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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

REQUESTS FOR HEARINGS (A/C.4/43/7/Add.5)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that if there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee wished to grant the request for a hearing relating to the question of Namibia, contained in document A/C.4/43/7/Add.5.

2. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 29: QUESTION OF NAMIBIA (continued) (A/43/23)

Hearing of organizations concerned (A/C.4/43/7/Add.5)

3. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Amsterdam (U.S. World Journal) took a place at the petitioners' table.

4. Mr. AMSTERDAM (U.S. World Journal) said that it was important to continue stressing the question of Namibia in the context of the talks being held by Angola, Cuba and South Africa with the United States serving as mediator. To that end, he was submitting Namibia Report - compiled and published in co-operation with the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) and the United Nations Council for Namibia - which gave documentary and graphic evidence of the atrocities which South Africa had been committing in Namibia over the past century.

5. He pointed to the accomplishments of SWAPO in the camps on the outskirts of Luanda and Kwanza Sul (Angola). He also commended SWAPO for its compassion, concern, integrity and efficiency in fulfilling its mandate as the sole representative of the Namibian people and in creating decent living conditions for Namibians and preparing them for independence, without ignoring health care, other social services and training, despite its reduced budget.

6. It was extremely important for the United Nations to continue exerting pressure to ensure that the question of independence for Namibia remained one of the key items on its agenda, and that the quadripartite talks proceeded. The work of the United Nations Council for Namibia would not be done until full independence was granted, a constituent assembly was elected and a government responsive to the will and sovereignty of the population was in office.

7. Mr. Amsterdam withdrew.

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8. Mr. MEHNAT (Afghanistan) said that the continuation of colonialism was incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. It also posed a serious threat to international peace and security. Despite appeals by the international community to the colonial Powers, millions of people continued to be deprived of their right to freedom and the most basic human rights. That was the situation in South Africa and in Namibia, with the latter being used by the apartheid régime as a springboard for acts of aggression and destabilisation directed against Angola and other neighbouring countries. Afghanistan welcomed the negotiations aimed at peacefully resolving the problems of southern Africa, and advocated immediate independence for Namibia under the leadership of SWAPO, on the basis of all implementation of the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia set forth in Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

9. Another question of concern to Afghanistan was the intention of the Administering Authority of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands to turn the Territory into a strategic military base in the region. The Commonwealth Covenant and the Compact of Free Association imposed on the people of certain islands of the Territory constituted a clear violation of the principles and provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence. The rejection of the Compact by the people of Palau demonstrated that they did not want to be the victims of the colonial policies of the Administering Authority, even though they were faced with a serious financial crisis as a result.

(Mr. Mehnat, Afghanistan)

10. A constant renewal of faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter was the only firm guarantee for a world free of colonialism in any form or manifestation. The colonial Powers must fulfil their obligations under the Charter and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence, and must take immediate steps in Trust Territories, Non-Self-Governing Territories and all other Territories which had not yet attained independence to transfer all powers to the peoples of those Territories, without any conditions or reservations, in accordance with their freely expressed will and desires, and without distinction as to race, creed or colour, in order to enable them to enjoy complete independence and freedom.

11. He referred to the colonial status of Puerto Rico, which continued to be used by the United States as a military base for action against Central American and Caribbean States. Afghanistan believed that the question of Puerto Rico should be discussed in the United Nations General Assembly, and hoped that sooner or later that international body would consider that important issue of decolonization.

12. Ms. BUNTON (United States of America), speaking on a point of order, reminded the representative of Afghanistan that the General Assembly was not considering the question of Puerto Rico and that consequently neither was the Committee. Any attempt to take up that question in the United Nations constituted an interference in the internal affairs of a Member State under Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter.

13. Miss SWENGRE (Liberia) said that her delegation viewed with interest the evolution of the political and economic structure of dependent Territories and attached great importance to the participation of their people in the search for collective solutions to the common problems of such Territories.

14. Under the terms of Article 73 g of the Charter, Member States which were responsible for the administration of Non-Self-Governing Territories were to transmit information regularly on the Territories concerned but in the case of Namibia such information was inconceivable. The support rendered to the South African régime by its allies, and South Africa's attempts to continue depriving the Namibian people of their victories in the liberation struggle, were a gross violation of human dignity. Her delegation believed that the international community had the duty to intensify concerted action in support of the Namibian people and their authentic representative, SWAPO, in their struggle against oppression and repression.

15. The specialized agencies were contributing to the social, economic and educational goals of the dependent Territories, and Liberia urged them to increase their assistance for infrastructural development and a real participation by the people in all economic, social and educational activities. It also urged all administering Powers to hasten the progress of the colonies towards self-determination and independence.

16. Mr. RIANOM (Indonesia) observed that the principles of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, set forth in Article 1 of the Charter, had been the most important factor in the decolonization process. The unanimous adoption of the

(Mr. Rianom, Indonesia)

Declaration on decolonization stood as a testament to the determination of the international community to ensure justice to all oppressed peoples. Yet, despite the progressive demise of the colonial era, colonial domination and exploitation in southern Africa and other regions were still impeding the full implementation of the Declaration.

17. The Namibian tragedy was the most glaring failure in the field of decolonization. All States had demanded the withdrawal of South African forces from the Territory in order to enable the Namibian people to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence. Consequently, it was essential to begin implementing the United Nations plan for Namibian independence contained in Security Council resolution 435 (1978). The quadripartite talks currently being held would help to establish the basis for peace in south-western Africa and to ensure Namibian independence. Given South Africa's record of duplicity and prevarication, however, the international community should exercise the utmost vigilance to ensure that the régime did not attempt to manipulate the negotiations in order to perpetuate its illegal occupation of the Territory. Indonesia was gravely concerned about the stepped-up repression against any opposition to the Pretoria régime and believed that there could be no peace in southern Africa until apartheid was totally eradicated, through the imposition of comprehensive mandatory sanctions against South Africa.

18. The question of Palestine could be dissociated from the colonial context, since millions of Palestinians were still deprived of the right to return to their homeland and to exercise the right to self-determination and independence. Indonesia would continue to support the heroic struggle for freedom of the Palestinian people and the withdrawal of Israel from all Palestinian and Arab lands, including Jerusalem.

19. Indonesia recognized the progress being made on the question of Western Sahara on the basis of the peace proposals put forward jointly by the Secretary-General and the Chairman of OAU, and took note of the discussions between the parties involved in the issue of New Caledonia. The Special Committee's report on the status of the other Territories gave a positive assessment, even though there were still problems associated with the development of the necessary infrastructures in those Territories. The administering Powers must be urged to give priority to considering the economic and social development of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in such a way as to safeguard the interests of the indigenous populations, and to allow the people concerned to express their aspirations freely.

20. Mr. SHARMA (India) said that colonialism created discord and distress and engendered the most difficult problem being considered by the Committee, namely, the denial of freedom and independence. The colonial mentality and arrogance threatened the survival of mankind, as evidenced by the use of erstwhile colonies or currently dependent Territories as dumping grounds for industrial or nuclear wastes, by the obstacles put in the way of the development of their peoples, and the problems to be found in the areas of the environment, education, human resources, health and social stability, which had been bequeathed by ruler to subject.

(Mr. Sharma, India)

21. The reports of the United Nations Council for Namibia had shown a consistent pattern of collusion and mutual support between the South African occupation régime and the transnational corporations, for the purpose of exploiting and plundering the Territory. Namibia, when independent, would begin nationhood with staggering economic drawbacks. For that reason India had formally proposed that the right of the future independent Government of Namibia to compensation for the immense losses suffered during the time of its people's captivity should be recognized and assured. The pillage and the devastation had been so total that, in addition to the specific programmes of the Council intended to facilitate the transition of Namibia to independence, rehabilitation would require much more.

22. India believed that the only solution to the question of Namibia was the unreserved and total adherence by South Africa to internationally accepted commitments and to the principles of the Charter. South Africa's participation in the current negotiations must not obscure the perception of what the racist régime represented. Its co-operation and sincerity, still to be proven, would not absolve it of its crimes against humanity. The apartheid régime must be compelled, by a universal application of comprehensive mandatory sanctions, to heed the principles of justice, equity and good-neighbourliness. India called upon those Governments which had blocked United Nations efforts to impose such sanctions to join the rest of the civilized world in upholding justice and freedom.

23. India also supported the efforts of the United Nations and OAU to decolonize Western Sahara, and it looked forward to the early implementation of steps to restore peace and resolve that conflict.

24. Ms. SHI Yanhua (China) said that, in spite of the significant changes which had occurred in the international situation, such as the détente between East and West, the Committee's work continued to be arduous. For example, it faced the urgent question of Namibian independence and South Africa's persistent refusal to implement Security Council resolution 435 (1978). China was pleased to see that Angola, Cuba, South Africa and the United States had reached an agreement on the implementation of the resolution on 1 November. It appreciated the efforts of Angola and other African countries to safeguard their sovereignty and security and recognized the support they were giving to the Namibian struggle for independence. The international community must continue to exert pressure on South Africa so as to compel it to honour the agreement and to end its illegal occupation of the Territory, the system of apartheid and its policy of destabilising the neighbouring countries, thus helping to achieve peace and stability in southern Africa.

25. China also appreciated the mediating efforts made by the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity with a view to the prompt solution of the problem of Western Sahara. It hoped that such a solution would benefit unity and co-operation among the Maghreb countries and would further the peace and stability of the region. China noted the agreement reached between the two opposing parties in New Caledonia and hoped that the people of that Territory would soon be able to achieve self-determination.

(Ms. Shi Yanhua, China)

26. With a view to speeding up the process of self-determination of colonial peoples, the Committee should urge all the administering Powers: (a) to develop diversified economies in the Territories so as to raise the living standard of the local people; (b) to facilitate programmes of political education; (c) to co-operate actively with the Special Committee and to provide it with information and the necessary facilities for visiting missions. It should also request those administering Powers which had troops and military bases in the occupied Territories to withdraw the former and dismantle the latter as soon as possible.

27. Economic co-operation between the Non-Self-Governing Territories and foreign economic interests would only become possible when those interests ceased to impede the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and when economic co-operation based on equality and mutual benefit between them was achieved with the acquisition of sovereignty and control over their own resources. In spite of the various resolutions of the United Nations and in spite of Decree No. 1 for the Protection of the Natural Resources of Namibia adopted by the United Nations Council for Namibia, South Africa and other foreign interests had wantonly plundered the natural resources of Namibia and had monopolized its economy. They had thus prevented the people from achieving their independence. China condemned those illegal activities and appealed to the foreign economic interests to put an end to them.

28. The present international situation was favourable for accelerating the process of decolonization. However, the efforts of people throughout the world were needed to bring it to fruition. China hoped that the peoples in the existing colonies and Non-Self-Governing Territories would soon enjoy the same status as other members of the international community.

29. Mr. PAIC (Yugoslavia) stressed the United Nations contribution to the process of decolonization through which a great number of new countries were able to occupy their rightful place in world affairs. Most of them had found in the policy of non-alignment the most appropriate way of promoting their national affirmation and making an active contribution to a better and more just world.

30. Almost 30 years after the adoption of the Declaration on decolonization there were still countries and peoples that had to struggle for freedom and independence. Most of the Non-Self-Governing Territories were of exceptional strategic importance in the midst of global rivalry. As a result, they had become perennial sources of instability and tension. The solution lay in the search for a broader context of East-West relations. Yugoslavia did not accept the contention that the situation of most of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories was an expression of the will of the local population. Such factors as size and location, limited numbers of people and shortage of resources did not constitute obstacles to decolonization. For that reason, Yugoslavia, together with other non-aligned countries, had maintained that lasting solutions to the problem of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories could be achieved only through full respect and the realization of the authentic interests and aspirations of the peoples under colonial domination.

(Mr. Paic, Yugoslavia)

31. Positive changes in international relations would encourage the elimination of the vestiges of colonialism. At the recent conference in Nicosia the Foreign Ministers of the Non-Aligned Countries had pointed out that in 1990 the United Nations would celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. They had agreed to suggest that the decade 1990-2000 should be declared an international decade for the eradication of colonialism and that an action plan aimed at inaugurating the twenty-first century with a world free from colonialism should be adopted.

32. Yugoslavia had followed with keen interest the activities aimed at solving the remaining colonial problems. It attached special importance to the negotiations between Cuba, Angola and South Africa, with United States mediation, for the settlement of the crisis in southern Africa. Only if South Africa abandoned its destructive policies and practices in Namibia and in the neighbouring countries would it be possible to implement fully resolution 435 (1978) of the Security Council and to create the conditions necessary to enable the Namibian people, under the leadership of SWAPO, to decide on their own fate freely and independently. The Committee must continue to bring pressure on Pretoria until the realization of that goal.

33. Yugoslavia welcomed the agreement in principle reached on 30 August by which the Kingdom of Morocco and the POLISARIO Front had accepted the joint proposals of the United Nations Secretary-General and the Chairman of OAU concerning a referendum on the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara under United Nations and OAU auspices.

34. Yugoslavia also hoped that the problem of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) would be solved on the basis of negotiations and dialogue between Argentina and the United Kingdom.

35. At a time when the United Nations was reasserting its irreplaceable role in the solution of complex international problems, it was the Committee's responsibility to intensify its efforts to bring about a speedy and universal implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. As a member of the Committee of Twenty-four and as one of the founding members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Yugoslavia was ready to help achieve that noble goal.

36. Mr. SINGH (Fiji) said that, in spite of the present existence of colonial vestiges, not all the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories were victims of oppression and exploitation, as they had been in nearly all cases, 20 years ago. Usually, the administering Powers concerned were promoting their social, political and economic development in order to prepare them for independence.

37. Fiji fully supported the principle of self-determination for colonized peoples and, in that respect, stressed three basic principles: (a) all the acts of self-determination must be carried out in conformity with the principles and practices established by the United Nations; (b) neither the United Nations nor the

(Mr. Singh, Fiji)

administering Powers must impose any particular option on those peoples, but they themselves must take their own decisions; and (c) once the peoples had decided on their own destiny, the administering Powers should respect that decision and the international community should do its utmost to guarantee that the will of those peoples was carried out.

38. Namibia was the clearest example of the denial of the inalienable right of self-determination. However, it seemed that South Africa had realized that it could not continue to oppress the Namibian people indefinitely. Fiji welcomed the positive developments that had recently taken place and hoped that in the near future a free and independent Namibia would take its place as the 160th Member of the United Nations.

39. Regarding the activities of foreign economic and other interests in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, it was important to be realistic in examining and reporting on those activities. Where they had a negative impact on the Territory, deprived the local population of profitable economic activities or involved uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources, the administering Powers must be urged to take appropriate measures to remedy the situation. However, it was also necessary to take account of cases in which such interests contributed to the economies of those Territories, and to examine whether they indeed impeded the implementation of the Declaration. The foreign economic interests were sometimes transnational corporations whose activities in developing countries were closely monitored by the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations and which, while they were not vehicles for charity, could make a valuable contribution to social and economic development. Most transnational corporations had come to realize that their future and profits depended on their helping to build and sustain the economy of the Territories in which they operated. Much of the developing world was offering incentives to attract foreign investment. The need of the Non-Self-Governing Territories for such investment was greater still, since most of them sorely lacked natural resources. His delegation suggested that the Special Committee should consider engaging the services of the Centre on Transnational Corporations to prepare reports on the activities of such corporations in those Territories, a step which would greatly assist the Division of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization, which did not have the staff or the expertise to undertake a more thorough study of those activities.

40. The draft resolutions on foreign economic and other interests and on implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations were too long, and strayed from their principal objectives; they should be simplified.

41. Mr. TEEHANKEE (Philippines) said it would be recalled that 28 years previously the Philippines, together with 43 other countries of Asia and Africa, had sponsored General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), and reaffirmed his country's commitment to the principles enshrined in that resolution. It was difficult to understand why 3 million people were still under colonial rule. Obviously, powerful economic and security interests and the annexationist policies of some States militated against

(Mr. Teehanke, Philippines)

the full implementation of the Declaration, to achieve which it would be necessary to apply economic and political pressure and to bring international public opinion to bear against colonial policies and practices. Although 10 years had passed since the Security Council had adopted resolution 435 (1978), which embodied a universally accepted independence plan for Namibia, that country remained in the brutal grip of a racist master. His delegation joined the international community's call for South Africa to heed the Security Council resolutions on Namibia and end its illegal occupation of the Territory, and fully supported the efforts by the Secretary-General to ensure the implementation of resolution 435 (1978). It also noted the recent progress in the efforts by the Governments of Angola, Cuba, South Africa and the United States to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in southern Africa, and the declarations by SWAPO that it would be ready to sign and observe a cease-fire agreement with South Africa, in order to pave the way for the implementation of resolution 435.

42. The Secretary-General's successes in the search for negotiated solutions to a number of regional conflicts also extended to the Maghreb region. The Philippines welcomed the Secretary-General's report on the question of Western Sahara (A/43/680) and noted with satisfaction the agreement in principle reached by the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO on 30 August 1988, whereby the two parties had accepted the joint peace proposals of the Secretary-General and the OAU Chairman. It also welcomed the unanimous adoption by the Security Council of resolution 621 (1988) and expressed full support for the Secretary-General and the OAU Chairman in their patient and untiring efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Western Sahara.

43. In co-sponsoring General Assembly resolution 41/41 A in 1986, which had reinscribed New Caledonia on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories, had been guided by the conviction that the people of New Caledonia should exercise their right to self-determination, and it now welcomed the re-establishment of dialogue between the French Government and the parties concerned, as well as the resolution on New Caledonia adopted by consensus by the Special Committee on decolonisation and recommended to the Fourth Committee. His country hoped that the few peoples still under colonial rule would have achieved independence in accordance with the Declaration before the end of the century.

44. Mr. COSTELLO (Australia) reiterated the deep commitment of his Government to the principles of decolonisation enshrined in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV)) and in resolution 1541 (XV). With regard to New Caledonia, he said that Australia, as part of the South-West Pacific region, had a particular interest in the long-term future of that Territory and was closely observing developments there. The Government of Australia supported the right of the people of New Caledonia to self-determination and welcomed the fact that, in response to General Assembly resolution 41/41 A, New Caledonia had been reinscribed on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories, and also the support given to the people of that Territory by the Special Committee on decolonization, the Fourth Committee and the United Nations as a whole.

(Mr. Costello, Australia)

45. At the previous session of the General Assembly the situation with respect to New Caledonia had been a matter for great concern, and it was encouraging to note that in recent months there had been a marked change in the situation. The agreements reached by the parties concerned had already considerably reduced tensions in the area. Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, who had recently visited New Caledonia and had had discussions with all the major parties, had indicated in his address to the General Assembly that those discussions had confirmed for him that the process set in train by the accords had created a new spirit of reconciliation and optimism. Australia shared France's determination to assist New Caledonia in its peaceful evolution towards self-determination in such a way as to ensure that the legitimate interests of all its people were protected.

46. The meeting of the South Pacific Forum leaders held in Tonga in September 1988 had welcomed those efforts by the French Government to initiate and promote dialogue between the communities in New Caledonia and to reduce tensions in the Territory. The Forum had declared itself ready to maintain the dialogue that had been started and to contribute to the process of reconciliation, had welcomed the adoption by consensus of the resolution on New Caledonia by the Special Committee on decolonization, and had expressed the hope that the consideration of the question by the General Assembly would continue to be guided by that resolution.

47. His delegation hoped that the draft resolution on New Caledonia that the Committee would have before it later in the current session would be adopted by consensus.

48. Dame Ann HERCUS (New Zealand) said that the Charter of the United Nations had established the principle of the equality of nations and that the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV)) and the complementary resolution 1541 (XV) had become the second landmark in the reshaping of the post-war world. However, in reflecting on past achievements, one must not forget that the Special Committee on decolonization still had much work before it.

49. New Zealand was deeply concerned at the situation in Namibia and condemned the illegal administration of that Territory by South Africa. But at last it seemed that a settlement was in sight. It was to be hoped that Namibia's independence could be secured peacefully and soon, in accordance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

50. The very small Territories deserved the same care and attention that had helped other former dependencies. One of those Territories, the three atolls comprising Tokelau, was still the responsibility of New Zealand, which continued to report on it in accordance with its obligations. In a sense, it was anomalous that New Zealand was still tendering information on a dependent Territory, since it had voted for General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), was committed to the right of peoples to self-determination, and favoured the practice of dispatching United Nations missions to visit the still-dependent Territories and of having United Nations teams present at acts of self-determination. But Tokelau itself had

(Dame Ann Hercus, New Zealand)

decided that it was not yet ready for independence. The previous year, representatives of Tokelau had spoken to the Sub-Committee on Small Territories about their plans for the future. On that occasion they had commented on the report of the mission that had visited Tokelau in 1986, and had indicated that although it was not their intention to maintain the relationship with New Zealand indefinitely, it was absolutely necessary to ensure that the political solution adopted for the future would conform with the social, cultural, traditional and governmental system that had enabled them to exist thus far. The people of Tokelau wished to make the necessary decisions about their future in their own time, in their own way, and it was that thinking which guided New Zealand in its continued administration of Tokelau.

51. When, two years earlier, the General Assembly had reinscribed New Caledonia on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories, the differences within that Territory had been exacerbated, a situation which had recently caused concern among countries of the South Pacific region, which feared a threat to regional stability. New Zealand therefore believed that the policy being pursued in New Caledonia risked marginalizing the indigenous population and provoking confrontation and division within the Territory. Following a period in which the worst fears had been confirmed, the situation had begun to improve. After the elections held in 1988 in France, the new French Government had restored dialogue with all interested parties in New Caledonia and had reached agreements which laid out the path to be followed towards self-determination. Even though that would not take place for 10 years, the agreements provided for a series of interim measures aimed at establishing a better balance between the main communities of New Caledonia. Preparation was a key element in any valid act of self-determination, and the countries of the South Pacific had demonstrated the will to contribute, collectively and individually, to the co-operation taking place in New Caledonia. New Zealand was encouraged by the process of reconciliation and development, and was pleased that that process was intended to take place within a legislative framework which should deter the fluctuations which had hitherto characterized the policy of the administering Power.

52. New Zealand was not interested in any confrontation with France and hoped that the problems of New Caledonia would be solved in a peaceful and just manner. The problem in that Territory was complex, and France's role was difficult. France had established a programme for the future of New Caledonia and in consultation with the people of the Territory had reached an agreement on a series of measures for which it sought support. On the basis of that agreement, and with the commitment of all interested parties, the way could be prepared for self-determination in New Caledonia.

53. The Committee had before it a draft resolution adopted by consensus by the Special Committee of 24 and New Zealand hoped that the Committee would maintain that consensus.

54. Mr. TALAAT (Egypt) reviewed the work of the United Nations in the struggle against colonialism, crowned in 1960 by the collapse of the colonial system, which had changed the world map. He observed that the mission of the United Nations was

(Mr. Talaat, Egypt)

not yet complete: there were still dependent Territories, with peoples who had not been able to exercise their will. It was necessary to achieve the total elimination of colonialism, and in that regard the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in general and Egypt in particular played an important role.

55. Referring to General Assembly resolution 845 (IX), on educational advancement in Non-Self-Governing Territories, he noted that Egypt offered educational assistance to various recently independent countries. Document A/43/677 included a reference to the aid in the form of scholarships which Egypt had provided in the immediate past and proposed to provide in the near future. Egypt hoped that other countries which had not yet done so would follow its example, and that the specialized agencies would also intensify their co-operation in that area and strengthen their links with the peoples of colonial countries so that they could exercise their right to self-determination and independence.

56. Egypt took note of document A/42/680 on Western Sahara. Mention should be made of the efforts of OAU to put an end to the conflict, and it was gratifying that the parties concerned agreed with the proposals of the Secretary-General and that an end to the conflict seemed near. In that connection, Egypt supported Security Council resolution 621 (1988) and was optimistic that international efforts would lead to an agreement which would enable the people of Western Sahara to express their free will, which, it was hoped, would be done in a referendum supervised by the United Nations. He hoped that all parties would demonstrate flexibility and that the draft resolution to be submitted to the General Assembly would reflect the support of the international community for the efforts made to achieve that noble objective as soon as possible.

57. Mr. IDRIS (Sudan) said that the Sudan would continue to support the efforts aimed at achieving the total elimination of colonialism in the world. It appealed to the administering Powers to comply with the basic objectives of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and urged all international forums to ensure that proper conditions were established so that those peoples could achieve self-determination, through the establishment of economic and social development programmes to raise the standard of living in those Territories and the provision of assistance in the field of training.

58. He urged all parties concerned with the question of New Caledonia to continue the dialogue in the interests of that Territory. With respect to Namibia, the Sudan supported the immediate implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). He noted the obstacles set up by the racist régime of Pretoria to impede Namibia's independence and commended the regional and international efforts and the initiatives of the Secretary-General aimed at achieving the immediate independence of Namibia, in accordance with the resolutions adopted by the international community and the current four-party negotiations.

59. The Sudan had always believed in achieving a peaceful settlement of the question of Western Sahara and was gratified that the parties concerned had accepted the proposal of the Secretary-General and the Security Council to appoint

(Mr. Idris, Sudan)

a special representative for Western Sahara, which would permit the immediate implementation of a plan to hold a plebiscite. The Sudan hoped that those efforts would culminate in an appropriate peaceful settlement which would permit the entire population of Western Sahara to exercise its right to self-determination.

60. Mrs. RAKOTONDRAMBOA (Madagascar) said that the administering Powers were attempting to keep the indigenous population of the colonial Territories insulated from progress and development in order to delay their self-determination. In addition to political autonomy, independence meant economic autonomy and in order to achieve that objective human resources, both physical and intellectual, had to be mobilized; that represented a daunting endeavour for the majority of colonial peoples. There was no doubt that the objective of the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa was to promote the attainment by those peoples of self-determination and true independence. Her delegation believed that emphasis should be placed on three priority areas: health, education and agriculture.

61. It was important to train staff at the intermediate level capable of attending to the immediate needs of the urban population, the rural population and those in refugee camps. In that connection, she recommended the training of health workers and personal-hygiene, and food and nutrition specialists who would teach how to make use of available resources in order to reduce dependency on racist South Africa. She emphasized the importance of primary education, the need to increase the number of teachers and the need to ensure that all children learnt to read and write. On the other hand, it was important to train agricultural and livestock technicians among the indigenous population who would contribute to eliminating traditional agricultural practices in order to make more rational use of the land and livestock.

62. Madagascar supported the Declaration and Plan of Action of the International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in southern Africa, held in Oslo under the auspices of the United Nations and OAU, which had underscored the importance of training key personnel for assistance programmes in order to make optimum use of financial and material resources provided by the international community to the countries of asylum, and had recommended the resettlement in those countries of the refugees from South Africa and Namibia who could not return to their places of origin.

63. In view of the present-day interdependence of the world, the peoples of southern Africa should receive education and vocational training in order to overcome their problems and face the future. Madagascar believed that it was essential to broaden the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa with a view to meeting the growing needs in that sphere, and thanked all donors, in particular the African countries, for their generous contributions to the Programme, and the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on the Programme for their activities in that respect.

64. The CHAIRMAN announced that Belize and India had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/43/L.2.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.