



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 5th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ADULHASAN (Kuwait)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 87: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SECOND DECADE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (continued) (A/43/3, 370, 491, 631, 637 and 644)

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1. Mr. FORTIER (Canada) said that agenda item 87 was a topic of the highest priority for Canada, which shared the international community's conviction that fighting apartheid was the most pressing moral issue of the day, especially during the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. As the Secretary-General had indicated in his report of the work of the Organization, the anniversary came at a time when the evolving world situation lent fresh point and urgency to the notions of human dignity and larger freedoms expressed in the Charter.
2. Regrettably, the Government of South Africa continued to pursue the shameful policy of racial discrimination it had introduced 40 years before, although it no longer tried to pretend that it was consistent with any defensible system of values. Apartheid blighted the lives of millions of individuals and remained a tragic reality, condemned by the entire world. Important as rejecting apartheid was, it was no less important to take effective measures against it and eliminate it as soon as possible.
3. The unique feature of the South African régime was that it had encoded racial discrimination in its law and constitution and made race the determining factor for economic and social opportunity. Only a small minority had real political power. As the Prime Minister of Canada had said, the result was massive and institutionalized violations of human rights. Apartheid claimed that racism was a normal and acceptable condition and denied that the right to dignity and respect was of universal validity, attempting to contradict the fundamental principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international covenants on human rights.
4. Apartheid affected all societies built, as Canada's was, upon tolerance. It must be fought, not only because of the harm it caused to its direct victims, but also because it provided an insidious model for other nations.

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

5. The South African Government tried to hide the truth from the world and its own citizens, declaring that apartheid no longer existed and arguing that many South Africans were no longer citizens of South Africa. It denied real political rights to the immense majority, and directed violence even against those who worked peacefully for an end to apartheid. Its repression was growing increasingly violent, affecting even the clergy. Moreover, the effects of apartheid reached beyond the boundaries of South Africa and afflicted the front-line States and Namibia, which South Africa continued to occupy illegally. Nevertheless, recent progress permitted some hope that the talks now under way would result in an equitable solution.

6. The Government of Canada had implemented all the steps and sanctions brought in by the Commonwealth in 1985 and 1986, and had encouraged the Commonwealth to assume a leading role. At the meeting of Commonwealth heads of State held in Vancouver, in 1987, it had been decided that such measures should be widened and intensified, and a committee of foreign ministers had been set up under the chairmanship of Mr. Joe Clark, the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs, to recommend appropriate initiatives to the highest political authorities. At a recent meeting in Toronto, the committee had concluded that sanctions had a real impact and that the Government of South Africa was beginning to feel their effects. It had therefore made a number of practical proposals to improve the effectiveness of the sanctions and had urged other countries to adopt the Commonwealth package of measures. It had also reviewed South Africa's relations with the international financial system and concluded that its sources of capital were dwindling. It had agreed on steps for removing sources of financing which enabled South Africa to cushion its balance-of-payments difficulties, and for stopping up the economic pressure.

7. Canada was conducting a review of the effectiveness of its own sanctions, and systematically closing loopholes. In September 1988, Mr. Clark had announced new curbs on Canada's economic relations with South Africa.

8. Sanctions increased the cost of maintaining apartheid and also had a psychological value, showing victims that they were not alone but had the world behind them. That was why the majority in South Africa accepted the sacrifices that resulted from sanctions. To help the victims and opponents of apartheid, Canada had in 1988 increased its material help, in the form of aid and education, to \$7.8 million, and would allocate \$2.4 million to promote dialogue and combat censorship and propaganda. Canada also furnished moral and material support for South Africa's neighbours. It contributed \$30 million yearly to projects of the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference, and supplied bilateral aid of over \$100 million yearly to those countries. If sanctions proved inadequate, Canada might resort to other measures.

9. Fortunately, there were grounds for hope. As the Secretary-General had indicated, independence for Namibia might soon become a reality. If Security Council resolution 435 (1978) were implemented properly, Canada would be ready to lend assistance during the transition period and following independence.

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

10. South Africa must understand that it could not have full peace with its neighbours or normal relations with the rest of the world without having peace and social justice at home. One South African minister had referred to the sanctions as "our agony"; another had said that, to survive the pressure, his country should get rid of the cause of the evil, apartheid. If they knew what to do, why did they not do it? It could not really be so difficult for a minority to recognize the political rights of the majority. The first step towards dismantling apartheid would have to be taken at some point. As the Secretary-General had said, the international community had given the Government of South Africa a renewed opportunity to accept the inevitable end of apartheid. Mr. Clark had said in a recent speech that the only way left to South Africa to avoid disaster was to begin to negotiate with the leaders of all South Africa's communities. That was the objective towards which Canada would work.

11. Turning to item 91, he said that the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination was one of the most important international instruments for promoting human rights, but the Committee responsible for implementing it was undergoing financial difficulties which prevented it from carrying out its mandate efficiently. Canada had taken note of the appeal by the Chairman of that Committee to States parties which had not yet fulfilled their financial obligations, and would try to find long-term solutions to enable the Committee to continue to help all States parties to build a society free from all forms of segregation and racial discrimination.

12. Mr. KRIEGER (Luxembourg) reaffirmed his Government's support for the campaign against all human rights violations in any part of the world, as expressed by the Secretary of State of Luxembourg in his statement to the General Assembly, and emphasized the importance of increasing the authority and means to act of the United Nations.

13. Although Luxembourg was part of the constantly shrinking group of countries which paid their contributions at the beginning of the financial year, it had, through an administrative oversight, been listed among the countries which were failing to meet their financial obligations towards the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (A/43/18, annex III).

14. In keeping with the statement made on behalf of the Twelve at the 4th meeting, the Government of Luxembourg urged all countries that were behind in their contributions to pay them, in order to enable the Committee, and the United Nations in general, to function properly.

15. Mr. AUREL (Romania) thanked the Under-Secretary-General for his informative introduction to the items before the Committee and noted the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General on the activities designed to achieve the objectives of the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (A/43/644) and the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (A/43/18).

16. Romania had submitted to that Committee its ninth periodic report, stating that it had maintained its existing legal framework relating to the provisions of

(Mr. Aurel, Romania)

the Convention and providing practical guarantees for all people to participate in every field of economic, social, political and cultural activity. Romania's condemnation of the policies and practices of racism and its solidarity with the liberation movements and with the aspirations of all peoples for a free and dignified life were well known.

17. During the first half of the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination the United Nations had achieved important progress. It was now necessary to strengthen international co-operation and to intensify national, regional and international activities in order to eliminate racism and racial discrimination throughout the world and particularly in South Africa, where it took on its most brutal form. The United Nations had declared that apartheid was a crime against humanity and the international community had vigorously condemned it. However, apartheid continued to exist. What was needed now was action and the adoption of measures to improve the economic, political, social and cultural situation of the population of South Africa in order to remove inequalities and injustices and create the conditions necessary for the establishment of a free society. Assistance and support should be given to all the victims of racism and racial discrimination, especially in southern Africa.

18. Romania had supported all United Nations resolutions in that field and appreciated the efforts made by the Secretary-General to implement them. The global compilation of national legislation against racial discrimination (A/43/637) would be very useful and should help in the work concerned with the Second Decade.

19. More and more Member States were pronouncing themselves in favour of the adoption of new resolutions and measures against the policy of apartheid and were supporting the demands of the African countries for the adoption of mandatory sanctions against South Africa. The international community should therefore continue to give the highest priority to the programmes for combating racism.

20. The delegation of Romania would continue to support all resolutions dealing with the programmes of action aimed at combating racism, racial discrimination and apartheid. It reaffirmed its support for all the efforts of the United Nations against apartheid and its militant solidarity with the people of southern Africa. Romania hoped that the struggle against racial discrimination would lead to the final victory of the noble ideals of the United Nations. It appealed for renewed determination by all States to support the cause of the oppressed people in South Africa.

21. Mr. GALAL (Egypt) thanked the Under-Secretary-General for his comprehensive introductory statement. Egypt attached considerable importance to the first group of items before the Third Committee because the struggle against racism and the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination were concerned with the basic rights of the human being. It was worth mentioning that Islam, to which Egypt belonged culturally, called for equality among all peoples, nations and individuals, irrespective of language, colour, sex, ethnic or cultural background or economic position. Islam also stressed that all human beings were born free. Consequently, it rejected the idea of slavery.

(Mr. Galal, Egypt)

22. Egypt was one of the gates to the African continent, which suffered severely from the scourge of racial discrimination. Egypt's modern struggle for independence was therefore closely interwoven with the African liberation movements and Cairo had become and still was the haven for such movements. Consequently, the struggle against apartheid and racial discrimination was one of the pillars of Egyptian foreign policy.

23. In recent months, diplomatic efforts had intensified to bring about the independence of Namibia through the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). Cairo had hosted one of the quadripartite meetings between Angola, Cuba, South Africa and the United States, thus highlighting the participation of Egypt in the struggle for the independence of the continent and the efforts to bring it peace.

24. He now turned to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. The analysis contained in document A/43/637 was laudable. However, more effort was required to obtain the necessary information from the other States of the international community before publishing the complete global compilation of national legislation against racial discrimination. As for document A/43/631, his delegation found that it was incomplete and called upon the Secretariat to make greater efforts to obtain more information, in particular from the reports of the States Parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

25. The work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination deserved the full support of the United Nations system. Egypt supported the decision taken by the Committee with regard to its financial situation (A/43/18, chap. VII) and appealed to all countries in arrears to honour their financial commitments under the Convention. Unfortunately, 60 States out of the 125 parties to the Convention were behind in their assessments and in the reports required under the Convention.

26. Document A/43/516 showed that only 91 out of the 159 States Members of the United Nations were parties to the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. Egypt called upon the other States to accede to the Convention and thus tighten the circle around the obnoxious racist régime of South Africa and hasten the fall of apartheid. At the same time, it was necessary to highlight the assistance that certain transnational companies were giving to the apartheid régime so that world public opinion would be aware of their responsibility.

27. His delegation congratulated Dr. Ahmed Khalifa, the Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, on his report on the adverse consequences for the enjoyment of human rights of political, military, economic and other forms of assistance given to the racist and colonialist régime of South Africa (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1988/6 and Add.1).

28. The right to self-determination for all peoples, including the Palestinian, Namibian and South African peoples, was a divine and inalienable right. The dangers of the status quo in the Palestinian occupied territories were great and

(Mr. Galal, Egypt)

Israel should respect the right of the Palestinians to self-determination, in accordance with the various United Nations resolutions, especially resolution 181 (II) of 29 November 1947.

29. The recruiting, training and financing of mercenaries as a means of impeding the independence of peoples must be denounced strongly. Egypt supported the conclusions appearing in the report of the Special Rapporteur on that subject (A/43/632).

30. Mr. ORTEGA (Philippines) thanked the Under-Secretary-General for his lucid introduction of the items under consideration. The Philippines fully agreed with him that the successful implementation of the programme of activities for the Second Decade required the concerted efforts of various organs and bodies within the United Nations system. It also supported his laudable initiative of raising that question with the heads of the specialized agencies during the 1988 session of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) in order to strengthen inter-agency co-operation.

31. Some of the activities approved for the period 1985-1989 had been executed, while others were in the process of completion. With the co-operation of Member States, the Secretariat and the non-governmental organizations, projects envisaged for the rest of the Decade should be implemented without delay. In that connection, he would like to cite the important role played by the non-governmental organizations.

32. The Philippines wished to reiterate that in the international campaign to eradicate all traces of racism and racial discrimination, it was most important to focus attention on young people. Every opportunity should be seized to teach them the basic tenet of equality among men and women and of respect for the dignity and worth of the human person irrespective of race, colour, sex, language or creed. For that reason, the Philippines had included the study of human rights as a new assignment in all schools. It attached great importance to the report of UNESCO on the preparation of teaching materials and teaching aids to promote human rights.

33. Although racial discrimination was foreign to the Philippine way of life, the Government had promulgated a law which declared racial discrimination to be an offence punishable under the penal code, with the aim of giving full implementation to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, to which the Philippines was a party.

34. Further to the proposals put forward in the Global Consultation on Racial Discrimination, held at Geneva from 3 to 6 October 1988, the Philippines would host, in November 1988, the first international conference on indigenous and traditional cultures, which would underscore the importance of culture in development and in the promotion of world understanding. His Government trusted that the States represented in the Third Committee would respond positively to the invitation to participate in the conference.

(Mr. Ortega, Philippines)

35. The elimination of apartheid was one of the prime objectives of the Second Decade. As long as that inhuman policy existed in South Africa and Namibia, no one could speak of having achieved the goals of the Decade or of the United Nations in general, since apartheid made a mockery of the lofty ideals and principles of the Organization. The situation in South Africa continued to deteriorate owing to the insistence of the apartheid régime on sowing terror and destruction both within and beyond its borders. The Philippines reiterated the view shared by the majority of Member States that comprehensive and mandatory sanctions should be imposed against the intransigent South African régime. As a founding member of the Special Committee against Apartheid, the Philippines had been in the forefront of anti-apartheid activities. The Philippines maintained no relations of any kind with the racist régime and was a party to the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and to the International Convention against Apartheid in sports. His Government had banned all travel by Philippine citizens to South Africa and had established a Philippine national commission against apartheid which, among other activities, had distributed brochures throughout the country printed in the Philippine language explaining the evils of the apartheid system.

36. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, to which 125 States had so far become parties, was the most universally-accepted human rights treaty. Accordingly, it was a matter of great concern that the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had been unable to carry out its work owing to the non-payment of assessed contributions by a number of States parties. His delegation appealed to those States to take appropriate action to restore the financial health of the Committee.

37. In connection with item 96, it should be noted that the exercise of the right of all peoples to self-determination did not end with the attainment of political independence. It was a continuing process, expressed in free and regular elections, that required the safeguarding of national sovereignty and territorial integrity together with economic development and social progress.

38. The use of mercenaries represented a danger to democratic institutions and the territorial integrity of all countries. Accordingly, his delegation took note of the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights (A/43/632) and supported, in particular, the recommendation that every possible effort should be made to reach a consensus leading to the elimination of the reprehensible practice of mercenarism, which violated human rights and undermined the self-determination of peoples, and the recommendation that the reports of mercenary activities in two continents (Africa and Latin America) should be studied further to determine their scope and implications and the possible responsibility of third parties.

39. In that connection from 3 to 6 June 1988 the Philippines had hosted the International Conference of Newly Restored Democracies. The 13 participating States had issued the Manila Declaration of 1988 (A/43/538) in which, inter alia, a call was made to older democracies to adopt a position of solidarity with the newly restored democracies that suffered the threat of terrorism, so as to prevent operations by and the development of terrorist organizations in their countries.

40. Mr. HOHENFELLNER (Austria) thanked the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights for his excellent introduction of items 87, 88, 91 and 96, and noted that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed that all human beings were born free and equal in dignity and rights and were entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration, without distinction of any kind, in particular as to race, colour or national origin. Racism and racial discrimination, which denied those basic principles, were incompatible with the fundamental ideals of free and democratic societies. It was essential to conceive legal rules for the protection of human beings against racism and to make the fight against racism an integral part of daily life in all societies.

41. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which had entered into force almost 20 years earlier and to which 125 States were parties, was the most widely-accepted international instrument in the field of human rights. Regrettably, racial discrimination continued to be a widespread phenomenon in all regions of the world. Distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, creed or national or ethnic origin was not justifiable for whatever reason and constituted a violation of the Convention as well as of other universally recognised human rights standards.

42. The Austrian Government could not accept the fact that some States parties to the Convention discriminated against ethnic and racial groups or individuals belonging to them by measures intended to destroy their social and economic basis and their cultural heritage. No State could deny the rights of minorities in the name of social and economic development.

43. Apartheid was an institutionalised denial of fundamental human rights and thus a flagrant violation of international law. South Africa, the only State in which racial discrimination served as an organising principle of society, was the most blatant example of racism and racial discrimination. Austria had persistently and unequivocally condemned apartheid as an abhorrent violation of human rights and dignity. His Government welcomed the various decisions taken by the United Nations and shared the determination of the overwhelming majority of the international community to adopt specific measures to create pressure for change. He reiterated the appeal of the Austrian Government to the Government of South Africa to immediately release all political prisoners and to refrain from carrying out pending death sentences. In addition, his delegation appealed to the Government of South Africa to enter, without pre-conditions, into a political dialogue with the genuine leaders of the majority population in order to bring about a peaceful transition to a free and democratic united South Africa, with equal rights for all.

44. Even though various decisions and resolutions, and certain compulsory measures, had been adopted at the United Nations, grave violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms persisted in South Africa. The Austrian Government's condemnation of the abominable system of apartheid also remained unchanged, a condemnation that Austria had stated and would continue to state bilaterally and in all relevant multilateral forums.

45. In connection with the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (A/43/18), it was hard to understand why States parties did not

(Mr. Hohenfellner, Austria)

honour their obligations under the Convention and did not pay their assessed contributions, a situation which had obliged the Committee to cancel its spring session and hold only a curtailed session at Geneva. That would lower the quality of the Committee's work and would further increase the delay in considering reports. Since the outstanding assessments in most cases amounted to a few hundred dollars only, Austria shared the view of some members of the Committee that the central problem was not purely financial but lay in the lack of political will on the part of some States parties. There was a correlation between non-payment of contributions and non-submission of reports. Accordingly, Austria could not support the Committee's recommendation to the General Assembly (A/43/18, chap. VII) that expenses for the members of the Committee should be funded from the regular budget of the United Nations. The provisions of article 8, paragraph 6, of the Convention were very clear, and accordingly his delegation hoped that the outstanding assessments would be paid immediately.

46. He commended the Secretariat for its detailed reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (A/43/631, 637 and 644). The Government of Austria had responded immediately to the request concerning the global compilation of national legislation against racial discrimination in order to facilitate the drafting of the comprehensive report issued as document A/43/637. Only concerted action by the different United Nations bodies involved in the implementation of the programme would have the required impact.

47. The Government of Austria had also noted with interest the comprehensive report on the question of mercenaries, submitted by the Special Rapporteur to the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-fourth session.

48. Austria maintained unchanged its basic position on the item under consideration and would closely follow future developments in the field of racism and racial discrimination with a view to contributing as best it could to the ultimate eradication of that evil.

49. Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica) thanked the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights for his important introduction to the topics which the Committee was considering and which concerned one of the most difficult challenges facing the international community: the eradication of racial discrimination and apartheid. Despite all the progress that had been achieved, especially in the legislative field, much remained to be done to reach the goal of the eradication of racial discrimination, particularly that based on a State policy as was the case in South Africa, whose persistent attitude it had not proved possible to change either in form or in substance.

50. Her delegation had taken note with satisfaction of the reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination (A/43/631, A/43/637 and A/43/644), submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 42/47, of 30 November 1987, which stated that "all forms of racism and racial discrimination, particularly in their institutionalized form, such as apartheid, or resulting from official doctrines of racial superiority

(Mrs. Castro de Barish, Costa Rica)

or exclusivity, are among the most serious violations of human rights in the contemporary world and must be combated by all available means". Her delegation endorsed that statement, with the reservation that those means should be peaceful, since the use of violence had not made it possible to achieve the goal sought.

51. Various United Nations bodies, as well as specialised agencies, including UNESCO and ILO, were participating in the activities of the Second Decade. In its resolution 42/47, the General Assembly had reaffirmed the necessity of co-ordinating the full range of programmes under implementation by the United Nations system as they related to the objectives of the Second Decade, and had emphasised the importance of an operational, viable and effective institutional machinery to that end. Her delegation was pleased to note that the Secretary-General had designated Mr. Jan Martenson to co-ordinate all the activities and programmes of the United Nations system in that field, in particular with respect to co-operation with the Centre Against Apartheid and the Centre on Transnational Corporations.

52. Co-operation with non-governmental organisations was also a matter of priority in order to promote and carry out the activities of the Second Decade. She took note with satisfaction of the activities carried out at Geneva and in New York and of the periodic meetings held with the communications media in those cities. The publicity given to the work of the United Nations against racism and racial discrimination was of special importance in order to mobilise public support for all the objectives of the Second Decade. Another event of great importance had been the innovative Global Consultation on Racial Discrimination which had been held recently at Geneva with the participation of eminent persons, including specialists, university professors and representatives from interested organisations.

53. Care must be taken not to overlook the constant activity of publicity, information and ethical training at the school level, with the support of the family and the home, in order to prevent the inculcation of prejudices, mistrust and racial hatred into very young children beginning their scholastic career. Through close co-operation between the school and the home it would be possible to eradicate the scourge of prejudice and racism. In that sphere, non-governmental organisations could play a very important role by publicising and providing information on the evils of racism, racial discrimination and apartheid and their tragic social consequences. She agreed with the representative of Canada on the need to combat the pernicious model of apartheid as well as intolerance.

54. Although Costa Rica had been unable to send information in time for inclusion in the global compilation of national legislation against racial discrimination (A/43/637), in its previous reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, it had stated that in ratifying the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, and the International Human Rights Covenants, including the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, those legal instruments had automatically been incorporated in its legislation.

(Mrs. Castro de Barish, Costa Rica)

55. Her delegation supported the appeal made by the Egyptian representative that more States should accede to the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, and pointed out that in demonstrating its determination to support international action in that field, Costa Rica had made the declaration envisaged in article 14, paragraph 1, of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination on 8 January 1974.

56. In his statement before the General Assembly at its current session, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Costa Rica had expressed his Government's profound indignation at the daily violation of human rights in South Africa and had recalled that, as evidence of its repudiation of that odious policy, Costa Rica had severed relations with South Africa and called for the eradication of that abominable system of segregation, which was contrary to the natural standards of human coexistence. Similarly, he had included Costa Rica in the group of countries which called for the immediate release of Nelson Mandela and all persons imprisoned in South Africa merely because they had asserted their rights as human beings.

57. Costa Rica shared the concern expressed at the financial difficulties of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; the fact that it had not yet been able to comply with the undertaking entered into under article 8, paragraph 6, of the Convention was due solely to problems of a budgetary nature which it was making every effort to resolve.

58. With regard to item 96, which was closely related to the principles contained in the Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Human Rights Covenants and General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), her delegation reiterated its belief that self-determination was a right that should be applied equally to peoples and to human beings, without any discrimination or restriction whatever. As pointed out by the representative of the Philippines, the exercise of self-determination was not an isolated event but a continuous process. The International Human Rights Covenants stipulated that peoples should be free to determine their political situation and, in full freedom, to determine their economic, social and cultural development. That fundamental right to self-determination was violated both by the existence of a racist régime such as that of South Africa or of a colonial régime, and by foreign intervention or occupation or through the denial to a people of the right freely to choose its own government. Regrettably, many of those violations continued to exist.

59. The Secretary-General had made great efforts to achieve a solution to various long-standing regional conflicts. She welcomed those efforts and expressed the hope that the peoples affected would finally exercise their right to self-determination. She drew attention, in particular, to the current efforts made to reach agreement in Angola and the independence of Namibia on the basis of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). She had also viewed with optimism the signing of the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan and expressed the hope that, in withdrawing the Soviet troops in pursuance of the political agreement and achieving the return of the refugees in a secure and honourable manner, it would be possible to establish an authentically representative régime through an act of genuine independence and self-determination in a non-aligned Afghanistan.

(Mrs. Castro de Barish, Costa Rica)

60. She noted with interest the steps taken to achieve a negotiated solution of the conflict in Kampuchea, resulting from a military occupation in violation of the fundamental principles of the United Nations and international law. To achieve such a solution, the military occupation by Viet Nam should end and the Cambodian people should be in a position freely to exercise its right to self-determination and to decide its own future free from threats from abroad.

61. The current climate of détente was conducive to the achievement of dialogues and agreements which had been impossible so far and justified the hope that justice and peace in the world would be consolidated.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.