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Fortieth session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Wednesday, 16 October 1985, at 10 a.m.

President:

Mr. DE PINIES

(Spain)

Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial  
Countries and Peoples [18]

Special commemorative meeting in observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary  
of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and  
Peoples

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 18

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE MEETING IN OBSERVANCE OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): It is most appropriate that in the course of this session in which we are commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations we should be meeting here today to observe the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. It is an undeniable fact that in the period marked by this dual commemoration truly dynamic changes have taken place in world affairs as a result of the evolving process of decolonization. Indeed, during the short span of 40 years the number of dependent people has diminished from some 800 million to fewer than 3 million, while the membership of this Organization has trebled.

The sweeping changes thus brought about in the geo-politics of the world have as their foundation the basic tenets embodied in the Charter of the United Nations: respect for the principles of equal rights and the self-determination of peoples and human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. In order to attain those common purposes the United Nations resolved to be, and has become, a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations.

The realization that accelerated international action had to be taken to meet the rising aspirations of the peoples of dependent Territories led to the adoption by the General Assembly in 1960 of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and to the establishment in 1961 of the Special Committee entrusted with the task of following its implementation.

(The President)

The work of the Special Committee over the past 25 years is a matter of record. Suffice it to note that its central role as a focal point of the conscience of the international community in support of peoples under colonial rule greatly facilitated the emergence of scores of newly independent States.

Our foremost concern, as regards the tasks that confront us today, centres on developments in and around Namibia, which is still under the illegal occupation of South Africa, and the rapidly deteriorating situation in South Africa itself, where over 24 million people continue to be denied the opportunity to realize their just aspirations and to live under a repressive régime committed to perpetuating the institutionalized crime of apartheid.

Our course of action has been clearly charted in numerous decisions and resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. If we are to succeed in preventing chaos in the region, we must act now and act decisively to bring about the faithful implementation of those decisions and resolutions.

With regard to other colonial Territories in various parts of the world, I have no doubt that, with the necessary co-operation of the administering Powers, the Special Committee will continue to contribute to the attainment in respect of those peoples of the purposes of the Charter and of the Declaration, in all their aspects and in the shortest possible time.

(The President)

I am equally confident that the organizations of the United Nations system will, within their respective spheres of competence, continue to strengthen their programmes of assistance to the peoples concerned.

It is incumbent upon us to redouble our efforts to bring about the full and speediest possible implementation of the Declaration and the total elimination of the remaining vestiges of colonialism.

On this solemn occasion I should like to announce that messages have been received from the following Member States: China, Democratic Kampuchea, the German Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Tunisia, Turkey, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Yugoslavia. Yemen has transmitted a message from the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Some of those messages already appear in document A/40/757, and the remainder will be distributed as addenda to it.

I call on the Secretary-General.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: It is indeed fitting that as the General Assembly marks the fortieth anniversary of its foundation it should also commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

By adopting that Declaration, the General Assembly helped to accelerate the historic march towards greater freedom promised by the United Nations Charter 15 years earlier. Evoking the themes of the Charter, it recognized that there was a passionate yearning for freedom among all peoples who remained non-self-governing, that those peoples had the right to self-determination, and that by virtue of that right they should freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

(The Secretary-General)

Following the adoption of the Declaration, the General Assembly moved quickly to establish a Special Committee to oversee its implementation. Ever since then the Committee has been at the centre of the efforts of the General Assembly to speed up the progress of dependent peoples towards self-government and independence. It has evolved innovative procedures and practices, whereby the co-operation of the administering Powers was elicited. In particular, the sending of visiting missions and the observation or supervision of democratic processes, such as elections, plebiscites and referendums, by the United Nations, in co-operation with the administering Powers, greatly enhanced the capacity of the Organization to promote and protect the interests of the peoples concerned.

In effect, the Declaration gave a new impetus to the essential catalytic role of the United Nations in the process of decolonization. In the quarter of a century since 1960 some 59 former colonial Territories, inhabited by more than 80 million people, have attained independence and joined the United Nations as sovereign Members, making this Organization an almost universal one. Widespread recognition of the United Nations achievements in this field could be heard in the declarations and statements made in the course of the general debate during the past few weeks.

Regrettably, notwithstanding the singular success of the United Nations in the decolonization process, a peaceful settlement in Namibia continues to elude us, for reasons which the Security Council has described as irrelevant and extraneous. The special responsibility of the United Nations for Namibia imposes on all of us an obligation to redouble our efforts to ensure a peaceful settlement of the Namibian situation.

I should like to take this opportunity once again to urge that the Government of South Africa, in particular, and all others in a position to help make a

(The Secretary-General)

renewed and determined effort to expedite the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), so that the people of Namibia can exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence without further delay.

While Namibia is of deep concern to the United Nations, there remain other Non-Self-Governing Territories to which the Declaration applies. Certain of those Territories are small in size, limited in resources or remotely located. There is wide agreement, however, that those difficulties should not be allowed to retard their political and economic advancement. On the contrary, special attention should be paid to assisting them in overcoming their problems so that their inhabitants can exercise the same inalienable rights as peoples elsewhere.

In the case of some Territories, the process of decolonization poses complex and controversial problems, and in such circumstances it is essential to bear in mind that without some degree of flexibility on the part of all concerned viable solutions may remain elusive and hard to attain.

The emergence of a large number of newly independent countries has brought, of course, new responsibilities for the peoples concerned and for their leaders. In particular it has posed new challenges for the international community. Among the most striking illustrations of those challenges to the current economic crisis facing Africa. While many of the countries directly affected suffer from a lack of a basic economic and social infrastructure, their people aspire to a better economic future as a legitimate concomitant of their political independence. In an interdependent world, the entire international community must do everything possible to assist them in their efforts to achieve stable and sustained economic and social progress. That is an objective to which the United Nations system is fully committed. I am confident that, with properly co-ordinated efforts at the national and international levels, we can help the Governments

(The Secretary-General)

concerned to fulfil the promise of independence by ensuring a better and more secure future for their newly independent peoples.

We have arrived at a stage which was very difficult to envisage clearly at the beginning of this Organization. Our membership is now practically universal, thanks to the fact that scores of newly independent countries have rallied to the Charter, the beacon which guides our work. The Organization has benefited greatly from the principle of universality and from it flows much of the authority for collective action in a number of fields. Now that we have such an instrument it is the responsibility of each one of us to make it work effectively, to gear our efforts towards the achievement of goals that are in line with the Charter and the obligations that flow from it. Only thus will our Organization maintain a central relevance to international life. Only thus will the achievements of our first 40 years, including the noble process of decolonization, endure and blossom fully in a world of peace, justice and human advancement.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I call on Mr. Abdul Koroma of Sierra Leone, Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

Mr. KOROMA (Sierra Leone), Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Special Committee of 24): Forty years ago the drafters of the Charter of this Organization, imbued with belief in the equality of human beings and with the conviction that the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories have an inalienable right to self-determination, that colonialism in whatever form represented a denial of fundamental human rights and a manifestation of injustice, proclaimed that one of the purposes of the United Nations is

"To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights, and self-determination of peoples," and prescribed a specific role to be played by this Organization to enable the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories to exercise their right to self-determination and ultimately to put an end to colonialism in all its forms and manifestations.

Concomitant with the basic principles enshrined in the Charter and in response to the yearning aspirations of dependent peoples for political freedom and economic advancement, the General Assembly in 1960 adopted the now famous Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. This Declaration simultaneously signified a reaffirmation by the community of nations of faith in the dignity and worth of the human person, while giving hope and faith to millions of people throughout the world who were still living under colonial rule.

Therefore, as we review the pace of decolonization over the past twenty-five years, we can justifiably take pride in the fact that, as a result of the continuing process of decolonization, this Organization is today far more representative, far closer to the goal of universality and a stronger body than at its creation four decades ago. Indeed, as its membership has increased, the role



(Mr. Koroma, Chairman, Special  
Committee of 24)

of the United Nations in support of dependent peoples has been exemplary and often crucial, and dependent peoples have continued to invest their hopes and trust in this Organization. This role reflects the commitment of the United Nations which the Declaration symbolizes.

The results of tireless and unremitting efforts during the past twenty-five years are to be seen in the fact that over 150 million people of some 50 former colonial Territories have emerged from dependent status during that period, and the majority of those new nations have since joined the membership of the United Nations. The Special Committee, to which the General Assembly assigned the task of examining the application of the Declaration and making suggestions and recommendations in that regard, has played an important role in that process.

During the second decade after the adoption of the Declaration, and thanks to the efforts of the Special Committee, we witnessed a quickening of the pace of the process of decolonization, and some 25 Territories emerged as free and independent States. These positive developments clearly demonstrated the fact that neither repression nor violence could arrest the historically irreversible tide of freedom and that colonial and alien domination of peoples was doomed to irrevocable failure. It is ultimately on the basis of the freely expressed wishes of its inhabitants that the destiny of a colonial territory will be decided.

The positive results achieved in the process of decolonization elsewhere during the past 25 years remain overshadowed by the grave situation still prevailing in Namibia. Despite efforts on the part of the international community, as institutionalized by the United Nations, the people of the Territory have still not achieved their basic rights and fundamental freedoms. At this stage of the Namibian conflict, the international community must resort to every available means to ensure that the Namibian people exercise their legitimate right to

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self-determination and independence. Furthermore, it must continue to give its unequivocal moral, political and material support to the Namibian people, under the leadership of their national liberation movement, the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO).

As we take stock of our accomplishments over the past twenty-five years, we are keenly aware of the fact that some 3 million people still remain under colonial rule, over one-third of whom live in Namibia, under a very reprehensible form of repression. Only when the true aspirations of all dependent peoples are fulfilled and colonialism has been eradicated from the face of the earth, can the United Nations afford to feel a full measure of satisfaction. To say this is not to underestimate the considerable achievements of our Organization. Rather, it is to recognize and stress the important unfinished business before the world community.

As we move closer to the day when the last vestiges of colonialism will be eradicated from the face of the earth, it is necessary, now more than ever, to ensure that the genuine interests of the inhabitants of those remaining Territories continue to be of paramount concern. We must do our utmost to bring about the free and unrestricted conditions which would enable the peoples concerned to express their true aspirations and, at the same time, ensure that the national unity and the territorial integrity of those Territories are fully respected and safeguarded.

On behalf of the members of the Special Committee, I wish to reiterate to the Assembly the Committee's resolute commitment and determination in continuing to do its utmost in the search for the most suitable ways and means for the full and speedy implementation of the Declaration.

Before concluding, I wish, in all solemnity, to pay a special tribute to the thousands of known and unknown heroes who have sacrificed their lives in the cause of freedom, justice and independence. Most certainly, on this occasion our

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thoughts turn to many a great African leader of liberation, such as Eduardo Mondlane and Amílcar Cabral. Our tribute also goes to those in southern Africa who have been subjected to persecution for the cause of freedom, and for the principles to the realization of which we all aspire.

On this fortieth anniversary of the United Nations and on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration, let us pledge anew our determination to assist effectively all colonial peoples in the attainment of their right to self-determination and independence in accordance with resolution 1514 (XV).

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I now call on His Excellency, Major-General Joseph Garba of Nigeria, Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, who will be speaking on behalf of the Group of African Countries.

Mr. GARBA (Nigeria), Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid: On behalf of the Special Committee against Apartheid and in my capacity as Chairman of the African Group for the month of October, I should like to convey our deep appreciation for the invitation extended to our Committee to participate in this important meeting being held to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the historic resolution 1514 (XV) entitled "The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples".

This Declaration is rightly considered a landmark in the history of the United Nations, for through it tremendous progress has been made in the difficult and painful task of decolonization. Such progress has resulted in the attainment of national independence by a large number of States all of whom have since taken their rightful place in the international community of nations. The increase in the membership of our Organization has reinforced the principle of universality from which it derives its strength.

(Mr. Garba, Chairman, Special  
Committee against Apartheid)

Despite this laudable achievement, however, a sizeable number of territories are under colonial subjugation, and the peoples of those Territories are being denied the opportunity to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination. It is highly regrettable that the efforts of the United Nations to ensure that all peoples are given the opportunity to exercise the inalienable right to self-determination are being frustrated. South Africa and Namibia have a special status among those States.

The Special Committee against Apartheid and the African Group are particularly disturbed by the situation in southern Africa, where the indigenous black population of South Africa and Namibia, which constitutes the overwhelming majority, continues to be subjected to the degrading and harrowing experience of apartheid domination. The perpetrator of this dual act of criminality is the racist minority régime in Pretoria, aided and abetted by its Western allies. The brutality and ruthlessness of that régime is well known to this Assembly, and I would not want to dwell on this.

The events recently unfolding in South Africa have given us cause for hope and concern. We are more hopeful than ever because we see the foundation of the apartheid system crumbling, which gives a clear indication that the years, if not indeed the days, of apartheid are numbered. At the same time we are gravely concerned that the régime has redoubled its brutality and ruthlessness, and its imposition of the so-called state of emergency last summer has contributed to this. The continuing wave of massacres of defenceless black men and women, and even children, is gathering new force. It is acknowledged even in the régime's official account that about 800 black people have been killed by its police and military machinery in the past 12 months. Thousands are languishing in detention without trial and hundreds are being tortured daily. Their only crime is that they

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seek to exercise their right to self-determination, which the United Nations declared to be inalienable 25 years ago when it adopted the Declaration whose anniversary we are celebrating today.

The situation is not much different from the pathetic one prevalent in Namibia, a Territory for which South Africa's Mandate was terminated 19 years ago, but over which South Africa has continued to exercise authority. South Africa's continued illegal occupation of Namibia, in violation of relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, is a serious challenge to the United Nations. As the fortieth anniversary is commemorated, serious thought should be given to this unprecedented challenge to the authority of our Organization. Namibia remains a classic colonial problem, and should be seen as such in the efforts to resolve it. The attempts to portray it in contexts different from that must be repudiated.

The racist régime has defied the international community successfully and with impunity, and one cannot help wondering why that has been possible. The obvious answer is that it is protected by the Western allies. The régime has been continuously shielded by those allies, particularly those that are permanent members of the Security Council. The Council's attempts to take adequate measures against the régime have been frustrated on countless occasions through the use of the veto by those members. With this immunity accorded it, the régime has not stopped at dominating and subjugating the blacks in South Africa and Namibia but has in fact gone a step further by launching unprovoked armed attacks against independent neighbouring States. Such acts of aggression have twice in the past four weeks been the subject of Security Council meetings.

In the face of this arrogant intransigence, what must the international community do? The General Assembly has made numerous calls for the imposition of

(Mr. Garba, Chairman, Special  
Committee against Apartheid)

sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter, but the Security Council has not been able to act because of the positions of the two ardent supporters of the racist régime. It is a matter for deep regret that those same countries, which often proclaim the superiority of their values of freedom and democracy and which have arrogated to themselves the apostleship of democratic choice, should become the celebrated defenders of such a pariah régime as that in Pretoria because of narrow economic expediency and short-sighted strategic considerations.

It is my fervent hope that those States will reconsider their positions and join the majority of Member States in order to facilitate action by the Security Council to expedite the decolonization of Namibia and the eradication of apartheid. No occasion seems more suitable than this session, which marks not only the fortieth anniversary of our Organization but also the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I call on Mr. Noel Sinclair of Guyana, Acting President of the United Nations Council for Namibia.

Mr. SINCLAIR (Guyana), Acting President of the United Nations Council for Namibia: I wish to express the appreciation of the United Nations Council for Namibia for the invitation extended to us to attend this special commemorative plenary meeting in observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

In observing this twenty-fifth anniversary the General Assembly is celebrating what is one of the more successful aspects of the work of this Organization. This Declaration is not only the freedom charter of peoples under colonial domination; it has also laid the groundwork for the development of law in some of the most vital areas of the relations between States and peoples.

(Mr. Sinclair, Acting President,  
United Nations Council for Namibia)

The adoption by this Assembly in 1960 of the Declaration on decolonization was a historic step in the development of international law with regard to self-determination. Whereas in the Charter the self-determination of peoples is stated as a principle, the Declaration of 1960 proclaims that self-determination is a right which all peoples possess.

The Declaration itself did not confer the right of self-determination. That right, like other rights, predates that Declaration; it predates even the creation of this Organization.

The evolution in law which has taken place following the adoption of the Declaration in 1960 has been clear and unambiguous. Since decolonization is more than a political phenomenon, in analysing that evolution it is both relevant and necessary to recall related decisions of this Assembly, such as the adoption of the Declaration on Permanent Sovereignty over Natural Resources, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and, of course, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

Together these instruments, including the Declaration of 1960, reflect a generalized awareness by the international community that colonialism constitutes a denial of human rights and of fundamental political freedoms. They reflect that awareness in a number of rules, which provide, among other things, that the fate of a territory should be determined by the people who live in that territory, that the resources of a territory are owned and should be controlled by the people of that territory and consequently that the exercise of such control is an essential aspect of the exercise of political sovereignty, and that the pursuit of racial policies to perpetuate political domination is a violation of international law. Our

(Mr. Sinclair, Acting President,  
United Nations Council for Namibia)

Secretary-General was therefore correct when he stated, in declaring open the 1985 meetings of the Special Committee:

"The United Nations is entitled to feel a measure of pride for creating an international consciousness of the imperative of decolonization and for mobilizing moral and political support to dependent peoples in their efforts to realize their right to self-determination and independence."



(Mr. Sinclair, Acting President,  
United Nations Council for Namibia)

In so doing, the United Nations system and the Committee on decolonization, as both its conscience and its activator in this regard, have rendered service of inestimable value.

Indeed, no one can argue against the contention that in contemporary international law the pursuit of colonial policies is illegal and that peoples subjected to colonial domination have the right to struggle to free themselves therefrom.

Of course, we cannot forget that some of the colonial Powers, in 1960, withheld their support from resolution 1514 (XV). These attitudes were not surprising at the time; in fact, they have not even yet entirely disappeared. But it is certainly an indication of the manner in which historical attitudes have evolved over the years that these very Powers are now expressing support, however measured, for the objectives of the Declaration.

Yet, as we record this anniversary, let us use this opportunity to rededicate our energies to pursuing aggressively that part of our task which is still incomplete - and here our attention must focus first of all on Namibia.

The bases for such action are recognized and unassailable. The General Assembly, the Security Council and the International Court of Justice, each acting independently of the other two, have proclaimed that South Africa's continued presence in the Territory is illegal and that South Africa is therefore under obligation to withdraw so that the people of Namibia can accede to independence. Security Council resolution 435 (1978) provides the framework for such withdrawal and accession. But, above all these, there is the consideration that the people of Namibia have a fundamental, inalienable right to self-determination. That right was proclaimed in the Declaration on decolonization in 1960. The Council for

(Mr. Sinclair, Acting President,  
United Nations Council for Namibia)

Namibia hopes that this commemorative meeting will serve as an additional pressure on South Africa to co-operate in implementing Security Council resolution 435 (1978) and that it will bring home to those States which, by their actions, still give support to South Africa in its continuing occupation of the Territory the urgency of the need for them to respect the principles of international law and of justice where Namibia is concerned.

This need for respect for the principles of justice is most dramatically seen in the case of South Africa, where the oppressed people are daily, with growing courage, defying the apartheid régime in their struggle even for the enjoyment of their right to be treated as human beings. But we are hopeful for the development of that situation, for the process by which people through the ages have freed themselves from alien domination is inexorably at work in South Africa, and the people of that country will be free.

The decolonization agenda also includes a number of Territories with peculiar characteristics of size, geographic location and population which will require innovative approaches by the Special Committee and by the administering Powers concerned. There is a consensus, however, that these factors should not constitute an obstacle to the full implementation of the Declaration in respect of these Territories, and we look forward to the early removal of their names from the agenda of the Committee.

The Council for Namibia hopes that this observance will serve to stimulate a total and active involvement in support of the early and complete eradication of decolonialism from the face of the earth and the establishment of a régime of freedom and justice - not for some but for all peoples.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The next speaker is Mr. Dia-Allah El-Fattal of the Syrian Arab Republic, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): I have the honour of speaking today on behalf of the Group of Asian States before the General Assembly, which is commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. This anniversary coincides with the commemoration by the United Nations of the fortieth anniversary of its founding.

The present commemoration is an expression of the solidarity of the States Members of the Organization and their commitment to accelerating the achievement by all countries still subjected to foreign colonialism of their national independence and freedom, without any preconditions. This is a commemoration in which States renew their commitment to the implementation of the objectives and principles of the Declaration, including the principle that all colonized countries must be liberated. These principles were included in the United Nations Charter. Subsequently, the well-known General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) enshrined the principles very clearly and gave new impetus to the process of decolonization, encouraging the struggle of colonized peoples for self-determination and independence.

One need only glance at the list of Members of the United Nations to see clearly that the struggle against colonialism, enshrined in the Declaration, has had a tremendous effect on international life. The Group of Asian States benefited greatly from that struggle, since many Territories from that region have become Members of the international Organization, this body which the peoples of the world regard as embodying the hopes for the attainment of freedom and independence by millions of persons living under foreign colonialist rule.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab  
Republic)

A mere glance at the list of Members of the United Nations also makes clear the increase in the number of Members. This increase shows that neither oppression nor violence nor killing can stop the historical tide of the freedom movement. It shows that colonial domination over peoples is doomed to failure. It shows too that the aspirations of colonized peoples to independence and freedom cannot be frustrated.

The fate of no colonized Territory can be decided without taking into account the freely expressed aspirations and wishes of the people of that Territory.

It is the will of these heroic peoples and their commitment to continued struggle that, in the final analysis, have enabled and will continue to enable those peoples to overcome the intransigence of colonialism.

But despite the positive, excellent developments we have witnessed, it must be noted - and this is truly sad and regrettable - that today the United Nations is still seeking the means to ensure the fulfilment of the aspirations of millions of persons in about 20 Territories that still do not enjoy self-government, countries that are still subjected to exploitation. More than 4 million persons from Palestine - this Arab country in Asia - continue to be deprived of their legitimate rights in their homeland.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian  
Arab Republic)

More than 20 million Africans in South Africa and Namibia are still being subjected to the worst forms of discrimination, repression and racist military occupation. In their own homelands they are deprived of the right to their own nationality and are subjected to repression and humiliation. The area as a whole continues to be one of the worst examples of traditional colonialism in its most extreme form.

The countries members of the Asian Group are convinced that this commemoration will give new impetus to the Special Committee of 24 which, under the leadership of its Chairman, Mr. Koroma, and with the assistance of its Secretary, Mr. Tanaka, and its officers, is working tirelessly to bring about complete implementation of the Declaration. We are also convinced that that Committee, with the support of the General Assembly, will continue with its excellent work until the last vestiges of colonialism are eradicated from our planet. We hope that that will be achieved in the shortest possible time.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I now call upon His Excellency Mr. Guennadi Oudovenko of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): I am grateful to have this opportunity to speak at this commemorative meeting as Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States. The twentieth century has been the era of the collapse of colonial empires and the emancipation of dependent countries and peoples from their age-old status of colonial slavery. Among the extremely important stages in the liberation struggle in our century were the great October socialist Revolution, the victory of the peace-loving peoples in the Second World War and, as a result of that great victory, the establishment of the United Nations. The United Nations Charter lists, as one of the Organization's most important tasks, that of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war,

(Mr. Oudovenko, Ukrainian SSR)

of respecting the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples and of promoting the observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion. Those historic events established conditions favourable to a powerful upsurge in the struggle of oppressed and dependent peoples for national liberation.

The adoption by the United Nations in 1960 of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, on the initiative of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, marked the beginning of a new stage in the process of the liberation of peoples who had been living in the chains of colonial slavery. The Declaration, which proclaimed

"the necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations" (General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV)) embodies such important principles as the right of all peoples to self-determination and to determine freely their economic, social and cultural development, and the inadmissibility of the subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation. It also condemns any attempt to disrupt the national unity and the territorial integrity of a country, it states that immediate steps should be taken to grant full independence to Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories, and it places upon all States the obligation to observe faithfully and strictly the provisions of the Declaration on the basis of equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of all States and respect for the sovereign rights of all peoples.

The Declaration was a powerful stimulus and lent moral and political support to the struggle of colonial peoples for freedom and independence. In the 25 years since its adoption, great successes have been achieved in implementing its goals. There has been a final collapse of the colonial empires, and from their ruins have arisen dozens of new States. Many peoples of Africa, Asia, America and Oceania have

(Mr. Oudovenko, Ukrainian SSR)

embarked on the path of independent development and social renewal. During their years of independence they have achieved many successes in solving complicated tasks of State construction and in achieving economic independence.

These new States were welcomed into the international community as full partners on an equal basis. Their international authority is growing, as is their positive contribution to solving world problems. This is a great achievement by the peoples of the world and an important step along the road towards the total elimination of colonialism, which was a scandalous stage in the history of mankind.

We must note, however, that despite the significant successes of national liberation movements throughout the world, colonialism has not been completely eradicated. It continues to poison the international atmosphere and is a dangerous source of tension and conflict. The stubborn resistance of the colonial Powers to full implementation of the Declaration on decolonization has its roots in the very nature of imperialism and in that system's political, economic and military-strategic interests. The existence of colonialism creates conditions highly favourable to the huge profits monopolist capital and transnational corporations are able to gain by stealing the natural resources of peoples and by exploiting the populations of the colonial territories. The unwillingness of the aggressive forces of imperialism to acknowledge wholeheartedly that all States have a right to sovereignty and genuine independence, to free self-determination and development, and the attempts of those forces to impose their will upon peoples and continue their economic exploitation represent today one of the main threats to the peoples of the world and create a threat to international peace and security.

That policy is the main reason why colonialism persists and why the sacred right to self-determination and independence is still only a dream for the peoples of some 20 countries and territories. An extremely important problem when dealing with the matter of the final eradication of colonialism is the liberation of

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southern Africa and, primarily, ensuring genuine independence for Namibia. By flouting numerous United Nations decisions, the racist South Africa régime is continuing its occupation of Namibia, exploiting that Territory's natural and human resources and attempting to destroy its national liberation movement under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), which has been recognized by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, as well as by the countries members of the Non-Aligned Movement, as the sole legitimate representative of the Namibian people. For many years the Pretoria régime, with the assistance of the United States of America and some other Western countries, has been impeding the implementation of United Nations decisions on granting independence to Namibia. The Socialist countries advocate the immediate exercise by the people of Namibia of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence, on the basis that the unity and territorial integrity of the country, including Walvis Bay and the offshore islands, must be maintained. We advocate the immediate and complete withdrawal of the occupation forces and of the colonial administration of South Africa from Namibia, and we advocate the transfer of full power to the people of Namibia as represented by SWAPO. Our countries share the conclusions set forth in General Assembly resolution 39/50 of 12 December 1984, which strongly reiterated that the continuing illegal and colonial occupation of Namibia by South Africa, in defiance of repeated General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, constitutes an act of aggression against the Namibian people and a challenge to the authority of the United Nations, which has direct responsibility for Namibia until independence.



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The socialist countries condemn the attempts of the Pretoria authorities to direct the solution of that colonial problem along neo-colonialist lines, through a so-called internal settlement and through the creation of a puppet régime in Namibia. The socialist countries support Security Council resolution 566 (1985) and other United Nations decisions that reject linkage between independence for Namibia and extraneous issues.

The basis for a political solution to the question of Namibia is Security Council resolution 435 (1978), the immediate implementation of which must be undertaken without any changes, any reservations or any prior conditions whatsoever. The entire process of a Namibian settlement should be under the constant and effective control of the Security Council.

In celebrating today the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, we cannot be silent as regards the question of the inhumane policy of apartheid, which has been extended by the racist régime of South Africa to Namibia. We vigorously condemn that system as a crime against mankind and as a violation of international peace and security. The policy and the practice of apartheid are incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations.

Encountering the unrestrained growth of resistance by the native population of South Africa to the apartheid régime and actually losing control over the situation in the country, the ruling circles of South Africa are attempting to strengthen their position with the help of military adventures. There are more frequent and more intensive acts of aggression by Pretoria against independent African States, whose purpose is simply to perpetuate colonialism in Namibia, to maintain domination in the region on a neo-colonialist basis and to stifle the aspirations of the African peoples to freedom, independence and social progress.

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The will of the African peoples to freedom is, however, insuperable. To attempt to stop their forward movement on the road of progress is a hopeless, doomed cause. We unfailingly stand at the side of the peoples of Africa, who are defending their right independently to determine their own social, economic and political development. We stand in solidarity with the front-line States, who are opposing the neo-colonialist manoeuvres of the imperialists and racists and we decisively support the struggle of the national liberation movements in southern Africa.

The socialist countries advocate an improvement in the entire political atmosphere on the African continent. We also advocate the assurance of reliable security for the young independent States of Africa. The policy of apartheid and the aggressive actions of the Pretoria régime should be halted in the most decisive way. That is the only way we can maintain peace and ensure free and independent development for the peoples in that region.

The United Nations Security Council should have an authoritative say in restoring legality and order to southern Africa. The United Nations should strive for the full observance by all States of the embargo established by the Security Council on the delivery of arms and military equipment to the racist régime of South Africa and the embargo against any co-operation with Pretoria in the production and development of nuclear weapons.

The socialist countries support the demand of the African countries and of the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as the appeal of the General Assembly to the Security Council, immediately to impose mandatory comprehensive sanctions against South Africa in accordance with Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

Unswervingly observing all decisions and recommendations of the United Nations intended to isolate and boycott the Pretoria régime, our countries do not maintain any relations of a political, economic, military or other nature with them. We

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condemn the policy of a number of Western countries of maintaining and developing co-operation with that régime. We condemn the policy of so-called constructive engagement with South Africa and we condemn the violation by that régime of decisions already adopted by the Security Council and the United Nations.

We cannot fail to condemn the position of those Western countries that verbally denounce apartheid and its crimes but in fact hinder the adoption of effective measures to curb the racists in South Africa.

It is not only in southern Africa that the provisions of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples are not being fulfilled. There remains the unsolved question of the decolonization of a number of so-called small colonial Territories. The point is not that these are Territories that are small in size and population; in fact, the administering Authorities like to use those reasons to justify their refusal to grant these Territories the right to self-determination and independence. The strategic military position of those Territories and the militaristic plans of the most aggressive circles of imperialism are the real reasons behind the stubborn attempts made by the Administering Authorities to preserve their remaining colonial possessions.

Also of a serious concern is the policy of splitting up and annexing the strategic Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands - Micronesia. For many years now, the islands and the peoples of Micronesia have had imposed upon them a free association status that is neo-colonialist in nature has been imposed upon them. The militarization of Micronesia, and its transformation into a military nuclear base for the United States, runs counter to the aspirations of the States of the area to establish a nuclear-free zone in the southern part of the Pacific Ocean.

In accordance with the United Nations Charter, any change in the status of a strategic Trust Territory - and Micronesia is such a Territory - can be carried out

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only by decision of the Security Council. The United Nations should continue to bear the responsibility for that Territory until its people have the opportunity to implement their legitimate right to full self-determination and independence without any hindrance.

As we have pointed out, the military activities of the colonial Powers in Territories under their administration or in Trust Territories are of a particularly dangerous nature. Hence the United Nations must, in keeping with decisions already taken, demand decisively that the colonial Powers end all military activities that are incompatible with or run counter to the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on decolonization, including the immediate elimination of all military bases on colonial and dependent Territories.

Our States support the demands of the developing countries that the elimination of colonialism be extended to the economic sphere, as well as the demand that economic relations be restructured on a just and democratic basis and the demand for the establishment of a new international economic order. Those just demands are being blocked by the imperialist Powers, which have decided on a policy of undermining equitable economic co-operation and of using a policy of diktat in international economic relations. That is having a very harmful influence on the development of the non-aligned States and damages all countries in the world.

It is our deep conviction that the year of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples should be celebrated by decisive actions to eliminate colonialism once and for all and to liquidate racism and apartheid.

The socialist countries fully acknowledge the inalienable right of peoples under the oppression of colonialism to struggle by all means available at their disposal, including armed struggle, against those who suppress their legitimate

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aspirations to liberty, self-determination and independence. In giving them moral, political, economic and other assistance, we wish them further successes in their just struggle against colonialism, racism and apartheid and for gaining and strengthening political and economic independence.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): I now call on Mr. Alfredo Canales of Chile, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American States.

Mr. CANALES (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): The dynamics of history have shown that because of his origins as a social creature man instinctively seeks independence for his community and seeks to earn a livelihood for himself and for the group of which he is a part. That characteristic of human nature has prompted nations, throughout history, to throw off the colonial yoke laid upon them by other peoples and to seek their own identity.

On the long road to the achievement of those goals - goals born with the birth of mankind - peoples had to appeal to the courage and wisdom of their most enlightened sons. That stage was marked by the valour of warriors.

We, the countries of Latin America, are no exception to that rule of history; more than 160 years ago we fought with sacrifice, vigour and dedication to attain our identity. Many of the greatest Latin Americans of the time laid down their lives for this noble cause, and today we proudly venerate and pay a tribute to their courage.

But more often than not, this heroic course was of necessity sown with the seeds of confrontation. Thus, the idea of an international community was gradually developed, along with an awareness that efforts had to be made to ensure that the just aims of peoples did not have to be achieved through war.

When 40 years ago the world emerged from an unprecedented conflict, the survivors pledged to eradicate the scourge of war and to stand together in their determination to build a better world. But it was necessary to understand that there would be no better world and no end to bloodshed unless a civilized, peaceful way were sought for colonial peoples to achieve their independence without recourse to armed struggle. That led to international recognition of the principle of the right to self-determination, and in that framework lie the efforts of the United Nations to make it possible for nations that were once colonies to attain, through the exercise of the right to self-determination, their desired freedom.

(Mr. Canales, Chile)

Resolution 1514 (XV) is the corner-stone of that peaceful process, and its implementation is without question the finest example of the achievements of the United Nations during its 40 years of existence. Dozens of peoples have attained their identity through the machinery of that resolution, and they are among us today as countries which are proud of the independence they achieved thanks to the Declaration.

Resolution 1514 (XV) has helped peoples exercise their right to self-determination in the fullest possible way; in cases where some of them, as nations, have freely and in a sovereign manner expressed their wish not to accede to independence and to exist in a status chosen by the majority, that wish has been respected and recognized. Today we are proud to point to the goals attained through resolution 1514 (XV), in the implementation of which the Special Committee of 24 has played a primary role.

But unfortunately there is work yet to be done. We regret to note that there are peoples denied the opportunity to attain their own identity. The most serious case is that of Namibia, where, despite international resolutions adopted by a wide variety of bodies, an archaic colonial system continues to be imposed upon the people; this is a throw-back to a past which should have disappeared long ago. On behalf of Latin America and the Caribbean, I express our solidarity with those peoples and our wish that they may soon exercise their right to self-determination, freely and in a sovereign manner.

As the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the foundation of the United Nations coincides with the twenty-fifth of the adoption of resolution 1514 (XV), I wish on behalf of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to reiterate our unequivocal condemnation of all forms of colonialism, our sympathy with peoples struggling for self-determination, and our determined support for the complete implementation of resolution 1514 (XV).

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Spanish): The next speaker is Mr. Robert McDonagh of Ireland, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States.

Mr. McDONAGH (Ireland): It is an honour for me, as current Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States, to speak at this celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of a historic document which made a significant contribution to the self-government and independence of peoples and Territories under colonial rule.

The essence of the right of peoples to self-determination was, of course, expressed in Article 1 of our Charter, which specifically includes as one of the purposes of the United Nations:

"To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, and to take other appropriate measures to strengthen universal peace".

The responsibilities and obligations concerning the Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories, which the administering Powers accepted by joining the United Nations, are described as a sacred trust and are outlined in Chapters XI and XII of the Charter.



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It would seem, therefore, that our founding fathers clearly believed that only equal rights and self-determination for all peoples could help guarantee peace and prosperity for future generations. The Charter leaves no room for doubt that peace and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are inextricably linked. To that extent it could be said that the Charter of the United Nations ushered in the era of decolonization, although it was not until the adoption of the historic resolution 1514 (XV) and, the following day, resolution 1541 (XV), adopted the following day, that specific international documents were adopted in this regard.

In a number of instances, of course, the administering Power had already begun to encourage, or even brought to its conclusion, the process leading to the free exercise of self-determination and eventual independence. Nevertheless, for many years peoples in colonial countries often looked to the United Nations as the guarantor of their national right to freedom and self-determination.

To colonial peoples everywhere, therefore, the adoption of the Declaration without a single negative vote constituted a landmark in the application of the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples enshrined in our Charter, and conveyed the promise of a world order based on those principles.

Today, largely as a result of the ongoing process of decolonization, the United Nations is very much closer to its goal of universality. The Group of Western European and other States welcomes the progress that has been achieved in this field since the adoption of the United Nations Charter and the Declaration, and notes with satisfaction the number of Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories that have attained independence and joined our Organization in the past 25 years.

However, on this twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration we must not limit ourselves simply to reviewing the past and congratulating ourselves on our achievements. The question of Namibia is one of our major

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preoccupations. It is particularly so in view of the special responsibility of the United Nations for that international Territory and its people. There should be no doubt that the United Nations will live up to that responsibility and that the international community will not rest until the Namibian people have freely exercised those rights proclaimed in the Declaration we are celebrating today.

In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Western European and other States for the month of October, I should like to take the opportunity afforded by this solemn occasion to emphasize the deep commitment of the members of the Group to promoting the ideals embodied in the Charter and reiterated in the Declaration and to seeking the implementation of the principle of equal rights and self-determination among all peoples.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.