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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 5th MEETING

Chairman:

Mr. FLEMMING

(Saint Lucia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

REQUESTS FOR HEARINGS (A/C.4/46/6-7, A/C.4/46/2/Add.1)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to a communication containing a request for a hearing concerning the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (A/C.4/46/6). If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided to grant that request.
2. It was so decided.
3. Mr. FIFE (Norway) speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that the granting of the request should not be interpreted as indicating that the Nordic countries agreed that the General Assembly had a right to hear petitioners speaking on matters relating to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Article 83 of the United Nations Charter stipulated that all functions of the United Nations relating to strategic areas should be exercised by the Security Council with the assistance of the Trusteeship Council.
4. Mr. VAN DER LUGT (Netherlands) said his delegation's acquiescence in the decision did not mean it accepted the view that the General Assembly could exercise any functions with respect to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.
5. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to a communication containing a request for a hearing concerning New Caledonia (A/C.4/46/2/Add.1). If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided to grant that request.
6. It was so decided.
7. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to a communication containing a request for a hearing concerning the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies (A/C.4/46/7). If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided to grant that request.
8. It was so decided.
9. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that he had received a communication containing a request for a hearing concerning Pitcairn, under agenda item 19. He suggested that, in accordance with the usual practice, the communication should be circulated as a Committee document for consideration at a subsequent meeting.
10. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 100: ACTIVITIES OF FOREIGN ECONOMIC AND OTHER INTERESTS WHICH ARE IMPEDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES IN THE TERRITORIES UNDER COLONIAL DOMINATION AND EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE COLONIALISM, APARTHEID AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA (A/46/23 (part III); A/AC.109/1065, 1066, 1070, 1073, 1075-1078) (continued)

General debate

11. Mr. IMANALIEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that socio-economic development was an important part of the process of decolonization; it was for that reason that the Declaration and other decisions of the United Nations on decolonization gave special attention to it. Under the United Nations Charter, the administering Powers were assigned responsibility for promoting the political, economic and social development of the Non-Self-Governing Territories while respecting the culture of their populations, and the problem of socio-economic development had now become especially important because for the first time in history the possibility existed of creating a genuinely interdependent global economy ensuring the attainment of a decent level of life for all the peoples of the world.
12. Foreign aid was an important means of establishing the proper conditions for development. At the same time, however, the United Nations must not ignore attempts by foreign economic interests to exploit the dependent Territories, and their activities in those Territories must be monitored. The United Nations had also taken cognizance of the fact that military bases in dependent Territories might hamper their development, and it was from that point of view that his delegation supported the proposed draft resolution contained in document A/46/23 (Part III). The time had come to begin to seek ways to eliminate those military bases.
13. The problem of increasing the effectiveness of the United Nations was also becoming increasingly important. Some changes had been made, but much remained to be done; his delegation accordingly believed that the effort must not only be given further impetus but reoriented so as to maximize the potential of the United Nations for helping the dependent Territories achieve self-government and independence.
14. Mr. ANVIRE (Côte d'Ivoire) said that the accession of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia to national sovereignty should strengthen the determination of the international community to meet the challenge it had set itself of eliminating colonialism by the year 2000.
15. The Special Committee had played a role in the process of freeing peoples from colonial domination but, now that international relations had changed, it was high time for the Committee to rid itself of the inherited burden of ideological propaganda. That was why his delegation particularly appreciated the efforts made by the two working groups during the past year to improve the work of the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee. It welcomed the results already achieved and hoped that the remaining difficulties would be overcome before the end of the Fourth Committee's current session.

(Mr. Anvire, Côte d'Ivoire)

16. Colonialism and its corollaries, including racial, political and religious discrimination and, worst of all, apartheid, must be banished from the earth. The world had recently witnessed a welcome movement towards the final eradication of apartheid in South Africa, and the Government and political groupings of that country must be encouraged to continue to work together to establish dialogue and to create a multiracial, egalitarian and democratic South Africa endowed with a constitution for all to which all had contributed.

17. The primary responsibility for meeting the challenge of freeing the world of colonialism belonged to the administering Powers. It was they who must help the peoples to take political and economic decisions and ensure respect for human rights and the preservation of cultural values. The abusive exploitation of the natural resources of the colonial Territories contradicted the purposes and principles of the Charter, and the Administering Authorities must be called on to ensure that economic and other activities in the colonial Territories did not pose an obstacle to the process of development, which was a prerequisite for political independence. The international community must help those Territories not only with their development programmes but to ensure their survival in the face of natural disasters and the rise in the ocean level caused by planetary warming. Only outside capital could help the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, which were mostly islands and economically handicapped, to escape from poverty. At a time when the whole world was seeking foreign investment for development, it was absurd that statements in the United Nations did not reflect that reality.

18. He reiterated his delegation's hope that, as a result of the important decisions recently taken by the United States and the Soviet Union in the field of disarmament, the military bases in Non-Self-Governing Territories would soon be dismantled and an end put to nuclear testing in those Territories. It was to be hoped that, now that the cold war had ended, the resolutions of the Special Committee and the Fourth Committee would better reflect the real aspiration of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories rather than anachronistic ideological positions.

19. Mr. MARTINEZ BOVE (Cuba) said that the Committee's task was to do its utmost to help eliminate colonialism from the face of the Earth and to do away as soon as possible with apartheid and racial discrimination in South Africa. It would encourage the proponents of colonial domination and racism, and would be a moral and political betrayal of its responsibility, if the Committee sought instead to find accommodating formulas that in practice favoured their perpetuation. Cuba was therefore extremely troubled by a draft resolution circulated informally among members in recent days. The text in question, by using sophistry and circumlocutions to avoid naming colonialism and colonial Territories for what they were, sent a clear message in favour of preserving colonialism. Cuba was not opposed to seeking consensus, but consensus should not become a straitjacket that in effect worked to extend the veto power to the Committee.

(Mr. Martinez Boue, Cuba)

20. The 1991 session of the Special Committee on decolonization, newly restructured to respond to the demands of the decade, had been very fruitful, and all its reasoned and wide-ranging recommendations should be adopted. Unfortunately, however, not all the colonial Powers had fully cooperated with the Special Committee, and some of them were even engaged in activities in the Territories under their control that violated established United Nations principles.

21. Apartheid was one of the major issues before the decolonization bodies. Some changes that had taken place in South Africa admittedly suggested a positive trend. Nevertheless, the abominable practice of apartheid was still forcibly entrenched in the legislative and other structures of the country. To lift pressure now on the Pretoria Government would be to send an ambiguous message, as had been or would be done by the lifting of sanctions.

22. A way must be found to give the people of the world up-to-date and specific information on the true nature of colonialism, in order to foster a universal recognition of the need to eradicate it. They must be made aware of the work being done by the Organization, and of the cooperation - or lack thereof - extended to it by the colonial Powers.

23. Sadly, foreign interests active in the dependent Territories were using economic control to set the patterns that would define the future course of the Territories. If the independent nations of the underdeveloped world had to fight constantly against the plundering of their natural resources, the unequal adjustment and exchange rate terms and the debt burden in order to survive, how much more desperate was the situation for the fragile economies of Territories under colonial domination.

24. The workings of foreign military interests were still more surreptitious. The maintenance of military bases in the Territories generated an even greater dependence, and more serious yet was the use of colonial Territories as training sites and testing grounds for new weapons that could be used against neighbouring countries, as the United States had done in Puerto Rico - whose territory, wealth and culture it was usurping - in preparation for its aggression against the Dominican Republic, Grenada and Panama.

25. Cuba would not abandon its commitment to the full implementation of the Declaration on decolonization as long as a single Territory remained in bondage.

26. Mr. CHORNY (Ukraine) said that the Committee could not avoid reflecting in its work the significant changes which were taking place in the world. The ideology of decolonization had taken shape both under the influence of confrontation between two blocs and at a time when the peoples of many countries which were now Members of the United Nations had suffered merciless exploitation and oppression. A substantial proportion of instruments and

(Mr. Chorny, Ukraine)

resolutions bore the stamp of those times. However, the chief concern now was not to "label" anyone, but to achieve the independence of Non-Self-Governing Territories, define their post-colonial development, and deal with neo-colonialism. The focus was on the problems of "island decolonization" and new, more specific instruments were needed to assist the United Nations in that task. His delegation nevertheless supported the recommendations contained in document A/46/23, part III.

27. His delegation was particularly concerned by the increasing military activity of administering States in dependent Territories, as described in chapter V of the Special Committee's report. Some of the working papers prepared by the Secretariat on that issue seemed to suggest that military activity had positive implications for island Territories. However, it was inappropriate in the current climate of arms reduction for the Territories to continue serving the interests of the military-industrial complex of administering Powers. Ukraine firmly opposed giving small nations such gifts of world civilization as nuclear weapon bases, testing grounds and waste disposal sites. Such action not only impeded their exercise of the right of self-determination, but also threatened international peace and security. In that context, the recent initiatives of the United States and the Soviet Union concerning nuclear disarmament were to be welcomed.

28. Ukraine was in the process of establishing itself as an independent, democratic republic with a strong commitment to human rights and freedoms. It therefore fully supported all those who were striving for independent development and cooperation.

29. Mr. LARGUI (Tunisia) said that the fact that Tunisia had joined the United Nations immediately after achieving independence was ample proof of its commitment to the ideas and values of the Organization. Considerable progress had been made since then concerning decolonization, and at last the beginnings of change in the apartheid system in South Africa were apparent. However, decolonization was not yet complete and society in South Africa not yet fully democratic and non-racial. The United Nations should continue its role and mandate and should work in a spirit of realism and efficiency whilst making allowances for recent developments. His delegation welcomed proposals for reform and rationalization which would lead to greater efficiency, but the most important consideration was that the will of the peoples concerned should be respected. The United Nations should monitor the impact of foreign economic and military interests on the Territories under consideration and should facilitate the political and institutional process under way in South Africa.

30. Mr. ZEINELODDIN (Islamic Republic of Iran) observed that the General Assembly had condemned the activities of foreign economic and other interests that had impeded implementation of the Declaration on decolonization and the elimination of colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. It had also strongly condemned transnational

(Mr. Zeinelddin, Islamic Republic
of Iran)

corporations and all States, particularly certain Western countries and Israel, that had continued to invest in South Africa or to supply it with arms, oil or nuclear technology. The dismantling and eradication of apartheid in South Africa was currently in sight, and there was now a growing hope for the formation of a new State based on the free will of the people, as propounded in the historic General Assembly Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa.

31. The limited but hopeful progress that had been accomplished in South Africa was now being threatened by a familiar kind of policymaking marked by short-sighted economic interests. Some argued that the presence of foreign economic enterprises in colonial Territories, and particularly in South Africa, was in the best interests of the indigenous populations, but that was not so. The proponents of that position also argued that the developments in South Africa made consideration of the issue of foreign economic and military activities in colonial Territories irrelevant. His delegation, however, like the overwhelming majority of the members of the Special Committee on decolonization, believed that the focus on those questions and on the issue of apartheid should be maintained.

32. Iran supported the draft resolutions and decisions put forward by the Special Committee in document A/46/23 (Part III), which condemned the policy of apartheid and foreign economic activities in Territories under colonial domination, as well as nuclear collaboration with South Africa by countries such as Israel, which only served to aggravate the threat to world peace. South Africa's nuclear and military strength and its collaboration with foreign countries were the major impediments to the complete elimination of apartheid.

33. Foreign economic and military activities of administering Powers in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific region raised similar questions. The small size of the Territories in those regions did not mean that the economic growth and initiative of their indigenous populations, however, could not be hindered. The establishment of military bases and nuclear dumps in those small Territories was in direct violation of the original mandates of the administering Powers, and threatened regional and international stability.

34. MR. AL-ZAYANI (Bahrain) briefly reviewed United Nations resolutions which were intended to eradicate all forms of colonialism and foreign domination, including racism, racial discrimination and the exploitation of economic and human resources by foreign interests. It was to be hoped that the positive moves seen in South Africa in the current year would be followed by the complete elimination of racial discrimination and the restoration of political and constitutional rights to the Black majority in South Africa. Since economic activity was the mainstay of minority rule in South Africa, Bahrain had imposed a legal boycott on trade and dealings with that country. All economic or other activities which impeded implementation of resolution 1514 (XV) and which hampered efforts to destroy colonialism, racism and racial

(Mr. Al-Zayani, Bahrain)

discrimination constituted a violation of human rights and the principles of the United Nations Charter and resolutions, as the 1991 report of the Special Committee confirmed.

35. Mrs. SEMAMBO KALEMA (Uganda) said that the entry into the United Nations of the two new States of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia, the forthcoming referendum on the future of Western Sahara and the achievement of independence by Namibia testified to forward movement in the decolonization process. The international community must not, however, relax its efforts to ensure that the remaining 18 small Territories achieved self-determination and independence. Indeed, there was now more need than ever to adhere to the principles of the United Nations Charter and to ensure the implementation of the Declaration on decolonization. The remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories were small and developing island countries with common problems of economic fragility and vulnerability to natural disasters, while their administering Powers had done little to find new strategies for their future economic development or to ease their heavy dependence.

36. The military bases which continued to exist in dependent or Non-Self-Governing Territories clearly constituted a major obstacle to the pursuit of self-determination and independence.

37. Although the report of the Special Committee noted that the contribution made by foreign investments had improved standards of living in those Territories, no mechanism had been put in place to allow the indigenous populations to continue their economic development after independence was gained. Thus, those Territories were threatened with the collapse of their economies in the event that foreign investors withdrew. Her delegation believed that such selfish interests, whether economic or other, constituted the main impediment to the granting of independence to colonial countries and people and that urgent measures must be taken by the international community to redress the situation.

38. Uganda attached special significance to the elimination of colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination in South Africa, as their existence had been a continuous denial of the inalienable right of the people of that region to self-determination and independence and a destabilizing factor in the entire continent. The ending of East-West confrontation had not led to the eradication of apartheid. A great deal still remained to be done by the South African regime before that was achieved. Her delegation strongly supported the constitutional negotiations, which were clearly imperative for the creation of a free, non-racial and democratic South Africa, and considered that existing sanctions must be maintained by the international community until there was clear evidence of profound and irreversible change. Her delegation therefore called on those countries which had been collaborating with the South African regime in the military, nuclear or other fields to cease that practice.

39. Mr. AL-FARAH (Kuwait) said that States administering Non-Self-Governing Territories were directly responsible for taking administrative and legislative measures to protect such Territories from economic exploitation and foreign control. They should also endeavour to develop and diversify the economic resources of those Territories, where all activities should, in any event, be undertaken only in the interests of their peoples. Kuwait, particularly after its recent ordeal under occupation, highly valued the importance of asserting the right of peoples to self-determination and freedom, a right which applied irrespective of the size, geographical location and natural resources of any territory. On the issue of discrimination, his delegation believed that pressure on the South African Government should be maintained until fundamental changes were instituted guaranteeing rights to all citizens. It therefore supported the work of the Intergovernmental Group to Monitor the Supply and Shipping of Oil and Petroleum Products to South Africa.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.