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FOURTH COMMITTEE
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held on
Tuesday, 8 November 1977
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 18th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ALLAF (Syrian Arab Republic)

later: Mr. AL SAID (Oman)

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The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

REQUESTS FOR HEARINGS (A/C.4/32/9, 10)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had received a request for a hearing relating to Belize which appeared in document A/C.4/32/9. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided to grant the request.

2. It was so decided.

3. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had also received a request for a hearing relating to Southern Rhodesia which appeared in document A/C.4/32/10. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided to grant the request.

4. It was so decided.

5. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that he had received a request for a hearing relating to Bermuda. If he heard no objection, the communication would be circulated as a document of the Committee in accordance with the usual practice and would be considered at a subsequent meeting.

6. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 24: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (continued) (A/C.4/32/L.13, L.14, L.15 and L.16)

7. Mr. RENTON (Papua New Guinea), introducing the draft resolution relating to the New Hebrides, which appeared in document A/C.4/32/L.15 said that his country's close relations with the New Hebrides could be traced back many centuries. His delegation hoped that that sister State would soon be granted sovereignty like the other States in the Pacific.

8. It was encouraging to note that, since the adoption of resolution 31/51 in 1976, one of the administering Powers of the New Hebrides, France, had decided to participate in the work of the Special Committee. That was reflected in the fourth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.4/32/L.15. That move by France represented a positive step towards the attainment of decolonization. The efforts made by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland also merited recognition and it was to be hoped that the co-operation being demonstrated by the administering Powers would be beneficial to the Territory.

9. His delegation hoped that the draft resolution which he had just introduced would be adopted unanimously by the Committee.

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10. Mr. FORRESTER (Australia) pointed out that his delegation was sponsoring the draft resolutions relating to the New Hebrides (A/C.4/32/L.15), American Samoa (A/C.4/32/L.6), the Gilbert Islands (A/C.4/32/L.5) and the Solomon Islands (A/C.4/32/L.8), as well as the draft resolution relating to Guam which appeared in document A/C.4/32/L.11 and the amendments to draft resolution A/C.4/32/L.10 which had been circulated in document A/C.4/32/L.17.

11. In recent times, a number of dependent Territories had attained self-government and independence. It was interesting to note that, as the representative of the United Kingdom had indicated, that country planned to divest itself of its residual responsibilities in the Pacific by 1980. It was hoped that Tuvalu, the Solomon Islands and the Gilbert Islands would accede to independence in 1978. Australia was already developing close ties with those Territories both bilaterally and through the South Pacific Forum, the regional body which encompassed the Heads of State and Government of the independent countries of the Pacific.

12. In relation to the New Hebrides, his delegation wished to record its appreciation of the fact that in 1977 France had for the first time participated in the work of the Special Committee relating to that Territory. That and other developments gave grounds for hope that the New Hebrides would soon obtain independence. To that end, it was essential that all political parties in the Territory should be fully involved in the process leading to self-determination and independence.

13. Australia was also a sponsor of the draft resolution relating to American Samoa, which called for no further explanation.

14. With regard to the Territory of Tokelau, which was administered by New Zealand, he wished to commend the diligent and sensitive way in which the administering Power had approached the decolonization of that small Territory, taking into account the wishes and customs of the people and involving the United Nations in the process.

15. On the question of Guam, Australia, together with other delegations, including those of some countries in the Pacific, had sought to propose a draft resolution (A/C.4/32/L.11) which would command the widest support in the Committee and, what was more important, the support of the administering Power. The support of the administering Power would undoubtedly be a great contribution towards the attainment of the common objective of the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples with respect to Guam.

16. During the current year, the United States had shown a new attitude towards the Special Committee and its own responsibilities in relation to the Territories under its administration. For example, it had invited the Special Committee to send a visiting mission to the Virgin Islands. That was a significant and important step since, in the past, the Fourth Committee had sought to persuade the United States Government to co-operate more closely with the Special Committee

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(Mr. Forrester, Australia)

and with the United Nations in general. Every effort should now be made to help to consolidate that new trend.

17. The time had come to take stock of general trends and to adjust decisions to the climate of the day, which had changed markedly. The situation in South-East Asia and the Pacific, and Australia, like all countries in that part of the world, hoped that relations of close co-operation and friendship could be established throughout the region.

18. His delegation reiterated that its motive in sponsoring the draft resolution relating to Guam (A/C.4/32/L.11) had been to secure the adoption of a resolution which could command the widest possible support and thus advance the objectives of resolution 1514 (XV). It had been guided by the belief that circumstances had changed greatly in the United Nations, in the Special Committee and in the Fourth Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 24: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (Territories not covered under other agenda items) (continued) (A/32/23 (part II), A/32/23/Add.3-5, A/32/23/Add.6 (parts I and II), A/32/23/Add.7, A/32/51, A/32/66, A/32/86, A/32/99, A/32/110, A/32/111, A/32/168, A/32/169, A/32/172, A/32/286, A/32/303, A/32/304; A/C.4/32/4, 5, 9 and 10; A/C.4/32/L.5, L.6, L.8, L.9, L.10, L.11, L.12, L.13, L.14, L.15, L.16 and L.17)

AGENDA ITEM 90: INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/32/23/Add.9, A/32/73, A/32/90, A/32/253; A/C.4/32/L.2)

(a) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

(b) REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

AGENDA ITEM 93: QUESTION OF EAST TIMOR: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES (continued) (A/32/73, A/32/90)

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(a) REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

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AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/32/3 (chap. VII (sect. E)), A/32/286)

AGENDA ITEM 96: UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR SOUTHERN AFRICA: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/32/283; A/C.4/32/L.7)

AGENDA ITEM 97: OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/32/277)

19. The CHAIRMAN said that he considered it a great honour to give the floor to Mr. Carlos Romulo, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Philippines, who had served as President of the General Assembly and had taken part in the San Francisco Conference, at which the United Nations Charter had been drafted.

20. Mr. ROMULO (Philippines) said that, in the annals of the United Nations, there was perhaps nothing more important or more significant than the exercise by colonial countries and peoples of their right to self-determination and their attainment of independence. It was a matter of satisfaction to note that, since the inclusion of that right in the United Nations Charter - a decision in which he had had a direct hand - many colonial countries and peoples had recovered their sovereignty and achieved national independence. As a result, the face of the United Nations had entirely changed. In that connexion, he wished to emphasize the invaluable work done by the Special Committee on Decolonization.

21. His delegation wished to reaffirm the views expressed by his Government on numerous occasions concerning East Timor, namely, that the people of East Timor, under the auspices of the Provisional Government, had exercised their right to self-determination. It could not be disputed that, by the vote of the democratically elected People's Representative Assembly, the people of East Timor had completed the process of decolonization and that the Indonesian Government had scrupulously respected the wishes of the people. At every stage of the implementation of the act of self-determination, the United Nations had been kept fully informed by the Provisional Government of East Timor and by the Indonesian Government. It was regrettable that the United Nations had been unable to respond to the various invitations extended by the Provisional Government and the Indonesian Government.

22. The problem was not the validity of the exercise of the right of self-determination by the people of East Timor, for there could be no doubt on that score. The confusion arose from the fact that the people had exercised that right under circumstances which seemed alien to the classical concept of self-determination.

23. The situation in East Timor had been both peculiar and complicated. A legacy of four and a half centuries of colonial domination, six months of civil war, the inability of Portugal to maintain law and order, and that country's subsequent withdrawal from the territory had compelled Indonesia, viewing the situation as a threat to its own security and that of the region, to respond to a request for assistance from the people of Timor. It was important to bear in mind that that response had been made only after the complete collapse of legally constituted

(Mr. Romulo, Philippines)

authority in East Timor. On 31 March 1976, the people of East Timor had exercised their right to self-determination and independence through the duly elected members of the People's Representative Assembly, who had opted for integration with Indonesia. Thus, East Timor had become a province of Indonesia and its colonial status had been terminated.

24. His delegation welcomed the efforts being made by the people of East Timor, with the assistance of the central Government, in the task of reconstruction and development. For the 1977/78 fiscal year, the central Government had appropriated almost \$20 million for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Timor. It was worth noting that that was almost eight times the average annual budget for East Timor during the colonial period. Since East Timor had become part of Indonesia, essential infrastructure had been built, new schools had been opened and more than 100 teachers had received advanced training. Impartial observers had concluded that the Indonesian Government was making a determined effort to assist Timorese economic development and that the people were free and uninhibited.

25. His delegation wished to repeat that the question of East Timor had ceased to be a problem of decolonization. To persist in discussing the matter within the context of decolonization did not serve the interests of the people of East Timor, and both Indonesia and the Timorese themselves would regard that as unwarranted interference in the internal affairs of a sovereign Member State.

26. Mr. BARROS (Sao Tome and Principe) said that his country, which had suffered colonial rule and exploitation for five centuries, fully understood the legitimate aspirations of peoples fighting to liberate themselves once and for all from colonialism, whatever its origin might be. When the people of his country had been fighting to decide their destiny, the colonial Government had contended that the Territory was merely a province of the colonial Power and that discussion of the problem within the context of decolonization therefore constituted interference in the internal affairs of that Power. However, the United Nations had assumed its responsibilities and had rejected the colonial claims. No strategic manoeuvre could still the voice of justice and reason.

27. The adoption of resolution 1514 (XV) had been a basic step in recognizing the right of peoples to self-determination and independence, and its practical implementation must govern all activities of the international community aimed at the attainment of decolonization.

28. In that context, the situation prevailing in East Timor and in Western Sahara represented a flagrant violation of the principles of the Charter and of the relevant United Nations resolutions, and the Organization must take a forthright stand in the face of the attempts being made to prevent the peoples concerned from exercising their inalienable right to a homeland. Those peoples' legitimate rights could not be the subject of resolutions which were designed to present the existing situations as *faits accomplis*.

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(Mr. Barros, Sao Tome and Principe)

29. East Timor, which had been invaded on 7 December 1975 by the Indonesian armed forces, was repelling the invasion under the leadership of FRETILIN and was fighting to recover the land of its ancestors and to realize its legitimate aspiration to self-determination and independence. That struggle was causing enormous suffering to the population. It was sufficient to point out that available reports estimated the total casualties since the invasion at 100,000. An ever more urgent plea was being made for recognition of the legitimate right of the people of East Timor to self-determination and independence under the leadership of FRETILIN. He recalled, for example, that the political declaration adopted by the Fifth Conference of Heads of State and Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Colombo in 1976 had reaffirmed the right of the people of East Timor to self-determination in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council (A/31/197).

30. Any solution of the problem of Timor must include the withdrawal of the foreign occupation forces so that the people could freely express its wishes concerning its own destiny.

31. Turning to another subject, he said that the people of his country, respectful of the resolutions of the United Nations and OAU and faithful to its policy of supporting all peoples fighting for independence, could not accept the situation in Western Sahara, where an entire people was being denied the right to a homeland. Although he recognized the important function that must be performed by OAU in that regard, he hoped that the United Nations would take steps to create the necessary conditions to enable the people of the Sahara, under the leadership of the POLISARIO Front, to exercise their legitimate right to self-determination and independence.

32. It was the duty of the international community to reject attempts to confront it with faits accomplis and to give whole-hearted support to those peoples which had not yet been able to realize their legitimate aspiration to self-determination and independence.

32a. Mr. Al Said (Oman) took the Chair.

33. Mr. LOBO (Mozambique) said that, until two years earlier, the notion of colonialism had been associated with the domination exercised by the United Kingdom, Portugal, France, Spain, Germany, the Netherlands and other Western Powers. With the collapse of Portuguese colonialism and that of the other colonial Powers, it had been thought that efforts could now be concentrated on the struggle against the remaining bastions of racist exploitation in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. However, imperialism had decided to create pockets of tension in order to divert the attention of peace-loving peoples from their essential task, which was to safeguard freedom and justice throughout the world. For the first time in the history of Africa, there had appeared a new type of colonialism in which the colonizer came from that continent itself.

34. In that context, his delegation was distressed by the combined aggression launched by two countries members of OAU against the heroic people of Western

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(Mr. Lobo, Mozambique)

Sahara, who had fought for so many years against Spanish colonial occupation. That showed that colonialism was now changing its colours and that the exploiters of the oppressed peoples of the world were increasing in number. Africa should not permit yesterday's colonizers to join today's exploiters and together become neo-colonizers.

35. That was the manoeuvre taking place in Western Sahara, where the former colonizing Power, Spain, had illegally entered into negotiations with two African States for the purpose of carrying out an illegitimate act of disposition of territory.

36. Although the United Nations had decided to request OAU to express its view on the Sahara problem, that did not absolve the United Nations of its responsibility to the people of the Sahara. What was involved was a problem of decolonization in which the entire international community bore responsibility.

37. His delegation appealed to Morocco and Mauritania to permit the Saharan people to exercise their right to self-determination and hoped that both countries would abide by the relevant resolutions of the United Nations, to which they themselves had subscribed when Western Sahara was still under Spanish occupation. His delegation also appealed to Spain to assume its responsibilities in accordance with the Charter and the resolutions of the United Nations.

38. Another question that concerned the international community was that of East Timor, a Territory illegally occupied by the Indonesian army, which was resorting to mass extermination and genocide in an effort to terrorize the population and compel it to stop supporting FRETILIN.

39. During the general debate in the plenary Assembly at its current session, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia had said that the problem of East Timor had ceased to exist as a problem of decolonization. In the light of that false statement, his delegation had noted with pleasure that Portugal was still maintaining formal responsibilities with respect to the Territory and respected the right of its inhabitants to self-determination.

40. In his statement, the representative of FRETILIN had told the Committee of the heroic resistance of the people against the aggressor, who stopped at nothing in his efforts to meet his goal of annexation.

41. The People's Republic of Mozambique considered that the United Nations should make every effort to have the Indonesian forces withdraw from East Timor, to put an end to the atrocities perpetrated against the Maubere people and to enable FRETILIN to be invested with the full powers that belonged to it as the representative of that people.

42. Mr. MUKHTAR (Sudan) said that the principle of self-determination had been one of the guiding principles in the work of decolonization carried on by the United Nations. No Territory was too small to be able to determine its own destiny and therefore the administering Powers had the obligation to promote the

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(Mr. Mukhtar, Sudan)

development of such Territories in the economic, social and political spheres and to consolidate their institutions, as well as to lead them ultimately to self-government.

43. His delegation welcomed the initiative of the Special Committee of 24 in sending visiting missions to the Territories and agreed with the conclusions of that Committee which appeared in the report on the visits made to the Cayman Islands and the Virgin Islands.

44. The problems of the smaller Territories were many-sided and for that reason they required specific solutions. However, in all cases the administering Powers should strive to raise the level of living of the population and exploit the resources of the Territories for the benefit of their inhabitants, providing the technological and financial means required for that purpose.

45. His delegation, endorsing the conclusions of the Committee of 24, condemned the military activities of the administering Powers in the Territories under their administration, considering that they constituted a danger which could, moreover, be an obstacle to the attainment of independence. It likewise condemned the Pretoria and Salisbury régimes, which, by creating a state of war in southern Africa, were raising a threat to international peace and security. The manoeuvres of those racist régimes and the war of extermination waged by them should be brought to an end.

46. With reference to the Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa, he said that his Government, with the co-operation of UNESCO and the OAU Liberation Committee, would grant 20 higher education fellowships and five other fellowships to nationals of Zimbabwe. In that connexion, he urged that the necessary measures should be taken to enable the recipients of those scholarships to take full advantage of them despite the dilatory tactics of the administering Powers.

47. Mr. HOSSEN (Mauritius), reiterating that the Government of Mauritius supported the principle of self-determination of all peoples, said that the question of Western Sahara called for a special approach and special treatment and that his delegation was puzzled at seeing it raised again in the Committee. The African representatives would recall that the Assembly of Heads of State of the Organization of African Unity held at Port Louis, Mauritius, in July 1976, had called upon the parties concerned to co-operate with a view to finding a peaceful solution to the problem of Western Sahara and had decided to hold an extraordinary summit conference for that purpose. That decision had been reaffirmed by OAU at its summit conference held at Libreville, Gabon, in July 1977.

48. In the circumstances, his delegation felt strongly that the problem of Western Sahara should not have been taken up again in the United Nations but should have been left to the Heads of State of the Organization of African Unity, who would undoubtedly find a just and equitable solution to the question.

49. For those reasons, his delegation supported the proposal of the delegation of Gabon that the question of Western Sahara should be referred to the Organization of African Unity.

50. Mr. PEŇAŽKA (Czechoslovakia) said that after studying the report of the Special Committee of 24 relating to the situation of small Territories he had concluded that, unfortunately, the process of decolonization was extremely slow and some administering and colonial Powers were doing nothing to enable the peoples of such Territories to advance towards independence. Some of them went so far as to refuse to co-operate with the United Nations and transmitted to it incomplete or inexact information, or even refused to transmit any information at all. That showed that the administering Powers did not have the slightest intention of ceasing to occupy the Territories or of recognizing to those peoples the right of self-determination and independence.

51. The United Nations had the obligation to do everything possible in support of the legitimate aspirations of the peoples to self-determination and independence and should vigorously reject the neo-colonialist tendencies of the administering Powers, which were trying to lead those peoples to situations of false independence.

52. Czechoslovakia supported the free and unrestricted expression of the popular will with respect to the future of those Territories and considered that the United Nations should request the administering Powers to withdraw their troops and dismantle their military bases, since only when those conditions had been fulfilled would it be possible to create the atmosphere in which the peoples could express their will without foreign interference. Consequently, Czechoslovakia supported the draft resolution submitted by the delegation of Viet Nam in document A/C.4/32/L.10.

53. Czechoslovakia attributed particularly great importance to the training of specialists and technicians, who would be greatly needed by the future independent Territories, and it had given special attention to that subject; during the period 1976-1977 it had granted fellowships to 13 students from Southern Rhodesia, and for the period 1978-1979 it intended to grant another 20 study fellowships; similarly, it would support all effective measures proposed in the United Nations to strengthen aid to colonial and Non-Self-Governing Territories.

54. Mr. BEKELE (Ethiopia) said that there were two important themes common to all of the six agenda items being considered by the Committee: the principle of self-determination of colonial peoples and the implementation of that principle. For all those Territories - whether those of southern Africa subjected to the rampant forces of racism, colonialism and imperialism, those where the normal decolonization processes had been disrupted, or the small island Territories of the Caribbean and the Pacific - the inalienable right to self-determination and independence and the implementation of that principle were vital.

55. With reference to the Territories of Namibia and Zimbabwe, he noted that there was a conspiracy against them which was motivated by economic considerations and was aimed at continuing the exploitation of those Territories, as had been recently documented by the United Nations Commission on Transnational Corporations in its report (E/C.10/26). Those imperialist corporations were represented in all sectors of the economy: mining, agriculture, manufacturing, construction, banking and financial services and the oil industry. The international community should immediately put an end to those practices in order to ensure the rapid and vigorous implementation of the noble principles of the Charter and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

(Mr. Bekele, Ethiopia)

56. In that connexion, his delegation had noted, from the information in the report of the Secretary-General (A/32/87 and Add.1), that some specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations had done better than others and it urged the agencies and institutions to apply existing and future resolutions calling for intensified assistance to the colonial peoples, especially those of Zimbabwe and Namibia. The Maputo Declaration in Support of the Peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia and Programme of Action for the Liberation of Zimbabwe and Namibia, as well as the Lagos Declaration adopted by the World Conference for Action against Apartheid, were examples which focused on the implementation aspects of the oft-repeated principles of self-determination and independence, and his delegation supported them fully.

57. Miss HOLZER (Austria) said that her country attached the greatest importance to the goals and principles set forth in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which it regarded as a milestone in the history of the second half of the twentieth century. Decolonization had profoundly changed the face of the world and was reflected in the structure of the United Nations, where, since the adoption of resolution 1514 (XV), the number of Members had increased by one third.

58. In that connexion, acknowledgement should be made of the importance of the work of the Committee of 24, which was reflected in its report and which continued to bear fruit as one Territory after another completed the process of decolonization. In that process it was important that the administering Powers should fulfil their obligations in conformity with the Charter and should provide the necessary information on all the Territories. During the current year, visiting missions had been sent to the Cayman Islands and the United States Virgin Islands, and Austria wished to take the opportunity to express its appreciation of the positive attitude taken by the United States in that connexion. In particular, Austria had noted with pleasure the statement of the United Kingdom that it expected its colonial responsibilities in the Pacific area to be terminated by or during 1980.

59. As a demonstration of its support for the process of decolonization, the Austrian Government was continuing to provide opportunities for the inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories to study in Austria and was contributing to the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa.

60. Generalizations with regard to the characteristics of the decolonization process in individual territories were to be avoided; it had to be acknowledged that each case was special and that a wide range of options suited to the particular needs and wishes of the people had to be taken into account. It also had to be recognized that one of those options might be integration into an existing independent State, the formation of a sovereign independent State or even free association with another country. Smallness, isolation, poverty of resources or lack of manpower should not impede or delay the implementation of the Declaration. The basis of all those options should remain the free exercise of the right to self-determination by the inhabitants; the case of Djibouti was one example in which the difficulties had been overcome and the principle of self-determination reasserted with the valuable co-operation of all concerned.

(Miss Holzer, Austria)

61. His country was deeply concerned about the question of Western Sahara and it was firmly convinced that that question had to be resolved peacefully and in a manner involving all parties concerned in a constructive dialogue. His delegation appreciated in that context the role assumed by international organizations, particularly OAU. It appealed to all involved to intensify their efforts to find a solution acceptable to all and to solve the problem of the citizens of other countries who were reportedly being held hostage.

62. Mr. MONGA (Zambia) said that championing the cause of self-determination and liberation in southern Africa was the corner-stone of his country's foreign policy. In view of its colonial past, Zambia was familiar with the humiliation of foreign rule and considered it its duty to stand firm on the principle of self-determination and to help those still oppressed to fight for their legitimate right to freedom and independence.

63. The principle of self-determination was at stake in both the Western Sahara and East Timor. If justice was denied to either people, the United Nations would be setting a dangerous precedent the consequences of which would be felt in other similar situations and even in some existing sovereign and independent States.

64. Among the many considerations that were involved when decisions had to be taken, the only relevant factor, in his delegation's view, was the rights and legitimate interest of peoples in their self-determination, whether they were seeking independence or integration with their neighbours.

65. In the case of Western Sahara, his delegation hoped that the Organization of African Unity would shortly be able to find a formula for settling the conflict without jeopardizing the right of the people of the Territory to self-determination. It considered that the conflict was potentially dangerous for OAU itself, and it had accordingly endorsed the idea of a summit conference on Western Sahara and regretted that circumstances made it impossible for the conference to be held at Lusaka, as originally scheduled. His delegation hoped, nevertheless, that the conference could be held in the near future.

66. With regard to East Timor, his delegation urged that a referendum should be convened immediately under United Nations supervision with a view to determining the future of the Territory. He believed that such a genuine act of self-determination was important both for the people of East Timor and for the prestige of Indonesia.

67. He paid a tribute to the work of the Special Committee of 24, which had spearheaded the process of decolonization. He reiterated his country's position with regard to the right of all territories to independence without distinction by reason of size, geographical position or population density. His Government hoped that the administering Powers would assume full responsibility for the creation of a sound economic base for each colonial Territory and that they would co-operate fully with the Special Committee.

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68. Mr. THABIT (Comoros) said that his country's position with regard to Western Sahara had been expressed repeatedly in the OAU, at meetings of the non-aligned countries and in the United Nations. It had consistently reaffirmed the right of Western Sahara to self-determination. Recognition of the right to self-determination implied recognition of the existence of the people, within a territory and in accordance with a legal statute.

69. The only parties concerned in the matter of Western Sahara were the administering Power and the people to be decolonized, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant resolutions, especially resolution 1514 (XV).

70. It was his delegation's hope that a special conference of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity would be held as soon as possible in order to consider the problem of Western Sahara.

71. Mr. VO ANH TUAN (Viet Nam), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that in his statement on the previous day the United States representative had stated that the presence of United States bases on Guam was not impeding the exercise by the people of their right to self-determination, that in fact it was in line with the aspirations of that population and that the statement of the Viet Nam representative on that same day had not reflected the real situation. His delegation wished to emphasize the following: the problem of Guam, like that of other non-self-governing territories in which there were still foreign military bases, was one that was covered by the provisions of resolutions 1514 (XV) and 2621 (XXV) and other resolutions of the General Assembly.

72. In various resolutions the international community had reaffirmed the inalienable right of the people of Guam to self-determination and had vigorously condemned any attempt to maintain military bases and installations on that island as incompatible with the exercise of the fundamental rights of the people of Guam and the purposes and principles of the Charter and of resolutions of the General Assembly.

73. The arguments employed by the United States to justify the presence of military installations on Guam were the same as those that had been advanced by a number of United States Governments during the Viet Nam war to justify the presence of half a million United States soldiers and the bombardment of the peoples of Viet Nam, Laos and Kampuchea.

74. The United States delegation was opposed to draft resolution A/C.4/32/L.10 because that document ran counter to the strategic and military interests of the United States and met the legitimate aspirations of the people of Guam and the international community. The representatives of the international community should oppose any attempt to amend General Assembly resolutions for the purpose of legalizing the presence of United States military bases in Guam and perpetuating the occupation of that Territory. The object of the amendments in document A/C.4/32/L.17 to draft resolution A/C.4/32/L.10 was, in fact, to perpetuate that military presence and that occupation. The proposals in document A/C.4/32/L.17 were tantamount to having the United Nations authorize the presence of military

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(Mr. Vo Anh Tuan, Viet Nam)

bases in Guam as being compatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter and to stating that the people of Guam could freely exercise their right to self-determination in the presence of military bases on their Territory and that, consequently, all earlier United Nations resolutions concerning military bases and installations of the administering Powers in colonial Territories, particularly in Guam, were ill-founded and inaccurate. That amendment was unacceptable to any delegation that sought to defend the purposes and principles of the Charter and was truly committed to the cause of self-determination for colonial peoples. If those amendments were adopted the consequences would be serious. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/32/L.10 rejected them vigorously, because they were diametrically opposed to the spirit of that draft resolution.

75. His delegation reserved the right to speak again on the item.

76. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) said that self-determination had a meaning beyond breaking the chains of foreign occupation. Self-determination should also be an internal process, in both the political sense and the economic sense. Moreover, it had to be remembered that there was no such thing as a homogeneous people. If a heterogeneous people was to remain united, there had to be a common objective to give it cohesion.

77. With regard to Guam, one had to ask whether that Territory was economically viable, since, it would otherwise be impossible for it properly to exercise its right to self-determination. That did not mean that it could not practise self-government locally.

78. He referred to the colonial history of the island of Timor and said that, in his view, East Timor was part of Indonesia and that those who advocated the independence of the Territory were being more papist than the Pope or were trying to fill a political and economic vacuum. In the presence of the suffering of a people, the United Nations should be very clear about whether it was serving its high ideals or only the purposes of activists who were secret agents of the super-Powers.

79. The difficult question of the Sahara should be settled by the Arab group, since it was not, strictly speaking, an African question. He appealed for concord and prudence, and said that family disputes were more serious than disputes between outsiders.

80. In conclusion, he pointed out that development structures could not be applied rigidly to peoples that had diametrically opposed cultural values.

81. Mr. Allaf (Syrian Arab Republic) resumed the Chair.

82. Mr. KHARLAMOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said, with regard to the statement of the representative of Saudi Arabia on East Timor, that the Soviet Union was not in rivalry with any super-Power in that part of the world.

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83. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he had not named any particular super-Power and that, in the case of the super-Powers as in the case of any other Powers, it sometimes happened that action was taken in their name without their having taken any prior initiative.

84. The CHAIRMAN said that voting would begin at the 20th meeting on the draft resolutions on agenda items 4, 5, 6 and 7 and on draft resolutions on individual Territories, with the exception of Western Sahara.

85. Consultations were in progress on the question of Western Sahara and he would report on the results when they were completed.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.