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QUESTION OF RACE CONFLICT IN SOUTH AFRICA RESULTING FROM THE POLICIES
OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Report of the Special Political Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Sergijo MAKIEDO (Yugoslavia)

1. In a letter dated 12 September 1956 (A/3190) addressed to the Secretary-General, the Permanent Representative of India proposed, on instructions from his Government, that the provisional agenda of the eleventh session of the General Assembly should include the item "Question of race conflict in South Africa resulting from the policies of apartheid of the Government of the Union of South Africa". An accompanying explanatory memorandum stated that India felt obliged to bring to the Assembly's notice that the Union Government had paid no attention to the appeal contained in General Assembly resolution 917 (X) and continued to pursue its policy of racial discrimination and violation of human rights. The Government of India, in view of the deteriorating racial situation in the Union of South Africa arising out of the Union Government's non-compliance with the terms of resolution 917 (X), requested the General Assembly to give renewed consideration to the question with a view to enabling the Members of the United Nations to express themselves on the issue, and thereby persuade the Union of South Africa to alter its policy in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.
2. In a letter dated 27 September 1956 (A/3190/Add.1), the Permanent Representative of Pakistan informed the Secretary-General that his Government had decided to sponsor the proposal for the inclusion of the question in the agenda of the eleventh session; in a letter dated 11 October (A/3190/Add.2), the Permanent Representative of Indonesia requested that his Government should also be added to those requesting the inclusion of the item.

3. At its 578th plenary meeting on 15 November 1956, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the question in its agenda and referred it to the Special Political Committee for consideration and report.

4. The Special Political Committee considered the question at its 11th to 16th meetings held between 11 and 21 January 1957.

5. At the 14th meeting, a joint draft resolution (A/SPC/L.4) was introduced, sponsored by Ceylon, Greece, Haiti, Iran and Iraq. Under the terms of this draft resolution, the General Assembly, inter alia, recalling paragraph 6 of resolution 917 (X) calling upon the Government of the Union of South Africa to observe the obligations contained in Article 56 of the Charter, would:

(1) express its deep regret that the Union Government had not observed its obligations under Article 56 and had on the contrary further developed its policy of apartheid and pressed forward with discriminatory measures which would make the observance of those obligations more difficult; (2) affirm its conviction that perseverance in such acts was inconsistent not only with the Charter but with the forces of progress and of international co-operation in implementing the ideals of equality, freedom and justice; and (3) again call upon the Union Government urgently to reconsider its position and revise its policies in the light of its obligations and responsibilities under the Charter and in the light of the principles subscribed to and the progress achieved in other contemporary multi-racial societies.

6. At the same meeting, the Philippines introduced a draft resolution (A/SPC/L.5) according to which the General Assembly, declaring that in a multi-racial society, harmony and respect for human rights and freedoms and the peaceful development of a unified community were best assured when patterns of legislation and practices were directed towards ensuring a legal order that would ensure equality before the law of all persons regardless of race, creed or colour; believing that a conciliatory approach to the problem could establish the necessary climate that could bring fruitfull results; and believing further that a high-level exploratory discussion of the subject might yield a rational solution to the problem, would request the Secretary-General to meet with the appropriate representative of the Union of South Africa to invite the return to the Committee of the South African delegation and to conduct exploratory conversations to study the means and ways by which some useful solution might be reached to solve the problem.

7. At the 15th meeting, the representative of the Philippines suggested that the final paragraph of his delegation's draft resolution might be redrafted to provide that the Assembly should request the Secretary-General to explore ways and means for achieving a satisfactory solution of the question of racial conflict in South Africa and to take whatever steps he deemed necessary with a view to finding such a solution.

8. After some discussion of the proposals before it, the Committee agreed to adjourn the debate for a few days, in the hope that in the interim the interested delegations, including the sponsors of the two draft resolutions, would consult together informally with a view to consolidating their ideas in one draft resolution.

9. At the 16th meeting, the representative of the Philippines introduced a joint draft resolution (A/SPC/L.6) sponsored by Ceylon, Greece, Haiti, Iran, Iraq and the Philippines, which was designed to replace the earlier five-Power draft resolution (A/SPC/L.4) and the Philippine draft resolution (A/SPC/L.5). The six-Power joint draft resolution provided, inter alia, that the General Assembly, recalling its previous resolutions on the question and, in particular, paragraph 6 of resolution 917 (X) calling upon the Government of the Union of South Africa to observe the obligations under the Charter; noting that resolution 616 B (VII) of 5 December 1952 declared that governmental policies which were designed to perpetuate or increase discrimination were inconsistent with the Charter; further noting that resolutions 395 (V), 511 (VI) and 616 A (VII) had successively affirmed that a policy of "racial segregation" (apartheid) was necessarily based on doctrines of racial discrimination; convinced that, in a multi-racial society, harmony and respect for human rights and freedoms and the peaceful development of a unified community were best assured when patterns of legislation and practices were directed towards ensuring a legal order that would ensure equality before the law and the elimination of discrimination between all persons regardless of race, creed or colour; and convinced also that a conciliatory approach in accordance with the principles of the Charter was necessary for progress towards a solution of the problem, would: (1) deplore that the Government of the Union of South Africa had not yet observed its obligations under the Charter and had pressed forward with discriminatory measures which would make the future observance of those obligations more

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difficult; (2) affirm its conviction that perseverance in such discriminatory policies was inconsistent not only with the Charter but with the forces of progress and international co-operation in implementing the ideals of equality, freedom and justice; (3) call upon the Union Government to reconsider its position and revise its policies in the light of its obligations and responsibilities under the Charter and in the light of the principles subscribed to and the progress achieved in other contemporary multi-racial societies; (4) invite the Union Government to co-operate in a constructive approach to the question, more particularly by its presence in the United Nations; and (5) request the Secretary-General as appropriate to communicate with the Union Government to carry forward the purposes of the resolution.

10. At the same meeting the Committee voted on the Six-Power joint draft resolution (A/SPC/L.6) paragraph by paragraph, with the following results:

The first paragraph of the preamble was adopted by 61 votes to 4, with 7 abstentions.

The second paragraph was adopted by 58 votes to 4, with 9 abstentions.

The third paragraph was adopted by 59 votes to none, with 11 abstentions.

The fourth paragraph was adopted by 58 votes to 4, with 7 abstentions.

The fifth paragraph was adopted by 65 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.

The sixth paragraph was adopted by 61 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 1 was adopted by a roll-call vote of 53 to 5, with 13 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Argentina, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cambodia, Ceylon, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Laos, Liberia, Libya, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia.

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Against: Australia, Belgium, France, Italy, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Abstaining: Austria, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United States of America.

Operative paragraph 2 was adopted by a roll-call vote of 53 to 3, with 15 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Argentina, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cambodia, Ceylon, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Laos, Liberia, Libya, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republics, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia.

Against: Australia, Belgium, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Abstaining: Austria, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United States of America.

Operative paragraph 3 was adopted by 54 votes to 4, with 11 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 4 was adopted by 59 votes to none, with 11 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 5 was adopted by 57 votes to 3, with 10 abstentions.

The Committee adopted the joint draft resolution as a whole, by 55 votes to 5, with 10 abstentions.

11. The Special Political Committee therefore recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

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QUESTION OF RACE CONFLICT IN SOUTH AFRICA RESULTING FROM THE POLICIES
OF APARTHEID OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

The General Assembly,

Recalling its previous resolutions on the question of race conflict in South Africa resulting from the policies of apartheid of the Government of Union of South Africa,

Recalling, in particular, paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 917 (X) of 6 December 1955 calling upon the Government of the Union of South Africa to observe its obligations under the Charter,

Noting that resolution 616 B (VII) of 5 December 1952 declared, inter alia, that governmental policies which are designed to perpetuate or increase discrimination are inconsistent with the Charter,

Further noting that resolutions 395 (V) of 2 December 1950, 511 (VI) of 12 January 1952 and 616 A (VII) of 5 December 1952 have successively affirmed that a policy of "racial segregation" (apartheid) is necessarily based on doctrines of racial discrimination,

Convinced that, in a multi-racial society, harmony and respect for human rights and freedoms and the peaceful development of a unified community are best assured when patterns of legislation and practices are directed towards ensuring a legal order that will ensure equality before the law and the elimination of discrimination between all persons regardless of race, creed or colour,

Convinced also that a conciliatory approach in accordance with the principles of the Charter is necessary for progress towards a solution of this problem,

1. Deplores that the Government of the Union of South Africa has not yet observed its obligations under the Charter and has pressed forward with discriminatory measures which would make the future observance of these obligations more difficult;

2. Affirms its conviction that perseverance in such discriminatory policies is inconsistent not only with the Charter but with the forces of progress and international co-operation in implementing the ideals of equality, freedom and justice;

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3. Calls upon the Government of the Union of South Africa to reconsider its position and revise its policies in the light of its obligations and responsibilities under the Charter and in the light of the principles subscribed to and the progress achieved in other contemporary multi-racial societies;

4. Invites the Government of the Union of South Africa to co-operate in a constructive approach to this question, more particularly by its presence in the United Nations;

5. Requests the Secretary-General as appropriate to communicate with the Government of the Union of South Africa to carry forward the purposes of the present resolution.
