



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/8853
19 October 1972
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

Twenty-seventh session
Agenda item 22

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF
INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

Note by the President of the General Assembly

1. The Chairman of the Fourth Committee, His Excellency Mr. Zdenek Cernik, has informed the President of the General Assembly that at its 1986th meeting, held on 16 October 1972, the Fourth Committee agreed to request its Chairman to convey to the President of the General Assembly the desire of many members of the Committee that the Assembly should invite Mr. Amilcar Cabral, Secretary-General of the Partido Africano da Independencia da Guiné e Cabo Verde (PAIGC), to make a statement before it in connexion with its consideration of agenda item 22.

2. In this connexion, the President of the General Assembly has received from Mr. Cabral a letter dated 19 October 1972, the text of which is appended to this note.

19 October 1972

Sir,

A large group of States Members of the United Nations, including brother countries in Africa and several friendly countries, have expressed the wish that we should be able to address a plenary meeting of the General Assembly during the debate on decolonization. This wish was echoed in the Fourth Committee, which instructed its Chairman to make the necessary arrangements with you to that end.

We are informed that, following the consultations held, a sizable majority is in favour of this initiative, which is of unquestionable importance and political significance in the context of the battle waged against the particularly retrograde Portuguese brand of colonialism by the anti-colonialist forces in the United Nations. Moreover, in view of the demonstrations of sympathy and support for us given directly by many delegations attending this session, we should undoubtedly be invited by the General Assembly to address a plenary meeting, if this question were discussed and voted on. For our African people, this certainty is already another encouraging factor in its bloody conflict with the colonialist Government of Portugal, which is entirely to blame for this conflict.

However, among the indifferent or opposing minority which emerged during the consultations, there are certain States whose friendship and understanding are prized by our people and whose attitude is generally, or should be, favourable to our struggle. For reasons which have nothing to do with our eligibility to address the General Assembly, these States would be forced to abstain or to cast a negative vote, if a vote were taken. Needless to say, this is obviously not the case with the insignificant minority, constituted by the allies of the colonialist Government of Portugal, which systematically opposes any initiative aimed at accelerating the elimination of colonialism and racism in Africa.

We have consulted the leaders of our Party on the matter and notified the representatives of the friendly brother countries, who by taking this entirely constructive initiative have once again given proof of their active solidarity with our people and their endorsement of the principles and purposes of the United Nations. We should now like, through you, to express to the General Assembly our desire that it should avoid a debate and a vote on this matter. While we are glad to note that a large majority of Member States recognizes unequivocally the inalienable right of our people to be heard, through the voice of their true and legitimate representatives, by all the organs of the United Nations, including the General Assembly, we would not at this stage of our

His Excellency
The President of the United Nations General Assembly

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struggle, and for such a reason, wish those friendly countries which actually or potentially support our cause to be forced to contradict their true feelings and principles in public. A political success is, generally speaking, a valuable asset, particularly for a people fighting for its national liberation against an unscrupulous enemy strongly supported by its allies. We believe, however, that even in this case there are successes which one must forego.

Accept, Sir, the assurances of our highest consideration.

Amilcar CABRAL
Secretary-General
of the Partido Africano da Independencia
da Guiné e Cabo Verde (PAIGC)
