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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 32nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ALLAF (Syrian Arab Republic)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 92: QUESTION OF SOUTHERN RHODESIA: 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)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 92: QUESTION OF SOUTHERN RHODESIA: 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/32/23/Add.1, A/32/57, A/32/61, A/32/63, A/32/92, A/32/98, A/32/109/Rev.1, A/32/115, A/32/235, A/32/259, A/32/266; A/C.4/32/L.31)

1. Mr. CHARPENTIER (Canada) said that the hold of the white minority in Southern Rhodesia was gradually slipping and that the country seemed to be on the verge of important changes. That was due essentially to the efforts of the majority of the people of Zimbabwe, who by their courage and tenacity had attracted world opinion to their cause.
2. While the economic sanctions imposed against the Smith régime had not always had the immediate effect that had been envisaged, it should be remembered that their effectiveness had been greatly enhanced by the closure of the Zambian and Mozambican borders. All the surrounding States, however, had had to make substantial material sacrifices, and Canada had therefore provided them with economic assistance.
3. The Maputo Conference in Support of the Peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia had been a milestone on the road to independence and majority rule in both countries. At the Conference, the international community had stressed that the process must involve the full participation of all the people of Zimbabwe.
4. Yielding to the pressure exerted by the liberation movement in the country and by the international community, Smith had finally stated that he would agree to negotiate with a view to establishing majority rule on the basis of universal suffrage. All the people of Zimbabwe must, however, be allowed to participate freely in the process of negotiating a settlement which would preserve their right to self-determination and independence.
5. As the Canadian representative at the Maputo Conference had said, the aim was to create a framework within which an independent Zimbabwe Government would be chosen by all the country's inhabitants.
6. Canada had supported the Anglo-American proposals for a negotiated settlement of the Rhodesian problem, because, for the first time in over 10 years, all the parties concerned had accepted a single document as a basis for further negotiation. It was hard to believe, however, that the internal settlement that Smith was now proposing as an alternative could lead to the establishment of a peaceful and stable State.
7. Clearly, the international community, and the United Nations in particular, could accept a solution only if it was the result of negotiations involving all the parties concerned. While Canada was not a party to the negotiating process in Zimbabwe, it would do its utmost to promote a peaceful settlement to the Rhodesian question, and it strongly encouraged all those directly involved to demonstrate flexibility and a spirit of compromise.
8. Mr. LAWSON (Togo) said he wondered how long the régime in Southern Rhodesia would be able to persist in defying the international community with impunity.

(Mr. Lawson, Togo)

Southern Rhodesia was, in fact, the only case of a colony which had been able to rebel against the administering Power without the latter using its power to attempt to re-establish legality. The rebel régime, however, relied only on an infinitesimal minority and did nothing to hide its racist aims, denying the indigenous black majority their fundamental rights. Despite the condemnation of the international community and the appeals made to the administering Power in the face of the clear threat to peace and security in the region and the world which Southern Rhodesia represented, the detestable régime remained in power and the measures adopted against it by the United Nations had failed to bring it to its knees.

9. Scrupulous compliance with United Nations sanctions by all States would, however, bring it very quickly to its knees. The régime's survival was due chiefly to the hypocrisy of certain wealthy Powers which claimed to condemn it but continued to maintain economic and other relations with it and disregarded United Nations resolutions. In that connexion, he drew attention to the activities of foreign financial, economic and other interests and to the commercial transactions - relating particularly to oil and minerals - which to a great extent helped to ensure the survival of the Salisbury régime and, in addition, enabled it to obtain sophisticated weapons. The régime likewise derived great benefit from its collusion with the South African Government, which also owed its economic and military strength to wealthy Powers concerned with their own self-interest.

10. It would seem that the only solution was for the international community to isolate the Smith régime at all costs, in order to make it respect the human person and democracy. In order to do that, it was absolutely essential to apply sanctions strictly. Furthermore, States must refrain from all economic, trade, financial or military relations with Southern Rhodesia and South Africa and, in general, any collaboration with the illegal régime. They must seek a solution based on the inalienable right of the people of Zimbabwe to self-determination, freedom and independence and providing for the establishment of majority rule. The responsibility for the rapid transfer of power to the majority lay primarily with the administering Power. In that connexion, his delegation commended the efforts made by the United Kingdom and other States to find acceptable solutions, and denounced the diversionary tactics which Ian Smith was using in an attempt to bring about a so-called internal settlement. Nevertheless, Salisbury's rejection of the broad outline of the Anglo-American plan, as well as the failure of the Geneva Conference and the British missions to Southern Rhodesia - which were proof of Ian Smith's fundamental bad faith - cast doubt on the prospects for a negotiated settlement. It would seem therefore that the only path leading to genuine independence was the national liberation struggle.

11. Accordingly, the international community must step up its support for the people of Zimbabwe and their liberation movement, in accordance with the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the Maputo Conference, which stressed the importance of the struggle for the independence of Zimbabwe and the strict application of sanctions, and called for an intensification of moral, political, financial and material assistance to the liberation movements of

(Mr. Lawson, Togo)

southern Africa. For its part, the Togolese Government would give all possible support to the martyred peoples of Zimbabwe, Namibia and Azania and to the States which were victims of repeated acts of aggression committed by Southern Rhodesia and South Africa in reprisal for their support of the just cause of the oppressed peoples.

12. Mr. BARANCIRA (Burundi) observed that, at the time of the unilateral declaration of independence, Southern Rhodesia had been a Non-Self-Governing Territory under British administration, in which a régime representing an infinitesimal minority was to take over through terror and repression. That régime had been able to remain in power as a result of its clever diversionary tactics: the administering Power had wanted to give the impression that it was incapable of restoring peace and justice in the Territory by any means other than negotiations, and Ian Smith, for his part, had pretended to negotiate in order to gain time while attempting to divide the nationalist leaders. The sham negotiations had, however, been carried out only to conceal the true nature of the so-called rebellion, which was in reality a great plot mounted by imperialism and international capitalism against the people of Zimbabwe and their dignity, freedom and property.

13. In the circumstances, it was not surprising that sanctions were not being widely applied, particularly by certain States which were influential members of the international community. In that connexion, he called to mind the role of the South African and Southern Rhodesian branches of multinational corporations, particularly the four giant western oil companies, which deliberately twisted sanctions to the benefit of Southern Rhodesia, and of those corporations which had delegated authority to their branches in that country. The rebel régime would have soon fallen without the economic, political and military support which it continued to receive from certain countries. In the face of that situation, the people of Zimbabwe had had no choice other than armed struggle. The people of Burundi, for their part, firmly supported their legitimate, just and heroic struggle for total liberation, which would lead to certain victory and which could not be stopped by brutality and acts of intimidation. Thanks to the intensification of the armed struggle and the pressures exerted by the international community, the problem of Southern Rhodesia appeared to be moving towards a solution based on the recent Anglo-American proposals. The administering Power seemed at last to have accepted its responsibilities and a representative of the Secretary-General had been instructed to enter into discussions concerning the military arrangements necessary to effect the transition to majority rule. However, there were still many contradictions and unknown factors concerning the intentions of the administering Power on the methods for the transfer of power.

14. Ian Smith was manoeuvring to accentuate the differences between the nationalist leaders by offering to negotiate while, at the same time, launching attacks on the territory of a country friendly to the people of Zimbabwe. His delegation therefore categorically rejected any solution based on a so-called internal settlement of the Rhodesian problem. The only currently acceptable solution must be on the basis of the Anglo-American proposals; in that connexion, the United Kingdom must dismantle the régime's armed forces and Mr. Smith and his group must be prevented from participating in the settlement, as the Patriotic Front requested; the

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(Mr. Barancira, Burundi)

Anglo-American plan could only become operational on that condition, as it would be intolerable if it were used to undermine the victories of the peoples of Zimbabwe and southern Africa and if the wars of liberation were thus deprived of meaning. Furthermore, the administering Power must furnish adequate guarantees in regard to the transfer of power to the black majority within the time-limit which had been established, namely during the year 1978. The international community must come to the aid of the Patriotic Front and strengthen the sanctions against the Salisbury régime.

15. Mr. LOBO (Mozambique) said that the anachronistic situation that had prevailed in the British colony of Southern Rhodesia for the past 15 years had continued to deteriorate and that colonial domination and exploitation had assumed a degree of cruelty that had never been known before. Against that background of oppression, special importance must be attached to Security Council resolution 253 (1968) which had decreed sanctions against the illegal régime. The economic and military blockade had not, however, been respected by the imperialists, who had plundered the natural resources of the country, and it was the economic and military assistance of certain Western countries which had enabled the British colony to survive, notwithstanding the struggle currently taking place.

16. The struggle was not directed against a given race but only against a tiny minority that had monopolized power and deprived the majority of their fundamental rights on racial grounds. As President Machel had said, the whites could choose to become citizens of the country in which they lived, while becoming integrated into its political and social life. Their racist ideas could only be prejudicial to their future integration into an anti-racist Zimbabwean society.

17. For the time being, the divisive manoeuvres of imperialism had not prevented the people of Zimbabwe, whose fighting determination had strengthened steadily, from achieving success under the leadership of the Patriotic Front. To ignore the fact that it was the Patriotic Front which was mobilizing the people of Zimbabwe and leading the armed struggle against the minority régime might jeopardize peace in the territory. In the face of the success achieved by the guerrillas, the régime launched attacks against sovereign States with the object of diverting attention from its own acts, so as to obtain support from international capitalism and provoke the direct intervention of the imperialist forces, whose sophisticated weapons had, however, failed to stop the forces of Botswana, Zambia and Mozambique.

18. Mozambique had been the victim of numerous border violations during which a ferocious enemy, inspired by Nazi practices, had not hesitated to kill many civilians in a ruthless manner, attacking the weak, the innocent and the sick. During the previous month, in the course of their greatest act of aggression against Mozambique to date, the sadism of Smith's soldiers had known no limits against an unarmed civilian population, consisting mainly of children, women and elderly persons. In Zimbabwe itself, weak and innocent civilians suffered by the thousands from a system of institutionalized terror. That situation was the result of the systematic support given by certain Western countries, through all sorts of manoeuvres, to a system which persistently defied the international community. The

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(Mr. Lobo, Mozambique)

United Nations had played a remarkable role in the elimination of the remnants of colonial domination in the world, thus enabling progressive and democratic societies to be built. However, the question of the independence of Namibia, the elimination of apartheid in South Africa and the overthrow of the colonial and racist régime of Ian Smith constituted the fundamental preoccupation of those countries which were neighbours of Southern Rhodesia. Mozambique, whose commitment to support for the people of Zimbabwe had only increased as a result of the acts of aggression perpetrated against it, hoped to benefit from the assistance promised in Security Council resolution 411 (1977); such assistance could be of a material, technical, moral or other character.

19. Zimbabwe should also receive all possible material and moral support from the international community, and his delegation appealed once again for the full implementation of the resolutions adopted at the Maputo Conference. It also wished to state that the independence of Zimbabwe was not negotiable; only the mechanism for the transfer of power could be discussed. In conclusion, his delegation reiterated its support for all genuine initiatives aimed at transferring power to the majority and combating diversionary manoeuvres.

20. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Syrian Arab Republic should be included among the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/32/L.31 on the question of Southern Rhodesia, having been omitted by error.

21. Mr. AYADHI (Tunisia) paid tribute to the Zimbabwean liberation movement for its devotion to the just cause of its people and its determination to pursue the struggle until independence had been achieved.

22. It had been claimed by some that the question of Southern Rhodesia had entered a decisive phase since the submission of the Anglo-American proposals. His delegation considered that that plan was not consistent with the principles of healthy decolonization, in so far as it dealt with an essentially colonial problem for which the administering Power assumed full legal and moral responsibility; indeed, it was the responsibility of that Power to free the people of Zimbabwe, whom it had abandoned to the domination of an illegal régime which was the product of the rebellion of a handful of settlers. It was the responsibility of the administering Power to re-establish legality in the Territory and to put an end to the acts of oppression and aggression committed by the illegal régime, both within the country and against neighbouring African States, in particular Mozambique, a country against which Southern Rhodesia had recently launched unprecedented attacks, massacring hundreds of men, women and children with impunity. His delegation wished to assure Mozambique and other front-line countries of its sympathy and active support; it fully appreciated the sacrifices which they were making in support of the heroic liberation struggle of the people of Zimbabwe.

23. The people of Zimbabwe knew that independence was not granted but had to be seized; for that reason, they had taken up arms, under the leadership of the Patriotic Front, which had acquired the right to make its voice heard in any negotiations for a political settlement of the Rhodesian question.

24. It was well known that Tunisia believed in the settlement of differences by peaceful means but, on the question of decolonization, oppressed peoples usually had no other means but recourse to armed struggle to defend their dignity and freely exercise their right to self-determination and independence.

(Mr. Ayadhi, Tunisia)

25. At the request of the United Kingdom Government, the Security Council, in its resolution 415 (1977), of 29 September 1977, had requested the Secretary-General to appoint a representative to enter into discussions with the British Resident Commissioner designate and with all the parties, concerning the military and associated arrangements that were considered necessary to effect the transition to majority rule in Southern Rhodesia.

26. It might be asked whether such a mission was in keeping with the responsibilities of the United Nations in that field. Did the Anglo-American plan for a settlement provide first and foremost for the restoration of legality in the Territory, in accordance with resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly? The administering Power should not impose conditions for independence. The Patriotic Front was itself ready to negotiate on a sound basis conducive to true decolonization.

27. The international community, which had utterly condemned the illegal Rhodesian régime, could no longer tolerate its survival. There was an urgent need for concerted efforts to avert the dangers which seriously threatened peace and security in the region and in the entire continent. It was to be hoped that good sense and reason would finally prevail.

28. Mr. LIPATOV (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that, in view of the explosive situation prevailing in southern Africa, there was an urgent need for the international community to intensify its efforts in support of the liberation struggle being waged by the patriots of Zimbabwe. The fact that the Rhodesian problem had not yet been settled posed a grave threat to peace and security, not only in the region but throughout the world.

29. Despite the many resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council and the repeated injunctions of the international community, certain Western countries continued to extend multilateral, especially military, assistance to the minority racist régime. They sought to induce Smith to negotiate, but no one knew what ulterior motives lay hidden behind the apparent flexibility which he manifested. His aim was to gain time, in order to maintain neo-colonialist government by the white minority and to strengthen the illegal occupation of Zimbabwe.

30. It was necessary to denounce all those who sought to stave off the inevitable collapse of the Southern Rhodesian régime by providing it with financial assistance, new types of arms and foreign mercenaries.

31. The experience of the independent African States proved that the indigenous peoples were capable of managing their own affairs and of choosing the path of their development without foreign intervention. That was why the transfer of all powers to the African majority, with the proviso that the fundamental rights of all minorities, including the whites, should be respected, was the surest way towards a settlement of the Rhodesian problem.

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(Mr. Lipatov, Ukrainian SSR)

32. Concerned at the numerous successes achieved by the Zimbabwean patriots, the racist régime was now resorting to veritable genocide against the civilian population, assisted by over a thousand foreign mercenaries, recruited principally in Western countries.

33. In one of its most recent resolutions concerning Southern Rhodesia, the Fourth Committee had called upon all States to take the necessary measures to prevent recruitment of mercenaries for that Territory. His delegation unreservedly supported that appeal. The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, at its fourteenth session, and the participants in the Lagos Conference, held in August 1977, had also taken decisions to that end.

34. In his delegation's view, the General Assembly should, at its current session, not only resolutely condemn the racist policy of the colonialist régime in Southern Rhodesia but should also adopt more effective measures in that regard. The United Nations should also condemn those States and circles which, in one way or another, flouted its decisions or sought by all possible means to circumvent the sanctions which it had imposed against the Smith régime.

35. His delegation unreservedly endorsed the appeal made at the Maputo Conference for an expansion of sanctions against the illegal minority régime in Southern Rhodesia, as well as its appeal to the United Nations for the immediate adoption of measures aimed at the complete isolation of the Smith régime.

36. Mr. VILLAR (Spain) said that his delegation, having stated its position on the question of Southern Rhodesia on many occasions and in various international forums, would confine itself to clarifying the position in the light of events.

37. His delegation supported all initiatives conducive to a speedy and peaceful settlement of the problem that would enable the people of Zimbabwe to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence through the formation of a majority government. In that connexion, the United Kingdom proposals for a settlement might provide an over-all framework in the search for a negotiated solution. His delegation had the impression that the parties concerned had not rejected those proposals out of hand, although they did not accept certain aspects of them. In that regard, it should be remembered that matters were still in the initial stage of a complex process. On the other hand, however, difficulties were inevitable in that process, which had been put in train only as a result of a series of internal and external factors, including the struggle of the people of Zimbabwe, important political changes that had occurred in the region and international pressure - pressure which, in his delegation's view, should be intensified.

38. Furthermore, his delegation was aware of the intransigence and manoeuvres of the Smith régime and vigorously condemned the frequent acts of aggression which the régime had perpetrated against neighbouring States, including the recent invasion of Mozambique. Such an attitude in no way contributed to a peaceful settlement of the problem.

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(Mr. Villar, Spain)

39. It appeared that Mr. Smith had now accepted for the first time the principle of "one man, one vote". That acceptance had been greeted with some degree of scepticism and prudence, which his delegation shared. He hoped that it was not a question of new delaying tactics but that the minority régime had finally understood that its racist days were numbered.

40. In any case, it appeared that any initiative which did not provide for the free and active political participation of all the nationalist forces of Zimbabwe, including the Patriotic Front, during the transition period, was doomed to failure. Only through such participation would it be possible to organize free and genuine elections which would bring to power the majority government that must preside over the destiny of a free and independent Zimbabwe.

41. Mr. PASTINEN (Finland) said that his Government strongly condemned the new acts of aggression which the illegal Smith régime had perpetrated against Mozambique, Zambia and Botswana, especially since those attacks had been directed against the innocent civilian population; while those acts reflected the fear and panic felt by the illegal minority régime, they aggravated the threat that the rebel régime constituted to international peace and security.

42. All States Members of the United Nations had an obligation to give assistance to the countries and peoples which had become victims of the violence committed by the Salisbury régime. It was their duty, in particular, to assist Mozambique and Zambia in sustaining the economic sacrifices resulting from the closing of their borders with Southern Rhodesia. Furthermore, Member States must strictly enforce the sanctions until a solution acceptable to the international community had been found. It was obvious, however, that some States, in particular South Africa, openly defied the sanctions, thus considerably weakening the effect that they could have on the illegal régime.

43. The Security Council should therefore urgently review the existing sanctions with a view to ensuring their effective implementation and possible extension. Special attention should be drawn to the supply of petroleum and petroleum products to Southern Rhodesia.

44. His delegation wished to commend the administering Power for the steps it had taken to fulfil its responsibility towards the people of Zimbabwe. The international community should support the efforts of the United Kingdom and the United States, which had devised a plan for a just and peaceful settlement designed to achieve a transition to majority rule and genuine independence in Zimbabwe.

45. In the view of his Government, the basic objective of the settlement must be the exercise by the people of Zimbabwe of their right to self-determination. It was therefore vital that appropriate conditions should be established for the holding of absolutely free elections based on universal adult suffrage. All parties and movements should have the right to participate in the elections and to campaign on an equal footing.

46. With regard to the so-called internal settlement proposed recently by Mr. Smith, details of which were deliberately vague, it was doubtful whether that plan could fulfil the criteria which would make it acceptable to the international

(Mr. Pastinen, Finland)

community and the United Nations. In no case could the latter accept a solution which would exclude the liberation movement which was struggling for the aspirations of the people of Zimbabwe from participating in the elections and constitutional arrangements. Furthermore, such a settlement would not in the long run bring either justice or peace to Zimbabwe.

47. Mr. SHAHI (Nepal) said that, when the General Assembly at its thirty-first session had considered the question of Southern Rhodesia, many delegations, including his own, had been optimistic about the positive outcome of the Geneva Conference on Zimbabwe. Unfortunately, the uncompromising attitude of the rebel Smith régime had caused the talks to fail.

48. For the past 12 years, the rebel régime had totally disregarded the legitimate demand of the majority of the people to be allowed to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence. The white settlers had enacted discriminatory racist laws to oppress the indigenous population. Despite all the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, it had not proved possible to solve the problem of Southern Rhodesia. The failure of the negotiations held in Geneva in 1976 had left the freedom fighters no other option but to intensify their armed struggle. That struggle, together with the outflow of foreign capital and emigration, had led to the isolation of the Smith régime. However, the régime was still engaged in a desperate effort to remain in power.

49. The illegal minority régime had intensified its repressive measures, had established "protected villages" and had engaged in blatant aggression against neighbouring States; that aggression, which constituted a threat to peace and security in the region, had been strongly denounced by the international community. The minority régime showed by its attitude that it was desperate and felt the end approaching. It realized now that the transfer of power to the majority was inevitable. Nevertheless, in an effort to prolong its domination, the minority régime had attempted to organize elections based on a restrictive franchise, but such delaying tactics did not deceive the freedom fighters and the struggle continued.

50. The international community had continued to reaffirm its full support for the people of Zimbabwe in their just struggle for self-determination and independence. The Maputo Declaration reflected the firm determination of all the peoples of the world to bring about the early end of the white minority régime and the establishment of majority rule in Zimbabwe.

51. The Special Committee of 24 had kept the question of Southern Rhodesia under review. His delegation wished to express its appreciation for the untiring efforts made by the Special Committee to facilitate the advent of majority rule in Zimbabwe, and wished to pay tribute to the Chairman of the Special Committee, Mr. Salim. His delegation shared the view expressed by the Chairman of the Special Committee concerning the blatant aggression perpetrated against neighbouring countries and associated itself with his appeal to all States to increase their vigilance in order to counter the manoeuvres of the racist régime in Salisbury.

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(Mr. Shahi, Nepal)

52. In the view of his delegation, if all Members of the United Nations had complied fully with the sanctions against the minority régime, the régime would have collapsed long since. It should be stressed that, without the co-operation of all, it would be very difficult to isolate the rebel régime and to compel it to transfer power to the majority. Furthermore, the survival of the rebel régime depended largely on the help and assistance it received from South Africa. The world community must therefore be prepared to exert all possible pressure on the racist régimes of southern Africa if a speedy solution to the question of Southern Rhodesia was to be achieved.

53. Nepal had always supported the legitimate demands of the people of Zimbabwe and felt that there should be no independence before majority rule in that Territory.

54. Furthermore, his delegation had always stressed the responsibility of the Government of the United Kingdom, as the administering Power, in the settlement of the question. It was encouraging to note the initiatives undertaken by the United Kingdom and United States Governments, as well as the adoption of Security Council resolution 415 (1977), under which the Secretary-General had appointed a Special Representative to hold talks with the parties concerned. Unfortunately, no progress had been reported in those talks. The recent statement by Mr. Smith that he would accept the principle of "one man, one vote" and the talks between the rebel régime and the leaders of the liberation movements based inside Southern Rhodesia had further complicated the situation. All the parties concerned must be included in the negotiations, and unity among all the liberation movements was vital. The days of the Smith régime were numbered but the international community could not trust the sincerity of its statements. The international community must maintain careful watch and continue to put pressure on the régime by imposing sanctions and supporting the liberation struggle until final victory was achieved and a sovereign Zimbabwe gained independence.

55. Mr. MARMULAKU (Yugoslavia) said that a few days before the beginning of the debate in the Committee, the Smith régime had come up with a so-called plan for an "internal solution". The plan was not a new one; Smith would like to retain the questions of law and order, defence and legal matters as a privilege of the white minority. A modification of the same plan had already been presented during the negotiations at Geneva. It would seem that the illegal régime, aware of the inexorable character of the struggle of the people of Zimbabwe, was exerting maximum efforts to bring to power groups which would serve its interests.

56. The material before the Committee and the report of the Special Committee showed that the Smith régime was faced with considerable internal difficulties. The economy was in a state of chaos, production was declining, there was a galloping rate of inflation, defence expenditure was huge, and the emigration of the white population was increasing every day. However, the consequences of that situation were borne primarily by the people of Zimbabwe, which explained why armed struggle, led by the liberation movement, had acquired a new dimension in recent years.

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(Mr. Marmulaku, Yugoslavia)

57. The people and the liberation movement constituted a single whole, in spite of the desperate actions taken by the Smith régime. The situation in southern Africa had recently undergone a radical change in favour of the forces fighting for freedom. Their victory was certain, since their struggle for freedom and independence and against racism, apartheid and colonialism was a just struggle.

58. On the one hand, the racist régime expressed its readiness to negotiate, while, on the other, it intensified terror and brutal measures against the oppressed people of Zimbabwe and attacked neighbouring countries. The violation of the territorial integrity of Zambia, Botswana and, above all, Mozambique was yet another proof of the general threat that the Smith régime posed to peace and security. The United Nations, in particular the Security Council, should act most energetically to prevent the repetition of such criminal acts. The administering Power, too, must take similar action for the purpose of safeguarding peace and security in that part of the world.

59. Unfortunately, it had to be noted that the provisions of resolution 253 (1968) were not being respected, with the result that the illegal régime had maintained itself in power for so many years, mainly with the help of South Africa and the support of certain Western transnational corporations. It was therefore essential to establish stricter control over the application of sanctions and to extend their scope in accordance with the provisions of the Maputo Declaration, to impose an oil embargo and to apply Article 41 of the Charter, as advocated by the Organization of African Unity. The United Kingdom, as the administering Power, should take concrete steps to put an end to the illegal occupation of Southern Rhodesia by the Smith régime and should play a dominant role in the transfer of power to the majority, alongside the Patriotic Front.

60. The economies of neighbouring countries, especially of Zambia and Mozambique, were suffering great losses owing to the sanctions they were applying against the racist régime. The international community, the United Nations and its specialized agencies were therefore duty-bound to lend material support to the front-line States.

61. The people and Government of Yugoslavia had always supported the just struggle of colonial peoples for liberation and independence, both through political action and through material assistance to the liberation movements. Furthermore, the Yugoslav delegation considered that the United Nations and the international community should lend all-out assistance to the Patriotic Front, the force leading the liberation struggle against the illegal Smith régime.

62. Mr. QUARTIN SANTOS (Portugal) said that 1977 had witnessed an intensification of diplomatic and military pressure in favour of the majority of the people of Zimbabwe. The nationalist forces of Zimbabwe had continued the armed struggle against the illegal régime, which had reacted with brutality, settling the African population by force in so-called "protected villages" and attacking the neighbouring African countries on various pretexts. Mozambique, in particular, had been a frequent victim of such attacks.

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(Mr. Quartín Santos, Portugal)

63. At the diplomatic level, following the failure of the Geneva Conference, two important events deserved attention: the convening of the International Conference in Support of the Peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia, held in Mozambique in May 1977, and the decision taken by the United Kingdom Government to assume responsibility for the direct administration of Southern Rhodesia during the period of transition towards self-determination and independence. That decision opened the way to a negotiated settlement of the Rhodesian problem.

64. The Maputo Conference was of major importance, since it was the first time that such widespread agreement had been reached on the principles conducive to finding an acceptable solution. In addition, it was impossible to overemphasize the fact that the Conference had been held in the territory of an African front-line State which had played an important part in supporting the people of Zimbabwe.

65. The initiative taken by the United Kingdom, with the assistance of the United States, was the most serious and comprehensive effort yet made to find a peaceful and satisfactory solution to the Rhodesian problem on the basis of majority rule and the principle of "one man, one vote".

66. At the same time, the Security Council had adopted resolution 409 (1977), extending the scope of the mandatory sanctions against Southern Rhodesia, and resolution 415 (1977), in which it requested the Secretary-General to appoint a representative to participate in the preliminary contacts with all parties within the framework of the United Kingdom proposals.

67. Since the democratic revolution of April 1974, Portugal had clearly stated its position on colonial problems in general and on the Rhodesian problem in particular. It had supported all the relevant General Assembly resolutions and called for self-determination and independence, based on equality of all inhabitants of the territory - in other words, majority rule - for the oppressed people of Zimbabwe, who had been deprived of their fundamental political and economic rights.

68. As for the means of achieving that goal, Portugal, while recognizing the legitimacy of the struggle of the people of Zimbabwe by all the means at their disposal, hoped that it would be possible to find a political solution so as to avoid further bloodshed and further suffering for the people of Zimbabwe, and enable them to choose their political future by democratic means. His delegation considered that all the political forces, both inside and outside the country, should participate in that democratic process and make a concerted effort, not only to fight against the obstinacy and deceitful tactics of the Smith régime but also to form a new State that satisfied the real aspirations of the majority of the population.

69. He was happy to announce that his Government had incorporated into its legislation the provisions of Security Council resolutions 253 (1968) and 388 (1976) calling for compulsory sanctions against Southern Rhodesia. In November 1977, the Portuguese airline TAP had suspended flights to and from Rhodesia. Those important measures would enable all individuals and bodies corporate under Portuguese jurisdiction to comply with the system of sanctions prescribed by the Security Council, whose implementation would serve as a significant deterrent to the illegal régime.

70. Mr. NUKETAR (Sudan) deplored the fact that the illegal régime was continuing to place every possible obstacle in the way of a solution to the problem of Southern Rhodesia and constantly resorting to the same despicable tactics to remain in power and preserve the privileges of the white minority. The African countries had spared no effort to arrive at an equitable solution and had welcomed all initiatives for peace, and particularly the Anglo-American plan, despite its obvious short-comings. His delegation had noted with satisfaction the positive trend in the attitude of the United Kingdom, which now fully recognized its responsibilities concerning Zimbabwe. For it was indeed responsible for taking all necessary measures to ensure that Zimbabwe became independent in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the population.

71. The illegal minority régime constituted a threat to the stability and security of the region and of the whole world. By its repeated acts of aggression against independent neighbouring countries it was seeking to humiliate the international community and weaken the support which the freedom fighters enjoyed in those countries. The sanctions had not prevented it from staying in power and engaging in acts of aggression against neighbouring countries. Despite the closing of the border between Mozambique and Southern Rhodesia, the latter continued to import oil and petroleum products via South Africa. It was therefore necessary to extend the sanctions under Article 41 of the United Nations Charter, and all countries must be asked to implement the programme of action for the liberation of Zimbabwe and Namibia adopted by the International Conference in Support of the Peoples of Zimbabwe and Namibia, so as to isolate the two racist régimes and put an end to their domination. Lastly, all nationalist groups must set aside their differences so as to avoid wasting effort and concentrate entirely on the struggle against the common enemy.

72. Mr. VINCI (Italy) said he welcomed the constructive statement made by the representative of the United Kingdom. The process of decolonization in Africa was now almost completed, and that constituted a tremendous success for the United Nations and for the international community as a whole. Italy was proud to have actively participated in that historic process and in the solution of one of the fundamental problems which lay ahead on the path to independence, namely, economic development. Italy was making its technology and manpower available to the third world, and to African countries in particular. Thousands of Italians were helping the African people to build roads, bridges, dams and factories, and to develop agricultural projects and promote education and medical care. In particular, Italy was executing "keys in hand" projects, whereby Italian experts left the country as soon as a project they had helped to execute was completed.

73. Africa was developing, but there were two colonialist régimes, in Southern Rhodesia and Namibia, which were slowing down the pace of the continent's economic and political progress. For 12 years all the efforts to bring about a peaceful solution to the problem of Southern Rhodesia had been frustrated by the obstinacy of the present illegal régime. However the régime could not last much longer because it could not indefinitely withstand the march of history, evidenced by political and economic international pressure, the struggle of the national movements of Zimbabwe, the commitment of the front-line States and the efforts of the United

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(Mr. Vinci, Italy)

Nations. The proposals made by the United Kingdom and the United States had the support of the European Economic Community, because they seemed to be fairly and equitably based and took into account the interests of all parties. It could only be hoped that those parties would approve them.

74. There were signs of transition in Southern Rhodesia but it was hard to form a clear picture of the current situation. On the one hand Mr. Smith was now speaking of "adult suffrage", which seemed to imply acceptance of universal suffrage. Nevertheless, he had committed repeated acts of brutal aggression against the territory of a neighbouring country. It was therefore hard to tell whether he had taken a genuinely new attitude or was simply using another delaying tactic as part of a "divide and rule" strategy.

75. However there was no doubt that the sanctions had proved effective, and Italy felt that they should be maintained as long as the present illegal situation prevailed. Indeed, it was more necessary now than ever for them to be scrupulously and universally applied, and their enforcement closely supervised. Whatever the outcome of the negotiations, their success would largely depend upon a unified effort of the people of Zimbabwe, whose political forces must participate in the process of transition to majority rule.

76. Mr. GLAYEL (Syrian Arab Republic) said that it was needless to recall the hard living conditions and sufferings of the African majority. However he wished to protest on behalf of his delegation against the behaviour of Ian Smith, which showed a total lack of any sense of responsibility. The illegal régime was doing all in its power to seek recognition by other countries, so as to continue to exploit the natural wealth and labour resources of Zimbabwe with impunity. The efforts made to arrive at an equitable solution were being obstructed by the obstinacy of Ian Smith which presented a striking contrast to the far more flexible attitude taken by the nationalists. The Syrian Arab Republic had protested from the outset against the acts of aggression committed in southern Africa. It had always supported the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council, and faithfully applied them. It maintained no ties with the Smith régime. The two racist régimes in southern Africa were receiving assistance from countries which were trying to tighten their hold on the resources of southern Africa and, to that end, had no hesitation in violating the resolutions on economic sanctions. Any solution to the problem of Southern Rhodesia must be based on certain principles: the release of prisoners, respect for human rights, the restoration of democracy, the cessation of aggression against neighbouring countries, etc. Only in those conditions could power be effectively transferred to the African population.

77. His country's position was based on the conviction that an all-out struggle must be waged against the common enemy, racism. For the problem in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa was not merely an African problem but an international problem: it was the problem of any people struggling against racism to achieve its liberation.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.