

quish its hold on Angola and Mozambique. However, if South Africa continued to flourish, it was because several countries maintained indirect relations with the racist régime, thus nullifying the effect of General Assembly resolutions. Pakistan, for one, was prepared to back up its

words with deeds, and had consistently provided moral and material assistance to the peoples struggling against racial discrimination in all its forms.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.

2054th meeting

Tuesday, 1 October 1974, at 10.45 a.m.

Chairman: Mrs. Aminata MARICO (Mali).

A/C.3/SR.2054

AGENDA ITEM 53

Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination (*continued*) (A/9603, chap. I, chap. V, sect. C.1; A/9666 and Add.1, A/9719, E/5474, E/5475):

- (a) Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (*continued*);
- (c) Status of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: report of the Secretary-General (*continued*)

GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

1. Mr. DAHLÉN (Sweden) said that the chief reason why the Committee was compelled to discuss the subject of racial discrimination year after year was the existence of *apartheid* and institutionalized racism in southern Africa. His country's position on that question, with particular reference to the goals and objectives of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, as listed in paragraph 5 of the draft resolution (A/9666, annex), had been clearly stated in its reply to the Secretary-General¹ following General Assembly resolution 2784 (XXVI). Sweden had ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and had enacted the necessary legislation to implement it. It had accepted the right of the individual to petition the Committee set up in accordance with the Convention and was giving direct assistance to refugees and liberation movements in southern Africa, in addition to supporting the work of non-governmental organizations in that field. It was also working actively within UNDP, UNICEF and other specialized agencies to have broader support given to the liberation movements in question.

2. One of the basic human rights was that of people to unite and form a State. However, although a State might be formally independent, its freedom could be illusory if it was economically or politically dependent on another nation. Underdevelopment was in itself an injury to true independence and, as had been pointed out at the sixth special session of the General Assembly, it was the responsibility of all Members of the United Nations to produce a new international economic order so that the people of every nation in the world could have a decent standard of living. Sweden would do its best to take up that challenge.

¹ See E/CN.4/1093/Add.7.

3. Sweden had always taken a firm stand against racial discrimination and believed that it was essential also to combat discrimination against women. The battle for religious, cultural and political freedom was also urgent, since discrimination on such grounds was as intolerable as discrimination by reason of race or sex.

4. No country could honestly say that it had been able to implement fully the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenants on Human Rights, since laws had to be continually adjusted to new situations. Moreover, special attention had to be given to the legal remedies of which the individual could avail himself if he considered that a governmental, regional or local authority had taken an unlawful decision. The Swedish institution of *ombudsman* had proved to be useful in that connexion.

5. It was likewise highly desirable that individuals in a country should have an opportunity to appeal to an international body when they believed their human rights had been violated or they had been discriminated against. For that reason a number of European countries, including Sweden, had set up the European Commission of Human Rights, to which Governments had to answer for their decisions in that sphere. His country held that the possibility of individuals appealing to an international institution was not a curtailment of national sovereignty. The United Nations had created similar machinery in connexion with racial discrimination whose rulings would have a significant impact if all States accepted the system. His Government hoped that more Governments would do so in the near future.

6. The International NGO Conference against *Apartheid* and Colonialism in Africa to consider the continuing violations of human rights in Africa had taken place from 2 to 5 September in Geneva. That Conference had clearly shown how important a role the non-governmental organizations played in influencing world opinion against racial discrimination. It was obvious that the United Nations had not yet made full use of the co-operation of non-governmental organizations and he believed it should do so.

7. The world still offered innumerable anonymous examples of racial discrimination; they were not limited to any particular geographical area or to any particular form of discrimination. It should be remembered that all human beings, all over the world, had the right to equal and fair treatment irrespective of their racial origin. All Govern-

ments should therefore maintain constant vigilance and should view the Decade within a broad global perspective. The racial discrimination still being practised in southern Africa was the most flagrant example of institutionalized racism, but even when that situation had changed the problem of racial discrimination would still have to be kept under constant review, since every new generation would have to pursue the struggle to maintain and deepen the achievements of earlier generations.

8. Mrs. YOTOPOULOS-MARANGOPOULOS (Greece) said that she was happy to be representing a democratic Greece after seven years of dictatorship and obscurantism. Throughout those years democracy had been suppressed and the Greek people had lost its fundamental rights. Every political force in the country had been persecuted and its representatives imprisoned or exiled. Throughout that time, however, the military dictatorship had been audacious and hypocritical enough to send a delegation to the United Nations to protect in words the human rights it was abolishing in practice. At the current session the Greek delegation could say with pride that its words reflected the facts, since there was not a single political prisoner in the country, all parties could carry on their activities normally and every citizen was free to express his ideas.

9. Painful experience had given Greece the privilege of learning exactly what other peoples felt when they lost their fundamental human rights. It was natural, then, that it should cordially welcome the countries which had recently gained freedom and been admitted to membership of the United Nations: Bangladesh, Guinea-Bissau and Grenada, and that it should support African peoples still enduring racism and racial discrimination.

10. In Greece problems of racism and racial discrimination were non-existent, but Greeks had learned what it was to feel oneself a second-class citizen. During the years of dictatorship Greeks had also come to understand that the great international organizations could do nothing effective to redress their situation. Only a few countries, among which Sweden and the other Scandinavian countries were outstanding, had assisted them in their struggle against oppression.

11. Words would not suffice to end the scourge of racism and racial discrimination. Indeed, they could at times be counter-productive, since they produced a false impression of a duty fulfilled. The signing and ratification of the two International Covenants on Human Rights was a prerequisite for real protection of those rights, but unfortunately the Covenants had not yet been signed and ratified by the majority of States. Her Government hoped to be able to announce at the following session that it had done so.

12. Moreover, even in countries such as Greece in which racial discrimination was non-existent, it was important to penalize acts which violated racial equality. Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination covered some of those acts and obliged the States parties—including Greece—to declare assistance to racist activities, including the financing thereof, to be a punishable offence. Nevertheless, Southern Rhodesia had received assistance from many countries, something that would notably not have happened if the

legislation of those nations had provided penalties for helping racist régimes. The Government of Greece, which had already enacted, through special laws, penalties for violations of the economic sanctions against Rhodesia, would do its utmost to have the Greek criminal code amended so as to make punishable any act of assistance, direct or indirect, to racist activities generally.

13. The adoption of legislation prohibiting all types of discrimination was not sufficient, however; more practical measures had to be taken, such as sanctions. Greece considered that, if the competent organs of the United Nations established the existence of acts which contravened the many decisions and recommendations on discrimination, they should impose appropriate sanctions, which might even go so far as to exclude the offending country from the United Nations. First might come the application of cultural sanctions, in other words, the breaking off of all cultural intellectual, artistic and athletic relations and the consequent isolation of a country which, because of its discriminatory or racist practices, did not reach the minimum level required of a civilized society. Should those sanctions produce no effect, economic measures should be applied; although they had produced no great impact in the case of Rhodesia, they had provided the necessary experience to identify the defects of the system and perfect it for future use. In the report entitled *The impact of multinational corporations on development and on international relations*² provision was made for that type of sanctions in the recommendation that home and host countries should ensure, through appropriate actions, that multinational corporations did not violate sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council, for example, on countries suppressing human rights and following racist policies. It even provided for a series of economic sanctions against host countries which violated human rights and, most particularly, the rights of workers.

14. There was also a third procedure, namely, that of not accepting as valid the credentials of the offending countries. In that connexion, the case of the Republic of South Africa was a landmark in the history of the United Nations, since until now the question of representation had been discussed only from a legal point of view. Now, for the first time, the substance of the question was being examined and it was openly being considered whether a particular country was worthy of being represented in a community committed to the struggle for fundamental rights and freedoms and human dignity.

15. Mrs. GUEYE (Senegal) said that, as the representative of a black African country which was proud of its origins, she was grieved to observe that, in the century of the atom and the exploration of outer space, the international community still had to deal with such outmoded problems as racial discrimination, particularly in its most cynical and intolerable form, namely, the policies of *apartheid* of the South African Government.

16. Since 1946, when India had submitted a complaint against the legislative measures adopted by South Africa against African citizens of Indian origin, the policies of *apartheid* had always been included in the agenda of the

² United Nations publication, Sales No. E.74.II.A.5.

General Assembly. In addition to various measures adopted against the South African régime, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination had been adopted on 21 December 1965 by General Assembly resolution 2106 A (XX), had entered into force on 4 January 1969 and had so far been ratified by 82 States, including Senegal; the year 1971 had been declared the International Year for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination; and, in resolution 2919 (XXVII), the General Assembly had decided to proclaim a Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and to inaugurate its activities on 10 December 1973, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

17. Nevertheless, after a quarter of a century and despite the efforts of the United Nations, questions of racism and racial discrimination were still burning issues in many parts of the world, particularly in southern Africa, where the majority of the people were being deprived of their most basic legitimate rights by a minority of racist dictators. The illegal Fascist régimes of Salisbury and Pretoria were intensifying their policies of oppression in the face of the inevitable progress of the national liberation movements which were fighting to regain the land of their ancestors and to restore their freedom and human dignity. In response to the negative policies and preposterous arrogance of Ian Smith and his clique of rebel racists, the United Kingdom Government had the historic duty to show that it was equal to its responsibilities, and so had all States which were still indirectly collaborating with régimes whose existence demeaned all mankind. One source of inspiration in that regard was the example of Portugal, which had just undertaken the decolonization of its former possessions.

18. Senegal was seriously determined to contribute to the establishment of a universal humanism and would do everything in its power, as it had always done, to support and encourage all the democratic and progressive forces in the world which were struggling for the establishment of a society without racism and racial discrimination. Thus, faithful to its concept of freedom and democracy in Africa and throughout the world, her Government had taken various measures for the promotion of the exercise of personal freedom, including the liberation of all political prisoners and the recognition of the existence of different political parties.

19. Her delegation fully supported the draft resolution recommended by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1863 (LVI) and contained in the annex to the note by the Secretary-General (A/9666), and it endorsed the programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (General Assembly resolution 3057 (XXVIII), annex). It invited the international community to take specific and energetic measures to destroy those evils at their roots and suggested a broad campaign of information on the subject and scientific studies which would prove beyond all doubt that there were no inferior or superior races but only a race of equal human beings possessed of human dignity.

20. Lady GAITSKELL (United Kingdom), paying tribute to the Portuguese Government for its courageous decision to grant independence to its colonies, said that, although

the Programme for the Decade should concentrate on the solution to the problems of southern Africa, where racism was institutionalized and regulated, a blind eye should not be turned to the existence of racial discrimination in other parts of the world. Moreover, the efforts of Governments to eliminate racism in other parts of the world could be convincing only in so far as they achieved racial harmony in their own countries. Consequently, dealing with that problem required a twofold approach, namely, trying to do everything possible to improve the situation in southern Africa without overlooking the problem of racial discrimination at the national level.

21. There was a tendency nowadays to stress the need for more and more research into man's behaviour. In her view what was necessary was research of a practical nature designed to overcome problems of racial discrimination, rather than purely theoretical research. There was a danger of becoming lost in the esoteric fields of philosophy, psychology and genetics, to the detriment of the adoption of urgent and necessary measures. Such measures should include expressions of international concern, as embodied in such instruments as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which were of great importance for bringing about an increased awareness of the evils of racism. The Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination provided a useful setting for the adoption of practical measures designed to eliminate racism and racial discrimination, and, while not agreeing with all the provisions of the Programme for the Decade, her delegation considered it sufficiently broad to take into account the diverse situations existing in different parts of the world. The immediate responsibility must, however, rest with national Governments, which must take the necessary political and legal steps to eliminate racial discrimination.

22. There were now about 3 million immigrants in the United Kingdom. Although it could not be claimed that racial prejudice did not exist, special laws making overt acts of racial discrimination illegal, such as the Race Relations Act, had been passed, and two official bodies, the Race Relations Board and the Community Relations Commission, had been established in order to try to solve problems before they required legal action. On the basis of that experience, the United Kingdom was glad that the Programme for the Decade made it a clear responsibility of each Member State to promote the elimination of racial discrimination at the national level. The measures suggested in paragraph 12 of the Programme provided a sound basis for all countries to use in formulating, if they had not already done so, national programmes and policies designed to achieve racial harmony. In conclusion, she expressed the hope that the Decade would help to create an attitude of constant vigilance on the part of each Member State with regard to its responsibility to those within its jurisdiction.

23. Miss ILIĆ (Yugoslavia) congratulated the representatives of Bangladesh, Grenada and Guinea-Bissau on their countries' admission to the United Nations. Their membership brought the Organization close to universality. The fact that Grenada and, more particularly, Guinea-Bissau had achieved independence at the beginning of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination was of

both real and symbolic significance to peoples still under colonial and foreign domination, which could find in it a source of inspiration in their struggle for liberation and independence. It was to be hoped that the process which had begun in the former Portuguese Territories would spread throughout southern Africa and put an end to the degrading and inhuman policies of *apartheid*. It was also to be hoped that that process would help to accelerate the liberation of the last colonialist strongholds, wherever they might exist, and bring freedom, self-determination and independence to all the peoples and countries still under racist, colonial and foreign domination.

24. Although racism and *apartheid* were examples of the most radical form of racial discrimination, determined action must also be taken to combat by every possible means all the other forms of discrimination, as defined in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

25. It was an honour for her delegation to take part in the first examination of the observance of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination proclaimed by the General Assembly at its previous session. Although less than a year had passed since the launching of the Decade, it was gratifying to note the readiness of Governments and various bodies and organizations of the United Nations system to help in every way to achieve the goals and objectives of the Decade. It was to be hoped that the following year would provide an opportunity for an analysis not only of the activities contemplated but primarily of those already completed and for substantive comments on the observance of the Decade.

26. It was not for lack of interest that her Government had not replied to the questionnaire sent by the Secretary-General in accordance with paragraph 18(e) of the Programme concerning activities undertaken or contemplated in connexion with the Decade but only for lack of sufficient time to do so. Her Government's activities had included, firstly, the organizing, in co-operation with the United Nations, of a world-wide seminar on the promotion and protection of human rights of national, ethnic and other minorities, held at Ohrid from 25 June to 8 July 1974, which was mentioned in paragraph 64 of document A/9666/Add.1. Her delegation believed that the conclusions adopted by that seminar would be a source of inspiration for the future activities of many United Nations bodies dealing with those matters. Secondly, Yugoslavia had established the nucleus of a national body which would be responsible for the observance of the Decade throughout the country. Furthermore, it had been proposed that the competent authorities should sign and ratify the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of *Apartheid* (General Assembly resolution 3068 (XXVIII), annex), and they would doubtless adopt a favourable decision in the matter.

27. Her delegation appealed to the members of the Committee to reaffirm their support for activities aimed at combating all forms of racism and racial discrimination, by adopting unanimously the draft resolution recommended by the Economic and Social Council (A/9666, annex).

28. Mrs. WATANABE (Japan) said that her country attached the highest importance to the fundamental ques-

tion of human rights and, together with other Member States, would continue to intensify its efforts to eliminate all forms of racism and racial discrimination. Japan had taken that position in conformity with the Constitution of Japan, which provided that no one should be prevented from enjoying the fundamental human rights and that those rights would be recognized as eternal and inviolable. The Constitution also provided that all persons were equal and that there would be no discrimination in political, economic or social relations on the ground of race, sex, creed, social status or family origin.

29. Her delegation was convinced that racism and racial discrimination were incompatible with human relationships determined by the principles on which the Charter of the United Nations was based. It was therefore very pleased to inform the Committee that her Government had assumed a number of obligations required of states parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and was carrying out a study on its possible accession to that Convention.

30. Mrs. GRINEVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the elimination of racism was one of mankind's greatest tasks. It was therefore gratifying to note that Governments and public opinion in many countries had stepped up the struggle against racial discrimination. The World Congress of Peace Forces, held in Moscow in October 1973, had condemned racism and proposed that South Africa and Southern Rhodesia should be isolated. Colonialism and racism had also been condemned by the eleventh session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, held at Mogadiscio from 12 to 15 June 1974, and by many other international meetings. The United Nations was involved in the struggle against racism and had designated the years 1973 to 1983 as the Decade for action to combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. Paragraph 8 of the Programme for the Decade stated that the ultimate goals of the Decade were to promote human rights and fundamental freedom for all, without distinction of any kind on grounds of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin, to arrest any expansion of racist policies and to counteract the emergency of alliances based on mutual espousal of racism and racial discrimination.

31. The decision to launch a Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had been inspired by the fact that there had been and there still were racist régimes in southern Africa and States which supported them. The decisions of the United Nations were not being fully implemented, and that was why the system of exploitation prevailing in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia persisted. The Salisbury régime continued its policy of racial segregation and oppression of the indigenous population. It had promulgated laws designed to make Southern Rhodesia a land of *apartheid* and to worsen the already lamentable position of the indigenous population, which was subjected to a policy of discrimination in the political, educational, social and all other spheres. The political and social organizations combating racism were being persecuted and their members imprisoned. Moreover, capital punishment had been instituted. World public opinion viewed with concern that intensification of racist policies and called for an end to such repression.

32. The United Nations General Assembly had adopted resolutions condemning the refusal of the Government of the United Kingdom to take steps against Southern Rhodesia, and the right of the people of Zimbabwe to fight for their liberation had been recognized.

33. Europeans living in South Africa were becoming increasingly aware of the injustice of the inhuman system of *apartheid* and were taking action against the racists. A struggle was being waged for political rights, not simply for wage increases or better working conditions for the black population. The racial discrimination situation would be resolved with the solution of the main problem, which was the political problem.

34. Her delegation supported the high ideals of the Programme for the Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. Soviet power established at the time of the triumphant October Revolution had led to the proclamation and practical achievement of full equality in every area. That was the essence of socialism since if there was no economic exploitation, there could be no grounds for racial discrimination. The Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR established the equality of all citizens in every area. Any limitation of rights or establishment of privileges was punishable by law. The population was educated in the ideals of friendship with all the peoples of the world and of internationalism.

35. In 1974 the Byelorussian people had demonstrated its support for the struggle being waged by the peoples of the world against racial discrimination, and had observed the Week of Solidarity With the Colonial Peoples of Southern Africa and the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. In the same year, the Government of the Byelorussian SSR had ratified the International Covenants on Human Rights and signed the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of *Apartheid*. His delegation was in favour of any measure designed to combat racism, and supported the United Nations decisions establishing sanctions against racist régimes and calling for the elimination of racial discrimination. Accordingly, at the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly it had urged all Members of the Organization to accede to the International Covenants on Human Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Similarly, it supported the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, and was in favour of the draft resolution on that question recommended by the Economic and Social Council to the General Assembly for adoption (A/9666, annex).

36. The Byelorussian SSR would continue to support the struggle against racism. The success of that struggle and the solidarity of the world community showed that an irrevocable decision had been taken to put an end to racism and racial discrimination.

37. Mrs. SÄLZLER (German Democratic Republic), after welcoming the representatives of Bangladesh, Grenada and Guinea-Bissau and congratulating them on their countries' admission to the United Nations, noted that the German Democratic Republic, like the other socialist States, had in accordance with its consistent past policy opposing colo-

onialism, racism and *apartheid*, supported at the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly the text which was subsequently adopted as resolution 3057 (XXVIII), concerning the Decade. The German Democratic Republic Committee for the Decade, composed of Government representatives and eminent personalities in her country, had been established on 25 June 1974. The task of that Committee was to co-ordinate scientific, educational and artistic activities in support of the struggle against the racist régime in South Africa and against all remnants of colonialism which still existed.

38. Racism and racial discrimination were incompatible with socialism. The people of the German Democratic Republic respected all human beings and all peoples, irrespective of race or religion, and felt linked to them by close ties of friendship. At the first of the meetings held in Berlin, the capital of the German Democratic Republic, by the Special Committee on *Apartheid* (285th meeting) – during its special session in various European capitals in 1974 – the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of the German Democratic Republic had stated that the value of a human being was not determined by the colour of his skin or by his creed, but rather by the stand he took with regard to the social problems of his people and by his contribution to the social development of his country. That statement reflected a concept which governed the policy of the German Democratic Republic and every-day life in that country, and during that series of meetings of the Special Committee, the solidarity of all its citizens with those fighting against racism, racial discrimination and *apartheid* had been demonstrated clearly.

39. The policy of racist oppression practised by the Pretoria régime threatened peace and constituted a crime against humanity. The German Democratic Republic recognized and supported the right of the liberation movements to employ all means in resisting imperialist and racist exploitation and oppression and to exercise the right of colonial peoples to self-determination, and had always provided moral and material assistance to liberation movements in southern Africa. Since it had always held that the Pretoria régime was not entitled to represent the people of South Africa, it welcomed the decision of the Credentials Committee not to recognize the credentials of the delegation of South Africa.³ It also supported the admission of representatives of the liberation movements to various international conferences and the decision taken by the General Assembly at its 2254th meeting to invite them to participate as observers in meetings of the Fourth Committee.

40. The German Democratic Republic regarded as a self-evident duty the strict observance of all resolutions adopted by the United Nations against the racist régimes in southern Africa. It maintained no relations whatsoever with either the Republic of South Africa or Southern Rhodesia, and therefore had no representation in those countries or in Namibia. It was a party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and

³ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-ninth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 3, document A/9779, paras. 14 and 15.

had been one of the first States to ratify the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of *Apartheid*. It therefore supported the draft resolution recommended by the Economic and Social Council.

41. Her delegation shared the indignation of other delegations with regard to the fact that there were still certain Powers which failed to comply with United Nations resolutions and continued to co-operate with the racist régimes in southern Africa. *Apartheid*, which was the most brutal form of racial discrimination, could only survive because a few NATO Powers did not observe United Nations decisions and continued to support the racists. It was the big multinational corporations which profited most from *apartheid* by exploiting the African workers, and it was particularly important that the Programme for the Decade should demand an end to all such support for the racist régimes, as had been emphasized at the Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Algiers in September 1973, when the Conference had demanded the withdrawal of invest-

ments from South Africa.⁴ Her delegation therefore suggested that paragraph 6 of the draft resolution presented by the Economic and Social Council (A/9666, annex) should be amended to include an appeal to the Governments of all States which had made investments in the Republic of South Africa to withdraw them or to bring their influence to bear on their nationals who acted as private investors to do so.

42. In conclusion, her delegation expressed the hope that all States Members of the United Nations would accede as soon as possible to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

43. The CHAIRMAN said that since there were no names on the list of speakers, the afternoon meeting of the Committee would be cancelled. The Committee would resume consideration of the item the following day at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.

⁴ See A/9330 and Corr.1, p. 32.

2055th meeting

Wednesday, 2 October 1974, at 10.45 a.m.

Chairman: Mrs. Aminata MARICO (Mali).

A/C.3/SR.2055

AGENDA ITEM 53

Elimination of all forms of racial discrimination (*continued*) (A/9603, chap. I, chap. V, sect. C.1; A/9666 and Add.1 and 2, A/9719, E/5474, E/5475):

- (a) Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (*continued*);
- (c) Status of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination: report of the Secretary-General (*continued*)

GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

1. Mr. RÍOS (Panama) said that his delegation fully agreed with the priority given to the item concerning the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination and with the number of meetings allocated to it. In a just world, with equality for all, such as the United Nations was attempting to build, there was no place for racial discrimination in any of its forms or manifestations. The human race was one and indivisible; and it followed from that indisputable premise that it was odious to practise racial discrimination either openly or covertly. The painful experience of nazism, which was based on the supposed superiority of one race, had alerted the world to the urgent need to eradicate all traces of racial discrimination, and the United Nations was committed to that task. The principle of respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, or religion, was laid down in

Article 1, paragraph 3, of the Charter. In 1966 the General Assembly had, by resolution 2142 (XXI), proclaimed 21 March as International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and on 10 December 1973 the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had been launched in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3057 (XXVIII). Both decisions reflected an irrevocable commitment obliging all peoples to promote fundamental freedoms and full respect for the inherent dignity of all human beings.

2. Mankind seemed to be passing through one of the most critical stages of its history, and could find adequate solutions and dispel the danger of the many problems threatening it only by means of co-operation, and neither co-operation nor harmony were possible if the hatred and hostility engendered by racial discrimination persisted. The Panamanians had been the victims of racial discrimination at the hands of a foreign Power on their own soil, and therefore knew how painful that inhuman practice was; and they would always speak out against any system based on discrimination between races. With the intelligent use of modern means of communication and methods for the dissemination of culture, the Decade could produce tangible results in the campaign to extirpate the scourge of racism as an obstacle to the happiness of peoples and to harmony between them.

3. Mr. NOTHOMB (Belgium), after welcoming the representatives of the three new Members of the United Nations,