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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 4TH MEETING

Chairman: Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 104: ACTIVITIES OF FOREIGN ECONOMIC AND OTHER INTERESTS WHICH ARE IMPEDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES IN NAMIBIA AND IN ALL OTHER TERRITORIES UNDER COLONIAL DOMINATION AND EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE COLONIALISM, APARTHEID AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA: 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/39/23 (Part III))

1. Mr. OBUNYASI (Kenya) said that despite the adoption in 1974 of General Assembly resolution 3295 (XXIX), which had approved Decree No. 1 for the Protection of the Natural Resources of Namibia, the Pretoria régime and transnational corporations had continued to exploit illegally the natural and human resources of Namibia, in violation of the principle of international law which recognized Namibian sovereignty over its natural resources.
2. All the international community's efforts to make South Africa leave the territory had so far failed. Therefore, condemnation of the illegal régime and its activities in Namibia was no longer enough; all States must implement and comply with the provisions of Security Council resolution 418 (1977) on sanctions against South Africa. The independence of Namibia was the international community's responsibility, and the States collaborating with South Africa should cease their economic activities and put an end to the transfer of matériel, technology and personnel that enhanced the racist régime's economic and military strength and enabled it to remain illegally in Namibia.
3. As Mr. Daniel T. arap Moi, the President of Kenya, had said at the thirty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly, Kenya's quarrel was with the system of apartheid and not with the people who lived in South Africa. Kenya felt that the system should be changed peacefully. His delegation thought that the United Nations must use any principle of international law that would restore democracy in southern Africa. It shared the view that the United Nations should continue to assume direct responsibility for Namibia's affairs, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2145 (XXI). He regretted that the Western Contact Group had failed to persuade South Africa to listen to it, and he called on it to use all available means, including economic measures, to force Pretoria to open negotiations with SWAPO. He also regretted that the question of Namibia's independence had been unfairly linked with the withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola.
4. Kenya supported Security Council resolutions 385 (1976) and 435 (1978) without any amendments, recognized SWAPO as the sole and authentic representative of the people of Namibia, supported the armed struggle of the Namibian people and paid a tribute to the sacrifices of the People's Liberation Army of Namibia, considered that the Namibian people must be able to exercise its inalienable right to self-determination and national independence, and believed that Walvis Bay should be an integral part of an independent Namibia.

(Mr. Obunyasi, Kenya)

5. Finally, he congratulated the Reverend Desmond Tutu, who had just received the Nobel Peace Prize, which was further evidence of the international community's interest in the question and its abhorrence of the system of apartheid.

6. Mr. SKOFENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that, in the few countries and territories where an anachronistic colonial order persisted, imperialist monopolies and transnational corporations found ideal conditions for their selfish interests to flourish, which explained why their activities there were constantly increasing, as could be seen from many of the documents before the Fourth Committee. Those activities, which the United Nations had already condemned, impeded the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. That was true above all in southern Africa, where South Africa was opposing Namibia's accession to independence. The hotbed of racism and oppression that was South Africa presented a threat to the independent countries of the region and to peace and security in general.

7. There was no need to ask South Africa what enabled it to defy the will of the international community and the decisions of the United Nations, and to trample underfoot the norms and principles of international law, because the answer had long been known and was confirmed once again by the report of the Special Committee against Apartheid, which showed that it was because of support from the United States, other Western countries, Israel and a number of transnational corporations and financial institutions that the Pretoria régime was able to persist in its rebellious attitude.

8. In order to combat the national liberation movements and thus maintain a dominant position in the economy of the countries of the region, the Western countries provided Pretoria with large-scale economic, political and financial assistance, and the United States, as well as some members of NATO and Israel, received in return protection for their strategic interests and their investments. It should be recalled in that connection that the overall amount of foreign investment in the South African economy exceeded 30 billion dollars. According to document A/AC.131/120, there were 2,000 transnational corporations in South Africa and most of the trade, investment and transfer of technology were channelled through those corporations - there were 400 from the United States alone and 650 from the United Kingdom - which, for the most part, were based in the United States, Western Europe, Israel and Japan.

9. Furthermore, Western banks provided generous financial assistance to South Africa. Thus, during the first four months of 1984, the South African régime had borrowed \$490 million on international financial markets. It was obvious those funds alleviated the serious crisis affecting South African society, a crisis due to the aggressive policy of the Pretoria régime and its enormous military expenditure. Through the active use of financial and economic leverage, and by putting pressure on progressive forces in Africa, the imperialist Powers, in particular the United States, were increasing their exploitation of the region's human and natural resources, particularly its strategic resources. Namibia was

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(Mr. Skofenko, Ukrainian SSR)

thus experiencing a veritable plunder of its wealth, suffering irreparable harm. Some idea of the involvement of the imperialist monopolies in the exploitation of Namibia's natural resources could be gained from document A/AC.131/115, which listed 335 transnational corporations as operating in the Territory.

10. As the hour of Namibia's liberation drew inexorably closer, the transnational corporations were scurrying to extract as much wealth as they could from the Territory, without heed for the destructive consequences of their acts for nature and the ecological balance of the country. Namibia's wealth was offered cheaply by South Africa, which thus hoped to gain allies and accomplices among the Western Powers. The report of the United Nations Council for Namibia clearly showed how South Africa operated in that regard, and it was apparent that the enormous profits made by pillaging the Territory's resources derived largely from the merciless exploitation of the black workers, who were paid 10 times less than white workers; thus, of course, the conditions in Namibia favoured investment. The pillaging by the transnational corporations had recently been denounced at a seminar held at Ljubljana in April 1984, which had emphasized that the activities of foreign interests constituted the main obstacle to the rapid attainment of independence by Namibia.

11. The General Assembly had, in resolution 38/50, reaffirmed the need to scrupulously respect Decree No. 1, a need also emphasized by the seminar held at Geneva in August 1984. Yet the Western countries were certainly in no hurry to respond to the appeals made by the international community.

12. His delegation called for everything possible to be done to put an immediate halt to the plunder by the imperialist monopolies and transnational corporations which were exploiting Namibia's natural and human resources, so that the Namibian people might benefit from them.

13. The harmful activities of foreign economic interests were not limited to South Africa. It was apparent that in fact they extended throughout a series of small Territories. There were many examples indicating that the right of the peoples of those small Territories to independence was ignored for the sake of transnational corporations and monopolies, whose activities, far from benefiting the population, kept it in poverty. Such was the case, for example, of Micronesia, Puerto Rico and other territories. His delegation considered that the continued pillaging by the imperialist monopolies, wherever it took place, favoured the maintenance of colonialism, racism and apartheid, and the Organization should thus do everything in its power to end the situation and promote the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, for its part, stood willing to support any measure which would bring about such a development.

14. Mr. AMR (Egypt) said that Namibia offered the most striking example of the exploitation of the wealth of a Non-Self-Governing Territory by foreign interests in collusion with the occupying authorities, with the aim of impeding the independence of the Territory and of continuing to profit from the situation for as

(Mr. Amr, Egypt)

long as possible, to the detriment of the current and future interests of the local population and the will of the international community, expressed in numerous United Nations resolutions and enshrined in the rules of international law.

15. Namibia had abundant natural wealth, but the South African apartheid régime had the Territory at its mercy: it controlled the railway system, the airline and the entire communications network. It was the régime which supplied the Territory with oil and coal, and most of the civil servants were South Africans. Finally, Namibia was part of the rand area and the South African customs union.

16. Although it was difficult to obtain statistics on the Namibian economy - it being the practice of the apartheid régime to combine figures for the Territory with those for South Africa and to ensure that the figures gave the impression that Namibia was an economically weak Territory, heavily dependent on South Africa - it was possible to gain some idea, from the information published by the corporations which operated in Namibia and from studies carried out by non-governmental organizations and some Western European countries, of the considerable profits made by foreign corporations in Namibia, and thus, of the taxation which South Africa levied on those profits. It appeared, for example, that corporation profits before taxation represented more than 60 per cent of Namibia's GDP. All those corporations had, of course, been attracted by the cheap labour guaranteed by the system of apartheid. The foreign economic interests in Namibia were so powerful that they had come to control the economic life of the Territory.

17. Namibia's proven and potential reserves of uranium, to take one example, were among the largest in the world, providing a major source of income for Rössing Uranium Ltd., which operated the largest open-cast mine in the world. He stressed that the conditions under which the radioactive element was extracted were extremely dangerous for the Namibian workers, who did not have adequate protection, and for the environment in general.

18. It was obvious that the corporations which carried out such lucrative activities in Namibia were bent on impeding independence for the Territory so as to be able to continue their exploitation for as long as possible without hindrance. The point was to determine what the United Nations could do to protect the interests of Namibians. Every study carried out on the subject, particularly those submitted to the regional seminar held at Geneva from 27 to 31 August 1984, agreed on one point: all the countries which had recognized the illegality of South Africa's presence in Namibia and the authority of the United Nations over the Territory, an authority which was invested in the United Nations Council for Namibia, should undertake to implement Decree No. 1 for the Protection of the Natural Resources of Namibia, which had been promulgated by the United Nations Council for Namibia on 27 September 1974 and approved by the General Assembly on 13 December of the same year.

19. He was grateful to the Committee of 24 for its efforts to monitor the situation in Non-Self-Governing Territories, whose natural resources were being pillaged in varying degree by foreign economic interests, on occasion, as in

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(Mr. Amr, Egypt)

Namibia, to the detriment of the rights of their peoples, and for its activities to mobilize international public opinion in favour of independence for all peoples still under colonial domination.

20. Mr. SOLTYSIEWICZ (Poland) recalled that at its thirty-eighth session, when considering the item on activities of foreign economic and other interests which impeded implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 38/50, in which it reaffirmed the solemn obligation of the administering Powers to promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the Territories under their administration and to protect the human and natural resources of those Territories against abuses. At the same time, the Assembly had adopted decision 38/419 concerning military activities, and reiterated its conviction that those activities also constituted a serious impediment to the process of decolonization, including the decolonization of Namibia.

21. That opinion had been repeated several times in various international bodies and forums. As an example, he mentioned document A/AC.131/117 which contained the conclusions and recommendations of the Seminar on the Activities of Foreign Economic Interests in the Exploitation of Namibia's Natural and Human Resources, held in April 1984 at Ljubljana, and which denounced the greed of transnational corporations and the collaboration of the Western Powers with South Africa; he also mentioned the Bangkok Declaration, adopted by the United Nations Council for Namibia, which deplored the continued economic and military assistance rendered to the Pretoria régime by some Western countries and Israel. The Council for Namibia had urged the Security Council to make a positive response to the request of the overwhelming majority of the world community by immediately imposing mandatory sanctions against South Africa and tightening the arms embargo imposed by resolution 418 (1977).

22. Despite the general consensus on the subject, there had been little or no change in the situation since the thirty-eighth session. It was a well-known fact that transnational corporations dominated the major sectors of the Namibian economy and the economies of other territories under colonial rule. Those corporations were even intensifying the exploitation of human and natural resources (such as Namibian uranium and diamonds) in violation of Decree No. 1 for the Protection of the Natural Resources of Namibia.

23. There could be no doubt that the joint action of those Governments and transnational corporations impeded elimination of the colonial system, illegal occupation, racial discrimination and apartheid and had a destructive effect on the local economy. The same applied to the military activities of certain administering Powers in the non-self-governing territories.

24. In conclusion, his delegation denounced colonial and neo-colonial policy, exploitation of colonial peoples and their resources and illegal occupation of their territories. Poland had rendered and would continue to render all possible support to peoples under the colonial yoke and supported the demand of the

(Mr. Soltysiewicz, Poland)

international community that the Security Council should proceed without delay to impose mandatory sanctions against South Africa. The colonial Powers should end their exploitation and withdraw their military bases and installations from colonial territories because, in addition to impeding the process of decolonization, those activities constituted a serious threat to international peace and security.

25. Effective measures should be taken to implement Decree No. 1 and put an end to the collaboration of NATO member States and certain international institutions with South Africa. The United Nations should intensify the campaign against South Africa and against those countries and transnational corporations which were collaborating with that country. The administering Powers and the transnational corporations operating in colonial territories should provide the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations with the necessary data, including information on their profits, in order to enable the Centre to broaden the scope of its work and prepare the necessary documentation.

26. His delegation attached the greatest importance to the reports of the Special Committee on decolonization, and of the Council for Namibia and other documents on the item under consideration, including the reports of the Centre on Transnational Corporations, and the work of those bodies. It therefore fully supported the draft resolution and draft decision in document A/39/23 (Part III).

27. Mr. AL-SIKAB (Iraq) said that it had been claimed that the activities of foreign concerns in non-self-governing territories were in no way prejudicial to the economy of those territories and that, they did not, therefore, impede implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence. That was not true. To prove his point, he mentioned working paper A/AC.109/782, prepared by the Secretariat, and the numerous reports prepared by the Centre on Transnational Corporations, the most recent of which appeared under the symbol A/38/444. The economic situation of Namibia had deteriorated and its wealth was being exploited to the point of exhaustion.

28. How many resolutions had the General Assembly adopted condemning economic activities which impeded implementation of the Declaration, affirming the inalienable right of peoples to enjoyment of the natural resources of their territories and requesting all member States to take legislative, administrative or other measures against corporations whose activities were detrimental to the interests of the inhabitants of the colonial territories in which they operated? All those resolutions remained dead letters: would the resolution before the Committee suffer the same fate? The racist régime of South Africa was more determined than ever to exploit Namibia's natural resources which it used to oppress the Namibian people and commit acts of aggression against neighbouring independent States. Those activities were contrary to the basic principles of international relations in the Charter of the United Nations.

29. Iraq subscribed to the views expressed in paragraph 53 of working paper A/AC.109/781 prepared by the Secretariat: the collaboration and financial support

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(Mr. Al-Sikab, Iraq)

which certain States - particularly the Zionist régime - extended to the South African nuclear programme encouraged the Pretoria régime in its defiance of the international community and obstructed efforts to eliminate the system of apartheid and bring to an end South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia. If adequate measures were taken to isolate the apartheid régime, it would not be able to develop nuclear weapons and thus threaten mankind as a whole.

30. In conclusion, he reaffirmed the solidarity of the Iraqi people with the peoples of Namibia and South Africa, his country's support for unconditional implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence and its firm opposition to the activities of foreign economic or other interests which impeded the accession of those territories to independence.

31. Mr. CAMARA (Guinea) said that for the Republic of Guinea, which from its earliest days of independence had distinguished itself in the international arena by engaging in a dynamic anti-colonialist struggle against the foreign oppressors, the item under discussion was especially important. Guinea had opposed, was opposing and would always oppose all forms of foreign domination.

32. His delegation accordingly denounced the South African Government and condemned its Fascist policy of oppression against the black majority in South Africa despite the urgent appeals of the international community. By persevering in its hateful policy of apartheid and continuing on its dangerous path of violating the most elementary rules and principles of justice and human morality, South Africa was committing a crime against humanity. It must not be allowed to do so any longer and his Government reiterated its firm and unshakeable support, both moral and material, for liberation movements such as ANC and PAC in their struggle against the champions of apartheid.

33. Furthermore, the Fascist régime of Pretoria was continuing its illegal occupation of Namibia despite the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. Guinea deplored the indecision of the members of the Contact Group which had not succeeded in obtaining a solution in accordance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978), the unfortunate result of which was that the spirit and letter of the resolution had been called into question once again. The unlawful occupation of Namibia had lasted too long, as had the systematic pillaging of its mineral, maritime and agricultural resources, and the international community must assume its full historic responsibility.

34. Guinea also deplored South Africa's military and strategic alliances with Western countries which were motivated only by their own petty and selfish interests. Those same Powers, which boasted of being champions of freedom and human rights, were impervious to the extortions of the Pretoria régime in South Africa and Namibia and made a laughing stock of the various United Nations resolutions. In the face of the tragedy that the people of Namibia were enduring, the world body could not allow itself to become the passive plaything of sordid special interests without losing its credibility in the eyes of the world at large.

(Mr. Camara, Guinea)

35. Confronted with that situation, the people of Namibia had no choice but to persevere in its struggle for liberation, and Guinea would continue to offer active and unconditional support to SWAPO until Namibia was completely independent. Moreover, in accordance with its anti-colonialist traditions, Guinea would consistently oppose any attempt to link the immediate independence of Namibia to problems pertaining to the sovereignty of a brother African State, Angola.

36. His delegation condemned all de facto situations involving systematic violations of the right of peoples to self-determination and national independence wherever they occurred, as being definite sources of tension and conflict that would sooner or later prove a serious threat to international peace and security. Guinea was convinced that only scrupulous respect for the fundamental right of peoples to live in freedom and independence and to adopt the system of government of their choice could safeguard international peace and security.

37. Mr. BADER (United States of America), speaking in exercise of his right of reply, said that the representative of the Ukrainian SSR had spoken at length of investment by the United States and other Western countries in southern Africa and had quoted many statistics, as though investment in itself was to be condemned. There had been lengthy discussions, both in the international community and in the United States itself, on the use of investment or divestment for bringing about desirable peaceful change in South Africa and an end to the deplorable system of apartheid. It was very unlikely that changes would occur in South Africa as a result of accusations from the sidelines: they would be more likely to come about through participation in a process of peaceful change and through the influence that some States might be able to exercise in that country.

38. The Sullivan Principles, which the Ukraine had characterized as designed to intensify the exploitation of the masses in South Africa, a charge wholly at odds with reality, had in fact served to bring about a certain degree of desegregation in employment and better working conditions for black South African workers. Companies which had signed and subscribed to the Sullivan Principles applied the principles of desegregation (principle 1) and equal pay for work (principle 3), recognized black African trade unions and offered a whole range of remedial procedures for dealing with workers' grievances. He cited as examples the fact that 99 per cent of the signatory companies were complying with principle 1 and 100 per cent of them with principle 3; in 1975, blacks had held 16 per cent of managerial and supervisory posts, and in 1983 the figure had been 21.2 per cent. Since 1980, the pay of white employees of the signatory companies had risen 16 per cent whereas that of black employees had increased 20 per cent.

39. Most United States companies in South Africa paid very good wages. The Sullivan Principles required the signatories to pay at least 30 per cent more than the established minimum level and in 1983 94 per cent of signatory companies had fulfilled that requirement. The number of black workers participating in educational and training programmes at company expense had risen considerably between 1982 and 1983, as had the number of blacks being trained for job advancement. Furthermore, the companies which had signed the Sullivan Principles

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(Mr. Bader, United States)

had spent more than \$24 million over the last six years to improve health care and living conditions for the blacks.

40. It was true that South Africa still had a long way to go before reaching a standard that the United States could regard as satisfactory, but it was more than likely that progress would be made, in a way that would belie the myths that the Committee had heard at the current meeting.

41. Mr. SKOFENKC (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic), exercising his right of reply, noted that the data showing increased collaboration between the United States and the apartheid régime had been taken from official documents of the United States and the United Nations (reports of the Committee of 24, the Special Committee against Apartheid and the Council for Namibia) and from a number of United Nations resolutions.

42. As a member of the Special Committee against Apartheid the Ukrainian SSR had at its disposal a great deal of data revealing co-operation between the United States and South Africa in various fields. He would not enumerate them but would simply recall the North American Regional Conference for Action against Apartheid, held in New York four months previously, at which various figures had been quoted clearly showing that the basic responsibility for the maintenance of the apartheid régime lay with the United States policy of "constructive engagement".

43. The Declaration adopted at the end of the Conference called for an ending to the "do-nothing" approach to the apartheid régime, in other words it demanded the ending of all investment - which also meant total divestment of funds already invested - full implementation of the arms embargo and the adoption of economic and cultural sanctions against the South African régime. The Ukrainian SSR did not recognize the validity of the Sullivan Principles and other guidelines whereby investments were deemed acceptable. Transnational corporations could not be regarded as exerting any kind of progressive influence. All investment served to support the apartheid régime and must be withdrawn.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.