



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 10th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PETERS (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

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- (a) REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION OF THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES
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1. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of members of the Committee to a draft resolution relating to agenda item 111: United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa, contained in document A/C.4/43/L.3, and to a draft resolution relating to agenda item 112: Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self Governing Territories, contained in document A/C.4/43/L.4.

2. His Royal Highness Prince JWABU (Swaziland) said that the question of decolonization was still of fundamental importance for his delegation and that the development of human resources in Non-Self-Governing Territories was one of the major elements of decolonization. It therefore applauded the efforts of the various United Nations agencies to co-ordinate their activities on behalf of the indigenous peoples and to facilitate their attainment of self-determination and national independence. His delegation also noted with satisfaction the expanded

(His Royal Highness Prince Jwabu,
Swaziland)

co-operation between States Members of the United Nations and States members of the Commonwealth and other organizations that had generously supported training programmes for southern Africa. In particular, his delegation commended the work of the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Educational and Training Programme in Africa, which was of vital importance in preparing the parties concerned for the responsibility that would come with national liberation.

3. His delegation remained perturbed by the ongoing struggle of the Namibian people, which had suffered for more than 40 years. It was imperative that the international community redouble its efforts to resolve the bitter conflict in that region. The United States Government had played an important role in bringing together the Governments of Cuba, Angola and South Africa in an attempt to find an amicable solution to the problem of Namibia and Angola and, consequently, to the chronic problem inside South Africa.

4. The Government of Swaziland continued to view the situation in Western Sahara with great concern, and its policy was to encourage a peaceful solution to the problem, calling upon both parties to the conflict to exercise the political and moral restraint necessary to achieve it. It supported the relentless efforts of the Secretary-General, the Organization of African Unity and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to find a solution, and, in that connection, it welcomed the framework of a referendum under the supervision of the United Nations and OAU.

5. Mr. MUTSUANGWA (Zimbabwe) said that, while one could derive satisfaction from the fact that, by virtue of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), many Member States had been able to attain their freedom and sovereignty, it should be emphasized that the work of the Fourth Committee had not yet been definitively concluded. The Movement of Non-Aligned States had been a stalwart supporter of the activities of the Committee in the struggle against colonialism. In that regard, he drew attention to the recent proposal by the Ministerial Meeting of the Non-Aligned States held in Cyprus that the period 1990-2000 be declared "the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism". The proposal called upon the United Nations to support a plan of action aimed at inaugurating the twenty-first century with a world free from colonialism.

6. The illegal occupation of Namibia by South Africa continued to be possible because of the support given to that country by certain Western countries, which were guided by selfish exploitative interests or geopolitical considerations extraneous to the question of Namibian decolonisation. His delegation dismissed any argument that maintained that the activities of transnational corporations played any positive role in a situation of forced dependence in which only the occupier derived any benefits. Such activities could be positively viewed only in the context of a free people master of its own destiny.

(Mr. Mutsuangwa, Zimbabwe)

7. Similarly, the provisions of resolution 1514 (XV) should also be applied to the last vestiges of colonialism in Puerto Rico, the Malvinas, Micronesia and other dependent territories. Zimbabwe was encouraged by the fact that the parties to the conflict in New Caledonia had found a way towards negotiating their differences. There were signs of progress on the question of Western Sahara, and the negotiations of the Secretary-General and the Chairman of OAU on that question had been carried out in accordance with OAU resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) and General Assembly resolution 40/50. The progress made in the negotiating process was encouraging and would, unquestionably, facilitate the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

8. Mr. KIRICHENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that, while the last 30 years had seen considerable advances in the sphere of decolonization, the objectives of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples had not yet been fully attained. The administering Powers were still using their small Pacific territories as military bases and strategic positions, against the will and aspirations of the indigenous population. A flagrant example of that was to be found in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, where it was easy to see that in recent times a policy of annexation had been applied, with the socio-political advancement of the population and its attainment of independence being accorded last priority.

9. The Special Committee's report (A/43/23 (Part VI)) stated that the Trust Territory remained under the control of the administering Power and had been divided into four distinct parts, each of which had been the subject of neo-colonialist agreements which strengthened the political, financial and military control of the administering Power over them. The annexation of Palau was almost complete. The results of absolute economic and political control by the administering Power constituted a distortion of the concept of self-determination. The decision of the Palau Supreme Court on the results of the referendum held on 4 August 1987 confirmed that conclusion.

10. His delegation considered that the dismemberment and annexation of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands by the administering Power violated the principles of the Charter, the Trusteeship Agreement and the objectives of decolonization. The occupation was accompanied by the militarization of the territories. All the small islands had been transformed into military bases, and bases for anti-ballistic missiles and for the storage of biochemical weapons. The Compact of Free Association reflected the interests of the administering Power because, inter alia, it provided for the maintenance in Micronesia of radioactive material and its transport. All those developments constituted a serious threat not only for the population of Micronesia but also for the population of the whole region and for world peace in general. Unfortunately, there were many other examples of the right of peoples being impeded by the strategic interests of other States. In Guam, Puerto Rico and other territories, military bases had been established against the will of the indigenous population.

(Mr. Kirichenko, Ukrainian SSR)

11. Undoubtedly, the elimination of the vestiges of colonialism, racism and apartheid depended on the assistance measures to be adopted by the specialized agencies. His delegation supported the African proposal that such aid should be extended since, so far, it had been insufficient. For a number of years, two of the international agencies associated with the United Nations, namely, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, had continued to co-operate with the South African racist régime in a manner which supported and strengthened it. They were thus violating the relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and of the Security Council. Such co-operation should be vigorously condemned by the international community.

12. Mr. SISOUVONG (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said it was unfortunate that some metropolitan countries continued to make excuses for not complying with their obligations unto the Charter. In his delegation's view, there was no link between the independence of a territory and its geographical location, its territorial size and the size of its population.

13. The occupation of Namibia by South Africa was a threat to international peace and security. It ran counter to the principle of the inalienable right of that people to self determination and independence, in accordance with Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). His delegation strongly condemned the co-operation of the Western countries and considered it as an attempt to prevent the immediate and full implementation of that resolution. His country reaffirmed its entire solidarity with the struggle of the Namibian people, under the leadership of SWAPO, and was convinced that the adoption of comprehensive mandatory sanctions against South Africa would contribute effectively to efforts for a peaceful attainment of independence of Namibia.

14. Mr. NGAC (Viet Nam) said that, although self-determination and independence had become a major aim of the present time and although all countries had committed themselves to the cause of decolonization, some 20 territories from the Pacific, the Atlantic, the Indian Ocean and the Caribbean still remained on the Fourth Committee's agenda. Clearly, of all those territories, Namibia was the most serious case. On the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia, firm and decisive measures should be adopted to ensure that South Africa granted immediate independence to that Territory. The United Nations plan must in no way be subordinated to extraneous considerations. Viet Nam supported the correct position and constructive attitude adopted by Angola and Cuba as part of the diplomatic efforts which were aimed at a solution guaranteeing the sovereignty, security and territorial integrity of Angola as well as the genuine independence of Namibia. The South African authorities must strictly abide by the agreements reached and refrain from creating new and artificial obstacles. The international community must adopt new and decisive measures to prevent South Africa from continuing to pile up arms and to build installations designed to develop and increase its nuclear capacity.

(Mr. Ngac, Viet Nam)

15. His delegation considered that, as long as a single territory remained under colonial occupation, the process of decolonization must continue. Such factors as territorial size, geographical location, the number of inhabitants or the limitation of natural resources should in no way prevent the implementation of the Declaration on decolonization. The administering Powers were under an obligation to create the necessary conditions for the implementation of resolution 1514 (XV) in the territories they administered.

16. Viet Nam fully supported the just cause in favour of self-determination and independence for the peoples of Western Sahara, New Caledonia, the Malvinas, Puerto Rico and other dependent and Non-Self-Governing Territories. A political solution should be found for the question of Western Sahara through direct negotiations by the parties concerned on the basis of respect for the independence and self-determination of its people. His delegation welcomed the efforts made by OAU and the United Nations to achieve that aim and reiterated its full support for the just struggle of the people of Western Sahara under the leadership of the POLISARIO Front.

17. Mr. AL-DOAGE (Kuwait) said that his country had always supported the struggle of the Namibian people, under the leadership of SWAPO, to put an end to Pretoria's odious occupation and had condemned the acts of the racist régime in South Africa. Kuwait hoped that the quadripartite negotiations in the search of a solution in southern Africa would end injustice and oppression. It supported the various liberation movements which were fighting for the legitimate rights of their people, whatever their territorial size or the number of their inhabitants.

18. It was gratifying that the parties to the conflict in Western Sahara had accepted the Secretary-General's report and his initiatives in favour of a solution. He also welcomed the initiative taken by France in New Caledonia. He hoped that the administering Powers would endorse the appeals made by the international community and show their good will in granting independence to the territories they administered. Kuwait deplored the failure of some of them to report to the United Nations on the situation in those territories.

19. His delegation vigorously condemned the co-operation now taking place between certain specialized agencies and South Africa in the financial, economic, technical and other fields. Such co-operation was a violation of United Nations resolutions, since it helped to preserve colonialism. He requested those specialized agencies to end their co-operation with the colonial Powers and to assist the Non-Aligned Movement to end the occupation and racial discrimination in South Africa.

20. Mr. MPAY (Cameroon) said that, although 25 colonial Territories had attained independence in the past 16 years, the United Nations must redouble its efforts to liberate the millions of people still living under colonial domination, which prevented them from exercising their fundamental rights, in flagrant violation of the Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Namibia and South Africa were the most notorious examples of colonialism. The system of apartheid of the minority and racist régime in Pretoria had subjected the black majority to

(Mr. Mpay, Cameroon)

slavery. Apartheid must be eliminated so that that régime would put an end to its attacks against neighbouring countries, its exploitation and plundering of Namibia, its military and nuclear co-operation with certain Powers and its policy of repression of the black majority.

21. Cameroon supported the recommendations in the resolution adopted by the Special Committee on decolonization (A/AC.109/970) concerning the assistance of the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations in the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and considered there was a need to strengthen the support given to peoples under colonial domination, especially those in Namibia and South Africa, in close collaboration with SWAPO, ANC, PAC and the front-line countries. His delegation also supported the Special Committee's resolution (A/AC.109/965) on the sending of visiting missions to Territories, as well as that Committee's recommendations for the transmission by the administering Powers, of information on the Non-Self-Governing Territories, which enabled the United Nations to monitor the economic and social situation in those Territories.

22. The programmes of education and training being implemented in the Territories should enable the indigenous peoples to prepare themselves for the future so as to be self-sufficient in the administrative, technical and managerial fields. UNESCO, in collaboration with other specialized agencies, should prepare programmes suited to those Territories. In the case of Namibia and South Africa, there was a need for participation in the programmes by SWAPO, PAC and ANC, which were familiar with the aspirations of their peoples, and by the front-line States, which received most of the Namibian and South African refugees.

23. Mr. FLEMING (Saint Lucia) said that his country noted the progress made towards a peaceful settlement of the question of Western Sahara. The previous year, Saint Lucia had taken a neutral stand on the draft resolution on that question in deference to the Secretary-General, who had dispatched a technical team to the area to gather the necessary data for the formulation, in co-operation with the Chairman of OAU, of peace proposals. The Security Council had unanimously supported the Secretary-General's proposals and had authorized the appointment of a special representative for Western Sahara. The next step should focus on the implementation of the peace plan; his delegation was convinced it would be a drawback if the negotiations were to be reopened on any of the elements agreed upon by the parties, and that the Secretary-General's efforts should be fully supported.

24. In view of the progress achieved in the implementation of the peace plan, his delegation had hoped there would be a consensus resolution acknowledging those achievements and supporting the Secretary-General. It felt that draft resolution A/C.4/43/L.2 did not facilitate attainment of the paramount objective of the Secretary-General and the OAU Chairman, which was to create conditions enabling the people of Western Sahara to exercise their just rights to self-determination through a United Nations-supervised referendum. It therefore hoped that some measure of compromise could be reached on the draft resolution.

25. Mr. QURESHI (Pakistan) said that the economies of most Non-Self-Governing Territories were linked to the interests of the administering Powers. That proved detrimental to the quality of life in those Territories and their movement towards independence. The priorities of the local population must be ascertained and their participation encouraged in the socio-economic development of the Territory; similarly, they needed training in preparation for future independence. In that context, Pakistan made a modest contribution by offering scholarships to students from Non-Self-Governing Territories.

26. Pakistan welcomed the support rendered by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations and the importance of that assistance for the peoples struggling for liberation. Intensification of those efforts and co-ordination of policies were needed with a view to implementing the Declaration so that those peoples might attain independence and take their rightful place in the Committee.

27. Mr. SLAOUI (Morocco) said that the international community had expected a consensus text on the question of Western Sahara, in view of the recent events in that Territory. The fresh climate of harmony characterizing international relations had been strengthened by the favourable events occurring in the Maghreb, which had enabled the five North African States - Mauritania, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria - to undertake the task of regional unification, paving the way for the next Maghreb conference, to be held in Rabat, at which guidelines would be laid down for future action in the context of regional co-operation programmes with a view to a lasting and mutually acceptable solution of the question of Western Sahara.

28. The fact that Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO had accepted the peace plan formulated by the Secretary-General in co-operation with the current Chairman of OAU, which provided for the appointment of a special representative for Western Sahara, the proclamation of a cease-fire, the authentication of persons allowed to take part in the referendum and the preparation and organization of that referendum under the authority of the special representative, could be considered the turning point from the conceptual and preparatory stage of the peace plan to its implementation .

29. The United Nations had reinforced its prestige and credibility by significant breakthroughs toward the settlement of certain regional crises. That prestige and credibility should now be consolidated, avoiding stereotyped, inefficient and therefore harmful approaches which might place artificial obstacles in the path of peace. Unfortunately, the submission of draft resolution A/C.4/43/L.2, which from the outset prejudged the results of the referendum and impeded the peace efforts of the Secretary-General and the OAU Chairman, had shattered all attempts to maintain the climate of confidence and harmony resulting from the peace plan. The Kingdom of Morocco, for its part, would abide by its commitments within the framework of the mission of good offices, in order to ensure the implementation of the peace plan and to settle as soon as possible the question of Western Sahara.

30. Mr. SAIF (Democratic Yemen) said that the current state of international relations favoured a more rapid decolonization. In the case of Namibia, the advances made were also the result of the victorious struggle of the Namibian people and their sole and authentic representative, SWAPO, and of the growing pressure brought to bear by the international community on the racist Pretoria régime. All those developments had obliged South Africa to accept the proposals put forward during the talks held with Cuba and Angola, with the mediation of the United States, aimed at finding a solution to the problems of southern Africa and at the same time reaching agreement on steps to hasten the process by which the people of Namibia would achieve independence and enjoy the right to self-determination. Yet such agreement was no replacement for Security Council resolution 435 (1978); rather, it placed a greater responsibility on the international community to be on the alert to ensure that the racist Pretoria régime would respect both the terms it had agreed to and the will of the United Nations in the matter.

31. His delegation welcomed the results of the quadripartite talks aimed at peace and stability in southern Africa and supported the Secretary-General's efforts to find a peaceful settlement to that regional problem that would be based on the resolutions adopted by the various United Nations organs, and to guarantee the complete dismantling of the apartheid régime and the total elimination of colonialism.

32. On the question of Western Sahara, there was hope that a solution could be found thanks to the joint efforts of the Secretary-General and the Chairman of OAU and to the good will of the parties, which had accepted the peace plan based on the principle of self-determination. Democratic Yemen hoped that those efforts would help Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO to reach a just settlement of the problem through negotiations under United Nations and OAU auspices.

33. Mrs. RUTERAKAGAYO (Burundi) said that it was amazing that 28 years after the adoption of the Declaration on decolonization the Committee was still discussing the problem of its implementation. The United Nations must, now more than ever, make every possible effort to achieve the noble objectives of decolonization. Burundi had made support for the authentic liberation movements one of the cardinal principles of its foreign policy. On the question of Western Sahara, it had always expressed full support for the Frente POLISARIO in its struggle for the inalienable right to self-determination, and it welcomed the fact that Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO had in principle agreed to the referendum proposed jointly by the Secretary-General and the Chairman of OAU. The application of the proposed peace plan must be carefully monitored in order to safeguard the progress that had been made.

34. Her delegation would support all resolutions aimed at strengthening OAU and United Nations action towards a satisfactory and lasting solution to the question of Western Sahara.

35. Mr. MARTINEZ (Panama) said that decolonization had been one of the most important goals on the United Nations agenda, but the process was by no means over. If the colonial Powers had not been bent on protecting the economic privileges of the large monopolies and maintaining strategic bases that sustained their hegemonistic policies, Namibia and other dependent countries would have freed themselves from colonial domination and exploitation.

36. Panama demanded the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) and reaffirmed its conviction that the situation in Namibia was essentially a colonial one and that the obstinate refusal by South Africa to withdraw from that Territory constituted a threat to international peace and security. It once again condemned the racist Pretoria régime for its illegal and prolonged occupation of Namibian territory and for its apartheid policy. Consequently, it appealed to those foreign Powers with ties to the region to set aside their strategic military interests in that area and use their political influence to enable the Namibian people in the near future to exercise their right to self-determination and to achieve political independence.

37. With regard to the talks aimed at settling the question of Namibia that had been held between Angola, Cuba and South Africa with the United States Government acting as mediator, it was not wise to be swept away by enthusiasm. The proper course was rather to continue cautiously and firmly taking all steps to ensure that South Africa would not try to move ahead unilaterally with a fraudulent internal settlement plan. He hoped the talks would succeed and would lead to the independence of Namibia.

38. His delegation welcomed the recent dialogue between the parties to the dispute on the question of New Caledonia and hoped that the outcome would be favourable to a just and lasting solution in that region. At the same time, it expressed full solidarity with Argentina and urged that Government and the Government of the United Kingdom to enter into negotiations to find a way of finally and peacefully resolving the problem of the Malvinas Islands, which historically and geographically belonged to the Argentine people.

39. Decolonization and the realization by peoples of their inalienable right to independence were in Latin America irreversible historical processes that guaranteed failure for any colonialist venture. Panama proclaimed its categorical rejection of colonialism in all its forms, and its unshakeable commitment to the struggle for independence of the countries in the Latin American region which had not yet achieved their national independence, especially Puerto Rico.

40. Panama had had the honour being the first country in Latin America to accord diplomatic recognition to the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic. However, if the Saharan people were to exercise their right to self-determination in a genuine way, the war that was draining the human and material resources of the Maghreb must be brought to an end. The Government of Panama welcomed the joint efforts by the Chairman of OAU and the United Nations Secretary-General to find a just and definitive solution to the problem of Western Sahara, as it did the appointment of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

(Mr. Martinez, Panama)

41. His delegation hoped that decolonisation would be completed by the year 2000. The last day of December 1999 was a very significant date for his country as it marked the end of the decolonisation programme agreed between Panama and the United States in the Torrijos-Carter treaties of 1977 according to which, by that date, the last colonial claim on Panamanian territory was to cease to exist. He wished to reiterate to the Committee that the political, economic and military aggression endured by his country could only be interpreted as an attempt to bend the anti-colonial will of the Panamanian people and as a colonial plot to prolong the military presence of the United States on Panamanian territory beyond the year 2000 in contempt of the legal agreement reached between the two countries. As Mr. Solís Palma, Head of the Panamanian State had said, to fold one's arms in the face of the current threat of domination looming over Panama was to endanger courteous coexistence among nations and peace itself.

42. Ms. NQE (United States of America), speaking on a point of order, said that Puerto Rico was not represented in the General Assembly and was accordingly not a member of the Fourth Committee.

43. Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea) said that, since the adoption by the General Assembly of resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV), some 75 colonies and dependent Territories, including Papua New Guinea, had become self-governing or independent. That was one of the most important success stories of the United Nations system. Yet, colonialism continued to exist in Namibia and elsewhere as a consequence of economic greed, a cultural superiority complex, political arrogance and strategic interests. The abundant natural resources found in Namibia and South Africa encouraged many countries to maintain policies which they knew deep down were inexcusable.

44. Papua New Guinea welcomed the prospects for the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) on Namibia's independence. The racist régime of South Africa must immediately dismantle apartheid and free the black majority in that country completely, leaving the way clear for Namibia's independence.

45. Papua New Guinea was pleased to note that the efforts of the United Nations were succeeding in creating a climate conducive to a lasting and just solution of the situation in Western Sahara. Papua New Guinea considered that the United Nations should continue its vital role of decolonization in the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories and in the sole remaining Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

46. In New Caledonia the Government of France and the leaders of the Territory had apparently made progress in restoring dialogue and peace. Nevertheless his delegation considered that 10 years was too long a period for self-determination and hoped that the administering Power would show flexibility and take account of the wishes of the population. The United Nations and the administering Power should consider jointly certain questions, such as, who the electors would be, the type of elections to be held and the need for proper political education. The United Nations should continue to observe the situation in New Caledonia closely

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(Mr. Lohia, Papua New Guinea)

and the administering Power should provide the Secretary-General with information as required by Article 73 (e) of the Charter and facilitate the dispatch of a visiting mission to the Territory in the near future.

47. Mrs. RAKOTONDRAIBO (Madagascar) deplored the fact that certain administering Powers had refused to participate in the work of the Special Committee and had not taken account of the adverse effects of that refusal, which deprived the Special Committee of an important source of information on the Territories they administered. The Special Committee must continue to examine the question of small Territories at its next session and plan to send visiting missions to each in due course and in consultation with the administering Powers. Madagascar reiterated its solidarity with the peoples struggling for independence.

48. She stressed that her country supported the struggle of the Saharan people for self-determination under the leadership of the Frente POLISARIO, its sole legitimate representative, and continued to follow with special interest the developments in Western Sahara. Although the two parties to the conflict had accepted the proposals of the Secretary-General, only direct negotiations between them would succeed in clarifying the misunderstandings, eliminating the obstacles and creating the conditions for a cease-fire and for the holding of a peaceful and just referendum which would ensure the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. She reiterated her support for OAU resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) and for General Assembly resolutions 40/50, 41/16 and 42/78, which represented a basis for real self-determination as they stipulated the means whereby a peaceful, just and final solution of the conflict in the Sahara could be achieved. She urged both parties to facilitate the work of the United Nations Special Representative and urged the members of the Fourth Committee to fulfil their traditional responsibility and to continue their support for the struggle of the people of Western Sahara by continuing to include the item in the agenda until the people of that Territory could express itself freely.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.