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Chairman: Mr. João Carlos MUNIZ (Brazil).

The Tunisian question (A/2152, A/C.1/736, A/C.1/737 and A/C.1/L.8) (continued)

[Item 60]*

1. Mr. SOURDIS (Colombia) observed that while the various views expressed during the consideration of the Tunisian question might not coincide with those of the French delegation, he requested them not to interpret the remarks of the Colombian delegation as a criticism of a nation which was so closely linked with the noble and spiritual traditions of the human race.

2. Referring to the draft resolution of the thirteen Powers (A/C.1/736), he stated that the aspirations of the group of delegations sponsoring it had the sincere sympathy of the Colombian delegation. The Colombian people were opposed to colonialism and recognized, as few others could, the right of all peoples to autonomy on the basis of the principle of self-determination contained in the United Nations Charter. Nevertheless, his delegation might express ideas which did not coincide fully with the aspirations of the Arab world.

3. Mr. Sourdis observed that the General Assembly was not a panacea. The Charter was merely an accord reached by a majority of countries which had regard for certain measures which, if carried out in good faith, could provide a road for solving various conflicts and for preserving universal peace.

4. The Charter, like every other work of man, was, in a way, imperfect. Since it was imperfect, the Colombian delegation believed that certain highly respectable principles and ideals, if taken to their logical conclusion, might lead to extremes which were different from those which the General Assembly was pursuing in good faith. Every human system, however perfect it might be, arrived at a point at which it must rest on the trust which people have in the human element. If that trust or human element vacillated, however perfect the system, it was inevitable that the system would break up and disappear. Therefore, he did not believe the principles of the Charter should be carried

to idealistic extremes which might subsequently lead to breaches of the Charter itself. In their application, account should be taken of the fact that the United Nations was a political organ.

5. The Colombian delegation would not attempt to examine the Tunisian question exhaustively. He wished, on the basis of a common feeling, to determine whether in the draft resolution of the thirteen Powers and in that of the Latin-American countries (A/C.1/L.8) there were fundamental analogies or links which, if taken into consideration, would enable the Committee to agree unanimously on the draft proposal of the Latin Powers.

6. Turning to the question of competence, Mr. Sourdis observed that the principle had been invoked that the situation which had developed in Tunisia was one which might endanger international peace and security. Chapter VI of the Charter dealt with potential situations which might lead to a breach of the peace, while Chapter VII dealt with the regulation of *de facto* situations.

7. The title of Chapter VI, "Pacific Settlement of Disputes", was self-explanatory. Those disputes he called potential breaches of the peace. Article 33 of that Chapter read in part as follows: "The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security, shall, first of all, seek a solution . . .". That provision of the Charter meant that the General Assembly did not wish to discuss situations which might lead to a breach of the peace. The Charter recommended that the parties presumed to be in dispute should themselves seek a solution to their disputes by negotiation, inquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement or other peaceful means. Those were conciliatory procedures which, in order to be successful, needed the consent of both parties, but they did not lead to any executive action by the General Assembly.

8. Paragraph 2 of Article 33 read: "The Security Council shall, when it deems necessary, call upon the parties to settle their dispute by such means". Mr. Sourdis observed that when a situation which might

* Indicates the item number on the agenda of the General Assembly.

lead to a breach of the peace reached such a point of maturity that it justified action by the United Nations, competence was conferred on the Security Council, which was not given executive but only recommendatory power.

9. Paragraph 1 of Article 35 read: "Any Member of the United Nations may bring any dispute, or any situation of the nature referred to in Article 34, to the attention of the Security Council or of the General Assembly".

10. The Colombian representative believed that if it were right for one Member to bring a situation of that nature before the General Assembly, it was not in order to permit that organ to take more extensive action than the Security Council could. It was not possible, since competence had been attributed to the Security Council, that the General Assembly should be allowed to go still further. The Charter gave the Arab countries the right to bring the Tunisian question before the General Assembly. However, that right did not involve conferring on it a competence which it did not have and which had been entrusted to the Security Council.

11. Chapter VII dealt with action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression. Article 39 of that Chapter read, in part, as follows: "The Security Council shall determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression and shall make recommendations, or decide what measure shall be taken . . .".

12. Mr. Sourdis noted that successive articles dealt with situations of increasing gravity. First, there was a situation which, if continued, might lead to a breach of the peace. That was referred to the Security Council, merely to enable it to "call upon the parties" if they themselves did not reach agreement. When the danger was no longer merely potential but had become actual aggression or an effective breach of the peace, the matter was attributed exclusively to the Security Council. The General Assembly would have no competence if it were a question of the breach of the peace.

13. The representative of Colombia said that, in view of the two types of situations dealt with in the Charter, it was important to determine which of the two procedures were envisaged in the draft resolution of the thirteen Powers. He believed the sponsors intended to bring the case within Chapter VI, because paragraph 4 of their proposal read: "Considers that the continuance of the present situation in Tunisia is detrimental to those rights and purposes and also endangers international peace and security." Article 33 of that Chapter included the same terms, since it stated: "The parties to any dispute, the continuance of which is likely to endanger . . .".

14. Mr. Sourdis interpreted that paragraph to be an admission on the part of the Arab States that peace had not been actually threatened or breached but that a situation existed between France and Tunisia which, if continued, might breach the peace.

15. Under those circumstances, the Colombian representative believed the Committee should consider the remedies outlined in the Charter. The Charter provided that the parties to any dispute should first of all seek a solution. He understood that the Tunisians

and French had tried to settle their dispute directly but that they had failed. For that reason, the Arab world had exercised its legitimate right in bringing the question before the General Assembly.

16. Recalling that the representative of India had recently stated (540th meeting) that the Arab, African and Asiatic worlds were on the march and would not tolerate anyone or anything which would interrupt that march, Mr. Sourdis said he believed that the idealistic principle which had started that march should not be developed merely within a purely dialectical process which was solely idealistic. If it were, it might be found that the extremes created were worse than the situation to be remedied.

17. If direct negotiations between France and Tunisia had failed, the next step was quite clear. The Security Council should, when it deemed necessary "call upon the parties" to settle their dispute. The Security Council could not go further, since the sponsors had based their whole proposal on Chapter VI. It was also clear that if the Security Council could not go further, neither could the Assembly when it was confronted with a case similar to the one before the Committee. The words "call upon" did not involve any executive principle but had a moral value. That principle of the Charter put trust in the desire for peace on the part of the negotiators. It must be agreed that the French, the Tunisians and the Arab States sincerely desired to solve the problem.

18. Since direct negotiations between France and Tunisia had failed, it was appropriate to determine how the Committee could call upon the parties to settle their dispute without running counter to paragraph 7 of Article 2. That paragraph read: "Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any State . . .". The Colombian delegation had intervened actively at San Francisco to have that principle included in the Charter, and his delegation would strive to see that nothing was done in violation of the principle of non-intervention.

19. However Article 14 read: "Subject to the provisions of Article 12, the General Assembly may recommend measures for the peaceful adjustment of any situation, regardless of origin, which it deems likely to impair the general welfare or friendly relations among nations . . .". France had agreed that the Committee was dealing with two independent States. The Arab sponsors of the draft resolution had accepted that fact as, in general, had the Committee. Therefore, the Committee was dealing with a breach of friendly relations between two States under Article 14 of the Charter.

20. Mr. Sourdis said his delegation would vote in favour of the Latin-American resolution because it did not involve an intervention. It contained only a request to the parties to reach an agreement.

21. With the deletion from the draft resolution of the thirteen Powers of the paragraph concerning the establishment of a commission, the Colombian delegate believed the two resolutions were substantially the same. The Latin-American draft resolution stated: "Mindful of the necessity of developing friendly rela-

tions among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples". Concerning that principle, the Latin-American draft resolution read: "Expresses the confidence that, in pursuance of its proclaimed policies, the Government of France will endeavour to further the effective development of the free institutions of the Tunisian people in conformity to the Purposes and Principles of the Charter". That resolution also expressed the hope that the parties would continue negotiations on an urgent basis with a view to bringing about self-government for Tunisians and it appealed to the parties concerned to conduct their relations and settle their disputes in accordance with the spirit of the Charter.

22. Mr. Sourdis asked why the sponsors of the draft resolution of the thirteen Powers did not join with the other representatives in calling upon the French Republic to recognize the principle of self-determination and the right of Tunisia to be fully autonomous. There was not a single representative who did not admit the great nobility of the French nation, nor one who did not recognize the Tunisians right to self-determination. Therefore, if the Charter contained a solution in Chapter VI, upon which the Arab States had based their draft resolution, then why should they not vote for the Latin-American draft resolution, which took into account those recognized principles? Although it might be said that seventy years ago the French nation promised to work under those principles, those years had been used to a great extent to improve the material conditions of the Tunisian people. That economic development was the basis on which could be built the political principles which the Committee was discussing. The Colombian delegation did not have the slightest doubt that the French Government would work on the basis of those principles.

23. Mr. DENNIS (Liberia) explained that his delegation had decided to participate in the debate because it subscribed to the declaration regarding the rights of Non-Self-Governing Territories, because the question of racial discrimination was unsettled, and because the rights of the African people were still ignored, although their lands were being exploited by the few and for the benefit of the few. It regarded the Franco-Tunisian dispute as a part of the problem of self-determination as a whole.

24. This problem, he continued, would have existed even if there were no Charter of the United Nations, in which was outlined the principles regarding the self-determination of peoples. Mr. Dennis pointed out that thus far the Charter had been of little use to the aspirations of dependent people. It would be futile for Powers to take shelter in paragraph 7 of Article 2 since the determination of subject peoples to obtain the right to be masters of their own destiny would continue. Furthermore, it seemed ironical that in order to prove their right to continue the suppression, States should have recourse to the very law which they had violated when subjugating dependent peoples.

25. The representative of Liberia stated that the question of the competence of the United Nations with regard to dependent or minority groups would continue to be discussed, since it had been noted in the past that certain Powers had been scrupulous and

tenacious in observing international law when that law could be interpreted to their benefit. The Tunisians did not expect any decision of the United Nations to be implemented without the consent of France or by the use of force, but they did need moral support. He warned that indifference toward their appeal would not make it easier for France to stem the tide of nationalism, and that suppressive action would only rekindle the flames of independence.

26. Mr. Dennis stated that the Committee's deliberations had been characterized by the absence of a desire to achieve good will among nations by just and fair treatment. Hate, suspicion, selfishness and nationalism still persisted. Arguments had been advanced that a threat to peace and security existed only in so far as the Asian-Arab sponsors of one of the draft resolutions had intended to create one. The representative of Liberia argued that those countries had only endeavoured to uphold the principles of the Charter by peaceful means and had offered no threat to peace. He warned, however, that indifference might change existing conditions for the worse.

27. Mr. Dennis stated that a solution of problems affecting millions of people necessitated concessions by both sides and not a consistent reliance upon national interests. He pointed out that, on the basis of their past records, the Committee could not rely on certain Powers to voluntarily renounce their rights and privileges in Non-Self-Governing Territories. It had often been said that a withdrawal of Administering Powers would spell chaos and ruination, but the facts in certain cases had proved the reverse. He questioned whether it would ever be possible to carry out the principles of self-determination for Non-Self-Governing Territories if the United Nations, which had outlined those principles, considered itself debarred from interfering.

28. In conclusion, he declared that insufficient attention had been given to the fundamental problems involved in threats to the peace and security of the world. He called upon the leaders of the Western democratic coalition to recognize, without reservation, the inalienable rights of men to equality, liberty and freedom, in order to consolidate the camp of peace in the free world. Since the question of Tunisia was part of the problem of applying the right of self-determination to Africa and Asia, the Liberian delegation announced its support of the draft resolution of the thirteen Powers.

29. Mr. FRANCO Y FRANCO (Dominican Republic) recalled the close association between the Spanish and the Arab peoples, and the deep feeling of admiration which the entire world had for France, whose virtues he praised. France was the cradle of the Declaration of Human Rights and the people's guide in the paths of democracy and self-determination. He reiterated an earlier statement on the question of Morocco made at the 354th plenary meeting of the sixth session of the General Assembly, which had expressed his delegation's faith in the usefulness of direct negotiations and in the spirit of co-operation, mutual understanding and conciliation of rights and interests. He repeated the appeal made by his delegation at that time and recalled the gravity of the international situation.

30. He stated that his delegation was not in favour of draft resolutions which did not create and maintain between the interested parties an atmosphere of sincere co-operation and which did not encourage a desire to continue the conversations between the two parties. Apart from any other consideration, such drafts would only defeat their own ends. Mr. Franco y Franco recalled that the Dominican people had always been in the forefront of those who had worked to bring an end to the old form of colonialism. It had always fought wholeheartedly for the advancement of peoples towards self-government and independence. He felt, however, that the First Committee was not confronted with a situation which could be considered as entirely colonial in character, since the achievements of France in Tunisia had been undertaken on the basis of treaties which had been concluded between two sovereign States. He referred to the great work of progress and civilization that France had accomplished in Tunisia, despite disastrous world wars and deep-seated crises. In that connexion, he recalled that the Constitution of the French Union had been drafted in accordance with the principles of co-operation, association and interdependence of nations.

31. The representative of the Dominican Republic then turned to a study of the competence of the General Assembly, recalling the discussions at San Francisco, although he pointed out that the question of competence did not concern his delegation at that juncture since it would vote in favour of the Latin-American draft resolution which did not imply any act of intervention. His delegation had sought to establish, as essential principles of the United Nations, due respect for internal jurisdiction and the principle of non-revision of treaties. The former was included in paragraph 7 of Article 2 of the Charter in order to complete the fundamental principles. With regard to the latter, a proposal contrary to the rule of *pacta sunt servanda* had been withdrawn since the opinion of the delegations obviously had been against it.

32. Mr. Franco y Franco pointed out, however, that the difference between the essential competence allowed by paragraph 7 of Article 2 and the exclusive competence contained in the Covenant of the League of Nations had reflected the will to extend the scope of the earlier provision. With regard to the argument that Article 103 of the Charter had placed all matters covered by international treaties within international jurisdiction, despite paragraph 7 of Article 2 of the Charter, the representative of the Dominican Republic suggested that in due course the Committee should consider particularly the organic character of the treaties concluded between France and Tunisia and the close interdependence resulting therefrom.

33. Furthermore, the Covenant of the League of Nations and the United Nations Charter contained no provisions governing the special status of protectorates, although specific provisions were made for the special status of Mandated and Trust Territories, respectively. Nevertheless, he maintained that the existence of protectorates could not be ignored or overlooked. It was undeniable that under a treaty States might cease to exist as a separate international entity in order to become part of another State, completely or in part. Mr. Franco y Franco declared that since the goal of the Committee should be to create an atmosphere of

reciprocal understanding and conciliation, it would be wrong to adopt any measures which, in addition to being unacceptable juridically, might lead to an unleashing of passions.

34. In concluding, the representative of the Dominican Republic reviewed the draft resolution submitted by eleven Latin-American countries, which his delegation resolutely supported. That support, however, did not mean that his delegation was changing in any way the position adopted by his country at San Francisco and continually maintained since then with regard to the principles to which he had just referred.

35. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) stated that the inclusion of the Tunisian question on the agenda was in itself an expression of the sympathy of the majority of the Members of the United Nations for the Tunisian peoples' aspirations for self-government, and involved the defence of their right to self-determination. However, if the United Nations merely expressed sympathy, as in the draft resolution submitted by Brazil and some other Latin-American delegations, it would not have carried out its duty under the Charter. The First Committee had to have in mind the legitimate demand of the Tunisian people for independence and for the abolition of the protectorate régime. These rights had been recognized by all the Members of the United Nations when they agreed to Article 1 of the Charter.

36. Mr. Palamarchuk pointed out that the French Government's allegation that the aspirations of the people of Tunisia were illegal was in conflict with the duties accepted by France under Chapter XI of the Charter. Furthermore, under Article 10 of the Charter, the United Nations was fully entitled to submit recommendations to the Members of the Organization on any questions within its competence by virtue of that Chapter. He pointed out that numerous pieces of evidence had been introduced in support of the accusation that France had failed to carry out the obligations which had been accepted by all Administering Powers under Article 73 of the Charter. Moreover, the measures of suppression of the national liberation movement in Tunisia which had been enforced by the French constituted a threat to international peace and security.

37. He recalled that the Governments of France, the United States and the United Kingdom had made unremitting attempts to avoid the consideration of the Tunisian question by the Security Council and by the General Assembly. With regard to the former, he inquired of the United States delegation whether the time for the consideration of the question would ever come. As for the latter, he pointed out that France had preferred not to participate in the consideration of the Tunisian question by the General Assembly, and was committed to perpetuating the colonial status of Tunisia.

38. The Ukrainian representative recalled the historical facts connected with the signing of the Treaty of Bardo in 1881, and indicated the pressures which had been brought to bear on the Bey of Tunis, and the agreement which had been reached between the British and the French. The facts, he continued, clearly

established that the Treaty was both unequal and unfair.

39. Turning to the Tunisian economy, Mr. Palamar-chuk declared that large French monopolistic corporations were in complete control and were exploiting the country's wealth to the detriment of its economic development. Half the arable land was in French hands, while almost one-third of the whole population consisted of wandering seasonal agricultural workers.

40. In response to the resulting national liberation movement, the French Government had declared its intention of carrying out political reform in Tunisia, leading towards self-government. In October 1951, however, the French Government had stated that the régime of the Protectorate would remain unimpaired, and had thus categorically refused to grant independence to Tunisia. The Tunisians had in turn rejected the French reform programme.

41. In addition to the forcible repressions and the mass arrests of Tunisian Ministers which had taken place, France had transformed that territory into a strategic military base of the United States of America. The Ukrainian representative referred to items in the periodicals *Intelligence Digest* and *Newsweek*, which indicated the military importance of Tunisia. That, he continued, went far in explaining why the United States and United Kingdom delegations had rejected the demand of the Tunisian people for national self-determination.

42. In conclusion, the representative of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic considered that, in the interests of the maintenance and strengthening of peace, it was the duty of the General Assembly to ensure the rights of the Tunisian people and to ensure that the French Government observed its obligations with regard to Tunisia and those prescribed by the Charter of the United Nations.

43. Mr. AL-JAMALI (Iraq) first read a telegram received by the Secretary-General of the Arab League, who was attending the meeting of the United Nations as an observer, from the President of the Parliament of Libya. The telegram expressed the full support of the Libyan people for the efforts to help the Tunisian people to achieve self-government. The telegram further stated that the Libyan Parliament demanded complete independence for Morocco and Tunisia and deplored the violent incidents there which were disturbing the peace and stability in that area.

44. Mr. Al-Jamali then stated that events in Tunisia spoke louder and more eloquently than any speeches which could be made in the Committee. Mass murders, deportation of nationalist leaders, destruction of homes, sieges of towns and villages, martial law and curfews were the order of the day. The lamentable assassination of Mr. Farhat Hached, the great Tunisian labour leader, was a cause of grief and regret to everybody. Mr. Farhat Hached and other Tunisian leaders had committed no sin, but had worked sincerely and earnestly for the independence of their country. The Tunisian nationalist leaders deserved the support of everyone in that task.

45. In Tunisia the two objectives of the United Nations, namely, peace and freedom, were united. So long as freedom was denied to the people of Tunisia, there could be no peace and no stability in Tunisia.

The situation in Tunisia was, therefore, a challenge to the United Nations and it was its primary duty to see that both freedom and stability were achieved in a most important part of the world. It was obvious that continued bloodshed and sacrifice on the part of the Tunisian peoples as a result of the French policy, could not continue without disturbing international harmony and without leading to international tensions.

46. Mr. Al-Jamali then recalled that since the last war many politically conscious countries, such as India, Pakistan, Indonesia, Burma and Syria, had attained independence and it was, therefore, in accordance with the march of time and the trends of history that Tunisia should also achieve its independence. Moreover, the Tunisian people, with their great history and culture and with their social, cultural and economic development, were comparable with any of the nations which had attained independence during the last decade. It would, therefore, be unfair to deny the Tunisian people the opportunity to exercise their freedom and self-determination.

47. Referring to the Treaty of Bardo, Mr. Al-Jamali pointed out that, while this treaty was intended to provide external security to Tunisia, in reality it had provided France with the pretext for domination and control of the internal as well as the external affairs of Tunisia. This was again contrary to the spirit of the time. It appeared that France was clinging to her old methods and policies of assimilation and absolutist authoritarianism and was not moving fast enough for the requirements of the times. His delegation believed that there were three reasons for French reluctance in moving forward in Tunisia.

48. In the first place, there was the French belief in their *mission civilisatrice*, which was rooted in the French conviction of their cultural superiority and in their desire to propagate the French culture throughout the world. While no doubt there was widespread respect and appreciation for French culture, no one, however, would tolerate its imposition on any people which did not choose to have it. It should not certainly become an excuse for domination over other people.

49. Secondly, the French people, like all other nations in the world, were divided among themselves. There were the progressive elements, who wished to see Tunisia free, independent and friendly to France. There were the reactionaries and conservatives, who would like to see Tunisia as a colony of France for all time to come. Then there were middle-of-the-road groups who wished Tunisia to attain self-government in a slow and gradual manner, but this, however, was unsatisfactory both to the progressive groups among the French people and the Tunisians themselves. Nor did it satisfy the reactionaries and conservatives. Thus all elements among the French people remained dissatisfied and the Tunisian people were ignored.

50. The third reason was the presence of the French *colons* in Tunisia, the French citizens who had migrated and settled in Tunisia and who did not live there as Tunisians but represented a group of Frenchmen who wished to have their interests and privileges preserved before other considerations. These *colons*, who numbered some 150,000, were sufficiently strong in the lobbies of the French Parliament to effect the change

of the Cabinet which might have favoured granting freedom and independence to Tunisia.

51. Mr. Al-Jamali then added that this analysis of the French situation was not an end in itself, but it should help the Committee to realize that France, left to itself without the United Nations help and good offices, could not grant freedom to Tunisia.

52. Faced with this situation, the Tunisian people, who were certainly among the most advanced, well-organized and moderate of peoples, found themselves in a desperate position. They had done their utmost to appeal to France and to negotiate with her to achieve their freedom, but it had been of no avail. All that the French had offered were some so-called reforms which could only be turned down by the Tunisians because of their inadequacy on the one hand and their violation of Tunisian sovereignty on the other.

53. Mr. Al-Jamali then read the text of a letter from the Bey of Tunis to the President of the French Republic. In his letter, the Bey of Tunis traced the relations between Tunis and France since the end of the Second World War and pointed out that the long-awaited reforms proposed by the French Government would constitute an impairment of Tunisian sovereignty, would legalize the maintenance of direct administration, would aggravate the confusion and irresponsibility of the Powers and would not bring any progress towards the democratization of Tunisian institutions. Therefore, these reforms could not satisfy the wishes of the Tunisian people and for that reason, the Bey was unable to affix his seal upon them.

54. Mr. Al-Jamali then stated that the national objectives of the Tunisians had been summed up very well in a statement made by Habib Bourgiba, President of the Neo-Destour party and leader of the Tunisian nationalist movement. Mr. Bourgiba had declared that what Tunisia demanded was the status of an independent and sovereign country, linked to France by a freely-negotiated alliance which guaranteed to France its strategic, economic and cultural interests. The Government of Tunisia would be a national constitutional and democratic government under the aegis of the legitimate sovereign of the country. Mr. Al-Jamali failed to see why there should be any opposition to the attainment of that legitimate objective by the Tunisian people.

55. The Committee had been told that France had done much in the way of education, social services and economic development in Tunisia. The delegation of Pakistan had referred to the contrast between what France claimed to have done for Tunisia and the conditions in most of those countries which had achieved their independence. If such was the case, that was an additional argument in favour of Tunisia's achieving its independence. Even if France possessed technical superiority over Tunisia, that should not entitle it to continue her domination over Tunisia. Under the present circumstances, no one nation would be free if the technically weaker were subjugated to the superior one. Judged according to that measure, France itself might fall under the domination of a still greater Power. Similarly, the French claim that France had made investments in Tunisia should not be a justification for its domination over Tunisia because the legitimate interests of France would be very well protected by an independent and friendly Tunisia.

56. France also sometimes justified its occupation of Tunisia on grounds of strategic and military interests. In this respect, not only the strategic interests of France, but those of all Europe and of the Atlantic and Mediterranean Powers were also mentioned. But strategic interests should never justify the occupation of any country. They could well be secured by freely-negotiated treaties between two sovereign States. In its own interest, France might do well to cherish a friendly Tunisia rather than one subdued by force.

57. Mr. Al-Jamali then recalled that Tunisia had been promised its national freedom and independence during the Second World War. He added that the Western Powers must be reminded that their promises and statements during the war must be binding if good faith and confidence were to prevail among mankind.

58. In view of the attitude assumed by France, which had been explained by the French Foreign Minister at the 392nd meeting of the General Assembly, it appeared that there were three alternatives. The first alternative was an indefinite period of enslavement and subjugation of the Tunisia people. The second was a mass revolt by the Tunisians, but since the Tunisians were a weak and unarmed people, that would result in great bloodshed, and that was what was actually happening in Tunisia today. The third alternative was negotiation and mediation through the United Nations. Having failed to achieve any fruitful results by direct negotiations and having suffered great oppression, the Tunisians had invoked the sympathy of all freedom-loving peoples of the world and had sought the guidance of the United Nations in the solution of their problem. The United Nations could not ignore this appeal by the Tunisians without losing its prestige and without violating its very *raison d'être*.

59. Mr. Al-Jamali then stated that, in the view of his delegation, the General Assembly must appeal to France to reconsider fundamentally its position on Tunisia. France should be asked to recognize the right of Tunisia to enjoy all the basic precepts of the Charter, to stop forthwith all harsh and ruthless measures and to release all political prisoners. France should then allow the Tunisians to select their true representatives, who would enter into direct negotiations with France. The United Nations should appoint a good offices commission to help and accelerate these negotiations, which would have the attainment of the independence of Tunisia as their objective.

60. Mr. Al-Jamali added that not only the prestige of the United Nations itself, but the basic concept of the dignity of man and the relations between East and West were at stake in the present issue. The world today was divided into antagonistic camps of blocs. Understanding and co-operation between these blocs were necessary if world peace and harmony were to prevail. One of the most serious and dangerous schisms was that between the Powers of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the peoples of Asia. The peoples of Asia and Africa were awake. There should be mutual respect and recognition for each other's interests or the chasm between the peoples of Asia and the Western Powers would widen further.

61. Mr. Al-Jamali concluded by appealing to the Members of the United Nations to ask France to make the liberation of Tunisia quick, peaceful and friendly.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.