



**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 9th MEETING**

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**Distr. GENERAL**  
**A/C.4/43/SR.9**  
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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued) (A/C.4/43/3 and Add.1)

Hearing of petitioners

1. The CHAIRMAN said it would be recalled that the Committee decided to grant the requests for hearings on Western Sahara contained in documents A/C.4/43/3 and Add.1.
2. At the invitation of the Chairman, Ms. Jackson (American Association of Jurists) took a place at the petitioners' table.
3. Ms. JACKSON (American Association of Jurists) said that her organization, composed of members from North, South, and Central America and the Caribbean, was committed to the principles of international law, especially the basic one of the right of peoples to self-determination.
4. She noted that there had been encouraging developments in Western Sahara, due in part to the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General and the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). Both parties to the dispute, Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO), had in principle accepted the peace proposals put to them. Yet a number of critical issues remained unresolved: the presence of Moroccan troops and a Moroccan administration in Western Sahara, the incentives given to Moroccans to become settlers in the Territory, the application of Moroccan laws to the Territory, and the issue of direct negotiations. The international community should not tolerate any delaying tactics: the immediate implementation of General Assembly resolution 40/50 and of OAU resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) was essential for a just and definitive political solution.
5. Her organization called upon Morocco to demonstrate its commitment to that goal, as had the Frente POLISARIO, by agreeing to direct negotiations immediately.
6. Ms. Jackson withdrew.
7. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Sidaty (Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO)) took a place at the petitioners' table.
8. Mr. SIDATY (Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO)), reviewing the history of the struggle for national independence of the people of Western Sahara, said that the struggle was the manifestation of the unshakeable determination of the people of Western Sahara to live in freedom and to lay the foundations of a developing society. The struggle of the Saharan people under the leadership of the Frente POLISARIO was currently

(Mr. Sidny)

receiving more support than ever from the international community. The United Nations, OAU and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries had shown a remarkable consistency in continually reaffirming the right of the Saharan people to self-determination and independence.

9. The decolonisation of Western Sahara would have been completed were it not for the Moroccan policy of obstruction manifested in the stationing of more than 160,000 Moroccan soldiers in Western Sahara in defiance of the resolutions of the international community.

10. The United Nations and OAU had long ago established the legal framework of a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Western Sahara, as outlined in General Assembly resolution 40/50 and OAU resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX). From the time of its adoption, the peace plan had been endorsed by the Frente POLISARIO. Morocco, for its part, having failed to win OAU support for its manoeuvres, had turned to the United Nations in an attempt to sow confusion. The growing international pressure, combined with pressure on the ground had forced Morocco to agree to a referendum. However, it still refused to negotiate with the Frente POLISARIO the terms and modalities for the organisation of the referendum, as stipulated in the peace plan. It also refused to turn over the Territory to international organizations as an alternative which would allow the people of Western Sahara to freely express their opinions without any administrative or military constraints.

11. The Frente POLISARIO had always supported and still supported a peaceful solution to the conflict through a truly free referendum but it questioned what could be done in the face of the obstacles posed by the Moroccan occupation.

12. The people of Western Sahara were a minority in their own country. They were surrounded by approximately 400,000 Moroccans as contrasted with a Saharan electoral body which, according to the Spanish census of 1974, numbered approximately 60,000.

13. Repression was so brutal that any dissident voice was stifled. There was no Saharan family which did not mourn the disappearance or imprisonment of a relative. Furthermore, Morocco was currently proceeding to evacuate the native population of the Territory. How could a free and credible referendum be organized under such repressive conditions?

14. The Frente POLISARIO was calling for a genuine referendum in which the Saharan people would freely opt for the future they desired, a kind of referendum that Morocco clearly feared.

15. The tireless efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General and the successive Chairmen of OAU had made headway in large part due to the constant co-operation and flexibility of the Frente POLISARIO, a sign of the Saharan people's confidence that the United Nations and OAU would protect their rights. By contrast, at the time of the survey mission to Western Sahara dispatched by the United Nations in 1987, Morocco had imposed a terrible repression in the occupied areas to hide the true situation.

(Mr. Sidaty)

16. The two parties' acceptance in principle of the peace proposals put forward by the Secretary-General and the current Chairman of OAU was an important step towards a just and definitive solution. The major obstacles remaining, however, had to do with the invasion troops, the occupying administration, the settlers and the laws that would apply during the transition period. Morocco's tendentious interpretation of the progress made was designed to mask the existence of any impediments to the peace plan, and amounted to a serious setback.

17. The only way to advance to the final stage of the peace process was through direct negotiations, for which the General Assembly had been calling since 1979, to discuss conditions for a cease-fire and procedures for a referendum. Neither the Saharan nor the Moroccan people had any desire to continue a bloody war. The Frente POLISARIO was ready, unconditionally, for direct negotiations. Morocco, instead, continued to reject them under various pretexts, presumably to avoid a just, free and orderly referendum. It could not on the one hand pretend it was working with the Secretary-General and the current Chairman of OAU and, on the other, reject United Nations and OAU endorsement of direct negotiations.

18. Such negotiations would allow each party to demonstrate its desire for peace while avoiding any possibility of post-referendum disagreements about the commitments that had been made. Those who were now enemies must speak to each other in order to discover anew the virtues of direct dialogue and work together as architects of an enduring peace.

19. The Frente POLISARIO pledged to co-operate with the Special Representative for Western Sahara whose appointment, pursuant to Security Council 621 (1988), had been announced that very day.

20. The war imposed on the Saharan people by Morocco and its illegal occupation of part of their Territory caused destruction and instability and compromised efforts for a greater Maghreb, contrary to the hopes of the Saharan and Moroccan peoples for a just and lasting peace and to the wishes of the international community for an end to the conflict in Western Sahara on the basis of justice and the right to self-determination.

21. Mr. Sidaty withdrew.

AGENDA ITEM 18: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued) (A/43/23 (Parts IV and VI), 226, 671, 680\* (reissued); A/C.4/43/L.2; A/AC.109/934-936, 937 and Corr.1, 938-941, 942 and Corr.1, 943, 944 and Corr.1, 945 and Add.1-2, 946-950, 952 and Corr.1, 953-957, 959, 963 and 964)

AGENDA ITEM 108: INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 g OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/43/23 (Part IV), 219, 226, 658)

AGENDA ITEM 110: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/43/23 (Part IV), 355 and Add.1-3; A/AC.109/L.1665; E/1988/81)

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/43/3 (chaps. I and VI), 226)

AGENDA ITEM 111: UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA (continued) (A/43/681)

AGENDA ITEM 112: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (continued) (A/43/677)

General debate (continued)

22. Mr. ARNOUSS (Syrian Arab Republic) said that, since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), many colonial countries had achieved independence and had become Members of the United Nations. Millions of human beings nevertheless remained under colonialism and occupation. It had been 10 years since the adoption of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), embodying the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia, but the people of Namibia was still struggling for self-determination while the Pretoria régime engaged in the most heinous practices in order to prevent the implementation of that resolution.

23. As was clear from chapter IX of the report 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/43/23 (Part IV)), a certain amount of progress had been made in the small Territories, but there was still a pressing need for the administering Powers to take the necessary measures to promote education, technical training, political preparation and economic and social development. The visiting missions dispatched by the United Nations to the Territories were particularly important for obtaining the information necessary for the Special Committee's work.

24. He wished to commend the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system which had provided assistance to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and their liberation movements and which had co-operated in the implementation of United Nations resolutions and responded to the recommendations of the General Assembly. He was, however, saddened by the fact that the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund had chosen to continue their relations with the Pretoria régime, which only helped that régime to perpetuate the policy of apartheid. Those relations should be suspended until such time as the racist régime complied with the will of the international community.

25. He commended the activities of the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa and called upon States, institutions, organizations and individuals to continue their generous support in order to enable the Programme to carry out the tasks entrusted to it. The Syrian

(Mr. Arnouss, Syrian Arab Republic)

Arab Republic acted in co-ordination with the liberation movements in southern Africa with a view to making a contribution in that field.

26. In its resolution 42/78, the General Assembly had reaffirmed that the question of Western Sahara was one of decolonization and that the solution of the question lay in the implementation of OAU resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX), in which ways and means were established for a just and definitive political solution to the Western Sahara conflict. His delegation welcomed the mission of good offices of the Secretary-General and the current Chairman of OAU undertaken to create the necessary conditions for a peaceful and fair referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. His country had endorsed the part concerning Western Sahara of the final communiqué adopted by the Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of the Non-Aligned Countries, held in Nicosia in September 1988.

27. Mr. EKPEBU (Nigeria) said that the inalienable right of all peoples to determine freely their political and socio-economic future must not be limited in any way. His delegation noted with satisfaction the impressive work being done by the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and pledged its continued support for the Special Committee's efforts to eliminate the remaining vestiges of colonialism. Although the United Nations had achieved impressive success in the field of decolonization, that struggle must continue until all oppressed and colonized peoples became independent. Of the remaining 3 million people under the yoke of colonialism, roughly half were in Namibia, a Territory illegally occupied by racist South Africa. His delegation, however, was confident that the Namibian people would ultimately gain their independence.

28. General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) had codified the principles guiding the decolonization work of the Organization. The litmus test of the true exercise of the right to self-determination was the free and democratic expression of the will of the people themselves. All freedom-loving peoples of the world must actively support efforts to complete the unfinished task of decolonization. In that connection, his delegation urged the administering Powers to co-operate with the Special Committee in the discharge of their obligations under the Charter.

29. His Government expressed satisfaction at the recent developments relating to the question of Western Sahara. The efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General and the successive Chairmen of OAU had contributed immensely to the recent progress made in that area. By accepting the joint OAU-United Nations Peace Proposals, both the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO had demonstrated that a solution could be found. Further agreement on the outstanding issues could be achieved in order to enable the Saharan people to express its will democratically. Nigeria appealed to both parties concerned to resolve their dispute and implement the proposals for settling the crisis.

30. Recent developments offered new possibilities for enabling the people of New Caledonia to achieve independence. The use of force, intimidation and electoral

(Mr. Ekpebu, Nigeria)

manipulation which had characterized French policy in New Caledonia under the Government of Mr. Chirac, was being replaced by a policy encouraging consultation and persuasion. The recently signed Paris agreement between the Rocard Government and the Kanak leaders offered real prospects for settling the crisis. His delegation called on France to resolve that question once and for all. France's participation in the work of the Special Committee relating to New Caledonia would assist the efforts under way in Paris to achieve that goal. Lastly, Nigeria appealed to all the administering Powers to give primary consideration to the aspirations of the populations in the Territories under their control.

31. Mr. DJOURI (Algeria) said that the recent positive developments in international relations had resulted from a collective desire to establish true international peace and security. The efforts made by the current Chairman of OAU and the Secretary-General had led to the agreement in principle between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO. In that regard, Algeria supported the assessment of the situation provided in the report of the Secretary-General on the question of Western Sahara (A/43/680).

32. The situation in Western Sahara must be resolved through a referendum for self-determination. Algeria supported the holding in Western Sahara of a referendum organized and controlled by the United Nations in co-operation with OAU and endorse the procedures to be followed during the transition period between the installation of the cease-fire and the announcement of the results of the referendum. It was hoped that the further clarification of the provisions of the settlement plan would lead to the holding of a referendum for self-determination in Western Sahara without any military or administrative constraints.

33. The act of self-determination required total freedom of choice. The people of Western Sahara must participate in the referendum without any obstacles to the free expression of their will. An effective international presence was required in order to guarantee the authenticity and credibility of the referendum.

34. The armed conflict in the area must be halted. The United Nations and OAU had called for direct negotiations between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, which were essential in order to achieve peace. The two parties to the conflict could not ignore each other indefinitely. They must reach agreement in order to ensure the security necessary for the return of the Saharan refugees to their homeland. The referendum, regardless of its outcome, would thus ensure reconciliation. The Secretary-General and the current Chairman of OAU should work together to bring about a rapprochement between the two belligerents through direct negotiations. In that regard, Algeria reiterated its consistent support for the efforts made by the Secretary-General and the Chairman of OAU to find a just and lasting settlement to the problem.

35. Decolonization was a sacred cause for Algeria, which supported the just cause of the people of Western Sahara. Furthermore, the unity of the peoples of the Maghreb was essential in order to ensure peace and co-operation in the region. He expressed satisfaction at the new atmosphere in the area and hoped that the

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

normalization of relations between his country and Morocco and the speedy restoration of fraternity and concord between its Moroccan and Saharan neighbours would make it possible for the peoples of the region to achieve their common aspirations. In that spirit, Algeria would spare no effort to bring about a prompt, peaceful and just settlement to the fratricidal conflict in Western Sahara.

36. Mr. BARRERO-STAH (Mexico) said that colonialism not only persisted but had assumed new forms. Economic and even financial colonialism had led to the domination and exploitation of vast numbers of human beings. Many peoples had exchanged one system of oppression for another, and their struggle for true independence and self-determination had become interminable.

37. Namibia was the most blatant case of a people fighting to achieve independence and to throw off the colonialist yoke. Pretoria continued its cynical disregard for international law and the community of nations. His Government condemned the odious system of apartheid imposed upon the Namibian people and the exploitation and oppression of Namibia by South Africa in violation of various United Nations resolutions. It was important to seek a solution to the Namibian question through all available peaceful means, including the imposition of comprehensive and mandatory sanctions under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

38. The efforts made by the United Nations to achieve independence for Namibia had been frustrated by the South African refusal to liberate the Territory and the Namibian people. The United Nations Council for Namibia had been unable to discharge its duties as the Administering Authority as conferred upon it by the General Assembly. South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia had been encouraged by numerous foreign interests, thus heightening the oppression and exploitation of the Namibian people. Mexico therefore reiterated its condemnation of South Africa and of those in collusion with it for keeping Namibia under a colonial régime.

39. As a member of the United Nations Council for Namibia, Mexico reaffirmed its determination to continue the struggle to achieve Namibia's independence in the near future. His delegation welcomed the important steps taken in recent months to attain the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) without any pre-conditions, which would be the only internationally acceptable basis for bringing about Namibia's independence, and Mexico therefore rejected making the independence of the Territory conditional upon extraneous questions. His Government welcomed the holding of quadripartite talks several months previously between Angola, Cuba and South Africa with the mediation of the United States in order to seek a settlement to the problem of southern Africa and to achieve peace in Angola and full independence for Namibia.

40. Another blatant case of colonialism was the question of the Malvinas. Mexico reiterated its firm support for Argentina's sovereign right to the Malvinas, South Georgia Island, the South Sandwich Islands and the adjacent sea. The United Nations had embarked upon a decolonization process, and it was duty-bound to take a clear position on that question. Mexico would continue to encourage the parties to the conflict to work towards a just and lasting solution to the problem. His



(Mr. Barrero-Stahl, Mexico)

delegation supported Argentina in its efforts to begin comprehensive talks with the British Government and commended the Secretary-General for striving to bring together the parties in question. His Government reiterated its opposition to unilateral measures aimed at perpetuating the status quo.

41. His delegation could not help but raise the issue of New Caledonia. Ever since that question had been placed back on the agenda of the Fourth Committee, Mexico had shared the view that the United Nations was responsible for the future progress of the Territory towards decolonization and self-determination. His Government therefore welcomed the decision adopted in June 1988 by the Administering Power and the leaders or the various independence movements in New Caledonia jointly to seek to establish a plan for the settlement of the issue and for the political development of New Caledonia that took into account the interests of the real inhabitants of the Territory. That decision had served as a background to the resolution adopted without a vote by the Special Committee on decolonization, which had received the support of the countries of the South Pacific Forum; Mexico welcomed the decision and hoped that the work of the Fourth Committee would lead to similar results.

42. Recent developments had encouraged his Government to hope that the parties to the Western Sahara conflict could reach a settlement on the question. That hope was borne out in the report of the Secretary-General (A/43/680). The proposals made by the Secretary-General and the current Chairman of OAU provided a sufficient framework for direct talks on a cease-fire and the establishment of conditions for holding a referendum free of administrative or military restrictions under the auspices of the United Nations and OAU. With that in mind, Mexico would support the draft resolution to be submitted to the General Assembly, and, by so doing, it gave its full backing to the right to self-determination of the Saharan people. Mexico also welcomed the agreement in principle reached between the King of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO on the proposals made by the Secretary-General and the Chairman of OAU and offered its assistance in promoting a just and lasting solution to the question in accordance with General Assembly resolution 40/50.

43. Mrs. DIAMATARIS (Cyprus) said that her Government was gratified by the new and promising developments concerning Western Sahara, which accorded with the spirit of recent General Assembly resolutions on the subject. The recent encouraging signs in international relations would undoubtedly facilitate a settlement of the Western Sahara issue.

44. The agreement in principle between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO described in the report of the Secretary-General (A/43/680) augured well for the future of the Territory. But it was essential not to underestimate the difficult task ahead. Of cardinal importance was recognition by both parties of the need for a free and fair referendum without administrative or military constraints. In that connection, her delegation welcomed the joint communiqué issued by Algeria and Morocco on 16 May 1988 on the occasion of the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries and their willingness to ensure the success of a just and lasting settlement of the conflict through a referendum free

(Mrs. Diamataris, Cyprus)

of any coercion. Only then could the people of Western Sahara exercise its inalienable right to self-determination and independence and could peace finally come to that tormented part of the world. Cyprus was a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.4/43/L.2 and believed that it contained all the elements for a just settlement.

45. Her Government expressed its deep appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to the current Chairman of OAU for their efforts in negotiating a cease-fire and the pre-conditions for a just and peaceful referendum.

46. Mr. MEHNAT (Afghanistan) said that in the view of his delegation, it was time for the parties to the conflict to start direct negotiations on enforcing a cease-fire and paving the way to a referendum free of any interference or intimidation. In that context, his Government commended the fruitful co-operation between the United Nations Secretary-General and the Chairman of OAU. It welcomed the recent agreement in principle reached between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO on the proposals put forward by the Secretary-General and the Chairman of OAU. It also attached great importance to the restoration of diplomatic relations between Algeria and Morocco. Such a step could speed up efforts to achieve a settlement.

47. His delegation reaffirmed its position that the prevailing situation in Western Sahara continued to pose a serious threat to peace, security and stability in the region. The people of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic had not been able to exercise their right to self-determination in accordance with OAU resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) and General Assembly resolution 42/78, which served as a constructive basis for a peaceful settlement. Afghanistan supported the repeated call by the non-aligned countries urging the parties to the conflict to hold direct negotiations as soon as possible on concluding a cease-fire and establishing the necessary conditions for holding a fair and peaceful referendum under the auspices of the United Nations and OAU. His Government welcomed the adoption of Security Council resolution 621 (1988) authorizing the Secretary-General to appoint a special representative for Western Sahara.

48. Afghanistan called upon the parties concerned to show greater political determination in putting an end to hostilities in the Territory and to provide all necessary conditions for the United Nations and OAU to hold and supervise a referendum free of military or administrative constraints. The people of Western Sahara must be allowed to determine their political status and pursue freely their economic, social and cultural development. To that end, it was more important than ever to support the struggle of the Saharan people for an independent Sahara, under the leadership of the Frente POLISARIO and its internationally recognized Government, the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic.

49. Mr. WOLFE (Jamaica) said that the importance and seriousness of the Committee's work was in no way diminished by the small list of items allocated for its consideration in recent years. Although there were relatively few remaining dependencies, decolonization was still a high priority on the agenda of the United Nations, as shown by the situation in Namibia resulting from South Africa's illegal

(Mr. Wolfe, Jamaica)

occupation and the protracted efforts made by the international community to secure the early implementation of the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia.

50. His country had consistently sought to maintain an active participation in the Committee's programme of work, reflecting its unswerving support for the legitimate aspirations of the peoples under colonial domination and its commitment to the process contained in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

51. During the period under review, no colonial Territory had moved towards independence. At the same time, there had been a number of political developments which could have a positive impact on the decolonization process in the remaining Territories.

52. First and foremost was the evolving situation regarding Namibia's independence. In the recently concluded general debate in the plenary session of the General Assembly, his delegation had expressed its satisfaction at the talks currently under way between Angola, Cuba, and South Africa, with the mediation of the United States, as well as its hope that events would lead to the termination of Pretoria's illegal occupation of Namibia and to the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). None the less, it had also called for continued vigilance to ensure that international pressure on South Africa was maintained in order to preclude the possibility of any violations by South Africa of the commitments which it had freely entered into. His delegation had since become gravely concerned to learn that the negotiations had reached an impasse, with the attendant possibilities that the renewed hopes for the early accession of Namibia to independence might not be realized after all.

53. It was therefore vital that the international community should intensify pressure to secure the emplacement of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group in Namibia before the adjournment of the current session of the Assembly. Concomitant efforts must also be made to ensure the strict application and enforcement of legal measures by the international community for the immediate termination of the illegal exploitation of Namibia's natural and economic resources, in accordance with the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and the relevant United Nations resolutions.

54. His delegation had followed with keen interest the recent developments with regard to the question of New Caledonia, following the favourable steps taken by the French authorities to initiate a dialogue with all the representative political parties including the Front de libération nationale kanak socialiste. The positive effects of the latest developments could already be seen in the work of the Special Committee on decolonization which, earlier in 1988, had been able to adopt a consensus text on New Caledonia. On the basis of that text, the Committee would be able to take similar action in respect of draft resolution I outlined in document A/43/23 (Part VI), which contained the recommendations of the Special Committee.

(Mr. Wolfe, Jamaica)

55. His delegation had also noted with appreciation the developments concerning the question of Western Sahara and the agreement in principle given by the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO to the joint proposals of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the current Chairman of OAU, with a view to the holding of a referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, organized and supervised by the United Nations in co-operation with OAU. His delegation welcomed the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 621 (1988), authorizing the Secretary-General to appoint a special representative for Western Sahara, and looked forward to the early deployment of the contingent of United Nations observers who would be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the cease-fire.

56. With regard to the text of the draft resolution which had been prepared for consideration and action by the Committee in 1988, his delegation noted with appreciation that efforts had been made to reflect the latest developments in a constructive manner. His Government would maintain its support for the draft resolution, which it still hoped could find consensus support in the Committee in the current year, and continued meanwhile to urge all Member States to lend their full co-operation in ensuring that the joint proposals of the Secretary-General and the current Chairman of OAU were not undermined.

57. He drew the attention of the Committee to the problems of the small Non-Self-Governing Territories, which had their own special difficulties due to their smallness and remoteness and to a host of other physical and structural constraints on their national economies. The experiences in many of the small colonial dependencies indicated that serious obstacles still stood in the way of the free exercise of the right to self-determination. Despite those problems, however, the issue of independence for a number of those Territories remained under active consideration. Two examples, chosen at random, would underline the kinds of problems being faced in the small and vulnerable dependent Territories.

58. In the case of Montserrat, he drew attention to the various statements attributed in document A/AC.109/944 to the Chief Minister in the campaign leading up to the elections held in the Territory in 1987. According to the document, the Chief Minister had emphasized that the future status of the Territory was not a campaign issue of the ruling party and that a victory for his party should not be seen as a mandate to seek independence from the United Kingdom. That appeared to contrast with an earlier statement by the Chief Minister, published in 1986, indicating that the ruling party would sever all remaining constitutional ties with the United Kingdom if it were returned to power in the next general election. More recently, according to a report published in October 1988, the Chief Minister had declared in the broadcast media that he would like to see the Territory prepare for independence and had reiterated the position of the Government of Montserrat that any constitutional change would be preceded by a referendum or an election in which independence was an issue.

59. In the light of those developments, his delegation reiterated its previous request that the situation in Montserrat should be kept under review, and, in the

(Mr. Wolfe, Jamaica)

event that a referendum or election were held on the Territory's future political status, that a visiting mission should be sent, following consultations with the Administering Authority.

60. With regard to Bermuda, document A/AC.109/942 indicated that the future political status of the Territory and the issue of independence for Bermuda would continue to be the main focus of attention and debate in the Government and among the locally elected representatives. It was clear from the account in the document of the ongoing discussions between the Government of Bermuda and representatives of the United States and Canada that the apprehensions about the Territory's future political status stemmed more from military and strategic considerations than from concerns about its economic viability. The Secretariat report on the Territory lent credence to the preoccupation of the elected authorities about the possibility of their involvement in super-Power rivalry and competition.

61. Notwithstanding the legitimacy of those concerns, the wishes, interests and legitimate aspirations of the people in the dependent Territories must always be paramount. Accordingly, the process of decolonization should not be perceived as being subject to purely external considerations. It would therefore be appropriate for the Special Committee on decolonization to keep abreast of the political developments in Bermuda and to seek the co-operation of the Administering Authority in allowing the inhabitants to be kept fully informed of the options open to them in the free exercise of their inalienable rights.

62. The particular problems and difficulties faced by the inhabitants of the small Non-Self-Governing Territories in seeking to make crucial decisions regarding their political future also underscored the need for more updated and comprehensive information from the Administering Authorities about the overall political situation in the Territories under their control. The United Nations should continue to render assistance through its specialized agencies and other bodies with a view to strengthening the fragile socio-economic structures in the dependent Territories.

63. The CHAIRMAN announced that Barbados had become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.4/43/L.2, on the question of Western Sahara.

64. Mr. BATAINEH (Jordan) said that decolonization remained a matter of high priority on the international agenda. The United Nations must take strenuous action for the full implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, regardless of the small size and population and geographical remoteness of the many Territories in question.

65. The administering Powers had a number of responsibilities towards the Non-Self-Governing Territories. They must see to the economic, social and political development of those Territories so as to provide a sound framework for their peaceful progress towards self-determination. They must ensure the preservation of natural resources and their future control and exploitation by the indigenous peoples. The administering Powers must promote the political awareness

(Mr. Bataineh, Jordan)

of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, allow them free choice among all available options and avoid interference in the exercise of their right to self-determination. The United Nations visiting missions must be allowed unimpeded access to the Non-Self-Governing Territories in view of the importance of the information they could provide on prevailing conditions there. All administering Powers should participate in the work of the Special Committee and should co-operate with it in its consideration of questions relating to the Territories. In addition, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system must provide the Territories with every possible assistance in order to expedite their social, economic and cultural progress.

66. His delegation would like to stress the role of the United Nations, and particularly of the sustained efforts made by the Secretary-General, with respect to the various issues that the Special Committee was endeavouring to resolve. The progress made with regard to Western Sahara was encouraging, and his delegation hoped that the momentum gained by the efforts of the Secretary-General and OAU could be maintained in the implementation of the practical details of the peace proposals submitted to the parties to the conflict for their consideration.

67. Namibia remained excluded from the application of the Declaration on decolonization. The question had taken on serious economic, social and political dimensions as a result of continuing economic exploitation and the depletion of Namibia's natural resources. States had become more interested in protecting their profits than in promoting justice, humanitarian principles and law. The question of Namibia was one of decolonization, and it must be resolved by the exercise by the people of the Territory of its right to self-determination. The recent encouraging developments in the ongoing negotiations on the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) provided grounds for optimism that 1988 would be a turning-point in the long progress of the people of Namibia towards freedom and independence.

AGENDA ITEM 115: PROGRAMME PLANNING (A/43/6 and Corr.1, 16 (Part I and Add.1 and Part II), 329; A/C.4/43/L.5)

68. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to document A/C.4/43/L.5, containing the text of a letter dated 12 October 1988 addressed to him by the Chairman of the Fifth Committee concerning programme planning. The Chairman of the Fifth Committee had invited, by the first week of November, the views which the Member States wished to express in the Fourth Committee on the relevant chapters of the revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989 and on the note by the Secretary-General containing the draft introduction to the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997. Accordingly, he requested members wishing to do so to submit any comments to him in writing by Tuesday, 25 October.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.