

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records

**SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE, 693rd
MEETING**



Tuesday, 6 October 1970,
at 3.15 p.m.

NEW YORK

Chairman: Mr. Abdul Samad GHAUS
(Afghanistan).

Note by the Secretary-General on documentation
(Conference Room Paper/Main Committees/1)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to a note by the Secretary-General (Conference Room Paper/Main Committees/1) concerning the procedure for the addition of sponsors of draft resolutions or amendments. In paragraph 3 of that note it was suggested that the addition of sponsors would henceforth be announced during the meetings by the Committee Chairmen, or by a representative speaking on behalf of the original sponsors of the proposal, and that statement would be reported in the record of the meeting and in the report of the Committee. That method would enable the number of addenda to the document containing the original proposal to be reduced.

2. Mr. KHALAF (Iraq) endorsed the Secretary-General's proposal. He further suggested that members who intended to submit a draft resolution or amendment should consult beforehand with as many delegations as possible, so as to enlist the maximum number of sponsors from the outset and thereby relieve the original sponsors from having to make further statements.

3. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee adopted the Secretary-General's proposal.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 34

The policies of *apartheid* of the Government of South Africa: report of the Special Committee on the Policies of *Apartheid* of the Government of the Republic of South Africa (A/8022, A/SPC/L.181)

4. The CHAIRMAN observed that the Committee had before it the report of the Special Committee on the Policies of *Apartheid* of the Government of the Republic of South Africa (A/8022) and the text of the relevant resolutions adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity and by the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/SPC/L.181), which had been circulated in accordance with the decision taken at the preceding meeting of the Committee.

5. Mr. BHATT (Nepal), Rapporteur of the Special Committee, introduced the report, the main sections of which

were chapters II (Review of the work of the Special Committee) and III (Conclusions and recommendations of the Special Committee), and annexes II (Review of developments in South Africa since 7 October 1969) and III (List of foreign diplomatic and other official missions in South Africa and South African missions abroad).

6. The situation in South Africa was continuing to deteriorate. The efforts made by the United Nations for the previous twenty-five years had proved fruitless. The arms embargo was being violated. South Africa, which received commercial and economic support from some Member States, had intensified its policies of segregation and had achieved a formidable growth in its military power, both by means of imports and by expanding its own production of arms and military equipment of all kinds. Those who supplied arms to South Africa claimed to make a distinction between arms for external defence and arms for imposing *apartheid*; but as the whole of South Africa's military strength was available for its policy of *apartheid*, that distinction was without real foundation. For that reason, on the recommendation of the Special Committee, the Security Council, in its resolution 282 (1970), had called upon all States to strengthen the arms embargo.

7. With regard to economic relations with South Africa, the General Assembly had called upon Member States to sever their relations with South Africa, but that measure had had no effect. The United Kingdom remained South Africa's main trading partner, and the United States of America, the Federal Republic of Germany and Japan ranked second, third and fourth, respectively. South Africa's foreign liabilities had increased by 65 per cent between 1956 and 1968, and that reflected an annual increase of 5 per cent in the volume of direct investments in the country which was bound to contribute to the consolidation of the policy of *apartheid*.

8. Furthermore, *apartheid* continued to be implemented. At the general election of April 1970, which had been won by the Government party, only white South Africans had been entitled to vote, and the only issue during the campaign had been the forms of discrimination. Elections to the Coloured Persons' Representative Council had also been held and, although the anti-*apartheid* Labour Party had been victorious, the Government had packed the Council with its own nominees. Since those elections, the Government had implemented its policy of *apartheid* more rigorously. Under the Group Areas Act, millions of non-whites had been uprooted from their homes and sent to locations lacking in employment opportunities and the minimum of health facilities. The systematic destruction of the non-white families had continued with impunity: thus, a so-called Christian country was breaking up many Christian homes and dealing at will with families because

they were not white. New legislation aimed at further eroding the rights of the majority non-white population had been introduced in the course of the year. The Bantu Homelands Citizenship Act (Act No. 26 of 1970) was intended to bind every African legally and constitutionally to his own people, and his own ethnic and cultural group. Henceforth, every African would be a citizen of a "self-governing Bantu territory" or "one or another territorial authority area". The Minister would decide to which area an African belonged, and his decision would be final. The real purpose of that Act was to make Africans aliens outside their own reserves. The Bantu Laws Amendment Act (Act No. 19 of 1970) empowered the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development to prohibit the performance of work by, or the employment of, a Bantu, in any specified area or any specified occupation. Those who opposed *apartheid* in South Africa continued to be harassed, subjected to house arrest, imprisoned, exiled or deported. The proportion of prisoners in relation to the population as a whole was probably the highest in the world.

9. The strengthening of *apartheid* had increased bitterness. Since any change by peaceful means was impossible, the leaders of the oppressed people had expressed their determination to achieve their rights and freedom by force. The situation thus constituted a threat to peace and security.

10. He would mention some recent cases. Mr. Benjamin Ramotse, who said he had been kidnapped from Botswana by Rhodesians and handed over to the South Africans, had been sentenced on 30 September 1970 after being held incommunicado for two years. Of 18 prisoners recently set free, 12 had been exiled and Mrs. Winnie Mandela, wife of the African leader, was under house arrest and had been prohibited from attending any meetings for five years. Mr. Vorster had threatened the African churches with firm action if they did not withdraw from the World Council of Churches, which had been guilty of giving grants to the African liberation movement, and two Anglican ministers had just been deported for their opposition to *apartheid*.

11. The Special Committee had nevertheless found some encouragement in international decisions barring South Africa from many sporting events, and the Special Committee hoped that the number of exclusions would increase.

12. However, the racial antagonism which prevailed in South Africa represented a serious threat, as it might develop into a large-scale conflict. If that threat was to be averted, the international community must apply effective coercive measures against South Africa. The Special Committee therefore called for the strict implementation of the Security Council's resolutions by all Member States, for it believed that economic sanctions were the most effective measures in the hands of the international community at the present time to support the African people of South Africa. The Special Committee also suggested that an appeal should be made to States to provide moral and material support to the liberation movement. It further considered that a more diversified programme of information was required to enlighten public opinion on the South African situation. Finally, it hoped that, at its twenty-fifth session, the General Assembly might launch a programme

of action which would put an end to the misery of the oppressed people of South Africa.

13. Mr. FARAH (Somalia), Chairman of the Special Committee, said that the evidence published by the United Nations showed that *apartheid* was a crime against humanity. That was why its elimination constituted the greatest moral challenge of the times. There was of course a danger that Member States would drift into frustration as a result of the refusal of several of the industrial countries to comply with General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. South African racist propaganda presented the situation to best advantage; but the racial conflagration might break out before the dissemination of pertinent information had caused peoples to force their Governments to act against *apartheid*. For *apartheid* was only a modern form of the slavery which had been condemned in the nineteenth century, the product of a mentality which viewed the relation of whites to blacks as that of masters to slaves. Indeed, on 25 January 1963, Mr. H. F. Verwoerd had said: "We want to keep South Africa white. . . . Keeping it white can mean only one thing, namely, white domination. . . . We say that it can be achieved by separate development."

14. As in the time of slavery, several hundred thousand Africans had been moved forcibly from their homes and relocated against their will. According to the plans of the South African Government, millions of persons would be thus relocated in the next few years and their work and living conditions would be determined by whites.

15. As in the time of slavery, the family life of millions of Africans was being destroyed by regulations which controlled African residence in white areas and which forced the African to choose between a solitary and servile urban existence on the one hand and family life on the borders of starvation in a Bantustan on the other. No further proof than the Bantu Laws Amendment Act of February 1970, empowering the Minister of Bantu Administration and Development to prohibit Africans from doing any work in any areas of the Republic, was required to show that the legislation reduced Africans to a servile existence. Statistics showed that African families in South Africa were undernourished.

16. Like the slave of the eighteenth century, the black South African could not change his situation by political, legal or peaceful means. He was deprived of trade union and political rights. And, like the slave owners, the Republic was obliged to resort to totalitarian force and oppression in order to maintain an unjust system. Violence bred counter-violence and the process constituted a threat to world peace.

17. As with slavery, *apartheid's* rules and regulations aimed at perpetuating the profits and privileges of the white minority and the subjection and misery of the black majority. *Apartheid* was the final solution to the problem of how to dispossess the African in his land while maintaining an abundant and cheap labour force.

18. Turning to an analysis of the self-determination the South African Foreign Minister dared to claim was being actively promoted, he stressed the inequity of apportioning

13 per cent of the territory to 75 per cent of the population. Whereas the white population occupied the largest and best parts of the territory, the "homelands" were overpopulated and in poor areas where only subsistence agriculture was possible. The false promise of "separate development" had not been kept and living conditions were not improving in the Bantustans where the Africans were herded together.

19. During the general debate in the General Assembly (1857th plenary meeting) the South African Foreign Minister had also claimed that all peoples in South Africa possessed self-government in varying forms and at varying levels of development. But the political activity of the non-whites was confined to the Bantustans and even there it was of the most elementary kind, characterized by complete subordination to the will and power of the white régime. It must be concluded, in the face of such clearly established evidence, that the aim of the policy was not self-determination but the gradual and systematic extermination of the black people of South Africa.

20. The majority of the Members of the United Nations had said that *apartheid* was a crime against humanity; the system therefore corresponded to a concept of international law laid down in the Charter of the Nuremberg Tribunal, the principles of which, subsequently affirmed by the General Assembly, had, as was generally known, been proclaimed by certain countries currently among South Africa's main trading partners. Thus, it could be said that the South African Government's long and calculated assault on the rights of the African population amounted to a crime against humanity in terms of both international and natural law.

21. *Apartheid* could also be viewed and judged from another angle—that of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In that connexion, he referred to the study of *apartheid* in South Africa and South West Africa published by the International Commission of Jurists in June 1967 in Geneva. That study showed, article by article, how *apartheid* infringed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the extent to which the system, as practised in South Africa, was inconsistent with the universally accepted principles of justice and humanity.

22. With regard to the question of the moral and material support lent to the Government of South Africa, in other words, the *apartheid* régime, by Pretoria's trading partners, it was true that the representatives of France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America had resolutely condemned *apartheid*: words could not, however, remedy the existing situation and the great Powers must agree to dissociate themselves from the web of greed that had been woven in South Africa. In fact, support for *apartheid* was very profitable; in March 1969, the United States journal *Business Week* reported that investments in South Africa attracted a return of between 17 and 26 per cent. It was not surprising, therefore, that the most enthusiastic lobbyists for the régime in western capitals were business and finance groups and the study prepared by Mr. Sean Ger-vasi¹ showed clearly the extent to which foreign capital was involved in South Africa.

23. Some people dared to claim that "political differences" should not interfere with the growth of trade. In the circumstances, however, the differences were such that any aid to South Africa could not but damage the authority of the United Nations and the principles of international morality it was trying to establish. The Organization had availed itself of all peaceful procedures under its Charter to persuade the Pretoria Government to abandon its policy; South Africa's main trading partners claimed to have done the same. All those attempts had been in vain; it was true that those same trading partners of South Africa provided it with the weapons with which it maintained an iron grip on its population. Could the Pretoria Government be allowed to continue its criminal acts against its non-white population?

24. The report of the Special Committee reiterated that application of a trade embargo was the only peaceful measure the United Nations could use to bring an end to *apartheid*. Many studies made during the past seven years had concluded that economic sanctions were feasible. The experts emphasized two points: first, that the success of economic sanctions depended entirely on the co-operation of the ten or so industrialized Powers which were South Africa's main trading partners; and, secondly, that South Africa's economy was vulnerable to economic pressure only if all her trading partners acted in concert. But each of the Powers feared to sever trade relations with the Pretoria Government lest another took its place. Moreover, it must be recognized that two or three countries were so heavily involved in South Africa's economy that a sudden rupture of trade relations would harm their own economies. He did not deny the difficulties involved, but emphasized that they were by no means insurmountable, for the economy of most of the countries concerned was sufficiently diversified to enable them, without untoward effects, to make some sacrifices.

25. Since the success of sanctions depended on a decision by South Africa's main trading partners to implement the relevant United Nations resolutions, it would be useful if the said partners were to meet, either under the auspices of the United Nations or otherwise, to discuss how they could act in concert to implement the trade embargo while softening the impact of such action on the more vulnerable economies. It was equally necessary completely to isolate South Africa by the severance of diplomatic and other links until the South African Government abandoned its policy of *apartheid*.

26. If the United Nations failed to act, the prospects for the future were gloomy indeed: the conflict would inevitably grow, since the non-white population, realizing the futility of depending on the international community for action against *apartheid*, had formed a liberation movement which was growing in effectiveness. Side by side with the militant attitude of a population resolved to wage armed struggle, a second and hopeful development had manifested itself: people everywhere, as opposed to their Government's inertia, were becoming more and more aware of the implications of *apartheid* and of their moral obligations in the matter. The action of the World Council of Churches in voting a substantial sum for the support of the liberation movements in Africa was important for two reasons: it served to underline the fact that the minority racist régimes

¹ *Industrialization, foreign capital and forced labour in South Africa* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.70.II.K.8).

had effectively barred any alternative to armed struggle, and to demonstrate the existence of a group of people who were unwilling to go on condemning *apartheid* without taking any meaningful action against it. Another encouraging development was the strong stand taken against *apartheid* by many international and national sports organizations.

27. Mention should also be made of the courageous stand taken against *apartheid* by the National Union of South African Students, and the unanimous censure by the World Youth Assembly, held in New York in 1970, of such discriminatory practices, which proved that young people both inside and outside South Africa were ready to combat that evil.

28. However, the dissemination of knowledge about *apartheid* and the consequent development of anti-*apartheid* attitudes in non-governmental organizations and in all those who would, it was hoped, influence Governments, was a long-term process. Racial conflict of a most terrible kind might erupt in and outside southern Africa before that process had had time to work. Two very important international conferences—the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU, held at Addis Ababa, and the Conference of the Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries, held at Lusaka—had issued warnings on the situation (see A/SPC/L.181). They had denounced *apartheid* and called for urgent and effective action to combat it.

29. Both the humanitarian and the practical issues involved in the question of *apartheid* were, he concluded, apparent to all, and those who were in a position to take action for the peaceful resolution of the problem of *apartheid* bore a grave responsibility.

30. Mr. CUEVAS CANCINO (Mexico) said that, having read the report of the Special Committee and heard the statement in the General Assembly (1857th plenary meeting) by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of South Africa, he must regretfully conclude that South Africa was unresponsive to any action taken by the United Nations to restrict the policy of *apartheid*. Various lines of action recommended by the Committee had already been tried out without success, including an embargo on arms, economic sanctions and aid to the peoples of South Africa in their struggle for independence.

31. It was futile to dwell on the harmful effects of the policy of *apartheid*, which was based on the ruthless exploitation of a majority that was systematically deprived of any prospect of enjoying the fruits of its labour. There was no doubt whatsoever that the policy of *apartheid* was continuing to spread and to become even harsher and more oppressive. *The Christian Science Monitor* had calculated that between mid-1968 and mid-1969 the daily count of persons in South African prisons totalled 88,000, of whom 95 per cent were Africans, and that during the same period 84 people had been executed in South Africa, or half of all the executions throughout the world. In addition, the policy of *apartheid* was spreading to neighbouring territories, since South Africa, in contravention of General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, was applying its *apartheid* legislation to Namibia, and the *de facto* Smith

régime in Rhodesia was beginning to introduce similar legislation.

32. The fact that the United Nations had been so far unable to stop the policy of *apartheid* from spreading was partly due to the obstinate persistence of South Africa in its policy, thus precluding any possibility of peaceful change, and to the fact, as had to be admitted, that United Nations efforts had so far been inadequate and indeed ill-conceived. The General Assembly had affirmed, by a very large majority, that the policy of *apartheid* was endangering international peace and security, but as it had not succeeded in convincing all the permanent Members of the Security Council that the provisions of Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter were applicable, the provisions in question had not been applied. The situation was, therefore, that the Assembly had persisted in calling for sanctions, while the Charter provided only for sanctions which had the Security Council's approval.

33. The implementation of Chapter VII of the Charter having proved impossible, it was pointless, he felt, to go on insisting on it, especially since the Charter contained provisions for other more effective ways of bringing pressure to bear on South Africa so as to force it to end its universally reprobated policy. Even when its efforts appeared to be in vain, the United Nations neither could nor should exceed its powers under the Charter. Despite the fact that diplomatic negotiations had been unsuccessful, the United Nations had not exhausted all the possible courses of action, any more than had the South African population, on whom the task of implementing the measures to eliminate *apartheid* devolved.

34. He recalled that paragraph 22 of the Lusaka Manifesto² had recommended South Africa's exclusion from the specialized agencies and even from the United Nations itself. The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Organization seemed to be an appropriate time for the United Nations to follow the example of some of the specialized agencies and to ban South Africa, for there was no point continuing to preach the equality of all men and at the same time to accept the Republic of South Africa as a Member State with full exercise of its rights when its domestic policy was based on the persistent violation of that principle.

35. Article 5 of the Charter provided for the suspension of a Member State against which preventive or enforcement action had been taken by the Security Council. Such suspension did not relieve the State from any of its obligations but deprived it of the exercise of the rights and privileges of membership. Preventive and enforcement action had been taken against the Republic of South Africa under Security Council resolution 182 (1963), on the one hand, and Security Council resolutions 181 (1963) and 282 (1970), on the other. As his delegation saw it, therefore, nothing debarred the General Assembly, by virtue of the powers conferred on it under Article 11 of the Charter, from inviting the Security Council to consider a

² Manifesto on Southern Africa, adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its sixth ordinary session; for the text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 106, document A/7754.

recommendation to suspend the rights and privileges of the Republic of South Africa, rights and privileges which could be restored by the Security Council under Article 5 once the policy of *apartheid* ceased to operate. By taking such action, the United Nations would be giving South Africa notice of its intention to continue its fight by all lawful means against the policy of *apartheid*, and would be making it clear to States wishing to maintain friendly relations with South Africa that their attitude was contrary to the principles of the Organization.

36. Mr. FAKHREDDINE (Sudan) observed that the United Nations had not yet exhausted all the possible courses of action, and felt that the steps suggested by the previous speakers deserved careful attention. In view of its importance, the statement just made by the Chairman of

the Special Committee, Mr. Farah, should be reproduced in full.

37. Mr. OUCIF (Algeria) requested that the statement by the Chairman of the Special Committee be published as an official document.

38. The CHAIRMAN said that the Special Political Committee could request a transcription of the proceedings of the current meeting from the sound recording, since it was authorized to do so by the General Assembly.

*It was so decided.*³

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.

³ Text subsequently circulated as document A/SPC/PV.693.