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SECOND COMMITTEE

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held on

Monday, 29 November 1976

at 3 p.m.

New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 56th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. LOHANI (Nepal)

later: Mr. VALDES (Bolivia)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.45 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (A/31/266; A/C.2/31/L.37, A/C.2/31/L.27) (continued)

1. Mr. FARAH (Assistant Secretary-General for Special Political Questions, Co-ordinator of the Programme of International Assistance to Mozambique), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to Mozambique (A/31/266), outlined the background to the report and said that, as the report made clear, although there were no recent statistics, the situation facing Mozambique was serious. Foreign exchange earnings and the level of imports had declined, economic activity was reduced, the traffic handled on the railways and in the ports was lower than before the imposition of sanctions, the level of employment was down some 40 per cent from 1973, and a food shortage was expected despite international offers of assistance. The response of the international community to the emergency projects had not been encouraging. Moreover, recent attacks by Southern Rhodesian forces had aggravated the situation. Thus, significantly more financial, material and technical assistance was required. More resources would also be necessary for the United Nations Special Account to provide international assistance to Mozambique. With regard to such assistance, in addition to the contributions listed in the annexes to the report, Belgium had made an offer of 1,500 tons of wheat, together with the cost of transportation to Maputo, and Finland had made a cash contribution equivalent to \$US 25,893.32. It would be seen from the list of contributing countries that the majority of Member States had still not responded to the appeals of the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretary-General. The Office of the Co-ordinator would provide interested Governments with any additional information concerning such assistance and would facilitate communications when necessary between donors and the Mozambique authorities.

1a. Mr. Valdes (Bolivia) took the Chair.

Draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.37

2. Mr. RAMPHUL (Mauritius), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.37, referred to the severe effects of the application of sanctions against Southern Rhodesia, especially during the first year of independence, for a country such as Mozambique which had inherited an economy weakened by a long struggle for liberation and by centuries of colonial rule and exploitation. The mandatory sanctions imposed by the Security Council represented an international responsibility the cost of which should be shared by the international community and should not fall solely on the States bordering on the Territory in question. The Government and people of Mozambique had shown spirit, courage and a willingness to sacrifice and the international community was indebted to them. Both the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council had unanimously recognized the obligation of the international community and had made various appeals in that connexion. It was discouraging to note that, although some Member States had responded positively and generously to those appeals, the majority of States had still not announced contributions. The losses suffered by Mozambique and its needs in terms of food and

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(Mr. Ramphul, Mauritius)

development assistance required at least the sum of \$150 million. It should be pointed out that OAU had made available to Mozambique the sum of \$26 million from the Arab Loan Fund for Africa.

3. With regard to the draft resolution, the preambular paragraphs referred only to the political framework, while the operative paragraphs acknowledged the assistance already received or pledged and drew attention to the food and other material needs of Mozambique. The draft resolution, which would add the voice and authority of the General Assembly to previous appeals, contained nothing controversial and was in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. He therefore hoped that it would be adopted unanimously.

4. The CHAIRMAN announced that the following countries had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution: Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Burundi, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Finland, Ghana, India, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Kenya, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Republic, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Pakistan, Portugal, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Swaziland, Sweden, Togo, Uganda, United Republic of Cameroon, Upper Volta, Yemen and Yugoslavia.

5. Mr. LOBANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) supported the draft resolution under consideration and expressed the solidarity of the Soviet Union with the people of Mozambique who were struggling heroically against the illegal racist régime of Southern Rhodesia and against the forces of imperialism represented by South Africa, Southern Rhodesia and their allies. It was the duty of the whole international community to provide bilateral assistance and assistance through the United Nations to ensure the triumph of that struggle against the last bastions of colonialism. The Soviet people followed with interest the creative work of the Government of Mozambique in reforming the structures of the country, and the Soviet Union contributed to that task with material and moral assistance directly and through OAU. In 1973, the Soviet Union had concluded economic and technical co-operation agreements, trade agreements and agreements on fisheries and maritime and air transport with Mozambique. The Soviet Union had also allocated funds to assist Mozambique in the education and health fields. Relations between the Soviet Union and Mozambique were established on the same basis as relations between the Soviet Union and other countries, namely, equality, non-interference in internal affairs, and the freedom of each country to choose the path to development which it considered most appropriate. The Soviet Union condemned Southern Rhodesian aggression, which was proof that it was essential to be on guard against the attacks of imperialism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism and, to that end, to strengthen international solidarity.

6. Mr. KHAN (Mozambique) congratulated the members of the Bureau and expressed appreciation to the Secretary-General, the Co-ordinator of the Programme of International Assistance to Mozambique and preceding speakers for all their efforts.

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(Mr. Khan, Mozambique)

7. Not all Mozambique's economic problems were due to the sanctions imposed against Southern Rhodesia with effect from 3 March 1976. The Portuguese colonial administration had already incurred serious deficits as a result of military expenditure, corruption and mismanagement. Prior to 3 March 1976, Mozambique had experienced economic difficulties as a result of the closing of the frontiers between Southern Rhodesia and Zambia and the British blockade of the coasts of Mozambique directed against Southern Rhodesia. Finally, there were other economic problems which, although they stemmed from the imposition of sanctions against Southern Rhodesia, had not been fully covered in the report. Among those problems, mention should be made of the deviation of airlines from normal routes, the problem of Mozambicans working in Southern Rhodesia, the acquisition of raw materials for industry, and so on. Nevertheless, Mozambique did not complain of the difficulties which it experienced. When they had decided to implement the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council concerning sanctions, the people of Mozambique had been aware of the effects that such action would have.

8. He commended the report of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council (E/5872/Rev.1) and the report of the United Nations Programme of International Assistance to Mozambique (A/31/266) and reiterated the appeal made in the Security Council by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mozambique that all peace-loving countries continue to give Mozambique in its present situation the same assistance that they had given it when it was struggling for independence. In conclusion, he mentioned the countries and intergovernmental and regional organizations which had responded directly or indirectly to that appeal and thanked them for the assistance they had given.

9. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.37.

10. Draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.37 was adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.27

11. Mr. QADRUD-DIN (Pakistan), speaking on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations which were members of the Group of 77 and on behalf of Turkey, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.27 concerning assistance to the Comoros.

12. Mr. BOINA (Comoros) pointed out that the UNCTAD session held in Nairobi in May 1976 had recommended that the Comoros be included in the list of the least developed among the developing countries and had appealed to the international community to provide the necessary financial, technical and economic assistance to meet the development needs of that country which had recently gained its independence. He referred to some of the problems which affected the economic situation of the Comoros, such as the lack of subsoil resources, exclusive dependence on agriculture, the growing deficit in the trade balance, and the very high unemployment rate.

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(Mr. Boina, Comoros)

13. Before the severing of organic and institutional relations between the Comoros and France, the economy of the archipelago had been directed towards export crops, for which the best land had been used. The consequences of that economic structure had been pernicious. Subsistence agriculture had been relegated to marginal areas where the yield was very low and, moreover, raised serious problems of erosion. Many food-stuffs had to be imported and prices were very high. The handicrafts industry had been indirectly destroyed and it had not been possible to establish a processing industry. Consequently, unemployment was extremely high. Added to that, the brutal severing of technical and financial aid had aggravated the economic and social situation. The budget deficit was enormous and, despite the fact that a policy of austerity was being applied, it would soon become intolerable. In fact, the State had had to take responsibility for a whole range of services which, during the period of internal self-government, had been administered by France. Those services required qualified personnel, which was at present non-existent, as well as loans and investments since the cutting off of loans and investments had been a severe blow to the economic development of the Comoros.

14. Despite the fact that the situation was so difficult, his country had been able to survive thanks to the determination and sacrifices of the people of the Comoros and the assistance received from abroad, and he expressed the gratitude of the Government and people of the Comoros to fraternal African and Arab countries and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

15. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objections, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.27.

16. Draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.27 was adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 59: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (A/C.2/31/L.2, L.3, L.4, L.31, L.42) (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.2

17. The CHAIRMAN drew the attention of the Committee to document A/C.2/31/L.42 on the administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution under consideration.

18. Mr. JÖDAHL (Sweden) said that, since document A/C.2/31/L.42 had just been distributed to the members of the Committee, so that they needed time to examine it, any decision on the draft resolution should be postponed.

19. Mr. HOHLER (United Kingdom) supported the suggestion of the representative of Sweden. He said that the United Nations Secretariat had not mentioned the financial implications of the draft resolution either when the question of the borrowing authority of the Administrator of UNDP had first been brought up before the UNDP Governing Council in January 1976 or when the draft resolution had been adopted by the Governing Council in June and by the Economic and Social Council in July.

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(Mr. Hohler, United Kingdom)

20. He believed that in the draft resolution under consideration there seemed to be some confusion between the borrowing authority of the Administrator of UNDP and the authority of the Secretary-General to lend money under other rules. Paragraph 1 (f) of the draft resolution stated that the rate of interest paid should be the lowest possible, whereas in document A/C.2/31/L.42 the United Nations Secretariat indicated that that might be contrary to the rules governing the Secretary-General's authority to lend or borrow money. If the two rules were in conflict, it was evident, in his opinion, that, on the one hand, the Secretary-General could not lend money and, on the other hand, the Administrator of UNDP could not borrow money. He therefore did not understand the relationship between the contents of document A/C.2/31/L.42 and the draft resolution under consideration; accordingly, he asked the Secretariat to clarify those concepts.

21. He also asked for some clarification concerning the meaning of the expression "normal current rates of interest" in paragraph 4 of document A/C.2/31/L.42. In that connexion, he pointed out the considerable difference between the 5 per cent rate of interest on loans obtained in Eurodollars and the 17 per cent rate of interest on loans obtained in Eurosterling.

22. The CHAIRMAN said that if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided to postpone until its next meeting the decision on draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.2, entitled "Borrowing authority of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme".

23. It was so decided.

Draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.3

24. The CHAIRMAN said that if there was no objection, he would take it the Committee decided to adopt draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.3, entitled "Expansion of basic services provided by United Nations Children's Fund in developing countries".

25. Draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.3 was adopted without a vote.

Draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.4

26. The CHAIRMAN said that if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee decided to adopt draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.4, entitled "United Nations Volunteers".

27. Draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.4 was adopted without a vote.

Draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.31

28. Mr. RIVAS (Colombia) announced that the delegations of Denmark, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Sweden and the United States had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution under consideration.

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(Mr. Rivas, Colombia)

29. After outlining the contents of the draft resolution, he pointed out that it was designed to follow up Economic and Social Council resolution 2021 (LXI), which his delegation had also sponsored. He was confident that the draft resolution would be supported by all delegations and would be adopted by consensus.

30. Draft resolution A/C.2/31/L.31 was adopted without a vote.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

31. The CHAIRMAN said that if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to extend the time-limit for the submission of draft resolutions on agenda items 59, 60, 63, 66 and 67 by 24 hours, until 6 p.m. Tuesday, 30 November.

32. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.