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MEETING**



Thursday, 22 October 1970,  
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NEW YORK

Chairman: Mr. Abdul Samad GHAUS  
(Afghanistan).

**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 (continued) (A/8022 and Add.1, A/8109, A/8117, A/SPC/L.181)**

1. Mr. NAUMENKO (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) shared the concern expressed by several speakers at the situation prevailing in South Africa as a result of the criminal policy of *apartheid*. That situation was similar in some ways to the dark days of the Nazi occupation; in Minsk, two monuments commemorated the many victims of fascism in his country and served as a reminder to the survivors.

2. The new form which the South African national liberation movement was tending to take was in his delegation's view the logical consequence of the struggle for national liberation of the African continent against colonialism, imperialism and racial oppression. The Republic of South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau) were, in fact, the last strongholds of colonialism on the African continent.

3. The labour legislation of the South African Republic was institutionalizing a contemporary form of slavery. Inhuman laws were giving the white racists an unlimited power over the indigenous population. The whole system was aimed at the exploitation of African workers. Thus, the average monthly income of a white was 13 times as much as that of an African; 74 per cent of the income of the country went to the whites, although they represented less than 19 per cent of the population. Apart from such economic spoliation, the African workers in South Africa were deprived of the most elementary rights; they were not allowed to form trade unions or to strike and the breaking of a labour contract by an African constituted a crime. South Africa prided itself on the speed of its economic growth; it should not be forgotten, however, that that growth was explained by a ruthless exploitation by South African companies and their foreign partners of the African masses whose already wretched situation was growing steadily worse as a result of industrialization and the development of the mining industry.

4. His delegation wished to thank the Chairman of the Special Committee on the Policies of *Apartheid* of the Government of the Republic of South Africa, for the

important work it had accomplished. He had found abundant documentation in the study entitled "*Apartheid in Practice*".<sup>1</sup> That document referred to Act No. 27, 1951, article 15, of South Africa, which provided that a person of white race who paid his servant for repairing a damaged roof was committing a criminal offence. Did the crime in that instance lie in the fact that the servant who had climbed the roof was thus in a higher position than his master? He stressed that South African legislation in all its branches, whether political, social, cultural, religious or family, recalled quite unmistakably the days of slavery. For example, a white who taught his servants to read for a few hours a week was guilty of a criminal offence under the terms of Act No. 47, 1953, article 9.

5. In order to ensure the maintenance of their policy, the racists of Pretoria were forcing 5.1 million Africans, or 40 per cent of the African population, to live in Bantustans the area of which represented only 13 per cent of the territory of South Africa and the soil of which was arid and liable to erosion. Many Africans were forced to leave the countryside and seek means of subsistence in the towns, where their activity was strictly regulated and any work involving some sort of specialization was prohibited to them. Vorster had openly declared that the nation which they were building was for the exclusive use of whites. The racist Government was doing everything in its power to prevent Africans from receiving vocational training or any kind of education. Despite the population growth, appropriations for the education of Africans had been reduced from 0.57 per cent of the budget in 1953 to 0.396 per cent in 1966.

6. His delegation agreed with others in attributing that state of things to the economic, political and military support which South Africa received from the monopolies of the United Kingdom, the United States of America, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan and a number of other States. The trade of South Africa with its main trading partners continued to increase, and so did the latter's investments in that country and in Namibia, as indicated in the report of Mr. Sean Gervasi;<sup>2</sup> thus, in 1968 foreign investment in South Africa amounted to \$6,414 million or an increase of 65 per cent over 1956. That capital earned interest of the order of 15 to 20 per cent, or more than twice as much as in most other countries. Therein lay the key to the problem and that was why eyes were being closed to the evils of the crime against mankind which *apartheid* was.

7. In defiance of the decisions of the United Nations, the Western Powers—including members of the Security Coun-

<sup>1</sup> Document ST/PSCA/SER.A/9, issued by the Unit on *Apartheid*.

<sup>2</sup> *Industrialization, foreign capital and forced labour in South Africa* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.70.II.K.8).

cil—were providing South Africa with large quantities of arms and military equipment. For the period between 1961 and 1968, the South African Republic had spent more than \$924.5 million in purchases of military equipment from States members of NATO. Thanks to those supplies, South Africa had been turned into a vast military and police camp, and its army had been provided with modern equipment.

8. The British Government had issued a new challenge to the African peoples by openly declaring its intention to supply arms to the Pretoria régime. It is true that it had asserted that those supplies would be limited to the arms needed for the defence of sea routes, but that argument could hardly convince anyone, for everybody knew that any arms could and would inevitably be used for the suppression of the national liberation movement.

9. On 23 July 1970 the Security Council had requested (resolution 282 (1970)) all States to strengthen the arms embargo against South Africa, but it seemed that once again the Western countries would not heed that appeal. The United Kingdom, for its part, had, in August 1970, carried out naval manoeuvres with the South African Republic, thus showing its military co-operation with that country. His delegation endorsed the conclusion of the Heads of State and Governments of OAU that the activities of the NATO countries—which, despite the decisions of the United Nations and the protests of the world community, were continuing to supply arms to the Pretoria régime—were contributing to international tension and constituting a direct threat to peace and security in Africa. The Western Powers were supporting self-determination in words, but in deeds they were aiding the racists.

10. The Byelorussian SSR supported without reservation the decisions adopted by OAU at Addis Ababa and of the non-aligned countries at Lusaka (see A/SPC/L.181). His delegation had voted for all the provisions of General Assembly resolution 2624 (XXV). In its view, the General Assembly should adopt, at the session during which the United Nations was celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary, decisive and constructive measures capable of putting an end to the inhuman policy of *apartheid* practised by the Government of the Republic of South Africa.

11. Mr. OGOLA (Uganda) said that the elimination of *apartheid* was a matter close to the heart of his delegation, which fully supported the recommendations made by the Special Committee in its report (A/8022 and Add.1).

12. According to the pessimistic prediction made by the black writer, W. E. B. Du Bois, the problem of conflicts between groups of human beings based on differences of colour would be the dominant one in the twentieth century. Unfortunately, the violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms of the peoples to which it gave rise were insidious, since those who committed them hid behind fallacious arguments. Eager to enrich themselves by dispossessing and exploiting another group of human beings, they salved their consciences by decreeing that that group belonged to an inferior race and, having reduced it to abject poverty by dint of oppression, they then used that poverty as an argument to bolster the myth of their own racial superiority, which soon took the form of a religious dogma.

There had at all times been groups ready to justify the injustices to which their acquisitiveness had driven them by declaring themselves to be the chosen people of God and by treating the rest of mankind as “gentiles”, “barbarians” or “infidels”. But it was not until the modern era, with nazism and fascism and now *apartheid*, that Governments had tried to institutionalize those injustices by making them the subject of ignoble legislation.

13. In South Africa, as elsewhere, racial prejudices, which corrupted all disciplines and all human activities, were all the more tenacious in that they made it possible to give free rein to the frenetic desire for exploitation. For the exploiter, the African population constituted a reservoir of cheap labour. Wages were wretched and the Africans had neither the right to strike nor the right to form trade unions and often worked more than twelve hours a day. Any African could be arrested arbitrarily on fabricated charges and, once imprisoned, could be sent to work on the farms of the whites, as was stated in the report<sup>3</sup> of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group of Experts established under resolution 2 (XXIII) of the Commission on Human Rights. In fact, according to that report, the farmers, acting in concert with the Department of Prisons, maintained farm gaols.

14. He expressed indignation at the mentality of the whites in South Africa, which was similar to that of the Europeans of the middle of the nineteenth century before the first factory legislation had been adopted. How could the world allow South Africa to perpetuate such barbarity and to continue to exploit and murder the African population?

15. The root of the evil was economic and, in order to understand the difficult nature of the problem, it had to be placed in its context which was that of a new form of imperialism and colonialism. Whereas the era of colonial expansion had been marked by clashes between the colonial empires in which some possessions had quite simply changed hands, today, in southern Africa, the former colonial Powers, having lost their empires, were resolved to preserve that last colony or, at least, to delay its accession to independence for as long as possible. Instead of fighting over South Africa, as they would have done in the past, they were determined, grouped together in NATO, to defend it collectively, using every means.

16. Why had there been such a change of attitude? The representative of the United Kingdom, Lord Caradon, had explained it the previous year in the Security Council<sup>4</sup> when he had observed that the economies of the United Kingdom and South Africa were mutually dependent, that some thousand million pounds of British capital had been invested in South Africa, and that the cutting off of trade relations with South Africa would create extensive unemployment in British industry, including the shipping industry, would result in a serious loss of trade and might aggravate still further the deficit in the balance of payments. That was also the attitude of South Africa's other major trading partners, the United States of America, France, Italy, Japan and the Federal Republic of Germany.

<sup>3</sup> Documents E/CN.4/984 and Add.1-19 (mimeographed).

<sup>4</sup> *Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-fourth Year, 1479th meeting.*

17. At the same time, the representative of the Soviet Union, in a note verbale (A/AC.109/340),<sup>5</sup> had drawn attention to the following comment by Karl Marx: "Guarantee 10 per cent, and capital will agree to any use of its money; at 300 per cent there is no crime it would not risk, even though it might mean the gibbet".

18. By their greed, those countries were the real culprits; they were the ones which should be exposed and against which others should be ready to fight. The racist minority régimes of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia and the Fascist Government of Portugal in its colonies were only masks behind which NATO perpetuated its monstrous moral swindle.

19. It was in that context that his delegation viewed with concern the intention of the Conservative Government of the United Kingdom to resume arms sales to South Africa. The United Kingdom asserted that the sea route to the east was threatened by the entry of the USSR Navy into the Indian Ocean. But, in the nuclear age, the Soviet Union had no need of a navy to wipe out both the United Kingdom and South Africa, and if it was only England on which it had designs, why would it go so far south to do so?

20. The real intention of the Conservative Government was to strengthen the military power of the South African racists, who were endeavouring not only to intensify their oppression of the African population but also to extend their aggression against the independent States of Africa. The Ugandan Government strongly condemned a decision which was so clearly racist and anti-African. It hoped that the United Kingdom would not allow the colonialists of the past to influence its policy towards the Africa of tomorrow.

21. The Ugandan delegation was also indignant at the attitude of the French Government which, despite the appeals of the African countries, the international community and the Security Council, was still one of the leading suppliers of arms to South Africa, while claiming to maintain friendly ties with Africa.

22. The Government and people of Uganda were also concerned to see the Western capitalist cartels seeking to carry out the Cabora Bassa dam project. That was essentially a political act through which the colonialists and imperialists hoped to consolidate their exploitation and domination of the African population of Mozambique. Its aim was to establish the Zambesi as the frontier of *apartheid* and to enable the régimes of South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and Portugal to reclaim more land for the Europeans whom they were currently encouraging to settle in that area. The support given to the construction of the dam therefore had the same effect in southern Africa, and indeed in Africa as a whole, as the sale of arms to the racist régimes. In both cases, the acts were essentially anti-African and promoted only the interests of the imperialists and colonialists. His delegation commended those Governments, such as the Swedish and Italian Governments, which had taken steps to prevent their nationals from participating in the project and it warned the others that they were jeopardizing their own long-term interests in Africa.

<sup>5</sup> Mimeographed.

23. What the people of South Africa wanted was not gold or dollars so much as dignity, freedom and justice. The same was true of the people of Palestine, Viet-Nam, Cambodia, Laos and Latin America. The fight against *apartheid* was no less justified than the fight against nazism. With every day, the African people were becoming increasingly aware of their national interests and, if they could not change their living conditions by constitutional methods, they would use force and would rise up against their oppressors, for, as Karl Marx had said, "force is the midwife of every old society pregnant with a new one". The foolish attitude of the disciples of *apartheid*, supported by the Western capitalists, could well turn against them and act as a catalyst to the independence of the Africans. For surely they would overcome.

24. Mr. ONG (Malaysia) said that every year, for twenty-five years, the Special Political Committee had had to consider the question of *apartheid* and deplore the failure of the United Nations efforts, while the situation in South Africa continued to deteriorate.

25. Year after year the increasing dangers of armed conflict had been noted, and the current situation had now been lucidly described in the Special Committee's report. However, despite the repeated warnings, some countries seemed not to have understood that the South African Government's intransigence and the failure of United Nations efforts were due to the support South Africa received from its principal trading partners and military suppliers, with their refusal to implement General Assembly and Security Council resolutions and thus compel South Africa to abandon its policies. Malaysia would urge them to uphold the efforts of the United Nations, especially as it was distressing to note that some were permanent members of the Security Council and ought therefore to be more alive to their responsibilities.

26. The increasingly ruthless and inhuman measures taken by the South African Government had heightened the bitterness of the people and had created an explosive situation. By quelling all opposition to *apartheid*, the South African Government was closing the avenue of peaceful change, and the oppressed peoples of South Africa had no alternative but violence. It was necessary to stress that the situation constituted a threat to international peace and security, and it was therefore urgent to bring it to an end.

27. If the major trading partners and military suppliers of South Africa continued to undermine the efforts of the United Nations, South Africa would maintain its policies, thus casting doubts on the Organization's ability to deal effectively with a threat to peace and security and to help the oppressed people of South Africa regain their rights. In his statement before the General Assembly (1868th plenary meeting), the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia had appealed to the influential countries to re-examine their current policies. Had those policies in fact been aimed at eradicating colonialism and racism in South Africa? Appropriate courses of action had been charted long since by the United Nations, and Malaysia hoped that South Africa's trading partners and arms suppliers would finally heed the General Assembly and Security Council resolutions.

28. The risk of armed conflict was real and alarming, in view of the repressive measures taken by the South African

Government against the leading opponents of *apartheid*, who had concluded that only through armed struggle could they achieve their rights. With the help of its suppliers, the South African Government was deploying its forces in Namibia and on the borders of Southern Rhodesia, whose illegal régime it supported. Malaysia therefore called for the strict implementation of Security Council resolution 282 (1970) on the arms embargo.

29. Where persuasion had failed, coercion was the sole remedy. Economic sanctions were the most effective means at the international community's command to compel the South African Government to change its policies. However, those sanctions must be mandatory, for any violation neutralized their effect. As its Deputy Prime Minister had already said, Malaysia reaffirmed its support for the people of southern Africa in its struggle against colonialism and racism and offered them its encouragement and assistance.

30. Mr. DURAISWAMY (Ceylon) recalled that the problem before the Committee had been regularly considered since 1946, without any solution having yet been found. *Apartheid*, an ugly and evil doctrine, directly violated the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and was scientifically false, morally indefensible, socially unjust and politically dangerous. It had been devised by the white minority racist régime in South Africa to perpetuate its domination over the non-white majority of the indigenous population, and its ruthless and systematic implementation had brought widespread suffering to the non-white population. It was a challenge to the enlightened conscience of the international community and contradicted the teachings of the great religions of our times.

31. His delegation wished to place on record its appreciation of the good work of the Special Committee, whose report had not only referred to the extent to which the South African population had been deprived of its rights and fundamental freedoms but had also examined the effects of the measures undertaken by the United Nations and had made certain recommendations.

32. It was distressing to learn that the South African Government was not only continuing to persecute the opponents of *apartheid* but also to pursue its policies on the widest and severest scale, thus arousing a degree of bitterness which might lead to an armed conflict. The South African Government's rejection of a peaceful and equitable solution of the problem advocated by the United Nations had convinced the leaders of the liberation movement that only through armed struggle could their inalienable rights and freedoms be achieved. The aggressive policies of South Africa had heightened tensions in the whole of southern Africa and, despite the arms embargo instituted by the Security Council, South Africa's military budget had increased from \$60 million in 1960 to \$380 million in 1970. South Africa was importing or producing massive quantities of arms and equipment and was, in the opinion of the Security Council, posing a threat to African States opposed to *apartheid*. He appealed to those countries supplying military equipment and know-how to South Africa not to do so, but to work with the United Nations to end the evil practice of *apartheid*.

33. Despite appeals and despite United Nations intervention, the South African Government was pursuing its perverted policy which constituted a threat to international peace and security. He viewed that tragic situation with grave concern and considered it the duty of the international community to intervene promptly and put an end to the cause of that conflict.

34. He referred to the comments of the Secretary-General on the situation in southern Africa, wherein he had stated that unless racial conflict was curbed and finally eliminated, it would eat away the possibilities for good that mankind had achieved and reduce man to the lowest and most bestial level of intolerance and hatred.

35. The source from which the ideology and practice of *apartheid* sprang was said to be the fear of the Afrikaner minority for the large majority of the population. However much we may sympathize with that collective fear, whether justifiable or not, the measures adopted by the South African Government to alleviate the collective fear were neither justifiable nor permissible, and it was devoid of reason, human feeling and a sense of proportion and perspective. It was also a grave reflection on the present-day civilization that such a society was permitted to exist.

36. Ceylon commended the suggestion of the Special Committee that the Secretary-General should continue to promote the dissemination of information on *apartheid*, with a view to arousing the conscience of mankind, so that it would work for the elimination of the system, *inter alia*, by bringing pressure to bear on the Governments which were assisting South Africa. The dissemination of information on *apartheid* by the United Nations, its specialized agencies, national Governments and non-governmental organizations on a large scale in various media, also in South Africa, must, therefore, be encouraged.

37. It was heartening to note that the National Union of South African Students, an organization of students of the English-speaking universities, and the World Council of Churches, which had subsidized the liberation movements, were opposed to *apartheid*. There was a ray of hope that among the whites in South Africa a powerful movement would come into being to redress the wrongs already inflicted.

38. The failure of the United Nations to eradicate *apartheid* was a source of disappointment and despair to millions of people all over the world. The success or failure of the United Nations depended upon its Members, since they alone could either make or mar this body which was essential for the present-day world.

39. There was no better subject than *apartheid* which offered the Members of the United Nations the opportunity of taking concerted and effective action against it. This could lead the way for greater co-operation in the United Nations and thereby strengthen the Organization, so as to enable it to tackle also the other problems more effectively. There was almost unanimous agreement on the evils of *apartheid* and on the need to eliminate the laws and regulations based on it. Concerted and effective action was needed to compel the South African Government to act with justice. If the resolutions which had been adopted

were implemented by all the Member States, the South African Government would have no choice but to comply with the injunctions of the United Nations, one of whose essential functions was the preservation of human rights and fundamental freedoms. He expressed the hope that on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, when the peoples of the world were looking to the United Nations for an effective contribution to the cause of peace,

justice and progress, suitable measures would be formulated to eradicate the evils of *apartheid* in South Africa.

40. The CHAIRMAN asked that draft resolutions be submitted without delay, in view of the small number of meetings left for dealing with that agenda item.

*The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.*