution on which the United States had abstained in the Security Council, posed difficulties for his delegation. While the United States believed the situation in the Portuguese Territories legitimately came under the concern of the Security Council within the terms of Chapter VI of the Charter, it could not support operative paragraph 1 which contained language which could be interpreted as requesting the Security Council to act in terms of Chapter VII of the Charter, even to the extent of taking punitive measures.

14. His delegation's abstention should not be regarded as a lack of concern with the situation in the Portuguese Territories. It continued to believe that negotiations undertaken by Portugal on the basis of the recognition of the right to self-determination of the peoples in the Portuguese Territories, as recommended by the Security Council, conducted in good faith, were the best means of achieving in a peaceful manner the solution sought by all.

15. At the 1490th meeting the Portuguese representative had compared the African Territories with Hawaii and Alaska. Those two countries had been given the right to determine their own form of government and had freely decided to become states in the United States federation. The Philippines, on the other hand, had opted for complete independence from the United States and had received it. Perhaps if the Portuguese African Territories were given the opportunity, they too might choose to become part of Portugal.

16. Mr. LE GUEN (France) said that his delegation had abstained, not out of indifference, but because it considered that the General Assembly must not prejudice the Security Council's action. His country still believed in the right of self-determination and had given proof of that belief in Africa.

17. Mr. ROBERTS (New Zealand) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution because it was in broad agreement with the spirit of the resolution and supported its emphasis on the right of self-determination. It would have preferred a different wording for the second half of operative paragraph 1, for it felt that the Security Council should decide on its own actions, and it thought that the word "only" in the last preambular paragraph might have been omitted. Despite those reservations, his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution in order to show its support for the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples.

18. The CHAIRMAN announced that the explanations of vote were now concluded but that certain delegations had asked to make statements.

19. Mr. NDAWULA (Uganda) said that his delegation had hoped that the draft resolution, which had been

^{3/} Ibid., Eighteenth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1963.

sponsored by sixty-five States, would be unanimously approved. His own and other delegations had made strong appeals to Portugal and its friends in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), but the results of the voting showed that those appeals had been ignored. After that vote Portugal's allies in NATO could no longer say that they did not support Mr. Salazar in his policies. Their vote must have been a matter of great satisfaction to the Portuguese representative and that probably explained why he had agreed to waive his right of reply after the vote at the previous meeting.

20. Portugal was ignoring the rights of the indigenous peoples in Africa and was using NATO weapons to suppress them. Actions spoke louder than words, and Portugal's friends should ponder their responsibilities. They were actively promoting an explosive situation. Nevertheless, perhaps it was not too late to hope that they would see that right was on the side of the African peoples and would show moral and political courage by ceasing their support of Portugal.

21. Mr. BUDU-ACQUAH (Ghana) said that it was disappointing that, immediately following the tributes which had been paid in the General Assembly to the memory of the late President of the United States, certain Powers should have felt it necessary to oppose or abstain on the draft resolution on Territories under Portuguese administration. It had been said that the United States could pay a lasting tribute to Mr. Kennedy by adopting his civil rights bill; it was a pity that the Powers concerned had not been prepared to pay a similar tribute by supporting the draft resolution. In a letter to the President of Ghana, President Johnson had pledged support for the struggle for the freedom of the peoples still in bondage. The only possible reason for the abstention by the United States was allegiance to a NATO ally. The strength of NATO's ties was illustrated by the fact that even Turkey, an Asian nation, had found it necessary to abstain.

22. As for Brazil, he recognized the close ties between that country and Portugal but hoped that, before the draft resolution was voted on in plenary session, that delegation would see its way to changing its attitude, in keeping with its traditions of support for the right of peoples to determine their own destiny.

23. As the President of Ghana had said at the Summit Conference of Independent African States held at Addis Ababa, it was time for all peoples of Africa to come to think of themselves as Africans first and foremost. Until the Africans united they would continue to be treated as children.

24. Mr. MONGONO (Nigeria) said that the results of the voting on the very innocuous draft resolution which the Committee had approved at the previous meeting had been a rude shock to all Africans. The draft resolution confined itself to requesting the Security Council, in polite terms, to ensure the implementation of its own resolution. It was clear that Portugal's allies in NATO attached more importance to the friendship of Portugal than to that of the African States. He could not accept the assurances of the French and United States representatives that there was no indifference or lack of concern on their part.

25. As was stated on pages 61-62 of Issues Before the Eighteenth General Assembly, published by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, in September 1963, it would depend largely on the strength of Portugal's ties with the United States and the United

Kingdom whether or not effective international pressure would be applied against Portugal. Africans could learn from the results of the voting who their friends were and the extent to which certain Powers believed in the principles they proclaimed.

26. Mr. DIALLO Seydou (Guinea) recalled that the American author Richard Wright, in his book entitled White Man, Listen had stressed the unwillingness of the white man to come to terms with the coloured races. It was distressing to hear legalistic arguments being used as a pretext for denying support to the struggle of a people for freedom. The results of the voting had illustrated the solidarity of the NATO alliance; all members of NATO, with the exception of Denmark, Iceland and Norway, had abstained. Africans should judge the Western Powers and the political system which they upheld in the light of the recent vote.

27. He had received some recent news regarding the tragic drama in so-called Portuguese Guinea, but there seemed little point in bringing it to the knowledge of the Committee in view of the attitude displayed by the Western Powers. That attitude, however, would not prevent the African cause from triumphing.

28. Some speakers had stressed the note of optimism in the Secretary-General's report (S/5448 and Add.1 and 2), but the statements of the Portuguese representative quoted in that report scarcely gave cause for optimism. The Africans were ready to hold a dialogue with Portugal but only if the principle of self-determination was genuinely accepted as a basis for the dialogue.

29. Mr. LANNUNG (Denmark) said that he wanted to thank the representative of Guinea for his correction with regard to the voting of Denmark, Iceland and Norway on the draft resolution concerning Portuguese colonies. His thanks did not, however, cover some of the comments made, to which Denmark, Iceland and Norway could not agree.

30. Mr. DIALLO (Mali) said that the African Heads of State and Government that had met at Addis Ababa had hoped for a more positive response to their appeals to the colonial Powers and their allies than had been apparent during the proceedings of the present session of the Assembly. The recent vote had shown which countries were really in favour of decolonization and were prepared to support the principle of self-determination in deeds and not simply in words. Spain, Portugal and South Africa, who had opposed the draft resolution, were at least honest adversaries. There could be no further doubt that Portugal's chief function was to defend Western economic interests in Africa. It had been reported that the strongest support for the present system in Angola and Mozambique came from the United States and the United Kingdom.

31. According to the Portuguese Minister for Foreign Affairs, the majority of Members of the United Nations which were in favour of the liberation of the Portuguese colonies did not represent the forces determining world policy, which, in the eyes of Portugal, were the United States, the United Kingdom and France. The countries of Asia and Africa carried no weight. That, however, was a serious mistake. Whatever the strength of Portugal and its allies might be, the process of decolonization could not be reversed. Since 1945 millions of people had been freed despite the efforts of the colonialist Powers. Even if its allies continued to supply Portugal with funds, the strength of the people's will was greater than the strength of weapons. Those

who had voted against or abstained in the vote on the draft resolution should take heed.

32. Mr. CISS (Senegal) said that his delegation had been disappointed by the statements in the Secretary-General's report with regard to the negotiations said to be in progress between Portugal and representatives of African States. The delegation of Senegal was always in favour of negotiation as a means of settling disputes and believed that, given good faith on both sides, a peaceful solution of the problem of the Portuguese Territories could be found. That attitude was, however, based on the assumption that both sides accepted certain fundamental principles. His delegation had been unpleasantly surprised when certain delegations in speaking of the Security Council resolution adopted on 31 July 1963 (S/5380) had referred to operative paragraph 7 only. The most important paragraph of that resolution was operative paragraph 5, particularly sub-paragraph (a), which called upon Portugal immediately to recognize the right of the peoples of the Territories under its administration to self-determination and independence. Operative paragraph 7 requested the Secretary-General to ensure the implementation of all the provisions of the resolution—not only of that paragraph. Self-determination was the crux of the debate and the key to the resolution. The Secretary-General's report showed that the Portuguese Government claimed that there was self-determination in the Territories under its administration. No discussion was possible on such a basis; Portugal denied in advance the right of self-determination to the peoples of its colonies. Certain delegations apparently considered the Secretary-General's report to be satisfactory; in the view of the delegation of Senegal it was far from satisfactory since it was likely to mislead delegations which were acting in good faith.

33. His delegation had been disappointed that Spain had voted against the draft resolution, for it had believed Spain's position in the matter of decolonization to be more reasonable than that of Portugal. In the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, Spain had advocated the liberation of Gibraltar. His delegation had therefore considered that Spain had become conscious of the rights of the peoples of occupied territories and that it would hesitate to take Portugal's part.

34. The United Kingdom representative had suggested that the Committee should progress beyond the stage of debates which led to no positive results and should try more direct methods. His delegation agreed with that statement, particularly since the solution of the problem lay in the hands of Portugal's allies of which the United Kingdom was one. One direct and effective method of settling the question would be for the United Kingdom to cease supplying Portugal with arms.

35. It would be wrong to give way to discouragement. The contribution countries other than those of Africa and Asia could make towards a solution should not be forgotten. He appealed to those delegations which had abstained in the vote to recognize that the draft resolution was a purely procedural proposal and to vote in its favour in plenary session.

36. Mr. EASTMAN (Liberia) said that once again the Committee had witnessed encouragement being given to Portugal in its wanton deeds in Africa; once again the NATO countries had abstained on a simple procedural draft resolution. The delegation of Liberia had not been

surprised; it was well aware that the members of NATO cared nothing for Africa and its peoples. Despite all their protestations of belief in self-determination, when the time came to translate beliefs into action the NATO countries said, as the United Kingdom representative had put it, that they could not tell Portugal how and when to act. To make such a statement was tantamount to condoning Portugal's policies. The United States representative had said that his delegation's abstention in the vote should not be interpreted as showing a lack of concern, but it was difficult to see how it could be interpreted otherwise. Obviously Portugal continued to flout the decisions of the General Assembly because it knew it would continue to obtain moral and material support from its allies. There was, however, a new breed of men in Africa today, dedicated to freedom and independence. Those men had no fear of NATO because their intention were honourable. All they claimed was the right to be free and to manage their own affairs, and nothing would stop them. Portugal's allies might find, perhaps quite soon, that they needed the friendship of the African peoples.

37. Mr. EOUAGNIGNON (Dahomey) said that he wished to make it clear that the remarks he was about to make did not apply to those members of NATO which had supported the draft resolution.

38. The Africans had long understood that the NATO Powers had made their choice between the friendship of Portugal and that of the independent African countries. They were within their rights in doing so and his delegation would have had no objection if they had not attempted to shirk their obligations. Those countries claimed to be opposed to the murder of African women and children and in favour of self-determination and independence for Africa. They said they would have voted in favour of the draft resolution if certain details had been different. That fact had brought home to him the uselessness of modifying any draft resolution in the hope of obtaining the support of those delegations. Knowing how little importance the NATO Powers attached to the appeals of the African States, he would nevertheless make an appeal that the men, women and children who had died in Africa should be allowed to rest in peace and that those responsible should not add insult to injury by shedding crocodile tears over their graves.

39. Mr. MGONJA (Tanganyika) said that his delegation had been disappointed, but not much surprised, that the draft resolution had not received the unanimous support of the Committee. His delegation had made it clear during the general debate that the struggle of Africa against Portuguese colonialism and South African racism was also a struggle against powerful outside forces which supported those two régimes. The leading NATO Powers had once again abstained in the vote on a draft resolution which was meant to lead to practical action to put an end to Portuguese brutality and oppression. For years the African peoples had appealed to the nations of the world to rally to the struggle for the liquidation of colonialism in Africa. Now Africans were being daily massacred by the Portuguese colonialists and the South African racists with the support of the NATO Powers which had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution.

40. There was no need to stress the hypocrisy of nations which were ready to apply sanctions against States which in their view were threatening them or NATO, even before a shot had been fired, but told the

Committee that they could not be parties to any suggestion for the application of sanctions against Portugal in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter. It was the United States, the United Kingdom, Belgium, Canada, France and other countries which had derived the greatest profits from Africa while claiming to be friends of the Africans. For many years those countries had pretended to be defenders of human freedom, dignity and independence. It had now become clear that they were defenders only of NATO. The peoples of Africa were increasingly coming to realize who were their real friends.

41. His delegation had been greatly encouraged to see that eighty-seven countries had now enrolled in the fight against Portuguese colonialism and genocide. In particular he was glad to note that Denmark, Iceland and Norway, which were members of NATO though not among its leading members, had supported the draft resolution. He also welcomed the support given by the delegations of Australia and New Zealand. In view of that encouraging growth of solidarity his delegation was confident that Portugal would soon leave Africa whether it wished to or not.

42. Mr. NGANDO-BLACK (Cameroon) thanked the delegations which had voted in favour of the draft resolution, particularly those which did not usually associate themselves with the African countries in connexion with the questions dealt with by the Fourth Committee. Every delegation was of course entitled to adopt the attitude it considered to be in accordance with its Government's policy and he would not therefore criticize those delegations which had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution, or even those which had voted against it. He wished, however, to make a few remarks in view of the votes cast by certain delegations.

43. Most of the countries to which the sponsors of the draft resolution had appealed to endeavour to induce the Portuguese Government to adopt a more realistic attitude had not supported the draft resolution. It was regrettable that the efforts of the sponsors to obtain the greatest possible number of votes had not been understood. During the general debate his delegation had appealed to the Powers which had been supplying Portugal with arms for the defence of what they regarded as the free world to cease from doing so, because it was sure that Portugal would put those arms to uses for which they were not intended. The African Heads of State and Government, meeting at Addis Ababa in May 1963, had told Portugal's friends, particularly the great Powers of the West, that they must choose between the friendship of Portugal and that of the African States. He still hoped that Portugal's friends would take that appeal into consideration.

44. He felt it was a duty towards the peoples of Africa and of the whole world who wanted to live in peace to denounce the attitude adopted by certain great

Powers. There were undoubtedly members of NATO which refused to shed blood in Africa and had tried to bring Portugal to reason. He asked those countries to continue their efforts. Nevertheless, the strongest and richest members of that organization claimed to be in favour of self-determination and to oppose Portugal's policies. The Africans hoped for the assistance of those countries in solving the problem, firstly because peace was at stake and secondly because they regarded those countries as friends. The countries in question should realize, however, that the choice was clear and unambiguous: they would not have the friendship of Africa until they had understood that it would be in the interests of the whole world, including Portugal, to change their conception of their relations with that country. Africa's friendship was not based on purely material considerations, but even at that level its friendship was not to be despised.

45. His delegation still cherished the hope that when the draft resolution was submitted to the General Assembly the NATO countries would reconsider their position. It also hoped that when the matter was again brought before the Security Council the NATO Powers which were permanent members of that body would not only refrain from using the veto but would support a resolution designed to bring about a reasonable solution of the problem of the Portuguese colonies and, further, that they would undertake to take any steps called for in that resolution. In doing so they would be performing a service not only to Africa, not only to themselves, but to international peace.

46. Mr. DE MIRANDA (Portugal) said that he would not attempt to reply to all the baseless allegations which had been made, often in abusive language, during the present meeting. For the benefit of the representative of Uganda, he would like to explain that his reason for not exercising his right of reply at the previous meeting was that he had intended to make an explanation before the vote and had seen no purpose in making it afterwards.

47. In answer to the appeals addressed to his country to co-operate with the United Nations, he wished to say that Portugal was always ready to co-operate within the terms of the Charter.

48. With regard to the United States representative's remarks, he was certainly not wishing to suggest that Hawaiians and Alaskans could not be Americans, although the procedures by which, according to the United States representative, those people had become Americans were recent and were not mentioned in the United Nations Charter. His point was that, just as people of various races could be Americans, so could people of various races be Portuguese. He himself was a full-blooded Asian but he considered himself Portuguese, just as many generations of his ancestors had done.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.