



Thursday, 24 January 1952, at 3 p.m.

Palais de Chaillot, Paris

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Chairman : Mr. Selim SARPER (Turkey).

Libya : (a) Annual report of the United Nations Commissioner in Libya (A/1949, A/1949/Add.1) ; (b) annual reports of the administering Powers in Libya (A/1970, A/1970/Add.1, A/2024, A/2024/Add.1, A/AC.53/L.39, A/AC.53/L.40) (continued)

[Item 20]*

1. The CHAIRMAN announced that the list of speakers would be closed at 5 p.m.
2. Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) expressed his Government's greetings to the new sovereign State of Libya, which had attained its independence as a result of positive action by the United Nations in accordance with the principle of self-determination. His delegation wished to congratulate the United Nations Commissioner, the Council for Libya and the administering Powers, each of whom had co-operated in the implementation of the General Assembly resolutions.
3. The new sovereign State would, he feared, have to face immense difficulties and would need a full measure of international co-operation. Such co-operation was particularly due to Libya in view of the special circumstances attendant upon its establishment. The United Nations was under a moral obligation to help Libya in the first steps of its independent life, and there should be no pretext for denying that country's admission to the Organization. He believed that all Members would agree with that principle.
4. That being so, the Chilean delegation had joined with eleven others in sponsoring the draft resolution before the Committee (A/AC.53/L.39). Mr. Santa Cruz summarized the provisions of the draft and observed, in connexion with the paragraph referring to technical assistance, that his delegation had always advocated the adoption by the United Nations of measures to provide Libya with technical assistance. The Chilean

delegation had been one of the sponsors of General Assembly resolution 398 (V) which provided that Libya should continue to receive technical assistance after it had attained its independence and before it was admitted to membership of the United Nations.

5. His delegation's insistence on the question of technical assistance to Libya arose from the deep conviction that the independence and the democratic government of a country could only be preserved if the entire population was assured of a reasonable standard of living based on a sound economy. It was quite clear from the Commissioner's supplementary report (A/1949/Add.1) that Libya was an exceedingly poor country, with small resources in skilled labour, and a blind population equalling 10 per cent of the total. That was adequate evidence of the unsatisfactory results of forty years of Italian colonial administration.
6. That was the situation existing in a sovereign State established under United Nations auspices. The United Nations could no longer embark upon a programme of aid to Libya unless requested to do so by the Government of that country. But the Government had not yet had time to plan a complete programme of economic and social development.
7. The recommendations of a group of economic and financial experts, on whose work the Commissioner had reported, were not optimistic. They laid considerable stress on the desirability of increased productivity from existing undertakings. If no more constructive effort were made, it might be feared that United Nations' action in promoting the independence of Libya would turn out to be one of its greatest failures. The Chilean representative was convinced that one of the first measures that the Government of Libya should take was to work out a large-scale plan for the economic and social development of the country, which would provide a wide field for technical assistance from the United Nations and the specialized agencies. Economic development should not be limited to the expansion of

* Indicates the item on the General Assembly agenda.

existing undertakings, but should include such projects as road-building, public health, increased production of electrical energy and other works which would demand financial as well as technical assistance. The United Nations was under an obligation to supply both types of assistance. Loans from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, as advocated by the representative of Pakistan (48th meeting), might, he was afraid, place too great a strain upon the country when it came to repayment, since the programmes most suitable for Libya at the moment tended to be of a type which would not produce immediate revenue. Libya was a typical example of the countries requiring financial aid in the form of grants, as envisaged by General Assembly resolution 398 (V) when it had requested the Economic and Social Council to work out a programme for an international fund for grants. As Libya was still in its infancy as a sovereign State, its enormous needs would be better satisfied by assistance given through an international organization than through bilateral arrangements.

8. In conclusion, Mr. Santa Cruz expressed the hope that the twelve-Power draft resolution would be unanimously approved and that all Member States would be prepared to meet the commitments undertaken when they had decided that Libya should be granted independence.

9. Mr. GUACHALLA (Bolivia) thought that the birth of the United Kingdom of Libya constituted further affirmation of the principle of the self-determination of nations. Inspired by the principles of equality of rights and the development of free institutions in Non-Self-Governing Territories, the United Nations had recommended the establishment of an independent Libya. The time allowed for its evolution towards that status seemed short, but the result had been satisfactory. The United Nations Commissioner in Libya and the administering Powers deserved congratulations, but the chief praise must go to the people of Libya, their king and their leaders. The Italian settlers who had established themselves in Libya also deserved commendation.

10. The work of the United Nations was creative and was inevitably subject to error. One weakness of the new Libyan State was its economic backwardness. It needed co-operation and technical assistance from the United Nations, which must be granted without delay so that the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development might be authorized to furnish financial aid. A further step in strengthening the sovereignty of the new United Kingdom would be its admission to membership of the United Nations, and it was to be hoped that appropriate action would be taken without delay.

11. The Bolivian delegation regarded the twelve-Power draft resolution as a suitable corollary to the General Assembly resolutions of 1949 and 1950, since it formally expressed United Nations recognition of the new sovereign State and recommended admission to the United Nations and the grant of technical assistance. The Bolivian delegation would vote in its favour.

12. In conclusion, Mr. Guachalla expressed his Government's good wishes for the future prosperity of Libya.

13. Mr. SAVUT (Turkey) stressed how closely the United Nations, through its Commissioner, had been bound up with the emancipation of Libya. The task of preparing the country for independence had not been easy, but all the difficult problems, such as the transfer of powers and financial arrangements, had been successfully tackled in the short period of time allowed.

14. The contribution of the Libyan people had amply demonstrated both their political maturity and the good judgment of the General Assembly in its decision that Libya should become independent. In congratulating the Libyan people, mention should also be made of the United Nations High Commissioner, the Council for Libya and the administering Powers. The United Nations had generously provided technical assistance, and all those various elements had worked together towards a common objective and had their share of responsibility for the final achievement.

15. The United Nations could view with pride the new independent State which had emerged, but Libya would inevitably have to face difficulties such as beset every free nation in the contemporary world. Mr. Savut felt sure that Libya was fully aware of all the economic, financial and security problems which confronted it, and he felt that it was capable of coping with them. The Libyan people, in proclaiming its independence, had undertaken the primary responsibility for making basic policy decisions. The United Nations would provide all the assistance it could, but he felt that there had been an unwarranted tendency in the Committee's debates to refer to Libya's problems as if that country were still the responsibility of the United Nations. Libya was capable of taking its own decisions, and might well resent too much advice and too many recommendations. He referred in that connexion particularly to the USSR draft resolution (A/AC.53/L.40), which his delegation would be unable to support. Mr. Savut felt, however, that the joint draft resolution was perfectly compatible with his delegation's views and would have its endorsement. The reference in the draft to the national elections to be held in Libya in the near future, in accordance with the provisions of that country's Constitution, was in harmony with the wishes of all Members that democratic institutions might develop freely in Libya.

16. Mr. KYROU (Greece) felt that the joint draft resolution, of which his delegation was one of the sponsors, echoed the words of welcome addressed in the Committee to the new United Kingdom of Libya. The text also paid a well-deserved tribute to the Commissioner, the Council for Libya and the administering Powers, and his delegation was happy to associate itself therewith. No human achievement was free of shortcomings, and it was impossible that the matter under consideration should be an exception to that rule. Certain criticisms had already been put forward, and others would doubtless follow in the course of the

debate. It would be unjust, however, to judge the achievements in Libya in the abstract, and without taking into account the opportunities that had been available and the results obtained.

17. The volume of documents produced was perhaps excessive, but that was a purely formal criticism and did not detract from his delegation's appreciation of the services rendered by the United Nations Commissioner in Libya.

18. The emergence of the independent State of Libya was sufficient answer to those who occasionally reproached the United Nations for its inability to achieve results; for his delegation, whose faith in the United Nations had never wavered, it was a new encouragement and a new reason for hope.

19. Mr. Kyrou recalled the historic links existing between Libya and Greece, and the epic actions in the Second World War which had preceded the movement for Libyan independence. He referred to the paragraph in the joint draft resolution relating to national elections to be held in Libya in accordance with the country's Constitution. He had read the text of that Constitution, and was able to confirm the statements made by the Prime Minister of Libya (48th meeting) as to its democratic nature. Some progress remained to be achieved, but a political system must be a continuous creation.

20. The remainder of the joint draft resolution called for no comment, but he would point out that the text under discussion must be the last resolution which the United Nations could adopt without infringing Article 2 paragraph 7, of the Charter. In future, United Nations action with regard to Libya would be limited to financial and technical assistance and the United Kingdom of Libya would follow its destiny guided solely by the true interests of its people. He repudiated the insinuations made at the 49th meeting by the USSR representative, and added that the Greek delegation would fully support, both in the General Assembly and in the Security Council, Libya's application for admission to the United Nations.

21. Mr. LEITAO DA CUNHA (Brazil) extended his delegation's welcome to the representatives of the Libyan Government, and expressed good wishes for the prosperity of the newly-constituted State. The United Nations Commissioner, the Council for Libya and the administering Powers, no less than the Libyan people and its rulers, deserved congratulations upon the results achieved. His country was confident that Libya would be able to go forward on the road to progress, and he wished to assure the Libyan Government of Brazil's friendly co-operation and goodwill. He felt sure that all the Member States of the United Nations would continue their assistance to the new-born State, which, he hoped, would soon be admitted to the Organization.

22. The relevant documents and the joint draft resolution before the Committee revealed the tremendous complexity of the problems confronting those responsible for the implementation of the United Nations resolutions on Libya. The Brazilian representative was not

quite satisfied as to the appropriateness of all the measures taken, but he felt, like the representative of Pakistan, that it would be undesirable to examine them in a spirit of destructive criticism. If studied in a spirit of understanding they would be seen to merit sincere commendation. Though the results achieved might not be perfect, realism demanded that they must be allowed to stand. Unlike a draft document they could not be destroyed and a fresh start made.

23. The Pakistani representative had always been uncompromising on matters of principle but conciliatory in practice. He had followed that rule in all his activities in Libya and elsewhere, and the Brazilian representative was prepared to follow his example. The Committee would be well advised to do so as well. In that spirit, the Brazilian delegation would vote for the twelve-Power draft resolution. In view, however, of the fact that Libya was a sovereign State and of the undoubted political maturity of its people, his delegation would be unable to support the USSR draft resolution.

24. Mr. GASHAOU (Ethiopia) associated himself with the other delegations in extending a welcome to the United Kingdom of Libya, whose claim to independence had been supported by his country from the end of the Second World War. He felt that Libya would succeed in solving all the problems which had come to light in the course of the debate.

25. His delegation would support the twelve-Power draft resolution but not the USSR draft resolution, because Libya was a sovereign State and as such was the only authority competent to decide whether other States might establish military bases on its territory.

26. The Ethiopian delegation hoped that Libya might be admitted to membership of the United Nations during the current year, and that its application would be considered independently of those submitted by other countries.

27. Mr. S. S. LIU (China) also congratulated the people of Libya and their king upon the achievement of Libyan independence. China had supported that independence from the outset and had been among the first to recognize the new sovereign State. His delegation was gratified to greet the first Prime Minister of Libya and wished him and his Government success.

28. Mr. Liu commended the United Nations Commissioner and the Council for Libya for their resourcefulness and wisdom in executing a highly complex task and praised the administering Powers for the fulfilment of their pledge to relinquish authority to the Libyan Government.

29. Having attained its political sovereignty, Libya had still to win its economic independence. Toward that end it was imperative to continue United Nations technical assistance. Moreover, Libya was fully qualified to participate in the Organization and should be admitted as soon as possible.

30. Inasmuch as the joint draft resolution was entirely compatible with its views, the Chinese delegation would support it.

31. Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) said that his delegation had co-sponsored the joint draft resolution because it recognized the fact of Libyan independence and sovereignty, proposed to assist the new State through the Programme of Technical Assistance and recommended its admission to the United Nations. The United Nations Commissioner in Libya and the various parties concerned, which had loyally carried out the Assembly's resolutions on Libya within the prescribed time-limit, deserved the highest praise.

32. The creation of the United Kingdom of Libya was a signal achievement for the United Nations and a triumph for the common man throughout the world. The Organization had helped to create a free nation out of the living material which was the Libyan people. In the name of the glorious tradition of the Latin American democracies whose peoples had, like the Libyans, broken the chains of colonial servitude, Uruguay was proud to greet the independent people of Libya. It took special note of the Italian contribution to Libya's progress and hoped that the new State would soon be admitted to membership of the United Nations.

33. When its political independence had been consolidated, the Libyan people would be free to guide its own destiny and to determine the ways and means of ensuring its security and its economic and social progress. Accordingly, Uruguay could not support the USSR draft resolution.

34. Mr. GAJEWSKI (Poland) welcomed Libya as an independent nation and recalled that Poland had introduced an amendment (A/1110/Rev.1) at the General Assembly's fourth session providing for the establishment of an independent Libyan State as early as 1 January 1951.

35. Basing itself on the principle of self-determination of peoples, contained in the Charter, Poland had consistently shown great sympathy for the national liberation movements of the peoples of the Middle East and had strongly opposed the policy of certain Powers which strove to stifle national aspirations to freedom and self-government. The Libyan struggle for independence was but another proof that peoples would not bow to such a policy.

36. It was therefore ironic to find that the very Powers which had attempted to prevent Libya's attainment of independence were now installing themselves in that country in an effort to convert it into a strategic base for their aggressive plans. The presence of military bases and foreign troops on Libyan soil was a clear limitation of the sovereignty of the new State. The imperialist Powers had marked off their respective spheres of influence and were constructing strategic highways, military airfields and coastal defences and boosting agricultural output for the supply of their occupation troops.

37. Mr. Gajewski quoted extracts from the French and American Press indicating the importance attached by the United States, France and the United Kingdom to Libya as a strategic base within the framework of the North Atlantic Treaty. The presence of foreign

troops and the construction of military bases had been sanctioned by an agreement concluded with the Provisional Libyan Government. A final agreement had been prepared and was to be negotiated with Libya after the elections to the Legislature. Under that treaty, the United Kingdom was expecting to obtain air and naval bases along Libya's Mediterranean coast and the United States would be permitted to complete construction of three bomber bases. The Libyan military installations were intended to strengthen United States' bases in other countries of North Africa and of the Middle East. The French had a battalion stationed in the Fezzan and the United Kingdom troops in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania were designed to reinforce its Suez garrison.

38. All those facts demonstrated that the administering Powers and the United Nations Commissioner in Libya had not acted in accordance with the Charter. They had worked in the interest of the United Kingdom, France and especially the United States. The activities of those States in Libya constituted a threat to the independence and full sovereignty of that country, interference in its internal affairs, and a danger to international peace and security.

39. Because it felt strongly that the United Nations could not and should not tolerate the presence of foreign troops and the construction of military bases in the territory of a State created under its auspices, Poland would vote for the USSR draft resolution. That draft, far from stigmatizing Libya or the Libyan people as dangerous to world peace, as the Australian representative had suggested, denounced those who truly threatened that peace by their military preparations in Libya. The newly created State, as the representative of Lebanon had declared (48th meeting), was justly grateful to the USSR for its decisive part in the victory over Nazi Germany, which had made possible Libya's emancipation.

40. Mr. CORNER (New Zealand), recalling the role of New Zealand troops in the liberation of North Africa in the Second World War, was glad to sponsor the joint draft resolution recognizing the creation of an independent Libya. In 1949, New Zealand had abstained in the vote on General Assembly resolution 289 A (IV) fixing a two-year period for the achievement of Libyan independence for fear that such an arbitrary time-limit might force the country to develop unnaturally and burden it with a cumbersome administrative machinery. That fear had been partially dispelled by the resoluteness with which the Libyan people had assumed its responsibilities and had profited from the experience of the administering Powers and from the sympathetic assistance of the United Nations Commissioner and his advisers.

41. Libya lacked many of the economic and social attributes of a stable and viable nation, partly as a result of natural deficiencies but also as a consequence of United Nations insistence upon the time and manner of its development. For that reason, it was particularly important that it should benefit from continued United Nations assistance as recommended in the joint draft

resolution. As the Pakistani representative had advised, the United Nations should give it the right kind of help. The Libyan people and its leaders had shown their ability to apply that assistance to the best advantage.

42. Mr. BULAJIC (Yugoslavia) extended his Government's best wishes to the Libyan people and its leaders and expressed confidence that they would exert their efforts to build up the prosperity of the new State. The task of creating an independent Libya had been fraught with tremendous difficulties. He praised the devotion of the United Nations Commissioner and his staff in implementing the Assembly resolutions. However, on the basis of the United Nations Commissioner's report and known facts concerning Libya's under-development, it was clear that the Libyan people would meet with great difficulties in their internal development in the future if they were not assured of United Nations assistance.

43. Mr. VARNAKOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that his delegation was opposed to any attempt to prolong foreign domination over Libya and would support any proposal which would strengthen the genuine independence of that country.

44. It was well known that the United States, the United Kingdom and France had forced the Libyan people to accept a federation which was contrary to their national interests and under cover of which they had divided Libya into spheres of influence. The United Nations Commissioner in Libya had acted throughout in the interests of those Powers and had not defended the interests of the Libyan people. The three Powers in question had recently taken steps to extend their military installations in Libya. For the purpose of strengthening their hold on Africa and in order that Libya should serve as a spring-board for the aggressive ends of the North Atlantic bloc, a wide network of air bases had been established in Libya. Airfields were being equipped and fuel and ammunition stored. Military advisers and army, navy and air force officers arrived daily in Libya from the United States and the United Kingdom.

45. Mr. Varnakov quoted passages from Egyptian, Swiss and American newspapers, alleging that vast military preparations were being carried out in Libya by the United States, the United Kingdom and France.

46. The establishment, strengthening and extension of military bases in Libya, and the concentration of foreign troops in its territory, were obstacles to the free and democratic development of the Libyan people, and were fresh evidence of the aggressive policies of the United States, the United Kingdom and France.

47. The Byelorussian SSR felt that the Assembly should take a decision that would lead to the elimination of the obstacles in the way of a genuinely independent development of Libya. The USSR draft resolution was designed to that end and was based on the principles of the Charter. By adopting that draft resolution, the General Assembly would fulfil its obligations towards the Libyan people and would make an effective contribution to the cause of peace and security

in North Africa and throughout the world. The Byelorussian delegation would therefore support that draft resolution.

48. Mr. SEVILLA SACASA (Nicaragua) said that his country had expressed its sympathy with the new Libyan State by joining in sponsoring the draft resolution contained in document A/AC.53/L.39. The emergence of the State of Libya, unified and independent, afforded a demonstration of practical application of the principle of self-determination of peoples. He expressed the hope that Libya would shortly be admitted to membership of the United Nations and would be represented by its own nationals, who would bring to the United Nations the contribution of their great capabilities and their enthusiasm for the cause of the Organization.

49. He congratulated the administering Powers, who were also celebrating the event, and in particular the United Nations Commissioner in Libya, for their magnificent work. In conclusion, the Nicaraguan representative expressed his country's best wishes to the King, people and Government of Libya, and its hopes that the new State would enjoy the fullest measures of prosperity and continue on the road of ever-increasing progress and greatness, in the service of peace and democracy.

50. Mr. ULLRICH (Czechoslovakia) observed that during the discussion his delegation had had constantly in mind the information it had obtained on living conditions in Libya. The reports it had received revealed a deplorable state of affairs, although some of them were designed to conceal the truth. For instance, reports submitted by France stated that a government employee in the Fezzan was paid 160 francs a day, or about 38 cents in American money. According to the *New York Herald Tribune*, *The Times* and the International Labour Organisation, the average annual *per capita* income was about \$30. Health conditions were very bad and there was great poverty among the peasants.

51. The plight of the Libyan people was due to the colonial régime imposed on Libya by the Western Powers. Those Powers were exclusively concerned with preparing for a new war and transforming Libya into a military stronghold, to be used for attack against the peoples' democracies and the USSR, the main bulwark of peace in the world.

52. The Australian representative had asserted that the Soviet Union was attempting to portray Libya as an enemy of peace. The USSR draft resolution, however, was an endeavour to rescue Libya from the imperialist aggressors, in whose military plans the Arab peoples could have no interest. The Czechoslovak delegation supported that draft resolution, because it was in accordance with the principles of the Charter and because its implementation would further the development and prosperity of Libya and its people.

53. Mr. MANTILLA (Ecuador) joined with other delegations in saluting the new nation, its people, its present rulers and the patriots who, with the help of the United Nations Commissioner and the Council

for Libya, had forged the economic, social and political structure of the new State on the basis of the ideals and principles embodied in the Charter. The Libyan Constitution would serve as an example for Trust Territories and Non-Self-Governing Territories when they attained self-government or independence.

54. The delegation of Ecuador would support the twelve-Power draft resolution. Mr. Mantilla drew particular attention to the importance of the last two paragraphs of the operative part of the draft.

55. He would reserve for the time being his delegation's position on the USSR draft resolution.

56. Mr. LOPEZ (Philippines) said that the United Nations could be proud of having brought to a satisfactory conclusion one of its finest achievements. At the same time it must be recognized that the new State would have many problems and difficulties to overcome, as was clear from the reports of the United Nations Commissioner and the administering Powers. Those problems were, however, inherent in the very nature of the task and the circumstances in which it had had to be carried out.

57. The Philippine delegation had been glad to join in sponsoring the draft resolution before the Committee.

The resolution did not go into too great detail, for the excellent reason that henceforward the people of Libya must be given freedom to solve their own problems with outside help if they so desired, but without undue interference. That principle was of extreme importance. Libya's sovereignty would be meaningless if assistance were extended to it on any terms incompatible with its self-respect and independence. On the other hand, its sovereignty would be equally impaired if the people of Libya were denied the right to manage its own affairs, including the right to establish relations of friendly and voluntary co-operation with other States for its economic development or the security of its territory. The right to enter into or abstain from such arrangements was the very essence of sovereignty.

58. The emergence of an independent Libya was one more instance of the fulfilment of that principle of the Charter which enjoined the orderly progress of peoples towards self-government or independence, and that other principle which placed upon the United Nations the responsibility for the peace and security of the world. A free Libya would be not only a worthy addition to the growing area of freedom in the world, but a bulwark of international peace and security.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.