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Chairman: Mr. Guillermo FLORES AVENDAÑO
(Guatemala).

AGENDA ITEM 56

Question of Southern Rhodesia: report of the Special Committee established under General Assembly resolution 1654 (XVI) (A/5238, chap. II; A/C.4/560, A/C.4/561, A/C.4/564, A/C.4/565, A/C.4/568, A/C.4/569) (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. SILVA SUCRE (Venezuela) observed that the question of Southern Rhodesia had been a severe test for the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, established under General Assembly resolution 1654 (XVI). At first sight it had appeared too much to ask a new body to begin its work by defining its own methods of work. There had, however, been no alternative but to comply with the instructions of the General Assembly, which fortunately corresponded with the desire of most countries represented on that Committee. In discussing priorities the Committee had decided to consider each Non-Self-Governing Territory in turn and to begin with Southern Rhodesia, not only in order to comply with the request of the General Assembly but because members had been convinced that the situation in that Territory called for urgent attention from the international community, since it was intimately bound up with the whole question of peace in Southern Africa.

2. The delegation of Venezuela, which was a member of the Special Committee, had closely followed the examination of the question of Southern Rhodesia. In that Committee, and in the Sub-Committee on Southern Rhodesia during the discussions in London, at which Venezuela had been represented, as also at the resumed sixteenth session of the General Assembly in June 1962, his delegation had whole-heartedly supported the position of the African population of Southern Rhodesia, whose interests it felt had not been duly taken into account either in 1923, when a certain degree of self-government had been granted to the Territory, or in 1953, when it had been decided to establish the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, or in 1961,

when the new Constitution had been proclaimed. There was no need to repeat his delegation's reasons for adopting that attitude, since his Government almost entirely endorsed the report of the Special Committee (A/5238, chap. II). He would, however, make some comments on the situation as it had developed since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1747 (XVI).

3. He would first recall that the magnitude of the problem in Southern Rhodesia was caused by the large number of white settlers—250,000 as compared with barely 80,000 in Northern Rhodesia and barely 10,000 in Nyasaland. In the case of the Federation it was clear that as long as the European population continued to increase in number and to take a growing part in the active life of the country, the finding of peaceful solutions and the participation of the indigenous inhabitants in the management of the three Territories would be hampered by the existence of certain material and political interests.

4. There was an apparent inconsistency in the manner in which the United Nations was dealing with the question. The General Assembly had urged the United Kingdom to take action in the Territory because it recognized the United Kingdom as the administering Power. The United Kingdom, however, maintained that it could not take any steps through constitutional channels to compel the federal or territorial authorities to take any specific action. The only positive event that had occurred in the Territory since June 1962 had been the introduction of amendments to two Acts further restricting the activities of the Africans, banning the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) and detaining various nationalist leaders. Those acts ran counter to the basic provisions of General Assembly resolution 1747 (XVI). It would soon be four months since that resolution had been adopted, but it had not led to the desired results. More recently the General Assembly had adopted resolution 1755 (XVII), which he hoped would prove more effective.

5. Paragraph 5 of the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples (General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV)) provided that immediate steps should be taken, in Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories or all other territories which had not yet attained independence, to transfer all power to the peoples of those territories. His delegation had always maintained that in the case of Southern Rhodesia there had been a gradual transfer of power from London to Salisbury. So far, however, those who had benefited by that transfer had been the European minority in Southern Rhodesia, while the African population played no active part in the political affairs of the Territory. The crux of the problem would therefore appear to be the rate at which the Africans were being incorporated into the active life of the country. Although the 1961 Constitution provided certain machinery for the attainment of that goal, the rate of progress was not sufficient to guarantee that

the African population would be managing their own affairs within a reasonable period of time. Indeed, as matters stood they would not even be able to share those powers with the European population on a proportional basis. A change in the present status of Southern Rhodesia was therefore called for and should be effected in the light of the recommendations in General Assembly resolution 1747 (XVI).

6. Mr. SMIRNOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that while the tenor of the statements in the Committee and the results of the voting on General Assembly resolution 1755 (XVII) had confirmed the existence of near-unanimity on the subject under discussion and a desire to implement the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples, the colonialists, as was clear from the statement made by the United Kingdom representative at the previous meeting, remained out of step. The United Kingdom Government was disregarding the views of the majority in the United Nations just as it disregarded the views of the majority of the people of Southern Rhodesia.

7. His delegation was concerned at the delays in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960. Nearly two years had elapsed since the memorable day on which the General Assembly, upon the proposal of Mr. Khrushchev, the head of the Government of the USSR, had adopted the historic Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples. Yet the colonialists, true to their nature, were still doing their utmost to prevent the enfranchisement of peoples.

8. The long-suffering people of Southern Rhodesia had now been under the British colonial yoke for over seventy years. While the methods of oppression had changed during that period, the colonialist essence of political, economic and racial inequality had remained the same. Southern Rhodesia was under the sway of foreign, especially British, mining companies, while the indigenous inhabitants had never been asked for their views. The foreign monopolies had really prospered after the establishment of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1953; in 1960-1961 the net profits of the British South Africa Company alone had amounted to nearly five times the grant given by the United Kingdom to Southern Rhodesia under the much vaunted Colonial Development and Welfare Act.

9. The African inhabitants of Southern Rhodesia were subjected to racist laws which deprived them of the most elementary economic and political rights. Racial discrimination as practised in the Territory did not differ in essence from apartheid in South West Africa. The indigenous inhabitants were mercilessly exploited, subjected to forced labour and paid the most meagre wages, and their existence in the reserves could hardly be called human life. The petitioners had painted a grim picture of inequality in education. While European children enjoyed compulsory free education up to the age of fifteen, African children had to pay for their education and were short of schools. The appropriations for the education of the 40,000 European children were two and a half times higher than those for the education of more than 500,000 African children. Only 20 per cent of the African children completed six years of schooling. Thousands of them were deprived of all school facilities and when, fighting for their future, they demonstrated in the streets, they were dispersed by the police with batons and tear gas.

10. The new Constitution proclaimed by the United Kingdom in the interests of the white settlers served to consolidate the rule of the minority over the overwhelming African majority. The steps taken by the United Kingdom in Southern Rhodesia were incompatible with its obligation as a State Member of the United Nations to observe the principles of the Charter and to contribute in every possible way to the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the United Nations and its organs. Even after the adoption of the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples, the United Kingdom had taken steps to bolster the interests of the colonialists and industrialists, without consulting the indigenous inhabitants or the United Nations. It might logically have been expected that the Governments of the United Kingdom and of Southern Rhodesia would give their support to such organizations in the Territory as were contributing to the implementation of the Declaration. They had, however, banned both the National Democratic Party and the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union, which were campaigning for Southern Rhodesia's independence, and had arrested Mr. Nkomo, the champion of his people's freedom. The Byelorussian delegation expressed indignation at his arrest and demanded his immediate release. Against the background of the United Kingdom's activities in Southern Rhodesia, the protestations of adherence to the principles of the United Nations uttered by that country's representatives in the General Assembly sounded hypocritical indeed.

11. His delegation failed to understand why some speakers in the Committee had tried so hard to look for something positive in the United Kingdom Government's actions in Southern Rhodesia. Nor could it subscribe to the view expressed by the Australian representative in the Special Committee established under General Assembly resolution 1654 (XVI) (14th meeting) that the United Kingdom Government's action in Southern Rhodesia deserved encouragement. On the contrary, it felt that the Australian representative had not had the courage to give an objective assessment of the situation as it was.

12. The United Kingdom should be clearly told that Southern Rhodesia had suffered enough under its rule and should be granted genuine independence. The indigenous inhabitants, who constituted the majority, should be masters of their fate. He could not subscribe to the views expressed in certain quarters that the political and economic backwardness of the indigenous inhabitants made it impossible for them to attain independence and that therefore there was no need for undue haste. After more than seventy years of colonial rule in Southern Rhodesia it was impossible to speak of undue haste. Moreover, it had been demonstrated in practice that a people which had shaken off the fetters of colonialism was capable of great deeds and could accomplish in one decade what would take centuries under the colonial régime. An end should be put to colonialism in all its forms through the immediate and unconditional application of the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples.

13. His delegation deemed it essential that the United Kingdom Government should be asked to repeal the so-called 1961 Constitution since it did not provide for universal suffrage or the creation by democratic means of representative organs of government. All discriminatory legislation should be repealed and the

ban on ZAPU should be lifted immediately; all political parties, trade unions and other public organizations, as well as individuals, should be granted all democratic freedoms; all political detainees should be released; and full powers should be transferred to local organs elected by the population as a whole by secret ballot, without any conditions or restrictions. The United Kingdom Government should be requested to settle as rapidly as possible all the issues in Southern Rhodesia relating to the implementation of the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples.

14. Mr. SONN VOEUNSAI (Cambodia) observed that his delegation's attitude with regard to the question of Southern Rhodesia was based on principles to which his country was firmly attached. Firstly, Cambodia had undertaken to abide by the principles of the Charter, to carry out its obligations and to co-operate in the implementation of decisions taken by the majority of Member States. Secondly, it stood by the principle of the sovereignty of nations and the freedom of peoples to choose their régimes, their institutions and their policy, provided it was not based upon aggression and did not constitute a danger for world peace. Thirdly, it was resolved not to dwell upon the past and to eschew hatred and emotionalism. Fourthly, it was resolved to seek, by means of peaceful negotiation, positive and concrete solutions of the serious problem of decolonization.

15. In his delegation's view, the following factors constituted the crux of the problem before the Committee. Firstly, Southern Rhodesia was inhabited by a majority of indigenous inhabitants and a minority of white settlers. Secondly, there was discrimination in fact, if not in law, which debarred the Africans from managing their own affairs and freely expressing their wishes. Thirdly, the Territory could not be regarded as self-governing, since its status did not meet the criteria laid down in General Assembly resolution 1541 (XV). Fourthly, the Constitution of 6 December 1961 was unacceptable to the majority of the population. Fifthly, the question having come before the General Assembly, the majority of Member States, in adopting resolution 1747 (XVI) of 28 June 1962, had voted in favour of a peaceful settlement through a constitutional conference with the full participation of representatives of all political parties. Sixthly, the recommendations of resolution 1747 (XVI) had been entirely disregarded; further legislation had been introduced and the banning of political parties and the arrest of the nationalist chiefs had created an explosive situation which might well endanger peace and security in Africa and in the world as a whole.

16. In the circumstances, his delegation considered that the United Nations should intervene, for two principal reasons: firstly, in order to preserve world peace and security; secondly, in order to defend the principles of the Charter, especially those relating to fundamental human rights and the self-determination of peoples. The argument that the United Nations should not intervene in the domestic affairs of States was valid only with regard to questions of administration and government policy. The international community was entitled to ensure the implementation of the essential principles by which Member States as a whole were guided.

17. Since, therefore, intervention was justified, any decisions reached must lead to definite results. It was regrettable that even the most reasonable recom-

mendations had remained a dead letter. The United Kingdom's argument that it was not competent in the matter could not be accepted. A number of representatives had already dealt with that question and he would merely add that the fact that the United Kingdom was responsible for the foreign policy of Southern Rhodesia placed it under an obligation to induce the Government of the Territory to respect the principles of the Charter regarding human rights and self-determination.

18. His delegation considered that the first step towards a settlement would be to clear the air by proclaiming a general amnesty. That was why it had voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 1755 (XVII). As he had already stated, that should be regarded only as a preliminary recommendation. Subsequently, the fact should be taken into account that every man should be able freely to express his opinion and his wishes without distinction of race, language, religion or economic or social position. On that essential point his delegation merely called for the implementation of the second paragraph of the Preamble and Article 1, paragraph 2, of the Charter. In the case before the Committee, and in view of the existence of the proposed Constitution, there were two possible solutions: the first would be to hold a referendum under international supervision to ascertain the views of the population regarding the Constitution; the second would be the holding of a further constitutional conference. In either case, it was essential that the whole population should have freedom of expression and that the whole Rhodesian people should be able to choose their destiny.

19. His delegation was prepared to support any draft resolution which would result in the putting into effect of the views of the majority of Member States regarding the restoration of peace in Southern Rhodesia and the granting to the Rhodesian people of political rights and self-determination. His delegation was convinced that Southern Rhodesia would soon recover its full independence in accordance with the freely expressed wishes of the whole population and that a new African sovereign State would shortly be added to the great family of free nations.

20. Mr. NICOLAESCU (Romania) said that his delegation regarded the situation in Southern Rhodesia as serious and urgent. The statements of the ZAPU petitioners had confirmed that view.

21. Southern Rhodesia was a typical example of the results of a racist colonial policy and of the way in which the colonialists were endeavouring to maintain their economic and political domination. Attempts were being made to transform the colonial system into a neo-colonial system based on foreign economic interests. Southern Rhodesia, with its great wealth of minerals and power, played an important part in the network of industrial corporations which covered Central and Southern Africa. A number of representatives had referred to the existence of an "unholy alliance" in Africa: that alliance was merely the political expression of the economic interests in that region. Obviously the political system in Southern Rhodesia, under which the right to representation of the African people was fifty times less than that of the white settlers, was based on the economic interests of the great foreign monopolies and of the white settlers. The latter, who represented less than one eighth of the entire population of the country, not only had a monopoly of political rights but also controlled the principal industrial resources, the best

land, and trade, and were desperately trying to preserve their privileges for the future in all fields of social activity, with the assistance of a racial police State. With regard to the argument of illiteracy as a pretext for depriving the people of Southern Rhodesia of their elementary political rights, he pointed out that that argument had been refuted by the experience of a number of African and Asian States.

22. The actions of the administering Power in Southern Rhodesia were a flagrant violation of the principles embodied in the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples. The 1961 Constitution, which had been drawn up after the adoption of the Declaration, was the concentrated expression of that attitude. Today, as in 1923, an indigenous population of over 3 million was refused the right to govern itself. The granting to the indigenous population of fifteen seats in an assembly of sixty-five members was merely designed to camouflage its lack of political rights. The application of a Constitution such as that of Southern Rhodesia, the perpetuation of racism and the measures against the leaders of the population were clear evidence of the retrograde nature of colonialist policy. There could be no other interpretation of such actions as the banning of ZAPU and the arrest of Mr. Joshua Nkomo, the nationalist leader, at a time when dozens of other peoples and countries were recovering their independence. The representative of Tanganyika had rightly stressed that the United Kingdom Government had learnt no lessons from history. There could be no doubt that the people of Southern Rhodesia would shortly achieve freedom, whereupon the United Kingdom delegation would probably claim that that freedom had been generously offered to the people of Southern Rhodesia, as it had claimed in other cases.

23. The confidence of the authorized representatives of the people of Southern Rhodesia that the General Assembly would be able to influence the policy of the United Kingdom must not be betrayed. The vital interests of the African people of the Territory required that they should be enabled to benefit from the great wealth of their country, which was today being exploited by large monopolies with the co-operation of the white settlers. The system of white domination in Southern Rhodesia, based on racial discrimination and arbitrary police rule, must be eliminated.

24. By means of various arguments, the United Kingdom, with the assistance of its allies, had sought to introduce confusion into the debate and to prevent the United Nations from adopting an unequivocal attitude in favour of the people of Southern Rhodesia. Such arguments could not withstand the force of facts and the responsibility of the United Nations in situations which endangered the fundamental principles of the Charter. According to the United Kingdom delegation, Southern Rhodesia belonged to a category of States which were neither dependent nor independent, which were not represented at the international level and were deprived of all responsibility. To accept that interpretation would be tantamount to sanctioning the colonial servitude of 3 million Africans and recognizing a racist State led by settlers even before they had proclaimed themselves independent.

25. Various delegations, anxious to support the administering Power, had argued that the liberation of Territories where there were large numbers of settlers was difficult and that in fact it constituted a fresh stage of so-called decolonization. In the view of

the Romanian delegation the essence of the matter was that the colonialist Powers were setting up increased resistance to the process of decolonization in the Territories where their economic and political interests were greatest and were seeking unprecedented social, political and legal arguments to that end. That was the real explanation of the supposed difficulties which must be surmounted by the African peoples in such territories as Rhodesia, South West Africa and Katanga.

26. The provisions of the Charter and the adoption of the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples were the best reply to the United Kingdom Government's claim of indivisible responsibility towards its colonies.

27. There had been a time when the colonialist Powers had shared out the world and decided the fate of peoples by means of international agreements concluded among themselves for the purpose of setting up zones of influence. At that time the international nature of colonial questions had been recognized, since a handful of colonialist Powers had spoken in the name of the international community. Since then, however, the world situation had changed, colonialism had collapsed, new factors and new forces had appeared in the international field, hundreds of millions of men whose fate in the past had been decided by colonial agreements were today free, were taking part in the settlement of the problems which faced humanity and were demanding the immediate liberation of the colonial peoples. It no longer suited the colonialist Powers to recognize the international character of colonial questions; hence theories such as that of "the indivisible responsibility" of the administering Powers towards their colonies were now appearing.

28. One essential conclusion had emerged from the debate on Southern Rhodesia: the country must be restored to the people to whom it belonged. It was the duty of the General Assembly to require the immediate and unconditional liberation of the people of Southern Rhodesia from colonialist domination and the restoration of the sovereignty of which they had been deprived for decades. The administering Power must be induced to abrogate immediately all discriminatory and repressive measures, to annul the 1961 Constitution and to convene the representative constitutional conference called for in General Assembly resolution 1747 (XVI). The Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples must be put into effect immediately after those steps had been taken, so that Southern Rhodesia could become a truly independent African State. The United Nations must ensure that at the moment of the transfer of power and the proclamation of independence the principle that the interests of the indigenous population were paramount was respected. In view of the seriousness of the situation in Southern Rhodesia, the question should be maintained on the agenda of the present session of the General Assembly and on that of the Special Committee.

29. Mr. USTUN (Turkey) observed that it was an undisputed fact at present that colonialism in all its forms and manifestations was outmoded. Inequality among human beings was no longer acceptable or permissible. Much had been done to liquidate colonialism, but the process of decolonization must be completed and the United Nations must spare no effort to accelerate that process.

30. The Turkish delegation had always supported all actions within the United Nations which it felt would

serve the interests of dependent peoples and countries and help them to achieve independence in the shortest possible time in peace and tranquillity. The United Nations should exercise great care in its approach to every specific problem concerning those countries and should first make sure that any action taken on the situation in any of the dependent countries would be in conformity with the interests of the people concerned and would give the positive results that were desired.

31. He felt that the Committee had obtained a better understanding of the situation in Southern Rhodesia from hearing petitioners representing different parties or groups with varying views about the solution of the problem. His delegation had been impressed by their almost unanimous testimony that the great majority of the people of Southern Rhodesia desired the achievement of their goals by peaceful means without recourse to violence. The United Nations must discourage violent methods for the achievement of political aims. However justified the use of such methods might be, many innocent people suffered from them, normal progress was hindered and the economic life of the country could be paralysed. The United Nations must encourage the solution of any problem by peaceful means except where all other means had been exhausted.

32. His delegation hoped that the people of Southern Rhodesia would try to solve their problems round a conference table. It would ultimately be for the people of Southern Rhodesia to solve those problems which were primarily of a constitutional character. He was confident that they would soon be able to reconcile their conflicting views and arrive at an agreement which would bring independence and be in the interests of all concerned.

33. His delegation was certain that the United Kingdom Government was greatly concerned with the situation and anxious to help to improve conditions in Southern Rhodesia. It was well known that the United Kingdom Government had embarked on a great movement of decolonization in recent years and he was sure that, having brought so many dependent lands and peoples to statehood and independence in peace and tranquillity, it would carry on the same policy and help in finding a just and lasting solution to the problem of Southern Rhodesia. In the light of the results of the discussions in the United Nations, the United Kingdom Government would doubtless endeavour to use its influence with the Government of Southern Rhodesia with a view to solving the problems facing that country. He felt sure that, thanks to genuine efforts and goodwill on the part of all concerned, a just and satisfactory solution would soon be found.

34. Miss IMRU (Ethiopia) observed that at the resumed sixteenth session (1120th plenary meeting) her delegation had defined its position with regard to the constitutional, legal and moral obligations of the United Kingdom in connexion with Southern Rhodesia. At the present time she would merely add that no exception to the general rules of law must be allowed because of the presence of white settlers in Southern Rhodesia. The Charter, the resolutions of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights must not be set aside.

35. According to the report of the Special Committee established under General Assembly resolution 1654 (XVI) (A/5238, chap. II), the United Kingdom Govern-

ment had retained the power to disallow certain categories of laws, including laws affecting the interests of the African population. It was further stated that those powers had not been exercised for a great many years. She wondered how it was that the reserved powers designed to protect the African population had not been exercised when a number of discriminatory laws had been introduced. Her delegation feared that the action now being pursued by the United Kingdom would lead to disaster and place a majority of the people of Southern Rhodesia in the same situation as the African population of South Africa. The inevitable result would be the destruction of confidence and the loss of an opportunity to make a constructive contribution towards race relations not only in Southern Rhodesia but in the whole of Africa, Asia and the rest of the world. Those consequences could be avoided if the United Kingdom would exercise its responsibilities before it was too late.

36. Minority groups must learn that they could not keep their privileged position. The only solution to problems such as that of Southern Rhodesia was to create better living conditions. Her delegation appealed to the United Kingdom Government to implement the resolutions on the question of Southern Rhodesia, which had been adopted by an overwhelming majority of Members of the General Assembly.

37. Her delegation was prepared to support any resolution or action which would assist the people of Southern Rhodesia to achieve independence unfettered by economic exploitation, political discrimination or social degradation.

38. Mr. DIALLO (Mali) said that all the States signatories to the United Nations Charter and all men of goodwill who had the triumph of justice and peace at heart should urgently ensure the implementation of the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples, which reflected the world's disapproval of the moribund system of colonialism. Yet today, mankind was witnessing an attempt in Southern Rhodesia to repeat the painful experiment performed in the past in South Africa, with the final objective of depriving a people of their country for the benefit of an alien minority.

39. At the time when Europe's colonialist Powers had been engaged in the colossal conspiracy against the African peoples which had resulted in the division of the continent among them, many settlers had been attracted by Southern Rhodesia's immense wealth and temperate climate. The indigenous inhabitants had soon come to realize the inhuman nature of colonization, which had gradually deprived them of their land. The settlers, following the precedent of South Africa, had sought to strengthen their entrenched authority by every means. In 1923, after a sham referendum in which the 13,000 European settlers had taken part while the views of the great majority of the indigenous inhabitants had not been sought, Southern Rhodesia had been sought, Southern Rhodesia had been arbitrarily and unlawfully annexed to the Crown as a "self-governing colony".

40. The status of a self-governing colony did not correspond either with the factors indicative of the attainment of independence or of other separate systems of self-government annexed to General Assembly resolution 742 (VIII) or to the principles annexed to General Assembly resolution 1541 (XV). His delegation was of the opinion that despite the internal arrange-

ments whereby the white settler authorities had been granted a measure of self-government, Southern Rhodesia remained a United Kingdom colony both legally and morally and thus fell within the scope of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples. The provisions of operative paragraph 5 of that resolution should therefore be applied to it.

41. The settlers in Southern Rhodesia, thirsting for maximum profits and blinded by the immense wealth accruing to them from colonial brigandage and by their material and military might, were incapable of learning from the lessons of history. In their determination to maintain their supremacy at any cost they were trying to repeat their successful coup of 1923. The people of Southern Rhodesia, however, had never accepted the situation resulting from the sham referendum of that year and would not accept any new decision to which they were not a party. They had become aware of their organized strength and could not allow their destiny to be at the mercy of others, nor could they fail to react to events in other parts of Africa. They could not accept a Constitution which would reinforce the political and economic powers of an alien minority at the expense of the indigenous majority and, under the enlightened leadership of ZAPU, they had rejected the 1961 Constitution by a large majority. To impose that Constitution after its rejection would be an act of despotism fraught with dire consequences. The events which had occurred in the country since the banning of ZAPU were but a foretaste of what might happen. A people driven to the wall by violence was obliged to resort to violence in self-defence. The people of Southern Rhodesia were determined to fight with all the means at their disposal to regain freedom and independence. They had right on their side and nothing would stop them from attaining their noble objective.

42. His delegation's stand in the question of Southern Rhodesia was determined by the fact that the people of Mali had always given and would continue to give their whole-hearted support to the African peoples still fighting for liberation from the colonial yoke. His delegation adhered to the view that the starting point for an objective solution of the Southern Rhodesian crisis should be the recognition of the indigenous inhabitants' right to govern themselves. To that end the 1961 Constitution must be repealed and a new constitutional conference convened in which the genuine representatives of the Southern Rhodesian people should play an effective part. The new Constitution should contain provisions for a democratic electoral law based on the principle of universal adult suffrage. Elections held under that law would result in a fair distribution of seats in the legislature and in the formation of a Government based on the will of the people.

43. The United Kingdom, as the administering Power, was in duty bound to work with the United Nations towards that objective. It should begin by restoring political and democratic freedom and releasing all the nationalist leaders, including Mr. Nkomo, thus ensuring the more relaxed atmosphere necessary for the preliminary negotiations which would lead to genuine independence for Southern Rhodesia. That way lay the only path of salvation. He was convinced that the United Kingdom, which had already granted other peoples formerly under its administration the right to freedom and self-determination, would overcome all the difficulties and satisfy the legitimate claims of the people

of Southern Rhodesia, thereby demonstrating once again its goodwill and understanding.

44. Mr. SHABA (Tanganyika) said that Africans in Tanganyika had always looked with deep revulsion on the humiliating practices of racial discrimination. While few African countries had escaped such practices altogether when under colonial rule, discrimination had never developed in Tanganyika to the same extent as in certain areas further to the south. In South Africa and now in Southern Rhodesia it had been institutionalized by means of mock constitutions, with the full blessing of the United Kingdom Government. That Government was now trying to divert attention from the issues by abstruse legal arguments. The issue in Southern Rhodesia was quite clear: it concerned the subjection of over 3 million Africans to some 250,000 British settlers. General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) declared that steps were to be taken in all territories which had not yet attained independence to transfer powers to the peoples of those territories in order to enable them to enjoy complete independence and freedom. It was generally conceded that Southern Rhodesia fell within the category of such territories.

45. It was distressing for those States which were members of the Commonwealth to have to appeal to the United Kingdom Government to bring about a change in the policies now being pursued in Southern Rhodesia. Unfortunately the United Kingdom Government had completely ignored the General Assembly's request, in resolution 1747 (XVI), that it should convene a constitutional conference for the purpose of formulating a new constitution, restore all rights of the non-European population, remove all laws which sanctioned racially discriminatory practices and ensure the immediate release of political prisoners. The Constitution was being enforced against the determined opposition of the Africans; more nationalist leaders and their followers had been restricted, detained and imprisoned, and ZAPU had been banned, with the result that it was now impossible for the experienced African leaders to take part in the political life of their country. In the face of all those developments the United Kingdom had remained aloof. It had ignored the stands taken by such men as Sir Robert Tredgold, who had resigned as Chief Justice of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland following the adoption of the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act; Mr. Hugh Gaitskell, who had vehemently criticized the recent amendments to the Unlawful Organizations Act and the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act; and Sir Hugh Foot, who had resigned from the United Kingdom delegation to the United Nations. Sir Edgar Whitehead's Government had now reportedly advanced the date of the forthcoming elections from March 1963 to December 1962, a manoeuvre which confirmed the determination of the settlers to perpetuate their domination once the Constitution was implemented.

46. The nationalist petitioners and the Reverend Michael Scott had removed all doubts regarding the oppressive conditions under which the Africans still languished in Southern Rhodesia. The so-called multi-racial group of petitioners should be dismissed with the contempt they deserved; it had been quite clear from the manner in which they had answered the Committee's questions that they were the puppets of Sir Edgar Whitehead. There were all the makings of a great human tragedy in Central and Southern Africa, and the fault would lie mainly with the United Kingdom,

which was surrendering responsibility to a white-dominated Government, just as it had done in South Africa. Under the new Constitution, the Europeans would have the necessary two-thirds majority to change the Constitution or deprive the Africans of their rights, and the United Kingdom would have relinquished its power to intervene. The time had come for the United Kingdom to prove its good faith towards Africa and to resist the powerful lure of gold and diamonds.

47. He appealed to the United Kingdom to stop the mock elections proposed by Sir Edgar Whitehead and to co-operate in the setting up of a constitutional and administrative service commission to draw up plans for technical and social aid and for consultation on a future constitution. Africa was now awake and its liberation was inevitable; the United Kingdom would best safeguard its own interests by co-operating in the achievement of that liberation.

48. Mr. Chiping H. C. KIANG (China) said that, as little had been left unsaid on the question of Southern Rhodesia, he would confine himself to a brief statement. The petitioners had appeared to his delegation to be devoted men with but one purpose, namely to promote the interests of the overwhelming majority of Africans in Southern Rhodesia. It was on that foundation that constitutional reforms and a harmonious racial society would have to be based.

49. According to the report of the Advisory Commission on the Review of the Constitution of Rhodesia and Nyasaland,^{1/} distrust among the African population had unfortunately reached such a pitch that to dispel it would require drastic changes in the structure of the Federation and in the racial policies of Southern Rhodesia. His delegation had hoped that the postponement of the October elections would have provided an opportunity for all parties to review the situation. After so many years during which African participation in government had been restricted, any attempts at constitutional reform were bound to encounter opposition. The failure of the effort to persuade 60,000 Africans to register as voters seemed to reflect the feelings of the great majority of Africans. The situation was such that the bona fide efforts of any significant multiracial group should be encouraged not only by Blacks and Whites alike in Southern Rhodesia but also by the United Nations.

50. In the view of his delegation, the most promising and generally acceptable solution lay in constitutional reforms designed to bring about the full participation of the African population in the government in a definite period of time. Many Southern Rhodesian leaders were understood to be aware of the danger of excluding large numbers of educated Africans from power; the Europeans would not succeed in preserving their security by perpetuating the status quo but should give proof of statesmanship in bringing about universal agreement.

51. In reply to a question his delegation had asked at the 1341st meeting, the petitioner, Mr. Sithole, the National Chairman of ZAPU, had said that his party accepted the need for a transitional period but would require guarantees that the stage of majority rule would be achieved in a definite time, which could be negotiated at a constitutional conference. That answer might provide the key to the solution of the question.

52. His delegation did not doubt that the United Kingdom would do its utmost to secure a widening of the franchise and the transfer of power to the African majority. He agreed with the view expressed by the Mexican representative at the 1357th meeting that the United Kingdom should be given the utmost freedom to effect the requisite changes. The security and welfare of the people of all races in Southern Rhodesia were inextricably linked and all races should be protected against discrimination.

53. All those taking part in the debate must realize that it would be unwise for the Committee to exceed the limits of the competence of the United Nations. Two of the petitioners, Mr. Dumbutshena and Mr. Sithole, had urged the Committee to be practical and realistic in its recommendations. His delegation hoped that that wise counsel would be taken into account.

54. Miss KAMAL (Iraq) said that the question of the status of Southern Rhodesia should no longer be open to question: in resolution 1747 (XVI) the General Assembly had confirmed the view—always maintained by her delegation—that Southern Rhodesia was a Non-Self-Governing Territory. Nevertheless, the United Kingdom Government still claimed that it was unable to exert authority over the Government of Southern Rhodesia on the grounds that, in 1923, it had given the European minority the right to conduct the affairs of the Territory. It was surely absurd to argue that a grave injustice committed in 1923 made it impossible for the United Kingdom to try now to rectify its mistake and to change the conditions resulting from it. The United Kingdom had an obligation under the United Nations Charter to administer Southern Rhodesia in accordance with the principles of the Charter. She was convinced that there were avenues open to the United Kingdom Government through which it could exert its influence in favour of a just settlement.

55. The 1961 Constitution, under which only fifteen seats in the legislature would go to the Africans, had been rejected by the African population, which constituted over 90 per cent of the total population. The Committee had been assured that the Constitution was not rigid and that the Africans would eventually obtain a majority of seats, but she had doubts on that score. The people had an inalienable right to rule themselves and that right could not be granted piecemeal. Moreover, there was no reason to think that the advancement of the Africans would be assured as long as control was in the hands of a minority which had always ignored their aspirations. The Africans were naturally suspicious of the Whites: they had endured constant discrimination and the rigours of numerous repressive laws. Under the Unlawful Organizations Act three nationalist parties had been successively banned and a new amendment had now been passed giving the Governor the power to ban any organization which he believed to be related to an unlawful organization. That measure, together with the amendment to the Law and Order (Maintenance) Act prohibiting gatherings of twelve or more persons, meant that almost every avenue for peaceful protest was closed to the Africans. A dangerous and explosive situation had resulted. The urgency of the matter was increased by reports received from petitioners and other sources of an "unholy alliance" between the Governments of Southern Rhodesia, South Africa and Portugal and certain financial interests in the region concerned. If the United Kingdom did not act now, it was hard to foretell what would happen and whether a repetition of

^{1/} Cmnd. 1148, London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

the recent events in Algeria would be avoided. Her delegation asked once again that a representative constitutional conference should be held and that freedom of political activities should be restored. There was so far no news of the release of Mr. Nkomo and other national leaders, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1755 (XVII).

56. Her delegation supported the proposal made by the Soviet Union at the 1357th meeting that the question of Southern Rhodesia should remain on the General Assembly's agenda. It would also support or co-sponsor any resolution in line with the general position which she had outlined.

57. Mr. TAPSOBA (Upper Volta) said that his country had obtained independence through agreement with the colonial Power. Such independence would, however, be meaningless if Upper Volta failed to concern itself about colonialism elsewhere and about a situation in which an African majority was being terrorized by a white minority. It was clear from the report of the Special Committee established under resolution 1654 (XVI) (A/5238, chap. II) that the wishes of 250,000 Europeans were being imposed on 3.5 million Africans. The African population had not been consulted regarding the formation of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1953; again, in the referendum on the 1961 Constitution, only some 4,000 Africans had taken part.

58. The so-called multiracial party which was now in power in Southern Rhodesia included a number of unfortunate Africans who could be prevailed upon to support the thesis that Africans were not yet ready to govern their country. The fact was that none of the recently independent countries had had a fully educated population before independence, though some had doubled or trebled the rate of school attendance since independence. Political power itself had the effect of giving the masses a sense of responsibility and dignity.

59. The question inevitably arose of the degree of responsibility of the United Kingdom in the present matter. The United Kingdom held that Southern Rhodesia was self-governing and it therefore refused to submit information under Article 73 of the Charter or to admit its competence regarding events in the Territory. Such a position was untenable and could be explained only by a concern for the protection of financial interests. The United Kingdom should be asked to bring about the release of Mr. Nkomo and his colleagues, the restoration of political rights to all the people, the abrogation of the 1961 Constitution, the holding of a free elections under universal suffrage, and the speedy accession of the Territory to independence.

60. Mr. ATIDEPE (Togo) said that the recent events which had led to the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1755 (XVII), the sudden action taken by the Government of Southern Rhodesia to hasten the elections and implement the 1961 Constitution, the arming of the settlers and the sometimes violent resistance of the Africans to coercive measures against them were indicative of an explosive situation. There was serious danger of a colonial conflict of a special kind, in which the colonizers would act independently of external control and the troops would not come from a metropolitan territory. Every settler was armed and ready to kill. Taking advantage of the racist constitution which they had been granted, the settlers were trying to assume complete independence and to consolidate their rule by all possible means. The prospects for Southern Rhodesia if the United Nations did not intervene in time could easily be foreseen.

61. His delegation held the United Kingdom responsible for the situation in Southern Rhodesia, regardless of the constitutional arguments invoked. There was no point in repeating the long debates on the subject; it was sufficient that General Assembly resolution 1747 (XVI) had affirmed that the Territory of Southern Rhodesia was a Non-Self-Governing Territory within the meaning of Chapter XI of the Charter of the United Nations. Self-government existed in the country, but only for the white minority which had been oppressing the rest of the population for three quarters of a century and was imposing its own laws at will. That minority had seized forests, fertile land and cattle and was exploiting the mineral resources of the Territory for its exclusive benefit.

62. Of the petitioners heard by the Committee, he had been most impressed by those of the independent multiracial group. Notwithstanding their narrow views and their failure to arouse sympathy in the Committee, he felt that they had revealed the basic problem in Southern Rhodesia. Peace could be achieved in that country only if there was racial harmony, but that harmony would have to be on certain terms which the Whites in Rhodesia were afraid to recognize. Those terms should be made known to the independent multiracial group and, through them, to all the Whites and to certain Africans of Rhodesia. Racial harmony could not be achieved so long as the 3 million Africans were denied their basic rights and felt themselves enslaved by the 250,000 Whites. It could only be achieved through recognition of the right of the people to self-determination and to choose their own form of government in accordance with democratic principles. That would entail the rescinding of the 1961 Constitution and the convening of a conference which would provide Rhodesia with democratic institutions in which the rights of the citizen would not depend on his income or cultural level, and in which majority rule would prevail. When the lawful rights and human dignity of the Africans of Rhodesia were restored under a new Constitution, then, and then alone, could a true basis for racial harmony be found. The African majority would accept the white minority as full citizens and the indigenous Government would regard the presence of the Whites as essential to the life of the country. The attainment of such conditions would prevent a colonial war and would contribute to the maintenance of peace not only in Rhodesia, but in the world.

63. General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) should be applied to Southern Rhodesia, power should be transferred to the indigenous inhabitants and the latter should be helped to organize their country. The support of the United Kingdom was essential for that purpose. If it so desired, the United Kingdom could easily help to solve the Rhodesian problem. If it would weigh the impending human tragedy against its own legal arguments, it would realize that it was serving neither the interests of the Whites nor those of the Africans in Rhodesia and was likely to lose what it zealously sought to preserve. He therefore appealed to the United Kingdom to co-operate with the United Nations in restoring a normal situation in Rhodesia through the application of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

64. Mr. SAID (Federation of Malaya) observed that, since the General Assembly had considered the question of Southern Rhodesia at its resumed sixteenth session, the situation in that Territory had deteriorated. There was wide-spread political repression in the

country, and riots and disturbances had resulted in loss of life and property. The situation was indeed explosive and his delegation therefore appealed to everyone concerned to exercise restraint and goodwill. Any changes proposed should be brought about through orderly, constructive and peaceful processes and not through violence. In that way a firm foundation could be laid for a society based on equal rights and prosperity for all.

65. In the years since 1923, when the United Kingdom Government, in what had then been regarded as an act of magnanimity, had granted Southern Rhodesia a constitution with a considerable measure of internal self-government, the white settlers had entrenched their power and authority over the Africans in the country. Although it should be said, in fairness to the United Kingdom Government, that the 1923 Constitution included provisions for the training and eventual participation of the Africans in the government of Southern Rhodesia, the United Kingdom Government had not used its reserved powers but had allowed the white settlers to consolidate their position. It was thus partly to blame for the present crisis.

66. Given goodwill and understanding the present situation was not beyond solution. The 1961 Constitution had not yet been brought into full effect and until that was done the United Kingdom Government retained its reserved powers. In view of the present situation the Governor of Southern Rhodesia would be wise to withhold his assent, which was necessary before the new Constitution could be given full effect.

67. His delegation could not agree with the United Kingdom Government that Southern Rhodesia was self-governing and that the United Nations should take no cognizance of the situation there. Southern Rhodesia had none of the attributes laid down in General Assembly resolutions 742 (VIII) and 1541 (XV); hence, in so far as the United Nations was concerned, it could not be said to enjoy self-governing status. The status of Southern Rhodesia had been examined in detail by the Special Committee established under General Assembly resolution 1654 (XVI), which had concluded that Southern Rhodesia was not a self-governing territory within the meaning of Chapter XI of the Charter. The Special Committee's conclusion had subsequently been endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 1747 (XVI).

68. Irrespective of the legal arguments involved, the United Nations was confronted with a serious human situation in which the political destiny of 3 million Africans, who would have to live under the new Constitution, had been arbitrarily decided without their consent. Although the United Kingdom Government maintained that the 1961 Constitution was an improvement on the 1923 Constitution and a step in the right direction which would eventually lead to an African majority in the legislature, the Africans could hardly be blamed for questioning the sincerity of the white minority, who had taken thirty-nine years to give the Africans fifteen seats in a proposed legislature of sixty-five. In view of events in South Africa and of the irresponsible statements of white leaders such as Sir Roy Welensky, the Africans had every reason to be concerned about their political future. Moreover, in the present context of political evolution, a ten years' delay, as envisaged by Sir Edgar Whitehead, before the Africans would be able to run their own government was too long and, if condoned by the General Assembly, would be a retrogressive step con-

trary to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

69. However good a constitution might be, it should not be forcibly imposed on a people whose majority had vehemently declared their opposition to it. The Committee had received ample evidence of that opposition. Furthermore, the Advisory Commission on the Review of the Constitution of Rhodesia and Nyasaland had pointed out that the overwhelming support of the African population was required before a constitution could be made to work. If the United Kingdom Government disregarded the considered recommendations of a constitutional commission it had itself set up, the Africans in Southern Rhodesia would be confirmed in their suspicions that, in forcing the new Constitution through, it was trying to protect its vested interests in the Territory.

70. The United Nations was in duty bound to respond to the appeal of the indigenous inhabitants of Southern Rhodesia, who, despite the so-called self-governing status of their land, were deprived of the most elementary political and human rights. The United Nations should find a solution that would prevent bloodshed and chaos in Southern Rhodesia.

71. He could not accept the arguments advanced by the petitioners Mr. Hlazo and Mr. Butler that the Africans should be debarred from full participation in the affairs of their country until such time as they reached a certain level of literacy. That was an antiquated and untenable argument which had been advanced by colonial Powers in the past in order to justify prolongation of their rule and which had been rejected in operative paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). The Committee had seen a sufficient number of the Territory's nationalist leaders to become convinced that there were many able and dedicated Africans in Southern Rhodesia. Furthermore, it had been shown that the level of literacy in that Territory compared favourably with that in other African countries which were now sovereign and independent. He was therefore driven to the conclusion that the argument concerning literacy had been advanced as a pretext for the prolongation of white domination in Southern Rhodesia.

72. The situation in Southern Rhodesia was indeed grave. There was a feeling of unrest, frustration and despair, and disturbances and riots had already occurred. Such a mood was fraught with dire consequences to peace in Africa and the harmonious political evolution of the Territory. It was in the interests of the white settlers themselves that it should be changed. The petitioners Mr. Sithole, Mr. Mushonga and the Reverend Michael Scott had argued convincingly that the only way out of the present impasse was for the Constitution of Southern Rhodesia to be amended in such a manner as to enable the population to participate fully in the country's political life and have a full say in its current and future affairs.

73. His delegation appealed to the United Kingdom Government to intervene before it was too late. It was convinced that that Government had the necessary legal authority to effect the changes which had been demanded by the overwhelming majority of the African people. He therefore urged the United Kingdom Government to suspend the 1961 Constitution and to convene a conference of all political leaders in Southern Rhodesia with a view to the formulation of a new constitution which would take all legitimate interests into

account and would give the franchise to all citizens regardless of their status, colour or creed. The new constitutional conference would have to be preceded by measures designed to lessen tension in the country, such as the release of political detainees and prisoners and the repeal of legislation restricting the free participation of political parties in the life of the country. He sincerely hoped that the United Kingdom Govern-

ment would not mar its fine record in colonial affairs by failing to heed the appeal of its friends with regard to Southern Rhodesia. He urged the United Kingdom Government to implement General Assembly resolution 1747 (XVI) as soon as possible.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.