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**SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE, 187th
MEETING**

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Chairman: Mr. Carlet R. AUGUSTE (Haiti).

AGENDA ITEM 23

Question of an increase in the membership of the Security Council and of the Economic and Social Council (continued)

1. Mr. NORIEGA (Colombia) said that it was not very difficult to foresee that the Special Political Committee would once more meet with stubborn opposition from the Soviet Union to the increase in the membership of the Security Council and of the Economic and Social Council which was desired by the large majority of States. The statement which the Soviet representative had made at the 186th meeting showed that a solution of the problem was in danger of being postponed again, since the Soviet Union was persisting in its point of view, despite the fact that its line of argument had been changed to the point of becoming incoherent. Just as had been done the previous year, the representative of the USSR had asserted that no modification of the Charter was possible without the consent of Communist China in its capacity as a permanent member of the Security Council. Whereas, however, at the fourteenth session at the 129th meeting of the Special Political Committee the representative of the Soviet Union had said that the Charter in its present form corresponded to the principal objectives of the Organization and ought to be scrupulously respected, the same Charter was today reduced to the status of an imperialist instrument and was constantly threatened with changes. Mr. Noriega wondered what the countries which had recently been admitted to the Organization would think of that flagrant contradiction, and, again, what those new States would think of the Soviet statement according to which all efforts to grant them adequate representation in the principal organs of the United Nations were doomed to failure. The precise reason why those States had come to the United Nations was that they hoped to find there an opportunity for strengthening peace and promoting economic and social progress.

2. The proposal that adequate representation for States which were insufficiently represented in the Councils should be provided by redistributing the present number of seats was rejected by the Colombian delegation because that would mean that some countries or areas would lose some of the representation which they had legitimately acquired. It was unthinkable that the greater weight given to the needs of some countries should be prejudicial to the rights of others.

3. He recalled that at the fourteenth session of the General Assembly the Colombian delegation had supported the proposal for a reasonable increase in the membership of the Security Council and of the Economic and Social Council, and that it had taken the initiative to expedite the implementation of that reform and had supported the steps which other countries, particularly those of Latin America, had initiated to that end. His delegation shared the legitimate aspirations of the African and Asian nations to obtain suitable representation on the Councils so that they could participate more fully in the Organization's work.

4. His delegation would therefore support any measure to give effect to that reform, but it would oppose any amendment which, under the pretext of bringing about a progressive improvement in the present structure of the Organization, would in fact compromise its "raison d'être" and its very existence. With all its defects and inadequacies, the United Nations was the sole refuge of mankind in distress. He recalled the message which the President of Colombia had sent to the Secretary-General on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the United Nations and in which the President had reaffirmed the adherence of the people and Government of Colombia to the principles of the Charter and their resolute support of the United Nations, which was showing itself with increasing clarity to be an irreplaceable instrument for maintaining peace and co-operation among nations.

5. Mr. WACHUKU (Nigeria) said he was certain that no one would object to the energetic efforts being made by the new nations to solve the question of the effective representation of all Member States in the principal organs of the United Nations.

6. With regard, first of all, to the Economic and Social Council, he believed that no part of the world was more affected by the Economic and Social Council than Africa. It was obviously absurd that the twenty-five African States which existed today were not properly represented on that Council, and it was difficult to see how the Council could undertake to carry out a vast programme for the development of under-developed areas without African participation. That abnormal situation could not continue any longer, for the economic and social problems of the present time demanded an urgent solution. It was therefore indispensable for that state of affairs to be remedied at the current session of the General Assembly. If no means could be found of amending the Charter immediately, the only method which would allow the problem to be solved without delay was to alter the present distribution of seats among the different groups of States. To bring up the question of amending the Charter was simply a delaying tactic, since that procedure would obviously require much time. The Members that had recently been admitted to the Organization were naturally grateful to those that had blazed the trail in the search for peaceful means of fostering under-

standing among nations. Those countries ought, however, to be generous and broad-minded enough to appreciate that the United Nations would fall behind the times if it did not adjust itself to the radical changes which had taken place in the world. The redistribution of seats was justified by the urgency of the problem and a seat was not, moreover, an heirloom of any particular State. He therefore urged the Committee to ensure that the African countries would be adequately represented on the Economic and Social Council.

7. As to the Security Council, the forty-five States of the African-Asian group had only one permanent seat on it, and Africa as such was not one of the permanent members. It was enough to consider the representation which America and Europe enjoyed to realize that such a situation was unacceptable. The African countries objected to having matters which vitally affected them discussed in their absence. They ought to have a permanent seat, but that question would, of course, be difficult to solve at the current session. In order for the geographical distribution to be equitable, one or two, at least, of the non-permanent seats ought to be allocated at once to Africa, and one or two other seats to Asia. The States of Europe and America which were at

present in a privileged situation should understand that such a redistribution was essential. In his delegation's opinion, the Committee should decide unanimously to recommend to the General Assembly either that the present distribution of seats should be changed in order to ensure equitable representation to the African States on the principal organs of the United Nations, or, if that method proved impracticable, that an amendment should be introduced as quickly as possible at the current session even if that should require the holding of special meetings. The countries of Africa and Asia would thus have their due representation and would be able to participate constructively in the work of the Organization. Only on that basis would they be able to shoulder fully the responsibilities which they had assumed in subscribing to the provisions of the Charter. The delegation of Nigeria was certain it could rely on the support of the other African-Asian countries. It hoped that all Member States would understand that the cause it was defending was just and that, given their goodwill, the question could be solved satisfactorily.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.