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Agenda item 70

QUESTION OF ANTARCTICA

Report of the First Committee

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled "Question of Antarctica" was included in the provisional agenda of the forty-third session in accordance with General Assembly resolution 42/46 A and B of 30 November 1987.
2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 23 September 1988, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.
3. The First Committee considered the item at its 44th to 46th meetings, on 21 and 22 November 1988 (A/C.1/43/PV.44-46).
4. In connection with item 70, the First Committee had before it the following documents:
 - (a) Report of the Secretary-General on the question of Antarctica (A/43/564);
 - (b) Report of the Secretary-General on the question of Antarctica (A/43/565 and Add.1);
 - (c) Letter dated 30 March 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the final communiqué of the Seventeenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, "Session of Islamic Solidarity with the Uprising of the Palestinian People", held at Amman, from 3 to 7 Sha'ban 1408 H (21 to 25 March 1988) (A/43/273-S/19720);

(d) Letter dated 6 June 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Jordan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the texts of the final communiqué, reports and resolutions adopted by the Seventeenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers "Session of Islamic Solidarity with the Uprising of the Palestinian People", held at Amman from 3 to 7 Sha'ban 1408 H (21 to 25 March 1988) (A/43/393-S/19930);

(e) Letter dated 8 June 1988 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Malaysia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of a statement issued on 8 June 1988 by Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, the Congo, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, on the Antarctica minerals régime negotiations held at Wellington from 2 May to 2 June 1988 (A/43/396);

(f) Letter dated 9 June 1988 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the text of the communiqué of the Fourteenth Meeting of the Standing Committee of Ministers responsible for Foreign Affairs of the Caribbean Community, held at Port of Spain on 20 and 21 May 1988 (A/43/399);

(g) Letter dated 30 June 1988 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the statement by the Chairman of the Antarctic Treaty Special Consultative Meeting on Antarctic Mineral Resources, which met at Wellington from 2 May to 2 June 1988 (A/43/434);

(h) Letter of 29 September 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, forwarding the final documents adopted by the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries held at Nicosia from 5 to 10 September 1988 (A/43/667-S/20212);

(i) Letter dated 6 October 1988 from the Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General transmitting the final communiqué adopted by the Meeting of Ministers and Heads of Delegation of Non-Aligned Countries to the forty-third session of the General Assembly on 3 October 1988 (A/43/709).

II. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS

A. Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.82

5. On 17 November 1988, Antigua and Barbuda, Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, the Congo, Ghana, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Mali, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Rwanda, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Uganda, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe, submitted the draft resolution entitled "Question of Antarctica" (A/C.1/43/L.82), which was introduced by the representative of Malaysia at the 46th meeting, on 22 November.

6. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.82 by a roll-call vote of 77 to none, with 7 abstentions (see para. 9, draft resolution A). The voting was as follows: 1/

In favour: Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Democratic Kampuchea, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: None.

Abstaining: China, Fiji, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal, Turkey, Venezuela.

B. Draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.83

7. On 17 November 1988, Zaire, on behalf of members of the Group of African States, submitted a draft resolution entitled "Question of Antarctica" (A/C.1/43/L.83). The draft resolution was introduced by the representative of Zaire at the 45th meeting, on 22 November 1988.

1/ The following delegations announced that they were not participating in the vote: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, Iceland, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malta, Mongolia, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Viet Nam.

Subsequently, the delegations of Cameroon, Canada, Ecuador and the Netherlands indicated that they had intended to announce that they would not participate in the vote on the draft resolution. The delegation of Swaziland informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

8. At the 46th meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/43/L.83 by a roll-call vote of 89 to none, with 5 abstentions (see para. 9, draft resolution B). The voting was as follows: 2/

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Kampuchea, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Côte d'Ivoire, Ireland, Lesotho, Luxembourg, Portugal.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

9. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following resolutions:

2/ The following delegations announced that they were not participating in the vote: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Chile, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, and Uruguay.

Subsequently, the delegation of Ecuador indicated that it had intended to vote in favour of the draft resolution; the delegation of Swaziland indicated it had intended to abstain in the vote on the draft resolution.

QUESTION OF ANTARCTICA

A

The General Assembly,

Having considered the item entitled "Question of Antarctica",

Recalling its resolutions 38/77 of 15 December 1983, 39/152 of 17 December 1984, 40/156 A and B of 16 December 1985, 41/88 A and B of 4 December 1986 and 42/46 A and B of 30 November 1987,

Recalling the relevant paragraphs of the Political Declaration adopted by the Eighth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Harare from 1 to 6 September 1986, 3/ and the resolution on Antarctica adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity at its forty-second ordinary session, held at Addis Ababa from 10 to 17 July 1985, 4/ as well as the decision of the Council of Ministers of the League of Arab States held at Tunis on 17 and 18 September 1986 and resolution 25/5-P(IS) adopted by the Fifth Islamic Summit Conference of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, held at Kuwait from 26 to 29 January 1987, 5/

Taking into account the debates on this item held since the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly,

Welcoming the increasing awareness and interest in Antarctica shown by the international community,

Convinced of the advantages to the whole of mankind of a better knowledge of Antarctica,

Affirming its conviction that, in the interest of all mankind, Antarctica should continue for ever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and that it should not become the scene or object of international discord,

Reaffirming the principle that the international community is entitled to information covering all aspects of Antarctica and that the United Nations should be made the repository for all such information in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 41/88 A and 42/46 B,

3/ A/41/697-S/18392, annex, sect. I, paras. 198-202.

4/ A/40/666, annex II, resolution CM/Res.988 (XLII).

5/ See A/42/178-S/18753, annex II.

Conscious of the particular significance of Antarctica to the international community in terms, inter alia, of international peace and security, environment, its effects on global climatic conditions, economy and scientific research,

Taking into account all aspects pertaining to all areas covered by the Antarctic Treaty system, 6/

Noting with appreciation the reports of the Secretary-General on the question of Antarctica, 7/

Reaffirming that the management, exploration, exploitation and use of Antarctica should be conducted in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and in the interest of maintaining international peace and security and of promoting international co-operation for the benefit of mankind as a whole,

1. Expresses its conviction that any minerals régime on Antarctica, in order to be of benefit to all mankind, should be negotiated with the full participation of all members of the international community;

2. Further expresses its deep regret that the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties have proceeded with negotiations and adopted on 2 June 1988 a Convention on the Regulation of Antarctic Mineral Resource Activities, notwithstanding General Assembly resolutions 41/88 B and 42/46 B, calling for the imposition of a moratorium on negotiations to establish a minerals régime until such time as all members of the international community can fully participate in such negotiations;

3. Reiterates its call upon the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties to invite the Secretary-General or his representative to all meetings of the Treaty parties, including their consultative meetings;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on his evaluations thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session;

5. Urges all States Members of the United Nations to co-operate with the Secretary-General and to continue consultations on all aspects relating to Antarctica;

6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-fourth session the item entitled "Question of Antarctica".

6/ United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 402, No. 5778.

7/ A/43/564, A/43/565 and Add.1.

B

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 42/46 A of 30 November 1987,

Having considered the item entitled "Question of Antarctica",

Noting with regret that the racist apartheid régime of South Africa, which has been suspended from participation in the General Assembly of the United Nations, has continued to participate in the meetings of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties,

Recalling the resolution adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Organization of African Unity at its forty-second ordinary session, held at Addis Ababa from 10 to 17 July 1985, 8/

Recalling also the relevant paragraphs of the Political Declaration adopted by the Eighth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Harare from 1 to 6 September 1986, 9/

Recalling further that the Antarctic Treaty 6/ is, by its terms, intended to further the purposes and principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations,

Noting further that the policy of apartheid practised by the racist minority régime of South Africa, which has been universally condemned, constitutes a threat to regional and international peace and security,

1. Views with concern the continuing participation of the apartheid régime of South Africa in the meetings of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties;
2. Appeals once again to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties to take urgent measures to exclude the racist apartheid régime of South Africa from participation in the meetings of the Consultative Parties at the earliest possible date;
3. Invites the States parties to the Antarctic Treaty to inform the Secretary-General on the actions taken regarding the provisions of the present resolution;
4. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report in this regard to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session;
5. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-fourth session the item entitled "Question of Antarctica".

8/ A/40/666, annex II, resolution CM/Res.988 (XLII).

9/ A/41/697-S/18392, annex, sect. I, paras. 198-202.