

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FORTY-EIGHTH MEETING

Held on Tuesday, 16 April 1968, at 11.5 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. COLE

Sierra Leone

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (continued)

Mr. POLYAKOV (Secretary of the Sub-Committee) said that the Sub-Committee had before it, in accordance with its request, a Conference Room Paper dated 16 April 1968 on the preparation of working papers by the Secretariat in regard to foreign economic and military activities in colonial Territories. The basic information on the Seychelles and St. Helena was contained in document A/AC.109/L.444, which also contained data on Mauritius, since it had been prepared before that country had achieved independence. To reissue the paper at that point would delay the Sub-Committee's work and would entail additional expense, but it was clear that the section concerning Mauritius could be eliminated from the Special Committee's report to the General Assembly if the Committee so decided.

The CHAIRMAN said that the United Kingdom representative was not yet in a position to make a statement on the Seychelles and St. Helena. However, he would again consult the representative of the administering Power and would inform the Sub-Committee of the result before the end of the week.

Mr. SHAKHOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he wished to make a statement concerning the documentation necessary for the Sub-Committee's work. The Soviet delegation would not deal with documentation on the Seychelles and St. Helena, as it considered that that question had been settled. He recalled that in resolution 2288 (XXII), concerning activities of foreign economic and other interests in Territories under colonial domination, and in resolution 2326 (XXII), concerning military activities by colonial Powers in Territories under their domination, the General Assembly had requested the Special Committee to study activities which might hinder the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. For the past three or four years, the Special Committee had devoted a large part of its work to those questions and had made recommendations which faithfully reflected the resolutions mentioned.

It must be recognized that the activities of international monopolies greatly hindered efforts to free colonial territories from all domination. The Special Committee had repeatedly indicated the steps to be taken by the colonial Powers to put an end to that state of affairs. The Department of Trusteeship and Non-Self-

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Governing Territories had played an extremely important part in preparing documents on the activities of foreign monopolies. Unfortunately, that documentation left certain gaps. There were documents on the activities of monopolies in small territories, but they were incomplete; for instance, nothing was said about Oman or the Territories of eastern Arabia, and he felt that those omissions should be corrected, as well as those concerning the Territories of the Indian Ocean, the Pacific, the Antilles and the Spanish Sahara in particular.

The Committee had not yet taken up the question of military activities by colonial Powers, but numerous delegations had stated before the General Assembly and the Special Committee of Twenty-Four that they constituted both an obstacle to the elimination of colonialism and, since the bases established in colonial territories were utilized for aggression against sovereign States, a threat to international peace and security.

The task of gathering information on those two types of activities, economic and military, and of combining them, was not easy. But both the Secretariat and the delegations should strive toward that end, for that was the only way in which it would be possible to make pertinent recommendations to the General Assembly. The Special Committee and the Sub-Committee should also concern themselves with the implementation of the resolutions previously adopted, particularly resolution 2228 (XXI).

In view of the magnitude of the task and of the documents before the Sub-Committee, he wished to make some suggestions on the organization of work and on the type of information the Sub-Committee would require.

The task of the Sub-Committee was first of all to study military activities by colonial Powers in territories under their domination. With that objective in view, it was particularly necessary to have information available showing the manner in which those activities influenced the economic, social and political life of the territories and generally hindered the achievement of independence, the establishment of local governmental bodies and local productive activities and, in addition, constituted a threat to peoples defending their right to freedom and independence.

The documentation necessary for the Sub-Committee should therefore emphasize the following points:

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(1) The presence of military, air and naval bases and installations, their ownership, financing and maintenance, the number of military personnel, advisers and instructors, the number of civilian personnel and the military agreements concerning the bases.

(2) Types of armaments, including nuclear weapons.

(3) The presence of airports and port facilities capable of being used for military purposes.

(4) Information on all military, air and naval bases used for the repression of national liberation movements in colonies, such as Aden, Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau).

(5) Information on all bases in colonial territories used for aggression against other peoples, such as Guam, a base for attacks against Viet-Nam; Ascension, used against the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Aden, used for interference in the internal affairs of Kenya and other African States; bases in Angola and Mozambique, from which attacks were launched against the independent African States; the bases threatening South West Africa; and the bases in the Antilles used by the United States against the Dominican Republic.

(6) Information on all military agreements between colonial Powers relating to the construction of military bases and installations in colonial territories, such as, for example, the agreement between the United Kingdom and the United States concerning territories in the Indian Ocean and the Antilles.

(7) Information relating to the joint use of military bases as, for example, in the case of Gibraltar which was used as a base by NATO.

(8) Information on the military alliance of the enemies of Africans - the "Unholy Alliance" - aimed at crushing the national liberation movements of the peoples of Angola, Mozambique, Guinea (Bissau), South West Africa and Southern Rhodesia, and the way in which activities were co-ordinated within that alliance. Information on the presence of South African military and police forces in Southern Rhodesia and on their use against national freedom movements.

(9) The use of mercenaries to counter freedom movements in the colonies.

(10) The use in colonial warfare of arms manufactured in the United States, the United Kingdom and the Federal Republic of Germany, for example, by Portugal through its membership in NATO.

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Information of this nature had, in fact, been supplied since 1963 by many petitioners and by various national freedom organizations, both to the Committee of Twenty-Four (for instance, during its meetings at Algiers in 1966) and to the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly. However, that information had not been collated in any United Nations document and had appeared only in the reports of the Committee of Twenty-Four. The Secretariat should distribute that information as well as the data on those responsible for the financing of military bases.

(11) Information on cases where, following the liberation of a territory i.e. its accession to independence, the former colonialists refused, despite the pressing requests of the new independent State, to dismantle their bases in the territories concerned. He cited as examples the United States base at Guantanamo and the United Kingdom bases in Cyprus.

Such bases were a threat to the sovereignty of States after their independence.

(12) Finally, the working document should show the consequences of military activities and of the existence of military bases in colonial territories.

The consequences of that state of affairs were numerous. In the first place, lands belonging to the local population were expropriated for the construction of bases, military buildings, barracks and supply depots; in the case of small territories, such expropriations often involved the annexation of a considerable proportion of the usable land, and the Sub-Committee should strive to determine the size of those installations. Secondly, the expulsion of the population from the areas where they had resided obliged them either to resettle in other areas or - and Gibraltar was a typical example - to work for the administration of the bases, thus depriving the country of part of its labour force and impeding the development of essential branches of local activity, which thus became economically and politically dependent on the metropolitan territory. Thirdly, resources essential for the development of industry and food production were diverted for the benefit of the colonial Power's armed forces. Fourthly, the recruitment of a large number of the population, and of young people in particular, for work at the military bases hindered the training of the cadres which were essential for the local economy, and the local economy itself became geared to the colonialists' military objectives.

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The Secretariat should pay the closest attention to such situations, the effect of which was to impede the process of decolonization, to prevent the population from working for its own development, to hold back the granting of independence, and to allow puppet régimes to be set up in the service of the colonial Powers.

The Sub-Committee had been called upon to draw up, for the twenty-third session of the General Assembly, a report on the activities of international monopolies in colonial territories. For that purpose, the delegations and the Secretariat ought to undertake a systematic analysis of the voluminous information already available and to collate information on the territories about whose situation in that respect little was known. It went without saying that the Sub-Committee's report should bring out the greed of foreign monopolies, whose activities were the chief obstacle to the independence of the countries in which they operated, since the colonialists and their hangers-on, anxious to hold on to the enormous profits which they derived from exploiting underpaid labour in those countries, strove to maintain colonial structures everywhere.

The Sub-Committee, using that analysis, must focus attention on the pernicious effects of the activities of foreign monopolies on the further development of industry and agriculture in colonial territories. The economic structures of those territories were very undiversified, with the result that the territories, being unable to satisfy their own needs and being reduced to the role of suppliers of raw materials at cheap prices, could not rid themselves, once they were politically independent, of the economic influence wielded by the former metropolitan territory.

The Sub-Committee should show, furthermore, that the activities of the monopolies were of an international nature, and that the exploitation of colonial territories, as the example of southern Africa showed, was methodically organized under agreements concluded between companies in various imperialist countries. The Sub-Committee should also gather information on the size of capital investments and of the profits reaped by the investors; it should also identify the enterprises which were operating in the various territories, as well as their owners, and should state how the capital was distributed among the various monopolies. In addition, it should draw attention to the economic and social gaps between the

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foreign exploiting minority and the indigenous population which it controlled; it should also look into the aspects of social welfare, public health and trade union freedom. A further point which warranted investigation was the granting of concessions to foreign companies, the duration of such concessions and the fiscal and other privileges which they entailed.

Another very important matter was the loans granted by international monopolies to colonialist régimes particularly in southern Africa. The Sub-Committee should try to determine how much money foreign companies had invested in colonial territories (particularly in southern Africa and the Pacific and Antilles regions); to identify the companies and their owners; to determine the distribution of their capital and dividends - stating what share of their income they reinvested to promote the economic development of the territory or to improve living conditions and the professional, economic, social and cultural situation and the health of the population, and the share which accrued to them abroad - and to describe the legislation governing the recruitment and termination of workers and the rights granted to unions with regard to employment contracts, as well as wage policy. There was obvious discrimination against the indigenous population with regard to the remuneration of labour in both industry and agriculture, particularly in the case of women and children. In particular, it should be ascertained whether social laws and labour legislation existed in the territories. The Sub-Committee should bring out the fact that foreign monopolies used various devices to appropriate all the economic resources of the territories: investments, unfair trade practices, pressure exercised by world capitalist markets, granting special privileges to imperialist economies and siphoning off profits.

Furthermore, the Sub-Committee should focus its attention on how States implemented the provisions of resolution 2288 (XXII), particularly paragraphs 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11, calling on the colonial Powers to adopt concrete measures regarding the economic interests of their nationals in colonial territories. The Sub-Committee should recommend that the Special Committee should ascertain from those States what measures had been taken to that end, devoting special attention to regions on which only incomplete information was available, such as the Middle East, the Pacific and the Antilles region. Such information would enable it to

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identify the methods used by the monopolies in those regions and to determine whether, as the colonial Powers maintained, those methods differed from those applied by foreign companies in the countries of southern Africa.

Finally, the Sub-Committee should include in its report all the information it was able to gather regarding the support which foreign monopolies gave to the colonial Powers to suppress national liberation movements, for example, in the territories under Portuguese domination.

The Soviet delegation was prepared to co-operate in that study and would supply the information at its disposal. Many very well documented works on the subject had been published in the USSR, and they would provide the Sub-Committee with a gold mine of information for the preparation of its report.

Mr. FOUM (United Republic of Tanzania) said that he endorsed the Soviet Union representative's very comprehensive and constructive suggestions. The consequences of the colonial Powers' military presence in colonial territories must be considered not merely from the strictly military standpoint but also in the light of the impact of that presence on the economic life of the territories concerned. In Gibraltar and Guam, for example, the structure of economic activities was determined entirely by the strategic needs of the colonial Power. Such militarization was not only morally harmful for the population, but also threatened its very existence.

Obviously the colonial Powers would never tolerate a thorough scrutiny of their military bases and activities in the colonial territories; however, as the USSR representative had suggested, the Secretariat should not restrict itself to sources of information in the Western countries. Reliable information could be found in the developing countries themselves, and such information would be even more useful to the Committee since it would reflect the feelings of the peoples themselves, who were at all times aware of the colonial Powers' military might. He mentioned a Tanzanian publication, the Nationalist, which had given a thorough report on imperialist interference in Oman and the neighbouring regions.

His delegation would present a detailed analysis of the problem at subsequent meetings.



Mr. DIARRA (Mali) whole-heartedly endorsed the suggestion of the Soviet Union representative.

The Secretariat could prepare complete and detailed documentation only if it gathered information from different sources. In that connexion, it might also draw upon statements made by petitioners in the Fourth Committee, particularly on the extent to which military bases had been used to suppress national liberation movements and to delay the colonial territories' progress towards independence.

Mr. JOUEJATI (Syria), Rapporteur, deplored the administering Powers' refusal to co-operate. The Sub-Committee should urge them to facilitate the Secretariat's work as much as possible. Speaking as the representative of Syria, he endorsed the suggestions of the Soviet Union representative and thanked him for having outlined a detailed plan for the preparation of a comprehensive report and for the formulation of appropriate recommendations.

Mr. PEJIĆ (Yugoslavia) expressed the hope that the Secretariat would consider the previous speakers' suggestions in preparing the working documents the Sub-Committee had requested. He agreed with the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania that the Secretariat would be advised to collect the necessary information both from the usual sources and from the countries directly affected by the military activities of the colonial Powers. As in previous years, and despite their lack of co-operation in the past, those Powers should be requested once again to provide information on their military bases in the colonial territories, in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly, particularly resolutions 2326 (XXII) and 2288 (XXII).

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.