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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 1225TH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 20 August 1982, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. ABDULAH (Trinidad and Tobago)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

86TH AND 87TH REPORTS OF THE WORKING GROUP (A/AC.109/L.1454 and L.1455)

The CHAIRMAN: We shall first take up the 86th report in document A/AC.109/L.1454. If there are no comments or objections I shall take it that the Committee adopts the 86th report of the Working Group.

The report was adopted.

The CHAIRMAN: We take up next the 87th report in document A/AC.109/L.1455. If there are no comments or objections I shall take it that the Committee adopts the 87th report of the Working Group.

The report was adopted.

QUESTION OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS (MALVINAS) (continued)

Mr. OLEANDROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Once again - and not for the first time this year - the Committee is considering the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), an issue that has long been on the agenda of this Committee and of the entire United Nations, awaiting a solution in accordance with the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The situation which has come about this year on these Islands shows very clearly that, despite the reduction of the number of Territories still under colonial rule, the acute nature of the problem of decolonization has not diminished. The Soviet delegation has repeatedly stressed that the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) is first and foremost part of the problem of decolonization of Territories seized by colonial Powers in various parts of the world.

The clear position of the United Nations in favour of the unconditional cessation of the colonial status of those Islands was reflected in the fact that they were included by the General Assembly in the list of Territories the colonial régimes of which must be brought to an end, in accordance with the United Nations Charter and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

(Mr. Oleandrov, USSR)

The question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) has been brought up numerous times in the Non-Aligned Movement as well. At the Sixth Conference held in Havana in 1979, the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries reiterated "their support for the Argentine Republic's right to the restitution of that territory and sovereignty over it and requested that the negotiations in this regard be speeded up". (A/34/542, para. 168)

(Mr. Oleandrov, USSR)

This position in support of Argentina has been reaffirmed in decisions of the non-aligned countries after the outbreak of the conflict in the southern Atlantic. Unfortunately, the United Kingdom has remained deaf to those appeals refused to seek a peaceful settlement of this dispute with Argentina over sovereignty of the islands, actually ignoring the decisions of the General Assembly and continues by every possible means to cling to the colonial status of those islands. That is the main reason that the problem of the Falkland Islands has not been resolved.

Britain's military action in restoring the colonial status of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) has created a danger to the security of international peace. It is well known that at the time of the South Atlantic conflict the Secretary-General of the United Nations made efforts to settle it, and during the first stage, in the implementation of the Secretary-General's good offices, significant progress was achieved in bringing the parties closer together.

It is also known that at the next stage the United Kingdom Government made its position more acute, resorting to the language of ultimatums and in fact virtually breaking off negotiations, having decided to restore the colonial status of the islands through the widespread use of military force.

At the same time we must also note that the Secretary-General's efforts to which we have referred received broad support in the Security Council.

It is perfectly clear that the United Kingdom Government would not have decided to unleash a colonial war in the South Atlantic if it had not had the agreement and full support of the United States of America. There is, of course, another factor that is clear: the restoration of the colonial status of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) in no way ruled out conflict in the Territory; it made the conflict even worse, in fact. The problem of decolonization of the Falkland Islands is at present even more acute, given the condition of ongoing tension in the Islands.

(Mr. Oleandrov, USSR)

The Soviet Union is convinced that there is no justification for refusing to negotiate, however the causes of this conflict may be assessed. The problem of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) must be resolved by negotiations on the basis of the appropriate decisions of the United Nations relating to decolonization. An attempt to maintain the colonial status of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) is an anachronism in the last quarter of the twentieth century and an act of defiance of the international community, which has unconditionally rejected and condemned colonialism. Therefore the Soviet delegation supports the demands for a swift solution to the problem of the decolonization of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) and feels that the United Nations General Assembly and the Special Committee of 24 can make a useful contribution to that objective.

Mr. KALINA (Czechoslovakia)(interpretation from Russian): This question has been discussed in the Special Committee and in the United Nations General Assembly for several years now. In its resolution 2065 (XX) the General Assembly considered that the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples "... was prompted by the cherished aim of bringing to an end everywhere colonialism in all its forms, one of which covers the case of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)".

Czechoslovakia's position on this issue is based on the fact that the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) constitutes, first and foremost, an inseparable part of the problem of decolonization of Territories seized by the colonial Powers. We feel that this question is an anachronism in this last part of the twentieth century which, as a result of Great Britain's colonial policy, must be solved around the negotiating table. In our view, the basis of such negotiations must be the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, in accordance with which that Territory was included in the list of Territories which, in conformity with the United Nations Charter, must see an end to colonial régimes.

(Mr. Kalina, Czechoslovakia)

However, the colonial Power in this case, the United Kingdom, despite the repeated appeals of the United Nations General Assembly and those of the Non-Aligned Movement, has ignored demands for the solution of this question of the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) by peaceful means. On the contrary, following the example of the classical expeditionary colonial wars, the United Kingdom actually resorted to force to maintain the Territory's colonial status and save the last vestiges of its colonial empire. Of course, Great Britain would not have undertaken those steps without the agreement and support of its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) ally, the other colonial Power of the Western hemisphere, the United States of America. That, we feel, is the real reason for the recent military conflict in the South Atlantic and the situation with regard to this issue today.

Mr. DENICHIN (Bulgaria): The problem of the Malvinas has for a number of years been on the agenda of the Special Committee on decolonization and of the General Assembly. As early as 1965, at its twentieth session, the General Assembly, in its resolution 2065 (XX), recognized that the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples applied to the Malvinas. The United Nations has expressed its clear position that the colonial status of the Malvinas should unconditionally be brought to an end.

However, for a number of years the United Kingdom has stubbornly refused to comply with the United Nations demand in respect of the decolonization of the Territory by delaying negotiations with the Republic of Argentina. Thus the United Kingdom has virtually sabotaged the decisions of the United Nations and the process of the Islands' decolonization.

Earlier this year, in the last quarter of the twentieth century, we witnessed events that should well have belonged to the nineteenth century. By sending an expeditionary colonial force and starting a colonial war to retake a Territory situated half way around the globe from the United Kingdom, London clearly and bluntly demonstrated to the world that it had not ended its colonial policy. By those actions the United Kingdom, with the direct support of the Government of the United States, created a situation which constituted a grave danger to peace and security in the world.

(Mr. Denichin, Bulgaria)

The position of my country on the question before us is clear. The Government of the United Kingdom should immediately enter into negotiations with the Government of the Republic of Argentina in order to bring an end to the colonial status of the Territory of the Malvinas Islands, in accordance with the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

The CHAIRMAN: Before calling on the next speaker, I wish to inform members that I have also received requests from the delegations of Colombia and Nicaragua to participate in the Committee's consideration of this item.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee accedes to these requests.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: In accordance with the decision we took yesterday, I call on the Permanent Representative of Panama.

Mr. OZORES TYPALDOS (Panama) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, my delegation wishes to thank you and the Committee, under your worthy leadership, for the opportunity to participate in the discussion of an item to which my Government attaches particular importance.

Panama was one of the 15 Latin American countries which on 15 November 1965 sponsored a draft resolution, which was later adopted by the General Assembly on 16 December of the same year as resolution 2065 (XX), entitled "Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)". Almost 17 years have elapsed since the adoption of that resolution, in which the General Assembly noted

(Mr. Ozores Typaldos, Panama)

the existence of a dispute between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom concerning sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands and invited both Governments to proceed without delay - I repeat: without delay - with the negotiations recommended by this Committee with a view to finding a peaceful solution to the problem, bearing in mind the provisions and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations and of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and the interests of the population of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas).

Members of this Committee, which has been considering the question of the Malvinas Islands since 1964 - in other words, for 18 years - are well aware that the dispute between the United Kingdom and Argentina derived from the illegal British occupation of the Malvinas Islands through an act of force carried out in 1833 against the territorial integrity of the Argentine nation. Argentina's affirmation of its sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands rests on solid legal foundations which have been duly expressed and documented before the Committee in the past 18 years; hence we do not have to dwell on that aspect.

Nevertheless, my delegation is compelled to say that this persistence of a colonial situation in South America for more than 149 years led to a recent armed conflict in the South Atlantic. As everyone in the international community knows, the crisis of the Malvinas Islands derived from the British obstinacy to maintain an outdated colonial situation in the South Atlantic in flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter and General Assembly resolutions 2065 (XX), 3160 (XXVIII) and 31/49. Unfortunately, this conflict caused the restoration by force of the colonial occupation of the Malvinas Islands, thus maintaining a situation prejudicial to the dignity and territorial integrity of the Republic of Argentina which, if not resolved, will continue to be a source of continuous conflict between the United Kingdom and its allies, on the one hand, and Argentina and the other South American countries, on the other, thus threatening international peace and security.

In my country's view, Great Britain must without delay commit itself to abiding by United Nations resolutions and entering into negotiations with Argentina in order to find a peaceful settlement to the problem of the Malvinas Islands - negotiations which should be carried out under the auspices of the United Nations - bringing an end to colonialism in keeping with the sovereign rights of Argentina and in strict respect for its dignity and territorial integrity.

(Mr. Ozores Typaldos, Panama)

Taking due account of the need comprehensively and thoroughly to discuss the question of the Malvinas Islands, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Panama, with 19 other Latin American Ministers for Foreign Affairs, signed a request calling for the inclusion on the agenda of the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly of an additional item, entitled "Question of the Malvinas Islands". We feel that this initiative will have a positive effect on the negotiating process, since it will reflect the broad support of the international community for the well-founded claims of the Argentine nation, and that the United Kingdom will therefore not be able to continue disregarding and ignoring the situation.

My delegation wishes to say once again in this Committee, as we said at the appropriate time in the Security Council, that we firmly and unswervingly support Argentina in its just claims to have the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands restored to Argentine sovereignty, since they are an integral part of its territory.

Mr. GARCIA MORENO (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, I should like first of all to thank you and the other members of the Committee for the opportunity afforded us to take part in this debate.

Everyone is well aware of Colombia's position on colonialism. Both in this Organization and in various forums we have unhesitatingly expressed our opposition to colonialism. That opposition is a constant in our foreign policy and we believe that, in our time, there is no convincing argument for the maintenance of colonial enclaves anywhere in the world. The logic of history and political circumstances are such that they have led and will continue to lead to the total eradication of colonialism. The activities of the United Nations in the historical process of eradicating colonialism derive from the United Nations Charter.

As Ambassador Carlos Sanz de Santamaría, the Head of our delegation, rightly said in one of his statements in the Security Council in recent months:

"For the present generation of our continent the concept of colonialism, which long formed part of the relationships between the powerful countries and the small and weak countries, is also as anachronistic and as alien to the thinking of Latin American youth as the traffic in human beings. No one can accept it or tolerate it." (S/PV.2363, p. 41)

What I have said is corroborated by General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, and, in connexion specifically with the Islands, by General Assembly resolutions 2065 (XX), 3160 (XXVIII) and 31/49.

Colombia's long-standing anti-colonialist tradition was manifested in connexion with the case of the Malvinas Islands. This was made clear by the former Colombian President, Mr. Julio Cesar Turbay Ayala, when he said that Colombia defends the cause of Argentina in its claim against the United Kingdom. Our support for that claim is channelled into a desire for a solution according to law, which can and must be achieved through dialogue between the States concerned and through action by the United Nations, for this Organization is empowered to stimulate the process of negotiation. Through that process, with the help of the United Kingdom, the process of decolonization can succeed.

The second point we wish to make is this: Colombia believes that all the problems that have arisen can be resolved fairly and honourably through constructive dialogue: by peaceful means in a peaceful spirit. Negotiations to put an end to the colonial situation in the Malvinas must be undertaken promptly and without reservations, with the aim of arriving at a just negotiated solution. In order to achieve this, 20 Latin American Ministers for Foreign Affairs, among them that of my own country, have addressed a letter to the Secretary-General, in which they call for the inclusion of this item on the agenda of the next session of the General Assembly.

Those are the efforts and the means which are conducive to the implementation of the ideals of the United Nations in a spirit of solidarity among peoples, with friendly dialogue, which can serve satisfactorily to resolve claims, counter-claims and disputes among States. Therefore, we express our full support for this Committee's recommending to the General Assembly that the issue of the Malvinas Islands be discussed at the next session of the General Assembly so that under United Nations auspices negotiations between the Argentine Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland can resume.

Mr. ROA KOURI (Cuba)(interpretation from Spanish): Just a few days ago, 20 Latin American States called upon the Secretary-General of the United Nations to include the question of the Malvinas Islands as a supplementary item on the agenda of the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly. It need hardly be said

(Mr. Roa Kouri, Cuba)

that this is a unanimous reiteration of the anti-colonialist stance of the American of Juarez, Bolivar, Hostos, San Martin and Marti. This was also made clear during the tragic days of the British aggression against Argentine sovereignty over that integral part of its territory.

The colonial issue of the Malvinas Islands has been discussed in our Committee since 1964. My delegation has clearly stated its position regarding the indisputability of Argentine sovereignty over that Territory in the light of American and international law and in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). In various bodies, we have reaffirmed that the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland must, in accordance with that resolution and with the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 2065 (XX) and 31/49, take the necessary steps to restore to the Argentine Republic its sovereign rights over the South Atlantic territories illegally occupied by the United Kingdom.

The invasion of the Malvinas Islands by the United Kingdom in May 1982, supported by the United States Government, was an attempt to repeat the plunder of those islands in 1833 by the United Kingdom, at which time it drove out the Argentine population and Governor in a typical act of piracy. No pseudo-legal subterfuge can cover the rank colonialist attitude of the United Kingdom or the predatory nature of its aggression against the Argentine Republic. Not only do its excuses based on the self-determination of the British population of the islands reveal utter contempt for the rules of international law and a twisted reading of paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), but they serve to highlight the duplicity which has always characterized colonialists. The proof is that in the Malvinas Islands the seraphic régime of Mrs. Thatcher, ruled by the strategic interests of the North American empire - which is its senior partner - champions the cause of self-determination for its overseas subjects in order to undermine the rights of a Latin American country.

In the Chagos Archipelago, in the Indian Ocean, another area of colonial interest, the then British Government expelled the people of Diego Garcia and between 1965 and 1973 turned the island into the main Yankee bastion in the region, in utter contempt for the inalienable rights of the inhabitants of that island.

(Mr. Roa Kouri, Cuba)

It was a mockery of the members of this Committee to invite those two British subjects - one of whom even was employed by the colonial Falkland Islands Company, which exploits in the interest of the British Crown what lawfully belongs to the Argentine people and the other a New Zealand national - as spokesmen for self-determination of the people of the Malvinas. Neither Mr. Cheek nor Mr. Blake belongs to the Old Vic Company, nor is this the place for comedy.

My delegation objected yesterday to the Special Committee's hearing British representatives in the guise of representatives of the Malvinas: first of all because only the Argentine people has sovereign rights over the Malvinas Islands. There is therefore no justification for hearing talk about self-determination for the British population who serve the Crown: in any event, Argentina has always had the greatest respect for their customs, rights and habits.

(Mr. Roa Kouri, Cuba)

Secondly, a dangerous precedent is set when those British subjects talk to us about their rights to self-determination. It was American subjects specifically who, by invoking an alleged right to self-determination and by taking advantage of the existence of civil war in Mexico, promoted the pillage by the United States of about 40 per cent of Mexican territory in the last century. Today the Israeli colonists in the Arab and Palestinian occupied territories lay claim to their "right" to land acquired by force.

This Committee, entrusted by the General Assembly with ensuring the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, cannot fall into such a trap.

The British act of aggression against the Republic of Argentina is a flagrant violation of the principles of international law, of the United Nations Charter and, of course, of the terms of Security Council resolution 502 (1982), sponsored by the United Kingdom itself. It further implies an attempt to return to gunboat diplomacy and other outdated colonial policies totally unacceptable in our time. Yet, despite the growing world-wide opposition to any interruption in the negotiations on the Malvinas, the British Government, with the support of United States imperialism, imposed by force what it could not justify as a matter of right. The aggression showed, if that were necessary, all the hypocrisy of the so-called inter-American system brought into being by the United States to serve its own interests. The true nature of the inter-American Treaty of mutual assistance was laid bare when, in the face of the attack suffered by the Republic of Argentina, the United States stood shoulder to shoulder with the aggressor, giving it close military and political support.

Cuba rejects this intolerable act of aggression and repeats its solidarity with the people of Argentina, which was defending its own sovereignty.

"This is the time for Latin American solidarity; it is in the interests of each and every one of our countries"

said President Fidel Castro in his message to the Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned countries

"- above all, of humanitarian solidarity with the people of Argentina and with the British soldiers who were thrown into battle - that we harshly condemn the continuing hostilities and appeal for a negotiated political settlement of the crisis that would respect Argentina's sovereign rights."

Such a negotiated political settlement that would respect the sovereign rights of the Republic of Argentina over the Territory of the Malvinas Islands is the one which my delegation advocates in this Committee and will defend in the General Assembly at its next session.

Mr. JOSEPH (Australia): First, the Australian delegation wishes to thank Mr. Cheek and Mr. Blake for their interesting briefing yesterday on developments in the Falklands. We find ourselves in substantial sympathy with much of what they say and we think it behoves the Committee of 24 to give weight to the views of these authentic local representatives.

We have also listened to statements by the Ambassador of Argentina and others yesterday and we listened equally attentively to what has been said this morning. Here we find ourselves in less agreement, at least, with all that has been said, though, in our view, it is not so much what they have said, perhaps, as what they have omitted to say. Nowhere, for example, has there been any admission of the unacceptability of the initial resort to force in the Falklands. It is a matter of perception, I suppose; yet it was Argentina's invasion of the Falkland Islands - and, I would remind the Committee, in defiance of the Security Council call that force not be used - that was the cause of the breach of peace in the region in early April, and it was Argentina's refusal to heed the mandatory call of the Security Council on 2 April for withdrawal of its occupying forces which nourished and sustained the continuing crisis.

If the United Kingdom was also moved to military action, that was a natural consequence of Argentina's own unprovoked resort to force and its failure to comply with the demands of the Security Council to withdraw its forces. In moving to recover its own territory the United Kingdom was acting legitimately under its inherent right of self-defence.

This background is essential to any understanding of what happened in the South Atlantic earlier this year. We do not believe it is possible simply to brush aside the breach of Article 2, paragraphs 3 and 4, when Argentina invaded the islands. Neither can we simply gloss over Argentina's subsequent failure - itself a breach of Article 25 of the Charter - to abide by the Security Council call to desist and depart; nor can we ignore the inherent right of the United Kingdom, under Article 51, to act in its self-defence.

(Mr. Joseph, Australia)

That is not all. There are other omissions and inadequacies in some of the presentations presented in the Committee. Most blatantly, in all the talk about colonialism and there being a colonial situation, there has been never a hint of the rights of the Falklanders to self-determination. On the contrary, those rights have been explicitly rejected, most recently a few minutes ago by the Cuban representative, as not being applicable to the Falklands. Now, that surely is the crux of the present problem and it is something which this Committee, whose whole rationale is to promote self-determination in dependent Territories, cannot in conscience ignore. It has been argued that the Falklanders are an introduced population to whom the principle of self-determination should not apply.

Australia cannot accept that argument. As was noted yesterday, the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands constitute a permanent population with roots in many cases stretching back to the early part of the last century. The fact that there is only a small number of them does not diminish the importance they attach to choosing the life and the kind of Government they want. They must enjoy the same rights of consultation as other peoples, including those who inhabit other small islands and Territories. This is an obligation which we hold is shared not only by the United Kingdom as the Administering Power, but also by Argentina and indeed the entire international community. Let those who do not agree re-read the Charter. The fundamental importance of self-determination is recognized in the first Article.

(Mr. Joseph. Australia)

The obligation is spelt out in Article 73 and it is the principle of self-determination which underlies the seminal resolutions on decolonization, 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV). It is self-determination, as I have noted, that underpins the functioning of this Committee.

There was a play on words yesterday about the different meanings of "peoples" and "populations". Frankly, we see no substantial difference between the peoples or populations that travelled from Europe to the Falklands in the last century and those which travelled to Argentina or for that matter those that came to my own country. Australia itself is essentially an immigrant society. But so is Argentina. Indeed, so are a number of other Latin American countries. It really escapes my delegation as to how in 1982 an argument can be developed that there is something ersatz about the quality of the Falkland society that distinguishes it from other immigrant societies. There is, of course, the size of that society, but, as noted, that in itself can be no argument for denying self-determination. We hold that to argue otherwise would really be pure sophistry.

In short, what we have in the Falklands is no simple wrangle over colonialism, as some would have us believe. Indeed, as the Australian Foreign Minister had occasion to observe during the Security Council's debates in May, had the initial aggression been permitted to succeed that in itself would have amounted to colonialism. The fact is that the islanders have not shown any evident desire to change the present administration in which they have been able to take part through their elected representatives. To impose on them a foreign diktat - even worse, to impose it by force - would run contrary to the principles which have underlain the attainment of independence of well over two thirds of the membership of the United Nations as it is composed today.

I know that some of our Latin American friends will be inclined to say of the statement from Australia that this is only the view of a Commonwealth partner of Britain's in which inevitably Australia would side with the United Kingdom. Indeed I have heard it said that we are forgiven for doing so. But I submit that that would be a wrong interpretation. My country likes to think of itself as a just and fair-minded society, ready to stand back and take a cool look at competing claims and charges. We have done so in the present case and frankly we cannot see that the moral argument lies with the Government of Argentina. Passages from various communications and communiqués

(Mr. Joseph, Australia)

have been cited to justify Argentina's position. These might be more convincing were the passages not so obviously self-inserted. In any case, my delegation is not prepared to engage in such "double think", which holds that historical claims dating back to the early part of the nineteenth century should somehow override the fundamental right of the Falkland Islanders to determine their own future. We simply refuse to be drawn into debate on such spurious terms.

In general we see no particular mystique about Argentina's claims to the Islands which could allow a departure or derogation from the normal rules of diplomatic conduct that apply in other regions. We think that Argentina has no more right to make a grab for the Falkland Islands than Australia to lay siege to a neighbouring territory. Both are simply unacceptable in the modern era. We think that the question of the territorial status of the Falkland Islands cannot be divorced from the issue of self-determination. We find nothing self-evident in the present situation to support Argentina's version of the facts. We are simply unconvinced.

The CHAIRMAN: Now bearing in mind the reservations previously expressed by several members of the Committee and which are fully reflected in the records of our 1223rd meeting, I call on Councillor Cheek, who wishes to make a further statement.

Mr. CHEEK: It was suggested yesterday by the representative of Argentina that Mr. Blake and I were not qualified to speak for the people of the Falklands. While it is true that I was in Britain on a training course during the occupation of our Islands, I returned to my homeland as soon as possible after its liberation. Having seen the physical results of that invasion and having listened since to many Islanders, I feel I am well qualified to comment on the subject. This was confirmed by my selection, together with my colleague, by elected members of the Falklands legislature. Since I know that the Islanders have every confidence in Mr. Blake, as I do, I would ask the Committee to allow him to speak for himself.

Mr. BLAKE: Contrary to the belief that I am a New Zealander, I was born in Britain to British parents. My early education took place in England and in 1952 my parents moved to New Zealand, where my secondary and university

(Mr. Blake)

education took place. In 1971 I took up a position in the Falkland Islands and I have now lived there for 11 years. As such I qualify under our Constitution to stand for the Legislative Council. I enjoy the confidence of my constituents and the confidence of the elected representatives of our Legislative Council, who asked me to represent them at this Committee. As such I am an example of the acceptance by the people of the Falklands of people from other nations, and I consider these attacks on us personally and on our institutions as typical of the attitudes of some countries towards the rights of self-determination and of freedom of speech. They are desperate attacks to suppress the truth and the facts of oppression.

Mr. Cheek and Mr. Blake withdrew.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no other speakers on this item, I suggest that, to facilitate the Assembly's consideration of the question, the Special Committee decide to transmit to the Assembly all the related documentation on the item. The Committee may also wish to indicate in its report to the Assembly that, subject to any decision that the Assembly might take in this connexion at its thirty-seventh session, it will continue to keep the situation in the Territory under review.

If I hear no objection to my proposal, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

Mr. ROA KOURI (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): I am sorry I have to speak again at today's meeting but it seems to me that some commentary is called for.

I listened carefully to what the representative of Australia said and I should like to ask him to take another "cool look" at the situation as put forward by representatives of several Latin American countries yesterday and today. I think it is obvious and has been demonstrated -- and is the opinion of the overwhelming majority of Members of this Organization -- that the Territory of the Malvinas Islands is an integral part of the Republic of Argentina.

Since 1973 it has been made clear and largely substantiated before this Committee that succession to sovereignty over the territories belonging to the Spanish Crown passed, after independence, by right to the recently established American republics of the time. Reference was made then, and again yesterday, to the fact that it was in accordance with the legal principle uti possidetis juris -- the cornerstone of American law, which since the 1960s has been embodied in the Charter of the Organization of African Unity and furthermore in international law by other means -- that the territories belonging to the Spanish Crown in the last century became an integral part of the sovereignty of the American republics.

(Mr. Roa Kouri, Cuba)

It is true that the aggression against the Republic of Argentina dates from 1833. We were referring not only to an act of aggression carried out in 1982 but also to the original aggression of 1833. But according to the logic of the representative of Australia, the fact that that was perpetrated in 1833 excuses the colonial nature of the plunder. According to that same logic, the imposition of the Guantanamo Naval Base by the United States of America on the people and Government of Cuba at the end of the last century and the beginning of this century is legitimate simply because a few decades have since elapsed.

Sophistic arguments are not those which have distinguished between people and populations that really have the right to exercise self-determination, but those which claim that the British subjects working in the Malvinas have a right to exercise self-determination while the British subjects who lived in Diego Garcia did not have that right and were expelled from the island, where they had been living for generations. Of course, they were largely Malagasy, African and Indian; hence they were not British subjects as are New Zealanders or the natives of any other member of the British Commonwealth. That is what I call a sophistic argument.

Mr. SORENSEN MOSQUERA (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish to say that, in view of the remarks by my delegation and almost all others which have taken part in the discussion on the item before us, and specifically on the working paper prepared by the Secretariat on the Malvinas in document A/AC.109/712 of 10 August 1982, it is my delegation's understanding that the Secretariat will take into account the request of my delegation and other speakers in this debate that that document should be amended so that it may be of use in our continued discussion of the Malvinas question.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to assure the representative of Venezuela that the Secretariat has taken note of his request.

I shall now call on those representatives who wish to exercise their right of reply.

Mr. WHYTE (United Kingdom): Since my delegation made a statement in this Committee yesterday we have heard a number of other statements. A few of them appear to us to have addressed very clearly the issues, notably the statement by the representative of Norway, the one made by the representative of Sierra Leone yesterday afternoon, and, if I may say so, that of the representative of Australia this morning. Many of the other statements that we have heard appear to us, however, to have dodged the central issues. Of the 80-minute-long statement by the representative of Argentina to which we listened very attentively yesterday, I might have said at the end, with my compatriot William Shakespeare, "Methinks he doth protest too much". But he, too, it seemed to us, confused and avoided the key issue.

I know that this Committee has a long agenda and a tight time-table today; therefore I shall make my remarks very brief. However, let me say first that the key point is that the right of self-determination cannot be compromised, watered down or argued away. Frankly, it seems to us ironic that the representative of Venezuela and some others in this Committee should have sought so diligently yesterday to deprive Councillor Cheek and Councillor Blake of the right and opportunity to address this Committee.

Secondly, when we listened to the representative of Argentina referring to the "broad-minded and understanding spirit" which he claimed that his countrymen had shown to the Falkland Islanders; when we heard the representative of Argentina harping on the constant goodwill of the Argentine Government, its real concern for the interests of the Falkland Islanders and the benefits those Falkland Islanders had derived from Argentine assistance, we were reminded of another of my compatriots, Mr. George Orwell. The logic of those sentiments appeared to us indeed Orwellian.

The true impact of the way in which the Government of Argentina has invaded those Falkland Islands and the massive fall-out from that invasion - which is still enveloping those distant islands - can best be judged, I submit, in the light of the remarks made by the representatives of those Islands that this Committee heard so clearly yesterday and today.

In conclusion, therefore, I say: let them having been heard speak for themselves, and let this Committee judge in the light of their views and their sentiments.

Mr. MUNIZ (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to make a brief statement.

I do not in any way wish to dispute point by point the inaccuracies contained in the statements of some representatives, in particular those of Australia and the United Kingdom. Nevertheless, I should like to make it clear, with reference to the statement of the representative of Australia, that there is a very big difference between the situation of the peoples of Australia and Argentina - immigrant societies - and that of the population of the Malvinas Islands.

First of all, most of that population is made up of employees of a commercial firm with headquarters in the United Kingdom and also of employees of the British Government. One very important thing which did not happen in Australia or in Argentina is that in the case of the Malvinas Islands there was the expulsion of the original population. Hence, that comparison cannot be made.

With reference to the words of the representative of Australia that in the same way that Argentina can lay claim to the Malvinas Islands Australia could try to claim part of Argentine territory, it should also be made clear that that shows profound ignorance not only of history but also of geography, given that the Malvinas Islands are linked to the territory of Argentina and form part of its continental shelf. So there are major differences and gross errors. I mentioned only two so as to underscore the lack of knowledge displayed by the representative of Australia on this question.

I also wish to make it clear that Argentina never denied the right of peoples to self-determination. Had it been so, how could we have declared our own independence? It is a matter of different situations. We consider that in this case - and we are not in any way inventing anything - it is fitting to apply the principle of territorial integrity established in the United Nations Charter itself. We are not doing anything paradoxical.

With reference to the words of the representative of the United Kingdom, I wish to refer to one thing only. The General Assembly itself in specific resolutions thanked Argentina for its actions taken for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Malvinas Islands.

Mr. WHYTE (United Kingdom): I should like very briefly to observe in passing that, if we consistently apply locally - and I should point this out since it may cause some concern to our absent neighbours from the United States - the principles just enunciated by the representative of Argentina - the principles of self-determination and of territorial integrity - with regard to the historical circumstances of peoples, it seems to me that the only people who may turn out to have security of tenure here in the United States will be those of Indian or Mexican origin.

Mr. MUNIZ (Argentina) (interpretation from Spanish): I simply wish to recall that this is a matter of sovereignty which has been acknowledged by the General Assembly and various other organs of the United Nations. So it is a specific fact recognized also by explicit provisions and by the votes of the majority of delegations in this international Organization.

The CHAIRMAN: We have thus concluded our consideration of the item relating to the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), and I wish at this stage to express the Committee's thanks to all those who participated in our deliberations on the item.

QUESTION OF NAMIBIA (A/AC.109/L.1450) (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has before it a draft proposal contained in document A/AC.109/L.1450. As I stated, the draft was prepared on the basis of consultations held with the President of the United Nations Council for Namibia and the Permanent Observer of the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO).

Are there any comments? As there are none, I take it that the Committee is prepared to approve the draft proposal.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the Deputy Permanent Observer of the South West Africa People's Organization, Mr. Asheeke.

Mr. ASHEEKE (South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO)): On behalf of the Central Committee of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) and, indeed, the embattled masses of the Namibian people, I should like to express our gratitude and appreciation to the decolonization Committee for once again addressing itself to the question of Namibia at this critical stage of our struggle for national liberation.

We hope and trust that, as long as Namibia continues to be illegally occupied by the minority régime in Pretoria and as long as the people of South Africa remains under apartheid rule, the decolonization Committee will continue to carry out its work in collaboration and co-operation with the liberation movements of southern Africa - the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and SWAPO of Namibia - and, indeed, in co-operation with the United Nations Council for Namibia, the Special Committee against Apartheid and other concerned United Nations bodies until Namibia is free and South Africa is under the people's rule.

Mr. CHAN (Australia): As in previous years, we have supported the draft consensus on the question of Namibia. We continue to do so and we also continue to attach the greatest importance to every effort that is made to bring Namibia to independence in accordance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

However, I should like to state for the record that, as on previous occasions when such formulations have occurred, we have reservations on the reference to the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) as the sole and authentic representative of the Namibian people.

(Mr. Chan, Australia)

We also have reservations about operative paragraph 15, in which the Committee strongly recommends a certain course of action by the Security Council. In this regard the position of my Government is well known: we consider that such a course of action is for the Security Council itself to decide.

The CHAIRMAN: The reservations expressed by the representative of Australia will be fully reflected in the records of this meeting.

Mr. KOLBY (Norway): My delegation was pleased to be able to support the decision just taken. There are, however, some formulations in the draft consensus which do not fully coincide with the position of my Government. But Norway's support for Namibian independence and for the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia is well known to all members here, and we were therefore happy that we could support the decision.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has thus concluded its consideration of the item entitled "Question of Namibia".

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 NAMIBIA AND IN ALL OTHER TERRITORIES UNDER COLONIAL DOMINATION AND EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE COLONIALISM, APARTHEID AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA (A/AC.109/L.1447, L.1451 and L.1452) (continued)

The CHAIRMAN: In connexion with this item, members of the Committee have before them a working paper prepared by the Chairman and contained in document A/AC.109/L.1447, as well as amendments thereto, contained in documents A/AC.109/L.1451 and L.1452.

Mr. KOLBY (Norway): I should like first of all to say that my delegation was quite happy with the paper presented to us by the Chairman, a paper fully in line with the previous decisions taken by this Committee on this issue.

My delegation, therefore, has been instructed to support it. We think that such a paper, with broad support from this Committee, would send a clear message on this issue.

Now, however, we have before us a paper to which the delegations of Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia have put forward a number of amendments, some of them of quite far-reaching nature, which would make our resolution of this year depart rather dramatically from decisions previously taken by this Committee. Some of the proposed amendments rather shift the emphasis a little bit away from the situation in southern Africa, and this my delegation finds very regrettable. We think that the stronger focus on the situation in southern Africa that we have had in previous texts ought to have been maintained.

Secondly, the proposed amendments introduce in some paragraphs references by name to several members of the international community. This is a question which was dealt with during our deliberations earlier this year in the Sub-Committee on Petitions, Information and Assistance; there were long discussions and consultations about the wisdom of such a course of action in connexion with the consideration of the question of the specialized agencies. The result of those consultations and discussions is reflected in the Sub-Committee's report on that issue. The text as proposed now would depart from the understanding that was reached in the Sub-Committee, and it is my delegation's view that this would not be helpful. We think that arbitrarily singling out certain countries does not promote the cause of decolonization. We think that a stronger, more unified message would be more helpful in that connexion.

Therefore, my delegation would suggest that the following alterations be made to the amendments proposed in document A/AC.109/L.1452:

In paragraph 5 of that document, after the words "other States", the words "particularly those of the United States of America, the Federal Republic of Germany and Israel" be deleted, and that after the words "calls upon", the words "the Government of France" be replaced by the word "them".

Then, in the amendment proposed to paragraph 9, in paragraph 6 of the document, we propose that the words "the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Japan, Belgium, Israel and Italy" be replaced by the words "certain Western countries."

Mr. LWENO (United Republic of Tanzania): On behalf of my delegation, I should like to state Tanzania's views on the working paper under discussion, document A/AC.109/L.1447. My delegation has been instructed to support the text of that document as submitted by the Chairman, and we should like to see it remain as it is as our working paper, although we have no problem in supporting the text of paragraph 4 as amended by the representative of Indonesia in document A/AC.109/L.1451.

We have just heard the representative of Norway suggest changes in the amendments proposed in document A/AC.109/L.1452, and we take very favourable note of them.

We have a great deal of respect for the amendments proposed by the representatives of Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia in document A/AC.109/L.1452 to paragraphs 6 and 9 of the working paper. While we support those views in principle, we feel that we must register our reservations about name-calling.

(Mr. Lweno, United Republic of
Tanzania)

I have had the honour, on one or two occasions, to explain our position on this issue in some of the meetings of our sub-committees. I should therefore like to take this opportunity to reiterate our position: we earnestly feel that in view of the current stage of our negotiations for Namibia's independence we believe that name-calling at this stage will not in any way help us. As a member of the United Nations Special Committee on decolonization we believe that our primary objective is to help achieve decolonization through discussing specifics on the methodology of ending the state of colonization in Africa and in other areas of the world where it exists.

We should therefore like to appeal very strongly to our colleagues and fellow members of this Committee to concentrate our efforts on the attainment of this objective. We should like to appeal to our colleagues not to bring into our Committee those issues, for instance, which have been discussed in the General Assembly because we believe that the levels of responsibilities in these two bodies are not the same.

In the opinion of Tanzania, therefore, we feel that our primary objective in the Committee should be to help positively so that we may achieve decolonization in the areas of the world concerned, so that Namibia, for instance, becomes independent today, not tomorrow.

We in Tanzania believe that at this moment, much as we support in principle, as I have said, the views expressed, we still believe very earnestly that name-calling, especially against those very countries with which some of us are involved in the very delicate negotiations on the independence of Namibia, will not help at all in the decolonization process.

Mr. YERE (Ivory Coast) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, the text you have proposed to us, in document A/AC.109/L.1447, appeared to my delegation to be excellent and may be one of the best we have ever had before us here in this Committee on the question of activities of foreign economic and other interests. This draft resolution firmly reaffirms the principles which have always guided the actions of our Committee and takes due account of the very well-known situations prevailing in the various Non-Self-Governing Territories and thus is well qualified to obtain a consensus in this Committee.

(Mr. Yere, Ivory Coast)

Unfortunately, delegations have introduced amendments to this text which my delegation feels will only diminish much of the support that the text should rightfully command. My delegation follows the principle of not condemning countries by name. It will be difficult for it therefore to support the amendments proposed to paragraphs 6 and 9 of document A/AC.109/L.1447 by the delegations of Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria.

Mr. KALINA (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian): The representative of Norway described the amendments proposed by Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia as far-reaching in scope. In this regard, I should like to point out that these amendments do not go beyond the context of the resolution adopted by the Fourth Committee on this question at the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly on the initiative of the African and other non-aligned countries, or the resolution voted for by the majority of members of our Committee.

In conclusion, I should also like to point out that my delegation will vote against the subamendments proposed by the delegation of Norway and the amendments proposed by Indonesia.

Mr. PEREZ (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, my delegation was and is ready to support the working paper you have submitted. We consider it an extraordinarily well-prepared summing-up of the thinking of our Committee and that it should meet with unanimous support if it is to have the strength it truly deserves.

As for the amendments proposed by Indonesia, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia, my delegation could fully subscribe to what was said by the representatives of Tanzania and of the Ivory Coast. I think that the statement made by the former is a true reflexion of the realities, one with which all members should associate themselves. My delegation, therefore supports the Indonesian amendment, as well as the statement by the representative of Norway. We think that in this way we could reach consensus and give this paper the strength that we should all like it to have.

Mr. AMARI (Tunisia) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, the working paper, document A/AC.109/L.1447, which you have submitted is absolutely acceptable to my delegation.

With reference to the amendments submitted by the delegations of Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia, my delegation has no difficulty, but after what was said by the representatives who have preceded me, including the Ambassador of Tanzania - because what we are looking for in this matter, our sole objective, is to see Namibia independent, today rather than tomorrow - so in the view of my delegation the amendments put forward by Norway seem to bring us closer to the consensus we all seek. Therefore, we support those amendments.

Mr. ALVAREZ-SANCHEZ (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Our delegation fully concurs with previous speakers in praising the document on this item submitted by you, Mr. Chairman, for a decision. None the less, although we agree that it is an excellent paper, our delegation feels that the amendments proposed by the delegations of Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia would improve on the substance of that text. They are consistent with the decisions taken by the Fourth Committee last year and supported by the immense majority of members of the Committee. They are also consistent with the positions of the non-aligned countries on this issue - both at their last summit meeting and at successive meetings.

With reference to the amendment submitted by Indonesia, our delegation will vote against it since it makes the present paragraph conform even less to the earlier positions adopted by the non-aligned countries on this issue.

With reference to the subamendment proposed by Norway, our delegation will obviously vote against it.

Mr. RAM (Fiji): My delegation also fully supports what previous delegations have said about the document submitted by you, Mr. Chairman. I have also listened with great care to what the representatives of the United Republic of Tanzania and of the Ivory Coast have just said.

In view of that and in order to advance what we are here to do, I should like to state that our delegation could support the amendment proposed by Indonesia and the sub-amendment proposed by Norway.

Mr. SALLU (Sierra Leone): My delegation would have liked to go along entirely with the text proposed by you, Mr. Chairman. We feel the language is moderate and in accordance with all the earlier decisions taken on this issue.

However, I note that certain amendments have been proposed by a number of delegations and I should like to express my delegation's view on them, in particular on those contained in document A/AC.109/L.1452 proposed by Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia.

I listened very carefully to the interventions of our colleagues from Norway, the Ivory Coast and the United Republic of Tanzania. In order to

(Mr. Sallu, Sierra Leone)

achieve a consensus, I should like to indicate that my delegation would wholeheartedly endorse the subamendments proposed by the representative of Norway to the amendments in document A/AC.109/L.1452.

Mr. DENICHIN (Bulgaria): In proposing the amendments contained in document A/AC.109/L.1452 my delegation and the delegation of Czechoslovakia had in mind the following.

Every year in this Committee and, indeed, in other United Nations bodies, arguments are put forward to the effect that we are on the verge of achieving independence for Namibia. Every year there is a flurry of negotiations, every year there is an air of optimism that is disseminated from certain quarters and every year that optimism proves to be based on false grounds.

Again this year - as indeed I think the current debate in this Committee has proved - we have been led to think we were on the verge of a solution to the Namibian problem: yet again that has proved untrue. On the contrary, in the negotiations and debate on the implementation of the United Nations plan for giving independence to Namibia, new issues have been introduced, issues which are extraneous to this question and indeed do not contribute to but rather hamper the achievement of a real solution to the problem of Namibia. Those facts and the continued unabated exploitation of Namibia's natural resources and of the people of Namibia, the unchanged colonial situation in that country, the continued repression of its people, the increased acts of aggression against neighbouring countries and the efforts to destabilize the governments of neighbouring sovereign countries prove that indeed we cannot expect that a real solution to the problem will be achieved and that the intentions of those spreading optimistic expectations are not justified. Indeed, we do not see any reason why this Committee, which is the Committee on decolonization, should depart from the very clear view of the General Assembly and the Fourth Committee expressed last year in their respective resolutions adopted at the thirty-sixth session; therefore, we introduced the amendments contained in document A/AC.109/L.1452.

We believe that we would not be contributing to a solution of the Namibian problem or, indeed, to the decolonization process if we retreat from the decisions already taken on the question. That is why my delegation will vote against the subamendments proposed by the representatives of Norway and the amendment proposed by the representative of Indonesia and stand behind its own proposal.

Mr. WAYARABI (Indonesia): We have just concluded our discussion on the question of Namibia and my delegation feels that the adoption of this document will affect the future of a people which we all believe should have independence today. Mr. Chairman, this working paper prepared by you, the amendment submitted by my delegation and those submitted by Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia are very important because they also will affect the entire problem of Namibia.

(Mr. Wayarabi, Indonesia)

I have listened carefully to the statements made by the representatives of Tanzania, the Ivory Coast and Tunisia, African countries directly involved in the situation in Namibia. My delegation has always maintained as one of the main policies of the Government of Indonesia listening to the region's views on a question. But we should also like to stress here that according to decisions resulting from consultations or meetings among members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the majority of the African countries would like to see Namibia independent this year or next. They would also like to avoid the singling out of names, because that will not solve the core of the problem.

In my delegation's view, this Committee should first try to reach a consensus on this document; therefore, we whole-heartedly support the statements made by the representatives of Tanzania, the Ivory Coast and Tunisia, and appeal to other members to take into consideration and heed the statements made earlier by the delegations of African countries.

If I may refer to the draft consensus adopted on the question of Namibia in document A/AC.109/L.1450, the second sentence of paragraph (17) reads:

"The Committee resolutely supports the Arusha Declaration and Programme of Action on Namibia adopted by the Council... and the relevant decisions of the Organization of African Unity."

My delegation believes that we should be guided by the positions of the countries in the region, and not go far beyond that.

Mrs. AHMADI (Iran)(interpretation from French): I should like briefly to state my delegation's position on the documents presented to us relating to the item on activities of foreign economic and other interests. My delegation supports the proposals contained in the excellent working paper submitted by the Chairman, as well as the amendments in document A/AC.109/L.1452. We feel that those amendments supplement the working paper submitted by the Chairman and are in accord with the position of the non-aligned countries. On the other hand, we cannot support the Indonesian amendments or the Norwegian subamendments.

Mr. POPAL (Afghanistan): My delegation fully supports the amendments submitted by the representatives of Czechoslovakia and Bulgaria to the text in document A/AC.109/L.1447, but does not agree with the amendment submitted by the representative of Indonesia and the subamendments by the representative of Norway.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)(interpretation from Russian): I should like for my part to commend the document submitted by you, Mr. Chairman, on the 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 Namibia and in all other Territories under colonial domination. The document was well worked out, but the delegation of the Soviet Union feels that very important things were left out which have been reflected in the amendments submitted by the delegations of Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia.

Some delegations here are trying to present things as if the amendments by the Bulgarian and Czechoslovak delegations were new and far-reaching, although actually they repeat word for word the decisions of a body higher than the Committee of 24, namely, the General Assembly, at its last session. As we all know, those decisions were adopted by an overwhelming majority of States Members of the United Nations.

As we consider the amendments proposed by the delegations of Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia we should ask in what way they might not respond to the interests of the African countries, the interests of the non-aligned countries and the interests of all progressive mankind. How has the situation changed since last year? As can be seen, those amendments condemn the collusion of the Governments of certain Western countries and other States, particularly the United States of America. Has anything changed in the meantime in that regard? Yes, the collusion is continuing and becoming worse. That is the only aspect of change that we can perceive. There is aggravation and exacerbation of the situation. There is conspiracy precisely in the nuclear sphere. Hardly can anyone sitting here overestimate the support given to the Republic of South Africa in supplying it with armaments and a nuclear-weaponry capability. Those comments relate to operative paragraph 6.

With reference to operative paragraph 9, and taking into account the Norwegian subamendment, has anything changed since last year in that connexion?

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

Has the Western Powers' collusion with South Africa diminished since then, particularly in the economic sphere? All the material available to the Committee of 24 and other material elsewhere testifies precisely to the contrary. I think it illusory to suggest that not mentioning the United States and other Western Powers in these resolutions may have some positive effect on efforts to achieve genuine independence for Namibia.

The Soviet delegation will firmly support the amendments proposed by the delegations of Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia. We oppose the subamendments proposed by Norway.

There is something else. Yet another small amendment is quietly being put forward here. I refer to Indonesia's proposal, which is indeed a very small one. This amendment contradicts the decisions not only of the General Assembly but also of the Committee itself, because it is an attempt to set the Committee back into the past with regard to its own decisions, to change the Committee's position on this question. Indeed, it is an attempt to weaken decisions already taken not only by the Committee but also by the General Assembly itself. I think that the members of the Committee must very seriously consider what is happening here today in the Committee of 24 and search their own consciences as to the extent to which these attempts really promote the cause of decolonization and are in keeping with the position of the Committee of 24, the principal organ dealing with issues relating to the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples.

Mr. LWENO (United Republic of Tanzania): Having listened with great attention to quite a number of delegations, it might be useful, by way of reassuring the members of this Committee, if I put on record that, although somebody referred to a "retreat" from the African position, firstly, there is no retreat from the African position as regards the question of independence - not only for Namibia but for any other part of the world where colonialism still exists. There is no retreat at all.

(Mr. Lweno, United Republic of Tanzania)

Secondly, it has been suggested that nothing has changed, or that the kind of discussion we are having now is a replica, a carrying forward, of what has been going on since last year. I have much respect for such views, but I think it would be naive of me as the representative of Tanzania to accept such an argument without qualification. It is true that negotiations on the independence of Namibia have been stalled since January 1981. For the information of this Committee, I had the honour and privilege to be part of the delegation of front-line States to those consultations in Geneva. I said that it would be naive of me to accept the argument that there has been no progress since last year, although much of what has been attained may not be commensurate with our desires. As I said before, I believe that it is our Committee's objective to see Namibia independent today, not tomorrow. I agree that Namibia is not independent today; but to say that there has been no progress since last year is self-deceiving.

Thirdly, I should like to appeal to our colleagues in this Committee not to doubt the sincerity of us in Africa - not to doubt our seriousness, not to doubt our commitment, not to doubt our honesty when we sit down and attempt to negotiate Namibia's independence.

I do not mean to belabour the issue; but the fact is that we do not need any lecture; we do not need any detailed hand-out on this aspect from anyone.

I think that it is important for me to repeat that I am appealing to the members of this Committee not to doubt our commitment, not to doubt our seriousness, not to doubt our honesty when we sit down and attempt to negotiate Namibia's independence. We are aware of the problems involved - and, as I say, when I say "we" I mean Africa.

Mr. SALLU (Sierra Leone): I apologize for asking to speak a second time. But, after the statement just made by my colleague from Tanzania, I thought I should add my support for what he said. I believe that Tanzania's responsibility in the whole conduct of the ongoing talks with regard to the granting of independence to Namibia is such that none of us here can have reason to doubt him.

(Mr. Sallu, Sierra Leone)

I should like to support him also when he says that no African country is retreating from its commitment to the granting of independence to Namibia. I should like to add to that and say that no African country can retreat from the fight against the apartheid régime of South Africa. I think that is very clear.

I think we are living in a world of realism, and I believe that is the point the Tanzanian delegation has been trying to make. Their country has been much involved in the talks and they are in a position to know what has been going on. I have every reason to believe that the account given us by the representative of Tanzania is a correct one.

In addition, I should like to indicate that the support given here to the subamendments proposed by the Norwegian delegation is in no way indicative of any withdrawal by my country from its wholehearted commitment to the cause of freedom in Namibia, for we believe, as the Tanzanian delegation said, that the talks are at a stage where amendments such as those proposed by Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia might not be helpful. I believe, as was clearly stated by the representative of Indonesia, that it is perhaps a wise thing for this Committee to try to listen to what we in the African region are saying about a matter which concerns our region first and foremost.

This does not in any way diminish our appreciation for the support given by a number of countries, including those of our colleagues from Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia, to the cause of freedom for Africa, but at the moment the positions expressed here by the African countries with near-unanimity should be taken into account.

It is the firm belief of my Government that the United Nations should have been given the over-all role of conducting the negotiations on the question of the independence of Namibia. However, a number of countries, some of which have been named in the amendments, have rightly or wrongly taken on that onus. We should like to believe that they are aware that we are all looking to them for results. Some of us may be opposed to naming them, but we would indicate that we are scrutinizing the conduct of the negotiations to see whether the trust we have placed in them is justified.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.