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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 5TH MEETING

**Chairman:**

Mr. AL-KINDI

(United Arab Emirates)

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General debate

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

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 (continued) (A/45/23 (Part IV); A/AC.109/1018, 1020, 1024, 1027, 1028, 1030, 1032, 1034 and 1035)

General debate

1. Mr. MALDIS (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said it was gratifying that the people of Namibia had at last achieved independence during the past year. Clearly, however, the United Nations must not slacken its efforts to achieve the goal of freeing all the dependent Territories.
2. Economic factors played an important part in achieving the full implementation of that goal, and the General Assembly had emphasized in its resolutions on the subject, including resolution 44/84, the inalienable right of the peoples of the Territories to full control of their own natural resources. It was hard to see, however, from the documents submitted to the Committee, what specific activities had been undertaken by the administering Powers to promote economic development and to avoid the possible negative consequences of the activities of foreign economic interests in the Territories. His delegation supported those resolutions and believed that the administering Powers should act in accordance with them and with the Charter. It also supported the decisions of the United Nations calling for the elimination of military bases and the cessation of military activities in colonial Territories, which constituted a basic hindrance to their achievement of independence. It was obvious also that those Territories should not be used for the testing of nuclear weapons or the storage of nuclear wastes.
3. Mrs. DELGADO (Cuba) said that continued application of the basic principles contained in resolution 1514 (XV), the thirtieth anniversary of which was at hand, would mean that the world could be free of the scourge of colonialism by the end of the century. Despite the progress which had been made, some 20 Territories remained under colonial domination, and efforts continued on the part of some to perpetuate that situation.
4. Many obstacles remained to compliance with the Declaration on decolonization. Such economic considerations as unequal trade and external debt undermined economic independence, the basis of political independence. The presence of foreign military installations also promoted dependency on outside Powers. Moreover, at least one such Territory, Puerto Rico, had served as a proving ground for new weapons and tactics later utilized by the United States in its policies of aggression. Independence was also impeded by the imposition of alien cultures, often far removed from indigenous values.

(Mrs. Delgado, Cuba)

5. Frequent reference had been made to change in the international environment and political thinking, and some Powers boasted that colonialism was a thing of the past, rendering continued analysis of the question before the Committee unnecessary. Those same powers declined to participate in the work 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 or to provide current information on the Territories for which they were responsible. Similarly, they sought to tone down the international community's condemnation of apartheid, on the pretext that a more moderate approach would promote democratization in South Africa. Yet it was quite clear that only the full elimination of apartheid could lead to a democratic and united South Africa.

6. There was thus doubt as to whether any real change was actually taking place. There was still a need to apply the principles of the Declaration and the Charter, and to continue the work of the past 30 years. Attainment of freedom by independent peoples would bring greater freedom to all, notwithstanding the siren songs of those who would subvert the world community's responsibilities towards mankind as a whole.

7. Mr. BYKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the issues the Committee was now discussing were essential for the establishment of the most favourable conditions for the accession of the dependent Territories to independence. The importance of ensuring the right of peoples freely to manage and exploit their own natural resources was self-evident, and the efforts to promote that right deserved encouragement and support. Unfortunately, however, foreign companies, in their economic activities in the Territories, had made widespread use of practices which were harmful to the Territories and the environment, including the pillaging of those resources, pollution of the environment and violation of the customary working practices of the populations. Those violations made it necessary for the United Nations to take effective measures to establish control and supervision of foreign economic activities in the Territories and to seek means by which the economic activities in those Territories could be integrated into the world economy.

8. Much had been said in the Committee about the negative impact of the military activity of the administering Powers in the Territories. Whatever the validity of the arguments justifying the maintenance of such bases in the past, they had been rendered invalid by the new international situation. In that connection, he recalled the proposal made by his delegation at the third special session devoted to disarmament for the elimination of all military bases on foreign territory by the year 2000. His Government continued to support that proposal and was doing its part to carry it out.

9. Considerable attention was being paid at present to efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations. One of the best ways to achieve that goal, as the recent experience with Namibia had shown, was to work towards the achievement of consensus decisions on the basis of a balance of interests. It was his delegation's view that the extension and deepening of such co-operative endeavours

(Mr. Bykov, USSR)

in order to reach consensus resolutions and decisions on all the questions of colonialism to be dealt with at the current session of the General Assembly would constitute a valuable and practical contribution to the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on decolonization.

10. Mr. MOHAMMADI (Afghanistan) said that, despite the significant role played by the United Nations, vestiges of colonialism persisted and the Organization's task remained unfinished. Colonial Powers still sought to preserve their domination, through both economic and military activities. Recent improvements in the global situation should encourage Administering Authorities to remove military installations in dependent Territories, thus improving the prospects for peace and independence.

11. His Government was heartened by the recent developments in South Africa, where dialogue between the Government and the African National Congress held out the prospect of a free and democratic country. Nevertheless the continued violence in the townships was a matter of concern.

12. His Government was optimistic concerning the prospects for peace, freedom, equality and prosperity for all, a process in which the United Nations would continue to play a crucial role.

13. Mr. MIMOUNI (Algeria) said that the United Nations had always stood alongside dependent peoples in their struggle to achieve freedom, as evidenced by its role in Namibia's liberation.

14. Nevertheless, many peoples remained under colonial domination because of the policies pursued by colonial Powers. Specifically, the activities of foreign economic interests, concerned only to maximize their profits and scornful of the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of colonial territories, hindered the process of emancipation, rather than promoting balanced economic development. Such interests flagrantly violated the sovereignty of peoples over their natural resources and, for the most part, served to perpetuate dependency. The use of dependent Territories for military purposes, against the wishes of the indigenous populations and in contravention of United Nations decisions, also gave cause for concern.

15. Foreign economic interests had long served to maintain the South African régime, thus contributing to the marginalized status of the majority of the South African people, who were reduced to little more than forced labour. While some improvement had taken place, the international community must maintain its pressure until apartheid was eliminated and the legitimate rights of the South African people restored.

16. His Government firmly hoped that, at a time of increasing freedom throughout the world, the United Nations would live up to the ideals which had attended its establishment and take the necessary action to restore freedom to all dependent peoples.

17. Mrs. SAMATE (Burkina Faso) said that her Government had always affirmed the right of peoples to self-determination and sovereignty over their natural resources. Regrettably, administering Powers of dependent Territories permitted the exploitation of those resources in pursuit of profits which were then repatriated rather than used to benefit the peoples of the Territories. Moreover administering Powers had even conducted nuclear tests in dependent Territories. Such policies were at variance with the positive developments on the international scene.

18. With regard to South Africa, certain Powers continued to conduct economic activities which had the effect of consolidating racial discrimination. Military and nuclear collaboration between the racist régime and certain States also continued, in flagrant violation of United Nations embargoes. The apartheid economy offered an extreme illustration of an economy based on colonization and exploitation, and while some change had taken place it was insufficient to lead to the dismantling of apartheid.

19. Administering Powers of colonial Territories must adopt measures to promote free political activities and rectify the serious economic and social problems faced by colonial peoples. The natural resources of colonial Territories must be protected. Foreign economic activities distorted the economies of colonial Territories and did not ensure appropriate economic development. While third world countries sought investment, it must reflect their development priorities and not be concerned solely with profits.

20. The international community must support colonial peoples and take concerted and effective action, particularly in the form of sanctions, to bring about the elimination of apartheid in South Africa. Failing such action, neither peace nor justice could obtain.

21. Mr. EMORID (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that the unprecedented détente between the two super-Powers, the reduction of the arsenals of weapons of mass destruction and the strengthening of human rights inspired optimism over the prospects for complete decolonization by the end of the century. He hoped that those developments had not been a result of selfish ambitions disregarding the rights of the peoples of the third world, including those who had not yet achieved self-determination. It was unacceptable for some to live in luxury while others plundered and depleted their resources. The international community was urged to eliminate all vestiges of colonialism. Thus, the Ninth Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries had raised the question of economic, social and cultural compensation for the colonial period. The plundering by foreign interests of natural resources and their exploitation of indigenous populations were aimed at making quick profits and tying the economies of those countries to those of the colonialist countries in order better to control the newly independent peoples.

22. Military objectives were often the main reason for occupying those Territories and obstructing their independence. The establishment of military bases there impeded development and constituted a danger even greater than that of nuclear testing or the deployment of weapons of mass destruction. Military benefits reaped by the colonialist countries often exceeded their economic gains in those regions

(Mr. Emorid, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

and should be condemned, and steps should be taken to prevent those Territories from being used to bury toxic wastes.

23. It was vital to comply with the General Assembly's economic sanctions, which were not applied against the South African régime by some colonialist countries, and in particular the Zionist entity. The arrogant régimes in occupied Palestine and South Africa defied repeated international resolutions against racial discrimination and apartheid, and co-operated closely in arms production and the plundering of the wealth of the Palestinian and South African people, encouraged by the indifference of the colonialist countries. The struggle to eliminate the shame of racial discrimination was not yet at an end, although some progress had been made.

24. During the colonialist occupation of Libya, air power and chemical weapons had been used in the Second World War against Libyan freedom fighters, as had detention, mass deportations and other forms of punishment. Libya had been the scene of the great North African campaigns, for which large tracts of land had been mined. The mines still impeded development, and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya would continue to request assistance in their removal from the countries responsible for them and seek compensation for loss of life and other damage.

25. He reiterated the firm support of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya for liberation movements around the world. Its freedom would remain incomplete as long as there were peoples who had not obtained their freedom, independence and sovereignty.

26. Mr. MDEE (United Republic of Tanzania) noted that, 30 years after the adoption of the Declaration on decolonization, only 18 countries remained under the yoke of colonialism. That should be a source of gratification to the international community, and to the Fourth Committee and the Committee on decolonization in particular, for a job well done.

27. As part of the Committee on decolonization's success, Namibia had in March 1990 become the last colony in sub-Saharan Africa to regain its independence. Yet colonialism was only one of the twin evils bedevilling the African continent. The other was apartheid. Although steps in the right direction had been taken in South Africa over the past nine months, the conscience of the international community could not be at peace until apartheid had been totally eradicated. For that reason, there was every justification in maintaining pressure on the South African régime. His Government rejected the argument that the relaxing of pressure would encourage the régime to eradicate apartheid; there was a strong body of evidence showing that that course of action would in fact produce the opposite results.

28. By some historical coincidence, the majority of the remaining colonies consisted of small Territories. His delegation shared the view that the size of a Territory should never be used as an excuse to deny a people their right to self-determination.

(Mr. Mdee, United Republic of Tanzania)

29. The past year had seen the end of the cold war and that had led some to conclude that there would be less support for the anti-colonial struggle. But neither the anti-colonial nor the anti-apartheid struggle had been a product of the cold war, and the relaxation of East/West tensions would not change the depth of anti-colonial sentiment.

30. While it was true that not all the activities of foreign economic and other interests impeded progress towards self-determination, there could be no denying that some activities had a direct negative impact on the process. It was those activities that must continue to be opposed by the international community. The countries that had chosen to co-operate in military and nuclear fields with the South African régime must be told that their action was reprehensible. Any attempt by them to hide under the umbrella of East-West rapprochement must be categorically rejected. His country remained unwaveringly committed to the struggle for the eradication of colonialism.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.