

Spain, largely determined the way of life and social and political organizations of the peoples inhabiting it. In consequence, the legal régime of Western Sahara, including its legal relations with neighbouring territories, cannot properly be appreciated without reference to these special characteristics. The territory forms part of the great Sahara desert which extends from the Atlantic coast of Africa to Egypt and the Sudan. At the time of its colonization by Spain, the area of this desert with which the Court is concerned was being exploited, because of its low and spasmodic rainfall, almost exclusively by nomads... It may be said that the territory, at the time of its colonization, had a sparse population that, for the most part, consisted of nomadic tribes the members of which traversed the desert on more or less regular routes dictated by the seasons and the wells or water-holes available to them."

42. Further on, the Court stated, in paragraph 88:

"the sparsity of the resources and the spasmodic character of the rainfall compelled all those nomadic tribes to traverse very wide areas of the desert. In consequence, the nomadic routes of none of them were confined to Western Sahara; some passed also through areas of southern Morocco, or of present-day Mauritania or Algeria, and some even through further countries."

43. He drew the Committee's attention not to the difficulties of making an appropriate judgement of the régime in the Territory and its legal relations with neighbouring countries, not to the sparsity of the population, which was not a decisive argument, but mainly to the fact that Western Sahara was only one part of a desert extending from the Atlantic coast of Africa all the way to the lands watered by the Nile in Egypt, in the north, and in the Sudan, in the south. That whole Sahara desert had constituted and still constituted integral parts of countries which bordered it to the north and the south; and terms such as Algerian Sahara, Tunisian Sahara, etc., had been established in geographical and political terminology to designate other parts. That stretch of land which crossed Africa could in any given part only be regarded as a Saharan

province of countries bordering it on the north and the south. For that reason, the Committee would surely not create in Morocco and Mauritania legitimate feelings of frustration by not allowing the populations to be consulted on their territorial claims. His delegation, moreover, would view favourably an appeal to those two countries to assure Algeria, which had a common frontier to the east of the Territory under consideration, that all its interests which did not jeopardize their own sovereignty would be safeguarded.

44. One could only note with satisfaction the will of the parties to make the United Nations play a role. That would be done at two levels. First, the Fourth Committee was requested to propose that the General Assembly should not approve, but should take note of, the agreement concluded by Mauritania, Morocco and Spain, which was an element that could no longer be denied even if one was not satisfied with the circumstances that had surrounded its drafting. Nor could the Committee fail to take into account the professions of good faith of its signatories. Secondly, provision was made for the presence of a United Nations observer appointed by the Secretary-General during the process of consultation of the Saharan populations.

45. Finally, the draft resolution requested the parties to the Madrid agreement to ensure respect for the freely expressed aspirations of the Saharan populations.

46. He concluded his statement by calling on the members of the Committee to give overwhelming support to the draft resolution whose various elements he had just justified. The draft resolution had, above all, the merit of representing a genuine effort to break away from the past. It would enable members of the Committee to look resolutely towards the future by basing their approach on the facts and the actual reality which now prevailed in Western Sahara and on co-operation between the administering Power and the two countries which had only recently engaged in a great dispute.

*The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.*

## 2180th meeting

Wednesday, 3 December 1975, at 4.30 p.m.

*Chairman:* Mrs. Famah JOKA BANGURA (Sierra Leone).

A/C.4/SR.2180

### AGENDA ITEM 88

**Question of Territories under Portuguese administration (continued)** (A/9998-S/11598, A/10023/Add.1, A/10040, A/10054, A/10055, A/10058, A/10207-S/11811, A/10208, A/10209-S/11813, A/10212, A/10214, A/10227, A/10277, A/10353, A/10353, A/10402-S/11887, A/10403-S/11890, A/C.4/802, A/C.4/803, A/C.4/L.1125)

### GENERAL DEBATE (continued)\*

1. Mr. WU Miao-fa (China), referring to the fact that the Frente Revolucionária Timor Leste Independente (FRETILIN) had proclaimed the independence of East Timor on 28 November 1975, said that that proclamation reflected the aspirations of the broad masses of the people

\* Resumed from the 2178th meeting.

of East Timor, and, in the view of his delegation, the aspirations of the people of East Timor for independence must be taken into consideration when discussing the question of Timor. His delegation held that Portugal must respect the demand of the broad masses of the people of East Timor for independence and immediately terminate its colonial rule over East Timor, and that it must not obstruct or undermine the independence of East Timor.

2. After the proclamation of the independence of East Timor by FRETILIN, the Indonesian Government had openly indicated its intention of engaging in armed intervention. According to foreign press reports, Indonesian officials had even gone so far as to declare that Indonesia would send its armed forces to East Timor, with the approval of the Indonesian Parliament, and that, in the event of resistance by FRETILIN, Indonesia would be ready to use its air, land and naval forces. The Indonesian Government's open declaration of its intention of engaging in armed intervention and its threat against East Timor was a fact which called for the attention of all States Members of the United Nations.

3. His delegation hoped that the Indonesian Government would stop its intervention, establish friendly and neighbourly relations with East Timor and solve the problems existing between the two sides, for instance, the problem of refugees, through peaceful negotiations conducted on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence.

4. Mr. ANWAR SANI (Indonesia) noted that the accession of five former Portuguese Territories to independence during the past two years dramatically illustrated the progress made in the process of decolonization. Most of the credit for that achievement went to the courageous fighters of the liberation movements in each country, although the policy of decolonization pursued by Portugal over the past year and a half had helped to facilitate the process. However, his delegation regretted that in Angola and Portuguese Timor the process of decolonization had been marked by armed and bloody strife.

5. Timor was situated at the heart of the Indonesian Archipelago, and Portuguese Timor was part of the island of Timor, the other part being Indonesian territory. The population of Portuguese Timor, which numbered a little over 600,000, was of the same ethnic origin as the population in the Indonesian part of Timor. The 450 years of division resulting from colonial domination had not diminished the close ties of blood and culture between the people of the Territory and their kin in Indonesian Timor. That geographical proximity and ethical kinship were important reasons for Indonesia's concern about peace and stability in Portuguese Timor, not only in its own interest, but also in the interest of South-East Asia as a whole.

6. When the old régime in Portugal had made way for the new revolutionary Government, three political groups had emerged in Portuguese Timor. The Associação Popular Democrática Timorense (APODETI) had desired integration with Indonesia, FRETILIN had desired complete independence and the União Democrática de Timor (UDT) had wished to continue some form of relationship with Portugal. Unlike the liberation movements in the former Portugal Territories in Africa, none had waged an armed struggle

against the colonial Power and none of them had possessed arms.

7. Indonesia's reaction to the desire expressed by APODETI for integration had been to emphasize that it had no claim on Portuguese Timor but that if the people of that Territory decided freely and democratically, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV), to become independent through integration with Indonesia, Indonesia would welcome that decision. It should be pointed out that the leaders of APODETI, some of whom had been imprisoned by the former colonial administration, certainly qualified as authentic fighters against colonial domination.

8. Indonesia had warmly welcomed the plan of the Portuguese Government with regard to the decolonization of Portuguese Timor, as set forth in bilateral talks and as expounded by the Portuguese delegation during the meeting held at Lisbon in June 1975 by the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

9. In August 1975, however, Indonesia had been startled by reports of fighting in Dili as a result of a coup and countercoup staged by UDT and FRETILIN. The fighting had spread to other parts of the Territory, foreign nationals and metropolitan Portuguese citizens had been evacuated by sea and air, and the Governor and some troops had evacuated themselves to the island of Ataúro off the coast near Dili. The indigenous inhabitants caught in the fighting had had to save themselves by fleeing to Indonesian territory, where some 50,000 of them were waiting to return to their villages. The presence of the refugees had created a problem for Indonesia, but the authorities had done what they could to help them.

10. In the contacts that had taken place between Indonesia and Portugal following the outbreak of the fighting, Indonesia had emphasized Portugal's responsibility as the administering Power in respect of the decolonization process in Portuguese Timor and had offered to co-operate in re-establishing peace and order so as to give the people of the Territory the opportunity to exercise their right to self-determination freely and democratically in an atmosphere of peace.

11. The fighting had, however, continued to spread and had increased in intensity. Two other parties, the Klibur Oan Timor Aswain (KOTA) and the Partido Trabalhista, had emerged and joined APODETI; on 17 September 1975 they had declared themselves in favour of complete integration with Indonesia. Indonesia had continued to insist that it was up to the parties concerned to rally the people's support for their cause, and that such a decision should be the outcome of a free and democratic exercise of the right to self-determination in conditions of peace and order.

12. As a result of the fighting in Portuguese Timor, Indonesia was confronted with serious difficulties. First, the thousands of refugees had to be fed and cared for; they were prepared to return to their villages if Indonesia could guarantee their safety. Second, the practice of terrorizing

the people because they were in favour of integration had created a strong reaction inside Indonesia; moreover, those people who, because of their choice, considered themselves entitled to protection, demanded that Indonesia should act to protect them. Third, incursions by armed bands into Indonesian territory had made it necessary for Indonesia to take appropriate action to prevent territorial violations and the harassment of its people.

13. Thus far, Indonesia had tried to act with the utmost restraint, despite strong provocation. It had remained in communication with Portugal in trying to find ways and means to stop the fighting and to re-establish peace and order and, in that spirit, Indonesia had accepted the Portuguese Government's invitation to join in discussions regarding the future of Portuguese Timor. At the meeting held at Rome early in November 1975 between the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia and Portugal, Portugal's responsibility as the administering Power had been recognized and emphasized and both sides had agreed on the need for Portugal to begin talks with the parties representing the people of the Territory in order to put an end to the fighting and find a peaceful solution.

14. It had been the understanding of his Government that such an idea was acceptable to the political parties in Portuguese Timor and it had sincerely hoped that the talks planned by the Portuguese Government would take place. His Government had therefore been greatly surprised by the unilateral declaration of independence by FRETILIN on 28 November 1975, which it deeply regretted. On 29 November, the four other parties in Portuguese Timor which favoured integration with Indonesia, APODETI, UDT, KOTA and the Partido Trabalhista had countered the action undertaken unilaterally by FRETILIN with a joint proclamation declaring the Territory of Portuguese Timor an integral part of Indonesia; the Indonesian people had welcomed that proclamation with deep emotion.

15. His Government was willing to continue to co-operate with others, especially the countries in the region, to enable the entire people of Portuguese Timor to exercise their inalienable right of self-determination. The situation had, however, become more complicated and dangerous; Indonesia would be facing greater pressure and provocation and would have to re-evaluate its position in view of the serious implications of the latest developments in the Territory. His delegation hoped that the United Nations, especially the Special Committee, would continue its co-operation with the Government of Portugal, and it thought that a visiting mission to Portuguese Timor might be considered at the appropriate time.

16. In conclusion, he wished to emphasize that Indonesia had been born of a bloody revolution against colonialism and had always supported the struggle of peoples everywhere to eradicate that evil. With its heritage and record, it could have not reason to oppose the exercise of the same right of self-determination by other peoples still living under colonial domination.

#### CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

17. Mr. KASSIM (Malaysia), speaking also on behalf of the delegations of Australia, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, New

Zealand, the Philippines and Thailand, introduced the draft resolution on the question of Timor contained in document A/C.4/L.1125. The draft resolution was, in essence, a reaffirmation of principles such as the right of self-determination, which had frequently been proclaimed in decisions of the Special Committee, the Fourth Committee and the General Assembly, and would be readily supported by the members of the Committee.

18. The sponsors felt that the proposed draft resolution was the best possible way of dealing with the situation of armed strife prevailing in Portuguese Timor. It was designed to bring all the parties together with a view to establishing conditions that would enable the people of that Territory to exercise their right to self-determination and independence in a peaceful manner and in an atmosphere of security and tranquillity, free from any threats or coercion, as contemplated in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and other relevant resolutions. The draft resolution also proposed that the United Nations should participate in the decolonization process by sending a visiting mission. Such a mission would make it possible to ascertain the actual situation prevailing in the area and would help to lay to rest the many conflicting reports which had come to the attention of the international community.

19. The draft resolution was the outcome of friendly and frank negotiations with all interested parties, and its sponsors hoped that it would be adopted by an overwhelming majority.

20. Mr. SAITO (Japan) said that his delegation welcomed the reaffirmation of the Government of Portugal's continued responsibility for the Territory and hoped that it would discharge that responsibility fully.

21. It must, however, be admitted that the Portuguese authorities' control in the Territory was limited and that they found it difficult to take effective action to normalize the situation. Although his delegation was confident that Portugal was doing everything it could, it believed that the international community should extend co-operation to Portugal and help it to restore peace and order in the Territory. His delegation agreed that talks should commence as soon as possible between the Government of Portugal and the representatives of the political parties with a view to finding a peaceful solution and safeguarding the right of self-determination of the peoples of the Territory.

22. His delegation was concerned at the escalation of the armed conflict and the use of arms of high offensive capacity. As a matter of principle, it could not accept any action whatsoever which prejudged the future of the Territory before its people had decided their own future through an act of self-determination. It could not accept faits accomplis imposed by any individual or group in disregard of the right to self-determination of the people of the Territory. After the commitment given by the administering Power, the future of the Territory must be decided by an act of self-determination in which all the people of the Territory would have the right to participate and freely express their will.

23. His delegation still believed that talks between Portugal and all the political parties in Portuguese Timor offered

the best basis for achieving a negotiated settlement, ending the armed conflict, and bringing about the peaceful and orderly decolonization of the Territory. In that connexion, his delegation wished to express appreciation to the Governments concerned, including Australia and Indonesia, for the generous co-operation and assistance they had offered Portugal in the achievement of those goals. His delegation hoped that the United Nations would play an appropriate role in overcoming the current difficulties, in co-operation with the administering Power, and that all Member States would help to achieve a peaceful solution and the decolonization of Portuguese Timor. He also hoped that all States would refrain from any action which might escalate the armed conflict in the Territory and hamper the peaceful process of decolonization. With those considerations in mind, his delegation had become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.4/L.1125, which it hoped would be adopted by an overwhelming majority.

24. Mr. KHAN (Mozambique) said that his delegation was surprised to see draft resolution A/C.4/L.1125 submitted for consideration by the Committee. It was well known that Portugal had been addressing letters, almost daily, to the Secretary-General advising him of developments in the Territory. In those letters, Portugal had even attempted to anticipate the result of the declaration of independence by FRETILIN. The Committee was therefore involved in a serious problem with respect to the principles of self-determination and independence.

25. His delegation was in a difficult position because some of the sponsors of the draft resolution had supported Mozambique's cause. They should therefore understand his delegation's position on the matter: the suggestion in the draft resolution that Portugal be given more time to enable the people of Portuguese Timor to exercise freely their right to self-determination, freedom and independence would, if accepted, prove futile. Portugal had already had sufficient time and it was for that reason that FRETILIN had proclaimed Timor's independence.

26. None of the previous speakers had challenged Timor's right to self-determination and independence and his delegation had heard nothing that would suggest that General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) did not apply to Timor. Claims that the people of Timor wished to enjoy the protection of Indonesia were irrelevant because the question was one of self-determination and independence. The kind of action undertaken by Indonesia was morally wrong and, legally, had been regarded as a crime against peace and a violation of human rights and of the United Nations Charter. The Committee could not sanction military threats aimed at fostering an illegal act which constituted aggression against the people of Timor. Nor should economic interests and the geopolitical situation of the region be allowed to impede the people's inalienable rights. The suggestion that an unstable situation would result from the declaration of independence by FRETILIN was no reason to flout the provisions of international law and fundamental principles. International political and economic stability could be achieved in the region if other States understood that the people's right to self-determination and independence was paramount. Strict observance of the principles of the Charter should be a prerequisite for any State interested in maintaining international peace and

security, and the deliberate use of false statements was a futile attempt to mislead international public opinion. Peace in the area could be achieved if all States were prepared to observe the Charter and allow the people to enjoy the independence proclaimed by FRETILIN.

27. The international community was aware of the manoeuvres of the colonialists and the difficulties of the present régime in Portugal. It was also a well-known fact that if Mozambique had not fought for its independence it would not now be represented in the United Nations. Accordingly, Portugal should be realistic and understand that the current situation had resulted from the fact that it had mishandled the problem from the beginning.

28. His delegation had serious reservations regarding draft resolution A/C.4/L.1125 and appealed to the sponsors to postpone consideration of it pending further developments in the Territory.

#### AGENDA ITEM 23

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued)**  
(A/10023 (parts I, II and IV), A/10023/Add.5, A/10023/Add.6 (parts I and II), A/10023/Add.8 (part III), A/10082, A/10095, A/10097, A/10101, A/10104, A/10300, A/10326-S/11862, A/10337-S/11872, A/10373-S/11881, A/C.4/804, A/C.4/L.1120/Rev.1, A/C.4/L.1121, A/C.4/L.1122/Rev.1, A/C.4/L.1123, A/C.4/L.1124)

#### QUESTION OF SPANISH SAHARA: CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (continued)

29. Mr. KAMARA (Senegal)\* thanked the Chairman for having given him the floor to introduce revised draft resolution A/C.4/L.1120/Rev.1, on the question of Spanish Sahara, and said that Togo had become a sponsor of the revised draft resolution.

30. The main aim of the consultations that had taken place concerning draft resolution A/C.4/L.1120 had been to take account of the comments made by countries which were likely to support the draft resolution. Certain passages of the text had presented difficulties for some of those countries. The consultations had led the sponsors to take into consideration a number of specific proposals. Those constructive proposals were to be commended since they considerably improved the text. The few changes made in the original draft resolution were the following:

31. First, no change had been made in the preambular paragraphs in the original text. Nor had any change been made in paragraph 1. In paragraph 2, the word "inalienable" had been inserted before the word "right", so that the paragraph would begin: "Reaffirms the inalienable right to self-determination"; and the words "of the Saharan populations" had been changed to read "of all the Saharan

\* The statement by the representative of Senegal and subsequent statements on the question of Spanish Sahara made at this meeting are reproduced *in extenso* in accordance with the decision taken by the Committee at its 2168th meeting.



populations". The scope had therefore been considerably expanded. Paragraph 3 had been divided into two parts. The first was the new paragraph 3, which read:

*"Requests the parties to the Madrid agreement of 14 November 1975 to ensure respect for the freely expressed aspirations of the Saharan populations";*

The new paragraph 4 read:

*"Requests the interim administration to take all necessary steps to ensure that all the Saharan populations originating in the Territory will be able to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination through free consultations organized with the assistance of a representative of the United Nations appointed by the Secretary-General."*

32. It had always been the concern of the members of the Committee to associate the United Nations as closely as possible with the process of decolonization in Western Sahara and it was for that reason that it had seemed appropriate to the sponsors to indicate the specific conditions which would enable a United Nations observer to participate effectively at different levels. Those different levels were the conception, the preparation and the execution of the consultation that was to take place.

33. Mr. ABDULAH (Trinidad and Tobago) said that the Committee had before it two draft resolutions, contained in documents A/C.4/L.1120/Rev.1 and A/C.4/L.1121, on the question of Spanish Sahara, which, his delegation believed, reflected the complexity of the issue arising from the differing opinions of the parties concerned and interested in the future of the Territory regarding the policy to be followed in its decolonization. The issue had been further complicated by the action of the administering Power, in collaboration with two of the parties concerned and interested, in making arrangements concerning the future of the Territory without the participation of other concerned and interested parties, without the freely expressed will of the people of the Territory and without regard for the ultimate responsibility which the General Assembly had in matters of decolonization.

34. His delegation had followed the arguments put forward in the Committee with great interest and concern and was convinced that in Spanish Sahara, as in all other colonial Territories, certain principles which were enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and confirmed in various General Assembly resolutions, must be observed.

35. The first and most important principle concerned the right of the people of colonial Territories to self-determination as set out in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. As a beneficiary of the Declaration, Trinidad and Tobago had never faltered in its resolve to ensure the application of that Declaration to all existing colonial situations. It firmly believed that the people of any colonial Territory were the final judges of their destiny and that, in exercising their right to self-determination, they must be enabled to determine freely their political status. His delegation was therefore apprehensive lest the arrangements put into effect by three of the interested and concerned parties, and referred to in paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.4/

L.1120/Rev.1, would not permit a free and genuine expression of the will of the Saharan people, which was absolutely essential to any act of self-determination. Indeed, its apprehensions were in no manner allayed by the proposal contained in paragraph 4 of the draft resolution to the effect that a United Nations representative should be present to ensure the free expression of the aspirations of the populations.

36. In addition, his delegation had supported General Assembly resolution 3292 (XXIX), in which the International Court of Justice had been requested to give an advisory opinion without prejudice to the application of the principles embodied in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), principles which had generally been understood to mean the achievement of self-determination and independence by dependent Territories in accordance with the declared wishes of their people. Resolution 3292 (XXIX) also requested the Special Committee to keep the situation in the Territory under review, including the sending of a visiting mission to the Territory, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session. The Committee now had before it the advisory opinion of the Court of 16 October 1975 (see A/10300) and the report of the Visiting Mission to the Territory which was annexed to chapter XIII of the Special Committee's report (A/10023/Add.5). It was his delegation's considered view that those two documents must guide the General Assembly in its final decision concerning the application of resolution 1514 (XV) to the Territory. Although the draft resolution in document A/C.4/L.1120/Rev.1 made mention of those two important documents in its preambular paragraphs, it did not take them into account in its proposals for the decolonization of the Territory.

37. Similarly, although, in its first preambular paragraph, the draft resolution reaffirmed General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), it went on to note in paragraph 1 an agreement which did not take into account the right of the people to decide their own future in accordance with resolution 1514 (XV). For those reasons, therefore, his delegation would be compelled to vote against draft resolution A/C.4/L.1120/Rev.1.

38. On the other hand, draft resolution A/C.4/L.1121 first reaffirmed the inalienable right of the people of Spanish Sahara to self-determination in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and its concern to see that principle applied to the inhabitants of the Territory. Secondly, it reaffirmed the responsibility of the administering Power for the decolonization of the Territory and its obligation to guarantee the free expression of the wishes of the people of Spanish Sahara in that regard. Thirdly, it called on the Spanish Government, as the administering Power, in consultation with all the parties concerned and interested, to act in accordance with the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and the observations and conclusions of the Visiting Mission. Fourthly, it provided for United Nations supervision of the exercise by the Saharans of their right to self-determination. Those provisions were fully in accord with his delegation's views on the question of Spanish Sahara. It would therefore not only support draft resolution A/C.4/L.1121 but would become a sponsor. He added that the delegation of Barbados also wished to become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

39. In his statement at the 2172nd meeting of the Committee, he had had occasion to refer to the fact that the Committee was at the crossroads of a decision that would affect not only the people of Belize, perhaps for a very long time to come, but also the thus-far untarnished record of the United Nations in matters of decolonization. His delegation believed that the question of Spanish Sahara was another test for the Organization, for it involved the upholding of sacred principles involving the right of peoples to self-determination. The United Nations had had recourse to the International Court of Justice, it had had numerous resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly on the right of the Saharans to self-determination and yet it was faced with the certain division of the Territory between two neighbouring countries. It was perhaps ironic that those countries were not two super-Powers, but countries which had themselves emerged from colonialism. The General Assembly must be prepared either to stand on principle or to give way to indescribable chaos. If it did not accept the acquisition of territory by force, was it prepared to accept the acquisition of territory by "non-military" force—by force of numbers? Was the role of the United Nations in matters of decolonization to be sacrificed on the altar of expediency? Those were some of the fundamental questions it was facing. Its failure to deal with them squarely and honestly would determine the future for many people still under colonial rule and the future effectiveness of the United Nations in the decolonization process.

40. Mr. RAHAL (Algeria) said that the Fourth Committee was a committee in which there was a great deal of talk about the right to self-determination of peoples under colonial domination. Of all the organs of the United Nations, it was the one in which there was most talk about that subject, since the main task of the Committee was to concern itself with the fate of peoples under colonial domination who did not have the means to defend their own cause at the United Nations, except through petitioners, and whose fate was the responsibility of the Organization.

41. Only a week or two earlier, the Fourth Committee had had occasion to discuss a very important problem—the case of Belize—in which the right of the population of the Territory to self-determination had been opposed by the claims of a neighbouring country. The Fourth Committee, by an overwhelming majority, had decided in favour of the right to self-determination of the population and against the territorial claim of the neighbouring State. That decision did honour to the Committee and allowed all peoples to continue to believe in the United Nations. It indicated that the principles set out in the Charter were not a mere fiction but elements of the profound faith of Member States in the future of the human community.

42. Dealing with another problem, the Committee had heard a number of statements which had continued to uphold the right of colonized peoples to independence and had placed that principle above all claims to the Territory put forward by other States, even where those claims might clearly be justified.

43. As he had already said, the Fourth Committee was an organ of the United Nations in which there was a great deal of talk about self-determination. It might even be said that

the Fourth Committee was a United Nations organ which believed in the right of colonized peoples to self-determination.

44. Any State Member of the United Nations certainly had the right to introduce a draft resolution. It was in no way his delegation's intention to deny anyone that right. But no Member had the right to divert the United Nations from its course, to make it deviate from the lines of conduct which it had laid down for itself by utilizing at the same time the very language of the United Nations, the language which had a very precise significance for each member of the Committee.

45. The distinguished representative of Senegal, who was one of the original sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/L.1120, had been kind enough to inform the Committee that a number of revisions, which he himself had described as improvements, had been made in the text of that draft resolution. Those improvements, he had said, lay in the fact that the right of the Saharan people to self-determination was reaffirmed more strongly. The Algerian delegation also felt that that right could never be reaffirmed strongly enough. In introducing those revisions, the sponsors of the draft resolution rightly wished to make the best use of the language of the United Nations. But what did the right of the Saharan people to self-determination represent in that draft resolution? The right to self-determination presupposed, first, the freedom of the people who exercised it. The right to self-determination presupposed the necessary range of options to be offered to the population. Lastly, the exercise of that right presupposed a guarantee that the population's choice would be respected.

46. His delegation saw no guarantee of any of the three aspects of that right in the draft resolution. Who was preparing for that right to self-determination? Or rather, who was preparing for the exercise by the Saharan people of their right to self-determination? The answer was, an interim administration composed of Spain, which was the colonial Power, and Morocco and Mauritania, the Powers which claimed the Territory. He found it difficult to imagine those three Governments preparing for the Saharan people the consultations through which they were to express their views concerning their future. So much for the organization of the consultations.

47. As for the options which the draft resolution guaranteed, he questioned whether there was any certainty that the population would be offered all the necessary options to determine its future freely. The presence of Spain and of Morocco and Mauritania already gave an idea of the options which would be offered to the Saharan population.

48. Lastly, who would guarantee that the choice of the Saharan people would be respected? Would the interim administration composed of those who were in fact interested in carving up the Territory be prepared to respect the choice of the Saharan people? Would the presence of a United Nations observer, even one appointed by the Secretary-General, ensure that the Saharan people's freedom of choice would be respected? Would the presence of such an observer guarantee that the operations would be conducted in a legal and honest manner? His delegation did not think so.

49. It therefore felt that that language, which was the language to which Member States were accustomed, the language which covered the ideas in which they believed, had been used in the draft resolution to cover something other than what the Committee wished to say. As evidence of that, he said that, in the preamble to the draft resolution, mention was made of the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice; the draft resolution even took note of it. Why, therefore, had the content of that advisory opinion not been implemented? Had the General Assembly asked the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion merely so that the members of the Committee would have a document to read and then file away?

50. The preamble to the draft resolution also took note of the report of the United Nations Visiting Mission. Why, then, had the conclusions of that report not been taken into account in the draft resolution? Had the General Assembly sent a visiting mission to the Territory only so that the members of the Committee would have another document to read and then file away?

51. He was very glad that a phrase which was very dear to all the members of the Committee had been introduced into the draft resolution by the addition of the word "inalienable" to describe the right of peoples. But why describe the right of the Saharan people to self-determination as inalienable at the very moment when it was being alienated by the countries which wanted to occupy the Territory, which were in the process of occupying it, and which wished to divide it in the near future?

52. The draft resolution did not concern the Saharan people. It did not concern the right of the Saharan people to self-determination. It concerned only one thing, which related to the colonial Power and the two countries that wished to divide the Sahara. Paragraph 1 stated as much. What the draft resolution sought to do was to endorse an agreement that had been concluded between those three Governments outside the United Nations, contrary to the decisions of the United Nations and contrary to the Saharan people. All the members of the Committee knew that that agreement was a declaration of principles and that it was not simply a slip which had led the sponsors of the draft resolution to write "agreement" instead of "declaration of principles".

53. By trying, under cover of what he had just described, to get the Fourth Committee to adopt such a draft resolution, the sponsors, avowed or covert, of the draft resolution merely wished, by roundabout means, to get the Committee, and then the General Assembly, to endorse a shameful agreement, which, for the first time, would signify, if the Committee adopted it and if the Assembly also adopted it, that its members had sacrificed the inalienable right of a people to the territorial claims of two neighbouring States.

54. Mr. EL HASSEN (Mauritania) said that his delegation had already had occasion to state its point of view to the Committee clearly and objectively at the 2171st and 2177th meetings; it was speaking once again at the current meeting not only to put things back in their true context, but also to throw some light on what had until then been the attitude of the different sides.

55. His delegation's first comment related to the principle of self-determination. Before making that comment, however, it would like to remind the Committee that, as far back as 1965, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 2072 (XX), in which it had requested the administering Power to enter into negotiations to resolve the problem relating to sovereignty over the Territory.

56. Agreements that had existed at the time between Mauritania and the Kingdom of Morocco had without any doubt been one of the difficulties which the administering Power had encountered in implementing that resolution. It had in fact been difficult for it to know with which of the two countries it should negotiate.

57. That difficulty, it appeared, had given rise to resolution 2229 (XXI), adopted the following year by the General Assembly, which had, for the first time, recognized the right of the Saharan populations to self-determination. There was no need to point out now that Mauritania had supported that resolution without any hesitation, since it had been certain that if its brothers had to choose in a calm and objective climate they could only choose the country with which they had always formed a single historical, cultural, political, economic and social entity.

58. Nearly 10 years had elapsed since that resolution had been adopted. For 10 years the General Assembly had been calling for the decolonization of the Territory of the Sahara. For 10 years the General Assembly's policy had failed and, during those 10 years, the populations had been given political orientation. Tribes which were not exclusively Saharan, but Mauritanian also, had been inculcated with ideas of independence and now demanded independence not for the Sahara but for the whole northern region of Mauritania and for the whole southern region of Morocco. Unfortunately, it turned out—as he deeply regretted to state and to note—that it was the Algerians who maintained, encouraged and armed that tribal movement. To seek under those conditions to apply the principle of self-determination to populations on which a choice had already been imposed in advance: was that what was known as applying the principle of self-determination?

59. Why consider words as solutions in themselves or as ends in themselves? Where, then, was the free and authentic expression of the will of the populations when a certain view of things was imposed on them, when mercenaries were recruited to speak in their name, to be their spokesmen?

60. Under those circumstances, there should be no more talk of the principle of self-determination being the surest means of arriving at a multitude of solutions, reintegration with Mauritania being the most likely, as well as the surest, of those solutions. It would be more logical, and more honest, too, to ask Mauritania and Morocco to accept a situation that was in the process of becoming a fait accompli. If Mauritania had not assumed its responsibilities and had not tried to play hide-and-seek with the United Nations, that was because it did not wish to play hide-and-seek with the future of the countries concerned.

61. Mauritania and Morocco should be asked in all honesty and in all objectivity to accept a fait accompli, to

agree to their countries being completely divided and their unity jeopardized. They would be quite ready to reply. But they were told in fact to apply the principle of self-determination, to forget the situation prevailing in their regions, to forget the danger which that represented for their countries. For 18 years the facts of the problem had been explained to the Committee. Any reasonable man with a modicum of objectivity and the least sense of responsibility should be careful not to take words as ends in themselves.

62. The principle of self-determination had been proclaimed by the United Nations in 1966 but it had been entirely drained of its content as far as the Sahara was concerned. The principle of self-determination presupposed a choice. It presupposed that one had the freedom to choose and to decide to go to the north, the south or the west. But when those concerned were told that they had the freedom of choice when in fact they could not go to the west, there was no longer any freedom of choice.

63. For that reason, his delegation was very surprised that its Algerian brothers were posing as the champions of that principle, when to their certain knowledge that choice was under the circumstances quite pointless, that it was subject to direction and that in fact there was no choice at all. That situation might simply have given Morocco and Mauritania grounds for saying to the Committee that they rejected the principle of self-determination. If they had not done so, it was out of respect for the United Nations, because they were aware of the problems that existed elsewhere in Africa and in other parts of the world.

64. It should not, however, be a case of being unable to see the wood for the trees. The members of the Committee should be alive to the true facts, facts which Mauritania had been placing before the Committee all alone, with all the sincerity and honesty that the situation demanded.

65. As he had already said, the situation, in his country's case, was becoming extremely serious. There was a tribal movement, only 35 per cent of whose members were from the Sahara. That whole movement demanded independence for the northern part of Mauritania and for the southern part of Morocco, and the members of the Committee wanted Mauritania and Morocco simply to accept that. The members of the Committee presented the situation with great eloquence, obviously convinced that it was essential to apply the principle of self-determination.

66. He thought that, for all those reasons, Mauritania and Morocco could reasonably have said no to the principle of self-determination. They had not done so because they were very clearly aware of all the other problems with which the United Nations was faced, with which Africa was faced, with which Asia was faced, with which Latin America was faced. But they asked all those who were reasonable and who had a minimum sense of responsibility to remember what he had said about not being able to see the wood for the trees.

67. Political ethics, friendship and fraternity and the duty of neighbourliness should have led the Algerians to be the first to uphold Mauritania in completing its national unity and preserving its territorial integrity. That, in any event, was what Mauritania had expected from a fraternal country

which had already given the best of itself to contribute towards the solution which had been reached.

68. What, in fact, had the role of Algeria been in the question of the Sahara? The reply to that question was the subject of his second comment.

69. Algeria's role, as it had appeared to Mauritania, had been in all respects positive until the time when the understanding on the question of the Sahara between Mauritania and Morocco had become an actual and irreversible fact. He would like to point out how his country had regarded Algeria's position and in what direction that position had seemed to Mauritania to evolve.

70. From 1966 to 1972, Algeria's position had been unequivocally in favour of self-determination, but in 1972 an event had occurred that was to launch the process that had resulted in the solution currently under consideration in respect of the Sahara.

71. What had, in fact, happened in 1972 was that, on the occasion of the ninth ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU, held at Rabat in June 1972, a frontier agreement had been concluded between Algeria and Morocco, putting an end to the territorial dispute that had divided those countries in 1963. At the same time, however, there had been a precise undertaking between Morocco and Mauritania, witnessed by Algeria, to find a solution to the problem. Morocco and Mauritania had taken a decision at that time, witnessed by Algeria, to seek a solution to the problem in a spirit of fraternity, in a spirit of African friendship and solidarity.

72. Since then the policy of their Algerian brothers had seemed to them to be aimed not only at preserving what had been achieved in the 1972 agreements, which they had applauded, but also at consolidating the understanding between Mauritania and Morocco. Those members of the Committee who had been at the United Nations in 1972, 1973 and 1974 had all heard the representative of Algeria on several occasions state that he would accept any resolution which was accepted by Mauritania and Morocco and which took account of their respective concerns. What African, Asian, American or Latin American ambassador had not heard the representative of Algeria, Mr. Rahal, use that phrase whenever there was a debate in the Fourth Committee on the subject? That was what had happened at the twenty-seventh, twenty-eighth and even the twenty-ninth sessions.

73. That attitude had been very much to Algeria's credit and his delegation would like to pay a tribute to it.

74. The members of the Committee would also remember—and it explained the attitude of some Arab countries—that the Head of State of Algeria had stated at the Seventh Summit Meeting of Arab Heads of State, held at Rabat in October 1974, that, for Algeria, once there was an understanding between Mauritania and Morocco, the case of the Sahara would be closed. It was true that at that time the understanding between Mauritania and Morocco had still not been reached. But when that understanding had subsequently become an irreversible fact, it had been as if the sovereignty of the Saharan people, the Saharan people



and the territorial integrity of the Sahara had been discovered by divine revelation.

75. It was appropriate to mention that in July, before the International Court of Justice, the representative of Algeria had said that the Sahara had been *terra nullius*, in other words it had been a territory which had belonged to no one, thereby denying the Saharans any human value, any political value and any cultural value.

76. But that had been forgotten and, three months later, the Fourth Committee had been told of the sovereignty of the people of the Sahara and of the territorial integrity of the Sahara. Perhaps things did change and perhaps it was not good to maintain a fixed position, but he wished to point out the facts. He in no way doubted the nobility of the Algerian delegations's sentiments but he was somewhat sceptical at that change of attitude: only recently, an understanding between Mauritania and Morocco had been encouraged, and now it was decried as a diplomatic fait accompli.

77. Perhaps Algeria had been banking on the impossibility of an understanding between Mauritania and Morocco. Mauritania was an African country; it had always worked for understanding among all African countries. Mauritania was not a country which bore grudges against anyone. Mauritania had never lost sight of the necessity of reaching an understanding with all its African brothers, whatever their past might have been. He felt that it was nevertheless undesirable that an African country should say, as Algeria had done through Mr. Rahal in the Fourth Committee, that the understanding between Mauritania and Morocco was an unnatural alliance. They were both Arab countries, and, moreover, both were African countries.

78. As far as the principle of self-determination was concerned, he wished merely to refer to what the Visiting Mission had been told when it had gone to Algeria in June 1975: the President of Algeria had told the Visiting Mission that if Algeria had had any territorial claim on the Sahara, it would not have waited for the arrival of the Visiting Mission, despite the great respect it had for the United Nations (A/10023/Add.5, chap. XIII, annex, appendix II C, para. 59).

79. Mauritania, for its part, had come to the United Nations and had said that it had claims, but that it wished to reconcile its claims with the principles which were dear to the United Nations. It had not said to the Visiting Mission what Algeria had said to it, namely that if it had had territorial claims it would not have waited for the arrival of the Visiting Mission to recover what belonged to it, despite the great respect it had for the United Nations.

80. Mr. Rahal had made himself out in the Committee to be the champion of self-determination, after the statement that had been faithfully reported in the Visiting Mission's report. That should at least prompt the Committee to give the benefit of the doubt to Mauritania, which had been frank with the United Nations, with the Visiting Mission, with the International Court of Justice and with all the members of the Committee.

81. Mauritania and Morocco had not done anything to the members of the Committee. They had told them what their

concerns were and how the problem stood in the region in concrete terms. They were appealing to all those who were interested in the question to show the same objectivity and openness towards them. Mauritania and Morocco had many reasons for most systematically opposing self-determination. They did not do so out of respect for Africa or for the United Nations. The choice was a tragic one for their countries, for it was a choice between their unity, between their existence as independent sovereign States and between two words, even if they were sacred words, which were applicable everywhere. The current situation was one of exceptional gravity for Mauritania and Morocco.

82. Mr. RAHAL (Algeria) said that, since his country, his delegation, and he himself had been referred to, it was quite natural that he should clarify at least a few points for the Committee, without allowing himself to be led into making observations of the kind that had already been heard.

83. First of all, he wished to point out that it would have been sufficient, in criticizing his statement, to restrict the remarks made to what he had actually said and not to invent things which he had not said. He had not said that the understanding between Mauritania and Morocco was an unnatural alliance; in fact, those were words that he did not use. His friend, the Ambassador of Mauritania, would have been better advised to listen carefully before replying; in so doing, he could have avoided many pointless, if not erroneous, extrapolations.

84. He also wished to point out that one of the countries most concerned with the adoption of draft resolution A/C.4/L.1120, or of draft resolution A/C.4/L.1120/Rev.1, did not believe in the right to self-determination, since its representative had urged the Committee to say that words should not be taken as ends in themselves. He had urged the Committee not to set too much store by the right to self-determination and, in any event, not to think of it as applicable in all cases. In the Committee, constant references were made to the right to self-determination, although that was the very thing that was currently being established. That illustrated very clearly what the exercise of the right to self-determination by the Saharan people meant as far as the sponsors of the draft resolution were concerned.

85. What was currently taking place in the Territory of the Sahara—the occupation of the Territory by the Moroccan armed forces, the establishment at El Aaiún of a Moroccan Governor and a Mauritanian Governor—was, according to the sponsors of the draft resolution, the exercise by the people of the Sahara of their right to self-determination; the Committee had only to let events take their course and the exercise by the people of the Sahara of their right to self-determination would ultimately reach its natural and normal conclusion. There was no need to dwell on that point. The very fact that the representative of Mauritania said that choice was completely pointless, that the choice had already been made—perhaps it had already been made for Mauritania and Morocco, but it had not been made for the people of the Sahara—was revealing in itself. He had said that his country had changed its attitude because the conditions which had been created in the Territory no longer permitted a free consultation to be held in the normal way, since the Saharan people had been con-

ditioned. Although, at the moment, there was no longer even a single "conditioner", so to speak, there would soon be three of them. For the Saharan people—who, as everyone knew and as had often been stated, were few in number—that was too many: three too many. They should be allowed to choose freely; they should be allowed for once to say what they wanted. And, if they said they were Moroccan, or if they said they were Mauritanian, Algeria would be the first to applaud.

86. Why was there such reluctance to ask the Saharan people to say in complete freedom what they wanted, if it was so certain that they were Moroccans, or if it was so certain that they were Mauritians? But enough of that!

87. If Algeria's position was questioned, he would not reply to the accusations, for Algeria's position was well known. As far as liberation struggles, liberation movements, assistance to all peoples struggling for their freedom and struggles for all just causes were concerned, there was no need for Algeria to reply to a certain type of criticism.

88. It had been alleged that Algeria's position had changed. It was sufficient to read Algeria's statements since 1966, to study Algeria's votes since 1966, to see quite clearly that Algeria's attitude had never altered on that question. Since 1966, Algeria had consistently stated in the Committee that the Sahara was a colonial Territory; that the Saharan people were a colonial people; that the Sahara was a Non-Self-Governing Territory subject to Chapter XI of the Charter; that the administering Power had obligations towards the United Nations, and that it was therefore accountable to the United Nations for its administration, its obligations and the measures which it had taken, not only in order to raise the standard of living of the population, but also to prepare for accession to independence. It was well known how much Spain had done to achieve that very end.

89. It had been said that, from 1966 until 1972, Algeria had consistently supported Morocco and Mauritania. His delegation did not deny it, because Algeria's support of Morocco and Mauritania did not conflict with the principles for which it stood or with the principles of the United Nations. Algeria had supported Morocco and Mauritania simply because Morocco and Mauritania, too, had supported the Saharan people's right to self-determination.

90. It had been stated that, suddenly, in 1972, something had happened. What had happened in 1972 had been witnessed by all the African Heads of State and, while all had rejoiced that a territorial dispute which had been a source of conflict between Algeria and Morocco since 1963 had been settled at the OAU Assembly at Rabat, the African Heads of State had also been very pleased to note once again that Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania had undertaken to intensify still further their efforts to assure the people of the Sahara of their right to self-determination. That had been in 1972. To prove it, he had only to read what the three Heads of State had said in 1973—one year later—with regard to the Sahara. The three Heads of State had met on 24 July 1973 in Agadir, and had issued a joint communiqué, part of which read as follows:

"The three Heads of State paid special attention to developments regarding the Sahara still under the domina-

tion of Spanish colonialism. They reaffirmed their unwavering attachment to the principle of self-determination and their concern to ensure that this principle was implemented in a framework which guaranteed that the will of the inhabitants of the Sahara was given free and genuine expression in conformity with the United Nations decisions on this question." (*Ibid.*, appendix III D.)

91. In continuing to defend, in the United Nations, the right of the people of the Sahara to exercise their right to self-determination, Algeria had remained true not only to itself, but also to the commitments by which it was bound to Morocco and Mauritania. His delegation did not see, therefore, why the representative of Mauritania had referred to 1972 as a very important date. Or rather, it had not known why. It was now known that, in 1972, Morocco and Mauritania had reached a secret agreement. It was easy to say to those two countries that Algeria was a witness; while an act was secret, any claim could be made; but when the result of that agreement became known, it could no longer be denied. What had happened was that Morocco and Mauritania had simply agreed to divide the Sahara between themselves, the Sahara for which Algeria had been waging a common struggle, calling for the right to self-determination for the population of the Sahara. Consequently, Algeria was not ashamed to say what its policy was, and no member of the Committee, with the possible exception of the representative of Mauritania, could consider that Algeria's policy had deviated or changed. Algeria had been in favour of the self-determination of peoples and would continue to be in favour of it; it had been in favour of self-determination for the people of the Sahara, and would continue to be in favour of it.

92. The representative of Mauritania had referred to a paragraph of the report of the Visiting Mission (*ibid.*, appendix II C, para. 59) in connexion with which he had said that, if Algeria had had a territorial claim, it would not have waited for the arrival of a United Nations mission in order to recover its property, despite the respect which it had for the Organization. He had understood that that question was closed, since it had been raised in the Security Council. He would simply refer to the reply he had given there. He had said:

"... as regards [paragraph 59]"—for it had been the representative of Morocco who had made the same observation now made by the representative of Mauritania—"... as regards [paragraph 59 of] the report of the Visiting Mission of the United Nations, I do have something to say. First of all, I am pleased that the delegation of Morocco"—that had been in the Security Council, therefore, at the current meeting, he should say that, first of all, he was pleased that the delegation of Mauritania—"seems to show so keen an interest in this document, a document which has many other paragraphs than the one quoted. The delegation of Algeria has always urged that we refer to the report [of the Mission] and also to the advisory opinion of the Court so as to be able to set the course for the decolonization of the Sahara.

"When the Algerian people wished to recover their independence and their country, they embarked on a war of liberation which has been sufficiently praised by others

for me not to have to glorify it here. This struggle, however, did not prevent Algeria from first putting its problem to the United Nations. Whatever the developments of that liberation struggle, the Algerian people accepted the fact that the solution of its problem be reached by its exercise of the right of self-determination.

"This reminder, I believe, can give some indications of the philosophy of Algeria as regards the satisfaction of claims. And if the Head of State of Algeria stated that he would not have waited for a visiting mission from the United Nations to come to his country, that meant that he himself would have gone directly to the United Nations."<sup>1</sup>

93. Mr. EL HASSEN (Mauritania) said he believed that no member of the Committee could doubt for an instant Mauritania's consistent attachment and loyalty to the struggle and its continuous support of all peoples struggling to regain their dignity. He did not say that simply for effect, and he did not believe that it was necessary to emphasize the point. His country's policy was well known in the United Nations; it was well known among the non-aligned countries; it was well known in OAU; it would

therefore be difficult for any member of the Committee to believe that Mauritania could be taught any lesson in that respect.

94. What Mauritania had tried to tell the Committee was that the ties which it had with the Saharans were not ties of self-interest. Mauritania did not want the Saharans to be pawns on a political chessboard which was completely foreign to them. The ties which Mauritania had with the Saharan people were ties of flesh and blood, ties of everyday life, ties of brotherhood. The proof of that was that, some days previously, it had been announced that Mauritania had designated its Minister for the Civil Service to be Deputy Governor, which proved that he had no connexion with the Sahara.

95. Who were those being presented as the spokesmen of the Saharan people and of Saharan sovereignty? They were the former Permanent Representative of Mauritania to the United Nations and the former Chargé d'affaires of Mauritania in Algiers. It was a Mauritanian affair. If the United Nations was to find a solution to a Mauritanian affair, Mauritania would close its eyes to any solution arrived at by the United Nations. But even if it was not a Mauritanian affair, it was not, in any event, an Algerian affair.

<sup>1</sup> See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirtieth Year, 1854th meeting.*

*The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.*

## 2181st meeting

Thursday, 4 December 1975, at 11.10 a.m.

*Chairman:* Mrs. Famah JOKA-BANGURA (Sierra Leone).

A/C.4/SR.2181

### AGENDA ITEM 23

**Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued)** (A/10023 (parts I, II and IV), A/10023/Add.5, A/10023/Add.6 (parts I and II), A/10023/Add.8 (part III), A/10082, A/10095, A/10097, A/10101, A/10104, A/10300, A/10326-S/11862, A/10337-S/11872, A/10373-S/11881, A/C.4/804, A/C.4/L.1120/Rev.1, A/C.4/L.1121, A/C.4/L.1122/Rev.2, A/C.4/L.1123, A/C.4/L.1124, A/C.4/L.1126, A/C.4/L.1127)

#### QUESTION OF FRENCH SOMALILAND: CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (continued)\*

1. Mr. PAQUI (Benin), introducing draft resolution A/C.4/L.1122/Rev.2, relating to the question of French Somaliland, drew attention to some departures from the text of draft resolution A/C.4/L.1122/Rev.1. The changes had been made in consultation with the countries bordering on so-called French Somaliland and mainly affected two operative paragraphs, namely, paragraph 2, to which the words "unless an urgent solution to it is found", had been

added after the words "international peace and security", and paragraph 3, which now ended with the words: "by effecting in particular the release of political prisoners and the return of the representatives of the liberation movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity and of all political refugees recognized as such by the liberation movements and political parties, in accordance with the Convention of the Organization of African Unity Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa, 1969".

2. The changes were the result of serious negotiations and had led several countries, namely, Egypt, Mali and Uganda, to join the sponsors of the draft resolution, who hoped that it would now meet with the approval of all countries bordering on so-called French Somaliland and that, in view of those changes, the delegations of Somalia and Ethiopia, in the spirit of brotherhood which had thus far prevailed in the Committee, would agree to withdraw the amendments they had submitted at the 2179th meeting (A/C.4/L.1123 and 1124).

3. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that the revised text of the draft resolution was currently being distributed. In view of the appeal made by the representative of Benin, she asked Ethiopia and Somalia if they agreed to withdraw their amendments.

\* Resumed from the 2179th meeting.