



THIRD COMMITTEE
7th meeting
held on
Thursday, 13 October 1988
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 7th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ABULHASAN (Kuwait)

later: Mr. CASAJUANA (Spain)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

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

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1. Mr. KAMALUDDIN (Afghanistan) said that, as a party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, Afghanistan had consistently supported the national, regional and international struggle against racism and racial discrimination and would continue to do so. It was regrettable that racism and racial discrimination were still rampant, and that no progress was being made in abolishing the abhorrent system of apartheid in South Africa. Co-ordinated and sincere action was needed to bring about the dismantling of apartheid; the roots and origins of apartheid had been amply identified and it was time for the United Nations to adopt appropriate measures for its eradication.
2. The right of peoples to self-determination was one of the principal norms of international law; it had been recognized as a fundamental rule and a basic element of democratic international relations. It was the prime duty of every State to contribute sincerely to the attainment of that right and to be aware that its violation could endanger world peace and security. It should also be borne in mind that political independence could not be achieved without economic independence and peoples' exercise of the right to use freely their natural and human resources.
3. Despite all the positive achievements of the United Nations in the area of decolonization, tens of millions of people were still suffering and being deprived of their right to self-determination in different parts of the world because of inhuman policies such as occupation, aggression and annexation, as well as racism, zionism, social discrimination and apartheid. The Pretoria régime was continuing its brutal exploitation of the natural and human resources of Namibia; the Namibian people must be granted their right to self-determination and independence.
4. The people of Palestine were also being denied their right to independence, including the right to establish their own State. The continuation of aggressive and adventurist policies against Palestine would achieve nothing but further misery

(Mr. Kamaluddin, Afghanistan)

for the Palestinians and the peoples of other occupied Arab territories. No solution could be just unless it enabled the Palestinian people to exercise fully their inalienable rights, including the right to self-determination and the right to establish their own national State in Palestine.

5. Mr. HOEHNE (German Democratic Republic) said that the items under consideration played an important role in efforts to strengthen international peace and security. Peoples' right to self-determination was a basic principle of democratic international law and was enshrined in the United Nations Charter. Decolonisation was one of the most outstanding achievements of the twentieth century, but was still far from being a reality for all peoples. The principal political challenges of the day included the final abolition of the colonial and racist subjugation of the peoples of South Africa and Namibia and the struggle against the denial of the right of self-determination to the Palestinian people and to some 20 colonial Territories in the Pacific, Atlantic and Indian Oceans.

6. The apartheid policies pursued by the South African Government constituted racism at its worst and had no place in modern international relations. The international community must make use of the opportunities offered by international law and, more particularly, the United Nations Charter. The termination of political, economic and military collaboration with South Africa was a matter of special urgency. Despite the disinvestment drive carried out since 1984 by foreign firms operating in South Africa, including the withdrawal of more than 500 western companies from South Africa, it was obvious that transnational corporations continued to be a mainstay of the apartheid régime's economy and of its cruel military and police apparatus, and that their collaboration was the main obstacle to the elimination of the apartheid system. That conclusion was borne out by the report of the Secretary-General (E/C.10/1988/7) and the updated report by Mr. Khalifa (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1988/6 and Add.1). International pressure on Pretoria must continue until the non-reformable system of apartheid was abolished. Effective international legal instruments for the pursuit of human rights and the elimination of all forms of racism existed; his delegation endorsed the proposals for enhancing the universality of those instruments contained in the Secretary-General's most recent report to the Economic and Social Council.

7. His delegation fully supported all activities designed to contribute to a settlement of the question of Namibia pursuant to Security Council resolution 435 (1978). Over the past few weeks, there had been encouraging steps in the direction of a political solution of that conflict; in the interests of peace, stability and security in the region and of Namibia's independence, such progress was urgently necessary.

8. The Organization of African Unity had played a leading role for over 25 years in the ever growing international alliance of opponents of apartheid. It had made a major contribution to the final elimination of colonialism, racism and apartheid and would undoubtedly continue to give strong impetus to the pursuit of that objective.

(Mr. Hoehne, German Democratic Republic)

9. In the Middle East, Israel's increasing recourse to violence and terror against the Palestinian popular uprising in the occupied territories was striking proof of the urgent need for a peaceful, political settlement of the Middle East problem and the question of Palestine. An entire people's will to be free could not be broken, and the only way of ensuring lasting peace in the Middle East and guaranteeing the Palestinian people the exercise of their right to self-determination was to convene an international peace conference on the Middle East as soon as possible. Such a conference should work out binding arrangements for all aspects of the Arab-Israeli conflict and seek to achieve the necessary balance of interests in a constructive spirit. Preparatory consultations taking advantage of the opportunities open to the Security Council, or a meeting at the level of foreign ministers, would be helpful in paving the way for such a conference.

10. The German Democratic Republic welcomed the signing of the Geneva accords on Afghanistan and their consistent implementation by the Soviet Union and Afghanistan. An all-embracing political solution to the problem would, however, be possible only if all sides met the obligations they had assumed.

11. After the achievement of political independence, the free choice of their course of economic and social development was an integral part of peoples' right to self-determination; otherwise, the development of fruitful and constructive relations between States in accordance with the Charter was inconceivable. Attempts to impose a social system, way of life or political course from outside often led to conflict and tension, with serious implications for international peace and security. A tangible example was afforded by the perilous situation which had arisen in Central America as a result of the policy of force and open interference in internal affairs being pursued vis-à-vis Nicaragua. The massive and brutal violation of the inalienable right of the Nicaraguan people to decide its own future had led to immeasurable human suffering; however, there was no doubt that the Nicaraguan people would repel all encroachments on its sovereignty and forge ahead in its social and democratic achievements, particularly since the Sandinista Government was firmly committed to a policy of peace and national reconciliation.

12. His delegation fully supported the conclusions and recommendations of the report of the Special Rapporteur on the question of the use of mercenaries (A/43/632). It strongly believed that, given the complexity of the problem and the preliminary nature of the report, the Special Rapporteur should continue his work; it would actively support any measures adopted at the current session in condemnation of the use of mercenaries as a violation of peoples' right to self-determination and of fundamental human rights.

13. The struggle against colonial oppression and racial discrimination was an integral part of the politics of the German Democratic Republic, whose people, freely exercising its right to self-determination, had decided in favour of socialism. His country would remain committed to its political, moral and material support of peoples engaged in the struggle for their social and national liberation.

14. Mr. COSTELLO (Australia) said that 1988 marked the 200th anniversary of European settlement in Australia. It was also the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Racial discrimination was a direct and unacceptable affront to the noble ideals of that document. Australia believed that all States should be accountable for the protection of human rights in their territory and that it was legitimate that interest in human rights should transcend national boundaries. It therefore accepted that Australia's own record should be open to scrutiny.

15. The original inhabitants of Australia, the Aborigines and Islanders, had lived on Australian soil for some 40,000 years. For too much of the past 200 years, they had suffered discrimination, cruelty and oppression. Over the past 20 years, since a constitutional amendment had given his Government power to legislate for Aborigines and Islanders, progress had been made in redressing those wrongs. Federal Governments, assisted by state and territory governments, had taken special measures to accelerate access by Aborigines and Islanders to government services and to provide a base for their economic and social equality. Although they were entitled to all the legal rights and freedoms enjoyed by other Australians, in practice many of them remained seriously disadvantaged; the Government was therefore pursuing major initiatives to enable Australia's indigenous people to decide their own future and assume a full role in Australian society. In 1988 it had provided a total of \$A 671.6 million for special programmes for Aborigines and Islanders in the fields of housing, education, training and community development.

16. His Government had adopted a state-by-state approach to Aboriginal land rights, taking into account the differences between the six Australian states and the varied needs of Aboriginal people. All but one of the state governments had taken action to provide secure land title for Aboriginal people and some 12 per cent of Australia was now held by Aboriginal communities under various forms of secure title.

17. In 1987, it had been announced that there would be a fundamental restructuring of the government machinery responsible for policy development and programme administration in regard to Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders so as to enable them to manage their own affairs. A new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission was to be created in 1989. His Government was also committed to improving the position of Aborigines and Islanders in the criminal justice system; in 1987 the Federal Government had established a Royal Commission to study and report on the high incidence of Aboriginal deaths in custody since 1980; it had also promoted urgent measures in states to prevent further deaths in custody.

18. The colonizers of the Australian continent had operated under the fallacious rule of terra nullius, which had wiped out the rights of the indigenous people to their land, its sacred places and the protection of their culture. Modern-day Australians had a responsibility to recognize the dispossession of the indigenous people and redress the wrongs of the past. In June 1988 it had been agreed that a treaty should be negotiated between the Aboriginal people and the Government on behalf of all the people of Australia, and in August 1988 a motion had been passed jointly by the two Houses of the Australian Parliament affirming the entitlement of

(Mr. Costello, Australia)

Aboriginals and Islanders to self-management and self-determination subject to the Constitution and laws of Australia.

19. Australia was a multicultural society; in earlier years, settlers had come predominantly from the British Isles, but over 3.6 million settlers from more than 100 countries had arrived since 1945. His Government was committed to a policy of multiculturalism. In 1987 it had replaced the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs with the Office of Multicultural Affairs within the Prime Minister's own Department. His Government's immigration programme was non-discriminatory and reflected a continuing commitment to the achievement of family reunion as well as to international humanitarian concerns, including the resettlement of refugees. All immigrants were entitled to participate in Australian society on terms of full equality with all other Australians. His Foreign Minister had pledged in the general debate that Australia would never again allow race to be used as a criterion in the exercise of its sovereign right to decide who should enter its territory.

20. Racial prejudice and discrimination continued to be a problem of global dimensions which must be jointly confronted and combated. Australia would continue to make a constructive contribution to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. It believed that United Nations system-wide activities in the fields of racial discrimination and apartheid should be consolidated in the context of the Decade; that better co-ordination between the various United Nations bodies dealing with racism should be encouraged; and that training courses and educational measures should be given priority in allocating scarce resources. Australia had participated actively in the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and in August 1988 had contributed a further \$A 10,000 to the Voluntary Fund to assist the widest possible participation of indigenous groups.

21. Australia had worked towards constructive solutions to the financial problems which had complicated the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and had brought forward its contribution to CERD's budget in 1987. Although the amounts owed by individual States parties were small, they perhaps reflected a lack of political commitment to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination on the part of many States parties. His delegation called on all States parties to meet in full their obligations under article 8, paragraph 6, of the Convention.

22. While racism and racial prejudice existed in all countries, racial discrimination was at its worst when it formed the institutional basis of a society. For that reason, his Government rejected the abhorrent policy of apartheid as a basic affront to human dignity and a flagrant violation of fundamental human rights. His country had implemented a policy of extensive political, social and economic measures against the South African Government. Among the major features of that policy were frequent expressions of his country's strong opposition to apartheid; the maintenance of formal diplomatic relations with South Africa to allow Australian views to directly influence the Government;

(Mr. Costello, Australia)

programmes to help the front-line States reduce their economic dependence on South Africa; increased contacts with southern African nationalist movements and prominent opponents of apartheid; measures to discourage contacts with sporting organisations or teams from South Africa; the establishment of a voluntary code of conduct for Australian companies operating in South Africa; cessation of the issue in South Africa of visitor and other temporary entry visas for Australia; and implementation of Security Council resolutions relating to the arms embargo against South Africa.

23. Only through the imposition of mandatory economic sanctions could effective pressure for change be brought to bear on the South African Government. Pending the adoption of such measures, his country had already implemented the wide-ranging sanctions adopted by the 1985 Nassau meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government and the 1986 London meeting of Commonwealth leaders. Those sanctions, which had also been extended to Namibia, included termination of air links, an end to all Government assistance to, investment in and trade with South Africa, and bans on the importation of various products.

24. Australia reiterated its support for the right to self-determination of, among others, the peoples of Namibia, Palestine, Kampuchea and Afghanistan.

25. Mrs. KIMATA (Japan) said that it was regrettable that, on the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, practices based on prejudice and discrimination continued in many parts of the world. The policy of apartheid in South Africa was a particularly abhorrent manifestation of such practices. To a long list of repressive measures, that country's Government had recently added the banning of all political activities by 17 anti-apartheid organisations. Her country reiterated its demand that South Africa take fundamental measures to abolish apartheid and present a credible timetable for achieving that goal. Such measures must include the lifting of the state of emergency, the immediate and unconditional release of all detainees, in particular Nelson Mandela, and the dismantling of the Bantustan system. Further, South Africa must refrain from military incursions into neighbouring territories.

26. The international community must be relentless in exerting political and economic pressure on South Africa until those goals were achieved. To that end, Japan would continue its various restrictive measures against South Africa. At the same time, it was promoting political dialogue with regional leaders, including black leaders in South Africa, extending educational and training assistance to young black citizens of South Africa and Namibia and providing assistance to neighbouring African States.

27. The Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, like the first Decade, had been playing a symbolic role in the eradication of all forms of racial discrimination. Japan had been working actively to achieve the purposes of the Decade and, to that end, had for the past three years contributed to the Trust Fund for the Programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination. In her delegation's view, long-term educational programmes and

(Mrs. Kimata, Japan)

public information campaigns, as set forth in the plan of activities, would prove the most direct path to achieving the goals of the Second Decade.

28. With the signing of the Geneva accords in April 1986, a major step had been taken toward the achievement of a comprehensive peace in Afghanistan. That movement towards peace should be consolidated through strict implementation of the accords including, in particular, the total withdrawal of foreign troops in accordance with the established timetable. It was essential that a broad-based government representing the will of all the Afghan people should be established in Afghanistan. The international community must join efforts to enable the Afghan refugees, who accounted for almost a quarter of the country's population, to return safely and voluntarily to their homeland as soon as possible. In that connection, Japan had pledged to the relevant bodies an initial contribution equivalent to \$60 million for assistance to Afghan refugees.

29. With respect to the situation in Kampuchea, any real settlement must include a complete withdrawal of Vietnamese forces; the establishment of an independent, neutral and non-aligned Kampuchea; and international guarantees regarding the eventual political settlement. Her country hoped that the peace process would be further advanced through discussions among the parties concerned.

30. In the light of new developments in the Middle East, expectations were higher than ever before that a just, lasting and comprehensive peace would be attained, which must be based on the following: withdrawal by Israel from all the occupied territories; recognition of the right to self-determination of the Palestinian people, including the establishment of an independent Palestinian State; and recognition of Israel's right to exist. Steadfast efforts by all the parties concerned were necessary to attain those ends, and Japan intended to do what it could to support them.

31. It was encouraging that negotiations on the situation in Namibia were now under way; she earnestly hoped that Security Council resolution 435 (1978) would finally be implemented.

32. The United Nations had been active and successful recently in its efforts to solve international problems, particularly in the case of Afghanistan. Her delegation hoped that the renewal of the authority and prestige of the United Nations would have a positive effect on other pending issues.

33. Mr. Casajuana (Spain) took the Chair.

34. Mr. DING Yuanhong (China) said that the attainment and safeguarding of the principle of self-determination remained a question of keen interest to the international community and merited continued consideration by the Third Committee. The restoration of the national rights of the Palestinian people had not become a reality owing to the obstinate refusal of the Israeli authorities to implement the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council and to withdraw from all the occupied Arab territories. The recent uprising in

(Mr. Ding Yuanhong, China)

those territories had testified to the urgency and inevitability of an end to the illegal occupation. The Israeli Government should give up its policy of expansion, accept the reasonable proposals put forward by the Arab countries and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and seek a just and reasonable settlement through peaceful negotiations. His country hoped that the current session of the General Assembly would make renewed efforts to arrive at a settlement of the question of Palestine.

35. Although the Namibian people had been granted the right to self-determination by Security Council resolution 435 (1978), the South African authorities had repeatedly invented excuses to obstruct its implementation. Consequently, his delegation welcomed the recent progress towards implementation and hoped that the parties concerned would continue their efforts.

36. Foreign aggression had resulted in the denial of the right of self-determination to the people of Afghanistan, for many years causing them untold sufferings. The recent signing of the Geneva accords on the political settlement of the Afghan question was therefore most welcome. It was the expectation of the international community that the Soviet Union would withdraw its troops from Afghanistan as scheduled under the accords, that Afghanistan would regain its status as a sovereign, independent and non-aligned country and that the early and safe return of the refugees would be ensured.

37. Since a number of regional disputes were currently being settled, the international community was all the more determined to demand that Viet Nam withdraw all its troops from Kampuchea as soon as possible. It was regrettable that the Vietnamese authorities were still making excuses in order to delay that withdrawal, thereby prolonging the sufferings of the Kampuchean people and preventing refugees from returning home.

38. It was also regrettable that the South African authorities were still clinging obstinately to the apartheid system, in defiance of the widespread condemnation of the international community. To those who had dared to resist apartheid, the authorities had responded with brutal suppression, including a February 1988 ban on anti-apartheid organisations and prolongation of the nationwide state of emergency. That showed that the situation in South Africa remained harsh and that the struggle against apartheid would be long and arduous. He reiterated the firm support of the Government and people of China for the South African people's just struggle against racism. He called upon the international community at large and certain Western countries in particular to continue to put pressure on the South African authorities to abolish the apartheid system, end their illegal occupation of Namibia and halt their aggression against neighbouring countries.

39. The Programmes of Action for the First and Second Decades to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination had been an important element in United Nations efforts in that field. Among recent activities, the Global Consultation on Racial Discrimination, held on 3-6 October 1988 at Geneva, had resulted in a number of constructive suggestions and proposals for strengthening co-ordination at the

(Mr. Ding Yuanhong, China)

international level. His country hoped that, in executing the plan of activities for 1990-1993, the Secretary-General would continue to give the highest priority to measures aimed at eliminating the apartheid system.

40. In the efforts to combat racism, racial discrimination and apartheid, two international instruments were of great importance, namely, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. He called upon those countries which had not yet done so to accede to those Conventions as soon as possible.

41. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) played a crucial role in the struggle against racism and racial discrimination. It was a matter of concern that, owing to lack of funds in recent years, CERD had had to cancel or shorten its sessions, making it impossible for it to complete its consideration of States parties' reports. To solve that problem, the United Nations should appeal to countries in arrears to meet their financial obligations under the Convention. In the meantime, consideration should be given to the proposal contained in CERD's report, namely, that the Secretary-General be authorized on a temporary basis to meet CERD's expenses from the United Nations regular budget, so as to ensure its normal functioning.

42. Mr. ADOUKI (Congo) said that his country fully supported the objectives of the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, foremost among which was the elimination of apartheid. Congo's contribution to achieving those goals, included its signing of various international instruments, such as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid. On another level, on the first day of school each year all Congolese children attended a lesson on the subject of apartheid as a crime against humanity. All Congolese ports and airports were closed to South African vessels and aircraft. In his country, all acts which accorded privileges to any citizens or restricted their rights on grounds, for example, of ethnic or other origin, sex or religion were contrary to the law and punished as such; men and women enjoyed equal rights in all spheres of private, political and social life.

43. While anti-racist and anti-discriminatory legislation had been passed in virtually all countries of the world, various, sometimes subtle, forms of racism and discrimination persisted, for instance against immigrant and minority communities throughout the world. In order to eliminate such practices, constant vigilance and commitment were required of both States and the international community.

44. Welcoming the efforts made by the United Nations to implement the Programme of Action for the Second Decade, he called for a special effort to be made, particularly by the more wealthy countries, to ensure that the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination had the financial means to fulfil its mandate. The question of the struggle against racism and racial discrimination was

(Mr. Adouki, Congo)

a central concern of the international community, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination being by far the most widely accepted of all international human rights instruments.

45. The commendable efforts so far made in the struggle against racism should not preclude further endeavours, in particular using the media and the education system, both of which, in his country, were actively involved in a national campaign against apartheid and racial discrimination.

46. In other areas, little progress had been made. In the Middle East, denial of the Palestinian people's right to a homeland had obstructed the peace process in the region. It was crucial for the international community to bring all the parties concerned to an international peace conference on the Middle East. The Palestinians, under the leadership of the PLO, would never surrender their inalienable rights.

47. Apartheid, a crime against humanity, pursued its reign of terror against the black population of South Africa, in defiance of the international community. The situation continued to be one of increased repression, extension of the state of emergency, press censorship, bans on non-violent organisations and arrests of blacks and whites alike. Political prisoners were still detained and the release of Nelson Mandela was being used as a vile instrument of diplomatic blackmail. Meanwhile, powerful allies of the régime had enabled it to build up a formidable military machine for the systematic oppression of the majority of the South African people and for aggression against independent neighbouring countries.

48. Convinced as it was that apartheid should be dismantled, the People's Republic of Congo was gratified that the recent Toronto meeting had recognised the importance of sanctions against the apartheid régime. The conclusions of that meeting and the information contained in the report by Mr. Khalifa now before the Committee (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1988/6 and Add.1) should be used in campaigns to rally public support for sanctions.

49. Of the 100 million CFA francs contributed by Congo to the Africa Fund set up by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to provide assistance to countries victims of South Africa's policy of aggression and destabilisation, 75 million had been allocated to Mozambique and 25 million to the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO).

50. South Africa had now embarked on a diplomatic offensive towards the African countries. His country's position was unambiguous: if South Africa wanted to establish a dialogue, it should do so with the genuine representatives of the black majority of the South African people, abolish apartheid, release all political prisoners including Nelson Mandela and restore democratic freedoms.

51. Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait) resumed the Chair.

52. Miss LEON (Singapore) said that, as the United Nations celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, manifestations of racial prejudice persisted in the world, the most blatant and abhorrent being the apartheid policy pursued by South Africa. Apartheid was a crime against humanity, and Singapore, which had consistently voted for resolutions condemning apartheid, strongly reaffirmed its continued support for the struggle of the people of South Africa against apartheid, and its hope for the early dismantling of the system and the granting of equal rights to all South Africans.

53. She noted with regret that forms of racial discrimination less obvious than apartheid but no less dangerous were still prevalent. It was widely thought that racial problems, including ethnic strife, most often had their roots in colonialism. However, they also stemmed from inherent tensions between ethnic communities, as well as from the absence of any government policy designed to keep racial antagonisms in check. Examples of racial discrimination in the economic sphere included the employment of a cheap labour force at the expense of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of workers differentiated by colour and the stereotyping of races and of their ability to perform certain tasks, which prevented the upward mobility of certain racial groups. Racial discrimination in the social sphere continued to affect many in their everyday lives.

54. Singapore's experience provided a good illustration of a Government's conscious pursuit of a policy aimed at creating a single nation out of diverse elements. Singapore was a multiracial, multilingual and multi-religious society and discrimination was outlawed by its Constitution. A continuing effort was being made to ensure racial equality and harmony. There were four official languages, and national newspapers, radio and television programmes appeared in all four languages, as did Government documents. Each racial group had the right to its own culture and was free to observe its own customs, including religious practices. The Government acknowledged the need to maintain a delicate balance in order to keep racial sensitivities in check, and devoted special attention to minority groups, for instance by enacting legislation to provide for a new system of "Group Representative Constituencies" to ensure minority representation in Parliament. Racial harmony and equality could not be taken for granted; only when individuals were treated with equal dignity and were given equal economic opportunities could a nation move forward.

55. It was necessary to continue to work towards educating the world community about the need to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination. She reaffirmed Singapore's strong support for the work of the United Nations in restoring and reinstating basic human rights for all oppressed peoples and, in particular, commended the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which deserved the full support of all Member States.

56. Mrs. SHERMAN-PETER (Bahamas) commended the exemplary efforts made by the United Nations towards the elimination of racial discrimination and the termination of institutions, particularly colonialism, conducive to racial inequality. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination had been ratified or acceded to by more States than any other human rights

(Mrs. Sherman-Peter, Bahamas)

instrument. However, the elimination of racism and racial discrimination was not guaranteed by international instruments or national legislation or regulations, but must be an ongoing process of creating and maintaining conditions conducive to racial tolerance and equality. The Bahamas therefore strongly supported the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and the efforts to co-ordinate system-wide activities to meet the objectives of the Decade. It noted the success of the Global Consultation on Racial Discrimination, whose recommendations it would study with a view to enhancing its own programmes against racism and racial discrimination.

57. Public information was a very important tool for combating prejudice. Public information activities in the Bahamas had included a press statement in July 1988 calling for the unconditional release of Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, and radio and television programmes to sensitise the public to the evils of racism and racial discrimination.

58. The Bahamas boasted a multiracial society in which racial conflict was virtually unknown. Its Constitution barred discrimination on any grounds, a provision that could only be amended by a three-quarters majority of both Houses of Parliament and a national referendum. Additional laws protected the rights of the individual in such areas as education and employment. The Supreme Court had jurisdiction to hear complaints from alleged victims of racial discrimination, but no such case had been brought to date.

59. The policy of apartheid of the Government of South Africa continued to be reflected in State-organised and State-sanctioned violence and repression, faced with which the challenge before the black majority was to make it clear that it could no longer tolerate domination and the denial of political, economic and social justice. The international community joined with it in its demands for an end to apartheid. The response from the racist régime had been ruthlessly to isolate its African population from outside contact by silencing the media and stepping up the repression.

60. Her delegation condemned the policy of apartheid, demanded the release of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners, including the Sharpeville Six, and urged the lifting of the restrictions on the African National Congress (ANC) and other political parties. Members of the international community should not be accomplices to apartheid and it was therefore greatly to be regretted that economic and military aid continued to be extended to the racist régime in South Africa.

61. The Bahamas could not view enterprise in South Africa as a progressive force for change and it therefore urged support for comprehensive sanctions against South Africa. Any policy with a lesser objective would run counter to the will of the majority of the international community and to the concerns of the black majority in South Africa.

62. She noted with satisfaction that the number of countries in all regions now supporting sanctions was increasing, and was heartened by the conclusion of the

(Mrs. Sherman-Peter, Bahamas)

Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers that sanctions, limited as they were, were having a telling impact on South Africa.

63. The integrity of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination must be maintained. Under the Convention, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) performed important functions and her delegation considered as timely CERD's recommendation that, as a temporary measure, funds be advanced from the United Nations regular budget to permit it to meet. The short-term alternative might be the continued curtailment or cancellation of CERD's sessions, which would have long-term crippling effects on the efficiency and effectiveness of that important treaty body.

64. Her delegation would welcome greater support for and adherence to the provisions of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, particularly at the current time of heightened resistance to apartheid within South Africa.

65. Under United Nations auspices, a majority of colonial peoples had gained political independence. The principle of non-intervention was crucial to protecting the sovereignty of former colonial States and to reducing the likelihood of conflict. In southern Africa, the front-line States lived with the reality of the threat of intervention by white racist South Africa. She wondered, however, whether South Africa would be as inclined to military adventurism in the front-line States if it did not have the support of insurgent groups. In that respect, she noted the complaints regarding the use of mercenaries against the front-line States and liberation movements contained in the report of the Special Rapporteur on the question of the use of mercenaries (A/43/632). Her Government emphatically condemned the use of mercenaries.

66. Her Government was cautiously optimistic that the favourable outcome of negotiations between the United States, South Africa, Angola and Cuba would lead to early independence for Namibia. It fervently hoped that influence and pressure would be brought to bear on South Africa to honour any commitments it might make in that respect, and that pressure would continue to be exerted to bring about change in South Africa itself.

67. Mr. LY (Senegal) said that, on the fortieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the praiseworthy record of the United Nations in the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms was tarnished by the situation in South Africa, where apartheid continued to represent a massive and flagrant violation of human rights. That the situation in South Africa had continued to deteriorate was evident from the action taken by the South African Government on 24 February 1988 in deciding to ban the activities of 17 organizations representing whites as well as blacks and 18 people who were opposing apartheid by peaceful means. That was an admission of failure by the South African Government which, notwithstanding the state of emergency imposed since 1985, had proved incapable of maintaining order and had been forced to silence the peaceful victims of its racist policies. The latest repressive measures, the muzzling of the press and the steps

(Mr. Ly. Senegal)

to strengthen further the apartheid laws represented a major challenge to the international community, and to the United Nations in particular just when the latter was regaining its prestige. Effective pressures reflecting the solidarity of the international community were therefore needed and, in that connection, the only peaceful solution that remained was the imposition of comprehensive, co-ordinated and mandatory economic sanctions against the South African Government and support for ANC, the Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC), SWAPO and the front-line States.

68. The question of Namibia was a question of decolonization and must be settled peacefully in the spirit of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). At a time when the world finally seemed ready to follow the path of dialogue, negotiation and reason, the United Nations, with its special responsibility for Namibia, must persuade the Pretoria régime to grant Namibia its unconditional independence without further delay, in accordance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

69. His delegation wished to reiterate its unconditional support for the cause of the Palestinian people and to reaffirm their inalienable right to achieve their legitimate aspirations. It remained convinced that the convening of an international conference with the full participation of the PLO could lead to a final solution of the Palestinian problem, which remained at the heart of the broader conflict in the Middle East.

70. His delegation welcomed the assurance given by the Under-Secretary-General for Human Rights in his introductory statement that everything would be done to ensure the proper co-ordination of activities under the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination and to enhance public information programmes. It also hoped that reports by the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action would assess the impact of such activities, and that the results of the Global Consultation on Racial Discrimination that had just ended at Geneva would be widely disseminated.

71. The conclusions and recommendations contained in the study on the role of private group action to combat racism and racial discrimination (A/43/631) deserved careful consideration, while the global compilation of national legislation against racial discrimination (A/43/637) should be able to draw on the reports already submitted by States Parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Any recommendations which the Secretary-General might make on the basis of the study on the effects of racial discrimination in the field of education, training and employment as it affected the children of minorities, in particular those of migrant workers (A/42/492) would greatly benefit the Working Group on the Drafting of an International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Their Families. In implementing the Programme of Action for the Second Decade, special emphasis should be laid on measures to eliminate apartheid and on the precarious situation of migrant workers and their families. In that connection, the updated list prepared by Mr. Khalifa (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1988/6 and Add.1) appeared to be an important means of exerting pressure.

(Mr. Ly, Senegal)

72. The extent of the international community's political will in the struggle against apartheid and all other forms of racial discrimination would be measured by its ability to mobilize resources to implement the Programme for the Decade, in particular, through the Trust Fund for the Programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.

73. His delegation emphasized the importance of securing the ratification and universal acceptance of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and the International Convention against Apartheid in Sports.

74. The financial crisis of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) continued to be a matter of concern to his delegation; in view of the importance which all countries attached to CERD, every effort must be made to resolve that crisis. He also wished to draw attention to the fact that, in its report to the General Assembly, CERD had stressed that its acceptance of the proposal made by the eleventh meeting of States parties concerning the periodicity of reporting under the Convention in no way altered the periodicity of reporting provided for in article 9 thereof.

75. Mr. GROLIG (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation fully supported the statement made on the first cluster of items by the representative of Greece on behalf of the European Community. That statement represented very clearly the position of his own Government and he would therefore confine himself to making some additional comments on agenda item 96.

76. The right to self-determination had far broader connotations than simply freedom from colonial rule and foreign domination. Article 1 of both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights defined the right to self-determination as the right of all peoples freely to determine their political status and freely to pursue their economic, social and cultural development. The question as to how peoples could freely determine their status and development was answered in article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The right to self-determination was indivisible from the right of the individual to take part in the conduct of public affairs, as was very clearly stated in article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The exercise of the right to self-determination required the democratic process which, in turn, was inseparable from the full exercise of such human rights as the right of freedom of thought, conscience and religion; the right of freedom of expression; the right of peaceful assembly and of association; the right to take part in cultural life; the right to liberty and security of person; and the right to move freely in one's country and to leave any country, including one's own, as well as to return to one's country.

77. It was a sad fact that the genuine democratic process, which was the essential prerequisite for the exercise of the right to self-determination, had been undermined, perverted and even openly abolished time and again in many parts of the

(Mr. Grolig, Federal
Republic of Germany)

world and in the name of various totalitarian ideologies. Although some positive developments could be observed, a number of serious problems remained to be solved with regard to the right to self-determination, which was still of paramount relevance to the problems of southern Africa, the Middle East, Kampuchea, Afghanistan and other parts of the world.

78. South Africa had still not ended its illegal occupation of Namibia, although the latter's independence and the right of its people to self-determination seemed to have drawn much closer. His Government supported early independence for Namibia on the basis of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) and welcomed the ongoing negotiations to that end.

79. His Government equally advocated the right of the Palestinian people to exercise self-determination and to decide their own future, within the framework of a Middle East peace settlement which would guarantee the right of all States in the region, including Israel, to exist within secure borders.

80. As far as Afghanistan was concerned, his Government hoped that the withdrawal of Soviet troops would permit a new political beginning leading to the full restoration of the Afghan people's right to self-determination.

81. In Europe, too, the right to self-determination had not been universally achieved. The German nation was divided against its will, but decades of separatism had not made two German nations out of one. Just as the Federal Republic of Germany supported the peaceful attainment of the right of peoples to self-determination in other regions of the world, so it remained committed to its aim of working for a state of peace in Europe in which the German nation would regain its unity through free self-determination.

82. The peaceful attainment of the right to self-determination of all peoples was a cornerstone of his country's policy. World-wide respect for that right and the full exercise of human rights were the only foundation on which peace could be built.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.