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Chairman: Mr. Yordan TCHOBANOV (Bulgaria).

AGENDA ITEM 76

The question of race conflict in South Africa resulting from the policies of "apartheid" of the Government of the Republic of South Africa (A/4804 and Add.1-5) (continued)

1. Mr. USHER (Ivory Coast) considered it appropriate that the Committee's discussion of the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (A/4881 and Corr.1)—effects closely related to the danger of war—should be followed by a discussion of "apartheid", probable source of serious disorders in Africa and potential threat to international security. If a conflict broke out as a result of "apartheid" it would find the young African and Asian States, supported by anti-racist Europeans and by Europeans whose position would be dictated by ideological considerations, for the most part Communists, ranged against white South Africa and its fanatically racist mercenaries, while other nations initially considering themselves as non-participants might view the war as a struggle against communism and therefore decide to align themselves with South Africa. It would be reassuring if that prospect could be dismissed as idle fantasy but unless the explosive conditions prevailing in South Africa were corrected it was all too likely to materialize.

2. The South African Minister for Foreign Affairs had not denied the existence of those conditions at the 267th meeting but had sought to defend his country's position by stating that the United Nations was guilty of discrimination in singling out South Africa for attack when it remained silent about injustices in other countries. That argument was inadmissible, for no country could justify its own shortcomings simply by pointing to those of others; the maxim *nemo turpitudinem suam invocare potest* could not be ignored. The history of the Nazi movement in Germany showed how far the effects of a racist doctrine that had its origin in a single country could reach. The similarities between the racism of the Nazis and "apartheid"—or "separate development" as the South African representative had called it—were obvious. So firmly had the proponents of "apartheid" come to believe in the evil doctrine they proclaimed that the South African Minister for Foreign Affairs had seemed to find it quite natural that he should address to the United Nations at the 1033rd plenary

meeting, an organization born of the struggle against nazism and dedicated to the principle of equality for all, a statement which had sounded as though it had been meant for delivery in the South African Parliament. With a total disregard for the presence of a large number of Africans in his audience, he had made a shameless apology for racism and had concluded with an appeal that his Government should be allowed to continue on its path without interference. By his use of the word "associated" in connexion with the subject of South Africa's economic development he had in effect admitted that modern South Africa was the product of the efforts of both whites and blacks, yet he seemed to see no inconsistency between that circumstance and the repressive régime under which the Bantus were systematically denied the exercise of the most elementary rights and freedoms. In defending that system he had stated that the Bantus themselves were satisfied with their lot. If that were true it would mean that the rulers of South Africa were guilty of reducing human beings to the level of animals so that they were no longer capable of judging their own condition.

3. In an effort to mislead his listeners into thinking that social progress was possible under "apartheid", the South African Minister for Foreign Affairs had given certain figures on Bantu school attendance. No one who was familiar with the history of Africa would be fooled by those statistics. For the benefit of the Minister he would like to point out that the Ivory Coast students attending universities in their own country or in France, who numbered some 1,200, had not been limited to specialized subjects intended only for Africans, as in the case of Bantu students in South Africa, but were able to compete on a basis of merit with French students in such subjects as science, medicine, engineering and law. The Minister's statement that the educational methods used for European and American children were unsuitable for Bantu children with their totally different background was an admission that the education made available to Africans in the Bantu language did not prepare them for any but the lowliest situations in life. Hitler had said that when subject peoples sought to raise themselves to the level of their conquerors, assimilating the language of the latter in the process, the barrier between them fell. The Bantu education system constituted an application of that theory. The Ivory Coast was an example of a country in which, thanks to the policy of non-violence and adherence to legal processes which had guided President Houphouët-Boigny and his party in the struggle for independence, Africans and white men lived in harmony and worked together for the attainment of common ideals. If the whites in South Africa were to take that lesson to heart their future in Africa would be assured.

4. Despite those considerations, his Government was not in favour of imposing extreme sanctions on South Africa, much as it deserved them. His Government

thought that the proper course was to continue all endeavours to persuade that country of the error of its ways so that it would abandon its present policies when it realized how dangerous they were for South Africa itself. The door must be left open so that South Africa could choose the path of negotiation when it realized the immensity of the danger it had itself created. In earlier years South Africa had neglected the General Assembly entirely; it could do so again if it chose, but the responsibility should be its own and not that of the United Nations.

5. Mr. REYES (Colombia) said that the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations in 1948 had been the culmination of a long struggle for the definition and universal acceptance of the fundamental human rights and the freedoms inherent in the human condition. The Declaration, which covered not only traditional political rights but also the new dimension of economic, social and cultural rights, had been conceived as a common ideal for all nations. Moreover, in subscribing to the Charter, all Members of the United Nations undertook to respect human rights for all, without discrimination of any kind. The Republic of South Africa, however, had failed in its undertakings under the Charter, and for the last ten years had defied world public opinion as expressed in the General Assembly of the United Nations. The system of separate development, or "apartheid", involved limitations on, or outright deprivations of, the human rights of the non-European majority. They had no political or trade union rights, no freedom of movement or freedom of speech or information, and their social and cultural rights were also severely restricted.

6. In defining his Government's policy, the South African Foreign Minister had admitted that those restrictions existed, but had sought to justify them as actually benefitting the Bantu population. He had also claimed that many of the States bringing charges against South Africa were morally unfit to do so since they tolerated discriminatory and undemocratic practices at home. He had complained that many other States violated human rights and had accused the General Assembly of having one standard for small countries and another for the great Powers. He had asserted that "apartheid" was not a recent creation but had a long history and was intended to safeguard the achievements of the European settlers and at the same time to take into account the needs and the traditions and culture of the Bantu population. He had also wondered whether the ex-colonies in the Western hemisphere, the United States, Canada and the Latin American countries, would be willing to hand over control of their countries to indigenous or Negro majorities. Lastly he had asserted that any action by the United Nations on "apartheid" constituted interference in South African domestic affairs.

7. The attempt to justify "apartheid" by arguing that racial discrimination existed elsewhere was inadmissible. As the previous speaker had noted, the faults of others could not serve as an excuse for one's own. The South African Foreign Minister was, of course, right to argue that there should be no exceptions. Clearly, the efforts of the United Nations to protect human rights should not be limited to one case, and its decisions and recommendations should apply to all countries. Nor should it turn its attention to violations of human rights, only, but to any violation of the Charter. The Foreign Minister had referred to racial discrimination in other countries and specifically in

the United States of America. It was true that there was such discrimination, but the African countries themselves had recognized that the situation was entirely different. Discrimination was not the official policy of the Government, nor was it enshrined in national legislation and the Government of the United States was doing its utmost to wipe it out. He had also referred to violations of human rights in Hungary and in Berlin. The United Nations should indeed concern itself with such situations, and any attack upon human rights or the provisions of the Charter should be investigated and appropriate action taken. International machinery to protect human rights should be set up as soon as possible and in the meantime the United Nations must defend them to the best of its ability.

8. When he claimed that United Nations discussion of "apartheid" was contrary to Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter, the South African Foreign Minister forgot that that provision must not prejudice the application of Chapter VII in respect to threats to the peace. "Apartheid" was certainly such a threat, and the General Assembly was undoubtedly competent to discuss it.

9. The answer to the South African Foreign Minister's question about the conduct of the Latin American countries if they were faced with a situation similar to South Africa's was that there was not, and would never be, any racial problem in Latin America. The original European colonists had not kept themselves aloof from the aboriginal inhabitants but mingled with them to found a new race. The archaic structure and economic under-development of some Latin American countries might sometimes place restrictions on economic, social and cultural rights but there was a general effort towards political advancement and greater freedom. The Latin American countries had been trying for a long time to create an international legal system for the effective protection of human rights and the establishment of the Central American Court of Justice; grouping the Central American Republics had been an important step forward in that connexion. The Latin American countries were therefore entitled to condemn "apartheid". Colombia in particular had condemned it since it first came before the United Nations and the head of the Colombian delegation had said in the General Assembly (1026th plenary meeting) that he would support any measure designed to correct the situation. Colombia rejected the contention that the Republic of South Africa had been built by the white settlers alone and that "apartheid" was justified as a safeguard for their achievements. In its view, all the inhabitants of South Africa had contributed to its progress, just as in Latin America all the races had played their part. Similarly, Colombia was unable to support the Nigerian representative's assertion in the General Assembly that the white population of South Africa was a microscopic minority with no right to be there (1034th plenary meeting). That view also was incompatible with the Charter and with the Declaration of Human Rights.

10. In conclusion, he urged the South African Government to reconsider its policy. Otherwise the Colombian delegation would support whatever measures were necessary to restore human rights in South Africa as elsewhere.

11. Mr. KIZIA (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the movement for the liberation of subject

peoples was progressing so rapidly and inexorably that the time was not far off when colonialism would disappear from the face of the earth. At the preceding session of the General Assembly an overwhelming majority of Member States had shown their sympathy with that movement by voting for the adoption of the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples (1514 (XV)) which had been considered on the initiative of the Soviet Union. The view was sometimes expressed, particularly by representatives of countries which had a stake in colonialist exploitation, that colonialism was dead and that consequently there was no need to call for its liquidation. That was mere propaganda, which only the gullible would believe; the facts showed irrefutably not only that colonialism and racism were very much alive but that their advocates were ready to uphold them by force of arms and at the cost of thousands of lives if necessary. In the struggle for freedom the dependent territories and the socialist countries were invariably ranged against the aggressive colonialist countries constituting the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) military bloc under the leadership of the United States. Recent facts were evidence of that assertion, such as the attack on Egypt in 1956 by the United Kingdom and France with the support of Israel, the aggression against Syria planned by the members of the erstwhile Baghdad Pact in 1957, the invasion of Lebanon and Jordan by United States and United Kingdom troops in 1958 and the aggression against the Congo committed by Belgium with the support of the other members of NATO in 1960. Similarly, France had for seven years been waging a colonial war against the Algerian people, and Portugal was trying to drown in blood the nationalist movement in Angola and a third member of NATO, the Netherlands, was clinging to a territory which rightfully belonged to Indonesia. With the help of hired assassins the members of NATO had done away with Congolese Prime Minister Lumumba and, more recently, with the Prime Minister of Burundi.

12. The members of NATO were constantly in consultation with each other concerning the policy to be followed in suppressing the nationalist liberation movement and displayed a unanimity of views in that connexion which was not always apparent when they were dealing with other matters. For example, before intervening in the Middle East in 1958 the United States had obtained the approval of the other members of NATO for that venture and the United States Secretary of State had threatened to intervene if Indonesia took steps to liberate West Irian from its Netherlands rulers. There was no reason to believe that similar consultations had not taken place within NATO before Belgium unleashed its aggression in the Congo and Portugal set about the process of suppressing the rebellion in Angola. There were indications that France's action in Bizerta had also received the prior approval of NATO.

13. Colonialism obviously had no future, yet in its death struggle it was still capable of provoking conflicts which were a threat to the maintenance of world peace. The policy of "apartheid" was a manifestation of modern colonialism. South Africa had been by turns a British colony, a Dominion within the Commonwealth and, finally, a Republic, yet those changes had not affected the lot of the African inhabitants, who had been reduced to the level of slaves and even, as the representative of the Ivory Coast had correctly

stated, to that of animals. With the proclamation of the Republic, South Africa had severed its connexion with the British Crown but the United Kingdom could not evade its responsibility for the dispossession of ten million Africans and their reduction to slavery in the interest of three million foreign intruders. The existing régime in South Africa continued to be based on the shameless exploitation of the country's non-white manpower and natural resources in the interests of South African, United Kingdom, United States and other monopolies. In the words of Chief Albert Luthuli, the winner of the 1961 Nobel prize, the African was now a homeless wanderer for whom there was no future in his own country. The South African Foreign Minister had tried in vain to deny the accusations made against his Government by the representative of the USSR and others. The whole world knew how low the South African Government had stooped in its persecution of the non-European population of South Africa. In March 1960, the world had been horrified by the Sharpeville massacre in which seventy-two black South Africans lost their lives and 257 were injured. The Security Council had taken the matter up^{1/} and opinion throughout the world had demanded the punishment of the guilty. Legal investigations in South Africa, however, had resulted in the punishment not of the white police who had done the shooting but of five persons who had participated in the demonstration. Such conduct was a mockery of human rights.

14. The shameful system of racial oppression and exploitation symbolized by "apartheid" was kept in place only by force and terror. The new South African Republic had inherited the worst features of the former Union of South Africa and was progressing speedily towards fascism. Discrimination of any kind was prohibited by the Constitution of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, but its experiences in the Second World War had taught it what fascism and racism meant. The Nazis had begun with the destruction of the Jews and had gone on to try to destroy the rest of the peoples of Europe. South African racism had begun with the extermination of the black South Africans, but that was only the overture to an attempt to destroy all mankind. The law in South Africa was designed to legitimize fascist oppression and stifle all disagreement with Government policy. Under new South African legislation, the authorities could engage in the harshest repressive action with impunity, persons could be arrested without warrant and an accused person was deemed guilty unless he could prove the contrary. Recent visitors had written of the trend to dictatorship in South Africa and had described a lack of freedom and an atmosphere of fear reminiscent of Nazi Germany. The persecution of Africans and Asians and all persons of democratic and liberal tendencies was carried on under cover of a struggle against communism. The rulers of South Africa claimed that they had the dual task of fighting communism and maintaining the purity of the white race. The Prime Minister had recently tried to explain a strike of African workers by the fact that international communism was extending its grasp to South Africa. Like the "revanchist" West Germans and the Government of Portugal, which was engaged in a campaign of repression in Angola, the Government of South Africa used anti-communism as an

^{1/} Official Records of the Security Council, Fifteenth Year, 851st to 856th meetings.

excuse for crimes of every kind and for tampering with democratic freedoms.

15. The Prime Minister of South Africa had claimed that his country was a bastion of Christian civilization in Africa. But the system which he termed "Christian" was one which disregarded the interests of the majority of the people, and was designed to enable South African and foreign capitalists to make huge profits. It should be noted that the Minister of Finance of South Africa had recently made a statement assuring foreign investors that the South African Government would be ready to put down disorders. Foreign investors played a very important role in South Africa; according to a statement by the United Kingdom Foreign Secretary, £700 million in foreign capital had been invested in South Africa during the period 1946-1955, including £500 million from the United Kingdom and the rest largely from the United States. Figures had already been given regarding the volume of trade between the Western Powers and South Africa. Under those conditions, it would be hard for anyone to deny the statement by Mr. Verwoerd that co-operation between South Africa and the Western Powers was in the interests of those Powers.

16. At the 268th meeting, the representative of the United States had said that his country abhorred "apartheid" and was pressing, through diplomatic channels, for its abandonment. At a recent press conference in Johannesburg, however, the new United States Ambassador to South Africa had been unable to say a single word in condemnation of "apartheid". Indeed, how could "apartheid" be condemned by a country which itself had a colour bar, and was the home of the Ku Klux Klan?

17. The Ukrainian delegation wished to draw attention also to the reported steps recently taken by South Africa to join forces with Portugal and the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland in order to stop the African independence movement from spreading to southern Africa, and thus to prevent the implementation of the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples. The same purpose was served by the sale of weapons to South Africa by the United States, France, the Federal Republic of Germany and other countries, to which the representative of Ghana had referred at the 269th meeting.

18. The policy of "apartheid" was in flagrant contradiction with the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and repeated resolutions of the General Assembly. It was clearly time that decisive steps were taken to compel the South African Government to take account of the views of the great majority in the United Nations.

19. Mr. KIKHIA (Libya) recalled that his country, inspired by its deep concern for human rights and for the liberation of the people of Africa, had been among the States which had requested the inclusion of the present item in the Assembly's agenda. The number and wide diversity of the countries which had joined in making that request showed that the situation was of grave concern to all mankind.

20. Repeated appeals by the General Assembly to South Africa to modify its policies, which constituted a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, had met with no response; the racist rulers of South Africa had merely adopted further inhuman laws and dis-

crimatory measures. As a result of the Sharpeville massacres in March 1960, the Security Council had been obliged to take up the matter and had requested the Secretary-General to use his good offices with the South African Government;^{2/} however, seven days of consultations between that Government and the Secretary-General had achieved no result.

21. On 29 June 1961, the Conference of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), by 163 votes to none, with 89 abstentions, had passed a resolution^{3/} calling for South Africa's withdrawal from that Organisation. Appeals had been addressed to the South African Government by international trade union organizations, associations of scientists, and other bodies representing world public opinion, yet all these appeals were ignored by the white racialists who were unable to perceive that their policy was leading them to certain catastrophe. The efforts of the Commonwealth of Nations to bring about a change in South Africa's policy had also failed, and South Africa had decided to leave the Commonwealth rather than abandon its policies. Those policies had been condemned by the international conferences of Bandung, Accra, Addis Ababa, Monrovia, Casablanca and Belgrade, and at several of those conferences sanctions against South Africa had been urged. In the country itself, resistance was increasing and the United Front of the two African parties—the African National Congress and the Pan-African Congress—which had been declared illegal after the Sharpeville massacres, gained new adherents every day. Even in South Africa, liberally minded whites, including members of the clergy and university teachers, had denounced the excesses of the Government.

22. At the fifteenth session of the General Assembly, a draft resolution^{4/} urging sanctions against South Africa had failed to obtain the required two-thirds majority, as a result of indecision or complicity in some quarters. Instead, the General Assembly had adopted, by an overwhelming majority, a resolution (1598 (XV)) reaffirming that the policy of "apartheid" was inconsistent with the Charter and requesting States to consider taking action to bring about an abandonment of that policy, but that warning had gone unheeded. It was now time for the Assembly to adopt positive measures against the South African Government, since all conciliatory proposals had proved of no avail. The South African Government must be given no further opportunities. The time for action had come. All countries concerned for peace and justice should adopt the steps urged at the Second Conference of Independent African States, held at Addis Ababa in June 1960, including the breaking off of diplomatic relations, the closing of ports and airports to South African ships and aircraft, and the boycotting of South African goods. There was also reason to consider whether a country which defied the United Nations had a right to remain a Member of the Organization. The delegation of the United Kingdom of Libya had to say, with respect to the burning question of racialism in South Africa, that the movement of liberation in Africa had reached a stage

^{2/} See: *ibid.*, Supplement for April, May and June, 1960, document S/4300.

^{3/} International Labour Organisation, *Records of Proceedings, Forty-fifth Session*, resolution I.

^{4/} See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifteenth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 72, document A/4728 and Corr.1, para. 9, draft resolution I.

at which it could no longer be contained or ignored without disastrous consequences. Action must therefore be speedy and effective or else even worse happenings might occur. The South African Government was pursuing its odious course with brutal obstinacy and was attempting to extend its hateful racial policy beyond its own frontiers as would be proved by the presence of white South African mercenaries in the service of Mr. Tshombé, that man of straw, occupied in the interests of finance against the just desires of the black population of the Congo.

23. The state of the world in which the peoples lived under the threat of atomic warfare could not but incite all Members to deal rapidly with that centre of

tension and friction in South Africa. But the South African situation was a hindrance to the plans of the political, economic, cultural and racial development of Africa which the United Nations and many other international organizations had projected. The Government of South Africa had been returned to power at the last elections and would continue its policy of white supremacy if action were not taken forthwith.

24. There was no longer any hope of improvement in South Africa itself. Member States must therefore act quickly.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.