



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 31st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DOLGUCHITS (Byelorussian Soviet  
Socialist Republic)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

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AGENDA ITEM 98: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/33/151, A/33/372; A/C.4/33/L.10)

1. Mr. DOLZHINSTEREN (Mongolia) said that, as previous speakers had pointed out, the specialized agencies and other organizations within the United Nations system had a major role to play in accelerating the process of eliminating the last vestiges of colonialism. To that end, the General Assembly and the Special Committee of 24, had adopted a number of important resolutions which met not only the aspirations of the peoples of the colonial Territories themselves, but also the interests of the United Nations and the international community as a whole. His delegation noted with satisfaction that much had been done to implement the resolutions and decisions calling on the specialized agencies to discontinue any co-operation with the racist régimes of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia and to provide all possible assistance and support to the national liberation movements of Zimbabwe and Namibia. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Labour Organisation and the United Nations Development Programme, for instance, were making commendable efforts to provide material and moral assistance and support to the peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia, in close consultation with the Organization of African Unity and the national liberation movements recognized by OAU and the United Nations as the legitimate representatives of those peoples. Such assistance to the national liberation movements was undoubtedly a major contribution both to the struggle of the oppressed peoples of southern Africa for freedom and independence and to the completion of the decolonization process. At the same time, his delegation was concerned that certain specialized agencies, in particular, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, were still refusing to implement fully the Declaration and other General Assembly resolutions on decolonization. The General Assembly should once again call on those specialized agencies to implement all the relevant resolutions; that was the purpose of draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.20, of which his delegation was a sponsor.

2. The question of the decolonization of small Territories was an important aspect of the elimination of the last vestiges of colonialism. The fact that many small Territories in the Caribbean Sea, the Pacific Ocean and other regions of the world were still under colonial domination not only contradicted the spirit and letter of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, but also constituted a threat to the peace and security of those regions. The administering Powers of some of those Territories were primarily seeking to establish and safeguard their own interests, and were trying to take possession of the Territories or to turn them into military and strategic bases under various pretexts. That was the situation in Micronesia, which had still not been able to exercise its right to self-determination, independence and freedom; the Administering Authority had not only failed to fulfil its obligations, but was also making attempts to take possession of the Territory. His delegation therefore joined previous speakers who had called on the Administering Authority to refrain from any measures to annex Micronesia under any pretext of any kind.

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(Mr. Dolzhinstseren, Mongolia)

3. His delegation believed that the peoples of other dependent and colonial Territories must be given every opportunity to exercise their rights to self-determination and independence, in accordance with the provisions of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. On the basis of its fundamental policy of support for the struggle of the colonial peoples, Mongolia had always supported and would continue to support the just cause of the people of Western Sahara in their struggle to attain independence and freedom in accordance with the provisions of the Declaration.

4. His delegation hoped that the Committee would adopt decisions and resolutions which fully corresponded to the vital interests of all the small Territories and their peoples still under colonial domination.

5. Mr. SEMEGA-JANNEH (Gambia), referring to the question of Western Sahara, said that the administering Power had handed the Territory over to Morocco and Mauritania in accordance with the Madrid Agreement which had been negotiated in compliance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. The great tension which had developed between the States in that area following decolonization was regrettable. A number of African States had tried to mediate the dispute and the Organization of African Unity had decided to hold an extraordinary summit meeting to find a solution. His Government had supported that decision as being in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. OAU had taken a constructive step towards finding a solution by its decision to establish an ad hoc committee, consisting of at least five Heads of State, to consider all aspects of the problem of Western Sahara. The President of the Sudan, as Chairman of OAU, had informed the Secretary-General that the ad hoc committee would meet in Khartoum to consider the question further and had expressed the hope that Member States would refrain from taking any action which might delay a solution.

6. His Government therefore hoped that the Committee would place its trust in the ad hoc committee and thus show its respect for Africa as well as its confidence in the ability of African leaders to bring peace to north-west Africa.

7. Mr. CARTER (Barbados) said that on 5 October 1978, the Minister for External Affairs of Barbados had drawn the attention of the General Assembly to the danger that the Caribbean area, which had been first on the path to decolonization with the attainment of independence by the Republic of Haiti, might well be the last area in the world to be rid of colonialism (A/33/PV.23, pp. 23-25). Some progress had been made with the recent emergence of Dominica as an independent nation and there were plans for St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Antigua and St. Kitts to follow suit in 1979. Although the United Kingdom Government was to be commended on those developments, he appealed to that Government to ensure that the transition of those Territories to independence was smooth, both economically and politically.

8. Much, however, remained to be done in southern Africa where minority Governments, with support from other nations, continued to oppress millions of Africans and to deny them their rights to self-determination and freedom. His country regarded the right of peoples to self-determination as sacrosanct. Indeed,

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(Mr. Carter, Barbados)

the Charter of the United Nations included among its purposes a pledge by Member States to respect the principle of equal rights and self-determination. Western Sahara and East Timor were two cases where the indigenous peoples had not been allowed to exercise their right to self-determination. The arrangement reached between the colonial Power and the neighbouring countries on Western Sahara had made a mockery of every principle of self-determination and it was therefore unacceptable. The United Nations and the international community should condemn those countries which had continued to deny the Saharan people that right. His delegation would support every effort by OAU to settle the problem. In particular, it welcomed the unilateral cease-fire announced by the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el Hamra y Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO) in order to create a climate conducive to serious negotiations leading to a solution to the problem.

9. His country's commitment to the principle of self-determination had also led it to condemn the action taken by Indonesia against the people of East Timor. His Government appealed to Indonesia to cease hostilities against the East Timorese, to withdraw from the Territory and to allow the people to exercise their right to self-determination in accordance with Security Council resolution 384 (1975) and General Assembly resolution 3485 (XXX).

10. It was evident that the negotiations between the United Kingdom and Guatemala on the question of Belize had failed and that Belize was no nearer independence than it had been in 1974. The United Kingdom proposals for a settlement of the dispute had appeared to be fair and reasonable, but the Guatemalans had shown a lack of good faith and had not only failed to respond to the proposals but had made no conscientious effort to bring the negotiations to a satisfactory conclusion. His Government did not feel that Belize's attainment of independence should be delayed because of the intransigence of a neighbour which continued to make spurious claims to its territory and sought to support those claims by the threat of force or by attempts at infiltration among the population of Belize; there had even been hints of bribery of petitioners.

11. Evidence which had convinced his delegation that the Guatemalan claim was unfounded included the fact that Guatemala was neither the de jure nor the de facto heir to the Spanish colonial empire in Central America. Furthermore, under treaties signed between 1850 and 1856, the United Kingdom had ceded the Bay Islands to Honduras while the Mosquito Kingdom had been ceded to Nicaragua, and the United States of America had agreed to recognize the then existing boundaries between Guatemala and Belize. A treaty had been signed between the United Kingdom and Guatemala in 1859 which had recognized the existing boundaries between Belize and Guatemala. Under that treaty, the United Kingdom had also agreed to give Guatemala access to the Atlantic Ocean by way of river transport or by a mule road. The fact was that for over 100 years Belize had existed on its own, independent of Guatemala, even though it had been under United Kingdom administration; it had a government of its own and a people of its own and a firm commitment had been made by both the ruling and the opposition parties to proceed to independence. Having failed in its earlier efforts to win support for its claim to Belize, the Government of Guatemala was currently attempting to justify its claim on grounds of ethnicity. The international community should recognize that the claim was designed only to obtain a cession of territory and should dismiss it accordingly. His Government firmly

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(Mr. Carter, Barbados)

believed that Belize should retain its full territorial integrity and should proceed without delay to independence, free of threats, notwithstanding any further negotiations between the United Kingdom and Guatemala on the recent United Kingdom proposals. His Government could not concede that Guatemala had the right to as much as one square inch of Belizean territory. The cession of any territory to Guatemala would trigger a multitude of other territorial claims in Latin America and the Caribbean and lead to instability and threats to the peace and security of the entire area. It was his hope that at its thirty-fourth session the General Assembly would be able to welcome a delegation from a free and independent Belize.

12. Mr. YÉRE (Ivory Coast) said that, as his delegation held the Chairmanship of the Sub-Committee on Small Territories of the Special Committee of 24, he would take the opportunity to voice some thoughts on the political, economic and social situation of those Territories. In that connexion, his Government believed firmly in the principles of self-determination and independence of peoples set out in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). His delegation accordingly welcomed the recent independence of Solomon Islands, as well as the arrangements made by the administering Powers to enable other Territories to achieve independence within a reasonable period of time. Progress in regard to the Gilbert Islands and the New Hebrides seemed satisfactory. It was to be hoped that the administering Powers of the latter Territory, France and the United Kingdom, would be able to work harmoniously with the indigenous people to enable the latter to achieve independence based on unity, free from any dualism which might have resulted from the joint presence of two Powers in the Territory.

13. His delegation regretted that the parties concerned had been unable to reach agreement on the question of Belize and hoped that the administering Power would take all necessary measures to ensure the territorial integrity and inviolability of the Territory so that it could achieve independence, freedom and a safe future.

14. A number of smaller Territories were in a special situation in so far as limited population and economic resources had raised doubts among the population as to whether independence might not be too risky. In that connexion, it was the duty of the international community to find a satisfactory means of safeguarding the legitimate aspirations of the indigenous population. While the people of a Territory should not be subjected to an indefinite prolongation of colonial domination, neither should they be forced to accept a solution which the majority rejected. His own country had achieved independence by peaceful means and would therefore hope that, whenever possible, the decolonization process would take place in conditions which would spare human lives and material resources and would provide the decolonized peoples with an opportunity to exercise their own full sovereignty.

15. Mr. BEDJAOU (Algeria)\* said that, at the 29th meeting of the committee, the representative of Morocco had once again brought up the same arguments on the question of Western Sahara that the Committee had been hearing for the past three

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\* The full text of the statement by the representative of Algeria will be issued as a document.

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(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

years. Since his delegation had replied to those arguments during the thirty-second session (A/C.4/32/SR.13), he would therefore not dwell on them. Nor would he reply to the Moroccan assertion that he (Mr. Bedjaoui) had argued before the International Court of Justice in support of the theory of "terra nullius", with reference to Western Sahara. The record of the presentations to the International Court of Justice were available in the United Nations library and any delegation, particularly that of Morocco, could refer to them.

16. For the representative of one of the occupying States to accuse his country of hegemonism would be laughable were it not so absurd. In the first place, if the entire international community was demanding a free consultation of the Saharan people, the purpose was to ask those people to choose between independence and incorporation into either Mauritania or Morocco, never into Algeria, which was not and did not wish to be involved in the territorial race. Furthermore, what right would any State have to oppose the free and sovereign suffrage of the Saharan people under the auspices and supervision of the United Nations? Yet the two occupying States offered a unique "remedy" against the so-called hegemonistic claims of Algeria: in order to safeguard the independence of Western Sahara, they would more surely annihilate it by dismembering it.

17. In fact, Moroccan expansionism had been quite open ever since 1956. During the 1960s, Morocco had even tried to take over Mauritania itself, as well as part of Algeria, all of Western Sahara, part of Mali and part of Senegal. In 1960, the Moroccan representative had spoken in the United Nations of Morocco's claims to a large segment of the Western Mediterranean. In 1961, the former President of Mauritania had replied to the Moroccan claims by drawing attention to the paradox of a former colonial Power protecting its former colony from the threat posed by another African country. Unfortunately, in 1975, the Mauritanian President had forgotten what he had said in 1961.

18. Very few countries in the modern world would survive if they all laid claim to boundaries from their past history. Yet one of the two States that was occupying Western Sahara had not yet renounced such claims. The records of the arguments presented by the Moroccan representative before the International Court of Justice were enlightening in that regard; indeed, the Mauritanian representative had found it necessary to respond to them in the course of the hearings before the Court. On the basis of those same hazy historical arguments, Morocco even continued to claim part of the territory of Algeria, as evidenced in an address delivered recently at Georgetown University, in Washington, D.C., by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Morocco.

19. Once again, an attempt had been made to divert attention from the problem of the decolonization of Western Sahara. Thus, Algeria had been accused of military intervention at the scene of the hostilities. Algeria could not permit itself to be blamed so irresponsibly. The Committee must not allow itself to be distracted by such a tactic, which would make it lose sight of the true nature of the problem, which was still one of the decolonization of a Territory, a question which fell within its competence and which was regularly on its agenda.

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(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

20. Unfortunately, States often showed a propensity to hold other States responsible for the failures they had brought on themselves by following an unjust policy. Mauritania had understood that and, through its Head of State had declared, in July 1978, that its conquest of part of the Saharan Territory had represented a "historical error" for which the former President of Mauritania had been solely responsible. The other occupying State, however, insisted on blaming Algeria for the problems caused by the military occupation. There was a conflict, but it was a conflict between the Saharan people and the two occupying States, which had wrongly usurped a Territory and divided the population between them as if they were dividing livestock; and between the two occupying States, on the one hand, and, on the other, the international community and Africa, the protectors of the Saharan people whose right to self-determination they had recognized.

21. The refugee problem mentioned by the representative of one of the occupying States was too well known to make it necessary for him to go into detail on it. The occupier tried to give the question a false humanitarian dimension in an attempt to divert attention from the conditions that had led to the flight of the Saharan people. Thousands of Saharan women and children had fled from the occupation forces. One of the occupying States demanded the return of the refugees. But why and under what conditions should they return? Did the occupying State expect them to return voluntarily to submit to the very domination that had caused them to flee? Or was it trying to mislead the international community by claiming them as its own nationals? That was a gross misrepresentation of the facts, aimed at achieving recognition of a military fait accompli in a Territory that had yet to be decolonized and which therefore could not be under the sovereignty of any neighbouring State.

22. The Saharan refugees and the freedom-fighters of the Frente POLISARIO, by their courage and faith, showed the spirit that had spurred the disinherited and oppressed masses of the third world since Bandung. The problem of Western Sahara was not simply a refugee problem. Once the forces of occupation left the Territory and the right of the Saharan people to decide their own destiny had been restored, the problem would be automatically solved. To draw attention to the effects while pretending to forget the cause was to distort reality.

23. The reference by the representative of Senegal to the unique nature of the question and the need for a unique solution was revealing. The situation was indeed unique, not because of its originality but rather because of the strangeness of the approach to it, an approach which consisted in supporting the effort to distort a genuine decolonization issue. It would be difficult to believe that the representative of Senegal was not aware of how the decolonization problem had suddenly and unexpectedly become so unique; the normal course of events had changed in November 1975 with the resurgence of the expansionism of the two occupying States. President Senghor of Senegal had made the best comment on such distortions of the decolonization process in his address to the United Nations General Assembly in October 1961, when he had spoken of the need for the third-world countries to practise some self-criticism, in view of the fact that many of them had caught the sickness of the former colonizers: the spirit of intolerance and the desire for conquest (A/PV.1045, para. 29).

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(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

24. The Moroccan representative had mentioned the case of the Algerian Sahara, but he had omitted the essential fact, namely, that a referendum in which all options had been open to the people, had been conducted throughout the entire territory of Algeria. The former colonial Power itself, which at the time had still had a military presence throughout the Algerian territory, could attest to that fact. If the historical argument adduced by Morocco for its incorporation of Western Sahara was to be universally applied, then Egypt could claim rights over Sudan, and Turkey could claim Algeria.

25. The Moroccan representative had quoted only part of resolution AHG/Res.92 (XV) on Western Sahara, adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at the Khartoum summit meeting, the text of which was reproduced in document A/33/235. He would therefore read out the resolution in full. Members would note that the fifth and seventh preambular paragraphs made reference to the report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Western Sahara of 11 November 1975 and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 16 October 1975. The resolution clearly reaffirmed the right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination, particularly in paragraph 3. Paragraph 7 specifically indicated that the United Nations continued to be seized of the question of Western Sahara.

26. The Moroccan delegation had been asked to commit itself to respect the right of the Saharan people to self-determination, but it had refused to commit itself on that point. That certainly was not surprising, since the occupying State had consistently defied all the resolutions of the international and regional bodies concerning the right of the Saharan people to self-determination. It was now perfectly clear that Morocco had no intention of undertaking to consult the Saharan people on their future in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV). The situation was quite simple. The right of conquest had replaced the right of the people, as in the worst times of colonialism. Further evidence of that was to be found in the draft resolution contained in document A/C.4/33/L.8/Rev.1, which was inspired by the illegitimate occupier of the Territory and was aimed at rendering sterile the efforts being made at the current session of the General Assembly. That draft resolution omitted any reference to the right of the Saharan people, and particularly to General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). Furthermore, it mutilated the OAU resolution to which he had just referred, thus showing not only disregard for OAU and aversion for anything concerning the Saharan people, but also a desire to abuse the good faith of the United Nations by submitting a distorted text.

27. An ad hoc committee had been established by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU to consider all the facts of the question of the Western Sahara including the exercise by the people of that Territory of their right to self-determination. It was impossible that his country should be opposed to a committee with such a mandate and draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.7/Rev.1, of which his country was a sponsor, was in conformity with the decision adopted by OAU. While the representative of Morocco had stated that draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.8/Rev.1 expressed confidence in the ad hoc committee, he had flagrantly omitted to refer to the mandate of that committee, which was specifically to examine all the facts relating to the question of Western Sahara, including the exercise by the people of that Territory of their right to self-determination.

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(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

28. Reaffirming his country's agreement with the efforts undertaken by OAU through the ad hoc committee, he pointed out that Algeria had expressed reservations only with regard to the manner in which the consultations concerning the establishment of the committee had been carried out and not with regard to the establishment of the committee itself. It was Morocco which had systematically obstructed the efforts of OAU; it was Morocco which had walked out of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU in 1976 when it had been decided to convene an extraordinary summit meeting on the question of Western Sahara; it was Morocco which had sought in vain to obstruct the proceedings of the 1977 session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU, and it was Morocco which had sought to prevent the Fourth Committee from discussing the question of Western Sahara at the current session of the General Assembly.

29. The debate in the Committee had placed the question of Western Sahara in its proper context, namely the right of the Saharan people to self-determination. However, certain speakers had sought to create confusion regarding the question of the simultaneous consideration of the question by the United Nations and OAU. The fact that both organizations, in accordance with the principles proclaimed in their respective Charters, dealt with problems of decolonization in no way meant that consideration of such problems in one of those organizations should replace, or be subordinate to, consideration of those problems in the other. Moreover, in establishing the ad hoc committee, OAU had solemnly reaffirmed the competence of the United Nations in the question of Western Sahara. Draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.7/Rev.1 referred to the activities of OAU, including the decision to hold an extraordinary summit meeting and to establish the ad hoc committee; it also indicated that the General Assembly of the United Nations should remain actively involved in the question and reaffirmed the basic principle proclaimed in all texts regarding decolonization, namely the right of peoples to decide their own destiny.

30. The main aim of those who sought to create confusion regarding the competence of the two organizations in respect of the question of Western Sahara was to have that question withdrawn from the United Nations and to leave it in suspense between the two organizations, thus avoiding substantive discussion in either body. Similarly, the aim of those who had introduced a so-called procedural draft resolution was to limit substantive discussion of the question in the United Nations simply with a view to shelving the problem.

31. The ad hoc committee had just issued an official communiqué on its work in which it stated that it strongly urged the continuation and extension of the cease-fire - which was also the aim of draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.7/Rev.1 - and that it had established a sub-committee to hear the views of all the parties concerned, including the Frente POLISARIO, and to report on its findings to the ad hoc committee. The reference to the Frente POLISARIO was in strict compliance with the resolution adopted in 1976 by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU, in which it had decided to convene an extraordinary summit meeting in which the representatives of the Saharan people would participate. Similarly, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sudan, the current Chairman of OAU, had stated in a

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(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

recent press conference that the ad hoc committee would consult all the parties concerned, including the Frente POLISARIO.

32. Those who had lately discovered an anachronistic vocation for the European practice of colonial domination believed that they would be able to subjugate a people with a long and fervent attachment to freedom which had always opposed foreign interference; that error had cruel consequences for the people of the two occupying States, who had to meet the costs of a fratricidal war, and for the Saharan people who wished to remain and would remain masters of their own destiny. The time had come for the two occupying States to make peace with the valiant Saharan people on the basis of the resolutions adopted by the competent international and regional bodies with a view to achieving the decolonization of Western Sahara through genuine consultations with the people of that Territory.

33. Mr. MILLS (Jamaica) said that in recent times the process of decolonization in the Americas, particularly in the Caribbean area, had steadily advanced, not by armed struggle, as in the past, but through the insistent demands of colonial peoples and by agreement and negotiation with the administering Powers. The United Nations had played an important role in that process in establishing a framework of principles governing the decolonization process which had become universally respected. The right of colonial peoples to self-determination and independence had been proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations and subsequently endorsed in numerous resolutions and instruments, in particular in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). The world community as a whole now accepted the paramount importance of the interests of the inhabitants of colonial Territories and their right to determine their own destinies. Many small countries, including Jamaica, had thus been able to achieve sovereign independence without the sacrifices involved in armed struggle.

34. The case of Belize represented a challenge to the implementation of the universally accepted right to self-determination. The obstacle to the full exercise of the rights of the people of Belize to self-determination and independence did not derive from problems of economic viability, nor from unwillingness on the part of the administering Power to withdraw, but from the threat of aggression from Guatemala on the basis of an unfounded claim to the Territory. The problem was one of a small country which was unable, by virtue of its limited military capability, to defend its independence against the aggression of a powerful neighbour, and at the same time to tackle the problems which all newly independent States had to face.

35. His delegation had always hoped that the Government of Guatemala would accept the judgement of the international community, respect the strongly expressed aspirations of the people of Belize, renounce its expansionist designs, and base its policies on the generally accepted principles of decolonization, recognizing that the interests of the inhabitants of colonial Territories were paramount and that the Territory of Belize belonged to the people of Belize. That recognition would be in the interests of Guatemala itself, and would constitute a real

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(Mr. Hills, Jamaica)

contribution to the peace and stability of the region. It was clear that the people of Belize were not prepared to become a captive nation and, as their elected leaders had stated, wished to exercise the option to become a sovereign independent nation. They had also declared their willingness to co-operate and live in peace with their neighbours. If Guatemala responded, the two countries could exist together as free, equal and sovereign partners in promoting the welfare of their peoples. That was the spirit in which the current negotiations between the parties should be approached.

36. His delegation shared the feeling of disappointment that the negotiations had so far failed to establish the conditions in which the people of Belize could exercise their right to self-determination, independence and territorial integrity, and it felt that the negotiating process should not be used as a tactic to delay the full implementation of those rights. The negotiations had to be approached in a constructive and realistic spirit; they could clearly not be conducted on the basis of the so-called territorial claim, which was unacceptable to the people of Belize and was in direct violation of the principles of the United Nations. The old imperialist practice whereby peoples and their territory were traded arbitrarily across negotiating tables was completely unacceptable in the modern world. A more constructive approach would be to try to eliminate the differences between Guatemala and the administering Power, without prejudice to the inalienable rights of Belize. The representative of the United Kingdom had outlined clear and specific proposals at the Committee's 27th meeting; it was now up to the Government of Guatemala to respond and to demonstrate its willingness to work towards an early and just solution to the problem. Otherwise, the efficacy of the negotiations would be undermined and other options would have to be explored. The people of Belize had shown patience and good faith throughout the process of seeking a negotiated settlement; it was therefore unacceptable and unjust that their aspirations and the full enjoyment of their rights should be jeopardized by prolonged negotiations. Since Belize could not defend itself against a powerful neighbour, it had to rely on the power of recognized principles, and on the United Nations as the embodiment of those principles, for the guarantee of its sovereign independence.

37. His delegation fully supported draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.19 and would support any move which would promote the development of harmonious relations among the countries of Central America and the Caribbean.

38. Mr. CASTILLO ARRIOLA (Guatemala) said that one of the main functions of the United Nations was to promote the process of decolonization and the progress of peoples towards independence, stability and freedom in accordance with the principles embodied in the Charter, Article 80 of which clearly stated that none of the provisions of Chapter XII should be construed as affecting the rights of any States or peoples or the terms of existing international instruments to which Members of the United Nations might be parties.

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(Mr. Castillo Arriola, Guatemala)

39. The Latin American countries, under the leadership of the heroes of their liberation struggle, had achieved independence from colonial rule at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Subsequently, because it had lacked the military strength to defend itself, his country had been forced to sign the 1859 treaty ceding part of its territory. However, in 1945, it had revoked that treaty and had sought to initiate negotiations with a view to reaching a just solution on the question of its territorial integrity. When it had signed the Charter of the United Nations in San Francisco, his Government had registered its reservations regarding the question of Belize. It was the position of his Government that the provisions of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) relating to territorial integrity should be applied to the territory which his country had inherited from the colonial period.

40. His country had also sought a negotiated settlement with the Government of the United Kingdom as the administering Power. It wished to establish brotherly relations with the people of Belize, many of whom were of Guatemalan origin and with whom his country was linked by geographical, historical and economic ties. His Government was willing to participate in negotiations with a view to reaching a just and equitable settlement that would safeguard the vital rights and interests of all the parties concerned. It was important that any resolution adopted by the General Assembly at the present time should be aimed at promoting such a settlement. Consequently, together with the delegations of Bolivia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Paraguay, his delegation wished to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.4/33/L.24.

41. The draft resolution, inter alia, reaffirmed the rights of all peoples to self-determination in accordance with the principles set out in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and noted that the Governments of the United Kingdom and Guatemala had reiterated their intention to achieve a speedy and satisfactory solution to the territorial dispute regarding Belize. It also urged the Governments concerned to accelerate the negotiations in order to achieve a settlement on the basis of the aforementioned principles and to communicate the results of those negotiations to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session. The purpose of the draft resolution was to bring the procedure agreed between the parties to the negotiations into line with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, taking account of the interests of the Government and people of Belize while avoiding political issues likely to obstruct the progress of the negotiations.

42. Mr. ZAITON (Malaysia) said that his Government had consistently supported the efforts of the United Nations to help the Non-Self-Governing Territories to achieve independence because of its belief that no Territory or people should be deprived of its fundamental freedoms and inalienable right to self-determination. The discussion in the Committee had shown that each dependent Territory had its own problems, characteristics and peculiarities. The process of decolonization need not conform to a rigid pattern, but the right to self-determination must never be prejudiced. In the last analysis, it was the wishes of the people which should be given paramount importance.

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(Mr. Zaiton, Malaysia)

43. In the view of his Government, the process of decolonization in East Timor had taken place in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV). East Timor was therefore part of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Indonesia. His Government accordingly supported the view of the Indonesian delegation that the current discussion represented interference in the internal affairs of Indonesia. Further debate on the question would not serve the interests of the people of East Timor. It was a matter for satisfaction that conditions in East Timor had returned to normal and that reports by independent press correspondents and visitors had borne witness to the fact that the people of East Timor had supported integration with Indonesia.

44. The draft resolution contained in document A/C.4/33/L.23 represented interference in the internal affairs of Indonesia and was contrary to the wishes of the people of East Timor. His delegation would therefore vote against it. The question of East Timor should no longer be a subject for discussion by the Committee or by any other international organization.

45. Dr. MALAFATOPOULOS (World Health Organization) said that WHO had submitted information on its response to the relevant resolutions of the United Nations concerning assistance to newly independent and emerging States in Africa and to national liberation movements in document A/33/109, as well as in statements to the Sub-Committee on Petitions, Information and Assistance of the Special Committee of 24 and to the Special Committee itself. In May 1978, the World Health Assembly had again reviewed those resolutions and had adopted resolution WHA31-52 on the liberation struggle in southern Africa which, inter alia, requested the Director-General to continue and intensify health assistance to the liberation movements and to give them, in collaboration with the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other bodies, all necessary support in the health sector, including technical co-operation for training and research as well as support in the prevention and control of communicable diseases and medical supplies needed for the treatment of the populations concerned; to ensure that such technical co-operation was provided in the most expeditious and flexible ways through simplified procedures; and to pursue all possible efforts to enlist support from governmental and non-governmental forces for that operation. The Assembly had also appealed to all Member States to make voluntary contributions to that programme.

46. The Executive Board of WHO and the World Health Assembly would keep under review the progress made in the implementation of that and other resolutions and would continue its fullest co-operation with the Organization of African Unity, UNDP, UNHCR and other specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations in order to assist emerging States in Africa and the national liberation movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity in meeting the public health needs of the populations concerned.

47. Mr. CUEVAS CANCINO (Mexico) said that the people and Government of Mexico had always been concerned about the question under discussion, particularly in relation to Belize, whose people, like the people of Mexico and of the Central American States, had settled in an area of the Caribbean mainland and had created

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(Mr. Cuevas Cancino, Mexico)

a nation. The great majority of countries in Latin America had gained their independence over 150 years earlier after a long and heroic struggle; Belize was one of the last examples of colonialism. The peoples of Latin America consistently supported the cause of freedom and the self-determination of all peoples and had repeatedly affirmed that peace and development could only be based on unconditional respect for the sovereignty of peoples. Mexico was a proud defender of that Latin American tradition; moreover, the geographical proximity of Belize meant that the two countries had a common future and needed to combine their efforts to promote their mutual welfare. Mexico thus had a fraternal interest in the well-being of the people of both Guatemala and Belize.

48. Support for a speedy and just solution to the problem of Belize had grown; his Government firmly supported such a solution. The previous year, the Committee had taken note of the Bogotá Declaration calling for a solution of the Belize question by the peaceful methods consecrated in the Charter, and in accordance with respect for its territorial integrity and with the principle of self-determination; the General Assembly had approved that resolution (resolution 32/32) by an overwhelming majority. As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico had pointed out during the general debate at the current session of the General Assembly, Mexico was convinced that General Assembly resolution 32/32 provided the best legal basis for any solution; that resolution recognized the procedure of consultation with other interested States in the area to enable the people of Belize to achieve self-determination and independence by peaceful means. In that connexion, the Government of Mexico was not fully satisfied with the manner in which it had been consulted during the negotiations referred to by the representatives of Guatemala and the United Kingdom.

49. International relations were becoming increasingly complex. Despite its great efforts to develop an international legal system, Latin America was still experiencing frequent incidents which undermined its efforts to build a better life for its people; the obstacles were many and varied, and nothing would be attained unless Governments were able to coexist peacefully, setting goals which were compatible with absolute respect for the rights of others. The Government of Mexico was, of course, particularly concerned about the sometimes violent confrontations which had occurred in Central America and the Caribbean. He recalled that the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the non-aligned countries, meeting in Belgrade, had stated in the Declaration, which they had adopted, that the situation in Belize could constitute a threat to peace and security and prevent the development of more harmonious relations between the countries of the region. Mexico could hardly fail to be concerned about a situation which might jeopardize peace along its southern border. It was doing its utmost to co-operate with its neighbours to promote common interests. In that spirit, Mexico was seeking a solution to the question of Belize through joint efforts in the light of common objectives and the legitimate interests of the peoples of the area; it would be possible to create a better future for Belize, Guatemala and Mexico only if there was the strictest respect for the rights of all their inhabitants.

50. Mexico's position with regard to Belize was based on the premise that the principle of self-determination must take precedence over any other consideration.

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(Mr. Cuevas Cancino, Mexico)

That inalienable right of the people of Belize must be scrupulously respected; if the freely expressed will of the people of Belize was not respected, Mexico would, to its great regret, be forced to restate a view based on principles which had long been familiar in the United Nations and other international forums.

51. His delegation had been pleased to note from the statements made by the representatives of Guatemala and the United Kingdom that the two countries were continuing negotiations to find an early solution to the question of Belize. It was convinced that the independence of the Territory could be achieved only on the basis of a mutual understanding, as clearly indicated in General Assembly resolution 32/32. His delegation would vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.19, which reproduced the formula contained in General Assembly resolution 32/32.

52. Mr. CABRAL (Guinea-Bissau) said that the Indonesian leaders of the time had played an important role in the historic Bandung Conference, which had had a catalytic effect on the struggle of oppressed peoples for liberation. Unfortunately, the long struggle of the Indonesian people for political and economic independence had not brought them the peace and progress to which they had aspired. On 30 December 1965, the principles and philosophy that had guided the Indonesian liberation struggle had been flouted and mass arrests and killings had marked the beginning of an era of repression and suffering and of indigenous colonization and manoeuvres by the Indonesian leaders against the genuine independence of East Timor. The criminal annexation of East Timor had not improved the lot of the Indonesian people; it had merely responded to the ideological requirements of the Indonesian leaders. There were other well-disguised, perfidious interests at stake in the sad case of East Timor, and the eloquence of certain speakers in the debate could not deny the real facts. The determination of the leaders of the Frente Revolucionária de Timor Leste Independente (FRETILIN) to achieve genuine independence for their people had disturbed the plans of prejudiced and privileged parties concerned only with their own interests who did not hesitate to barter the destiny of a people. The struggle of the people of East Timor could only go forward; imperialist interests could not force them to retreat. Faced with the negligence of the administering Power, the leaders of FRETILIN, conscious of the dangers of colonialism, had acted to safeguard the interests of their people and to ensure their progress towards freedom and development. There was nothing Indonesian about the occupation of East Timor except that it was carried out under the Indonesian flag, behind which imperialism and crypto-colonialism sought to hide while at the same time using propaganda to maintain the illusion of their anti-colonialism among the international community and brandishing the spectre of communism and the problem of security in the region to justify their activities.

53. The occupation of East Timor by Indonesian armed forces and the war against the Saharan people constituted grave threats to the international community and tested the credibility of the United Nations and its peace-keeping activities. The representative of the people of Belize had also informed the Committee of the obstacles which the Government of Guatemala was placing in the way of its accession to independence. His delegation regarded all such manoeuvres as

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(Mr. Cabral, Guinea-Bissau)

preparations for future aggression. In order to be effective, the United Nations must have a moral impact that could only be achieved through acceptance of the idea of international jurisdiction. The international community should accord the struggle of the people of East Timor under the leadership of FRETILIN the importance it deserved in order to contribute to the early and successful conclusion of that struggle.

54. The international community, in particular the peoples of Africa and Asia who at Bandung had decided to join forces in order to eliminate colonialism in all its forms, should not forget the sacred principles to which they had freely subscribed. The obsolete structures of colonialism were no longer acceptable and the General Assembly at its present session, more than ever before, should condemn the aggression against and the occupation of East Timor by Indonesian armed forces. East Timor was at a crossroads and there must be no hesitation. He reminded Indonesia, as a fellow Islamic country, that at a similar crossroads in its history, the Islamic civilization had wrongly chosen dynastic power and that that had eventually led to colonization.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.