

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records



**FOURTH COMMITTEE, 1908th  
MEETING**

Tuesday, 1 December 1970,  
at 11.05 a.m.

NEW YORK

**Chairman:** Mr. Vernon Johnson MWAANGA  
(Zambia).

*In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Sadry (Iran),  
Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

**AGENDA ITEMS 12, 13, 23, 61, 66, 67, 68, 69 AND 70\***

**Agenda item 12 (continued) (A/8003, chapter XIII  
(section D))**

**Agenda item 13 (continued) (A/8004, A/8085)**

**Agenda item 23 (Territories not covered under other  
agenda items) (continued) (A/7989, A/8023/Add.4  
(part I), A/8023/Add.4 (part II) and Corr.1, A/8023/  
Add.6, A/8023/Add.7 (parts I to IV))**

**Agenda item 61 (continued) (A/8023/Add.8,  
A/8134 and Add.1)**

**Agenda item 66 (question of Oman) (continued)  
(A/8023/Add.5 (part II))**

**Agenda item 67 (continued) (A/8148 and Add.1)**

**Agenda item 68 (continued) (A/8023 (part IV), A/8023  
(part IV)/Add.1, A/8143)**

**Agenda item 69 (continued) (A/8151)**

**Agenda item 70 (continued) (A/8162)**

**GENERAL DEBATE (continued)**

1. Mr. STRULAK (Poland) said that the items under discussion were evidence of the complexity of the problems of colonialism persisting in many areas of the world. The crisis existing in southern and western Africa influenced those problems and, at the same time, had serious implications for the peace and security of the whole continent, as could be seen from the invasion of the Republic of Guinea. That act of imperialist aggression had been sharply condemned by the Government and people of Poland.

2. The need to differentiate between colonialism in Africa and in other regions, and between the policies of South Africa and Portugal on the one hand and those of the other

colonial Powers on the other hand had been stressed by some delegations. While United Nations resolutions had taken account of such differences, the truth was that there was only one colonialism and that it had a definite historical origin and a definite place within the system of contemporary imperialism. There was a similarity in the position of the colonial Powers as manifested in their negative vote on various resolutions concerning colonial questions.

3. Activities of economic and financial interests were characteristic of all colonial Territories. Despite the fact that the harmful role of foreign monopolies in those Territories had been demonstrated, the position of the colonial Powers had not been changed. It ranged from defending the autonomy of companies and individuals, as in the case of Namibia, to proclaiming that foreign investments were virtually the only way to economic development for many Territories, especially the smaller ones. That argument could not be accepted as valid in the light of the completely different historical experience of so many countries, including many of the developing countries. In actual fact, the position of the colonial Powers was guided by the rules of the imperialist system of exploitation, which was designed to secure maximum profits and to create the conditions required for preserving the sources of those profits through colonialist or neo-colonialist methods. It was true that there were some countries which had been able to control or prevent the ventures of economic interests in other countries. It was only to be regretted that such measures had never worked against a colonial or racist régime.

4. Despite the insistence with which the administering Powers maintained that in some Territories, particularly the smaller ones, the level of development and economic viability, size, isolation, social conditions and difficulties in establishing international relations did not make it easy to implement General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, it could not be forgotten that those arguments had been refuted in that very resolution and in later decisions 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 the General Assembly, including Assembly resolution 2621 (XXV) of 12 December 1970.

5. It was not entirely true that the Special Committee had not devoted enough attention to the question of small Territories in 1970, as could be seen from the reports which it had submitted and the fact that three of its Sub-Committees had dealt with them. It was true that the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Committee for the current year, which contained a critical evaluation of the policies of the administering Powers, did

\* For the titles of the items, see "Agenda" on p. ix.

not differ much from those of previous years and that progress towards the implementation of resolution 1514 (XV) had been insufficient and slow. Nevertheless, discussion in the Special Committee could not, in and of itself, accelerate that progress, which depended on the positions and political will of the administering Powers and their willingness to take account of the views of the United Nations.

6. It was necessary to analyse the type of information received by the Special Committee in order to see what possibilities really existed for co-operation between it and the administering Powers. Some of those Powers never transmitted information, while others, as occurred in the case of certain Caribbean Territories under United Kingdom rule, thought that they could stop transmitting it and stop discussing the question in the Special Committee whenever they felt that the Territories concerned had achieved self-government. Although the administering Powers did provide information on other Territories, the contents and extent of the information naturally depended on the wishes of those Powers. The Special Committee had no other source of information and could not verify that received through direct contacts with the peoples concerned.

7. In that regard, visiting missions were extremely important to the work of the Special Committee. They were considered a major source of first-hand information to ascertain the wishes of the people of dependent Territories as well as a way for the United Nations to make its presence felt in colonial Territories in order to secure United Nations participation in the elaborations of measures for the implementation of resolution 1514 (XV) there and to observe the final stages of decolonization. With their role so conceived and their composition duly representative of the Members of the United Nations, visiting missions could enable the Special Committee to make a breakthrough in its consideration of the question of small Territories and to participate actively in its solution. Nevertheless, despite repeated appeals by the Secretary-General and the Special Committee, the administering Powers had either totally rejected the idea or, in a few cases, had imposed conditions which made it practically impossible to send missions.

8. As a member of the Special Committee and of its Sub-Committee II, his delegation fully appreciated the need for co-operation between the Special Committee and the administering Powers, but it was also convinced that such co-operation was possible only if all parties respected resolution 1514 (XV). Unfortunately, the administering Powers were willing to co-operate with the United Nations only on their own terms.

9. Poland disapproved of the military activities carried on by the colonial Powers in the small Territories, since they were detrimental to the interests of the peoples concerned and to peace and security among nations. It fully supported the report adopted by the Special Committee on that subject (see A/8023 (part II)) and noted the negative attitude of the administering Powers towards the demands of the United Nations on that matter.

10. With regard to Papua and the Trust Territory of New Guinea, he did not agree that Australia was doing everything possible to promote the progress of the people of the

Territory towards self-determination and independence in accordance with resolution 1514 (XV). That evaluation differed basically with the report of Sub-Committee II of the Special Committee (see A/8023/Add.6, chap. XIV, para. 27 (g) and annex II, sect. G), later approved by the Special Committee, which had concluded that the inhabitants of the Territory were not fully participating in the management of their affairs and that progress towards the implementation of resolution 1514 (XV) continued to be slow. The Sub-Committee had also thought it necessary for the administering Power to establish a specific time-table to guide Papua and New Guinea towards self-determination and independence. That was important in view of the persistent vagueness of the Australian position regarding the final goal of the process of constitutional development of the Territory and the rate at which that development was to proceed. Such vagueness could only create serious doubts as to Australia's intentions.

11. Notwithstanding the characteristics of the Territory which had been cited in order to justify its present condition and the policy of the administering Power, it should be borne in mind that more than two generations of inhabitants had lived under the colonial rule of a country which had one of the highest standards of living in the world and that during that period their natural resources and their labour had been exploited while little had accrued to the people of Papua and New Guinea. The figures concerning education and medical care in the Territory were depressing. In recent years, moreover, there had been manifestations of dissatisfaction and unrest, such as those around the Bougainville project and in the Gazelle Peninsula, and the administering Power had used coercive measures in order to suppress them.

12. His delegation maintained its reservations concerning the methods used to include countries which were not members of the Trusteeship Council in the Council's forthcoming visiting mission and concerning the definition of the mission's terms of reference, which, contrary to the wishes of the Special Committee, did not include the Committee's recommendations on the Territory.

13. Lastly, he observed that the representative of the administering Power for Papua and New Guinea was now more open to criticism than when the question had been discussed in Sub-Committee II of the Special Committee. He therefore hoped that his criticism would be accepted and that, as a result of it, the people of Papua and New Guinea would soon be able to exercise their right to self-determination and independence.

14. Mr. SEN (India) pointed out that twenty-five years after the creation of the United Nations and ten years after the adoption of resolution 1514 (XV) by the General Assembly, forty-four Territories were still under colonial rule. The most important of them were in Africa, but there were many others scattered over the globe.

15. It was generally accepted that the colonial Powers had occupied those Territories for economic and strategic reasons which today were still the only justification given for colonial rule. Some administering Powers had argued that it was difficult to grant independence to certain Territories because of their smallness, lack of resources,

small population or remoteness. It was true that the special circumstances of each Territory should be taken into account, but in most cases the difficulties were not as great as they were alleged to be. Nor was it possible to accept the fact that after decades, if not centuries, of colonial rule, the administering Powers had not been able to create conditions in which the right of self-determination could be exercised. In most of the Territories in question, real political power was in the hands of persons nominated by the administering Power and only a marginal role was assigned to the indigenous inhabitants. That situation was not only unsatisfactory but ran counter to the basic principles of self-government and economic development. His delegation urged the administering Powers to take rapid measures to achieve those two objectives.

16. It was a matter for regret that certain administering Powers and their sympathizers had tried to confuse or cast doubt on the aims of the United Nations in connexion with some of the smaller Territories. The essential task of the United Nations was to ensure that the peoples of those Territories determined their own political future. That was why the Organization had insisted on ascertaining their wishes at first hand whenever necessary. The United Nations should continue to use the same approach and to associate itself directly with acts of self-determination where appropriate.

17. The subject was closely connected with the question of visiting missions to colonial Territories. Unfortunately, the Special Committee had persistently been refused permission in recent years to send missions to the majority of colonial Territories. In the past, missions had provided the basis for thorough study of the problems in different Territories as well as for ascertaining the wishes of the inhabitants concerning their political future. His delegation urged the administering Powers concerned, some of which had been represented in missions or had accepted missions from other United Nations organs, to review their policies in the matter.

18. With regard to Papua and the Trust Territory of New Guinea, his delegation welcomed General Assembly resolution 2590 (XXIV) of 16 December 1969 because it provided for the inclusion of non-members of the Trusteeship Council in the visiting missions to the Territory, in consultation with the Special Committee. Such a step should give greater regional balance to the composition of future missions, as had already been demonstrated by the inclusion of an African and an Asian in the next mission.

19. The agreement which had led to the independence of Fiji, a new Member of the United Nations, reflected the ideals of progress and national freedom which had inspired that country's leaders. His delegation would do its utmost to co-operate with Fiji in all matters, both inside and outside the United Nations. At the same time, it was still gravely concerned by the action of the United Kingdom Government in detaching certain islands from its colonial Territories in the Indian Ocean to form the so-called British Indian Ocean Territory for military purposes; that action could hardly be regarded as a peaceful one.

20. His delegation had already referred on previous occasions to the assistance which could be given to the colonial

peoples of Africa by the specialized agencies and other international organizations associated with the United Nations. Assistance could also be provided to promote technological development in other colonial Territories and thus indirectly reduce their dependence on the administering Powers. His delegation therefore hoped that the specialized agencies would intensify their programmes of assistance to the smaller Territories, which also needed help in the field of education and training. The United Nations already had such a programme, and several countries, including India, had offered help on an individual basis. India was providing a substantial number of scholarships to people in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. However, more should be done, particularly at the international level. In short, large and small Territories alike should reach independence as soon as possible and the United Nations should do its utmost to ensure a better future for their inhabitants.

21. Mr. OULD MOULOUD (Mauritania) said that it was most disturbing to find that, ten years after the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, tens of millions of men and women were still living under colonial domination. In defiance of the principles of the United Nations Charter, Portugal and the minority racist cliques in Pretoria and Salisbury, with the support of the Powers in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, were still occupying vast territories in Africa, holding their inhabitants in subjection and seizing their resources in association with the foreign capitalist monopolies. Furthermore, Portugal and its henchmen in southern Africa were using their illegally occupied Territories as permanent bases for aggression against the sovereign States of the continent, as had recently occurred in Guinea.

22. However, colonial domination and exploitation were not confined to Africa. In the Middle East the martyred Palestinian people were fighting for their freedom, Muscat and Oman were still under foreign occupation, and the same was true of other territories in Asia. No one was deceived any longer by the fallacious argument that those peoples were not yet ready for independence and had to be civilized. Colonialism and its evil offspring, *apartheid* and *zionism*, were anachronistic phenomena which had been condemned once and for all time by history and by the conscience of all mankind. The United Nations should do all in its power to eliminate quickly and completely such shameful manifestations of selfishness and the spirit of domination. It should recognize as legitimate the struggle for independence of the colonized peoples and provide assistance to the national liberation movements.

23. In conclusion, his delegation wished to mention the problem of so-called Spanish Sahara, which was of direct concern to it. It had already stated its position in the matter many times and felt it did not need to do so again during the general debate. It reserved the right to speak again at greater length and in more detail when the Committee dealt specifically with that question.

24. Mr. AMELI (Iran) said that from the current debate it could be seen that the process of decolonization had slowed down. Decolonization was largely dependent on co-operation between the administering Powers and the United

Nations, and from the Committee's consideration of agenda items 61 and 23 his delegation had unfortunately reached the conclusion that those Powers had on the whole failed to give their co-operation. It was cause for regret that Portugal and other administering Powers had not provided information on the Territories under their administration, and it was even more regrettable that their attitude had not changed despite the many United Nations resolutions adopted on the matter. Another source of concern was the failure of the United Kingdom to transmit information on Antigua, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla, St. Lucia and St. Vincent. Under resolution 1541 (XV) of 15 December 1960 only the General Assembly could determine whether or not there was a duty to transmit information pursuant to Article 73 of the Charter, and the administering Powers could not unilaterally release themselves from that duty.

25. The refusal to admit visiting missions was further evidence of a lack of co-operation. The appeal made by the General Assembly in resolution 2548 (XXIV) of 11 December 1969 and in previous resolutions had been ignored. If the administering Powers did not change their attitude, it might be useful to explore the feasibility of adopting other means for establishing direct contact between the Special Committee and the peoples of the colonial Territories. For example, invitations could be sent to groups of people in the Territories to participate in the meetings of the Special Committee and provide it with first-hand information. That suggestion was to be found in the report of the Special Committee's Sub-Committee III (see A/8023/Add.7 (part III), annex II).

26. With regard to the question of the smaller Territories, his delegation recognized that smallness and remoteness, which were relative concepts and difficult to define, posed

special problems that hindered the granting of independence. Nevertheless, the small Territories also had a right to self-determination in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). Until such time as they were ready to exercise that right, the administering Powers had a responsibility to assist them in their social, economic and political development, to ensure respect for human rights and to prepare the way for their independence. His delegation thanked the delegations of Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom for the information they had given to the Committee on the Territories under their administration.

27. From an economic standpoint, the smaller Territories were characterized by small domestic markets, insufficiently diversified production and consequent dependence on foreign trade. Since their export markets were also very restricted, they were often essentially satellites of their respective administering Powers, which took the bulk of their products. If such Territories were to attain true political independence, they would have to acquire a large measure of economic self-reliance.

28. The complex problems of the smaller Territories required special attention, and it was to be hoped that the Special Committee would continue its consideration of the question in 1971. A definitive solution depended on the concerted efforts of the Members of the United Nations and particularly on the co-operation of the administering Powers.

29. Since his delegation had not spoken on all the items under consideration, it reserved the right to make further observations at a later stage if necessary.

*The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.*