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at 10 a.m.  
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 9th MEETING

**Chairman:**

**Mr. ADOUKI**

**(Congo)**

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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 (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued)

Question of New Caledonia

Hearing of petitioners (A/C.4/45/2/Add.5)

1. The CHAIRMAN reminded the members of the Committee that they had agreed to grant a request for hearing contained in document A/C.4/45/2/Add.5.
2. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Wamytan (Front de libération nationale kanak socialiste) took a place at the petitioners' table.
3. Mr. WAMYTAN (Front de libération nationale kanak socialiste) said that 30 years after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, which had given a boost to the process of decolonization throughout the world, it should not be forgotten that the struggle for self-determination and independence of the peoples of more than 15 Non-Self-Governing Territories was still continuing. The majority of the Territories were islands lost in the expanses of the oceans, but their geographical position, low population density and scant reserves of natural resources could not justify denying their peoples their legitimate rights.
4. One such territory was New Caledonia, whose history of colonial rule by France had lasted 137 years. Subjected to massive repressions and herded into reservations, the Kanak people had now become a minority in its own country and had been squeezed out to the margins of political, economic and cultural life. It was perfectly natural that the Kanak people could not accept such a fate and had waged a tireless struggle for liberation throughout its colonial history. That struggle had been raised to a new level when the indigenous inhabitants had been granted the right to vote in 1953.
5. The Front de libération nationale kanak socialiste (FLNKS) had been created in order to thwart the attempts to integrate the Territory with France and to guarantee the future of the Kanak people as a nation; FLNKS was the sole lawful representative of the Kanak people and had set itself the goal of fighting against colonialism and for independence. From 1984 the Front had opposed the imposition on the Territory of the Lemoine Statute by actively boycotting elections and it had fought against the policy of disregarding the Kanak people pursued by the cabinet of Jacques Chirac, the sad outcome of which had been the tragic events of May 1988 on Ouvéa island. The French Government had thus been forced to agree under pressure from FLNKS to a dialogue which had led to the signing of the Matignon Agreements.

(Mr. Wamytan)

6. Recognition of the Kanak struggle for national liberation had been marked by the adoption by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/41 A of 2 December 1986 of a decision to restore New Caledonia to the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories, by the granting of observer status to FLNKS in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in 1986, and by its acceptance in 1990 as a fully-fledged member of the Melanesian Spearhead Group.
7. FLNKS regarded the tripartite Matignon Agreements as a link in the general strategy of fighting for liberation. The Agreement reflected above all the desire of the parties to put an end to the escalating violence which threatened to drag New Caledonia into a civil war and it facilitated the transition to a division of political and economic power, as well as obliging the French Government to grant an amnesty to political prisoners and carry out a number of other measures.
8. Implementation of the Matignon Agreements had made it possible to make up much of the ground lost in the development of the infrastructure over the years of colonial rule, to improve the Territory's economy, to reduce its dependence on metropolitan France, and to encourage the development of Kanak culture. Within the framework of the Territory's new status, powers had been granted to three provinces, institutions had been set up to carry out a fair land policy and develop Kanak culture, and the training of local staff, including managers, was to be speeded up.
9. However, although the Matignon Agreements demonstrated the genuine desire of the French Government to promote the Territory's development, FLNKS believed that it did not offer a clear prospect of transition to independence, and the wish of the Government itself to begin the decolonization process was open to doubt. The Rocard plan was unacceptable to FLNKS, for it did not resolve, amongst other issues, the questions of amnesty for political prisoners and the voting qualification, and the Front did not accept the time-limits for the plan's implementation. Everything seemed to indicate that France and the Rassemblement pour la Calédonie dans la République (RPCR) were gambling on the maintenance of the colonial status of the Kanaks.
10. The indigenous Kanak population was convinced that the process of national liberation which was unfolding in accordance with the provisions of the Declaration on decolonization could not be turned back. Therefore, the French Government should begin a genuine process of decolonization and do everything possible to prepare the Territory for the transition to independence after the 1998 referendum. For FLNKS the need to restore the sovereignty of the Kanak people was not open to discussion; it was only a question of the means and the timing.
11. The referendum on self-determination must be organized in accordance with the principles and rules of the United Nations, and participation in it must be authorized only for the representatives of the Kanak people who were vitally interested in self-determination and for the "victims of historical circumstances" - the descendants of immigrants to New Caledonia from countries of Asia and Europe. Only in such conditions would the referendum on self-determination be a genuine decolonization referendum.

(Mr. Wamytan)

12. In that connection, FLNKS requested the United Nations to appeal to the Government of France to initiate the decolonization of the Territory in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV) and with the Charter of the United Nations. New Caledonia must remain on the list of Territories awaiting decolonization, for its removal from the list would reduce to nothing all the measures which had been taken so far.

13. The Kanak people did not wish to be the poor stepchild of decolonization. That was why he was interested in the dispatch to New Caledonia of a United Nations mission to observe the implementation of a process already begun. In that connection, FLNKS urged the Committee to consider in detail the resolution adopted at the Twenty-first South Pacific Forum on the question of New Caledonia and the proposals put forward at the seminar on decolonization held in Vanuatu, especially with regard to setting up a regional subdivision of the United Nations in that region. It was also necessary to ensure that the administering Power provided regular information on the situation in New Caledonia, in pursuance of Article 73 e of the Charter.

14. Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea), noting the positive aspects of the Matignon Agreements but also the French Government's apparent lack - as mentioned earlier - of a genuine desire to begin the decolonization process, inquired whether a specific plan for the self-determination of the Kanak people had been agreed upon by the three parties.

15. Mr. WAMYTAN replied that the Matignon Agreements had been signed in 1988 to end further bloodshed and violence. Their implementation could only to a limited extent prepare the Kanak people for independence; they were unable to satisfy fully the people's legitimate demand for self-determination. Thus, there was no specific plan for a transition to independence.

16. Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea), noting the positive changes in Eastern Europe and the forthcoming integration of Europe in 1992, said he would be interested in the speaker's view as to whether those changes would facilitate decolonization or would place additional obstacles in its path. In addition, in view of the elections due to be held in France during the next year or two, he would be interested in an assessment of their possible effect on the prospects for Kanak self-determination.

17. Mr. WAMYTAN said that FLNKS was concerned lest those who came to power in France did not keep the promises made by the present Government. FLNKS considered that the international community was the best guarantor of observance of the Matignon Agreements. Furthermore, the Committee to Monitor the Agreements had been set up and was functioning, and in 1992 the intention was to take stock of the preliminary results of the implementation of the Agreements and to assess their prospects.

18. Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea) repeated his first question and also asked whether FLNKS had a plan of action in the event that the French Government changed its position.

19. Mr. WAMYTAN said that FLNKS wished to settle the question of the independence of New Caledonia before the integration of Europe, since the free mobility of labour and capital resulting from that process would change the situation radically. As for the French Government, after the elections it would avoid giving a specific reply regarding the prospects for implementing the Matignon Agreements. FLNKS was working out possible options for action to take in the event of a breach of their implementation.

20. Mr. BUGOTU (Solomon Islands), referring to the FLNKS request for the dispatch to New Caledonia of a United Nations observer team, said that, from all accounts, France was not inclined to admit such a mission to the Territory. He would be interested to know the position taken on that question by the Rassemblement pour la Calédonie dans la République (RPCR) and how it was intended to gain France's consent to inviting a United Nations observer mission.

21. Mr. WAMYTAN, observing that the Rocard cabinet's position on instituting reforms was vital, noted that, when the decision to send an observer mission had been taken at the latest meeting of the South Pacific Forum, in Vanuatu, the representative of France had not rejected the idea. RPCR, for its part, had never expressed its view on that issue; it had declined to take part in the meeting in Port-Vila, and its position was unknown to FLNKS.

22. Replying to a question from Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea) as to whether agreement had been reached on the formula for preparing the electoral register for the 1998 referendum, Mr. WAMYTAN said that FLNKS had at first rejected the idea of including in the electoral register all those who had participated in the 1988 referendum. At first FLNKS had recognized the right to participate in the referendum only in respect of the Kanak representatives of the colonial people, whereas subsequently, as part of the package of proposals in the Matignon Agreements, it had consented to a broader interpretation which would include the concept of "victims of historical circumstances". For the purpose of drawing up the electoral register for participation in the referendum on self-determination in 1998, FLNKS advocated the principle of residence of electors who had participated in the 1988 referendum, in other words, their continuous residence in New Caledonia for the past 10 years.

23. Replying to the point made by the representative of Solomon Islands to the effect that France had recently declined the proposal put forward by Fiji, Nauru and Solomon Islands at the meeting of the South Pacific Forum in Vanuatu for the dispatch of an observer mission to New Caledonia, he expressed surprise at such a change of position by France, and explained that FLNKS was not empowered to decide on questions of inviting observers; it would, however, seek France's consent during consultations and within the Committee to monitor the Agreements.

24. Mr. LENAT (France) said that the Matignon Agreements had been the focus of attention of the referendum held in France in 1988, and that support by the French population for those Agreements would serve as the best guarantee of their implementation.

25. Mr. WAMYTAN withdrew.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered by other agenda items) (continued) (A/45/23 (Part VI) (chap. IX); A/AC.109/1015 and Corr.1, 1016-1021, 1023 and Corr.1 and Add.1, 1024-1036, 1041 and Corr.1, 1044 and 1048 and Corr.1/Rev.1)

AGENDA ITEM 111: INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 a OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/45/23 (Part V) (chap. VI<sup>FI</sup>) and A/45/559)

AGENDA ITEM 113: 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 (continued) (A/45/3 (chaps. I and VI (sect. D), A/45/23 (Part V) and A/45/309; A/AC.109/L.1740; E/1990/72)

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/45/3 (chaps. I and VI (sect. D))

AGENDA ITEM 114: UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA (continued) (A/45/553)

AGENDA ITEM 115: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (continued) (A/45/560)

#### General debate

26. Mr. KOUNKOU (Congo) said that, during the 30 years since the adoption of the Declaration on decolonization, many oppressed peoples had achieved great successes in their struggle, and a large number of dependent Territories had freed themselves from colonial rule. Much of the credit for that achievement lay with the United Nations, above all the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee on decolonization.

27. Whereas 30 years earlier the African continent had been on the threshold of decolonization, today various parts of that continent had attained sovereignty. Yet there were still Territories whose colonial status rendered the Special Committee's work essential. His delegation welcomed the attainment of sovereignty by Namibia, one of the last African colonies. Namibia's participation in United Nations activities had fortunately coincided with the growth of the Organization's role in the maintenance of peace and justice.

28. The Special Committee's work over those 30 years had to a large degree concerned Africa. Today, few of the items on its agenda concerned Africa. Under the auspices of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), a plan had been formulated for a settlement of the question of Western Sahara which was acceptable to the parties concerned. Congo supported the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General and of the current Chairman of OAU aimed at the speedy organization of a referendum on the self-determination of that Territory.

(Mr. Kounkou, Congo)

29. Turning to the political issues concerning Africa, he said it was difficult not to dwell on the policy of apartheid pursued by the Government of South Africa and the destructive consequences of that policy, including its effects on the population of neighbouring countries. The situation remained serious, even though day after day apartheid was retreating, thanks to the bold steps being taken by President de Klerk and Nelson Mandela, Vice-President of the African National Congress. The eradication of apartheid remained a priority task. The opening of peaceful talks would help to transform South Africa into a non-racial, democratic society. At the same time, only the continuation of the sanctions would assist the continued and irreversible evolution of the peace process currently under way in South Africa.

30. The time had come when the Fourth Committee, availing itself of the improved international climate, could reach the atmosphere of agreement needed to enhance its effectiveness.

31. Mr. TARANENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that, when adopting the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the General Assembly had recognized that the road to its implementation would be long and difficult, and that it would require persistence and no small effort from the international community. Although many at that time had sincerely believed that the final collapse of the colonial system would come more quickly, the solution to the problem had proved to be a lengthy process.

32. The decolonization of Namibia - a huge territory which was now a full Member of the United Nations - was a fitting commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration. That process had been difficult, and it would be no exaggeration to say that the principal role therein had been played by the United Nations itself. Together with the entire international community the Ukrainian SSR had participated in ensuring the Namibian people's right to independence. He expressed the hope that the peoples and Governments of the world would not forget an experience which had been of such value to the Organization. His delegation was profoundly convinced of the necessity and feasibility of swift and complete elimination of the very concept of "colonialism". Now that the problem of Namibia had been solved, the world community would have more attention, resources and determination available to it for dismantling the last vestiges of colonialism.

33. The situation with regard to Western Sahara seemed to be close to a positive outcome. The main problem still to be settled was the organization and financing of a referendum of the Saharan people on self-determination. The financial support of the United Nations had been assured both for the Namibian process and the elections in Haiti. There were thus favourable prospects for a referendum in Western Sahara.

34. His delegation considered that in 1990, when relatively few Non-Self-Governing Territories remained in the world, it was important to choose the right point at which to apply force. The Ukrainian SSR was ready to co-operate with all interested countries, organizations and non-governmental groups in order to ensure

(Mr. Taranenko, Ukrainian SSR)

that the very concept of "non-self-government" disappeared. To eliminate a hotbed of tension in north-west Africa was to eliminate a hotbed of tension in the world as a whole.

35. In his view, it was necessary once again to recall the principle, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, of the equal rights of large and small nations and the principle of the resolute determination of the international community not to allow advantage to be taken of a Territory's small size or small population to justify failure to implement the Declaration on decolonization. If the approach to such Territories was based on a free expression of their peoples' will under international supervision and on the interests of the peoples of the colonial Territories, ultimate success was assured, as in the case of Namibia.

36. His delegation did not always understand the logic followed by the States administering such Territories. Their actions were probably motivated by normal human inertia. Such inertia, for example, had resulted in the somewhat stale formulas used in some provisions of the draft resolutions.

37. The United Nations must not waver on the issue of calling upon the administering Powers to accelerate the process of completing decolonization. That must be done with the urgency expected of the Member States by peoples still deprived of their inalienable right. His delegation considered that it was extremely important to extend the new thinking to the processes of decolonization, and expressed the hope that the day would come when, as a result of the concerted efforts of the international community, no vestiges of colonialism would remain in the world.

38. Mr. SAVOV (Bulgaria) said that one could not underestimate the immense impact of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the thirtieth anniversary of whose adoption had recently been observed by the General Assembly, not only on the colonial peoples in their struggle for self-determination and independence, but on the United Nations as a whole. The political emancipation of peoples and the admission of newly emerging States to membership in the United Nations had to a considerable extent changed the very substance of the Organization by transforming it into a universal and representative forum.

39. Particular stress should be laid on the unprecedented involvement of the United Nations in the peaceful transition of Namibia to independence. The efforts of the United Nations, however, would have been much more painful without the spirit of détente in East-West relations and the close co-operation between the Soviet Union and the United States. In his country's view, compromise and constructiveness had also played a major role in the approach to the question of Western Sahara. The adoption by the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session of a compromise resolution on that issue gave grounds for hope that the question of Western Sahara would soon be resolved in accordance with the plan of the Secretary-General.

/...



(Mr. Savov, Bulgaria)

40. His delegation also expressed the hope that the Matignon Agreements would be implemented consistently in the interests of the people of New Caledonia on its road to self-determination.

41. It was his delegation's conviction that the decolonization process would have been much more effective had it not been for the ideological rivalry between East and West. His delegation was confident that the positive changes in the world and the enhanced role of the United Nations would help the world to enter the new century free from colonialism. Accordingly, it fully subscribed to the statement of the Secretary-General affirming that, in their approach to resolving the remaining colonial problems, the Member States must act with dispassionate objectivity, guided solely by the wishes and well-being of the peoples directly concerned.

42. Mr. TADESSE (Ethiopia) said that, over the years, the Fourth Committee had played an important role in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 and of the relevant articles of the Charter on decolonization. Since the adoption of that resolution the United Nations had fulfilled a large part of its responsibilities in the field of decolonization.

43. In 1990 the Committee had a unique opportunity to review progress in decolonization and to chart a more effective course of action in the pursuit of that noble objective. In commemorating that anniversary, the Special Committee had recommended that two regional seminars should be held in the regions where most of the Territories were located. The seminars had been held in Vanuatu and Barbados. They had enabled members of the Special Committee to learn at first hand the wishes of the parties directly concerned. In its future work the Special Committee must continue to take full account of the views contained in the reports of the seminars.

44. Non-Self-Governing Territories were for the most part island Territories whose vulnerability to environmental hazards was well known. They could not withstand the pressure of foreign economic interests which impeded decolonization. While some had been identified as ideal targets for the dumping of industrial waste, others had become victims of massive drift-net fishing carried out by foreign States. That was why he was calling upon the administering Powers to continue to assist Territories in meeting their economic needs and also in protecting their natural environment.

45. As many speakers had said, the prevailing international atmosphere was encouraging. The spirit of co-operation which had recently emerged would undoubtedly accelerate decolonization. Viewed against the backdrop of such promising political developments, the work of the Special Committee and of the Fourth Committee could be perceived as anachronistic in terms of methods and approach. Such an impression, however, arose precisely because their mandate focused on the anachronistic phenomenon known as colonialism.

46. The resolutions to be adopted should reflect the realities obtaining in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. The contents of the resolutions were only as relevant as the information received regarding the Territories. In that

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

connection, the importance of the information provided by the administering Powers, and of the periodic assessments made possible by the dispatch of visiting missions, could not be overemphasized.

47. His delegation was convinced that the areas of consensus far outnumbered the areas of disagreement. It was essential to continue to broaden the areas of agreement and consensus in the interests of the peoples whose cause was championed by the Committee.

48. Ms. ESCOLAR (Colombia) said that her country upheld the inalienable right of all peoples to self-determination and independence affirmed in the Charter of the United Nations and General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960. In connection with the situation in Western Sahara, she said that she approved of the proposal for a settlement put forward by the Secretary-General and that Colombia called on the Government of Morocco to promote the holding of a referendum and was co-operating with the Secretary-General on that question in every way.

49. Concerning the organization of work of the Special Committee, he noted the importance of discussing the issues before the Committee and the need to seek a way of enhancing the effectiveness of its work. Only thus would it be possible to complete the process of decolonization in the near future.

50. Mr. ARROSPIDE (Peru) underscored his country's unswerving commitment to the just cause of the peoples who were struggling to eradicate all forms of oppression. Peru, which had struggled against colonialism in its own territory, firmly supported the similar struggle of its brothers in other countries.

51. The process of democratization had been initiated in South Africa also, and had brought about, in particular, the release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners and the legalization of the national liberation movements. Nevertheless, Peru expressed disappointment at the continued existence of the structure of apartheid, which prevented the achievement of a full victory for democracy in that country. The international community should take a firm stand on sanctions against the South African Government until such time as it received proof that a democratic, non-racial and united society had been established. Peru was firmly convinced that the apartheid régime could not be altered or reformed; it could only be dismantled.

52. Turning to the situation in Western Sahara, he commended the efforts of the Secretary-General and the activities of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity to promote the self-determination and independence of the people of Western Sahara. In that regard he fully endorsed their proposal for a settlement by means of an agreement concerning the holding of a referendum. Peru was pleased to note that a dialogue had begun between the representatives of Morocco and of the Frente POLISARIO with the assistance of the Secretary-General; that was the best means of achieving a just and durable settlement of that problem in accordance with the Secretary-General's plan.

(Mr. Arrospide, Peru)

53. In the interest of achieving mutual understanding on all questions which were brought to it for consideration, the Committee should proceed by means of direct negotiations; in that connection, he expressed the hope that the opposing parties would give preference to dialogue as a means of resolving their differences on every issue. Unfortunately, the political developments that were currently taking place in the world, marked by the end of the cold war, were not being accompanied by corresponding changes in the social and economic spheres. The positive results of decolonization and democratization must be reflected in the adoption of measures aimed not only at ensuring adherence to the principles of self-determination and independence but also at alleviating the social and economic problems of the developing countries. It was necessary to lay the bases for the establishment of a more just international system whose corner-stone would be the dignity and welfare of the people.

54. Mr. SAVUA (Fiji) said that the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee on decolonization had played a major role in securing independence for former non-self-governing territories in accordance with the aspirations of their people. An important aspect of that role had been the vigilance exercised by the United Nations to ensure that independence, when granted, was reinforced in practice by full implementation by the administering Power of its obligations under the Charter. Unfortunately, the social and economic stability enjoyed upon independence had on occasion proved to be but a passing phenomenon.

55. Some people were of the view that the work of the Special Committee on decolonization was full of anachronisms and that, in essence, it had little more to do. He believed that the work of the Special Committee could not be diminished in any way so long as large numbers of people continued to live under colonialism. The Organization and the Committee still had an important trust to fulfil. Over the years, the two Committees and the Secretary-General had been assisted in their tasks by the administering Powers and he urged the latter to continue to fulfil their legal and moral obligations in that regard. Referring to the need for proper supervision of the self-determination process, he noted that the Secretary-General should continue the practice of dispatching United Nations visiting missions.

56. With regard to the activities of foreign economic interests, many enterprises while pursuing profits also contributed in very significant ways to the development of the host countries. He commended the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations for its efforts to smooth over differences between transnational corporations and host countries. Mention should also be made of the destabilizing influence of other foreign interests. Those factors tended to lie dormant during the early stages of an independent State's development only to appear later. A nation that was making its best efforts to sort out its difficult heritage should be given understanding and support.

57. Namibia's attainment of independence raised hopes that it would be possible to resolve all outstanding decolonization questions that currently seemed intractable. The people of Namibia needed the support of the entire international community.

/...

(Mr. Savua, Fiji)

58. In his view, the resumption of diplomatic relations between Argentina and the United Kingdom boded well for the resolution of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) problem. It was necessary to support efforts to implement the settlement plan for Western Sahara. In that connection, he commended the increasing efforts by the Secretary-General to formulate a peace plan for that region. With regard to New Caledonia, his delegation expressed the hope that the French Government would hold steadfast to its undertaking and would see to it that that Territory achieved independence - if such was the will of its people - no later than 1998.

59. He expressed the fervent hope that colonialism would be eradicated by the end of the century and underscored the need to make every effort to achieve that goal and also to support in every possible way the proclamation of the 1990s as the Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

60. Mr. SMERAL (Czechoslovakia) said that, having seen the past successes of the United Nations, a number of States were currently wondering what should be the Organization's future role in the sphere of decolonization. His delegation believed that the United Nations must supervise the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples until the inhabitants of all remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories - irrespective of the size of their population, their geographical location or their natural resources - had decided on their own future.

61. A declaration of independence was not the only instrument by means of which the populations of Non-Self-Governing Territories might implement their right of self-determination. As provided for in General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 and especially 1541 (XV) of 15 December 1960, Non-Self-Governing Territories could also opt for a looser or closer association with the administering Power. That option could be chosen more frequently precisely in the case of the so-called small Non-Self-Governing Territories.

62. Czechoslovakia was a long-standing member of the Special Committee on decolonization, in which it had held the post of Vice-Chairman and also of Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Petitions, Information and Assistance. The Special Committee on decolonization retained its significance in verifying compliance by the administering Powers with their obligations under the Declaration. However, in changed circumstances, it was necessary to rethink the forms and methods of that Committee's work as well as the question of its operating costs. Furthermore, the Committee should not be allowed to be used by some members - as had happened in the past - for the assertion of specific political objectives having little to do with the actual process of decolonization.

63. The situation of the population of the remaining so-called small Territories was incomparably better than that of the colonial nations at the time of the adoption of the Declaration on decolonization. It was a fact that in most cases the administering Powers were honouring their obligations under the Declaration. Nevertheless, international supervision was still necessary in order not to lose sight of such problems as the one-sided development of the economies of the

(Mr. Smeral, Czechoslovakia)

Non-Self-Governing Territories, insufficient concern for preserving their cultural identity, the infiltration into them of drug trafficking, drug abuse and prostitution, the dumping of toxic wastes and the need to improve the level of education. The populations of the Non-Self-Governing Territories must be fully informed of the ways to implement their right to self-determination.

64. Concerning Western Sahara, it was very important that Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, pursuant to Security Council resolution 658 (1990), were co-operating fully with the Secretary-General and the OAU Chairman in their efforts to find an early solution to the problem. If the Secretary-General's plan was put into effect and a decision made to set up a United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), Czechoslovakia was ready to participate in that peace-keeping operation.

65. His country welcomed the important steps taken by the Governments of the United Kingdom and Argentina towards full normalization of relations and felt that they could also enter into talks on the future of the Falkland Islands, as requested in the relevant resolutions of the Special Committee on decolonization and of the General Assembly.

66. At meetings of the Special Committee, the Czechoslovak delegation had stated repeatedly that the Committee's activities were no longer in keeping with the changing times. That was also true for the Sub-Committee on Small Territories. Czechoslovakia's comments should not be taken as a criticism of the Chairman of that Sub-Committee; its objections referred to the shortcomings in the work of the Sub-Committee as a whole. Every year the Sub-Committee prepared virtually identical reports that contained no suggestions regarding the destiny of the various Territories. They used outdated and confrontational language and their provisions exceeded the mandate not only of the Sub-Committee but also of the Special Committee. Their archaic method of work discouraged the administering Powers from participating in the work of the Special Committee. The question arose as to whether those countries that were trying hard to justify the current style of the Sub-Committee's work really believed that they helped improve the effectiveness of that and other United Nations decolonization bodies and the effectiveness of implementing the aims and objectives of the Declaration.

67. Mr. MOHAMMADI (Afghanistan) said that since the adoption of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples the international community had witnessed significant progress towards decolonization. The Declaration was still normative for the remaining colonial Territories. While supporting the commitment of the United Nations to the eradication of colonialism in 18 small Non-Self-Governing Territories, Afghanistan noted that opportunities existed for expediting the complete and unconditional eradication of colonialism all over the world.

68. Afghanistan firmly believed that the recent positive developments in the international arena opened up possibilities for solving global problems for the benefit of all people without any discrimination. The role of the United Nations

(Mr. Mohammadi, Afghanistan)

in solving such world problems as the political settlement of disputes, the speedy eradication of colonialism and the condemnation of apartheid and racism had been enhanced.

69. His delegation welcomed the recent changes for the better in South Africa. The elimination of apartheid and racism depended on the further intensification of joint international efforts and on the sincerity of the South African Government in its intention to abandon the practice.

70. His delegation, which supported the resolutions of the Security Council, the General Assembly and OAU on the question of Western Sahara, felt that the issue could be decided only through goodwill and mutual understanding. Afghanistan supported the joint proposals of the Secretary-General and of OAU to conduct a referendum on self-determination in Western Sahara, and endorsed MINURSO.

71. While supporting the General Assembly resolutions on the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), his delegation fully agreed that continued negotiation between the concerned parties was the only way to find a peaceful, just and lasting solution to the question. His delegation appreciated the position of the Government of Argentina, which had confirmed its intention to comply with the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

72. Afghanistan viewed the historic changes in the world with optimism. There was an opportunity for the international community to accept joint responsibility for co-operation in the solution of global problems.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.