



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 15th MEETING

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The meeting was called to order at 11.00 a.m.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF HIS EXCELLENCY MR. SAMORA MOISES MACHEL, PRESIDENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

1. The CHAIRMAN, speaking on behalf of the Committee and himself, expressed his condolences to the Government and people of Mozambique and the family of the late President. He likewise expressed his deep regrets, and those of every member of the Fourth Committee, to the family of Mr. Lobo, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who had also died in that tragic accident.

2. Mr. DJOUDI (Algeria), Mr. AOKI (Japan), Mr. HOCHSCHILD (Federal Republic of Germany) and Mr. HELLER (Mexico) paid tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Samora Machel, the President of the People's Republic of Mozambique.

3. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Committee observed a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Samora Machel, the President of the People's Republic of Mozambique.

AGENDA ITEM 19: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (continued) (A/41/23 (Parts IV, VI and VIII), 168 and Corr.1, 332, 341 and Corr.1, 349, 367, 372 and Corr.1 and 2, 373, 375, 407 and Add.1, 420, 435, 444, 478, 485, 641, 673; A/C.4/41/3, A/C.4/41/L.2; A/AC.109/848 to 857, 858 and Corr.1, 859 to 868, 873 and Corr.1, 874 and Corr.1 and 2, 877 and Add.1)

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Question of Western Sahara

4. The CHAIRMAN announced that Belize, the Congo, Guyana, Nigeria, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Suriname, the Syrian Arab Republic and Zimbabwe had become co-sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/41/L.2.

Hearing of petitioners

5. The CHAIRMAN reminded members that at its third meeting, the Committee had agreed to the request for a hearing from the Frente para la Liberación de Saquia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO) appearing in document A/C.4/41/3 on the question of Western Sahara.

6. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Omar Mansour (Frente POLISARIO) took a seat at the petitioners' table.

7. Mr. MANSOUR (Frente POLISARIO) said that, like other peoples in Africa and around the world with experience of colonialism, the Saharan people had not been able to enjoy their right to self-determination and independence, being unable to exercise it properly despite having been recognized by the United Nations in various resolutions since 1966. The then administering Power had irresponsibly neglected its duties and betrayed all its solemnly undertaken commitments to the Saharan people in an outrageous episode, giving in to blackmail by Morocco and the Government of Ould Daddah's Mauritania. Thus, after a century of colonization, there had opened a new bloody page in the history of the Saharan people's struggle against colonization, this time by Morocco, and the war had been raging for nearly 11 years.

8. The truth of the question of Western Sahara was that it was a problem of decolonization. The Saharan people were entitled to self-determination and independence in accordance with resolution 1514 (XV), the occupation of parts of Western Sahara by Morocco was illegal and the cause of the war, and the Frente POLISARIO was the authentic and legitimate representative of the Saharan people. The Saharan Republic was the legitimate embodiment of the aspirations of the Saharan people.

9. Eleven years after the beginning of the second phase of national liberation, just as the Fourth Committee was discussing the question of Western Sahara, great battle was being joined between Saharan forces and the invading troops of Morocco throughout Saharan territory. Morocco was persisting in its expansionist policy in the region, and deploying all its forces to annihilate Saharan resistance. The war was claiming more and more lives and now covered most of the western Sahara, southern Morocco and the Atlantic coast of his country. Owing to the rout which, for all its defensive tactics, its army had suffered, Morocco had been forced to construct a defensive line, known as the "wall", around the zone it occupied. That line consisted of a sand parapet with radar installations, mine fields and barbed wire, troops stationed at 20-kilometre intervals and forward positions every 5 kilometres. The purpose of that tactic was to reduce the human and material losses to Morocco's troops, raise morale, protect the districts and spots it regarded as nerve centres and reduce surprise attacks. The "wall" was a fixed defensive emplacement extending 2,000 kilometres from southern Morocco to the central coastal zone of Western Sahara; approximately 120,000 Moroccan army soldiers had been stationed behind it. The wall, on which the Moroccan Government was relying for all its propaganda and hopes, its troops' morale, its foreign investment and an end to the war, had turned into a nightmare, a serious tactical error, for it was a gigantic tomb in which Moroccan soldiers awaited death without knowing where or when it would occur. The Moroccan forces stationed along the defensive line had put the Moroccan army staff to enormous logistical trouble because of the distances involved, the nature of the terrain and the climate.

10. The army of the Frente POLISARIO had launched an intensive war of economic, human, physical and moral attrition, learning to neutralize radar installations, deactivate minefields, open breaches in the enemy line and use the wall to its own advantage, thus causing the "walling-in" tactic to fail. The war of attrition had affected the morale of the Moroccan troops and was forcing them to devote all their efforts to maintaining their handiwork.

(Mr. Manjour)

11. Evidence of the attrition included desertions, mutinies, high drug use, suicides and venereal disease in the Moroccan army, and the fact that, in recent months, the last 13 battalions looking after domestic and border security in Morocco had been called in to reinforce the defensive line in the war.
12. Saharan resistance in the areas occupied by Morocco was exemplary, despite the sophisticated repressive political apparatus Morocco had at its disposal. The Frente POLISARIO again denounced the dirty war Morocco was waging in the occupied zones through killings, torture, the disappearance of hundreds of people and concentration camps, some of whose inmates were aged over 70. Morocco continued to deny the facts and resist fact-finding visits, despite condemnation by the Saharan Red Crescent, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Amnesty International and other humanitarian bodies and human rights organizations. The Frente POLISARIO invited those organizations and the international community to bring greater pressure to bear on Morocco, forcing it to free the civilians it had detained, respect the prisoner status of the Saharan servicemen captured in combat and honour the relevant conventions, in the same way as the Frente POLISARIO afforded decent treatment to its Moroccan prisoners, who were learning to read, playing games, receiving mail and being visited by various humanitarian bodies and the international press.
13. In Morocco, where no one was allowed to disagree with the Government, the international press was not free to discover what was going on, far less to find out what was taking place in the occupied zones.
14. The Government of the "Saharan Democratic Arab Republic" was exercising sovereign control over a large part of the Western Sahara and had organized all the refugees created by the war on the borders of neighbouring countries, notably in southern Algeria, where the foundations of the Saharan state were also being laid and consolidated; the problems of survival in a war economy were being resolved, as were the problems of education, and attention was being given to women, children and the elderly. Thus the Saharan people were preparing for peace by drawing up economic, social and political programmes to suit their true circumstances, as thousands of delegates, public figures and journalists had seen.
15. The recognition of the Saharan Republic, its admission into the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the broad support it enjoyed were the best testimony to the justice of the Saharan cause and the determination of the international community to help justice and right to prevail in Western Sahara.
16. The Organization of African Unity, having shown foresight by acknowledging in its charter the right of peoples to self-determination and independence and the inviolability of the borders inherited from colonialism, had on that basis acknowledged the right of the Saharan people to self-determination and independence as reflected in its resolutions on the question of Western Sahara adopted between 1963 and 1983; in 1983, the African Heads of State had by consensus adopted resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX), containing a plan for peace. Morocco had hindered the peace process by refusing to negotiate with the Frente POLISARIO or accept a free referendum arranged and supervised by international organizations.

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(Mr. Mansour)

17. Since OAU had not bowed to Morocco's blackmail and had allowed the Saharai Republic to join that Organization, Morocco had withdrawn opting, like South Africa, for the path of rebellion.
18. The Frente POLISARIO, like the international community, believed that if the Western Sahara conflict was to be resolved both interested parties must want it; the Saharai leaders had already clearly expressed their desire for peace to OAU, to the United Nations and to Morocco itself, both in secret talks with Morocco and in public statements. Dialogue was the best way of reaching a political agreement between warring parties and it constituted concrete proof of the existence of a desire for peace. Starting from that conviction, OAU in its resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX), had invited the two parties to the conflict to initiate negotiations to establish the modalities for a cease-fire and to permit OAU and the United Nations to organize the referendum. However, Morocco's intransigence had prevented that resolution from being implemented.
19. In resolution 40/50, the General Assembly had requested the two parties to undertake direct negotiations, in the shortest possible time, to define the modalities for the cease-fire and the referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, and had invited the current Chairman of OAU and the Secretary-General of the United Nations to exert every effort to persuade the two parties to negotiate the terms of a cease-fire and the modalities for organizing the referendum without any administrative or military constraints.
20. Only in 1986, in accordance with the mandate entrusted to them by the General Assembly, the President of Senegal, current President of OAU, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations had invited the Saharai Government to participate in preliminary talks with Morocco with a view to implementing General Assembly resolution 40/50. Responding to that invitation in February 1986, the Secretary-General of the Frente POLISARIO had sent a message to the Secretary-General reaffirming support for any initiative which they might deem useful so that the parties to the conflict could negotiate directly the terms of a cease-fire and the modalities for organizing a referendum without any administrative or military constraints.
21. Acceptance of resolution 40/50 by both parties to the conflict would have led to full implementation of the resolution; however, Morocco had begun to obstruct the implementation, rejecting direct negotiations and the role of the United Nations and OAU. It had maintained that position during both series of preliminary talks which had been presided over by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Minister of Defence of Senegal, as representative of the current Chairman of OAU, and had resorted to excuses and ambiguous positions. During those preliminary talks the Frente POLISARIO, for its part, had said that it was not prepared to see resolution 40/50 implemented immediately and that Morocco was trying to gain time and was seeking ways of continuing the war, and that its seeming acceptance of the framework of the settlement was merely an attempt to avoid international isolation.

(Mr. Mansour)

22. Morocco's position was that it would not negotiate with the Frente POLISARIO because that would be tantamount to recognizing it. In fact, the Frente POLISARIO did not need to be recognized by Morocco, since it was recognized by its own people and by the international community. If Morocco did not wish to negotiate with the Frente POLISARIO, it must hand over to the United Nations and OAU that part of Saharawi territory which it was occupying, and withdraw its forces and administration from it.

23. Morocco was trying to achieve a cease-fire as though by magic: in the view of the Frente POLISARIO, a cease-fire must be negotiated. Morocco did not wish to withdraw its forces and administration before the referendum was held; in the view of the Frente POLISARIO, there could not be any free speech with 120,000 foreign soldiers and a repressive administration in the territory. Morocco would not accept the United Nations and OAU save as observers or supervisors; in the view of the Frente POLISARIO both organizations must organize the referendum and see to its authenticity; to that end, they must take control of the territory in which case they would have the Frente POLISARIO's full co-operation. Morocco claimed that the entire Saharawi people accepted the annexation yet it feared a free referendum; the Frente POLISARIO, on the other hand, although it had proclaimed the Saharawi Republic, enjoyed broad international support, was a member of OAU and controlled a large part of Western Sahara, was prepared to see the territory's fate decided democratically at the polls.

24. With respect to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 40/50, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the current President of OAU had shown great sensitivity towards and understanding of the Saharawi problem and an exemplary will to forge ahead with the difficult task of restoring the rights of the Saharawi people; on behalf of the Saharawi people he paid tribute to and thanked them and reaffirmed that the Saharawi people would always co-operate with them in the fulfilment of their noble task. The Frente POLISARIO felt that OAU resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX), General Assembly resolution 40/50 and draft resolution A/C.4/41/L.2 constituted a whole whose essential elements - direct negotiation, cease-fire and peaceful and fair referendum - could not be separated from one another and that their order could not be reversed without upsetting the peace plan. Like Security Council resolution 435 (1978) on the question of Namibia, General Assembly resolution 40/50 on the question of Western Sahara established a mechanism for a peaceful settlement; implementation of the latter resolution depended on the will of the occupying country, Morocco, and on the pressure which the international community might bring to bear on it with a view to holding a fair and free referendum.

25. Morocco's position, which had been stated year after year since 1981, and restated at the present session by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, was that it would accept the organization of a referendum for self-determination under the control and with the guarantee of the United Nations: that was merely a vague formula whereby Morocco sought to avoid being isolated internationally and to gain time. Its real desire was demonstrated by the eagerness with which it raced to find financial resources and weapons to continue the war, even resorting to the

(Mr. Mansour)

most unlikely axes and alliances. The fact that the delegation of Morocco was not present at the meeting was further proof of Morocco's real desire; paradoxically, that would only isolate Morocco further.

26. In view of Morocco's continuing refusal to negotiate with the Frente POLISARIO, the United Nations and OAU must persuade Morocco to end its illegal occupation of Western Sahara, withdraw its forces and its administration and hand over the territory to the United Nations and OAU so that they could finally organize a referendum without any administrative or military constraints. The international community must, in turn, redouble its efforts to mobilize far-reaching support for the legitimate struggle of the Saharai people since only wide-ranging support for, and broad recognition of, the rights of Saharai people and its sacrifices would finally convince Morocco to accept the solution advocated in OAU resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) and General Assembly resolution 40/50 so that the Saharai people might enjoy its rights and so that the region might regain the stability and peace necessary for economic and social development.

27. Mr. Mansour withdrew.

AGENDA ITEM 108: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/41/23 (part VI); A/41/664 and Add.1; A/C.4/41/5)

28. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to draft resolution A/C.4/41/L.5 and said that Japan, Sweden and Turkey had joined the list of sponsors.

AGENDA ITEM 19: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION OF THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not already covered by other agenda items) (continued) (A/41/23 (Parts IV and Corr. 1, VI and VIII), 168 and Corr.1, 332, 341 and Corr.1, 349, 367, 372, and Corr.1-2, 373, 375, 420, 435, 444, 478, 485, 673; A/C.4/41/L.2, D.4; A/AC.109/848-857, 858 and Corr.1, 859-868, 873 and Corr.1, 874 and Corr.1-2, 877 and Add.1)

(a) REPORT 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 (continued)

(b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 104: INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/41/23 (Part IV and Corr.1, 641)

(a) REPORT 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 (continued)

(b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 106: 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/41/23 (Part IV and Corr.1, 341 and Corr.1, 407 and Add.1; A/AC.109/L.1600; F/1986/114)

(a) REPORT 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 (continued)

(b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/41/3 (chapters I, VI and IX))

AGENDA ITEM 107: UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/41/678, A/C.4/41/L.3)

29. Mr. SHIRAMBERE (Burundi) reaffirmed his country's undertaking to promote United Nations objectives, especially the inalienable right of the peoples of colonial Territories to self-determination as embodied in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. He said that the international community had decided back in 1960 to rid the entire world of the unjust situations stemming from colonization, and that had been achieved in numerous cases, including Burundi. Yet other peoples were still under the colonial yoke, such as the people of Western Sahara, who should be permitted to live peacefully and to organize freely their political and economic life without foreign interference. It was unjust and unacceptable that a country should continue to deny a people its right to self-determination and should pursue a policy of irredentism without taking into account the resolutions of OAU and of the United Nations.

30. Burundi fully supported the struggle of the Saharan people and the peace plan in resolution AHG/Res./104 (XIX) of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU, and considered that the solution to the problem of Western Sahara lay in the implementation of that resolution, in which the two parties to the conflict, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, were urged to hold direct negotiations with a view to achieving a cease-fire in order to create the necessary conditions for a peaceful and just referendum, without administrative or military constraints, which would permit the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara under the auspices of OAU and the United Nations. Burundi consequently welcomed the good offices of the current Chairman of CAU and of the United Nations Secretary-General, aimed at putting an end to that conflict, and made a renewed appeal to the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO that they should show political will and respond to the initiatives of OAU and the United Nations. He congratulated the Frente POLISARIO on its responsibility and its readiness to appear in international forums. Furthermore, he considered draft resolution A/C.4/41/L.2 to represent a sound basis for permitting the people of Western Sahara to exercise their right to freedom and independence.

31. Mr. DJOUDI (Algeria) said that the current list of Non-Self-Governing Territories indicated that the work of emancipating colonial peoples had not yet been completed and that concerted efforts should be made to ensure the right of those peoples to self-determination and independence. The international community would be unable to break with the centuries of injustice until all peoples were freed from the colonial yoke, and would continue to be responsible for achieving the equality of rights of peoples and their self-determination.

32. Close to Algeria there was a people whom the United Nations, OAU and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries had recognized as entitled to the enjoyment of inalienable national rights and as heirs to a Territory in which decolonization had not followed its natural course. The people of Western Sahara were conducting a broad liberation struggle which indicated their yearning to live and their unshakable sense of identity. The international community supported the just cause of the Saharan people and the responsible attitude of the Frente POLISARIO, and demanded the implementation of OAU resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX); in that regard, an ever-growing number of countries demanded a just and definitive political solution based on the free expression of the will of the people of Western Sahara.

33. In its resolution 40/50, the General Assembly had endorsed the peace plan contained in the OAU resolution and had combined its efforts with those of OAU to enable the two parties to the conflict, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, to undertake negotiations with a view to bringing about a cease-fire in order to create the conditions for a referendum. He congratulated the President of Senegal, the current Chairman of OAU and the United Nations Secretary-General on their efforts to discharge that mission.

34. The importance of that joint mediation process was that it was aimed at finding a political solution in accordance with the laws of the international community, on the basis of similar cases, and offered a new possibility for peace by demonstrating the importance of the question of Western Sahara and by reaffirming the competence of OAU and the United Nations with regard to the exercise of the national rights of the Saharan people over their Territory.

35. The first contacts with the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO had tested the political will of the parties to the conflict. It was vital that the need to find a just and definitive solution should prevail over any consideration incompatible with the full self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, and that the process should not be undermined by erroneous interpretations or by objectives that ran counter to the goal of peace which the process involved. The practical aspects of the question should therefore be borne in mind.

36. In the event that one of the parties to the conflict did not respond to the efforts to achieve peace, certain facts made it possible to assign responsibilities. First, the joint United Nations/OAU mediation was no substitute for the principles, objectives and characteristics of OAU resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) and General Assembly resolution 40/50; rather, it was a mechanism for their implementation, and therefore none of their fundamental elements could be considered invalid. Second, the appeal to undertake direct negotiations was

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

neither superfluous nor new, since there had been many precedents in which the parties to the conflict had been requested to shoulder their responsibilities for the cease-fire and other political arrangements pending an agreement. In the case of the joint mediation, the preliminary contacts to facilitate the implementation of those resolutions were part of that perspective. Third, Western Sahara was a Non-Self-Governing Territory and, under international law, its sovereignty was a matter for the Saharan people alone. Since the International Court of Justice did not recognize any Moroccan sovereignty over the Territory and no country accepted the military fait accompli in the Territory, it was illogical to try to conduct a referendum which presupposed the prior recognition of the Moroccan character of Western Sahara, a referendum which the United Nations could guarantee only through on-the-spot supervision, whereas the occupying forces and administration would be the true participants. Fourth, the withdrawal of those forces and administration was the basic element of the "referendum without any administrative or military constraints". That is what Morocco had called for in 1966, when the foreign troops had been much fewer and less obtrusive than was currently the case in Western Sahara. Fifth, the organization of the referendum by the United Nations and OAU guaranteed the freedom, impartiality and sincerity of a consultation through which the Saharan people would determine their future. That guarantee was justified by the need to allow the people to express their choice and by the prejudices and fears created by such a long and bloody armed conflict.

37. Algeria had worked tirelessly for a political solution to the conflict. Accordingly, it supported and encouraged the good offices of the Acting Chairman of OAU and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, and, like Mauritania, associated itself with the endeavour as an observer. Algeria trusted that justice would be done to the people of Western Sahara and that a beneficial and lasting peace would be established for all the peoples of the Maghreb.

38. It should be pointed out that the recent introduction into the Maghreb of external tensions ran counter to the efforts to induce Morocco to renounce the military option in Western Sahara, and that the Moroccan policy of taking its place at the United Nations only half of the time indicated its doubts and misgivings over the process of joint mediation. For genuine peace to be attained, the process required firmer and more unanimous support by the international community, so that the good offices would have the political force they required and merited.

39. Mr. OUEDRAOGO (Burkina Faso) said that the Committee must continue to consider the question of Western Sahara at the current session. In the view of his delegation, the question of Western Sahara was one of decolonization through the exercise of the inalienable right of the Saharan people to self-determination, a view which Burkina Faso had consistently expressed before the Organization of African Unity, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the United Nations, with the aim, not of speaking out against a fraternal country, or against African unity or international peace and security, but of reaffirming the fundamental principle of the law of nations and the path of reason.

(Mr. Ouedraogo, Burkina Faso)

40. He referred to measures designed to resolve the issue, such as the United Nations mission of 1975, the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX), adopted unanimously by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its nineteenth ordinary session. That resolution called for the question of Western Sahara to be submitted to direct negotiations between the parties to the conflict, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, with a view to bringing about a cease-fire to create the necessary conditions for a referendum. The consensus subsequently had received the support of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the international community through General Assembly resolutions 38/40, 39/40 and 40/50.

41. However, it was not possible to hold a referendum in the presence of occupying forces and a partisan administration that set unacceptable conditions. Burkina Faso reiterated its support for the Saharan people in their just struggle for freedom, reaffirmed its full commitment to the principle of self-determination and urged the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO to end the current state of conflict.

42. Mr. SIBOMANA (Rwanda) said that the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples had enabled many countries to attain full sovereignty. Now that the great work of liberation was on the point of completion, the Declaration was being sorely tested by the challenge which the racist régime of South Africa had issued to the international community. The illegal occupation of Namibia allowed the Pretoria régime to pillage the enormous wealth of the Territory and to use it as a base for aggression against neighbouring States, particularly Angola, in a futile endeavour to oblige them to accept the impossible - peaceful coexistence with apartheid.

43. In expressing its solidarity with the front-line States, Rwanda denounced the ignominious policy of the South African apartheid ideologues, condemned the recent attacks against Botswana, Zimbabwe and Zambia, and reaffirmed its conviction that only the application of mandatory sanctions would avert bloodshed in southern Africa. His delegation also expressed its concern at the information that the International Monetary Fund was about to grant a new line of credit to the Pretoria régime, in spite of the relevant General Assembly resolutions. He trusted that the Fund would not grant the credit.

44. In the north of the African continent, the right to self-determination was being denied another people: the Saharan people. In spite of the many initiatives and good offices of the Organization of African Unity, the United Nations and eminent persons, the parties to the conflict had not yet laid down their arms and organized free, just and fair elections that would allow the Saharan people to decide their destiny. Rwanda called on Morocco, which had accepted the principle of a referendum, to show imagination, courage and wisdom in order to bring about a satisfactory solution to the question of Western Sahara. Similarly, his Government supported the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and of the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity.

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(Mr. Bihomana, Rwanda)

45. With respect to the Caribbean and the southern Pacific, more than 15 Territories were awaiting independence. The Government of Rwanda was of the view that, whatever the geographical, demographic and economic status of those Territories, the international community should promote self-determination, respecting the inalienable right of all peoples to determine their own destiny in unfettered freedom.

46. Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the elimination, as soon as possible, of the remaining vestiges of colonialism was one of the priority tasks of the United Nations. The peoples of some 20 colonial countries and Territories were awaiting speedy action towards specific ends. However, every attempt to eliminate the last bastions of colonialism met with ever-greater resistance on the part of colonialists and neo-colonialists. Accordingly, the arbitrary acts of the colonialists against dependent countries and Territories must be matched by the political responsibility of the world community of States with respect to the right of all peoples to be masters of their destiny. The question had been so presented in the joint initiative submitted by the Socialist countries to the General Assembly at its current session. New political ideas reflecting current realities required a new approach and new practical solutions to the problem inherited from the past. The task involved not only the approval and consideration of the items on the Fourth Committee's agenda or the adoption of a greater number of resolutions on behalf of the peoples of colonial Territories, but also the determination of a new scale of priorities in which the practical activities of States would occupy a prominent position. It was time to translate into reality all the authority of the United Nations and to implement all inherent rights, particularly with regard to the destiny of the peoples of Namibia and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (Micronesia).

47. His delegation took note with satisfaction of the interesting ideas and views expressed at the current session concerning how to speed up the process of decolonization and the practical steps which should be taken to that end. It endorsed the proposal of the representative of Jamaica that the United Nations should pay more attention to other Non-Self-Governing Territories besides Namibia and that, in particular, it should monitor their socio-economic and political development.

48. That idea was of crucial importance, in view of the attempt by the colonialists and neo-colonialists to extend the vestiges of colonialism into the twenty-first century and to maintain the Non-Self-Governing Territories in a backward, underdeveloped and impoverished state. Indeed, instead of working in conformity with Article 73 of the Charter, which stipulated that the interests of the Territories were paramount, instead of granting economic and other assistance to the indigenous populations of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, so that there might be the material basis for an independent existence, they were keeping those populations in a state of mendicity. Instead of setting up national companies and developing agriculture and the transport system, they were constructing new military bases and airports and using the Territories as sites and springboards for military installations. Instead of helping those peoples to obtain genuine

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

independence, they sought to impose an artificial system of exploitation under the banners of free association, commonwealth, etc. Presenting those forms of colonialism as a free expression of the inhabitants' desire for independence was tantamount to introducing the devil as an angel.

49. The problem of decolonization was indivisible, whether one was speaking of the African continent, the islands of the Pacific or the islands of the Atlantic. The peoples of the island Territories must have the right to live in peace and security, to choose an independent road in their economic and political development, and to establish mutually beneficial relations on an equal footing with their neighbours and with other States and countries of the world. In that regard, the Soviet Union also gave attention to the problem of the future of Micronesia, where developments, including the most recent one in connection with the well-known decision of the Supreme Court of Palau, did not cease to cause concern. He noted with appreciation that, in the document submitted to the Fourth Committee, the Committee of 24 had included a chapter devoted to that Trust Territory. Contrary to the Trusteeship Agreement unanimously approved by the Security Council in 1947, the United States had yet to discharge its obligation, which it had assumed as Administering Authority, to create in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands conditions enabling the people of Micronesia freely to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence. In violation of Article 76 of the Charter, which spoke of the need to promote the political, economic, social, and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the Trust Territories, the Administering Authority had let 40 years elapse without creating those conditions. A viable economy had not been developed, and the people could not freely, without external interference, exercise their option, as had been highlighted during the recent session of the Trusteeship Council. Unemployment was assuming catastrophic proportions, affecting 82 per cent of the population on one island.

50. Also in violation of Article 76 of the Charter, negotiations had been imposed on the people of Micronesia concerning the future political status of individual parts of the Territory. However, no agreement had been reached, and the issue had been abandoned under the pretext of a commonwealth or free association, which deprived the inhabitants of Micronesia of their genuine independence and self-determination.

51. According to the petitioners, the Territory was being prevented from holding further negotiations regarding the new status and from resorting to the mediation of a neutral Power as a means of settling the disputes. Micronesia had been divided into four parts, and so-called plebiscites and referendums had been held for the purpose of thrusting upon them a free association or commonwealth with the United States. However, that had nothing to do with self-determination. It was significant that during the so-called political education campaigns, neither the benefits of self-determination and independence nor the rights of the people had been explained to the inhabitants of Micronesia. They had been presented with no other option than that of neo-colonial status or free association. If they accepted that arrangement, they would receive economic and financial assistance,

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and it was not surprising that the Trusteeship Council had heard a special petition for the investigation of cases involving the intimidation of inhabitants of Palau opposed to the compact of free association.

52. Neither had the Administering Authority discharged its obligation under Article 76 (a) of the Charter "to further international peace and security". From the moment that its control over the Pacific islands was established, the United States had embarked on the task of converting the Trust Territory into a military and strategic stronghold in the western Pacific. The Pentagon had assumed the right to establish, expand and maintain military and naval bases and other installations and military targets on those islands. It had used the Territory for testing atomic and nuclear weapons of mass destruction, which posed a threat to the population of the Territory and also to the region.

53. The Administering Authority had divided the Territory of Micronesia into four parts in order to weaken the pro-independence movement of the population. In violation of Article 76 of the Charter, the activities of the Administering Authority with regard to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands reflected no interest in the indigenous population or the future of the Territory. The provisions of the Trusteeship Agreement had not been fulfilled with regard to the Pacific islands. That was true, in particular, of Article 6, paragraph 2, which provided that the Administering Authority had the obligation of protecting the inhabitants against the loss of their lands and natural resources. In conformity with article 2, section 323, of the compact, the authorities of Palau had to transfer to the United States within a period of 30 days any portion of territory which the Administering Authority needed for military purposes, in the event that the latter could find no other territory suitable for its purposes. What was really at issue was the confiscation of lands by the Administering Authority.

54. With regard to the term of the mandate of the Administering Authority, it was fitting to note that any change or modification of the status of the Territory was a matter for the Security Council, and the United Nations as a whole had to maintain its responsibility for the Territory as long as the people were unable to express themselves freely on that issue. The programme of action approved at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly in 1970 stipulated that, in the event that resolution 1514 (XV) was not implemented with regard to a given Territory, the General Assembly would be responsible for that Territory until such time as the people concerned had had an opportunity to exercise their right to self-determination and independence. That important provision was underscored in the resolution on the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples adopted at the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly in 1980. In conformity with the Declaration, the people of Micronesia, like the peoples of the entire world, had the right to freedom and independence. In that regard, the demands which had been reaffirmed recently by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries were justified, i.e., that the Declaration should be applied to all Territories which continued to be non-self-governing or colonial, including Micronesia.

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(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

55. The Soviet approach to the question of the decolonization of Oceania was closely linked to the meaningful proposals put forward on 28 July 1986 in Vladivostok by Mikhail Gorbachev, the Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. Their purpose was to set up in Asia and the Pacific Ocean a system of peace and security which would not only contribute to the strengthening of the security of the small Territories and island States of that region, but would also make it possible to create the favourable conditions for extending political, economic and other kinds of co-operation in those Territories.

56. If no opposition was voiced to the implementation of the militarist plans of the United States with regard to Micronesia, there was a potential risk of helping to step up the military presence of the Administering Authority in the region of the Pacific Ocean or of setting an unsuitable and even dangerous precedent for the future of Namibia, where the racist Pretoria régime was adopting all kinds of accelerated measures with a view to implanting there a puppet Government of South Africa.

57. All States Members of the United Nations had the duty, in the interest of strengthening peace, to oppose actively tyranny in the region.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.