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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF
INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 1183RD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 24 October 1980, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ABDULAH (Trinidad and Tobago)

Question of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands: report of the Visiting Mission
to the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, 1980 (continued)

Question of the Turks and Caicos Islands: report of the Visiting Mission
to the Turks and Caicos Islands, 1980 (continued)

Question of sending visiting missions to Territories (continued)

Closure of the session

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The meeting was called to order at 11.25 a.m.

QUESTION OF THE COCOS (KEELING) ISLANDS: REPORT OF THE VISITING MISSION TO THE COCOS (KEELING) ISLANDS, 1980 (A/AC.109/635; A/AC.109/L.1382) (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has before it the report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Cocos (Keeling) Islands (A/AC.109/635), which was introduced by the Chairman of the Visiting Mission, Mr. Lobognon Yere, at our meeting yesterday. The Committee also has before it the draft decision on the question (A/AC.109/L.1382). I call on the representative of the Ivory Coast in his capacity as Chairman of the Visiting Mission.

Mr. YERE (Ivory Coast) (interpretation from French): Sir, as you asked at yesterday's meeting, the members of the Visiting Mission to the Cocos (Keeling) Islands have held consultations with the representative of Bulgaria on the amendments proposed by him. Following those consultations we reached agreement as follows. As regards the first amendment proposed by the representative of Bulgaria, we agreed that we should retain the expression "with appreciation". As regards the second amendment, we agreed on the following text:

"In approving the chapter of the report of the Special Committee and taking note of the conclusions and recommendations of the Visiting Mission to the Territory, the General Assembly calls upon the administering Power to ensure the free expression by the people of the Territory of their true aspirations concerning their future status, as well as the full exercise by them of their inalienable rights to self-determination in accordance with the Charter and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples."

Mr. CHAN (Australia): I should like to express my delegation's appreciation of the degree of co-operation which has been shown in this matter and the relatively quick dispatch of the consultations to arrive at agreement on this particular text.

If I may, I should like to respond further to a query that has been raised by the Soviet representative. Yesterday, referring to paragraph 196, he raised some questions about land and the transfer of land ownership. Perhaps I can clarify the position for the enlightenment of representatives by reading the following:

"The Cocos Malay community lives on Home Island and it has ownership of the village area. The productive areas are both on Home Island and on a number of other islands in the group. These areas, the machinery and equipment and other assets located on them are on lease to the co-operative. Under the agreement the co-operative has to pay a rental of \$1 per annum if and when demanded. This rental has not been and will not be demanded. The lease arrangement was considered to be the most appropriate means of enabling the community to develop a viable commercial enterprise."

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I should like to thank the representative of Australia for the clarification he has just provided. However, despite that explanation and the content of this paragraph of the report, it remains true that the population of the Territory is not the owner of the land or the facilities to be found in the Territory, and that it is compelled to pay rent. It is said that the rent is \$1 per year and that it is not even asked for. But whatever type of rent it may be, the fact remains that legally the lands, the facilities and all the rest do not belong to the people of the Territory. It is not important how much they have to pay in this arrangement; what is important is that juridically they are not the owners of the land, the property, that should belong to them. That is what is involved.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are not further comments and I hear no views to the contrary, I shall take it that the Committee is prepared to approve the draft decision contained in document A/AC.109/L.1382 as revised orally.

The draft decision, as amended, was adopted.

QUESTION OF THE TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS: REPORT OF THE VISITING MISSION TO THE TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS, 1980 (A/AC.109/636 and Corr.1, Add.1 and 2, Add.2/Corr.1, Add.3; A/AC.109/L.1383) (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has before it the report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Turks and Caicos Islands, contained in document A/AC.109/636 and addenda and corrigenda, which was introduced by the Chairman of the Visiting Mission, Ambassador Nava Carrillo of Venezuela, at yesterday's meeting. The Committee also has before it the draft decision contained in document A/AC.109/L.1383. I call on the representative of India, who wishes to introduce some amendments.

Mr. SREENIVASAN (India): I am speaking on behalf of the representative of Venezuela, who has had to leave to attend another meeting. We have received a number of amendments to the document now before us and have had consultations with the delegations that submitted those amendments, and I am glad to report that we have come to agreement on those amendments, some of which have been accepted. I shall now present the amendments that were accepted during those consultations.

On page 2 a new paragraph has been inserted before the last preambular paragraph, at the suggestion of Cuba. It reads as follows:

"Recalling that the administering Power has the responsibility to ensure that the people of the Turks and Caicos Islands are kept fully informed of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence in accordance with the Declaration."

(Mr. Sreenivasan, India)

Operative paragraph 1 has been replaced by the following, on the proposal of the delegation of Czechoslovakia:

"Approves the chapter of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples relating to the Turks and Caicos Islands and takes note of the report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Turks and Caicos Islands, 1980;"

Two paragraphs have been added as new operative paragraphs 3 and 4. They were proposed by the delegation of the USSR, and I will read them as amended after consultations.

New operative paragraph 3 reads as follows:

"Reiterates the view that such factors as size, geographical location, population and limited natural resources should in no way delay the speedy implementation of the process of self-determination in accordance with the Declaration contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), which fully applies to the Territory;"

(Mr. Sreenivasan, India)

New operative paragraph 4, which is also an additional paragraph, will read as follows:

"Recognizes that the presence of military bases and other military installations constitutes an impediment to the implementation of the Declaration and reaffirms its conviction that the presence of foreign military bases and installations should not prevent the peoples of colonial and dependent Territories from exercising their right to self-determination and independence, in accordance with the Declaration and the purposes and principles of the Charter;"

Then come operative paragraphs 5 and 6, which were originally numbered 3 and 4. Operative paragraph 7, originally paragraph 5, has been amended by the Czechoslovak delegation and now reads as follows:

"Calls upon the administering Power to take the necessary measures to promote the economic development of the Turks and Caicos Islands, in accordance with the Declaration, as an important element in the process of self-determination and independence and urges the administering Power to continue to intensify and expand its programme of aid in order to accelerate the development of the economic and social infrastructure of the Territory;"

The rest of the text remains as it is.

The CHAIRMAN: If there are no further comments and if I hear no views to the contrary, I shall take it that the Committee is prepared to approve the draft decision contained in document A/AC.109/L.1383*, as orally revised.

The draft decision was adopted.

Mr. MACLAY (United Kingdom): I should like to stress very briefly before the Committee of 24 that the presence in the Turks and Caicos Islands of the bases mentioned in the report of the Visiting Mission does not in any way constitute an impediment to the implementation of the Declaration, in the view of our delegation. As the Mission discovered on its trip, the negotiations over these bases were conducted by the Territorial Government

(Mr. Maclay, United Kingdom)

itself, not by the British Government, and were the direct expression of its wishes.

I have at great length put before this Committee the package that was negotiated by the previous Government and which it has decided for the present not to accept. In our view, self-determination depends on the will of the people and is not going to be impeded by the presence of these bases.

There is a Visiting Mission from this Committee next week to the Islands and we look forward to receiving it and enabling it to see the process of self-determination in action.

QUESTION OF SENDING VISITING MISSIONS TO TERRITORIES (A/AC.109/639) (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: At our meeting yesterday I drew attention to the statement made by the representative of the United States at the 13th meeting of the Fourth Committee concerning the invitation to this Committee to dispatch a visiting mission to American Samoa in 1981. That invitation has now been confirmed in a letter addressed to me by the Permanent Representative of the United States, Ambassador McHenry, which is contained in document A/AC.109/639.

I wish accordingly to suggest that the Committee accept this invitation with appreciation and request the Chairman, in accordance with standing procedure and on the basis of consultations, to appoint the mission with a view to its timely dispatch.

It was so decided.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to take this opportunity of thanking the representatives of the administering Powers for their co-operation during the year and particularly during our present meeting concerning the two Visiting Missions, on which we have just taken decisions. We look forward to their continued co-operation in the work of the Committee.

We have thus concluded consideration of all the substantive items of our agenda for this year.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.