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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 16th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MOUSHOUTAS (Cyprus)

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1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the draft consensus on the question of Gibraltar (A/C.4/42/L.4).

2. Mr. LUKASHA (Jordan) said that the right of peoples to self-determination was the primary human right and the United Nations was bound, under the Charter, to help the oppressed peoples to exercise that right. Despite the remarkable success which the Organization had achieved in that area since the adoption, more than 26 years earlier, of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, there were still people who were suffering under colonial domination.

3. The activities of foreign interests in the Non Self-Governing Territories and the plundering of such Territories' resources for the benefit of the colonial Powers and the occupying authorities were some of the main obstacles to the implementation of the Declaration, since they accentuated the economic dependence of the subjugated Territories. The most striking example in that regard was Namibia; transnational corporations had a stranglehold on 80 per cent of Namibia's wealth and remitted 60 per cent of its GDP abroad in the form of profits. In the agricultural sector, black farmers, who represented 95 per cent of the population, accounted for not more than 2.5 per cent of the income.

4. The military activities of the colonial Powers and the military arrangements they had made in the Territories under their domination were just as bad, since they exacerbated tensions; the Territories were often used as bases for launching armed attacks against other States. The illegal military occupation of many dependent Territories, which had been denounced in many resolutions of the United Nations, represented a threat to international peace and security and also obstructed the implementation of the Declaration on Decolonization.

5. With regard to the Arab territories occupied by Israel, his delegation felt that preservation of their economic resources could be ensured only by the withdrawal of the occupying forces and the accession to independence of the inhabitants of those Territories.

6. Jordan appealed once more to the Administering Powers to honour their commitment under the United Nations Charter, to promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the territories for which they were responsible and to protect them from abuses.

7. Since the General Assembly, the Security Council and other organs of the United Nations had recognized the legitimacy of the struggle of the colonial peoples, the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations were bound to give all the necessary moral and material assistance to those peoples and their national liberation movements. His delegation urged those agencies not to cut their contributions for emergency relief and to determine their assistance instead in proportion to the development needs of the colonial peoples so as to promote, in their respective areas of competence, the speedy and full implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

8. Jordan, a non-aligned country which maintained relations of friendship and co-operation with the African States, was in favour of eliminating colonialism in all its forms, and supported the just struggle of the colonial peoples to exercise

(Mr. Lukasha, Jordan)

their rights to self-determination and independence. It condemned South Africa's apartheid policy and all forms of co-operation with that régime and it strongly supported the efforts being made by the United Nations to bring Namibia to independence, in accordance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978), the only internationally accepted basis for a peaceful and definitive solution of the Namibian issue. That issue should not be linked to other extraneous issues placed in the context of East-West confrontation, since that would simply strengthen the South African Government and prolong the suffering of the Namibian people. The importance of a peaceful and just settlement of the question within the context of the United Nations had been stressed at the Eighth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Harare.

9. If the United Nations had a genuine political will to impose such a settlement collectively in accordance with the Charter, it could compel the South African Government to abandon its apartheid policy and to withdraw immediately from Namibia. On that point, as on the other major issues before the United Nations, the Organization would not succeed in imposing an overall solution and enhancing its effectiveness unless all States worked together.

10. Mr. TAEB (Afghanistan) expressed appreciation for the work performed by the specialized agencies, which had extended moral and material assistance to the Namibian and South African peoples in the struggle for national liberation. The specialized agencies should pay special attention, however, to the small Non-Self-Governing Territories. Moreover, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which, regrettably, were continuing collaboration with South Africa, should take steps to implement the relevant provisions adopted by the General Assembly.

11. Despite their obligations under Article 73 e of the Charter, the administering Powers were transmitting insufficient information on the Territories entrusted to them. The Special Committee on decolonization was therefore unable to conduct its work properly, which meant a loss of time and money for the Organization as a whole, at a time of financial crisis. It would be recalled that the General Assembly had requested the administering Powers concerned to transmit the information within a maximum period of six months following the expiration of the administrative year.

12. The failure of the United Kingdom to participate in the Special Committee's work was a matter for concern. That country, which administered a number of Territories, should review its position. The non-participation of an administering Power was bound to have a negative impact on the Special Committee's work and did not improve the situation for the Power concerned.

13. Mr. TOMA (Samoa) said that the fact that the overwhelming majority of the 159 Member States had been colonies augured well for continued action by the United Nations to complete the process of decolonization. There were still forces that would thwart the aspirations of the peoples under their domination, as in the case of Namibia. It was unacceptable that South Africa should continue to occupy

(Mr. Toma, Somoa)

Namibia against the wishes of the international community, as expressed more than 20 years earlier in General Assembly resolution 2145 (XXI). The obstinacy with which the Pretoria régime insisted on "linkage" between settlement of the question of Namibia and withdrawal of the Cuban troops from Angola had disrupted the negotiations. Yet, there was no connection between the colonial situation of Namibia and the internal affairs of an independent State. Accordingly, the United Nations plan for the decolonization of Namibia must be implemented.

14. Speaking on behalf of the Members of the United Nations which were also members of the South Pacific Forum, he said that the members of the Forum and the region as a whole were extremely concerned about the situation in New Caledonia and France's disregard of that region and the United Nations. The countries in question rejected totally the so-called "referendum" which France had recently conducted in New Caledonia and which had succeeded only in deepening and widening existing divisions in New Caledonian society. In fact, 80 per cent of the indigenous population had not taken part in the bogus referendum.

15. France maintained that New Caledonia, whose population was 43 per cent Melanesian, 37 per cent European and 20 per cent other, was not a colony, and that a ballot, such as the one held on 13 September 1987, was all that was required to determine the future of the Territory. What it had omitted to say, however, was that the Melanesians, who currently numbered 62,000, had numbered 60,000 at the time of the Europeans' arrival and that it had taken 100 years for them to regain that number. It had not said that by 1976 900 settler families had owned more land than the whole Kanak population of New Caledonia; and that in 1979 Kanak reserves, the only land which the Kanaks could legally own, accounted for only 10 per cent of the surface of the main island. At that time also, even though Kanaks had formed 40 per cent of the population, only 20 per cent of their children had received secondary education. He did not understand how the administering Power could state that New Caledonia was not a colonial issue when even the President of the French Republic had acknowledged the inequitable situation of the indigenous population in that Territory.

16. The South Pacific Forum was protesting against the continuation of that situation and requested that everything possible should be done to enable the Kanaks to exercise the rights guaranteed them by the Charter and by the relevant declarations and resolutions of the United Nations, since New Caledonia was a Non-Self-Governing Territory within the meaning of the Charter and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

17. The nature of the colonialism practised in New Caledonia, together with the policies deliberately implemented there, such as those favouring settlement in order to modify the demographic profile of the Territory, had directly led to the current difficult situation. Those policies were contrary to paragraph 8 of the plan of action for the full implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, adopted in General Assembly resolution 35/118.

(Mr. Toma, Samoa)

18. The countries of the South Pacific Forum considered that the very complex situation demanded a very cautious approach. It required, first, a programme of constructive measures and reforms to permit the oppressed segments of the population to participate on an equal footing in all facets of life in the Territory. In addition, the Territory must be prepared for a genuine act of self-determination in which all options were offered and fully understood and no option was seen to carry punitive consequences. As to the franchise, the Forum believed that it should be given only to those who could demonstrate long-term residence in and commitment to New Caledonia. It should ensure that the rights and interests of all inhabitants were guaranteed, with special recognition of Kanak rights.

19. It was France's responsibility to facilitate a dialogue and to play a central role in it. That was the only way to arrive at a genuine act of self-determination and a satisfactory long-term solution to the problems of New Caledonia. All activities relating to the decolonization of New Caledonia should be overseen and reviewed in the usual way by the United Nations. When the international community had restored New Caledonia to the list of Non-Self Governing Territories, members of the South Pacific Forum were encouraged to hope that France would see that co-operation with all parties and with the United Nations was in the genuine interest of all concerned. Sadly, France had stubbornly insisted on pursuing its unilateral path, against all established United Nations principles and practices and in complete disregard of the wishes of the international community.

20. The draft resolution had been very carefully prepared. There was nothing in it that could be rejected, and nothing that posed any threat to France. Its sole aim was to have France accept the paramount obligation that an administering Power had to look to the genuine interest of its Non-Self-Governing Territory and to conduct a proper act of self-determination. The member countries of the South Pacific Forum were asking no more and no less for New Caledonia than application of the standards and methods that had been used by many Governments whose representatives were currently present. They recommended the Committee to adopt the draft resolution.

21. Mr. PAIC (Yugoslavia) said that it was a matter for great concern that, 27 years after the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, there were still peoples struggling to realize their legitimate rights because certain administering Powers were persistently trying to keep them in a state of subjection and, to that end, were attempting to establish various forms of political, economic and other links with them.

22. The remaining colonial questions could not and must not be considered in the context of East-West rivalry or become bargaining chips in the deals struck between great Powers. The primary task of the international community was the creation in Non-Self-Governing Territories of political, economic, educational and other conditions that would enable their people to exercise their inalienable rights to freedom and independence. It was worth recalling that such factors as small size, geographic location and size of population could not be invoked to deny independence to Non-Self-Governing Territories.

(Mr. Paic, Yugoslavia)

23. The primary concern of the international community in that respect was still Namibia. Yugoslavia was in favour of the speedy implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) and of maintaining pressure on the Pretoria régime. It fully supported demands for the imposition of comprehensive mandatory sanctions against South Africa.

24. It was also necessary to create conditions for the realization of the inalienable rights of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination and independence. That could only be achieved through direct negotiations between Morocco and the Polisario Front, and by a fair and just referendum on the basis of the Organization of African Unity's resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) and General Assembly resolution 41/16. Yugoslavia fully supported the mediation efforts made by the President of OAU and the United Nations Secretary-General.

25. Yugoslavia fully supported the solution of the problem of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) on the basis of negotiations and dialogue between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Argentina. The colonial problems remaining in the Pacific, the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans and in the Caribbean region also ought to be resolved as quickly as possible.

26. The United Nations should continue to make every effort to remove the last bastions of colonialism from the face of the world.

27. Mr. SAEMALA (Solomon Islands) said that the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples would remain as applicable as when it was first adopted so long as colonialism in all its forms and manifestations still existed.

28. New Caledonia was no exception. General Assembly resolution 41/41 A had clearly established that New Caledonia was a Non-Self-Governing Territory in the sense of the Charter. France was therefore obliged to comply fully with its obligations under Article 73 e of the Charter.

29. French policy in New Caledonia had been clear for some 15 years because it pursued the sole aim of turning the Territory into an integral part of the French Republic by encouraging a massive immigration of French citizens from metropolitan France. The mock referendum of 13 September 1987 had been intended simply to endorse the existing state of affairs. However, the indigenous Kanak people (43 per cent of the population) had refused to abide by French colonial policy. The so-called referendum had thus proved nothing and solved nothing: New Caledonia remained a colonial territory and could not be considered an integral part of the French Republic.

30. The only sensible action for France to take was to co-operate with the United Nations in pursuit of the decolonization process, as it had done so admirably in other parts of the world in the past. The problem could only be settled on the basis of a friendly dialogue and consultations between the French Government, on the one hand, and Governments of the South Pacific region and the Kanak population

(Mr. Saemala, Solomon Islands)

represented by FLNKS on the other, with the participation of the United Nations. So far as they were concerned, the Solomon Islands stood ready to assist the authorities in New Caledonia to achieve a peaceful transition to independence there.

31. The draft resolution recommended by the Special Committee would pave the way for the liberation of the people of New Caledonia and thus enable them to share the memorable experience of many other peoples in the region. It was non-confrontational and should be capable of adoption by consensus. States that had supported the decolonization process elsewhere could not decline to support it in the South Pacific region.

32. Mr. POLO (Peru) said that the situation in Non-Self-Governing Territories was a matter of concern for the international community because it represented a danger to international peace and security. The Special Committee played an important part by ascertaining, within the terms of its mandate, that administering Powers were suitably preparing the people of their dependent territories to exercise their right to self-determination.

33. The state of small Non-Self-Governing Territories varied from one to another. Thus, many of them had developed in a very positive way, both politically and constitutionally and in the economic field. On the other hand, that had not happened in other cases. His delegation was grateful to those administering Powers that had fulfilled their obligations as they should, and it called on all countries responsible for Non-Self-Governing Territories to continue co-operating with the Special Committee, in accordance with Article 73 e of the Charter, and to submit on time the periodic reports that were necessary for it to fulfil its task. Such reports and visiting missions were the two most effective means available to the Special Committee for its evaluation and programming work.

34. Namibia was currently the most flagrant example of the violation of fundamental human rights. South Africa must be made to understand that its stalling tactics delaying the independence of the Territory could not continue, that the odious colonial system no longer had a place in the modern world, that its vision of reality was hopelessly out of date and that the movement for the Namibian independence drew its strength from the very state of oppression of the Territory. Only implementation of the United Nations plan contained in Security Council resolution 435 (1978) would enable a final political solution to be found to the problem. The two parties to the conflict - SWAPO and the South African Government - would, sooner or later, have to start negotiations and reach a just, honest and final agreement enabling Namibia to accede to independence. In the meantime, the heroic fight waged by the liberation army was totally justified.

35. The Peruvian delegation rejected the theory of "linkage" which only served to prolong the racist régime's domination over the Territory. It also condemned the South African régime's acts of aggression against Angola and the other States in the region. As long as there were no legal authorities to monitor and regulate foreign investment in Namibia, it constituted yet another obstacle to

(Mr. Polo, Peru)

independence. It was, however, encouraging that the international campaign to isolate the South African régime had been stepped up over the past months and the call for compulsory sanctions by the international community had become ever more pressing and unanimous. Although many companies had left South Africa and Namibia, vigilance was still needed to identify cases where such withdrawals were nothing but a capital transfer disguised by means of some artful ploy in order to continue exploiting the Territory's natural resources, in violation of Decree No. 1 promulgated by the United Nations Council for Namibia. The Peruvian delegation invited the Security Council to act in accordance with the provisions of the Charter, and urged its members not to use their right of veto to protect special interests at the expense of those of the international community.

36. The strategic interest for the administering Powers of the military bases in the Non-Self-Governing Territories explained the force of inertia that those Powers were opposing to decolonization efforts. The use of some of those territories for that purpose was alarming, as were the build-up of South Africa's nuclear arsenal and the increased numbers of troops in the Malvinas Islands. In that connection, there were strong historical, legal, geographical and cultural reasons to support Argentina's claims. At a time when an attempt was being made to remove all tensions and dangers to peace and security in Latin America, Central America and the South Atlantic, it was a matter for concern that one of the parties lacked the necessary political will to hold negotiations enabling an agreement to be reached which satisfied Argentina's legitimate claims.

37. The question of the Western Sahara was also a grave problem for the international community. His delegation supported the position of the non-aligned countries, endorsing OAU resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) and General Assembly resolution 41/16, which reaffirmed that the question of Western Sahara was a question of decolonization which remained to be completed on the basis of the exercise by the people of Western Sahara of their right to self-determination and independence. His delegation also supported the point of view expressed by the Secretary-General in his most recent report (A/42/601). It was encouraging that the negotiation process was continuing and evolving in a positive manner. Peru considered that the only way to reach a just and definitive solution to the conflict was to use the good offices of the Secretary-General, in close co-operation with the current Chairman of OAU, taking into account the relevant resolutions.

38. Regarding New Caledonia, his delegation reaffirmed its support for the Kanak people's right to self-determination.

39. He then turned to the role of the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations in the field of the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples. He took the view that the institutions and agencies should continue to participate in the work of the United Nations and, in particular, in the international campaign against the unjust order imposed by the apartheid régime in southern Africa. It was unacceptable that funds coming from international sources of credit were being used to help South Africa

(Mr. Polo, Peru)

prop up that evil system, instead of serving to alleviate the famine and misery in the countries that most needed it.

40. Mr. CHORNYI (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations had played a leading role in the decolonization process. The international community could not encourage them too strongly to pursue that course and co-ordinate their efforts. It could even be said, with Mr. Gorbachev, that the specialized agencies should regulate international processes.

41. The positive role played by ILO in the fight against apartheid should also be recognized. UNESCO had made an important contribution in the field of education to the national liberation movements and peoples of the colonial territories. UNEP, ICAO, WHO, FAO, UNDP and UNICEF had also made a substantial contribution to the fight against apartheid and racial discrimination. Another positive sign was that those institutions had strengthened their links with national liberation movements and OAU. However, they should increase their aid still further to liberation movements in Namibia, southern Africa, and the front-line States. The fact that the World Bank and IMF continued to maintain relations with South Africa could only be seen as alarming.

42. It was also important to improve the capacities for co-ordination and action of the Special Committee of 24, the United Nations Council for Namibia and the Special Committee against Apartheid. To that end, it would be a good idea if the specialized agencies and international institutions kept those bodies better informed on their activities, and if the Secretary-General were informed in good time of the outcome of the examination of the relevant resolutions at the General Assembly. The Ukrainian delegation would support the recommendation of the Special Committee contained in document A/42/23 (Part IV).

43. The CHAIRMAN announced that Ghana had become a co-sponsor of draft resolutions A/C.4/42/L.2 and L.3.

AGENDA ITEM 116: PROGRAMME PLANNING (A/C.4/42/L.6)

(a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND CO-ORDINATION

(b) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

44. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to document A/C.4/42/L.6, which contained a letter from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee regarding programme planning. The Chairman suggested that any views that members of the Committee might wish to express on the documentation mentioned therein should be submitted to him in writing by 30 October for appropriate action.

45. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.