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FOURTH COMMITTEE
Agenda item 115

PROGRAMME PLANNING

Letter dated 27 October 1988 from the Chairman of the Fourth
Committee addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to enclose herewith, for your kind transmittal, a letter addressed by me to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee concerning agenda item 115, Programme planning.

(Signed) Jonathan C. PETERS
Chairman
Fourth Committee

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Annex

LETTER DATED 27 OCTOBER 1988 FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FOURTH
COMMITTEE ADDRESSED TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 12 October 1988 (A/C.4/43/L.5, annex), in which you requested the views of the Fourth Committee on the relevant chapters of the revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989 (extended to 1991) (A/43/6 and Corr.1) and on the note by the Secretary-General containing the draft introduction to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 (A/43/329).

At its 9th meeting, on 19 October 1988, the Fourth Committee decided to invite members wishing to submit their views on the above documentation to do so in writing. I wish to inform you in that connection that I have received three communications, submitted in accordance with that decision: a letter dated 21 October 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples; a letter dated 21 October 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations; and a letter dated 25 October 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations. Copies of the three communications are herewith attached for the attention of the Fifth Committee.

(Signed) Jonathan C. PETERS
Chairman
Fourth Committee

Appendix I

LETTER DATED 21 OCTOBER 1988 FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE
ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON
THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES ADDRESSED
TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE

I have the honour to refer to a letter dated 12 October 1988 addressed to you by the Chairman of the Fifth Committee (A/C.4/43/L.5) and, in my capacity as Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, to request you kindly to transmit the following observations on the relevant chapters of the revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989 (extended to 1991) and on the draft introduction of the Secretary-General to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997.

As will be recalled, in my letter dated 30 October 1987 (A/C.4/42/L.10), I indicated to you, and through you, to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, a serious concern expressed by members of the Special Committee at the conspicuous absence of reference to the tasks remaining in the field of decolonization from the issues outlined in the documentation relating to the medium-term plan for 1990-1995 that would likely require the attention of the United Nations during that time-frame.

I wish to note with satisfaction in this connection that the list of issues which, in the view of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, could serve as a framework for determining priorities includes the items on decolonization and Namibia as priorities on political matters (A/43/16 (Part II), para. 23). I also note an overview given by the Secretary-General in his draft introduction to the medium-term plan 1992-1997 on the status of the ongoing process of decolonization and his analysis of the tasks yet to be completed in that regard, as well as the reiteration by the Secretary-General that the Secretariat will continue to support United Nations organs concerned with Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories in their review of the compliance with the Charter of the United Nations and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the Member States responsible for the administration of those Territories (A/43/329, para. 43).

As the Organization in 1990 will mark the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, it is incumbent upon the international community to continue to intensify its efforts to assist effectively the peoples of the remaining Territories in order to enable them fully and freely to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence. To that end, I should be grateful if the Fifth Committee could ensure that the general orientation of the major programme on political affairs,

trusteeship and decolonization be maintained, mutatis mutandis, throughout the programme budget period under reference.

(Signed) Tesfaye TADESSE

Chairman,

Special Committee on the Situation with regard
to the Implementation of the Declaration on the
Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries
and Peoples

Appendix II

LETTER DATED 21 OCTOBER 1988 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF MEXICO TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE CHAIRMAN OF
THE FOURTH COMMITTEE

I have pleasure in referring to document A/C.4/43/L.5 of 18 October 1988 containing a letter addressed to you by the Chairman of the Fifth Committee on item 115 of the agenda of the General Assembly entitled, "Programme planning".

I am transmitting herewith the comments of Mexico on this item and on the structure of the Secretary-General's proposed medium-term plan:

During the last session of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC), there was an extensive discussion of the structure of the future medium-term plan to be submitted by the Secretary-General. On this item the CPC itself reached an initial conclusion and recommended that during the work of the forty-third session of the General Assembly each one of the Main Committees would examine carefully and in depth what the plan might contain.

With regard to the work of the General Assembly and its Fourth Committee, the proposed structure of the plan is incomplete and its basic nature is weakened by a large number of ambiguities.

The item on decolonization, one of the fields in which the United Nations has been most successful, is mentioned in a very vague manner. It would appear that the colonial period is over and that the international community has been freed from colonialist systems and is made up for the most part by free and sovereign States.

The plan is focused mainly on a solution of such questions as international security, disarmament and terrorism, on which the work of the United Nations should be concentrated.

It is very disturbing to note the reduction which is planned in the major programmes and the proposal to divide the medium-term plan into four such programmes is inadequate and even incomplete.

In this way, in the structure proposed for the medium-term plan, the first major programme, which would include the work of the Fourth Committee, would be as follows:

Major programme 1. Maintenance of peace and security, disarmament and self-determination of peoples.

Programmes (Sub-groups):

1. Good offices, including special missions, peace-keeping operations, investigation and information.

2. Political and Security Council affairs.
3. Political and General Assembly affairs.
4. Special political questions, equal rights and self-determination.
5. Disarmament.
6. Elimination of apartheid.

In this first proposed major programme it is surprising to note the complete absence of any mention of decolonization and the question of Namibia, which are both of great importance in the work in which we are now engaged.

Careful consideration should therefore be given to the following new wording for the title of major programme 1.

"Maintenance of international peace and security, disarmament, decolonization and self-determination of peoples.

Similarly, within the subprogrammes mentioned, item 4 should be reworded as follows:

"4. Special political questions, equal rights, decolonization and self-determination of peoples".

The following new item should be added:

"7. Namibia."

Similarly, I would like to make the following comments, which are the result of negotiations in CPC and of unofficial consultations and comments to which the Mexican mission has given careful attention:

(a) CPC decided to analyse as broadly and thoroughly as possible each one of the subjects on which each Main Committee is working;

(b) This analysis must take into account the opinions expressed by each committee; however, the discussion should not be limited to these opinions and ample time should be given for the expression of the different viewpoints;

(c) Other committees are discussing all these points at the level of their different regional groups, including the Group of 77. The Fourth Committee could follow a similar procedure.

I would be very grateful if you could have these comments circulated as a document of the Fourth Committee.

(Signed) Mario Moya PALENCIA
Permanent Representative of Mexico
to the United Nations

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Appendix III

LETTER DATED 25 OCTOBER 1988 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF ARGENTINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE CHAIRMAN
OF THE FOURTH COMMITTEE

The Argentine delegation has the honour to refer to the letter dated 12 October 1988 addressed to you by the Chairman of the Fifth Committee concerning agenda item 115 "Programme planning" circulated as document A/C.4/43/L.5.

I would like to draw attention to the relevant paragraphs of the statement made by the Argentine delegation during the twenty-eighth session of CPC in which he commented on the draft introduction to the medium-term plan for the period beginning in 1992, especially regarding its new structure.

This statement contained the following remarks concerning the items within the competence of the Fourth Committee:

"The self-determination of peoples is a basic principle but the development of the principle through resolution 1514 (XV) and subsequent resolutions has made the question of decolonization more elaborate and has recognized special cases. We would therefore prefer to speak of decolonization."

Similarly, and, in conclusion, another paragraph in the Argentine statement was as follows:

"With regard to political questions, we would reiterate our preference for keeping the term decolonization instead of self-determination."

The Argentine delegation, together with others, wishes to reaffirm its view that questions relating to Namibia and decolonization must be included explicitly in the major programme proposed (para. 51 of the report of CPC).

(Signed) Marcelo E. R. DELPECH
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
