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THE PROBLEM OF MAURITANIA

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Dr. Alberto HERRARTE (Guatemala)

1. By a letter dated 20 August 1960 (A/4445), Morocco requested the inclusion of an item entitled "The problem of Mauritania" in the agenda of the fifteenth session of the General Assembly. Attached to this letter was an explanatory memorandum, in accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. An addendum to the original explanatory memorandum was communicated by a letter dated 14 September 1960 from the Permanent Representative of Morocco to the United Nations (A/4445/Add.1).
2. At its 128th meeting, held on 23 September 1960, the General Committee decided to recommend the inclusion of the item in the agenda.
3. At its 898th plenary meeting, held on 10 October 1960, the General Assembly decided to include the item in the agenda and referred it to the First Committee.
4. The First Committee considered the item at its 1109th, 1111th, 1113th to 1118th meetings inclusive, held between 15 and 26 November 1960.
5. At the 1117th meeting, held on 25 November 1960, the representative of Libya introduced a draft resolution sponsored by Indonesia, Jordan and Libya (A/C.1/L.261), whereby the General Assembly would reaffirm the principle of respect for the unity and territorial integrity of Member States and would recommend that France and Morocco enter into negotiations with a view to reaching a peaceful solution of the problem in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter.

6. At the same meeting, Afghanistan submitted amendments (A/C.1/L.262) to this draft resolution whereby the words "France and Morocco" appearing in operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution would be replaced by the words "the parties concerned", and a third operative paragraph would be added, according to which the General Assembly would recommend to the parties concerned, for a just and peaceful solution of the problem to respect the right of the people of Mauritania to self-determination ascertained by a referendum free from any influence, under the auspices of the United Nations.
7. At the 1118th meeting, held on 26 November 1960, the representative of Afghanistan withdrew his amendments (A/C.1/L.262) and submitted other amendments, whereby the second paragraph of the preamble to the draft resolution would be deleted and operative paragraph 2 would be modified. These amendments, having been accepted by the co-sponsors of the draft resolution, were incorporated into a revised draft resolution (A/C.1/L.261/Rev.1), according to which the General Assembly, having examined the question of Mauritania, would reaffirm the principle of respect for the unity and territorial integrity of Member States and would recommend that the parties concerned enter into negotiations with a view to reaching a peaceful solution of the problem on the basis of the right of self-determination.
8. At the same meeting, India submitted an amendment (A/C.1/L.263) proposing that operative paragraph 2 of the revised draft resolution be replaced by a text whereby the General Assembly would express the hope that the parties concerned would reach a peaceful solution of the problem on the basis of the right of self-determination.
9. The amendment submitted by India (A/C.1/L.263), having been withdrawn by its sponsor, was reintroduced by the representative of Iraq.
10. The amendment sponsored by Iraq was rejected by a roll-call vote of 39 to 31, with 25 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Ceylon, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Guinea, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Nepal, Panama, Paraguay, Poland, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Republic, Yemen, Yugoslavia.

Against: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Leopoldville), Costa Rica, Dahomey, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Finland, France, Gabon, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Senegal, Spain, Sweden, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Upper Volta.

Abstaining: Argentina, Cambodia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Federation of Malaya, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Iran, Japan, Laos, Liberia, Mali, Morocco, Netherlands, Nigeria, Pakistan, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uruguay, Venezuela.

11. Upon a motion submitted by India, and later agreed upon by Indonesia, Jordan and Libya, the revised draft resolution (A/C.1/L.261/Rev.1) was withdrawn and was therefore not put to the vote.

12. Consequently the First Committee has no recommendation to submit to the General Assembly on the item entitled "The problem of Mauritania".
