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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 1238TH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 2 September 1983, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. KOROMA (Sierra Leone)

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 (continued)

Military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration which might be impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

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.109/731, 736, 737 and Corr.1, 744; A/AC.109/L.1481)

(continued)

MILITARY ACTIVITIES AND ARRANGEMENTS BY COLONIAL POWERS IN TERRITORIES UNDER THEIR ADMINISTRATION WHICH MIGHT BE IMPEDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (A/AC.109/738, 742, 743; A/AC.109/L.1479)

Mr. YOSSIPHOV (Bulgaria): For many years at every substantive session of this Committee its members have participated actively in deliberations on the item entitled "Foreign economic and other interests which are impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples," General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). Year after year delegations have explained their positions of principle concerning the matter in question, exposing the machinations of the economic, financial and strategic interests of the major Western Powers in colonial and Non-Self-Governing Territories which are impeding the speedy and unconditional implementation of the United Nations Declaration on Decolonization.

Once again this body has to note with regret that for the process of decolonization - which has been developing tempestuously as a result of the heroic liberation struggle of the oppressed colonial peoples and of the adoption of the historic Declaration in 1960 - a major obstacle to the complete eradication of colonialism, racial discrimination and apartheid, one created over many years by the economic, financial and strategic interests of the major Western Powers, still continues to exist. The ruthless plunder of the natural and other resources of the colonial Territories and their use by the imperialists for their strategic purposes have reached new and dangerous heights in recent years. In spite of the manifest desire on the part of the overwhelming majority of the international community to put a halt to the collaboration with the racist

(Mr. Yossiphov, Bulgaria)

régime of Pretoria, the United States and its major allies members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have been giving, behind the smokescreen of the policy of constructive engagement, all-round moral, political, financial and military support to the racists, thus creating favourable conditions for their exploitation of the natural and human resources in the illegally occupied Territory of Namibia and in South Africa itself. The stand and policies of the United States are the main factors reinforcing South Africa's continuous and arrogant refusal to allow the people of Namibia to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence and behind South Africa's aggressive acts against the neighbouring independent African States, as well as its war against Namibia's people and their sole and authentic representative, the South West Africa People's organization (SWAPO).

The responsibility for the continuing deterioration of the situation in southern Africa and for the tragic suffering of the peoples of that region rests fully with the Pretoria régime and with its imperialist allies. Through the permanent expansion of the economic, financial and strategic collaboration with the major Western countries and their capitalist monopolies the South African racist régime continues to gain political, economic, financial and military strength of vital importance for its survival and for its aggressive and inhuman policy of oppression. More than 3,000 monopolies of the major Western countries have economic and other interests in South Africa. Eighty per cent of all foreign investment in South Africa is held by corporations based in the major Western countries, 40 per cent of which are British, 20 per cent American and 10 per cent West German. The direct investment of United States companies in South Africa continues to increase by an average of more than \$100 million per year. More than 500 United States companies have subsidiaries in South Africa, and over 6,000 other companies have business relations with Pretoria. Four American companies - Ford, General Motors, Mobil Oil and Caltex Oil - hold more than 50 per cent of the direct investment by United States business in South

(Mr. Yossiphov, Bulgaria)

Africa. United States companies control the most important branches of Pretoria's economy - 33 per cent of the motor-vehicles market, 44 per cent of petroleum products and 70 per cent of the computer market.

A leading role in the plunder of the natural and human resources of the illegally occupied Territory of Namibia has been played for many years by corporations located in the major Western countries. Out of 90 foreign companies, as is shown in the recently published document A/AC.109/744, 35 are British, 19 American, 3 West German, 3 Canadian and one French. This means that close to two thirds of all foreign corporations illegally operating in the Territory of Namibia are from major Western States. If we add the 19 South African corporations to those mentioned above we find that more than 80 per cent of the corporations plundering Namibia's resources are from Pretoria and from its Western allies.

(Mr. Yossiphov, Bulgaria)

As stressed by previous speakers, this document proves once again that enormous profits continue to flow out of Namibia to South Africa and major Western countries. The source of these profits is all too well known to the members of this body - namely, the unrestrained, profit-oriented colonial exploitation of all resources of Namibia under the protection of the army of oppression of South Africa. This illegal exploitation of Namibia's resources and the continuing prospecting for new ones, such as oil drilling and others, is in flagrant violation of various decisions of the United Nations General Assembly and Decree No. 10 of the sole governing body of Namibia until independence, the United Nations Council for Namibia.

The strategic importance of South Africa and Namibia for the imperialist States cannot and must not be underestimated. South Africa and illegally occupied Namibia are viewed by the representatives of the leading imperialist States as an important link in the strategic interests of world imperialism. That is why the racist régime in South Africa has been turned into a powerful bastion of imperialism charged with the impossible task of turning back the tide of history.

Mindful of those developments in southern Africa, we urgently demand that military, economic and political support for the racists be stopped forthwith. In this connection I should like to reiterate the position of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, stated recently by the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Luben Gotsev, at the International Conference in Solidarity with the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence, held this spring in Paris, in order to ensure the full and speedy implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples:

"The United Nations has repeatedly declared that the policies and practices of South Africa constitute a threat to international peace and security and has called upon the Security Council to fulfil its obligation under the United Nations Charter. Now that it has become abundantly clear that the activities of the Western allies of Pretoria have brought new issues into the question of Namibia and led to the present impasse in the efforts of the international community to secure the independence of the Territory, it is more urgent than ever that the Security Council start to deal with the resulting

(Mr. Yossiphov, Bulgaria)

situation directly in accordance with its mandate. We fully support all the decisions of the OAU and the non-aligned countries on Namibia, as well as the position of SWAPO, expressed by its President, Mr. Sam Nujoma, at this Conference, including those calling for immediate convening of the Council for the adoption of measures against the apartheid régime under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter."

Turning to other parts of the world where colonies and colonial dependencies still exist, we must note with regret that economic, financial, political and strategic interests of the major imperialist Powers are amplifying the existing obstacles to the immediate implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

In document A/AC.109/727, we have found substantive evidence for this conclusion. For instance, in the case of the Turks and Caicos Islands, the document points out that foreign investors, mainly from Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States, are playing a dominant role in the economy of the Territory. Its economy is "very dependent on the United States". In Micronesia, for example, where the United States has arrogated to itself exclusive military rights to suit its strategic purposes, there also exists an acute dependency on foreign economic and other interests.

In this connection I should like to stress once again the firm position of the People's Republic of Bulgaria that the activities of foreign economic and other interests in the colonial Territories constitute an impediment to the implementation of the Declaration on Decolonization in all of those Territories irrespective of their size or geographic location.

In conclusion, I should like to express the unflagging support of the People's Republic of Bulgaria for the just struggle of all peoples and countries still under colonial domination and for the immediate and unconditional implementation of the Declaration on decolonization.

Mr. DIMITRIJEVIC (Yugoslavia): Mr. Chairman, since this is the first time I have spoken in this Committee, I should like to begin by offering you, the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone, my felicitations on the very effective and competent manner in which you are presiding over the work of our Committee. Under your guidance it will be a privilege for me to contribute to the Special Committee's deliberations.

In my delegation's view, activities of foreign economic and other interests, as well as military activities by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration, similarly impede the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. These subjects are not only of great importance to the peoples living in these Territories but also a challenge to the very essence of the process of decolonization. The greater the time lapse, in view of the deterioration of the situation in many Non-Self-Governing Territories, the more unacceptable it is to treat these issues out of the context of decolonization.

The relevant documents of the United Nations clearly indicate that the political structures of the colonial system and the activities of foreign economic and other interests are closely linked and complement each other. In other words, these documents illustrate the interdependence between the vast profits reaped by foreign economic, financial and other interests in Non-Self-Governing Territories and the perpetuation of exploitation, racism and apartheid.

(Mr. Dimitrijevic, Yugoslavia)

We share the opinion of the international community that the foreign economic and financial interests in Namibia are among the reasons why the liberation of this Territory and the implementation of the United Nations plan for Namibia have not yet been achieved. Despite numerous international legal instruments, General Assembly resolutions and an opinion of the International Court of Justice, 88 major transnational corporations and hundreds of smaller ones operate in Namibia without the permission of the Council for Namibia. The mineral wealth of this Non-Self-Governing Territory is being exploited on such a scale that were Namibia free and independent, it would be one of the richest countries in Africa. Alas, this wealth is earned by the hands of Namibian workers who earn only five to six per cent of what a white man is paid for the same work.

With apartheid as its political dogma and racial discrimination as its political platform, South Africa is a synonym for the narrow interests of the white racist minority that is keeping the black population in a state of complete political and economic subordination, deprived of all rights. Co-operation with such a régime has become awkward, and the resolutions on apartheid adopted every year by the General Assembly insist that such co-operation be severed.

The situation in other Non-Self-Governing Territories differs, in as much as these Territories do not have such vast natural potential as Namibia has. Foreign interests there are striving to exploit the strategic advantages which these Territories, scattered over the expanses of three oceans, have in the rivalry between the great Powers.

On these Territories the poverty-stricken, sparse populations have to accept the existence of foreign military bases and installations and to agree, in return, to be paid a lease and have some hundreds of people employed. The stationing of military bases, however, constitutes an immediate and real danger to the population should war break out, since in such a case their Territory would be a target of missiles and atomic warheads. There is a tendency for this fact to be silently passed over by those entrusted with developing the economy and political affairs of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

(Mr. Dimitrijevic, Yugoslavia)

In a world that constantly witnesses the threat or use of force, the military and strategic interests in Namibia and other Non-Self-Governing Territories prevent those Territories achieving independence. It goes without saying that in conditions of foreign military presence the national will and aspirations of the indigenous population cannot be freely expressed.

We believe that the Special Committee on decolonization still has much work ahead of it. It is very important that this process be continued on the basis of the true implementation of the principles of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and not on the basis of an interpretation of those principles that suits the interests of the colonial system.

We were greatly impressed by the information provided by some petitioners who underlined the intentions of the administering Powers to explain and implement the Declaration according to their own interests. The Declaration can be interpreted only to mean that self-determination and independence are indivisible, and this synthesis cannot be split.

This year, as has been the case in every previous year, there are a number of issues on the agenda of the Special Committee on decolonization with arguments pro and con, concerning those issues. Our position is clear and unchanged. As long as those issues are on our Committee's agenda and as long as they are not resolved in accordance with the legitimate interests of the peoples, they should be considered as problems of decolonization and be discussed within the United Nations. We should always have in mind the interests of the peoples of these Territories and enable them to decide their own future freely and without foreign interference and influence.

It has become clear that the presence of foreign economic and other interests is the reason why the request that various Non-Self-Governing Territories in the world should be liberated from the colonial yoke is being implemented so slowly. It is also obvious that the profits made out of the colonial status of these Territories are the main problem of decolonization. When one adds to this the presence of military, strategic, political and ideological interests and their activities in Non-Self-Governing Territories, one can clearly realise the proportions and boundaries of the problem of the further decolonization of Non-Self-Governing Territories.

(Mr. Dimitrijevic, Yugoslavia)

Together with other non-aligned countries, Yugoslavia is consistent in opposing attempts to maintain such forms of exploitation and continuation of the plundering of natural and human resources in Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Faithful to its policy of non-alignment with regard to decolonization questions and to its opposition to any form of foreign domination, Yugoslavia strictly respects the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and other United Nations organs calling for the cessation of economic and other foreign activities in Non-Self-Governing Territories which impede the implementation of the Declaration. The Yugoslav delegation not only hopes, but is convinced, that this view and interpretation of the problems dealt with by the Special Committee is shared by the majority of Member States of the United Nations. It is from that fact that we draw strength and inspiration to co-operate in further efforts of the Committee to bring the process of decolonization to its definitive completion.

Mr. LWENO (United Republic of Tanzania): The position of my delegation on the subjects under discussion, concerning the activities of foreign economic and other interests and the military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories, is strictly guided by the basic principles so eloquently outlined in the famous General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 1960. Within the context of that resolution, my delegation believes the primary objective of our Committee to be to ensure that all colonial peoples and countries attain their human right to self-determination and independence. Therefore, my delegation strongly believes that these activities, in both the economic and military fields, are obviously not in the best interests of these colonial peoples and countries. We believe that these activities do impede the rights of these peoples and countries to express freely their choice of self-determination and ultimate independence. Because of this, we have always supported international condemnation of them.

(Mr. Lweno, United Republic of
Tanzania)

In our opinion, the case of Namibia is one very glaring example. We believe that the continued effect of the foreign economic activities of some transnational corporations and foreign military activities, with the collaboration of the illegal administration in that country, is clearly an impediment to the people of Namibia's exercising its right to self-determination and independence. It was basically with this background that the people of Namibia, under the leadership of the South-West People's Organization (SWAPO), its sole and authentic legitimate representative, decided to wage a just military campaign, with the full support of my delegation, for the total liberation of its country.

(Mr. Lweno, United Republic of
Tanzania)

It is because of this that my delegation has always been part of the international campaign to exert maximum pressure on transnational corporations to terminate their investments in Namibia and all other forms of collaboration with the illegal racist régime in that country. And we have always welcomed as a positive step all policies of Governments aimed at bringing to an end the activities of those transnational corporations in southern Africa in general and in Namibia in particular. We have always condemned the racist régime of South Africa for the perpetuation of its inhuman and illegal occupation of Namibia. We have always condemned all those transnational corporations which collaborate with the racist régime of South Africa and we have always supported international calls for all international corporations to respect the various United Nations resolutions concerning South Africa in general and Namibia in particular.

My delegation will always continue to support international calls for all home countries of transnational corporations to take effective measures to terminate the collaboration of their transnational corporations with the racist régime of South Africa, to prevent further new investments and reinvestments and to bring about an immediate withdrawal of all existing investments in and economic ties with Namibia.

We believe that this will contribute effectively to the speedy decolonization of that country.

Mr. MASRI (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): Year after year this Committee has been considering the twin items on the economic and military activities which are impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the adoption of pertinent resolutions in this connection. It has appealed to the colonial countries undertaking such activities to take appropriate measures to facilitate the granting of independence to the colonial countries and peoples involved and has condemned those economic and military activities as well as the failure of the administering Powers and their allies to heed its appeals.

The peoples of those Territories continue to suffer the exploitation and plunder of their wealth and the destruction of their natural environment by the Governments of colonial countries, their allies and entrepreneurs - to such an

(Mr. Masri, Syrian Arab Republic)

extent that the time is long past for appeals or condemnations; it is no longer a matter merely of those interests impeding the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples: so grave is the threat posed by this situation that there is now an imperative need to protect the rights of colonial countries and peoples, and to prevent the exploitation of their natural resources, as well as the pollution of their environment. Above all, pending independence, the security of the peoples of those Territories must be protected from the military activities being carried out on their soil by the colonial Powers.

We have studied with great attention and care the documents that have been prepared by the Secretariat relating to the activities of foreign economic and other interests and to military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories still under the yoke of colonialism. While extending our gratitude to the Secretariat for the valuable information included in those documents, we still believe that this Committee should adopt a series of measures and make appropriate arrangements to preserve peace and security in colonial Territories so that their inhabitants can develop economically, socially and culturally and in conditions conducive to and indeed necessary for independence.

It is well known that foreign investment is geared not to the interests of host countries but to profit. And there is a clear contradiction between the desire for profit from a particular economic or tourist project and a host country's development requirements. If the United Nations is currently trying to regulate foreign investment in host countries by establishing a code of conduct and organizing the activities of multinational corporations, then it is appropriate to take into consideration the conditions prevailing in colonial Territories and to enact suitable measures to protect their interests - and indeed to prevent their wealth from being absorbed by foreign investment. There can be no doubt that such measures are mandatory, if we are to curtail the plundering of the wealth of the Territories at the hands of the colonialists, while the peoples of those Territories suffer deprivation and poverty.

The need to safeguard the wealth and the environment of the colonial Territories and to regulate foreign economic activities there stems from the fact that those activities are directed mainly at investment in the field of natural resources such as tourism, stock-breeding, fisheries, mineral extraction and so on, while they neglect agricultural development and the setting up of permanent

(Mr. Masri, Syrian Arab Republic)

Indeed, there are a number of countries, which, having freed themselves from the yoke of colonialism, now find themselves in a state of terrible economic backwardness as a result of the exploitation of their natural resources; for the imperialists do not leave a country unless they are sure that it is in tatters.

Foreign investments are a matter of great importance to us as regards colonial Territories' future existence as independent States. Yet, foreign military activities threaten not only the environment and the peace and security of colonial Territories and neighbouring countries, but international peace and security as well. The spread of military bases and installations in the colonial Territories hinders the economic development of those Territories and ruins their environment; it also threatens the security of their peoples. As proof of the danger posed by military bases and installations and their deleterious consequences, suffice it to point out by way of example that United States military defence installations on the island of Guam occupy about one third of its territory. Indeed, 2,000 of the 17,500 hectares of land on the Anderson military base are utilized for the stockpiling of ammunition.

In Namibia there are 100,000 South African military personnel, which amounts to one soldier for every 12 Namibian citizens. Military bases of the Pretoria régime are being used as springboards for attacks against Angola, in addition to their basic purpose of oppressing and suppressing the Namibian people while protecting foreign investments and interests in the Territory.

Similar conditions prevail in other Territories such as Bermuda and the Turks and Caicos Islands, as well as the Virgin Islands under United States Administration, where air and naval bases proliferate and vast quantities of nuclear weapons are stored.

The dismantling of these bases is a basic condition not only for the elimination of colonialism in those colonial Territories, but for reinforcing international peace and security, protecting the world's natural resources and environment. It would also advance the liberation struggle and strengthen international peace and security.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): For many years now, the question of the rapacious activities of foreign monopolies in colonial Territories has been a subject of consideration in various United Nations bodies, in particular in the Committee on decolonization. The world's fixed attention on this question is quite deserved since the concomitant predatory exploitation of the natural and human resources carried out by colonial and imperialist forces is the primary obstacle to the liberation of peoples still fettered by colonial enslavement.

To its credit the United Nations has taken many proper and useful decisions which reveal the plundering essence of the activities of foreign monopolies in colonial Territories and the great danger they pose to the liberation of peoples languishing under colonial oppression. United Nations decisions strongly condemn the activities of foreign economic and other interests in colonial countries in southern Africa that hinder the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which asserts the inalienable right of peoples in colonial Territories in southern Africa to self-determination and independence and to the exploitation of the natural resources of their land for their own benefit and also recommends specific steps to halt such activities. However, those resolutions of the United Nations still remain unfulfilled.

The main reason for their non-implementation lies in the fact that the Western States, primarily the United States and several other member countries of NATO, are not interested in changing the situation in colonial and dependent Territories. Their economic, military and strategic interests are served by maintaining colonialism and racism in those Territories, since the existence of colonial systems creates the most favourable conditions for investment by monopolistic capital for further super profits through an unhindered and rapacious plundering and exhaustion of non-renewable natural resources and the inhuman imperialist exploitation of the local population in colonial, dependent and Trust Territories. The desire to maintain these conditions lies at the basis of the stubborn resistance of the imperialist Powers and transnational corporations to the full implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

The continued existence of hotbeds of racism and apartheid in the southern part of the African continent serves the long-term political, economic and military-strategic goals of the United States and other members of NATO which consider South Africa to be a bulwark for the struggle against an independent Africa and as a military base in a strategically important region. It is thanks to the close co-operation of these countries and their transnational corporations that the economic and military potential of South Africa is increasing. The close economic ties of the Western countries with the apartheid régime are well known. Companies of the United States, the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany and a whole range of Western States are actively operating in South Africa and their activities are growing every year. Over the last few years the number of foreign companies in South Africa has grown by more than a thousand and in 1981 reached a total of 3,035.

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

Existing data show that direct foreign investments in South Africa at the beginning of 1979 amounted to \$11 billion and the general investments by 1980 reached R 30 billion, 70 per cent of which came from the United Kingdom, the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany.

Western banks do not refuse to make loans to the apartheid régime. According to data from the Centre against Apartheid, from 1979 to mid-1982 Pretoria was granted loans to the tune of \$2,156,800. The latest flagrant fact in this respect is the grant by the International Monetary Fund of a loan to South Africa amounting to \$1 billion. That action has been condemned by the world community, in particular in decisions of the International Conference in Support of the Struggle of the Namibian People for Independence. It has been shown that such assistance not only does not promote the enhancement of the well-being of the overwhelming majority of the people of South Africa but also increases the military potential of the Pretoria régime and allows it grossly to suppress the people of Namibia and carry out harsh acts of aggression against neighbouring countries.

Southern Africa is one of the most important sources of non-ferrous and rare minerals, metals, uranium and diamonds which bring the imperialist monopolies super-profits through the inhuman exploitation of the labour of the African population. Namibia has been subjected to particularly intensive plundering and exploitation by foreign transnational corporations.

A document prepared by the United Nations Secretariat states:

"The foreign economic interests involved in the exploitation of Namibian resources include many of the world's largest corporations and financial institutions from South Africa, Western Europe and North America. According to a recent report of the Commission on Transnational Corporations (E/C.10/1983/Add.1), there are 90 transnational corporations with interests in Namibia, of which 35 are based in the United Kingdom, 26 in South Africa, 19 in the United States, 3 each in the Federal Republic of Germany and Canada and 1 each in France and Sweden. All of these corporations conduct

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

their operations by means of licences issued by the colonial Pretoria régime or its illegal administration in Namibia." (A/AC.109/744, para. 13)

The defenders of the interests of transnational corporations frequently assert that these monopolies allegedly bring benefits to the Territories and countries where they operate since they supposedly promote the development of the economies of those countries and improve the living standards of their populations. The real situation is quite clearly described in the same Secretariat document, which states:

"The economically active population of Namibia numbers over 500,000....

"In 1981, some 90,000, of the economically active population of Namibia were unemployed....

"... the average white wage has remained 10 times that of black workers. In 1979, the average white wage was \$US 1,222 per month. Blacks earned an average of \$US 130 per month, an income less than the 1978 base subsistence level of \$US 190 for a family...."

(Ibid., paras. 39-41)

Those eloquent facts speak for themselves and commentary would be superfluous.

The Soviet delegation cannot but note the correctness of that evaluation of the activities of foreign monopolies which was given in one of the documents of the United Nations Council on Namibia -- document A/AC.131/92 -- which states:

"Transnational corporations give direct support to the apartheid régime by injecting large amounts of capital, paying taxes and developing significant sources of foreign exchange earnings. More importantly, the activities of foreign economic and financial interests also serve to reinforce and perpetuate South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia." (A/AC.131/92, para. 27)

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

The interest of transnational corporations in maintaining the sources that obtain super-profits for them significantly determines the position of Western Powers which are striving to maintain the colonial régime in Namibia. This is to be seen in particular in the delaying tactics and manoeuvres on the question of a Namibian settlement on the basis of the relevant Security Council resolution and attempts to link that solution in such a way as to ensure the unhindered exploitation of that country in the future by foreign capital. In essence, it is a question of an alliance between the South African racists, the most aggressive circles of the West and the powerful transnational corporations - an alliance based on the crude exploitation and suppression of the African population.

Speaking about super-profits of transnational corporations and foreign interests in southern Africa and other colonial Territories, the Soviet delegation would like to take this opportunity to deviate from our statement on the essence of the question before us today to draw attention to the following.

At its last session the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 37/31, requested the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations to complete the work on transnational corporations and the profits derived from their activities in colonial Territories. In accordance with that resolution, the special session of the United Nations to be held on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples was to be supplied with that report, and the discussion in this Committee on foreign economic interests impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples was to be the report's content. In accordance with that same General Assembly resolution, a report should be submitted to the General Assembly at its forthcoming, thirty-eighth, session - and that is in the near future.

Through you, Mr. Chairman, we should like an explanation of how matters stand with regard to the preparation of that register and why the Committee, when discussing this question, did not have the register and could not therefore use the result of the work assigned to the Centre on Transnational Corporations.

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

We should like to know whether that document has been prepared by the Centre and, if so, why we have not received it here. If it has not been prepared, then obviously the Committee on decolonization should be informed by the Centre on Transnational Corporations of the reason for its delay.

I shall now return to my statement on the substance of the matter being discussed today.

Furthermore, a document available to the members of the Committee on decolonization clearly shows that Western monopolies, above all those of the colonial Powers, continue to play a dominant role in the economy of small colonial and dependent Territories, subjecting them to plunder and exploitation of their natural resources. The activities of foreign monopolies in small colonial Territories supported by the ruling colonial Powers are restraining the growth of the national self-awareness of the peoples of those Territories and hindering the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

With reference to the existence of the so-called specific conditions of small colonial Territories - limited size, small population and geographical isolation -- as well as to the other, clearly groundless arguments advanced by the colonial Powers - such as the assertion that the peoples of such Territories are supposedly quite prepared to continue to live in a status of colonial dependence - it is obvious that the Administering Authorities are attempting by every means to slow down the process of liberating those Territories and striving to impose and legalize new forms of colonial and semi-colonial dependency under such neo-colonialist rubrics as commonwealth, association or integration, thereby eluding United Nations jurisdiction over small colonial Territories in order to establish their total domination in those regions of the world.

The economies of the small Territories, dependent to a significant extent on tourism and on the activities of foreign companies, are today in a serious situation. The colonial activities of the Administering Authorities create acute social problems in such Territories. There is an increase in unemployment and poverty, and many of the inhabitants are forced to leave their homelands in search of work. A catastrophic economic situation continues to exist in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands - Micronesia - where economic development is totally dependent upon the actions of the United States. The Administering Authority has not fulfilled its obligations under the United Nations Charter and the Trusteeship Agreement to develop a viable economy and to reduce the Territories' dependency on foreign financing. At the latest session of the Trusteeship Council this year, representatives from Micronesia spoke of the lack of infrastructure in the Territory. They spoke of unemployment and about the lack of water, electricity, communications and transport. Year after year their trade balance shows a deficit and there is a decrease in the traditional forms of production. As Micronesian representatives noted, medical services are in a catastrophic state in a large part of the Territory. Three and a half decades is more than enough time for the State given the Mandate for administering the Trust Territory to show that it has truly undertaken every effort - in the words of the Charter -

"to promote the political, social, and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the Trust Territories, and their progressive development towards self-government or independence."

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

However, not only has the United States not promoted the economic progress of the people of Micronesia, it has done everything it can to prevent the creation of an independent and viable economy in the Territory. As a result, as Micronesian representatives have pointed out, the population of the Territory is today less self-sufficient than it was at the beginning of the Trusteeship period. Micronesia's economic dependence on the United States gives Washington the opportunity to dictate to and impose a neo-colonial political status upon the people of the Trust Territory, turning Micronesia into a possession of the United States.

Just a few days ago the Committee discussed the situation in Puerto Rico. United States policy in Puerto Rico leads, each year, to a further impoverishment of the 3 million Puerto Rican people. The living standards of a vast number of Puerto Ricans are below the official poverty level. There is raging unemployment in Puerto Rico, as has been stated here in the Committee by representatives of the Puerto Rican people.

The Soviet delegation considers that the ceaseless plundering activities of the imperialist monopolies in southern Africa and in small colonial Territories demands that the United Nations undertake the most serious efforts to put an end to the existing situation and to eliminate this obstacle to the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The Soviet Union condemns the plundering by foreign monopolies in southern Africa and the small colonial Territories, which is one of the basic obstacles to full implementation of the Declaration on decolonization. It rejects the policy of imperialist exploitation and plundering of these Territories and supports the demands of the African countries for an immediate withdrawal of capital from South Africa and Namibia and for the immediate cessation of all economic co-operation with the racist régime of Pretoria. We call upon the Western Powers and transnational monopolies to cease all economic, financial, or other assistance to the racist South African régime and we call for the strict implementation of the existing United Nations resolutions and decisions on this question.

The Soviet Union supports the demands of the African States for the immediate imposition by the Security Council of comprehensive mandatory sanctions in accordance with Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

Mr. NENGRAHARY (Afghanistan) (interpretation from French): In the opinion of my delegation, the activities of foreign economic and other interests have made

(Mr. Nengrahary, Afghanistan)

the situations in Non-Self-Governing Territories far more dangerous than ever. Foreign interests encourage the perpetuation of colonialism in those Territories. Vast sectors of Non-Self-Governing Territories are under the complete control of interests implanted in them by the Western Powers, above all by the United States of America.

Article 73 of the United Nations Charter stipulates that

"Members of the United Nations which have or assume responsibilities for the administration of territories whose peoples have not yet attained a full measure of self-government recognize the principle that the interests of the inhabitants of these territories are paramount, and accept as a sacred trust the obligation to promote to the utmost, within the system of international peace and security established by the present Charter, the well-being of the inhabitants of these territories".

Had this been taken into account, the exploitation of the natural and human resources of Non-Self-Governing Territories by economic and other foreign interests would not have impaired those Territories so gravely. As a flagrant example let us take Namibia, which is occupied by the racist régime of South Africa. The principal vital sector of the Namibian economy, mining, is under the complete control of interests implanted there by Canada, France, the United States and the United Kingdom. According to the working papers prepared by the Secretariat at the end of the 1970s, net profits realized by the foreign economic interests represented approximately 45 per cent of the domestic gross national product of Namibia, 36 per cent of which was taken abroad in the form of dividends and profits. Less than 10 per cent reached the black labourers and merchants who represent more than 90 per cent of the population. The per capita income in Namibia in 1980 was R3,000 for whites, whereas for black salaried workers it was only R125. According to a report recently issued by the Commission on Transnational Corporations, 90 transnational corporations have interests in Namibia, 35 of which have headquarters in the United Kingdom, 26 in South Africa, 9 in the United States, 3 in the Federal Republic of Germany, 3 in Canada, one in France and one in Sweden. All of these activities demonstrate that the colonial Powers, either directly or through financial and other institutions, attempt to maintain colonialism as a permanent status in those Territories.

(Mr. Nengrahary, Afghanistan)

In exploiting the natural resources of Non-Self-Governing Territories, Western monopolies are helping to maintain colonialism. All of this demonstrates that, rather than preparing the Territories for economic independence and promoting the social progress of their populations and defending their fundamental rights and freedoms without any discrimination whatsoever, the colonial Powers and their interests have kept the Non-Self-Governing Territories in a state of economic dependence.

Furthermore, it is perfectly clear the the colonial Powers through foreign economic and other interests attempt to obstruct the efforts of the populations of these Territories to exercise their right to self-determination and independence.

With regard to the military activities of the colonial Powers in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, the concern of the international community and of the populations of these Territories themselves has on many occasions been reflected in international forums. The military activities of these colonial Powers and the military measures they have taken not only in Territories under their administration but also throughout the world are clearly obstructing the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The presence of military bases and installations in the Non-Self-Governing Territories has only one purpose: to keep these Territories in so far as possible under the control of the colonizers and to endanger the stability of the region and of the world at large.

The illegal occupation of Namibia by the puppet army of the racist régime of South Africa is an example that corroborates the comments I have made in this connection. The presence of 100,000 South African armed troops in Namibia, which runs counter to the interests of the Territory's population, is a serious threat not only to the peace and security of the region but also to international peace and security.

Paragraph 15 of working paper A/AC.109/743 states the following:

"South Africa is already believed to have the ability to mobilize a force of over 400,000 men. The new system could bring another 800,000 into the reserve pool." (A/AC.109/743, para. 15)

(Mr. Nengrahary, Afghanistan)

South Africa has also recruited many mercenaries in order to conduct military activities in Namibia and carry out incursions beyond the border. Military expenditures are increasing day by day, while the large majority of the population is suffering poverty. South Africa could never continue its illegal occupation of Namibia and commit crimes against the Namibian people if it did not feel that it enjoyed the support, backing and direct and indirect assistance of the United States and other members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and Israel in the economic, military, diplomatic and political spheres. The existence of military bases and installations in Namibia, Guam, Puerto Rico, Micronesia and other Non-Self-Governing Territories threatens the populations of those Territories and their national liberation movements struggling for independence.

Afghanistan reiterates its position that the activities of foreign economic and other interests and the presence of military installations of the colonial Powers in Territories under their administration constitute an obstacle to the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the relevant resolutions adopted by the various bodies and organs of the United Nations system, as well as those adopted by the Non-Aligned Movement, concerning the inalienable right of colonial peoples to self-determination and independence. We demand once again the immediate cessation of all these colonial activities, so that the populations of these Territories can be allowed to live as human beings enjoying freedom and well-being.

Mr. SHOWKATIAN (Islamic Republic of Iran): Since this is the first time I have spoken in the Committee, I should like, on behalf of my delegation, to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the Chairmanship of the Special Committee. My delegation is confident that the work of this Committee under your chairmanship will be of the highest calibre for the benefit of peoples still living under colonialism.

The implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples is feasible only through firm actions by dedicated believers in the true spirit and values of the human person. Indeed, peaceful negotiations, compromises and conventional efforts have delayed the achievement of a just solution leading to the independence of colonized peoples and Territories. That United Nations Security Council resolution 435 (1978) is flouted by the South African régime and its supporters is an indication of the need for action rather than rhetoric.

The vast economic and military co-operation of the United States with the apartheid Government has strengthened the position of South Africa against the oppressed people of Namibia. The sale of radar equipment by the United Kingdom to the treacherous régime of South Africa to monitor the rightful activities of the Namibian people against the usurper forces of the racist régime is postponing independence. The nuclear reactor facilities which have been provided by French colonialists are tacit approval of the use of rhetoric, instead of an attempt at establishing a peaceful settlement in Namibia.

According to the working papers on Namibia in documents A/AC.109/743 and A/AC.109/744, the usurper régime of South Africa has confiscated some 90 per cent of the most arable farmland of Namibia for utilization exclusively by the racist minority. It is stated therein that the foreign economic interests involved in the exploitation of Namibian resources in the fields of mining, fishing and agriculture include 90 of the world's largest corporations and financial institutions from the United States, South Africa, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, the Federal Republic of Germany and Sweden.

The working papers also state that the South African defence budget for 1982-1983 represents a 7 per cent increase in its military expenditure. There are approximately 85 to 90 South African bases in Namibia using that Territory

(Mr. Showkatian, Islamic Republic of Iran)

as a launching pad to attack the neighbouring States of southern Africa. In this regard the apartheid régime of South Africa has received extensive military aid and equipment from the United States, the occupiers of Palestine, France and other sources.

Along with the contradictory conduct of the members of the "contact group", the military ties and intelligence services between the Zionist régime of Israel, an imperialist partner, and the racist Government of South Africa preclude a just solution to the problem of Namibia.

The United States policy of military linkage, with its irrelevant precondition, has placed a new obstacle to the justified settlement of the Namibian question leading to independence. The current United States Administration has continued to further its interests in South Africa with the strengthening of its military, economic and intelligence ties, thereby supporting the racist régime's aggression against and continued domination of the Namibian people through that régime's overt and shameless intervention in Namibia. The United States policy of co-operation with the multinational corporations works only to appease the movements of the oppressed peoples fighting against the apartheid régime of South Africa in order further to guarantee United States industrial and economic survival.

(Mr. Showkhatian, Islamic Republic of Iran)

The working papers on small Territories indicate that economic and military activities in the small Territories benefit only the Administering Powers. There is no indication that the people of the small Territories have been informed about or consulted on military and economic arrangements in those Territories. The people of the dependent Territories are not acknowledged and they are not educated on their right to use their own natural resources. The exploitation of labour and natural resources of the dependent Territories is deep-rooted in the nature of colonial Powers.

The people of the Territories are simply victims of the economic and military activities of the colonizers. The Administering Powers, for their hegemonistic purposes, are expanding their largest military installations in the dependent Territories of the Caribbean and Western Atlantic regions -- namely, Bermuda, the Turks and Caicos and the United States Virgin Islands -- undermining the right to self-determination of the people of the Territories.

The colonialist and imperialist forces, along with the racist usurpers, have for years dominated and plundered the human and natural resources of the African continent as well as other Territories. The inhuman policies of the "civilized" colonizers, mainly arising from their racist attitude and superiority complex, must be taken into serious account. It is time all elements, forces and Governments dedicated to the freedom and independence of the oppressed people condemned the illegal occupation and domination of Namibia by the apartheid régime and all its imperialist and Zionist cohorts, and wholeheartedly supported the just and heroic struggle of the Namibian people.

From the point of view of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the elimination of all military activity and the reduction of the vast economic engagement of colonial Powers in small and Non-Self-Governing Territories, together with United Nations supervision to improve the education and social affairs of the people of the Territories, are the appropriate approach for the decolonization of Territories.

In the case of Namibia, the negotiations and political approaches by one or two bodies hold back the prompt establishment of an independent and self-governing State by the Namibian people. An impartial settlement is

(Mr. Showkatian, Islamic Republic of Iran)

attainable only through the joint co-operation of the members of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the non-aligned countries, the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) and the front-line States, within the framework of the immediate implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). Furthermore, the removal of South Africa from membership of the United Nations will guarantee progress in attaining an independent Namibia.

Mr. PULZ (Czechoslovakia) (interpretation from Russian):

I should like to speak about the military activities of colonial Powers in colonial Territories. These activities are among the main obstacles to a speedy granting of full independence to colonial countries and peoples. The use of colonial Territories for military purposes within the framework of the aggressive strategic conceptions of the colonial Powers is, together with the economic exploitation of those Territories, the major motive for the continuation of colonial domination.

That is why Namibia and the island Territories in the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans and in the Caribbean basin are used by the Administering Authorities as military bases. They are strong points for suppressing the national liberation movements, for interfering in the internal affairs of independent States and for carrying out acts of aggression. The maintenance of the military bases of imperialist Powers in those Territories, despite United Nations decisions, is a real threat to peace and the security of peoples.

This is to be seen above all in Namibia. As is stressed in documents of the United Nations Secretariat and information in the world press, South Africa has turned Namibia into a test ground for new types of armaments and new methods of organization, and the military use of armed forces has been turned into a bridgehead for aggression against sovereign African countries -- Angola, Mozambique, Zambia and Botswana. It is obvious that Namibia is the

(Mr. Pulz, Czechoslovakia)

sphere of the greatest military efforts of South Africa aimed at maintaining the colonial, racist system of oppression in southern Africa.

It is also obvious that the Pretoria régime would not be able to carry out such activities in Namibia without the direct support of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries, which continue to violate the relevant decisions of the United Nations, including General Assembly resolution 37/233 A of 20 December 1982. As we see in Secretariat document A/AC.109/743, for seven years since the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 385 (1976) the South African armed force in Namibia has increased more than fivefold, despite attempts to settle the problem in the spirit of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). By 1981, it was estimated to be 100,000-strong and when the civil forces with territorial training of various kinds are taken into account the number reaches 180,000. This is made possible by the recruitment of a large number of mercenaries and the compulsory call-up of Namibians to military service. The level of militarization in Namibia is one of the highest in the world. One in every 12 inhabitants of the country is a soldier.

As we see from the Secretariat document, certain transnational corporations functioning illegally in Namibia and financial institutions of Western countries help South Africa to strengthen its military machine. South African troops occupying Namibia and carrying out acts of aggression against neighbouring African countries are being supplied in ever-greater quantities with equipment produced in South Africa's arms factories. South Africa is producing under license from certain Western countries and Israel a large range of armaments, and it has become the world's tenth largest producer. Several Western countries continue to equip the army of the racist Pretoria régime, in violation of Security Council resolution 418 (1977) on the embargo on arms supplies, military equipment and matériel to South Africa.

(Mr. Pulz, Czechoslovakia)

According to statements by specialists, South Africa is capable of speedily developing the production of nuclear weapons. It is obvious that the policy of racist South Africa, which is turning into a nuclear Power, is very aggressive and is a threat to the security of African countries and to peace throughout the world. We should call on the Western States to observe strictly the obligatory embargo on arms supplies to South Africa established under Security Council resolution 418 (1977). We should also make an urgent appeal to the Security Council for the immediate implementation of comprehensive, mandatory sanctions against South Africa under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

The arms race and military psychosis forced upon us by the military-industrial complex of imperialism are reflected in the practices of the colonial and administering Powers. They are also evident in the creation and maintenance of military bases and military installations in the so-called small Territories, with the clear desire for their further expansion. This practice fully coincides with United States plans to set up its Rapid Deployment Force.

For example, the Territory of Guam is used as a major naval base of the Administering Authority, the United States. The military bases of the United States occupy 26,000 hectares, that is, approximately one third of the territory of the island. Twenty per cent of its inhabitants are military personnel in active military service and members of their families. The strong military presence of the United States in Guam has an adverse effect on the entire life of the island.

The military activities and installations of the United Kingdom and the United States on Ascension Island and on the territory of the island of Saint Helena come under the category of military activities and measures which hinder implementation of the Declaration. Ascension Island played an important role during the military conflict in the Malvinas - Falklands Islands - as a centre for the supply and refuelling of United Kingdom naval and air divisions set to the South Atlantic. This designation in strategic plans of the Administering Authority continues. The airfield on the island, the oil pipeline and other installations also serve the military purposes of the Administering Authority. As the United Nations Secretariat document says, the permanent population on Ascension Island has increased as a result of the use of the island for military purposes by about 700 to 800 people. As was pointed out by some of the members of the Committee

(Mr. Pulz, Czechoslovakia)

on Small Territories, this is a misuse of an independent Territory for purposes of suppression by a foreign Power. Indeed, as part of the American missile-tracking system, United States bases continue to operate upon that island.

Secretariat documents also show the significant military presence of the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada in Bermuda, and of the United States in the Turks and Caicos Islands. The United Kingdom is drawing the territory of its colony into the sphere of military training and manoeuvres. The activities of officers of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization are in full accordance with the evaluation of the extremely important role of the dependent Territories in the Caribbean. Unfortunately, the decisions of the United Nations, the will and interests of the people of the colonial Territories and their right to self-determination are secondary to those officers.

Our greatest concern is caused by the military activities of the United States in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and its use for the military and strategic interests of the Administering Authority. Bikini atoll and Enewetak have been totally converted into testing-grounds for nuclear and hydrogen weapons. The unfavourable consequences for the Territory are far-reaching. The military plans of the Pentagon have led to the expulsion of the inhabitants of Micronesia from 62 per cent of the Territory. The threat to the life and health of present and future generations of inhabitants of the Territory is serious. The island of Kwajalein has been turned into an American missile-test-site. The United States is further intensifying its military activities in the Territory. Those activities of the United States are a serious threat, not just to the people of Micronesia, but also to countries bordering this region. The creation of United States military bases and strongholds in that Territory indicates the intention of the Administering Authority to maintain and strengthen control over vast regions of the Pacific Ocean and to strengthen its military position in that part of the world.

The United States is also making intensive use of Puerto Rico for its aggressive military purposes, and it now has its largest Latin American bases there. Fourteen per cent of the territory of Puerto Rico is occupied in this way. The Pentagon plans also include further steps to expand the military presence of the United States in Puerto Rico, not excluding the deployment of nuclear weapons. The military bases of the United States are intended not just for control and monitoring of the inhabitants of Puerto Rico: they

(Mr. Pulz, Czechoslovakia)

are positioned for attacks against progressive States and movements in the Caribbean and in Latin America as a whole.

Those are just a few examples of the activities which the colonial Powers are carrying out in dependent Territories, activities which are hindering the implementation of the Declaration on decolonization.

The position of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic on the question of military activities and measures which the colonial Powers are carrying out in Territories under their administration is based on the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, above all on the programme of action contained in resolution 35/118. In accordance with these fundamental instruments and other documents we consider that the military activities and measures of colonial and occupying Powers in Territories under their colonial and racist domination are major obstacles to the full implementation of the Declaration and we are in favour of an immediate and unconditional elimination of military bases and installations of colonial Powers in dependent Territories. This is why the Czechoslovak delegation supports all effective measures that would put an end to such military activities, which contradict the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on decolonization.

Mr. MORTIMER (United Kingdom): I had not intended to speak in this debate this afternoon, but the representative of Czechoslovakia has just made some extremely inappropriate remarks about an island that is a dependency of the United Kingdom, namely, Ascension Island, alleging that the presence of military facilities on that island constituted an impediment to self-determination.

May I just say, as my colleagues and I have pointed out in the Sub-Committee on Small Territories, that Ascension Island has no indigenous population. It cannot therefore be described as a Non-Self-Governing Territory as laid down in Article 73 of the United Nations Charter. It therefore falls outside the remit of the Committee of 24.

May I also remind the Committee that the item that is being discussed here concerns military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration which might be impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. If there is no population whose right to self-determination can be impeded, what right has the representative of Czechoslovakia to raise this question here?

The CHAIRMAN: As there are no further speakers, the Committee has thus concluded the general debate on the item pertaining to the activities of foreign economic and other interests.

The Committee has before it in document A/AC.109/L.1481 a working paper containing a draft resolution on the item prepared by me which was distributed on 16 August. The Committee will take action on this draft at its next meeting.

With reference to the point raised by the representative of the Soviet Union concerning the preparation by the Centre on Transnational Corporations of the report called for by General Assembly resolution 36/51, I wish to draw attention to a note dated 31 March addressed to me by the Executive Director of the Centre which was distributed to members in aide-memoire 13/83. In that note the Executive Director stated, inter alia, as follows:

(The Chairman)

"In view of the difficulties regarding collection of data, particularly on profits, the large number of companies that are involved, and the unwillingness or inability of a number of corporations to furnish such material, the completion of the register, including information on profits, is likely to be extremely difficult. In any event, whatever progress the Centre can achieve in this regard will be determined only after several months, after it is able to obtain and analyse the response from the companies concerned. Accordingly, it is suggested to the members, for their consideration, that the report be submitted to the Special Committee in September 1983, simultaneously with the presentation to the General Assembly."

I requested the Centre a few weeks ago to let us know as to when it intended to submit the report. I will inform members of any reply I may receive in this connection.

QUESTION OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS (MALVINAS) (A/AC.109/752; A/AC.109/L.1486)

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has before it a working paper prepared by the Secretariat, contained in document A/AC.109/752, as well as a draft resolution on the item, contained in document A/AC.109/L.1486.

I wish to inform members that I have received a request from the delegation of Argentina to participate in the Committee's consideration of the item. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee accedes to the request.

It was so decided.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Muñiz (Argentina) took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: In connection with the consideration of the item, members are aware that the Acting Civil Commissioner of the Territory has conveyed the wish of the Executive and Legislative Councils of the Territory to be given the opportunity to present their views on the item.

I call on the representative of Cuba, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Mr. LOPEZ DEL AMO (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. Chairman, I want to tell you how pleased I am to see you presiding over our work.

I should like to re-read here a declaration made on behalf of 20 Latin American countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela. This declaration was made before the Fourth Committee at the last session in connection with the decision adopted by the General Assembly to authorize petitioners now residing in the Malvinas Islands to be heard by it. I shall quote from that declaration of the 20 Latin American States:

"First, the Malvinas Islands belong by right to the Republic of Argentina, to whose effective sovereignty they must be restored in accordance with the fundamental principle of the Charter of the United Nations which enshrines the right of States to territorial integrity.

"Secondly, the original population of the Malvinas Islands was the Argentine population which was expelled when the islands were illegally occupied by force in 1833. Since that year, Argentines have not been allowed to have permanent residence in the Territory.

"Thirdly, all those circumstances determine that those who today inhabit the Malvinas Islands do not have the legitimate relationship with the territory necessary in order to exercise the right to self-determination. The Latin American countries have always been zealous defenders of that right, but in the special and particular case of the Malvinas Islands they consider that the present residents of the Territory, including the petitioners, do not meet the requirements established by the United Nations in order to exercise such a right."

That, basically, is the position of the General Assembly itself, which in its three resolutions on the question of the Malvinas Islands, established that the only way of decolonizing the Territory is by settling the dispute over sovereignty between Argentina and the United Kingdom, and that the Governments of those two States are the only parties to the dispute. Latin America, whose position on the Malvinas Islands neither can nor should be ignored - since the Malvinas are a colonial Territory located within its geographical ambit - is confident that the Fourth Committee and the General Assembly will in no way amend the terms of reference for the decolonization of the Malvinas established in resolutions 2065 (XX), 3160 (XXVIII) and 31/49.

(Mr. Lopez Del Amo, Cuba)

Any alteration of its terms of reference against the will of the people of the region would only prolong this serious issue. Nor would it be realistic or viable, since it would lack the indispensable support of Latin America. We feel that the position of the 20 Latin American countries on the issue before us is most pertinent, which is why I have reiterated it.

The CHAIRMAN: The statement of the representative of Cuba will be fully reflected in the records of this meeting.

I call on the representative of the United Kingdom.

Sir John THOMSON (United Kingdom): On a point of order, the intervention that we just heard is the longest point of order I have ever heard expounded in the United Nations, and I must say I find it very difficult to see how it can possibly be classified as a point of order. I protest that it should be accepted as a point of order.

The CHAIRMAN: I take note of the point of order raised by the representative of the United Kingdom.

With the consent of the Committee, I now invite Mr. Anthony T. Blake and Mr. John E. Cheek, representative Councillors of the local government, to take places at the Committee table.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Blake and Mr. Cheek took places at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Blake.

Mr. BLAKE: I am very grateful to you, Mr. Chairman, for giving my fellow Councillor and me the opportunity to appear before this Committee once again. The Falkland Islands Government attaches great importance to ensuring that, in its consideration of our islands, the Committee should hear directly from the elected representatives of the islanders.

When my colleague and I last appeared before this Committee, we described the destruction and damage caused in the Falklands by the invading Argentine forces. Over the last year, the Islanders, with the help of the British Government

(Mr. Blake)

and elements of the British forces in the Falklands, have been engaged in the major task of rehabilitation.

The disruption of our economy and to the way of life of the inhabitants has been considerable. Pastures have been lost because of the risk of unidentified mines and access by the Islanders to recreational areas is still not possible for the same reason. Progress has been made in identifying and in some instances clearing mines. However, there has been a steady number of casualties to members of the British Armed Forces as well as to our livestock, particularly horses, from Argentine mines. Although a few maps have been found of the Argentine minefields, these give only an approximate location of the minefields, and the placement of the individual mines is proving unreliable. Sadly, only 10 days ago another army officer lost his leg as a result of an Argentine mine situated outside an Argentine marked minefield.

Damage to roads and tracks has also caused considerable problems. While progress has been made in restoring them, we still have difficulty in travelling about Stanley and the surrounding area. Several Islanders lost their houses as a result of the Argentine invasion, and the shortage of labour and of building materials on the islands has meant that many have had to spend considerable periods living in temporary accommodation; new housing is only now becoming available. Coping with the results of the damage has been a major task for a community of only 1,800 people. The British Government has made available £15 million for the purpose of rehabilitation, and although this is generous it will not be enough fully to repair all the damage caused by the Argentine invasion. In this task of rehabilitation we have been helped by civilian contractors and a number of Army Engineers reflecting on the large number of military personnel at present in the Islands.

Thus the process of rehabilitation is not complete, but it is well under way, and we are now able to give more thought to the future economic development of the Islands. Our programme for this is closely geared to the British Government's decision on the recommendations made by Lord Shackleton last year. These include the provision of £31 million over

(Mr. Blake)

the next six years. These funds, together with such funds as we designate from our own budget, will be and in some cases are already being applied to the improvement of agriculture, a new jetty in Port Stanley, improved roads and tracks, better water and electricity supplies, improved sewerage and telephone systems, and the possibilities of salmon ranching and wool processing. The Falkland Islands Development Corporation has been established in the Islands by the Falkland Islands Government to co-ordinate the implementation of this programme. We Islanders are thus increasingly taking on the responsibility for planning our own economic future. We are always interested to hear from private enterprises which are thinking of contributing to our economic life to join those which are at present establishing themselves in the islands.

There is one aspect of Lord Shackleton's recommendations on which there is a degree of misunderstanding. His report advocated the transfer of ownership of many of the large farms in our islands, with the main objective of creating smaller, owner-occupied farms. The British Government decided that the gradual approach to land redistribution would be more in keeping with the capacity of our existing agricultural population and also more consistent with the realistic immigration prospects.

My colleagues and I on the Islands councils, however, are ensuring that the momentum of this process of redistribution is not lost. At present the demand for land exceeds the amount offered for sale on the open market and we have taken the legislative steps that are necessary to accelerate matters. Our approach to this has been the democratic one of consulting the Islanders through a questionnaire asking whether and where they would like to buy or operate a piece of farm land. In response to that questionnaire a large percentage of people have indicated that they would like to own or operate a farm of their own, and to help fulfil those desires the Falkland Islands Government has purchased one of the large absentee-owned farms which has been now subdivided and so far six smaller units have been sold to Falkland Islanders.

(Mr. Blake)

We have been affected in other ways and we are making changes which will determine our future. I would be grateful if you would allow my colleague, Mr. Cheek, to explain these points to this distinguished Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Cheek.

Mr. CHEEK: I must say a few words about the impact of the events of 1982 on the attitudes of the islanders. We note the Argentine press has published the text of a letter which the Argentine authorities have apparently sent to the United Nations Secretary-General. This, according to the press report, refers to the possibility that the traditions and way of life of the Islands' inhabitants could be preserved with "guarantees and special statutes". This strikes us a completely cynical statement, especially when we in the islands remember how the Argentine treated us during their occupation last year. The islanders enjoy freedoms and rights under their existing system of government which Argentines themselves do not enjoy, and we have no wish to surrender them.

(Mr. Cheek)

There has been another consistent feature in the Argentine papers - a steady stream of statements by senior personalities - civilian as well as military - that they will one day succeed in the attempt which came to nothing in 1982. So, far from declaring that hostilities are at an end or renouncing the future use of force, the Argentine posture remains full of menace and completely at variance with its statements of last year, which indicated a de facto cessation of hostilities and the express intention not to renew them. We readily accept that it is the duty of the British Government, as part of its standing commitment to us, to deter the Argentines from further hostile acts and to defend the Islanders against renewed aggression. It is as part of this policy that a new air field is being constructed on the Islands, which will make it easier to reinforce them in the event of further aggression. Even more important to the Islanders is the fact that this air field will improve communications with the rest of the world, and its construction will meet recommendations - welcomed by us - made by Lord Shackleton in 1976 and again in 1982.

Britain has been accused by Argentina of building a vast military base on the Falklands. I should like to point out that prior to 2 April 1982 there was a garrison, if one could call it that, of 42 men - 42 men only - in the Islands. The continued presence of British forces is in response to the continuing Argentine threat. It has no wider significance, and the talk which we have heard of a "North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) base" is laughable. It may be worth noting that current British force levels are probably only one third the size of those Argentine forces on the Islands last year. It is also suggested that we are compelled to live in a condition akin to that of a military fortress, and that an overwhelming military presence is distorting our way of life. Initially, after 14 June last year, there were problems in the capital, Stanley, caused as much by the war as by the additional British forces, but, with goodwill and hard work on both sides, these problems have been overcome. Indeed, both of us have been struck by the very good relations between the

(Mr. Cheek)

Islanders and the British forces stationed on our territory. Those forces have provided us with considerable assistance in restoring the damage caused by the Argentine invasion, and we welcome them not only for the security which they provide but for the contributions they make to the life of our community. The commander of these forces, as Military Commissioner, has the right to attend our meetings. This is obviously helpful, but he has no vote, and the administration remains in the hands of the Executive and Legislative Councils under the chairmanship of the Civil Commissioner.

The Committee may recall from our visit last year that we have been considering the future structure of our administration. Before the invasion the Islanders had been giving thought to improvements which could be made in the internal administration of the Falkland Islands and in the system of elections. A questionnaire was circulated towards the end of 1982, and a report has now been prepared by a Select Committee of elected councillors. No final decisions have yet been made on the basis of that report, which is being discussed with the British Government, but, if accepted, it will increase the number of elected councillors, abolish nominated members and, although it will retain ex officio members as advisers they will lose their present right to vote in Council. We see this as continuing progress in the move towards democratic internal self-government. In addition, the responses from the Islanders to the questionnaire gave no hint of any wish to weaken the link with Britain. In the aftermath of the Argentine invasion and brief occupation the reverse is clearly the case.

Of course any Islander is perfectly free to express any opinion. Indeed, I understand that two Islanders now living in Argentina will shortly give you their views, which are those of a minute minority; their families -- in one case a wife and children -- are still living by choice in the Falkland Islands and have views which differ completely.

My colleague and I would be happy to answer any questions the Committee may wish to ask us after we have finished. However, I should like to conclude now

(Mr. Cheek)

by saying that we Falkland Islanders look to the United Nations to support and protect our right as people to determine our own future, to decide the form of Government under which we wish to live and to live in peace and security from further aggression. As a people we may be few in number, but this is not the main point. What matters is respect for the purposes and principles of the United Nations and a recognition of our right to self-determination as specifically expressed in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and reaffirmed in many Committee of 24 resolutions since.

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to announce that as indicated in aide-mémoire 30 and 36, Mr. Alexander Jacob Betts and Mr. Derek William Rozee, as concerned individuals, have expressed the wish to be heard by the Committee in its consideration of this item. If I hear no views to the contrary I shall take it that the Committee agrees to accede to their request.

It was so decided.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Alexander Jacob Betts and Mr. Derek William Rozee took places at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call upon Mr. Derek William Rozee.

Mr. ROZEE: I thank this Committee for allowing me to speak here today. I am a native of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) who has lived on the Argentine mainland as recently as 4 February 1982. On 13 April 1982 I adopted Argentine citizenship, which gives me the right and opportunity to enjoy the normal day-to-day activities and advantages that were not available to me in the Islands.

It is my wish that by presenting my point of view in this Committee I may demonstrate the feelings and ideas of a born Islander who lived the first 20 years of his life in the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) and who worked for three years on its farms as a labourer and for four years as a member of a sheep-shearing gang there.

(Mr. Rozee)

Now I am working on the Argentine mainland in one of the most important cement factories of the country, and my position and future there have improved enormously in comparison with what these were in the Islands. My future and the opportunities that I had in the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) were to become a farm labourer and to remain in that position until attaining the age of retirement at 65, with very little possibilities of any social or economic progress - a typical situation for a worker in a colonial environment.

For that reason I do not want my people in the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) consigned to the status of a Crown Colony under colonial governorship, isolated, backward and removed from the life of the South American continent, which could be linked to them. How much more appropriate it would be for the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) to become integrated with Argentina. How negative and distressing it is for the Islanders to live in dispute with the Argentine mainland.

The British Government says that the Islanders' wishes are paramount. But I would ask: Who are the Islanders they refer to? Are they the Falkland Islands Company Coalite Group, who are the owners of 43 per cent of the best grazing land over which they also have full mineral rights? Are they the English land-owners who have the lion's share of the profits? Are they the small but active political group linked to the companies and the Government? Or are they the normal, day-to-day Falkland Islanders who work with their hands in the isolated Islands with little possibility of improvement, albeit being the majority of the population, and who are so little informed and consulted?

(Mr. Rozee)

So who are the islanders whose wishes are "paramount" frequently mentioned by Prime Minister Thatcher?

In the future, what kind of support can the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) expect from Great Britain, which is approximately 7,000 miles away? And what have the British to show after 150 years in the archipelago?

We must say the Islands' experience in that field is very poor. As pointed out in Lord Shackleton's economic survey, the outflow of funds over the years was greater to the United Kingdom than from there to the Islands. We can add to that also the lack of roads, the poor communications and services for the well-being of the community.

Contrary to that, Argentina has shown its will to benefit the population of the Islands and its interests, as was done through the Anglo-Argentine Agreement of 1971, when so much was accomplished for the well-being of everyone there. Something to think about and compare are also the progressive and rich communities that arrived -- for instance, from Europe -- many years ago and established themselves on the Argentine mainland, of which the English and the Welsh are very good examples.

Finally, I should like to repeat here what was written in 1951 in a book about the question of the Malvinas:

"The question of the 'Malvinas' is still pending. Argentina will never yield her rights. Meantime Great Britain is keeping alive a spark that endangers the peace of the world and the security of the Americas. Let the full responsibility for whatever may befall rest squarely on her shoulders."

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing me this opportunity to express my views. It is my hope that this might in a way do something towards the resuming of negotiations between Argentina and Great Britain in the search for a peaceful and lasting solution to the dispute.

Mr. Rozee withdrew.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on Mr. Alexander Jacob Betts.

Mr. BETTS: I find myself once again in this world Organization to make a statement in reference to my homeland and that of my ancestors, the place in which the living members of my family still reside, and because of the need to continue the search to resolve the uneasy and apprehensive situation in which they live.

It is with much appreciation that I thank this Committee for listening to the words of an Islander from Malvinas concerned for the well-being of his people. I am speaking here today because of the need to find a solution to this Argentine-British sovereignty dispute over the Islands and because the actual situation and the promised return to the life that the Islanders love has not come about as was promised by the British Government. On the contrary, with the passing of each day the rhythm of life in the Islands intensifies and 'fortress Falklands' becomes more of a reality. The incidents that occurred some weeks ago in waters near to the Islands demonstrate the increasing instability of securing an effective peace in the zone.

This often repeated 'fortress Falklands' policy and the continued presence of a large military garrison, together with the suggested policy of an enlargement of the base on the Islands, is, I believe, very strongly affecting the Islanders' life. Can they continue to lead their accustomed normal and quiet life knowing that their Islands have been turned into a strategic military target?

In the international forum, among the British public and even among the selfsame British Government, it is recognized that sooner or later - and some have said sooner - Argentina and Great Britain will renew negotiations. In this connection I have heard that opinion polls in Great Britain taken within the last few months indicate that the majority of the English people are in favour of resuming negotiations. An effort on behalf of the Islanders should be made to solve this ambiguous situation in order to facilitate a process which eventually, as it has been said, will come sooner or later.

In the past, when Argentine-British negotiations were in progress, at no time did the man in the street in the Islands have access to reliable and factual information on what was happening at the international level or to what Argentina had suggested in the form of ideas and guarantees for the protection and the preservation of language, laws, culture and style of life in general on the Islands.

(Mr. Betts)

The few people who have had access to this information were members of both of the governing bodies of the local government - that is to say, legislative and executive councils - and they classified this information as being top secret. On the few occasions that the representatives of the people consulted the islanders, they merely asked: "Can we continue talks with Argentina and can we talk about sovereignty?" - and nothing else. Never a word of explanation of how - or what - arguments could be put forward as a solid base from which to build and negotiate in seriousness.

I recall that in December 1980, when the then elected member to Council for the West Falklands (Malvinas) made a tour of his constituency, he discovered that, in his own words, "I have spoken with nearly every adult of the West Falklands. I found only three who did not want anything at all to do with Argentina, and that in replying to the question of 'Do you consider that the Minister [of the Foreign Office] should discuss sovereignty with Argentina', the consistent reply was 'Yes'. Nobody wanted to return to the days of a once monthly sea voyage to a South American port, or lose the Argentine air service, or the medical service provided by the Argentine authorities".

One must bear in mind that the electorate of the West Falklands (Malvinas) represents 19.7 per cent of the total electorate of the Islands. If the opinion of these people had been given consideration, it could have been that the Argentine-British negotiations of 1981 and 1982 would not have continued in the accustomed stalemate.

The truth is that democracy under the British colonial law in the Falklands (Malvinas) has never been a reality, as has been boasted so many times. The Islanders never had the opportunity to consider Argentine proposals so that they could fairly judge them.

This, together with the lobbying of Members of Parliament by the Falkland Islands Committee in London, which has always been strongly influenced by the Falkland Islands Company, has been the cause of the failure and frustration of any solution to the sovereignty dispute. I cannot forget that this Committee was founded by three people: a London lawyer the then Chairman of the Falkland Islands Company in London and the owner of one of the largest farms on the East Falklands (Malvinas).

(Mr. Betts)

To conclude, I should like to draw attention to several very important observations.

First, the Shackleton Reports of 1976 and 1982 and the Colin Phipps Report on the hydrocarbonate potential of the area (1977) all pointed out that any future development of the archipelago would be considerably hampered without the effective co-operation of Argentina. Secondly, it is not a solution simply to replace the Argentine troops with English ones. Thirdly, United Nations General Assembly resolution 2621 (XXV) stated that the continuation of colonialism in all its forms is a crime and a transgression of the principles of international rights. Fourthly, I would propose the practice in the Falklands (Malvinas) of article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which says that everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This right includes the freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

It is my hope that all the ideas that I have expressed may, in a modest way, contribute to opening the road to a negotiated settlement between Argentina and Great Britain ~~that~~ would give a final solution to the existing situation. Perhaps a step in this direction would be to ensure that my statement and that of my colleague here today and the statements of me and my colleagues before the Fourth Committee on 2 November last year could reach the Islands and be made public there.

Mr. Betts withdrew.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, the Administering Power concerned. Welcome to the Committee, Sir.

Sir John THOMSON (United Kingdom): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It gives me much pleasure, Sir, as this is my first opportunity to address the Committee, to offer you my belated congratulations on your election by acclamation as the Committee's Chairman. You will know, Mr. Chairman, that we have always attached great importance to the work of the Committee of 24, not only because it addresses issues of direct concern to my Government but because it lies at the heart of many of the ideals and aspirations for which the United Nations stands. The high reputation enjoyed by the Committee has been due in no small part to the efforts

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

of your predecessors. We are confident that you will continue to maintain the exacting standards that they have set. You have the right combination of qualifications and abilities. We in the United Kingdom, as the Administering Power responsible for more than half the Territories that appear on the agenda of this Committee, are happy to extend to you our fullest co-operation.

I have to speak today on an item that, regrettably, remains a serious bone of contention between the United Kingdom and the Government of Argentina. Last year's conflict in the South Atlantic, although it took us all by surprise, was an unfortunate reality, and its consequences are still with us. The Argentine invasion of the Falklands is part of history. It is true that in his speech to the General Assembly last year the Argentine Foreign Minister managed to avoid all reference to it, but it is no good trying to pretend that it did not take place or that it is not important. The fact is that Argentina did invade the Falkland Islands, and, moreover, in direct defiance of a call by the Security Council to refrain from the use or threat of force, and in open violation of basic Charter principles about the peaceful settlement of disputes and the right to self-determination. No meaningful discussion of the Falkland Islands can take place except against that background. It is most unfortunate, but we have to live with the facts as they are.

The Islanders last year suffered an act of unashamed and unprovoked aggression. Their way of life was shattered and their pastoral economy was severely disrupted. Now the Islanders want to be left along to reconstruct their own future, secure in the knowledge that the United Kingdom has both the political will and the material means to deter, but, if unfortunately necessary, to repel future attempts to take the Islands by force. The Islanders want to remain British and to manage their own affairs. If anyone doubts that, let him visit the Islands; let him listen to the Islanders' elected representatives.

These are not half-truths quoted out of context, slanted to support our refusal to negotiate the transfer of sovereignty over the Falkland Islands to Argentina. That is all that Argentina means by negotiation. These are plain facts, to which Councillors Cheek and Blake, whom the Council has just heard, have attested from personal experience. Anyone who can read, anyone who was even remotely close to the events of last year, can understand that Argentine rule is not wanted in the Falkland Islands.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

I listened to some of the glowing things that Mr. Betts and Mr. Rozee said about life in the Argentine. With their practical experience of living in the Argentine, they are no doubt speaking accurately. Many Falkland Islanders know what conditions are in the Argentine. Nevertheless, they do not want to be ruled by the Argentine. The rule of the Argentines is simply not wanted in the Falkland Islands. The Argentine forces were regarded as usurpers, not, as some would believe, as liberators. It is simply a question of demonstrable and observable fact. Nor is it surprising. When one's home is seized, it is natural that one does not like the people who seized it. This has happened all too often around the world. All the peoples in Africa, the Middle East, Europe, Asia and the Falklands who have been invaded cry out to us to take a stand on principle, a stand on the Charter of the United Nations.

The Committee of 24 has received and considered British reports on the Falklands under Article 73 of the Charter for over 25 years. It is not necessary, therefore, in this body to enter into any argument about that. The record is clear. Suffice it for me to say here that we have no doubt as to our sovereignty over the Falkland Islands, and the moral and political validity of our title is resoundingly endorsed by the present-day facts. A settled and self-sustaining community with its own institutions and administration and a growing measure of self-government has seen uninterrupted development on the Falkland Islands since the 1830s. How many independent States, let alone dependent Territories, can claim a political and historical pedigree of such stability and quality? The Islanders have recently celebrated 150 years' continuous settlement on the Islands. Many have families going back six and seven generations. The Falkland Islands are their home and, like other people, they wish to determine their own destiny.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

In the Committee of 24, it is above all appropriate to speak of obligations, particularly the obligations placed by the Charter on the United Kingdom as the administering Power for the Falkland Islands. Those are responsibilities I hope no one in this Committee would seek to question. In the Charter provisions on self-determination, as well as in Article 73, we find chapter and verse showing that the British Government's responsibilities towards the people of the Falkland Islands and their Charter obligations mutually support and reinforce one another. Our policies have firm Charter backing and we will continue to pursue them.

The principal concern of this Committee is the economic and political well-being of non-self-governing peoples and, in particular, their right to self-determination. I have no doubt that Committee members know Article 73, resolution 1514 (XV) and the Friendly Relations Declaration by heart, but I hope they will bear with me if I quote from them today.

The first part of Article 73 is particularly significant:

"Members of the United Nations which have or assume responsibilities for the administration of territories whose peoples have not yet attained a full measure of self-government recognize the principle that the interests of the inhabitants of those territories are paramount".

These are profound words; they are strong words. If we as the administering Power accept that the interests of the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands are paramount, how can we negotiate with another Government about transferring sovereignty when that is manifestly contrary to what the people of the Islands see as their interests? The administering Power cannot move in direct contradiction to the wishes of the people of the Territories concerned. How can we say that their interests and their wishes stand in direct opposition to one another? Administering Powers accept "as a sacred trust the obligation to promote to the utmost [their] well-being". In particular, they undertake "to ensure, with due respect for the culture of the peoples concerned, their political, economic, social and educational advancement, their just treatment, and their protection against abuses".

May I add, in parentheses, Sir, that an invasion by 10,000 troops is an abuse indeed.

And it is the obligation of this Committee to support us in so doing. May I repeat - it is the obligation of this Committee to support us in carrying out our responsibilities as administering Power to ensure, with due respect for the culture of the people concerned, their political, economic, social and educational advancement, their just treatment and their protection against abuses. The abuses come from one direction only.

Some, though I would hope not members of this Committee, which has always maintained that factors such as the size of the population and geographical isolation should not militate against any people's right to self-determination in accordance with the Charter, may argue that Article 73 allows the interests of the inhabitants to be overridden. But it is surely not for one country to lay down where another people's interests lie. The inhabitants of a settled and largely self-governing Territory like the Falklands must surely be the best judge of that.

Suggestions to the contrary can only encourage interference in the internal affairs of other States and the unprincipled use of force. It is of course the classic argument used by those who wish to further their territorial ambitions. But for the United Kingdom as administering Power to accept that argument would be to acquiesce in handing over a people to alien and unwanted rule. It is not the sort of argument which the Committee of 24 by its very nature could accept. For it runs directly counter to the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which states that:

"The subjection of peoples to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation constitutes a denial of fundamental human rights, is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and is an impediment to the promotion of world peace and co-operation." (resolution 1514 (XV))

That seems to me a fairly comprehensive statement which applies directly to the Falklands.

I have dwelt at some length on the responsibilities placed on us by the Charter because it leads to the heart of the matter. It is the origin of my Government's co-operation with this Committee. The Committee has repeatedly declared its belief in the inalienable right of self-determination. "Inalienable" is a very strong word. It means birthright; it means you cannot get rid of it;

it means that the Falklanders have a right of self-determination which no one can take from them. The United Kingdom shares that view. In the process of decolonization, which this year will see a further two dependent Territories, Saint Kitts-Nevis and Brunei, achieve independence, we have held fast to that principle. There is no reason if, for example, the people of Tokelau, the Cocos Islands and Pitcairn can enjoy the right to self-determination, the people of the Falkland Islands cannot. This right is the right recognized in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which lies at the origin of this Committee. Forgive me, Sir, if I repeat what must already be so familiar to members of the Committee, but the second operative paragraph of the Declaration is particularly relevant:

"All peoples have the right to self-determination; by virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development." (ibid)

This is another very clear statement.

These words have been taken up into the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic and Social Rights, both of which have been ratified by the United Kingdom and extend to the Falkland Islands. They admirably and succinctly summarize what we stand for in the case of the Falkland Islanders. Moreover, the General Assembly itself has repeatedly asserted that self-determination is an inalienable right, of equal standing to other fundamental human rights. The General Assembly continues to assert that right on behalf of the remaining dependent Territories and also on behalf of certain other peoples. The right of self-determination, as propounded by the international community, offers many small and powerless peoples a moral and legal safeguard against being overwhelmed, assimilated or conquered by ambitious and unscrupulous neighbours. Like other human rights, self-determination is a concept which can be convenient to certain Governments on some occasions and inconvenient when it runs counter to their untrammelled exercise of arbitrary power. This is not, however, a reason to set it aside; on the contrary, such situations require that the principle be asserted with great conviction. It would not be reasonable to believe that members of a Committee seriously concerned with the future of the people of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories are willing to be selective in their application of this inalienable right.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

I should like members of this Committee to be in no doubt of our determination not to shirk our responsibilities under the United Nations Charter. The right to self-determination of any people, however small, is too precious a commodity to be sacrificed to satisfy the political whims of one particular country. There is much to talk about with the Argentine Government, and we should like nothing better than to normalize relations with a country with which, prior to last year's events, we were bound with close ties of friendship and co-operation in a variety of fields. We have never denied the existence of serious differences between the United Kingdom and the Government of Argentina. What we will not countenance is Argentina's insistence that its claims be accepted in advance. We continue to hear threats, some open, some implied, of further Argentine military action. That surely is no way for the Argentines to win friends in the Falklands, or, for that matter, in the United Nations.

The Committee of 24 has just heard the people of the Falklands speak through their freely elected representatives. They have also just heard two petitioners, Mr. Rozee and Mr. Betts, speak in what I thought was in a rather interesting way. I am sure that Mr. Betts' wish for his remarks to be heard in the Falklands will be gratified. I have no doubt it will be reported: it is a free society there. It is really strange for him to continue to believe that the islanders may have a doubt about what rule they wish to live under. Perhaps he would like to return to his family in the Falklands and find out what they think.

Mr. Rozee asked, "Who are the islanders?" and he replied rhetorically that "Were they not the normal day-to-day people?". Well, yes, indeed, the normal day-to-day people have voted. They have expressed their views to the world press. They have expressed their views through their elected representatives. It is their elected representatives who have spoken here today, and that is surely what this Committee is all about. Its purpose is to make sure that the administering Power does right by the people of the Territory concerned. The people have spoken. The United Kingdom will do its part, and I am sure the United Nations will uphold its principles.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

I have just expressed in detail the United Kingdom's views about the subject matter of this debate in the Committee of 24, namely, the advancement of the people of the Falkland Islands and the protection of their rights. I have to observe, however, that a text has been submitted by Venezuela in A/AC.109/L.1486 for a draft resolution that would have the Committee deny or ignore its own cardinal principles. It would also take the Committee outside its proper field by seeking to have it pronounce, or purport to pronounce, on matters which appear as a separate item on the agenda of the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, as they did last year. The United Kingdom is not a member of this Committee. We therefore have no vote on any decision or resolution taken by the Committee of 24. Our vote and our voice will be expressed in the General Assembly itself when the agenda item on the question of the Falkland Islands is debated there. But it is my duty, as the representative of the administering Power, to point out to the Committee why the Venezuelan resolution would conflict with the Committee's own principles, and it may be of help to members of the Committee if I now do so.

I would say that the reference in the preamble to the maintenance of colonial situations being incompatible with the United Nations ideal of universal peace is offensive. Our principal concern has always been to promote the interests of the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands, and that appears to be their view: they appear to have accepted that that is what we have been doing and are continuing to do. Our concern has also been to defend their right to live in peace and security under a Government of their own choosing. That, too, is something that the Falkland Islanders appear to accept that we are doing. The small population of the Islands pose no threat to anyone. It is evident, unfortunately, that Argentina does.

In its other preambular paragraphs the draft resolution also takes a biased and prejudicial slant which makes it unacceptable to my Government. The paragraph which refers to a solution "to the sovereignty dispute" is cast in a way which implies that the outcome of any negotiations must be the only one that only Argentina considers acceptable - that is, a transfer of sovereignty over the Falkland Islands to Argentina. Neither in that nor in any other paragraphs do we find reference to the fundamental question of the rights of the people of the Falkland Islands.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

My Government is also obliged to take a sceptical attitude towards the paragraph which refers to the "expressed intention" of the parties not to renew hostilities. Since this language was incorporated in General Assembly resolution 37/9 last year, the Argentine Government has done nothing to enhance the credibility of its professions of peaceful intent. It has steadfastly refused to demonstrate convincingly that it considers that hostilities have ceased permanently or that it renounces the use of force in the further pursuit of its claim. It was, after all, the Argentine Minister of Defence, who may be expected to know about such matters, who in May stated that diplomacy was not the only option Argentina had, and noted that there had been "only" a de facto cessation of hostilities. The Argentine attitude, in other words, remains menacing; the threat of force remains; and these are not circumstances in which negotiations could be expected to produce a useful result.

The Argentines have made much of their expressed intention to safeguard the "interests" of the population of the Falkland Islands. But Argentine actions in 1982 unfortunately demonstrated how they interpreted this interest of the Falkland Islanders. They put at risk the lives of the Islanders and sought to impose on them their alien laws instead of inalienable self-determination. A sharp contrast. They also sought to impose their alien regulations, language and school curricula. The Islanders, moreover, are conscious that the Argentine legal system has failed to protect its own and foreign nationals from the serious abuses of human rights about which my own and other Governments have expressed their concern, and a reference solely to the interests of the Islanders is no substitute for the right of self-determination, which we expect this Committee to recognize.

The final preambular paragraph and subsequent paragraphs refer to the principles of the Charter on the peaceful settlement of international disputes and call on my Government and that of Argentina to resume negotiations. But the draft resolution appears to neglect the facts and the consequences of events in 1982. It simply is not realistic to pretend that there was no invasion of the Falkland Islands, that there was no occupation by 10,000 troops. It happened - most unfortunate, but it is a fact. My Government and that of Argentina were in that very year engaged in negotiations about matters in dispute between them.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

A joint communiqué - and I emphasize the word "joint" - issued at the end of the last round of talks in March 1982 characterized those talks as "cordial and positive". One month later, Argentine forces invaded the Falkland Islands in flagrant violation of the fundamental principles of the Charter. Argentina has demonstrated no regret over that action and, as I have already noted, appears to preserve the option of a further resort to force. Argentina's sole objective remains the transfer of sovereignty over the Islands, irrespective of the wishes of the inhabitants of that territory. No negotiations begun against that background could possibly have a useful outcome.

(Sir John Thomson, United Kingdom)

It is for the reasons I have just set out that my Government does not propose to resume negotiations with Argentina about the Falkland Islands. I wish to make clear in this Committee, however, that my Government has taken and supported several initiatives aimed at reducing tension and at developing a more normal bilateral relationship between Argentina and the United Kingdom. It is a matter of regret that Argentina has shown no interest in responding to those initiatives but maintains a sterile attitude of confrontation and of menace. Serious indications by Argentina that it is prepared to respond to those initiatives or is otherwise ready to work towards the restoration of mutual confidence will find my Government receptive. But the Argentine authorities must recognize the consequences of their actions and work for a gradual restoration of confidence. This, rather than unrealistic and hypocritical calls for negotiations, must be the path to follow.

So much for the Venezuelan draft.

In August of last year this Committee decided to continue its consideration of the Falkland Islands at its 1983 session, subject to any directives which the General Assembly might give in that connection at its thirty-seventh session; it also decided to transmit the relevant documentation to the General Assembly in order to facilitate consideration of the item there. It is not for the United Kingdom, as a non-member of this Committee, to say whether the Committee ought to adopt any decision of a different kind this year. In our view, what the Committee is duty bound to do, in whatever form it thinks best, is to re-emphasize the inalienable right of the people of the Falkland Islands to self-determination in accordance with the United Nations Charter and other relevant documents, including resolution 1514 (XV). That would undoubtedly facilitate consideration of the question of the Falkland Islands by the General Assembly in due course. As I have already said, the right to self-determination of any people, however small, is too precious a commodity to be sacrificed to satisfy the political whims of one particular country.

The CHAIRMAN: Before I call on the next speaker, I wish to inform representatives that arrangements have been made for the provision of interpretation until 6.30 p.m., at which time I shall have no alternative but to adjourn the meeting.

I call on the representative of Argentina.

Mr. MUÑIZ (Argentina)(interpretation from Spanish): I should like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Special Committee for giving me this opportunity to participate in the consideration of a serious colonial question the continuation of which violates the legitimate and inalienable rights of my country and is a cause of serious concern to the entire Latin American region.

Since this is the first time that my delegation has spoken in the debates of the Special Committee during 1983, may I, first of all, tell you, Sir, how pleased we are at your unanimous election to your office. We are certain that, under your expert leadership, this important body will continue to be one of the most effective instruments in the United Nations struggle against colonialism. As the distinguished son of a continent which has suffered more than any other from the ills of colonialism, you are in the best possible position to understand the legitimacy and urgency of the demand of those of us who continue to have a part of our territory under foreign domination.

We also extend our congratulations to the other officers of the Committee whose contribution is also of great importance to the success of this body's work.

The members of the Special Committee are sufficiently familiar with the background of the question of the Malvinas Islands. That makes it unnecessary for me to reiterate today the solid historical and legal basis of Argentina's rights over the Malvinas, South Georgias and South Sandwich islands. In this connection, I shall confine myself to reaffirming previous statements by my Government in which that basis has been broadly expressed, in particular the statement of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of my country in the plenary General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session on 2 November 1982. I should

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like to recall that Argentine rights have been explicitly recognized by the overwhelming majority of the international community, including in particular the countries of the Latin American region of which the Malvinas, Georgias and South Sandwich Islands are an inseparable part, and the Non-Aligned Movement. In spite of the broad international consensus, the close and unassailable link between the Islands and Argentina continues to be disregarded by the United Kingdom, which since 1833 has illegally and forcibly occupied and colonized those Territories.

The existence of sufficient grounds for Argentina to demand the return of the islands in dispute has been explicitly and formally acknowledged by the General Assembly and the Special Committee in important decisions, among them, I should like to underscore, resolutions 2065 (XX), 3160 (XXVIII), 31/49 and 37/9. Those resolutions constitute an essential frame of reference for the decolonization of the Malvinas Islands. Because they stem from the organ to which all the Members of the United Nations, including Argentina and the United Kingdom, have voluntarily recognized principal competence to guide and oversee the process of decolonization, they form a body of laws which Argentina and the United Kingdom could not disregard without challenging international law. It is therefore important to recall exactly what that frame of reference established by the General Assembly for the decolonization of the Malvinas Islands is.

First of all, and as is natural, the Assembly has included the Malvinas Islands among colonial Territories subject to the process of decolonization. It is not superfluous for me to mention this point which is so obvious, because for a year now the highest authorities of Great Britain have been affirming, even in Parliament, that the Malvinas, Georgias and South Sandwich Islands are "sovereign British territory". In other words, the United Kingdom now wishes to annex a foreign territory located more than 10,000 kilometres from London which the British Government itself in 1946 included in the list of Territories to be decolonized. The British Government has gone to the extreme of considering the description of its presence on those islands as colonial as "offensive".

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Secondly, the General Assembly has recognized the existence of a sovereignty dispute between Argentina and the United Kingdom over the Malvinas Islands. This point is of legal and political importance. It means that the British claim of sovereignty over the colony has no international recognition. It also makes the political future of the Territories in the dispute dependent on prior solution of the question of sovereignty. Recognition of the existence of a dispute of sovereignty constitutes the cornerstone of the doctrine prepared by the General Assembly on the question of the Malvinas Islands and it explains why certain principles the application of which has been followed in connection with other colonial Territories have been expressly excluded from the frame of reference to which I have just alluded.

I should also like to recall that the inclusion of this item was decided upon for the first time by this Special Committee in 1964 in a decision which has served as a basis for all the subsequent resolutions of the General Assembly on the subject and which implied clear rejection of the British reasoning. On that occasion the Special Committee accepted the Argentine reasoning that the question of the Malvinas Islands constituted a special case of decolonization, with the particular characteristic of there being a dispute of sovereignty the solution of which was an essential and inevitable prerequisite to the determination of the Territory's political future.

Thirdly, the General Assembly inspired by the general principle that enshrines the right of States to territorial integrity and by operative paragraph 6 of resolution 1514 (XV), affirmed in resolution 3160 (XXVIII) that the solution of the conflict of sovereignty was the way - that is, the only way - to put an end to the colonial situation of the Malvinas Islands. It is evident, therefore, that any British measure aimed at determining the political future of the colonial Territory outside that framework would lack legal effect in the eyes of the international community.

Fourthly, the General Assembly also established that there are only two parties to this dispute, namely, the Argentine and British Governments. This is logical, since in a dispute of this type the parties can only be the States involved.

Fifthly, the Assembly has repeatedly asked both Governments to resolve the dispute through negotiations. As is known, Argentina has always supported that course of action, since negotiations between the parties constitute the principal and most effective of the means enshrined in the United Nations Charter for the solution of international controversies. The British attitude has been otherwise. A special investigatory commission appointed last year by the Government of the United Kingdom, the Frank Commission, and, more recently the Foreign Relations Sub-Committee of the British House of Commons have admitted that during the 17 years prior to the conflict in the South Atlantic the United Kingdom had been reluctant to enter into negotiations with Argentina over sovereignty. Nor have the members of those investigatory bodies been unaware of the role that policy has played in creating the conditions of the 1982 crisis. Although I shall refer to the present situation in the South Atlantic later, I should like at this juncture to point out that at the present time the British Government is not only maintaining that attitude, it is even attempting to impose a military solution and is pursuing a dangerous policy of increased provocation against Argentina.

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Sixthly, the General Assembly has emphasized the need for the Argentine and British Governments to take into account in their negotiations the interests of the present inhabitants of the territories in dispute. That formulation is also a key one. It is, furthermore, logical and intelligent.

It is a key formulation because more than any other it responds to the particular circumstances of the territories that are in dispute between Argentina and the United Kingdom, particularly the need to guarantee respect for the fundamental Charter principle that enshrines the right of States to territorial integrity. It is logical because it would be unthinkable at this stage in the development of our civilization and of international relations for two countries to resolve a dispute over sovereignty without taking into account the well-being, traditions and cultural identity of the inhabitants of the Territory in question. Lastly, the formulation is intelligent because, owing to its broad and comprehensive nature, it strikes a balance between Argentine rights, the responsibilities of the administering Power and the concerns of the 1,800 Islanders.

Of course no one can ignore the fact that the United Kingdom has questioned the inclusion of the word "interests" in resolutions adopted with regard to the question of the Malvinas Islands. Nor can anyone be unaware of the ambiguous and self-interested attitude the United Kingdom has always maintained in connection with the right of colonial peoples to self-determination. Diego Garcia, among others, is a specific and timely point of reference.

Actually it is only natural for the General Assembly and this Special Committee to have adopted a position rejected by the United Kingdom. When the British took over the Malvinas Islands illegally and by force they expelled from the Territory not only the Argentine authorities but also the indigenous population of the Territory, a population of Argentine origin. Since then, Argentines have not been allowed either to own property or to reside permanently in the Islands.

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The original Argentine population was then replaced by officials and employees of the British Government and of the Falkland Islands Company, which, as has been recognized within the United Kingdom itself and as can be seen in the Secretariat's working paper, has a monopoly over economic activity and land ownership in the Islands. Those British officials and employees comprise 70 per cent of the present population of the Islands.

Hence, if the present population were to be recognized as having a right to self-determination, that recognition would only favour the United Kingdom, which acts through its dependents and through the employees of the Falkland Islands Company.

As is obvious, this would be a grotesque distortion of the right to self-determination, which would be used not to put an end to a colonial situation but, rather, to legitimize the indefinite prolongation of that very colonial situation at the expense of the inalienable right of a State to its territorial integrity. It would be tantamount to recognizing a right to self-determination for the inhabitants of Walvis Bay or the illegal settlers in the occupied Arab territories, and it would establish a serious precedent with regard to other colonial enclaves in the territories of Member States. It would be tantamount to endorsing colonial expansion and aggression against third States. It would make possible the triumph of colonialism through a gross manoeuvre designed to make improper use of the instruments established by this Organization precisely in order to guarantee the elimination of colonialism. In any event, the real holder of the right to self-determination in the Malvinas Islands is the Argentine people, from whom the Territory has been taken illegally and by force.

The unjustified British attacks against the General Assembly and this Special Committee do not take into account the fact that the International Court of Justice, in its advisory opinion of 1975, handed down the clear

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interpretation that there is no single, immutable form for the decolonization of colonial Territories and recognized that each colonial entity has an individual nature and that the particular circumstances prevailing in each situation must determine the principle and right to be applied. In fact, this position was firmly upheld by the United Kingdom itself during the drafting of the United Nations Charter and during negotiations preceding the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), and it is now upheld by London with regard to several of the colonial Territories it still administers. The anachronistic policy of confrontation with Argentina and with international law that is being pursued by the United Kingdom with regard to the Malvinas Islands is therefore even more incomprehensible.

I have dwelt on the fundamental aspects of the resolutions of the General Assembly on the question of the Malvinas Islands because they offer the sole frame of reference for a solution to the present confrontation between Argentina and the United Kingdom that will be not only just, legal and peaceful, but also realistic, intelligent and lasting. In fact, there is no alternative to those resolutions that can, at the same time, guarantee a solution respectful of international law and the final eradication of tension in the South Atlantic. The clearest proof of this is the present situation around the Islands. The British claim that the future of the disputed Territories should be determined independent of the resolutions of the General Assembly dangerously prevents the return of peace and stability to the region.

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The lack of a viable and legal alternative to the resolutions of our Organization was clearly recognized by the international community when on 4 November 1982 the General Assembly took its first decision following the conflict in the South Atlantic: resolution 37/9. The importance of that resolution is undeniable. It reaffirms all prior relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the standard applicable to the decolonization of the Territory continues to be the same as that existing before the crisis, whose military outcome in no way enhanced the non-existent British title over the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands.

Together with this explicit endorsement of its prior resolutions on this issue, in its resolution 37/9 the General Assembly once again requests the Argentine and British Governments to resume negotiations in order peacefully and as promptly as possible to resolve the sovereignty dispute. It also includes a request to the Secretary-General of the Organization to resume his good offices which were begun during the South Atlantic conflict.

Since the adoption of resolution 37/9, Argentina has repeatedly expressed in statements and communications to the Secretary-General its desire to co-operate in the search for a negotiated solution to all - I repeat: all - its problems with the United Kingdom, including aspects related to the definitive disappearance of tension in the South Atlantic, in accordance with the decisions of the Organization. The working paper prepared by the Secretariat in connection with this issue in document A/AC.109/752 contains a list and a summary of the many official documents in which this position of my country has been expressed.

As I have already stated, the attitude of the British Government has been exactly the opposite. Not only has it failed to recognize resolution 37/9 but it has at the same time implemented a policy of growing provocation against Argentina.

Indeed, its refusal to negotiate has been accompanied by a massive militarization of the territories usurped from Argentina. My country has already denounced before the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council the seriousness of the situation which, because of its characteristics and magnitude, clearly suggests the British intent to prolong indefinitely its colonial presence in the Islands and, equally serious, to incorporate them in

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a strategic global framework. In this context the United Kingdom plans to build an airport for the largest combat aircraft in existence and has not denied its intention to establish a naval base for warships and nuclear submarines. As is clear, this strategic plan, which also includes the introduction of atomic weapons in the region, violates the resolutions of the General Assembly on military installations in colonial Territories.

It should therefore come as no surprise that the policy of the United Kingdom, which represents a grave escalation in British expansionism in the South Atlantic, is a source of concern not only to Argentina but also to the entire South American region, whose interests as regards peace and security are significantly affected.

It should be recalled that the United Kingdom is a nuclear Power and a member of one of the two main strategic alliances. During the 1982 conflict it introduced submarines and nuclear weapons in the South Atlantic, actions which constituted a grave violation of international commitments assumed within the Latin American framework, which led to a recent decision of the Organization to prohibit nuclear weapons in Latin America. The growing Latin American concern at the potential dangers of such an irresponsible policy and what it means as a negative precedent for the security of our region has also been reflected at the recent meeting of the Committee on Disarmament in Geneva. In the case of Argentina, whose legitimate rights and vital interests have already been seriously violated by the mere colonial presence of Britain in the Malvinas Islands, it is obvious that a plan such as the one I have described is simply intolerable. The decolonization and recovery of the Malvinas Islands is, I repeat once again, a permanent priority objective which all Argentines cannot renounce.

The situation in the region of the Islands is worsened by the British decision to maintain around the occupied territories a zone of exclusion against Argentine ships and aircraft. This illegal and arbitrary measure has caused several incidents in which Argentine civil ships which were conducting legal and peaceful fishing activities in Argentine jurisdictional waters were detained and driven out by British military ships and helicopters. The use of the living resources of the islands and their marine space constitutes a new

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and serious source of harm to my country affecting the interests of the Argentine State and fishing activities, which represent an important sector of national production.

In summary, the British attitude is incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations, in particular with its provisions establishing the obligation of States to settle their international disputes peacefully, and with the General Assembly resolutions to whose contents I have already referred. No excuse can justify the British refusal to comply with the basic obligation which as a Member of the United Nations it has assumed under the Charter and General Assembly resolutions to seek a peaceful and negotiated solution to its problems with Argentina and refrain from taking provocative measures that contribute to increasing tension in the South Atlantic.

It can therefore come as no surprise that the British Government can find no argument to respond to those who, such as members of my Government and of some responsible sectors of the United Kingdom itself, have pointed out this grave violation of international commitments and of the principles and norms regulating international coexistence.

The violation of the Charter by the United Kingdom cannot even be founded on the need for Argentina to comply with formalities that are not demanded under international law. Argentina has repeatedly declared that it is not its intention to resume hostilities. Furthermore, Argentina, together with 19 other Latin American countries, is a sponsor, of resolution 37/9, which contains a paragraph along those lines. The 14 and a half months that have elapsed since the cessation of hostilities confirm the strict compliance with those statements. That long period without armed hostilities in addition has legal effect. What explanation can there then be for the British insistence on placing artificially at the centre of this problem this already resolved aspect of the 1982 crisis? We can only conclude that the sole real explanation is the afore-mentioned intention to establish a military base on the Islands as part of a policy of strategic expansion especially since, as is natural, if the United Kingdom were to accept compliance with the Charter and resolution 37/9, setting aside that aggressive plan and leaving without effect the illegal exclusion zone, relations between the two countries would register an immediate and significant change.

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As my Government has already pointed out, the British policy is even less understandable if account is taken of the fact that for its implementation it uses as additional justification a supposed desire to protect the rights and guarantee the future of the present inhabitants. In fact, and as has also been recognized in the United Kingdom, the policy of fortifying the Malvinas Islands is bound to result in deep and negative changes in the lifestyle of the islanders. Above all, that policy lacks viability, since it guarantees a permanent state of confrontation with Argentina and Latin America, which are called upon to play a fundamental role in the economic progress and political future of the Territory. It is known that a peaceful negotiated and just solution to the sovereignty dispute would make it possible for related questions - for example, questions related to respecting and guaranteeing the lifestyle of the Islands, their well-being, traditions and cultural identity - to be given, as is natural, special consideration and be properly met, including through international guarantees and safeguards and special statutes that could be negotiated.

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Argentina demonstrated its concern in this connection in the course of negotiations lasting 17 years. The negotiators from Argentina repeatedly presented to their British counterparts proposals containing a system of guarantees and safeguards for the population of the islands. It was the British lack of receptiveness that made it impossible to do more thorough work on this important question, lack of receptiveness to the extent that the Islanders themselves were not made fully aware of the concern demonstrated by Argentina.

My Government is confident that the United Kingdom authorities will come to understand that a prolongation and worsening of the present confrontation with Argentina cannot be a realistic or viable option. The occupation of the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands is today as illegal as it was in 1833.

On the basis of all these considerations, my Government hopes that, as is proposed in draft resolution A/AC.109/L.1483, the Special Committee will ratify the principles applicable to the decolonization of Territories under disputed sovereignty. My Government also hopes that in ratifying those principles the Special Committee will make a new appeal to both parties to resume their negotiations with a view to putting an end as soon as possible, in a peaceful, just and definitive way, to that dispute, and that it will express its support for the Secretary-General's present mission of good offices. My Government wishes to express once again its gratitude to Mr. Perez de Cuellar for his valuable efforts during the past year in connection with this issue. At the same time, we reiterate to him our intention to continue to give him all the co-operation he requires, in accordance with the mandate given him by the General Assembly.

Lastly, I should like to emphasize that a decision by the Committee along the lines that I have just mentioned would meet not only the just position of my country but also the interests of all of Latin America, which, as is well known, has made of decolonization and the return of the Malvinas Islands to Argentina a regional cause. My country cannot fail to reiterate its special gratitude to the States of Latin America, whose firm support for Argentina in this problem constitutes one of the most concrete and effective manifestations

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of regional unity. We also extend our thanks to the other members of the international community which support us and to the Non-Aligned Movement, which explicitly and firmly reiterated at the recent Summit in New Delhi its support for Argentina's rights.

The meeting rose at 6.45 p.m.