



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 21st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. VRAALSEN (Norway)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 25: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES: 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 (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 84: INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

(a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

(b) 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

AGENDA ITEM 88: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

(a) 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

(b) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 89: UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 90: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

\* This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be incorporated in a copy of the record and should be sent *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, room LX-2332.

Corrections will be issued shortly after the end of the session, in a separate fascicle for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL  
A/C.4/31/SR.21  
16 November 1976  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

The meeting was called to order at 11.10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 25: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES: 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 (A/31/23 (parts II, IV and V), A/31/23/Add.1, A/31/23/Add.4, A/31/23/Add.5 and Corr.1, A/31/23/Add.6-10, A/31/42, A/31/48, A/31/52, A/31/55, A/31/56, A/31/59, A/31/91, A/31/106, A/31/109, A/31/112, A/31/114, A/31/121, A/31/136, A/31/138, A/31/197, A/31/269, A/31/283, A/31/286, A/31/287, A/31/306; A/C.4/31/L.3, L.5 to L.10, L.12) (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 84: INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS (A/31/23/Add.10, A/31/275; A/C.4/31/L.11) (continued)

(a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

(b) 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

AGENDA ITEM 88: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (A/31/23 (part V), A/31/65 and Add.1-5, A/31/197, A/31/238; A/C.4/31/L.4) (continued)

(a) 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

(b) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (A/31/3 (chap. VII, sect. E), A/31/197, A/31/238) (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 89: UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/31/268; A/C.4/31/L.2) (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 90: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/31/287) (continued)

#### French Somaliland

1. Mr. AKE (Ivory Coast) said that the process of the decolonization of Djibouti had entered its final phase, since the Territory would become independent on 1 July 1977, and that the debate should therefore be conducted with the utmost clarity so that no doubt would remain regarding the right of the people of the Territory to self-determination and independence and regarding the need to respect

/...

(Mr. Ake, Ivory Coast)

their sovereignty and territorial integrity once independence had been attained. The sole objective should be the harmonious and peaceful decolonization of the Territory, guided by the higher interests of the people of Djibouti. In that connexion, the co-operation of all the parties concerned was absolutely vital.

2. In his statement on 3 November 1976 (A/C.4/31/SR.14), the President of the Government Council of the Territory, Mr. Abdalla Mohamed Kamil, had confirmed the unequivocal wish of his people to achieve international sovereignty and attain independence in a climate of union of all political tendencies and of friendship with France and the neighbouring countries. On that occasion, the President of the Council had also referred to the intentions, hopes and concerns of his Government at the delicate stage reached in the country's decolonization and had concluded by urging all Member States to give his country all necessary assistance and co-operation to enable it to take its rightful place in the international community. His delegation promised the full support of the Ivory Coast for the attainment of those objectives. It also welcomed the participation in the debate of representatives of the political parties and liberation movements, who had provided important information.

3. As had already been indicated the previous year, the evolution of the position of the parties concerned in the question of Djibouti had created favourable prospects for the process of decolonization of the Territory. Although it had recently been necessary to regret the attitude of France with regard to the question of Mayotte, France's current policy with respect to Djibouti, confirmed by the French representative in his statement of 3 November (A/C.4/31/SR.14), was supported by the Ivory Coast delegation. The French Government, after recognizing the aspirations of the people of Djibouti to independence, had announced that it was determined to do everything possible to enable the Territory to attain independence in peaceful conditions, with reconciliation of all its inhabitants and in a climate of friendship with neighbouring countries. For that purpose, France had in the previous year engaged in intense political and diplomatic activity, with encouraging results. In order to dispel any doubt regarding its intentions, the administering Power had explained that it was setting no prior conditions for the independence of Djibouti, that it did not intend to maintain its military presence there and that future relations of co-operation between France and the Territory would be decided in complete freedom by the Government of the Territory. In addition to providing assurances to the political groupings in the Territory and to the leaders of the African countries, the French authorities had sought to enlist the co-operation of the neighbouring countries of the Territory and of international organizations, particularly OAU, the League of Arab States and the United Nations. That all indicated a change of attitude on the part of the French Government and attested to its sincere wish to promote the independence of Djibouti.

4. The aspirations of the neighbouring countries with respect to the Territory had somewhat complicated the problem of the decolonization of Djibouti. It was therefore important to ensure that those countries not only gave up all claims but also solemnly undertook to respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial

/...

(Mr. Ake, Ivory Coast)

integrity of the future State and refrained from intervening in its internal affairs. That question was a matter of great concern to the administering Power, to the authorities of the Territory and to organizations such as OAU and the United Nations, which had on various occasions made appeals on that subject both to Somalia and to Ethiopia. His delegation therefore welcomed the commitment given by both countries at the Colombo Conference to renounce all their claims to Djibouti and to respect the independence and territorial integrity of the future sovereign State. Nevertheless, it considered that the countries concerned should solemnly reaffirm those statements in the Fourth Committee in order to dispel any misunderstanding and concern, so that the General Assembly could take note of that fact in its resolution.

5. His delegation had been very glad to hear the statement made at the 14th meeting of the Committee by the representative of Somalia, who had stated that his country was pursuing a policy of full support for the immediate and unconditional independence of the Territory in conformity with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and of OAU and the relevant resolutions on the subject. It nevertheless hoped that the representative of Somalia would reaffirm once again that his Government had no intention of annexing the Territory and desired the complete and unconditional independence of the Territory. Somalia should give that indispensable clarification in order to reassure the various parties. He personally had no doubt that Somalia intended to renounce all its claims once and for all.

6. His delegation also hoped that the representative of Ethiopia would reaffirm what had been said by his Head of State at the recent Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries, namely that his country acknowledged that the right of the people of Djibouti to self-determination and independence should prevail over any historical rights which Ethiopia might have over the Territory, and that it also undertook to recognize the new State, to respect its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to refrain from any interference in its internal affairs.

7. The Ivory Coast delegation appealed to France to allow the Government of Djibouti to participate in the formulation of measures related to the future independent status of the Territory, to endeavour to obtain the participation of all the political movements and parties of Djibouti, to facilitate the return of the political exiles and to continue to work for reconciliation. In addition, the administering Power should in due course invite the international organizations and neighbouring countries to participate as observers in the proposed referendum - a referendum which, in the opinion of his delegation, was neither necessary nor advisable, since the desire of the people of the Territory for independence was clear and obvious. France should study very carefully the various demands made during the current debate by the parties directly concerned, with a view to meeting them as far as was possible.

8. His delegation urged all the political parties in the Territory, both those within the Government and those in the opposition, as well as the liberation movements to overcome their divisions and animosities and to join efforts in leading the country to independence and facing the major problems which would arise.

/...

(Mr. Ake, Ivory Coast)

It also again asked the neighbouring States, Somalia and Ethiopia, to end their quarrel over Djibouti and to urge the various political movements and parties which they supported to work for union and reconciliation, since if those movements and parties persisted in their disagreement the future of Djibouti would be in doubt. Lastly, it exhorted both countries scrupulously to respect the commitments made to the international community and to co-operate with the administering Power and the Government of the Territory in achieving the harmonious and peaceful decolonization of Djibouti.

9. The draft resolution which was to emerge from the discussion should take into account the demands of the representatives of Djibouti and, above all, should command the unanimous support of the members of the Committee, including the administering Power and the neighbouring countries. The draft resolution should reaffirm the principles of the self-determination of the people of Djibouti and respect for their independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. It should also take note of the statements made by the administering Power and by the President of the Government Council of the Territory, and of the date set for independence. The General Assembly should again urge all Member States, and in particular France, Ethiopia and Somalia, solemnly to undertake to respect the sovereignty and independence of the future State. The draft resolution should also note the commitments given by those States and request all concerned to co-operate with the administering Power and the Government Council and to give all necessary assistance to the future State in the consolidation of its independence and the pursuit of its development.

10. Mr. AMPAT (Congo) said that General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) should be applied to small territories, despite their small area and population and their difficult economic position. On the basis of the reports of the Committee of 24, the General Assembly had adopted resolutions reaffirming the right of the peoples of such territories to self-determination and independence.

11. All oppressed people aspired to freedom, and the colonial Powers should strive to enable the Territories they administered to make progress towards independence. Moreover, Governments which faced problems with regard to the sovereignty of territories under their jurisdiction should speed up negotiations so that those problems did not hamper decolonization.

12. One Territory whose decolonization process was being discussed with great interest in the United Nations was so-called French Somaliland. On 3 and 8 December 1976 (A/C.4/31/SR.4 and SR.17) the Committee had given a hearing to the legitimate representatives of so-called French Somaliland, who had provided valuable information on the real situation in the Territory. It was clear that restrictive measures still remained in force, such as the ban on the activities of the two national liberation movements recognized by OAU, the ban on the settlement of the nomad population at Djibouti, the upkeep and reinforcement of the barbed-wire barrier surrounding the city, and the increased strength of the armed forces. The wishes expressed by the liberation movements' representatives largely corroborated the views of the international community. In resolution 3480 (XXX), for example,

/...

(Mr. Ampat, Congo)

the General Assembly had called for the granting of immediate and unconditional independence to the Territory and for the creation of the necessary conditions for accelerating the process of independence. The Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity had likewise adopted at its twenty-seventh session resolution CM/RES.480 (XXVII) in which it deplored the manoeuvres which had so far impeded the independence of the Territory and called on France to solve problems concerning nationality and the revision of the electoral rolls with a view to organizing a referendum before the end of 1976 and subsequent elections early in 1977.

13. At the 14th meeting the first speaker had been the representative of the administering Power, who had described the various stages in the process by which the Territory would accede to independence. It was to be hoped that that Power would fulfil its promises and assume its full responsibilities until the date of independence in 1977. In that way it would obviate a vacuum of which might a third party take advantage, as Indonesia had done when, on the pretext that Portugal had withdrawn from East Timor, it had decided to annex that Territory and was turning a deaf ear to the United Nations decision requesting it to respect the territorial integrity of East Timor and the right of its people to self-determination. It should be noted that the neighbouring States of so-called French Somaliland had repeatedly stated that they had no intention of annexing that Territory.

14. The Special Committee had done commendable work and carried out effectively the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly. The hopes of the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America which were struggling to free themselves from the colonial yoke rested on the United Nations, which should not play the colonialist Powers' game or evade its responsibilities. The Organization should ensure that the decisions adopted in pursuance of resolution 1514 (XV) were applied in order to help peoples still living under colonial domination to achieve independence and so to create a favourable climate for real détente and for co-operation among all the peoples of the world.

15. Mr. TAHA (Palestine Liberation Organization), speaking at the invitation of the Chairman, said that the members of the Committee had recently listened to two authentic representatives of the people of Djibouti, who had expressed their people's desire and determination to attain full independence and remove the last vestiges of colonialism. Despite all arguments and interpretations to the contrary, the right of peoples under colonial domination to gain their independence was indisputable.

16. The inalienable right of the people of Djibouti to independence had been reaffirmed in General Assembly resolution 3480 (XXX), in which France had been urged, inter alia, to create the necessary conditions for accelerating the process. Moreover, the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity, at its twenty-seventh session at Port Louis, Mauritius, had reaffirmed the unconditional support of the majority of African countries for Djibouti.

17. The people of Djibouti, like all other peoples still under the colonial yoke, should take its rightful place among the free peoples of the world. That being so, the Palestine Liberation Organization supported the just struggle of the people of Djibouti and rejected any form of trusteeship over that people which impeded the

/...

(Mr. Taha)

exercise of their legitimate rights; it likewise rejected any foreign military base in the region that might threaten liberation movements in the African continent and western Asia. The time had come for the peoples of Djibouti and of Palestine to free themselves from colonialism and recover their full right to freedom, independence and self-determination.

18. The wave of agitation initiated by the people of Palestine early in the century was an integral part of its liberation struggle against colonialism and the racist settlements which had caused it so much tribulation. That wave of agitation, brutally repressed by the Zionist authorities, had repeatedly necessitated the convening of the Security Council, which had laid bare the racist aggression.

19. The victory of the liberation movements in Africa, and that of Djibouti in particular, was a triumph for the Palestine people and those African peoples still struggling for unconditional and full independence.

20. Mr. GARRIGUE-GUYONNAUD (France) stated, on the subject of the debate on the French Territory of the Afars and the Issas, that his Government would continue to promote reconciliation within the Territory so that the new State might attain international sovereignty in a climate of union. He pointed out, for the benefit of the political organizations which had remained outside the Territory, that his Government had no intention of excluding anybody who wished to participate by peaceful means in that work of national reconciliation.

21. France, which would assume its full responsibility as administering Power until the date of independence, earnestly hoped that civic peace would continue to prevail in the future State. It was aware of the risks which might face the new State because of disagreements among the neighbouring countries, and hoped that a responsible approach on the part of the political leaders of the region would remove those risks. It was his country's hope that the neighbouring countries would not ignore the appeals made to them and that the peoples of the Territory could live in a peaceful State, with real prospects for development and with the support of the international community.

22. Mr. WARSAMA ASSOWE DHABAR (Front de libération de la Côte des Somalis, FLCS) said that the statements made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia in his statement on the previous day (A/C.4/31/SR.20) needed to be corrected.

23. The speakers who had preceded the Ethiopian Minister of Foreign Affairs had expressed two fundamental ideas on the question of French Somaliland (Djibouti): first, that the decolonization of that Territory was a problem which directly affected only the colonized people and the colonizing Power and in which the international community was endeavouring to help, and, secondly, that the decolonization of the Territory should be immediate, unconditional and complete, so as to prevent imperialism from establishing neo-colonialism through a simple change in the form of domination, a step which would at once deprive the people of French Somaliland (Djibouti) of the privileges of real sovereignty, and constitute

/...

(Mr. Warsama Assowe Dhabar)

a threat to the States of the region, since the Territory occupied a strategic position between Africa and the Arab world and between the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

24. The achievement of independence by French Somaliland (Djibouti) in such conditions and with due respect for its territorial integrity, unity and national sovereignty would enable the Territory to fulfil its aspiration to form an independent, sovereign and neutral State and would ultimately bring about peace for all States in the region. At the beginning of the discussions those basic conditions had appeared to have been accepted by all parties and the discussion of the problem within that framework had seemed likely to lead to a final and satisfactory solution.

25. Unfortunately, the deliberately belated statement of the Ethiopian delegation, far from making a helpful contribution to the question, advanced a position which was utterly incompatible with the requirements he had stated and was contrary to the generally favourable movement which had emerged for the first time with regard to the problem of French Somaliland (Djibouti).

26. In view of the readiness of the people of the Territory for independence, the relatively constructive statement with which the administering Power had opened the debate - finally undertaking to grant the long-sought independence - and the delay that had occurred in the consideration of the problem, the Ethiopian delegation might have been expected to facilitate the process of reaching a democratic, peaceful and universally satisfactory solution, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the non-aligned movement and the League of Arab States, and in compliance with the legitimate wishes of the people of French Somaliland (Djibouti).

27. In his statement the Ethiopian Minister of Foreign Affairs had, however, substituted for the fundamental problem, which was the decolonization of French Somaliland (Djibouti), an African Territory under foreign domination, an issue having no bearing on the discussion or on the interests of the people of the Territory, the dispute between Ethiopia and Somalia. By devoting the greater part of his statement to that dispute, the Minister had sought to make the discussion of the question take a turn which would delay the attainment of the profound and legitimate aspirations of the people of French Somaliland (Djibouti).

28. On the basis of an ostensibly historical, but actually tendentious analysis, the Ethiopian Minister had stated that so-called French Somaliland constituted a "special case of decolonization". Using that inappropriate description, and with a view to making an impression on world public opinion and intimidating the local people, the Ethiopian Minister had advocated the maintenance of the colonial status quo, arguing that any other course would jeopardize peace in the area. In order to avoid both situations, it was necessary, according to the Ethiopian

/...



(Mr. Warsama Assowe Dhabar)

Minister, to accept Ethiopia's particular concept of "independence" for the Territory.

29. FLCS was in possession of a secret document which contained the results of a study made by the Provisional Military Government of Ethiopia and indicated, inter alia, that Ethiopia would not accept the presence in Djibouti of a government which did not take instructions from Addis Ababa, that the foreign policy of Djibouti must conform strictly to Ethiopian guidelines, that the defence policy of an independent Djibouti must be under Ethiopia's supervision, that Ethiopia could not in any circumstances allow an independent Djibouti to belong to the League of Arab States and that any person or political organization failing to accept the conditions laid down would be subdued by all possible means.

30. Ethiopia was continually and systematically interfering in the internal affairs of French Somaliland (Djibouti) and was the only African State which had opposed its independence. Furthermore, it was the only African State which, as had been seen at the OAU meetings in Mozambique and Mauritius, had supported the lackey of imperialism, Aref, throughout.

31. In collusion with colonialism and in pursuit of its oppressive and repressive policy, Ethiopia had attempted to alter the demographic and social composition of the Territory. It was natural that its Minister for Foreign Affairs should question the representativeness of the current President of the Government Council formed by the United Front, Mr. Abdallah M. Kamil, a man who was incapable of displaying towards Ethiopia the servility of an Aref. It should be recalled that Aref, in order to gratify Ethiopia and although calling himself an Afar, had given his approval to the genocide of the Afar people by the Ethiopian Provisional Government.

32. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia had also cast doubts on the national union which had been achieved. The OAU Fact-Finding Mission had ascertained that the Ligue populaire africaine pour l'indépendance (LPAI) enjoyed the support of the vast majority of the inhabitants throughout the Territory. The United Front, that is, FLCS, LPAI, the parliamentary majority and the local Government, currently enjoyed the confidence and support of more than 90 per cent of the population.

33. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia proposed that the future of French Somaliland (Djibouti) should depend on the dictates of Ethiopia; he also proposed an agreement on guarantees, which the people of the Territory vigorously opposed. According to Ethiopia, the only way to reconcile the independence of Djibouti with peace was through military agreements between the new State and the colonial Power in order to safeguard the former's sovereignty and territorial integrity, in other words, through the maintenance of a foreign military base.

34. Finally, he (Mr. Dhabar) deplored the behaviour of a fraternal African nation which had shown less understanding than even the administering Power.

/...

35. Mr. BADIMA (Ethiopia) said that his delegation reserved the right to reply to the statement made by the representative of FLCS at a later meeting.

36. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom) referred to the statement made at a previous meeting (A/C.4/31/SR.18) by the representative of Argentina concerning the Falkland Islands. The Falkland Islands were a Non-Self-Governing Territory with a well-established population for which the United Kingdom was responsible under the Charter of the United Nations. Its future must be considered in the light of the United Kingdom's well-known policies towards its dependent territories as a whole, which was based on respect for the wishes of the inhabitants of the Territory in accordance with the principle of self-determination enunciated in the Charter and General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

37. The representative of Argentina had made three points in his statement. He had argued, firstly, that the United Kingdom's claim to sovereignty over the Falkland Islands was invalid; secondly, that the Falkland Islands were a special case of decolonization, in which the principle of self-determination should not be invoked; and, thirdly, that the United Kingdom attitude towards previous United Nations resolutions and towards discussion of ways and means of resolving its differences with Argentina was negative.

38. The differences between the United Kingdom and Argentina were not unbridgeable. The traditional friendship between the two countries was marred only by issues arising from the Argentine claim to sovereignty over the Falkland Islands and the differences could be resolved by dialogue. Accordingly, the remark made by the representative of Argentina that his country was ready to implement previous resolutions of the General Assembly without prejudging the results was a welcome one.

39. There could be no doubt of United Kingdom sovereignty over the Falkland Islands and, in that connexion, the historical background should be recalled. In January 1833, a British vessel had peaceably reasserted British sovereignty, which had first been established in 1765. The British had not "ousted by violence" the Argentine authorities established in the Islands, and the only persons sent back to Argentina had been the ringleaders of a mutiny which had occurred at the small settlement of colonists from Buenos Aires. Some of the civilian inhabitants had elected to be repatriated and some had chosen to stay behind. Not a shot had been fired on either side.

40. In the view of the United Kingdom, the essential point was easily verifiable. Nearly a century and a half had elapsed since the events of 1833 and, during that time, the United Kingdom had maintained an open, continuous, effective and peaceful possession of the Falkland Islands. There had been, of course, numerous diplomatic exchanges between the United Kingdom and the Argentine Governments, but those had not affected the continuous exercise of United Kingdom sovereignty. The population of the Islands currently stood at a little over 1,900, 97 per cent of whom were of British descent, and 80 per cent of whom had been born in the Islands. There could be no doubt that the Falkland Islanders were an old established people with the same right as anyone else to enjoy the fundamental

/...

(Mr. Murray, United Kingdom)

freedoms laid down in the Charter for the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Argentine claims had been based mainly on the ground that Argentina had succeeded to rights claimed by Spain in the 18th century. It should be recalled that, in considering the case of Belize the preceding year, the Committee had rejected a claim based on similar grounds. Moreover, the pattern of international relations would break down if all the territorial claims arising from the events of previous centuries were to be upheld by the United Nations.

41. With regard to Argentina's argument that the principles of self-determination should not be invoked in connexion with the Falkland Islands, he pointed out that Argentina had always acknowledged that the interests of the people of the Islands - as distinct from their wishes - should be borne in mind when the problem was discussed. The question arose, however, as to who was to decide what the interests of the inhabitants were and whether the views and wishes of the people themselves should be given weight. The United Kingdom had been unable to accept earlier United Nations resolutions because they had not given sufficient weight to that factor. The United Kingdom had always stressed that the human dimension could not be brushed aside so easily and the problem dealt with as if it concerned no more than the settlement of a claim to a piece of real estate.

42. It must be made clear, however, that the long-term interests of the Islanders lay in practical forms of association with the Argentine mainland, and that the future development and diversification of the Islands' economy could take place only in a spirit of co-operation with Argentina. Since 1965, when the General Assembly had adopted resolution 2065 (XX), a number of practical agreements advantageous to the Islanders, to Argentina and to the United Kingdom, had been concluded. Those agreements covered communication by air with Argentina and the construction by Argentina of a temporary air-strip, the establishment of a postal service and the supply of fuel by Argentina. The United Kingdom unreservedly thanked Argentina for its contribution to the welfare and interests of the Islanders.

43. The representative of Argentina had argued before the General Assembly the previous year that the differences between his Government and the United Kingdom Government were subject to the procedure laid down in resolutions 2065 (XX) and 3106 (XXVIII) and that, while that procedure was still functioning, both Governments were obliged not to take innovative action, which, if interpreted literally, could block any constitutional progress in the Territory. Previously, the representative of Argentina had argued that, as the two relevant resolutions contained no reference to the wishes of the Islanders, the United Nations could not accept a unilateral innovation by the United Kingdom in introducing the wishes of the Islanders as a factor in the negotiations. It was encouraging that that view had not been repeated at the current session. However, it was regrettable that the idea that self-determination was an unacceptable unilateral innovation by the United Kingdom had been mentioned in the decision adopted by the Special Committee of 24 in September 1976. It had never been suggested that the wishes of the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands were in doubt. They wished to remain British. What had been suggested, however, was that in order to solve

/...

(Mr. Murray, United Kingdom)

the problem, the United Kingdom Government and the United Nations should simply disregard the wishes and aspirations of the Islanders. That was unacceptable.

44. The representative of Argentina had suggested that the United Kingdom had taken a negative attitude towards United Nations resolutions and towards ways of resolving the dispute over the Falkland Islands. To demonstrate his point he had, no doubt inadvertently, misinterpreted Lord Boston's statement that the United Kingdom had been unable to accept earlier General Assembly resolutions on the Falklands as they did not give due weight to one essential factor, namely, that the wishes of the Islanders must be a prime consideration in discussing the future of the Falklands.

45. The United Kingdom had held discussions with the Government of Argentina following the adoption of resolutions 2065 (XX) and 3160 (XXVIII) and wished to continue to do so. However, it could not allow those resolutions to provide a rigid juridical framework for such contacts. Also, the United Kingdom had adopted a cautious attitude to the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in view of its misgivings about their fairness to the people concerned, particularly now that their meaning had been distorted both in the United Nations and elsewhere. The resolution adopted by the Non-Aligned Countries at Colombo, urging the United Kingdom "to actively pursue the negotiations recommended by the United Nations for the purpose of restoring that Territory to Argentine sovereignty" was one example of such distortion. Resolutions 2065 (XX) and 3160 (XXVIII) did not propose that the only outcome of such negotiations must be the recognition of Argentine sovereignty. His delegation therefore hoped that the wording of the Colombo resolution was no more than a passing aberration. It was certainly at variance with the well-established practice of the Fourth Committee.

46. The United Kingdom hoped that discussions would lead to a settlement of the dispute over the Falkland Islands which was consonant with the wishes and interests of the Islanders. It was relevant that in the last two years there had been four meetings between Ministers of the Argentine and United Kingdom Governments, all held at the request of the United Kingdom.

47. The representative of Argentina had expressed the hope that the General Assembly would ratify the decision which the Committee of 24 had taken on the Falklands earlier that year. His delegation could not accept that decision since, as he had already indicated, it did not give sufficient weight to the wishes of the people of the Territory. The United Kingdom was willing to engage in a dialogue with Argentina on the basis of a clear understanding of each country's positions, but it would be difficult to convince the people of the Falkland Islands that such a dialogue would be in their interests if the General Assembly, like the Committee of 24, adopted a resolution which did not do justice to both sides of the question. His delegation viewed with grave concern the prospect of a General Assembly resolution on decolonization which would be unique in excluding any mention of the wishes of the people of the Territory concerned.

/...

48. Mr. ALBORNOZ (Ecuador) said that although the United Nations had been more successful in decolonization matters than in any other field, as was demonstrated by the presence in its midst of many States that had achieved independence in recent decades, its work would only end when all vestiges of foreign domination over other peoples and territories had disappeared.

49. The struggle for emancipation had begun in Latin America 167 years ago, yet there were places on that continent that were being subjected to some kind of foreign domination. Such was the case of the Malvinas Islands, over which two States with which his country maintained cordial relations, Argentina and the United Kingdom, claimed sovereignty, the latter having occupied the Islands since 1833.

50. Self-determination had been the guiding principle of the Committee's proceedings, a principle to which his country had always subscribed. None the less, his delegation shared the view expressed by other delegations that all aspects of resolution 1514 (XV) should be taken into account, including the provisions of paragraph 6, which stated "Any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of a country is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations". In the case of a conflict arising from dismemberment of a territory as a result of illegal occupation, there could be no solution but decolonization for purposes of integration.

51. Argentina had based its persistent demand for reintegration of the Malvinas Islands on historical facts and juridical arguments with which Ecuador agreed. The General Assembly, in its resolutions on the subject, had determined the nature of the problem beyond all doubt in recommending that the parties concerned should employ the most appropriate means provided for in Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter, concerning the pacific settlement of disputes, namely direct negotiation, in order to settle the issue.

52. As in the past, his country would fully and resolutely support any resolution recommending that the parties concerned, namely Argentina and the United Kingdom, should actively continue negotiations for a peaceful solution of the problem in keeping with the spirit and the letter of earlier resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. In that connexion, it was encouraging to note that the representative of the United Kingdom had reiterated the desire of his Government to continue discussions with the Government of Argentina in good faith.

#### Solomon Islands

53. Mr. PAYPOOL (Papua New Guinea) announced that Austria, Iraq, Mozambique, the United Republic of Tanzania and Singapore wished to be added to the list of sponsors of the draft resolution on the Solomon Islands contained in document A/C.4/31/L.3.

54. The Solomon Islands were very close to Papua New Guinea both geographically and culturally. His delegation was therefore particularly anxious to see those Islands become a sovereign State. It believed that draft resolution A/C.4/31/L.3 was consistent with its recent calls for the islands of the South Pacific to be emancipated from the yoke of colonialism at an early date.

/...

(Mr. Paypool, Papua New Guinea)

55. The report of the Special Committee and the statement made by the Representative of the United Kingdom, as the islands' administering Power, on current political developments in the Territory indicated that satisfactory progress had been made towards granting independence to the people of the Solomon Islands as soon as they asked for it. His delegation was aware of the need for economic and political co-operation between the administering Power and the Government of the Solomon Islands since the discontinuance of co-operation with the metropolitan Power would be detrimental to the Territory.

56. The sponsors of the draft resolution hoped that the Committee would adopt the draft unanimously.

Timor

57. Mr. ARAUJO (Guinea-Bissau) announced that the sponsors of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.4/31/L.5 had decided to withdraw their draft and prepare a new text which would be submitted to the Committee as soon as possible.

Gilbert Islands

58. Mrs. JOKA-BANGURA (Sierra Leone) introduced draft resolution A/C.4/31/L.7 and announced that Australia, Fiji, Indonesia, Iraq, Malaysia, Mali, Mozambique, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines wished to be added to the list of co-sponsors. She recalled that, in the past two years the resolutions on the Gilbert Islands had been adopted unanimously, and she hoped that that would be the case at the present session.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.