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New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 32nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DOLGUCHITS (Byelorussian Soviet  
Socialist Republic)

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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/C.4/33/L.10)

General debate

1. Mr. ADMINA (Gabon), introducing draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.8/Rev.1 on behalf of the sponsors, said that the draft resolution was in fact a procedural text; in the spirit of the resolution adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at Khartoum (AHG/RES.92 (XV)), it referred the question of Western Sahara to the ad hoc committee established by OAU in that resolution.
2. The Khartoum session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU had had one of the broadest representations of Heads of State, all of whom - including those of the States sponsoring draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.7/Rev.1 - had unanimously endorsed the establishment of the ad hoc committee, judging wisely that the question was primarily the responsibility of OAU and that an African solution should be found for that and other African problems. The ad hoc committee had since set up a sub-committee to listen to the views of the parties concerned.
3. Draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.8/Rev.1 expressed confidence in the Heads of State to find a solution and, in its preambular paragraphs, while recalling previous relevant resolutions and decisions of the United Nations, OAU and the non-aligned countries, it respected the appeal of the current chairman of OAU reflected in document A/33/364. Draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.7/Rev.1, on the other hand, introduced elements which had been deliberately omitted from the OAU resolution adopted at Khartoum.
4. Draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.8/Rev.1 was based on the belief that the OAU ad hoc committee should be given a free hand. It would surely succeed, but in the meantime the draft resolution asked all parties to refrain from any action that might impede its efforts.
5. He reminded those who claimed that draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.8/Rev.1 took the problem out of the hands of the United Nations that both its preambular and operative parts stressed the links between the actions of OAU and those of the United Nations, to whose Secretary-General the Administrative Secretary-General of OAU was requested to report. He hoped that the Committee would attach due importance both to the appeal of the current Chairman of OAU and to the continuing efforts of the OAU ad hoc committee.
6. Mr. ANWAR SANI (Indonesia) said that it was extremely disturbing to his delegation to hear the petitioners who claimed to represent the so-called Frente Revolucionária de Timor Leste Independente (FRETILIN) rehash the same wild accusations and claims they had been making year after year.
7. Reviewing the events leading to the decision of the people of East Timor to become independent through integration with Indonesia, he observed that the decolonization process in East Timor had started with the declaration by Portugal

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(Mr. Anwar Sani, Indonesia)

in 1974 that democratic rights would be accorded to all its overseas Territories and its announcement that the people of East Timor would be allowed to establish political parties to decide their political future through a national referendum. The proposed referendum was to present the people with the following options: autonomy in federation with Portugal, independence inside or outside a Portuguese commonwealth, or integration with Indonesia.

8. Five political parties had sprung up: the União Democrática Timorese (UDT), which had the support of over 50 per cent of the population; the Associação Social Democrática de Timor, which later became FRETILIN and which had only limited support; the Associação Popular Democrática Timorese (APODETI), which favoured integration with Indonesia; the Klibur Oau Timur Aswain (KOTA), which was in favour of preserving the authority of the liúrais as the traditional leaders of the people; and the Partido Trabalhista, or Labour Party. At the time, his Government had taken the position that, as a former colonial Territory itself, it would respect the right of the people of East Timor to self-determination and it had entered into talks with the Portuguese Government in order to ensure a democratic and orderly process of decolonization.

9. FRETILIN, however, had sabotaged those efforts by refusing to attend the proposed 1975 meetings of all the political parties of East Timor, obviously hoping to create a situation in which Portugal would be forced to surrender authority to it without involving the people, thus denying them the exercise of their right to self-determination. It had then embarked on a series of violent acts in preparation for an outright seizure of power. In order to forestall such a coup d'état with tacit Portuguese approval, and to force the colonial Governor to implement the Portuguese constitutional law regulating the decolonization process, UDT had in August 1975 taken over most of the Territory, including the capital city of Dili. FRETILIN, backed by most of the colonial army, had forced UDT to withdraw from Dili and, in the resulting civil war, the three other political parties had joined with UDT to thwart FRETILIN's political designs.

10. With the flight of the Portuguese colonial Governor, Portuguese responsibility in the Territory had ended. Seeking to impose a fait accompli upon the masses, FRETILIN had on 28 November 1975 unilaterally declared East Timor independent. On 30 November 1975, the four other political parties, which clearly represented the overwhelming majority of the people, had, in turn, declared the independence of East Timor and demanded immediate integration with Indonesia, requesting the latter's assistance in restoring order. Neither the request for foreign assistance nor the sending of volunteers in compliance with the request from people fighting for their right to self-determination was exceptional.

11. Indonesia had none the less insisted that the future status of East Timor should be decided through the exercise by the people of their right to self-determination. In December 1975, the four political parties opposed to FRETILIN had managed to gain the upper hand and to establish a Provisional Government in Dili. As soon as conditions permitted, the Provisional Government of East Timor, in order to complete the process of self-determination initiated by the Portuguese and interrupted by FRETILIN, had held elections to establish a Regional Popular Assembly, following the principle of one-man one-vote, on the basis of practices established by the people. The first act of that Assembly had been to decide, on 31 May 1976, that East Timor should become independent through integration with Indonesia. In June 1976, the Indonesian Government had dispatched a fact-finding mission to verify the wishes of the people of the Territory, and, upon its

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(Mr. Anwar Sani, Indonesia)

recommendation, East Timor had on 17 July 1976 been integrated into the Republic of Indonesia in accordance with the appropriate legislative procedures.

12. Both the Provisional Government of East Timor and the Indonesian Government had on several occasions invited various United Nations organs to send missions to the Territory. Only after a negative United Nations reaction to every invitation had the Provisional Government of East Timor decided to proceed with the exercise of the right to self-determination.

13. No process of decolonization outlined in the Charter of the United Nations or in General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV) had to be followed blindly. Each case had to be understood in the context of existing historical, social, cultural and political realities, and in no two cases had the decolonization process been implemented in exactly the same way. At the end of each exercise of self-determination, however, power had been handed over to the winner.

14. From its inception to its disintegration, FRETILIN had never represented more than a small minority in the Territory. Whatever initial support it had had among the people of East Timor had been quickly dissipated by the acts of terror and violence it had committed against them, often forcing them to join at gunpoint, to gather food and to serve as human shields when they came under attack. FRETILIN no longer existed as an organized movement in East Timor. The remnants that could still be found had continuously been at each other's throats. The former President of FRETILIN, Mr. Francisco Xavier do Amaral, who had fallen out of favour and had been held prisoner, had been freed by security forces in September 1978 and had just issued a statement calling on his former comrades to lay down their arms and join the Republic and condemning his former colleagues for their actions and falsehoods. The fate of Mr. José Ramos-Horta, who had previously appeared before the Committee as a petitioner from FRETILIN and who had recently been recalled to his headquarters in the capital of an African country, was unknown. His younger brother, Arsenio, had escaped from FRETILIN in August 1978 and had denounced the members of that movement as adventurers who lacked the capacity to govern and prevented defections by force of arms or torture. Many of those who had managed to escape had joined the security forces or the civil defence organizations and were at present helping to round up the remnants of the so-called FRETILIN still roaming the remote jungle areas; those remnants were for the most part criminals who were afraid to surrender.

15. In the light of the fact that the so-called FRETILIN no longer existed in East Timor, he wondered whom the petitioners were representing. Based in a distant African country, they still claimed to be fighting for the rights of the East Timorese people.

16. Indonesia was well aware of the fact that the restoration of peace and security in East Timor was in itself insufficient to heal the wounds of colonialism and the civil war that had followed. During the hundreds of years of colonial rule, little or nothing had been done to develop the natural and human resources of the Territory. The Government was now busy implementing an ambitious programme of social and economic rehabilitation and development designed to bring the Territory as soon as possible up to the level of development found in the other provinces of Indonesia. Employment had risen substantially and thousands of East

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(Mr. Anwar Sani, Indonesia)

Timorese were now working in development projects and Government offices. Substantial progress had also been made in the field of agriculture, with the construction of dams and irrigation systems and the preparation of thousands of hectares of land for intensive cultivation and the introduction of high-yield varieties of seed and modern farming equipment. Health care had also been greatly improved, with the establishment of more than 25 health-care centres. Investments in the field of communications had also contributed greatly towards unifying the people of the province and strengthening ties with the citizens of other provinces. Radio and television links had been established; a new television relay station in Dili and a new airport near Dili had been constructed and the port of Dili had been reopened to international shipping. Roads were being rehabilitated and new ones constructed. The entire education system had been reorganized and new schools had been built. East Timorese students were now attending classes at various universities and institutions in other provinces of Indonesia. In short, every possible effort was being made to bring East Timor quickly into the mainstream of the over-all Indonesian development programme.

17. The Government was now confronted with the serious problem of the displaced persons who had come down from the mountains, driven out of their homes by the forces of the rebel FRETILIN movement, and it was taking the necessary measures to alleviate the suffering of those people. Recovery centres had been established to care for their needs and they were free, when they had received medical treatment and regained their health and strength, to return to their villages or to resettle elsewhere. In coping with that problem, his Government had been greatly aided by the humanitarian assistance provided by the Governments of Australia and New Zealand, inter alia. The Indonesian and Australian Governments had also entered into extensive negotiations aimed at reuniting with their families the hundreds of East Timorese refugees who had fled to Australia after the outbreak of the civil war in 1975.

18. His delegation felt that the Committee should establish clear guidelines on the basis of which a decision could be taken as to whether or not a request to be heard as a petitioner should be accepted. Such a request should normally be granted if it was submitted by parties directly involved in the matter under discussion; requests by persons speaking in their personal capacity or representing organizations should be considered only if the Committee was reasonably certain that their statements would indeed contribute to a better understanding of the matter and provide additional information. The Committee should not allow itself to be used as a platform for self-serving individuals and should avoid wasting its time listening to endless repetitions of the same arguments and counter-arguments.

19. The problem in East Timor was no longer one of decolonization, as the decolonization process had been concluded on 17 July 1976 when the decision of the people of East Timor to become independent through integration with Indonesia had been formally accepted by Indonesia. The problem was now one of social and economic rehabilitation and development. The wishes of the people of East Timor were of paramount importance and their desire to become independent and integrate with Indonesia had been clearly expressed in 1976 when they had exercised their

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(Mr. Anwar Sani, Indonesia)

right to self-determination. His delegation expected that the United Nations would leave the people of East Timor alone and allow them to concentrate on rehabilitation and development as an integral part of the Indonesian nation.

20. Mr. GROTEWOLD SOLARES (Guatemala) informed the Committee that the delegation of Morocco had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.24.

21. Speaking in exercise of the right of reply, he said that the United Kingdom Government had indeed made various proposals during its latest meetings with the representatives of Guatemala and that those proposals were at present under study. The good faith of one of the parties could not be questioned merely because it took a certain time to reply to proposals which affected its national interests. Guatemala had also made many different proposals to solve the question at various times but did not question the good faith of the United Kingdom merely because it delayed in responding to them. That was part of the negotiating process, in which both parties were fully engaged because they realized the need to reach an over-all solution as soon as possible. Guatemala's recognition of the people of Belize as an entity should be understood as proof of its flexibility in the matter and in no way as a demand for the cession of territory.

22. With regard to the statement by the representative of the Bahamas, he said that, although States were accorded international recognition by virtue of the existence of certain elements such as population, territory, their own Government, and capacity as entities within the community of nations, it should be understood that States were not constituted on the territory of other countries and could not be recognized unless they possessed sovereignty. The 1933 Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States had applied to formally constituted and recognized entities. Additional elements were thus necessary, namely possession of territory and sovereignty.

23. It had also been said that the people of Belize were demanding immediate independence. Yet the working paper annexed to the relevant chapter of the report of the Special Committee (A/33/23/Add.7) stated that, in February 1978, the opposition party had issued a declaration calling for a moratorium on independence for at least 10 years, during which time the energies of the people of Belize should be channelled towards the economic and social development of the Territory, the National Army should be strengthened and, with the United Kingdom, the Belize Government should seek the military co-operation of friendly nations, for the defence of Belize. It did not appear from the statement made by the United Kingdom representative at the 27th meeting of the Committee that those aims would be attained, since he had said that a separate treaty of amity and mutual security had been proposed to Guatemala, which would include limitations on the stationing of foreign, but not British, armed forces in the Territory (A/C.4/33/SR.27, para. 17). In addition to the opposition party, other sectors in Belize, in particular the Toledo Progressive Party, in the south of Belize, had said that, before the Territory became independent, the controversy between the United Kingdom and Guatemala must be resolved. That idea had been taken up by

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(Mr. Grotewold Solares, Guatemala)

the representative of Oman, who had said that the United Kingdom was discussing matters with the party in power and had then suggested that consideration might be given to the possibility of a compromise, that the frontiers might perhaps be adjusted, that a significant part of the Territory might be returned to Guatemala, or that agreement might be reached on a joint administration. That suggestion showed an understanding of the realities and a desire for conciliation in a case where intolerance and intransigence could only threaten the security and peaceful and productive coexistence of nations.

24. Some recent speakers on the question had alleged that the negotiations between Guatemala and the United Kingdom had broken down and that the negotiating process could continue once the independence of Belize had been decided upon. The official statement made the previous week by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala that his country was still prepared to continue the negotiations, and the call for the acceleration of negotiations in the draft resolution of which Guatemala was a sponsor (A/C.4/33/L.24) proved that the first allegation was unfounded. With regard to the second allegation, he said that the independence of Belize must be a consequence of the settlement of the dispute between Guatemala and the United Kingdom. The Belizean opposition party and other sectors in Belize had asked for independence to be postponed pending a satisfactory agreement and the United Kingdom Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office had himself said that the security of Belize would be best assured by his country reaching agreement with Guatemala. Those allegations could only be regarded as unacceptable pressure designed to precipitate a solution which would give one of the parties no choice. The American continent had seen other examples of treaties entered into before a dispute had been satisfactorily settled.

25. Mr. FILALI (Morocco)\*, speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the problem in Western Sahara had given rise to a significant increase in tension, which could lead to armed conflict. The Committee would do well, therefore, to avoid polemics and sterile debate and concentrate on achieving specific, positive results. In that connexion, his delegation regretted that the representative of Algeria had as yet failed to reply to many questions put to him concerning the actions and intentions of his Government in the region.

26. Despite the objections of the representative of Algeria, the Moroccan delegation would continue to denounce the hegemonistic intentions of the Algerian Government, both at the regional and at the African level. Hegemony had no place in present-day Africa, from which colonialism had been banished. By its stubborn determination to prolong discussion on a subject which did not even concern it, the Algerian delegation and the Algerian Government were in fact challenging decisions of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity on the subject. Algeria had accused Morocco of trying to divert attention from a problem of decolonization in Western Sahara but it had itself failed to reply on the matter of its own direct intervention in the area. It was a fact that regular Algerian troops were involved in the conflict, as could be seen from the numerous dead and captured Algerian soldiers. By what right did Algeria claim to be the sole defender of the Saharan people?

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

(Mr. Filali, Morocco)

27. The representative of Algeria had also referred to a statement made by President Senghor of Senegal in the General Assembly many years earlier; that statement had, however, been of a general nature and had made no specific reference to Morocco. He wondered why the representative of Algeria had introduced such a statement which bore no relation to Morocco.

28. The representative of Algeria had said that the problem of refugees was well known; that was not true, owing to the policy of obstructionism on the part of the Algerian Government with regard to the refugees. He wondered why the Algerian Government had failed to reply to the letter sent to it by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees at the request of the Secretary-General requesting it to carry out a census of the refugees, in collaboration with the High Commissioner. Furthermore, it was not for the Algerian Government to decide why refugees should return to their own territory or in what conditions that return should take place. Algeria's policy indicated that it was its intention to turn a humanitarian problem into a political one by using blackmail and publicity-seeking propaganda. For its part, the Moroccan Government would offer every facility to the High Commissioner to enable him to carry out his task effectively.

29. The representative of Algeria had referred to self-determination in Central Sahara but the act of self-determination which had taken place in Algeria in 1962 had been general in nature and had had no specific reference to Central Sahara; there had been no proposals dealing specifically with the independence of that region or its unity with Algeria. The situation of Morocco with regard to Western Sahara was analogous; surely what had been valid for Algeria was also valid for Morocco.

30. The representative of Algeria had accused Morocco of attempting to act contrary to the resolution adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU at Khartoum. The Moroccan reference to that resolution had been in connexion with the responsibility of OAU to find a just and equitable solution to the problem. The resolution had been circulated in a United Nations document (A/33/235) and was available to all delegations. The representative of Algeria had reproached Morocco for its failure to respect OAU and the Heads of African States. A glance at the draft resolution sponsored by Morocco (A/C.4/33/L.8/Rev.1) would show that his Government had full confidence in OAU; that confidence was not reflected in the draft resolution sponsored by Algeria (A/C.4/33/L.7/Rev.1). His Government pledged its complete confidence in OAU, in the Heads of African States and in the ad hoc committee recently established by OAU to deal with the problem and to find a just solution. He noted that the ad hoc committee had begun its work in conformity with its instructions; the Fourth Committee should take that fact into account and not jeopardize the ad hoc committee's work by adopting untimely resolutions. The ad hoc committee had met and had decided to establish a sub-committee, consisting of the Presidents of Nigeria and Mali, with broad powers; it had been delegated, inter alia, to accompany the Administrative Secretary-General of OAU on a visit to the region to contact all the parties concerned, including the Saharan people, and to make all necessary arrangements to restore peace and security in the region. The ad hoc committee had also decided to appeal to all the parties concerned to cease hostilities immediately and to allow the sub-committee to carry out its task. Contrary to the statement made by the representative of Algeria, the ad hoc committee had taken no decision, nor had it made any reference or allusion to any so-called liberation movement referred to as the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el Hamra y Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO), nor had it taken any decision with regard to any unilateral cease-fire.

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(Mr. Filali, Morocco)

31. The Committee should decide once and for all, and in the spirit of co-operation between the United Nations and OAU to leave it to the African Heads of State, as requested by OAU, to attempt to find an African solution to the problem, in keeping with the aspirations of all for peace and prosperity.

32. Mr. ZITU di NENKOTI (Zaire) proposed that the important statement just made by the representative of Morocco should be reproduced in extenso.

33. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee, in keeping with its usual practice and in the light of the financial implications, should decide to issue the statement made by the representative of Morocco as a separate document.

34. It was so decided.

35. Mr. BEDJAOU (Algeria), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, expressed regret at the ugly tone which the representative of Morocco had introduced into the debate. He should have more respect for the Committee than to lower the tone of the discussions in such an obstructive manner. The representative of Morocco had accused his delegation of not replying to his questions. In his statement at the previous meeting, he had drawn the attention of delegations to the comprehensive reply which his delegation had given to all the arguments submitted by the representative of Morocco during the thirty-second session of the General Assembly (A/C.4/32/SR.13). Far from refusing to reply to the questions raised by the representative of Morocco, he had simply wished to save time by avoiding repetition out of respect for the Committee. With regard to the accusation of hegemonism against his country, he reiterated the views he had expressed at the previous meeting and left it to the members of the Committee to make their own judgement on such incongruous accusations.

36. Despite the laborious efforts by the representative of Morocco to demonstrate that Algeria had an interest in the question of Western Sahara, the fact was that Western Sahara was not an Algerian problem, but a problem for the United Nations, for the whole of Africa and for the entire international community. True to its principles, his country had always helped national liberation movements in accordance with United Nations decisions, in particular General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV).

37. He expressed surprise that it was the representative of Morocco rather than the representative of Senegal who had deemed it necessary to reply to the reference he had made to the statement made by President Senghor in his address to the United Nations General Assembly in October 1961 (A/PV.1045). President Senghor's remarks had indeed been addressed to the Government of Morocco in the context of that country's persistent claims to the territory of Mauritania. Indeed the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Senegal had subsequently taken up that issue with the representative of Morocco at the same session of the General Assembly.

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(Mr. Bedjaoui, Algeria)

38. With regard to the reference by the Moroccan representative to the Algerian Sahara, he pointed out that, as in the case of the present struggle of the Saharan people, Algeria's liberation war had been waged throughout its territory and had involved all sectors of the population under colonial domination within frontiers that had been recognized since the nineteenth century, including the smallest and most distant oasis of what the Moroccan representative, in an effort to defend his own hopeless and unjust case, had derogatorily referred to as the Central Sahara.

39. The Moroccan representative had indeed mutilated the text of OAU resolution AHG/Res.92 (XV) on Western Sahara and for that reason he himself had considered it necessary to read out the text of that resolution in full in order to frustrate attempts to sow confusion in the Committee. Moreover, the representative of Morocco had still not replied to the basic question of whether his country recognized the right of the Saharan people to self-determination and had even distorted the text of draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.8/Rev.1, of which the Moroccan delegation was itself a sponsor in order to avoid that issue. The question was not what OAU had done - it had done much, as the 32 sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/L.7/Rev.1, which included 19 African States, had recognized - or what OAU would do in the future. The sponsors of the aforementioned draft resolution had every confidence in OAU. The question before the Committee, which was a United Nations body, was to determine what the United Nations could do in order to carry out its own specific, independent mission, thereby complementing the efforts of OAU.

40. He refuted the allegation that he had distorted the communiqué issued by the ad hoc committee. At the previous meeting, he had simply quoted Agence France Presse reports, dated 1 and 2 December respectively, which stated a fact which the representative of Morocco did not deny, namely, that the ad hoc committee had established a sub-committee to hear all the parties concerned including the Frente POLISARIO and that it had called for a cease-fire. It would appear that references to the Frente POLISARIO did not please the representative of Morocco. However, he wished to remind him that the decision adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU in 1976 to convene an extraordinary summit meeting on Western Sahara was still on the agenda of OAU and that that resolution stipulated that the meeting would take place in the presence and with the participation of the representative of the Saharan people. That meant that the Frente POLISARIO would participate with the African Heads of State in the discussions on the question of Western Sahara. Moreover, he reminded the representative of Morocco that, despite his current accusations against it, the Frente POLISARIO had been established in 1973 in Rabat. He expressed profound regret at attempts to distort the facts and impassion the debate.

41. Mr. FILALI (Morocco), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, expressed surprise that the representative of Algeria had based his remarks solely on a press release. The text which he himself had just read out was the final text issued by the ad hoc committee and made no reference to the so-called Frente POLISARIO or to a cease-fire. The OAU resolution relating to the convening of an extraordinary summit stated that that meeting should take place with the

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(Mr. Filali, Morocco)

participation of representatives of the Saharan people; that did not mean the Frente POLISARIO. If the Frente POLISARIO was a national liberation movement, it would have been recognized as such by OAU. However, to his knowledge, OAU had never adopted any such decision. The fact was that the so-called movement existed only in the mind of the Algerian Government.

42. Mr. BEDJAOUI (Algeria), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the text of the communiqué issued by the ad hoc committee had not yet been officially circulated to delegations at the United Nations, either through the OAU secretariat or through any other channel. If the extraordinary summit meeting of OAU was to take place with the participation of representatives of the Saharan people, that must necessarily mean the Frente POLISARIO. The statement by the Moroccan representative that OAU had refused to recognize the Frente POLISARIO was yet another example of his attempts to distort OAU texts. In that connexion, he wished to draw the attention of the Committee to the consensus adopted by the Council of Ministers of OAU at its twenty-sixth session with the agreement of the delegations of Morocco and Mauritania, which stated that the people of Western Sahara had declared themselves to be a free, sovereign and independent State and that there was no longer any question of recognizing the liberation movement. Thus, far from refusing to recognize the Frente POLISARIO as a liberation movement, OAU had simply stated that the issue had been resolved. He welcomed the fact that the representative of Morocco had at last recognized the existence of the Saharan people to whom the Moroccan Minister for Foreign Affairs had referred not long before as a phantom people; since that time, the phantoms had given the occupying régime many nightmares.

43. Mr. DIOP (Senegal), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the statement by President Senghor to which reference had been made related to a principle which Senegal still defended and which had nothing to do with the item under discussion. His delegation had clearly explained its position on the question of Western Sahara and was a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.8/Rev.1.

44. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) said that he did not doubt Algeria's firm support for the self-determination of peoples in Africa and elsewhere. However, the question of Western Sahara was an intricate one because that Territory was wedged between Morocco, Mauritania and Algeria, and it looked as if those countries were competing with one another to see which should take the Saharan people under its wing. The Saharan people, who numbered only approximately 60,000, were a nomadic, free and democratic people. However, they were not viable as a state. There were, admittedly, other Member States with fewer inhabitants, but their independence existed only on paper. Since Western Sahara had been colonized for many years, he appealed to Algeria and Morocco to be patient a little longer and allow OAU to arbitrate the matter. He appealed to both delegations to withdraw or suspend the draft resolutions they had submitted and await the results of the efforts of OAU, which was deeply concerned over the possibility of military conflict in the area. The adoption of the draft resolutions before the Committee would only intensify the animosity; his delegation would therefore not participate in the vote on those draft resolutions.

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45. Mr. FILALI (Morocco), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the representative of Algeria had read out only an extract from the consensus adopted at the meeting of the Council of Ministers of OAU in February 1976; it would have been more honest to read the full text, which he himself would do. First of all, the Council of Ministers had recognized the right of the people of Western Sahara, like all peoples in the world, to self-determination. Secondly, it had noted that, according to the information at its disposal, the people of Western Sahara had proclaimed the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic, which meant that they had in fact exercised their right to self-determination. He therefore wondered why the Committee was discussing the matter. What the Algerian representative had forgotten to point out was that it was under those circumstances that the Council of Ministers had stated that there could be no question of recognizing the Frente POLISARIO as the liberation movement of Western Sahara because no such movement existed in an independent, sovereign territory.

46. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee had concluded its general debate on agenda items 24, 92, 94, 96 and 12, 97 and 98 and would proceed to vote on draft resolutions on specific Territories.

#### Consideration of draft resolutions

47. Mr. RIFAI (Secretary of the Committee) said that in the draft resolutions concerning the questions of the New Hebrides (A/C.4/33/L.11), American Samoa (A/C.4/33/L.15/Rev.1), Guam (A/C.4/33/L.16/Rev.1), the United States Virgin Islands (A/C.4/33/L.17/Rev.1), Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the Cayman Islands (A/C.4/33/L.21 and Corr.1) and East Timor (A/C.4/33/L.23), the General Assembly would request the Special Committee to include in its activities for the forthcoming year the possible dispatch of visiting missions to the Territories concerned. The Secretary-General wished to bring it to the attention of the Committee that the related estimated costs could be met from within the resources already requested in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1978-1979 for the over-all programme of the Special Committee and that the adoption of the draft resolutions would not entail any additional financial implications.

#### Question of the New Hebrides (A/C.4/33/L.11)

48. Mr. RIFAI (Secretary of the Committee) announced that the delegations of Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Singapore and Sweden had asked to be added to the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.11.

49. Mr. BROCHENIN (France) said that his delegation wished to remind the Committee of the main political events which had occurred in the New Hebrides during the past year. First of all, he wished to reaffirm that the French and United Kingdom Governments were still firmly decided that the New Hebrides should accede to independence during the first quarter of 1980. The political evolution of the Territory must therefore be speeded up.

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(Mr. Brochenin, France)

50. Elections for a Representative Assembly had been held on 29 November 1977. As the Vanua Aku Pati had boycotted those elections, only candidates from the other parties had been elected. Nevertheless, on 5 April 1978, the Prime Minister, the President of the Assembly and the President of the Vanua Aku Pati had issued a public communiqué outlining a seven-point agreement not only on the achievement of unity but also on the establishment of an electoral reform committee and the holding of new elections after a census had been carried out. In July 1978, the Electoral Reform Committee had proposed that the new elections should be held by 16 April 1979. Since the Representative Assembly had decided that the elections should be held as soon as possible after the completion of the census, the Vanua Aku Pati had refused the three ministerial posts offered to it.

51. In August 1978, the French Secretary of State for Overseas Departments and Territories had gone to the Condominium and had submitted the following new proposals which had been worked out with the United Kingdom Government: a government of national unity should be established as soon as possible, half of it consisting of representatives of the Vanua Aku Pati; a draft constitution should be adopted by that government guaranteeing equal opportunities for French-speaking and English-speaking people, equitable representation of minorities, and the right of regional authorities to conduct their own affairs within a federal structure; a referendum should be organized on independence and the constitution, and it should be followed by a general election. In the meantime, French and United Kingdom experts had been working actively on the census and hoped to complete the revision of the electoral lists by mid-1979.

52. As could be seen, France and the United Kingdom had not been inactive and the two administering Powers were obviously determined to do everything possible to bring about a reconciliation between the parties. The statements by the Prime Minister of the New Hebrides Government and the representative of the Vanua Aku Pati to the Committee showed their common wish to achieve unity. Although the conclusions reached by the recent meeting of the political commissioners of the Vanua Aku Pati had not yet been officially announced, the French and United Kingdom Governments had reason to hope that the proposals made on behalf of the two administering Powers would be given serious consideration and might rapidly be implemented.

53. The text of the draft resolution (A/C.4/33/L.11) contained references to resolutions concerning which France had its usual reservations. It also requested the administering Powers to facilitate the dispatch of a United Nations mission to the New Hebrides (para. 10). The French and United Kingdom Governments considered, however, that in view of the ongoing negotiations, such a visit might not facilitate harmonious developments at the current delicate stage in the evolution of the Territory.

54. His delegation was sure that with goodwill on all sides, all difficulties could be overcome. The New Hebrides would become independent within a few months and everyone should work to ensure that that independence took place in an atmosphere of dignity, calm and unity.

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55. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.11 without a vote.

56. Draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.11 was adopted without a vote.

57. Mr. WOODS (United Kingdom) said that, although his delegation had been pleased to join the consensus on draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.11, his Government considered that the question of the visiting mission referred to in the sixth preambular paragraph and in paragraph 10 was a matter for the two administering Powers to decide in consultation with the local authorities of the Territory.

Question of Western Sahara (A/C.4/33/L.7/Rev.1 and A/C.4/33/L.8/Rev.1)

58. Mr. RIFAI (Secretary of the Committee) announced that the delegations of Barbados, Kenya, Lesotho, the Syrian Arab Republic and Trinidad and Tobago had asked to be added to the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.7/Rev.1.

59. The CHAIRMAN invited those representatives wishing to do so to explain their vote before the vote on draft resolutions A/C.4/33/L.7/Rev.1 and A/C.4/33/L.8/Rev.1.

60. Ms. AL MULLA (Kuwait) said that her delegation had hoped for the emergence of a single text upon which the Committee could have reached a consensus. The issue was a very delicate one and voting tended to stiffen positions. It was the duty of the international community to do its utmost to reduce tension and lay down the basis for promoting a better atmosphere. Since attempts to reach a consensus had not been successful, her delegation would abstain in the vote on both draft resolutions. That abstention in no way meant that it did not see the valid points in both. It could not, however, give its consent to proceedings that might further alienate the parties concerned since the main objective was to achieve understanding among them.

61. Mr. PFIRTER (Argentina) said that his delegation would vote in favour of both draft resolutions since it considered that they were not incompatible and that the differences between them stemmed mainly from the emphasis given to different aspects of the question. Both draft resolutions reaffirmed the right of the people of Western Sahara to self-determination and the overriding competence of the General Assembly in that respect. His delegation also supported the measures adopted at the fifteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity and expressed the hope that their implementation would lead to a solution of the problem acceptable to all parties which would make possible the full and speedy implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

62. His delegation was especially concerned over the problem, which affected the normal relations between countries with which his country had close ties. It therefore particularly regretted that the Committee should once more have to vote on two draft resolutions on the question. It hoped that that would not increase the tension in the area and that the goodwill of the parties concerned and the



(Mr. Pfirter, Argentina)

assistance of the countries of the region would make it possible to solve the problem through negotiation, in an atmosphere of calm and mutual understanding.

63. Mr. ADAMS (New Zealand) said that, although his delegation would have preferred to see a single consensus text, it would vote in favour of both draft resolutions. His delegation supported draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.8/Rev.1 because it endorsed the role of OAU as the body best placed to bring about a satisfactory solution to the problem. However, it would have preferred to see a reference to the right to self-determination of the people of Western Sahara included in the operative paragraphs and felt that the continuing over-all responsibility of the United Nations should have been highlighted.

64. Mr. KOUYATÉ (Guinea) said that he wished to draw the attention of the Secretariat to two errors in the summary record of his delegation's statement at the Committee's 19th meeting (A/C.4/33/SR.19). Firstly, his delegation had said that Guinea had severed diplomatic relations with the United Kingdom and not with Southern Rhodesia. Secondly, he would like it made clear that the message sent from Conakry to Mr. Sithole had been signed by the Guinean Head of State, President Ahmed Sekou Touré, on behalf of the people and Government of Guinea.

65. In view of the peace negotiations instituted since the completion of the work of the OAU ad hoc committee, of which the Guinean Head of State was a member, his delegation would not participate in the vote on either draft resolution.

66. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on draft resolutions A/C.4/33/L.7/Rev.1 and A/C.4/33/L.8/Rev.1.

67. Draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.7/Rev.1 was adopted by 86 votes to 11, with 39 abstentions.

68. Draft resolution A/C.4/33/L.8/Rev.1 was adopted by 61 votes to 25, with 45 abstentions.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.