

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

**EIGHTH SESSION**

*Official Records*



**FIRST COMMITTEE, 636th**

**MEETING**

**Wednesday, 14 October 1953,  
at 3 p.m.**

**New York**

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**Chairman: Mr. F. VAN LANGENHOVE (Belgium).**

**The question of Morocco (A/2406 and Add.1,  
A/C.1/L.60) (*continued*)**  
[Item 57]\*

1. Mr. ZEINEDDINE (Syria) said that his delegation found great satisfaction in the fact that, in the course of the debate from which representatives of both Morocco and France were absent, one fundamental element had been evident: no representative had maintained that French action in Morocco was proper and prudent. Some representatives had been hesitant in forming an opinion. Others had remained reticent. Although some representatives had invoked the principle of domestic jurisdiction as a cover, none had ventured to uphold the policies and actions of France in Morocco as being in accordance with the right of self-determination, the purposes of the Charter or the elementary norms of justice; never before in any debate had such a consensus been felt.
2. Many other representatives had been impressed by an empty seat voluntarily relinquished. His delegation hoped that the debate on the question clarified the fact that what attracted attention was not the emptiness of the seat but the emptiness around it, the almost complete lack of support for the French argument.
3. The United Nations was not a court. However, the moral influence of the General Assembly was important and his delegation hoped that the Assembly's beneficial effects would be felt in time to help the parties to work out a satisfactory solution through negotiation. The objective and careful study of the Moroccan question, which Syria had undertaken along with other countries of Africa and Asia, had led them to a proper and useful solution appearing in document A/C.1/L.60. In presenting those proposals various representatives of the Powers sponsoring the draft resolution had indicated their willingness to consider other viewpoints such as those presented by the delegations of Mexico, Norway and others; these viewpoints were worthy of careful consideration.
4. Mr. Zeineddine believed that the importance of the absence of the French delegation had been over-emphasized, especially by the representative of Greece (663rd meeting). However, its absence led the Committee to fear that the implementation of the Charter might become more difficult, as more seats became

vacant. He felt that if the United Nations would adhere to the principles of the Charter, then the seat which was now vacant would be occupied again and another seat, that of Morocco, might be gained.

5. Some representatives were still wondering what would happen if France withdrew its authority from Morocco. There were two ways of withdrawing that authority: by turning it over either to the French settlers or to the indigenous inhabitants of Morocco. Should the second alternative be adopted the result could be seen from the experience of other nations such as India, Pakistan, Syria, Lebanon and Indonesia. In all those cases where a foreign Power had withdrawn, two results had emerged: (1) the people of the country concerned had turned their efforts from opposing foreign domination towards national construction; (2) the atmosphere of tension which had existed between the colonized and the colonizing people had given way to international co-operation. Such would be the expected effect of the withdrawal of French authority from Morocco. Thus, the real question was not what would happen in the event that France withdrew but what would be the result if France remained in Morocco with all that authority. Actually, the struggle would continue in the future as it had in the past. Under those conditions the Assembly should look towards wider aspects of the problem and endeavour to visualize the impact of such a situation on the general international scene.

6. The United States delegation, which was usually eloquent and explicit on many questions, had preferred to limit itself on the particular question of Morocco. Its attitude could be summed up in the following manner: the American people, conceived as they were in liberty, had a strong leaning towards liberation movements in other countries and a readiness to understand them. However, that fact had not been completely emphasized. Nevertheless, his delegation was appreciative of the efforts which the United States had taken through diplomatic channels to convince the French Government to take a different course from the one which it had taken. For its part, Syria in concert with all the Arab countries had tried to convince France through diplomatic channels, but to no avail.

7. Thus, the question had come before the United Nations. Since dealing through diplomatic channels had already proved insufficient in the Moroccan as well as the Tunisian case, it was necessary for the Assembly to exercise its authority by clear-cut and substantial resolutions. Moreover, the activity undertaken since last year by many governments had not been in accordance with the recommendations of the Assembly; greater efforts could be made to ensure respect for those recommendations. Silence was of no avail on such important matters. In the circumstances, it should be pointed out that many delegations had remarked the fact that Mr. Dulles' address to the

\* Indicates the item number on the agenda of the General Assembly.

Assembly (434th plenary meeting) had moved from a discussion of Indo-China to a direct discussion of European questions without touching the problem of the Middle East and North Africa. Such a lack of interest in the areas, particularly in North Africa could be ascribed to the fact that, for the moment, that area was not exposed to communism. However, attention should be called to the fact that when communist movements succeeded in allying themselves with national liberation movements they formed a lever of power which could turn the masses in the direction those forces wished.

8. As to the views expressed by the representative of South Africa (633rd meeting), it seemed to the Syrian representative that the mode of thinking prevalent in South Africa had had its influence on the French residents in the north. That mode of thinking seemed to be forming itself more and more into a school of thought, centred in the south, regarding the treatment of Africa and the Africans. Accordingly, in his statement the South African representative had stressed the question of domestic jurisdiction. But did France possess any rights in Morocco except those resulting from international treaties? Certainly, the question of domestic jurisdiction was quite irrelevant in that respect.

9. Moreover, the representative of South Africa, along with other representatives, had referred to the sanctity of treaties and had contended that it had been the intention of the Asian-African bloc to abrogate the Treaty of Fez. But that treaty was not operative because the obligations incurred under it were not being carried out by France. And there was also the Act of Algeciras which was more explicit. Furthermore, the South African representative had implied optimistically that the discussion of the Moroccan question would lead to disorders in Morocco and that in order to avoid such disorders the Assembly should not take up the matter. To share such optimism one would have to believe that the United Nations had been actually discussing the question for more than forty-one years, long before the Organization was established, since trouble and disorders in Morocco had been continuous from 1912. Thus there could be no relation between discussing the question in the United Nations and the disorders that might occur in Morocco. Indeed, discussion of the question would have at least two results: (1) it would quiet the disorder in Morocco and create the hope of a solution and (2) it would help in the attempt to bring about such a solution.

10. Some discussion, Mr. Zeineddine added, had taken place as to the necessity for a new resolution. Preference had been given to the text of the resolution adopted at the seventh session (612 (VII)). That mode of thinking was mainly based upon the belief that the Moroccan situation was more or less static. But what had happened last year was of real importance. To begin with, last year's recommendations had not been implemented. Indeed, French policy ran contrary to the text of that resolution by executing practically the entire programme of the French residents of Morocco. Moreover, the moderating influence of the Sultan, who had constantly sought a compromise by negotiations between his people and the French Government, had been eliminated by his exile. Thus the removal of that moderating influence opened the way to violence. Instead of seeking to solve the question in accordance with the general directives of the Charter and the recommendations of the Assembly, the French Government

moved in a completely different direction and left its authority to the French settlers. Therefore the new French policy was designed to create a new pattern of government which was contrary to the very recommendations of the resolution adopted at the seventh session. That was the reason why the thirteen Powers had proposed in their draft resolution that exceptional measures, martial law, the suppression of freedoms and liberties, should be lifted and that elections should be called. Certainly the Assembly could not impose a solution but it could recommend a proper course. The extent to which it could go was far beyond what the group of African and Asian countries would have liked to propose. The Assembly was empowered not only to accept the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.60) but it could even go further by using the methods of mediation, conciliation and, if necessary, investigation in order to ascertain the facts and to act accordingly.

11. In conclusion, Mr. Zeineddine said that the Moroccan question was not a matter of an empty seat which had been momentarily relinquished, nor was it even a matter of an empty throne which had been vacated whilst it was upheld by the people. The matter was one on which depended the future of that people as well as the faithfulness shown to the principles of the Charter.

12. Mr. ARZE QUIROGA (Bolivia) said that, despite the fact that the debate had been characterized by the repetition of the arguments adduced at the seventh session, it had still proved the existence of new elements in international problems. The new aspects of the discussion on Morocco referred to present political conditions which had been aggravated by very important events. Those events had altered the normal status of the Protectorate of Morocco and eliminated the sovereign to whose protection France had committed itself.

13. There was a remote similarity between the debates at the present session of the Assembly on the Moroccan question and those which must have taken place during the discussions of the Holy Alliance concerning colonial problems. The period of Latin-American history between 1815 and 1820, when various struggles for freedom had taken place, had witnessed military expeditions aimed at strangling the growing independence of that part of the world. His delegation was pleased to believe that the circumstances obtaining today were different from those of that period. That was the reason why his delegation was somewhat surprised that France was shielding itself behind the Charter thereby avoiding participation in the debate where its presence would have been quite useful in proving that the Assembly of the United Nations was not an assembly of the Holy Alliance type.

14. Despite the high respect which the people of Bolivia felt towards France and the French people, his delegation could not acquiesce in the view that the clause on domestic jurisdiction was applicable to the Franco-Moroccan question. His delegation had felt that, in the circumstances and within the framework of the debate, the General Assembly might decide on a repetition of the common aspirations of all peoples and States, as expressed in resolution 612 (VII) regarding the question of Morocco. It also felt that the proposal that would be submitted by some Latin-American delegations tended to the same end.

The meeting rose at 4.05 p.m.