



Wednesday, 23 January, at 3 p.m.

Palais de Chaillot, Paris

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Chairman : Mr. Selim SARPER (Turkey).

Libya : (a) Annual report of the United Nations Commissioner in Libya (A/1949, A/1949/Add.1) ; (b) Annual reports of the administering Powers in Libya (A/1970, A/1970/Add.1, A/2024, A/2024/Add.1, A/AC.53/L.37, A/AC.53/L.38, A/AC.53/L.39, A/AC.53/L.40) (continued)

[Item 20]*

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to the draft resolution submitted jointly by Australia, Chile, Denmark, Greece, Iraq, Liberia, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Peru, Philippines, United States and Uruguay (A/AC.53/L.39).

2. Mr. SOLDATOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Libyan question had been studied at several General Assembly sessions. At the fifth session, the USSR delegation had submitted a proposal (A/AC.38/L.10) calling for the immediate establishment of a sovereign and independent Libyan State, the withdrawal of all foreign troops and the closing of all foreign military bases in Libya within a period of three months after the proclamation of independence. That proposal had been designed to solve the Libyan problem solely in the interests of the Arab population of the country and of the maintenance of international peace. The USSR proposal had, however, been rejected, during the fifth session, at the 17th meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee, under pressure from France, the United Kingdom and the United States, and the proclamation of Libyan independence had been fixed for 1 January 1952. The General Assembly's decision had been based on a resolution whose obscure text was the result of underhand dealings and bargaining on the part of the French, United Kingdom and United States representatives during the General Assembly with the object of delimiting their respective zones of influence in Libya.

3. It might be worth while to recall that after the Second World War, France, the United Kingdom and the United States had endeavoured to delay the solution of the Libyan problem and the granting of independence to Libya in order to establish themselves in that country. The three Western Powers had set up military bases in Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and the Fezzan, under the pretext of strengthening middle eastern defences, thus effecting a military occupation of Libya which enabled them to interfere continually in the country's domestic affairs and to use its territory as a strategic base for the carrying out of their aggressive intentions.

4. At the end of December 1951, the French, United Kingdom and United States Press had published articles showing clearly that after the proclamation of Libyan independence the strategic bases set up in that country would remain at the disposal of the Western Powers. British armed forces stationed in Cyrenaica would remain there, the United Kingdom and Libya having arranged to conclude a treaty of mutual assistance as soon as possible. As regards France, it would retain its garrisons and airfields in the Fezzan. Lastly, the United States would retain air bases in Tripolitania. The agricultural and industrial production of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania would be so adapted as to become a source of supply for the allied forces in case of war.

5. The fact that increasing numbers of British armed forces were being stationed in Libya and that British representatives were at present endeavouring to form an Arab Legion in that country under British command, similar to the Arab Legion of Transjordan, commanded by the famous Glubb Pasha, certainly gave rise to serious misgivings.

6. The Egyptian Press had disclosed in January 1951 that, at a meeting of the Political Committee of the Arab League, representatives of Libyan political organizations had stated that the construction of military works, strategic roads, port installations and airfields in Libya was being expedited. They had also stated

* Indicates item number on the General Assembly Agenda.

that iron-mines and all Libyan oil supplies were owned by British companies, while certain American companies had taken over control of all phosphate deposits.

7. The British newspaper *The Times* had stated on 13 September 1951 that under the pretext of granting technical assistance the British Government was ready to invest capital in Libya in exchange for the right to use military bases in the country. As regards the United States, the statements of Mr. McGhee in the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives showed that the United States Government was ready to increase credits for strengthening the strategic position of the United States in the Near East, and especially in Libya.

8. In spite of the severe censorship in Libya, the Press of the country had shown that officers of the United States armed forces were maltreating certain elements of the Arab population. Any demonstration by the Libyan people against the use of Libya as a strategic base was ruthlessly suppressed and the members of the Movement for Peace were persecuted. The local authorities in Tripoli had promulgated a decree at the beginning of September 1951 forbidding the introduction and distribution in Tripolitania of progressive newspapers and pamphlets printed in Arabic or Italian.

9. Those facts showed that the United States, France and the United Kingdom had set up an iniquitous military occupation in Libya and were pursuing an anti-democratic policy which was contrary to the interests of the Arab population. The activities of the United Nations Commissioner in Libya, and of the United Kingdom and French authorities, had been inspired not by the lofty principles of the Charter—which demanded respect for the equality of peoples and for their right to self-determination—but by deference to the selfish interests of the ruling circles of the United States, France and the United Kingdom.

10. The maintenance of foreign armed forces and the existence of foreign military bases in Libya were part of the aggressive plans of the Atlantic bloc and constituted a threat to international peace and security, as well as a means of bringing pressure to bear on the neighbouring countries, especially the Arab States.

11. The Soviet Union, faithful to the principles of its foreign policy, the aim of which was to strengthen international peace and friendship, had, since the very first days of its existence, manifested its understanding and sympathy for the national aspirations of the peoples of the East. In accordance with that policy, the USSR had supported the legitimate claims of Syria, Lebanon and Egypt when those countries had demanded that their territories should be freed from all foreign occupation.

12. In the present circumstances, and at a moment when the Committee was about to study the situation in Libya, the USSR delegation considered it necessary to state that the presence of foreign armed forces and the existence of foreign military bases in Libya constituted a violation of the rights of the Libyan people and an infringement of Libya's sovereignty. It felt that the

General Assembly should decide upon the urgent evacuation of all foreign armed forces at present in Libya and also on the dismantling of all foreign military bases in Libyan territory.

13. To that end, the USSR delegation was submitting to the Committee a draft resolution (A/AC.53/L.40), which would be distributed to the delegations forthwith.

14. Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran) stated that the Iranian delegation had not had time to study the joint draft resolution which had just been submitted to the Committee. For the moment he would therefore confine himself to offering his delegation's sincere congratulations to the new State of Libya on the occasion of its achievement of independence, to bidding welcome to the Libyan delegation, whose participation in the work of the Committee would be extremely useful, and to expressing the wish that Libya should be admitted to the United Nations at an early date.

15. The Iranian delegation reserved the right to make a further statement later.

16. Mr. AL-JAMALI (Iraq) emphasized that it was with profound satisfaction that the Iraqi delegation had seen an eighth Arab State, Libya, attain its independence. That event assumed a particular significance in view of the fact that it had been preceded by a long and bitter struggle against oppression and imperialism, a struggle directed by the brave and energetic head of the Libyan people, King Mohammed Idris el-Senoussi. It was to be hoped that the United Nations would likewise assist other Arab countries, at present subject to foreign domination, to follow the road which Libya had taken.

17. Recalling his own words on the same subject at the General Assembly's fifth session, the Iraqi representative stated that it was because the parties involved had been able to manifest so great a political sense that, in spite of all the difficulties encountered, it had been possible to establish between the Libyan people, the administering Powers and the United Nations Commissioner in Libya, that community of views and aims without which Libya would have been unable to achieve independence within the time-limit laid down.

18. With regard to the future, although the attainment of independence represented a difficult phase for any State under foreign domination, the work of construction which had subsequently to be accomplished demanded from that State efforts on an even more considerable scale. It was therefore to be hoped that the leaders of Libya, whether members of the Government or members of the opposition, would show the patience and political sense required to strengthen the unity of their country and to make it a democratic, advanced and prosperous State.

19. With respect to the United Nations, it was undeniable that for the Organization the question of Libya constituted a test of very great importance. Up to the present time the United Nations could be justly proud of the results achieved; it was to its credit that for the first time since the Organization was founded a State had attained independence by just and peaceful methods,

in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter. It was to be hoped that, conscious of the responsibilities incumbent upon it with regard to the development and progress of the new State, the United Nations would be able to place at the disposal of the United Kingdom of Libya, upon the latter's request, all the necessary technical and financial assistance.

20. The Iraqi delegation also urged the great nations to ensure that the new State, which had so felicitously attained its independence, should not become the victim of power politics. The independence and integrity of Libya should be respected by all and the new State should be called upon, in the normal course of events, to take its place in the United Nations.

21. The representative of Iraq hoped that the United Kingdom of Libya, once established as a free and prosperous country, would become an important factor in world peace.

22. Mr. TARCICI (Yemen) stated that his delegation was gratified that Libya should be taking its place among the free and sovereign nations, after a heroic struggle to gain its independence.

23. That event, which was naturally of great importance for the United Kingdom of Libya, likewise assumed extreme importance for the United Nations which, by its decision, taken in 1949, to grant Libya its well-earned independence, had performed an act of justice with respect to the Libyan people and, more generally, with respect to all peoples of the world aspiring to national independence—thus establishing a precedent which could well serve as the inspiration for future action.

24. It was plain, however, that the task of the United Nations was not finished by Libya having attained independence. On the contrary, the United Nations still had responsibilities towards that State, created by its intervention, which it could not evade. It had the duty, in fact, of guiding the first steps of the new State, of promoting its economic development and strengthening its political independence and, with that end in view, of granting it that financial and technical aid which alone could enable Libya to make good the damage amounting to over 12 million pounds which it had sustained in the course of a war not of its own seeking. It was also the duty of the United Nations to invite the new State to take its place among the Member States in accordance with the spirit and letter of the resolution adopted by the General Assembly. No obstacle should prevent that State, which had a special status in view of its having been created under the auspices of the United Nations, from membership of the Organization.

25. Yemen congratulated the new State of Libya, its sovereign and its Government on the results already achieved, thanks to a heroic struggle and constant effort, and wished it every success in the future.

26. The delegation of Yemen also wished to pay a tribute to the United Nations Commissioner in Libya and to all Secretariat officials working under his orders.

27. It reserved the right to speak again and state its attitude towards the various proposals submitted to the Committee, but at first sight the joint draft resolution appeared to be acceptable.

28. Mr. PHARAON (Saudi Arabia) stated that the United Nations, by assisting the Libyan people to achieve its national aspirations in accordance with the Charter and with the sacred obligation devolving upon the United Nations to promote the emancipation of all peoples, had proved by practical deeds that it was capable of contributing towards the building of a better world and bringing about a new era in international relations. It might therefore be said that Libya's attainment of independence was a decisive step in the history of the United Nations.

29. At the same time, the political emancipation of the Libyan people, who had long been oppressed and who had achieved independence thanks to the support of the United Nations, constituted a highly important event which was of significance not only to the Libyans themselves but also to all the peoples of the world who aspired to independence and sovereignty. It was no exaggeration to say that the success achieved by the Libyan people, with the aid of the United Nations, revived a hope which had been on the point of extinction, and had inspired in mankind renewed confidence in the United Nations.

30. The United Nations should not consider that its mission was ended because Libya had achieved independence. On the contrary, it had duties to observe towards the new State which had been created under its auspices and which needed its assistance in order to develop further. The United Nations must, however, be on its guard against causing the new State to live artificially by making it dependent upon external support. The United Nations technical assistance should serve no purpose other than that of developing the domestic resources of the country, so as to render it independent of all external aid as soon as possible. Along such lines, United Nations technical assistance should extend to all fields of human activities—economic, social, cultural and others—where it would have an extremely useful part to play.

31. Apart from such technical assistance, the United Nations should also afford the new State the benefit of its support in the political sphere, protect its security, guarantee its independence and ensure that no attempt was made to undermine its sovereignty. As a primary proof of its desire to perfect the work thus begun, the United Nations should unhesitatingly give its support to the admission of Libya to membership of the United Nations.

32. In conclusion, Mr. Pharaon paid a tribute to the Commissioner and to all those who had contributed to the success of the work of the United Nations in Libya. He stressed that his delegation welcomed with the greatest satisfaction Libya's attainment of independence and wished to take the opportunity to extend its wholehearted congratulations to the Libyan people, their sovereign and their Government.

33. Mr. TABIBI (Afghanistan) recalled that at the General Assembly's fifth session, his delegation had expressed the hope that at the next session the representative of an independent Libya would take his seat on the Committee and he accordingly wished to express his satisfaction at the presence of Muntasser Bey at the Committee table. Success would crown the efforts of the United Nations whenever it defended the rights and liberties of enslaved peoples.

34. Religious and sentimental ties united the people of his country with that of all Moslem States, and particularly with the people of Libya. For that reason, the people of Afghanistan were happy to see Libya achieve political independence. He hoped that the United Kingdom of Libya would be admitted to membership of the United Nations and thereby participate in the work of the Organization to which it owed its existence. He also hoped that the United Nations would continue to give that democratic country the benefit of its technical assistance and help it to consolidate its independence.

35. Mr. Tabibi congratulated the United Nations Commissioner and all the members of the Council for Libya, whose work had been of the greatest importance to the whole world.

36. As regards the draft resolutions before the Committee, the Afghanistan representative would support the twelve-Power draft resolution; he would state his views on the USSR draft resolution when the text had been officially distributed.

37. Mr. LAWRENCE (Liberia) expressed his satisfaction at seeing a new African State, the United Kingdom of Libya, become a member of the international community. It was an encouragement for the other less privileged peoples of the African continent. He wished to thank the administering Powers, which had scrupulously fulfilled the commitments they had undertaken, as well as the United Nations Commissioner and the Council for Libya.

38. Draft resolution A/AC.53/L.39, of which his delegation was a co-sponsor, recommended the admission of the new State to the United Nations. He was not unaware of the difficulties currently involved in the admission of new Members, but he hoped that all Member States would support the admission of the United Kingdom of Libya. He also stressed the need for the United Nations to continue to protect and assist the State it had helped to establish. Finally, he looked forward to the day when the entire African continent would be composed of free nations imbued with the great principles of democracy.

39. Mr. HOOD (Australia) emphasized that Libya's attainment of independence marked an important stage in the history of the world. He recalled the part which Australian forces had taken in liberating Libya during the Second World War. He was glad that the Libyan people had been able to achieve independence, draw up its constitution and establish its sovereignty in the eyes of the world; he was convinced that it

would be possible for the new State to be admitted to the United Nations.

40. For that reason, he did not share the opinion of the USSR representative, who saw a hostile or dangerous element in Libya. In that connexion, he wished to recall the origin of Libya's independence; in particular, he drew attention to the discussions at the Peace Conference held in Paris in 1946, during which it had been decided that, failing agreement between the principal Powers concerned, the final decision would be left to the United Nations General Assembly. It was thus that, after profound deliberation, the General Assembly had adopted in 1949 and 1950 resolutions aimed at Libya's attainment of independence. Moreover, he did not believe that the USSR had ever at any stage of the discussions which had taken place, opposed the idea of Libya's independence.

41. The Australian representative paid a tribute to the Pakistani delegation for its statement at the 48th meeting. He associated himself with the views it had expressed.

42. He hoped that the joint draft resolution, which his delegation had helped to draw up, would receive unconditional support.

43. Mr. SALAZAR (Dominican Republic) expressed the satisfaction of his Government and the people of his country at the attainment of independence by the United Kingdom of Libya.

44. The United Nations had assumed the task of promoting the well-being of peoples, within the framework of the system of international peace and security established by the Charter, by guaranteeing the respect due to their national culture and to their political, economic and social evolution. The United Nations aim was also to promote the achievement of autonomy by peoples, while respecting their legitimate political aspirations and granting them the material aid necessary to develop progressively their free political institutions. Libya's attainment of independence was a practical illustration of the principles embodied in the Charter. Peoples who loved freedom and peace therefore enthusiastically saluted the achievement of independence by the United Kingdom of Libya.

45. Mr. Salazar offered his Government's best wishes to the King of Libya, its Government and its people. He hoped that the United Kingdom of Libya would very soon be able to take its place in the United Nations.

46. His delegation would vote for the twelve-Power draft resolution.

47. Mr. BELLEGARDE (Haiti) welcomed the United Kingdom of Libya into the international community.

48. Recalling the case of the Republic of Haiti, which had gained independence in extremely unfavourable circumstances, he expressed satisfaction that that had not been the case for the new State of Libya which, on the contrary, was becoming an independent and sovereign State under the happiest auspices. The new State would in fact find all the assistance it needed to develop its moral and material resources in United Nations organizations.

49. It was certain that no delegation would wish to oppose the admission of the United Kingdom of Libya to the United Nations. Article 4 of the United Nations Charter laid down the conditions governing the entry of a State into the Organization, and those conditions were fully met so far as the United Kingdom of Lybia was concerned. It was therefore to be hoped that the new State would take its place in the United Nations, not only in order to defend its interests but to co-operate in the Organization's work, and in the establishment of a solid peace based on justice and on the prosperity of all the nations of the world.

50. Mr. SAVUT (Turkey) welcomed the new State on behalf of his delegation. He offered his Government's sincere congratulations to the King of Libya and to the Libyan Government and people.

51. With regard to the two draft resolutions before the Committee, Mr. Savut reserved the right to comment on them later.

52. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the list of speakers should be closed at the next meeting, on Thursday, 24 January, in the afternoon.

It was so agreed.

53. MUNTASSER Bey (Representative of the United Kingdom of Libya) thanked the members of the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee and said that he had been deeply moved by the fact that many representatives had expressed themselves in favour of the admission of his country to the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.