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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 3rd MEETING

Chairman:

Mr. ADOUKI

(Congo)

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Hearing of petitioner

REQUESTS FOR HEARING

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

REQUESTS FOR HEARING (A/C.4/45/2 and Add.1 and 2, A/C.4/45/3, A/C.4/45/4 and Add.1, A/C.4/45/5 and 6)

1. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that requests for hearing had been received relating to the question of New Caledonia (A/C.4/45/2 and Add.1 and 2), Western Sahara (A/C.4/45/3), the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (A/C.4/45/4 and Add.1), activities of foreign economic and other interests (A/C.4/45/5) and implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (A/C.4/45/6).

2. Ms. NIELSEN (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that their agreement to the granting of a request for a hearing on the question of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (agenda item 18) should not be interpreted as recognition of the competence of the General Assembly to assume any functions relating to that Territory. The position of the Nordic countries was based on Article 83 of the Charter of the United Nations, which stated that all functions of the United Nations relating to strategic areas would be exercised by the Security Council, which could avail itself of the assistance of the Trusteeship Council.

3. The PRESIDENT said that, if there were no further comments, he would take it that the Committee wished to grant the requests.

4. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 112: ACTIVITIES OF FOREIGN ECONOMIC AND OTHER INTERESTS WHICH ARE IMPEDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES IN TERRITORIES UNDER COLONIAL DOMINATION AND EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE COLONIALISM, APARTHEID AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA (A/45/23 (Part IV); A/AC.109/1018, 1020, 1024, 1027, 1028, 1030, 1032, 1034 and 1035)

Hearing of petitioner

5. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. González González took a seat at the petitioner's table.

6. Mr. GONZALEZ GONZALEZ expressed satisfaction at the attainment of independence by Namibia and went on to say that the item before the Committee touched upon all types of activity, which irrespective of their importance and character, were impeding the implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 and also the struggle of the black majority of South Africa against racial segregation and racial discrimination in order to ensure equality and dignity for all the inhabitants of that country. It would be a serious mistake to limit consideration of the issue to economic and military aspects alone because that would mean bowing to imperialism and disregarding the moral damage which such activities caused to the people under colonial domination.

(Mr. González González)

7. It was clear that economic and military activities were a major impediment to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960. That was clearly borne out by the situation of his country; it had a huge number of military bases located on its territory and its economy was almost entirely controlled by the United States. The activities of transnational corporations in that colonial Territory earned those corporations an annual income of between \$US 9 and 10 billion to the detriment of the interests of the workers and inhabitants of that country. It should be added that the United States did not pay the Territory any compensation for the use of all those bases.

8. There was no doubt that propaganda was the greatest impediment to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960. By "propaganda" he meant all forms of influence on children, young people and adults which was designed to mould appropriately the mind, spirit, consciousness and outlook of people. Moulding the consciousness of the oppressed was the oppressor's principal task in order to perpetuate his domination over the subject Territories. Both State and private schools were used in order to achieve that goal as well as radio and television, the press and other methods of influencing the minds of the population of colonial Territories. In addition to the various types of propaganda "death squads" were used to scare the freedom fighters.

9. The Fourth Committee should take that aspect into consideration because it was far more significant for the implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 than the military and economic aspects. In that connection, for the attainment of the goal of the decolonization of the 19 colonial Territories it would be advisable not to restrict the functions assigned to the missions dispatched there only to observing the electoral process but to provide also for them to study the teaching materials used in schools and the content of radio and television programmes.

10. Another aspect of the item under consideration related to the formulation of the concept of self-determination. The response given by the Legal Counsel of the United Nations to the inquiry which he (the petitioner) had made on that subject demonstrated clearly that there was no generally accepted formulation of the concept of self-determination. The Fourth Committee should ask Legal Counsel to evolve an appropriate formulation. Furthermore, it should request the inclusion of a new item on the agenda of the General Assembly concerning the formulation by the Assembly of the concept, which played a key role in the process of the decolonization of the 19 Territories.

11. In the absence of a generally accepted formulation of the concept of self-determination in respect of Territories under colonial domination, it was necessary to use the same standards that were used in respect of free, sovereign and independent States. Any referendum, consultation or election conducted on the instructions of the occupying Power in a colonial Territory should be considered an act of self-determination only if measures were taken to transfer to the people indigenous to the territory "all powers ... in accordance with their freely expressed will and desire, without any distinction as to race, creed or colour, in

(Mrs. Tahir-Kheli, United States)

current issues which would have the effect of creating polarization rather than consensus. What was saddest about those resolutions was that they in no way served the interests of territorial peoples. Her delegation was deeply concerned by the Special Committee's inability to bring its work into line with thinking elsewhere in the United Nations and was saddened by the language of the resolutions the Fourth Committee was being asked to consider. In fact, it seriously questioned if there was any utility in continued efforts to work with the Special Committee given the retrogressive nature of the draft resolutions at its August session.

14. The draft resolution on activities of foreign economic and other interests was an embarrassment. It made no attempt to integrate the new thinking and concepts on development approved by the General Assembly in a consensus resolution at its 1990 Special Session, instead devoting a major portion of its text to South Africa and apartheid. But it had nothing to contribute on that subject, as the text was a relic of the past and had been surpassed by far superior consensus language in the General Assembly. Where the resolution did discuss the role of foreign economic interests, it reiterated blanket condemnations of those interests which had never been accurate and were even less appropriate at present, when the developing world was crying out for foreign investment. What was needed in the resolution were creative, forward-looking ideas, pragmatic guidelines and balanced language. While her Government joined in the condemnation of foreign interests that were exploitative in any way, it considered that a distinction must be made between the beneficial and the harmful. Moreover, it was convinced that the people of the territories would object to the blanket condemnations contained in the draft resolution as harmful to their own search for foreign investment leading to growth.

15. The draft decision on military activities lent itself to the same objections. It employed name-calling and outmoded language on apartheid that ran counter to the General Assembly's consensus views and maintained that focus for at least half the text. Where it did discuss military activities, it did so with blanket statements regarding their nature which were simply not supported by the facts. Her Government would vote against the resolution and decision as it had in the past, but would do so with special sorrow at the current session. Those texts in no way reflected the United Nations of the 1990s, did nothing constructive for the peoples of the Territories and revealed an unwillingness to deal with contemporary reality. Her delegation hoped that, together with the other delegations opposing those resolutions, it would be able to convey to the Special Committee that it must move with the times or become totally irrelevant. Most importantly, it hoped to convey the message that the concerns of the Territories deserved more serious treatment than had been offered in those texts.

16. Mr. AL-FAIHANI (Bahrain) said that, as a result of United Nations efforts, many countries had gained independence in the 1950s and 1960s and that the previous year, Namibia had become independent. However, there remained a number of countries colonized against their will, partly as a result of foreign economic interests. The United Nations had repeatedly stressed the illegality of the economic activities of colonial powers, which deprived peoples of their most basic right to conserve and benefit from their natural resources. Article 16 of the

15. Mr. SHAHEED (Syrian Arab Republic) recalled that 30 years had passed since the adoption by the General Assembly on 14 December 1960 of its historic resolution 1514 (XV), containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The Declaration was quite justly regarded as a new page in the history of the United Nations, as a result of which it had been possible to help many countries to embark on the road to decolonization.

16. In spite of the successes which had been achieved, some regions were still under colonial domination, and their peoples were unable to exercise the inalienable rights to self-determination and independence enshrined in the aforementioned resolution. Obviously, the activities of foreign economic and other interests in the colonial countries constituted a major obstacle to the resolution's implementation. Colonialism meant promotion of the military, economic and other interests of the metropolitan State, which could not be compatible with the interests of the colonial territory. Accordingly, economic structures in a colonial country were also primarily oriented towards the predatory exploitation of natural resources for the benefit of the metropolitan centre or its trading partners. That also explained the tendency to reinforce the colonial status of those territories.

17. As was well known, the United Nations had adopted countless resolutions calling for an end to colonialism and the restoration of colonial countries' natural resources. The continuous looting of those regions' natural resources, to be used as a source of raw materials for the metropolitan States, must be stopped.

18. It was unacceptable, in that connection, that colonial territories should be used for military purposes. His delegation fully endorsed the United Nations repeated calls contained in the corresponding resolutions, for the immediate and unconditional cessation of all forms of military activity in colonial territories and the complete elimination of military bases therein. Everyone knew that the metropolitan States used those bases as springboards for acts of aggression against neighbouring States, as well as for the purpose of carrying out nuclear tests and storing nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction.

19. One of the reasons for the ineffectiveness of sanctions against South Africa was the co-operation between the apartheid and Zionist régimes. Their co-operation, which occurred in various spheres, was based on the fact that the two régimes pursued a similar policy of racism, that both faced international isolation and that their principal aims consisted of aggression, expansion, the plunder of neighbouring States and the suppression of efforts by the indigenous population to exercise their inalienable rights. The Declaration adopted by the United Nations was also intended to combat such policies.

20. His country had always been ready to provide assistance to the colonial countries and to those struggling for their independence and self-determination and intended to make every effort to facilitate the final eradication of colonialism. All appropriate measures should also be taken by the international community.

21. Mr. VAN LIEROP (Vanuatu) said that the view was being expressed, as the last decade of the twentieth century began, that great progress had been made in the decolonization process and that the United Nations should now shift its attention elsewhere.

22. At one stage of the decolonization process, the activities of foreign economic and other interests impeding implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in the various territories under colonial domination had been relatively open and evident. The relationship between colonialism, apartheid and foreign economic domination had been far more evident than it was now. Over the past 30 years, the world had changed dramatically, but there was no doubt as to the continued existence of foreign economic and other interests which did in fact impede the decolonization process and efforts to eliminate apartheid and other forms of racial discrimination.

23. The economy of the modern world was undoubtedly different from that which had existed 30 years previously. Geopolitical conditions were also completely different. The former colonial countries were now perhaps more open to foreign investment than at any other time in their history. Colonial economies had very often been the products of politically imposed monopolies. In addition, foreign economic interests had, in the pre-colonial era, generally been welcomed in lands that were subsequently colonized. It was only when certain foreign economic interests began to encourage the process of colonial subjugation that a reaction against such interests began to develop.

24. In theory, if not always in practice, the end of colonialism made it possible for new relationships to develop between foreign economic interests and those who had been colonized. The evolution of the world's economy meant that those new relationships were often more beneficial to some foreign economic interests than the old colonial relationships had been.

25. That subject should be examined further. Far too often, sterile repetitiveness had held sway over original thought and analysis. It was hoped that the new thinking that had swept across the globe would also influence the work of the United Nations, particularly in the Fourth Committee. Vanuatu firmly believed that the decolonization process must continue until the people of all Non-Self-Governing Territories were able to decide for themselves who they were and what they wished to be.

26. His delegation did not agree with those who suggested that a lower priority should be assigned to the decolonization process. Vanuatu would always listen to new and constructive ideas addressed to the Committee on that subject. It looked forward to a candid and open exchange of ideas which would bring the Committee closer to the realization of its collective dream - a world totally free of any form of colonialism.

27. Ms. LAOSE (Nigeria) said that her delegation continued to attach a lot of importance to the agenda item currently under consideration. Nigeria condemned without equivocation all activities of foreign economic and other interests which impeded, either directly or indirectly, the exercise of the inalienable right to self-determination by colonial and non-self-governing peoples. It particularly condemned the activities of foreign economic and other interests in the Non-Self-Governing Territories where apartheid and racial discrimination existed.

28. General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 clearly stipulated that neither the size of a Non-Self-Governing Territory nor its level of socio-economic development should impede the exercise of the right to self-determination. Nigeria, therefore, rejected any attempt to link the exercise of the inalienable right to self-determination to social and economic progress in the colonial and dependant Territories.

29. Her delegation also wished to reiterate that the administering Powers had an obligation to protect the land, marine and other natural resources of the Territories under their administration. Most of the economic activities carried out in the Non-Self-Governing Territories were in the sectors of mining, farming and fishing. Those activities had been further encouraged by the existence of cheap, unskilled and semi-skilled labour.

30. The international community should detect and expose any attempt to transform the dependant Territories into dumping sites for toxic and hazardous waste, which endangered the lives of present and future generations.

31. The promotion of economic development in the dependant Territories was clearly a desirable objective. However, in order to be successful, economic development must involve the local population at every stage of project elaboration and execution. Furthermore, the right of colonial and dependant peoples to chart their political destiny should not be sacrificed on the alter of economic development. Her delegation, therefore, urged the administering Powers to give the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories the opportunity to decide their own political future.

32. Her delegation welcomed the recent positive developments in southern Africa and hoped that those changes would continue. Nevertheless, until profound and irreversible changes took place in South Africa itself, it would be necessary to continue to maintain existing sanctions, as had been agreed in the consensus declaration adopted at the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly. The international community must not relent in its efforts to eliminate apartheid and racism in southern Africa.

33. The current session of the General Assembly was taking place at a time when significant and momentous developments were occurring in the world. One should not, however, hastily conclude that the colonial era had ended. Any action by individuals, corporate bodies or sovereign States aimed at perpetuating colonialism must be not only condemned, but also firmly resisted.

34. Mr. IBRAHIM (Egypt) said that, although the achieving of independence by Namibia was a decisive step in the struggle against colonialism, there was still much to be done in ensuring all colonial Territories the right to self-determination, regardless of their geographic situation, population size or reserves of natural resources. The Charter of the United Nations and various General Assembly resolutions left no doubt that the administering Powers must take effective measures to ensure the inalienable right of colonial peoples to administer their own natural resources and property. Those Territories must not be used as nuclear-weapon-testing sites or for disposing of nuclear waste or storing arsenals of nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction. It should be kept in mind that the peoples and resources of those Territories did not belong to the administering Powers, but had been placed under their trusteeship and that those Powers were obliged to take all measures to preserve the natural wealth of the Territories for future generations. Egypt urged the administering Powers to follow the spirit and letter of the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in order to help usher in speedily a new era free of all forms of colonialism in which all States and peoples would be able to live in conditions based on justice and co-operation.

35. Apartheid and its destructive consequences in southern Africa had been condemned at the special session of the General Assembly. The Declaration adopted at that session must be the basis for the efforts by the international community to eliminate that inhuman system. Egypt unswervingly condemned all forms of discrimination and ethnic inequality. At the previous session, his country had, in the Fourth Committee, called upon the Government of South Africa to put an end to that system once and for all. The steps taken by the Government of South Africa, which might promote constitutional changes leading to the establishment of a democratic and non-racial society, which would make it possible to ensure development in the region on the basis of justice, equality and peace, had given rise to measured optimism.

REQUESTS FOR HEARING

36. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that he had received three communications containing requests for hearing on the question of New Caledonia under agenda item 18. He suggested that, in accordance with the usual practice, the communications should be circulated as Committee documents for consideration at a subsequent meeting.

37. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.