

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTIETH SESSION

Official Records



**2438th
PLENARY MEETING**

Friday, 12 December 1975,
at 11.05 a.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

Page

Special meeting to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples	1275
---	------

**President: Mr. Gaston THORN
(Luxembourg).**

Special meeting to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

1. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): It gives me the greatest pleasure to preside today over the special meeting to commemorate the anniversary of the adoption by the United Nations, 15 years ago less two days, of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples [resolution 1514 (XV)].

2. The generous and ambitious aspiration to emancipation, self-determination and freedom for peoples was already embodied in essence in Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations, which lays down for the Organization the aim of developing friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples.

3. The Declaration made this an article of faith, if I may put it that way, for the United Nations; a programme policy which the General Assembly and the various organs of the United Nations have pursued with determination and success. Indeed, since the establishment of the United Nations more than 60 countries have achieved independence and the majority of them have come here to swell our ranks. It is symbolic that during this anniversary session six new States have been admitted to our midst, thus proving the depth and durability of the awareness which at the same time inspired and was the result of the Declaration of 1960. Today it is an irreversible historical fact, to the extent that no Government could proclaim colonialist intentions without immediately attracting general opprobrium and condemnation.

4. Nevertheless, I must emphasize that, if it is not too optimistic to envisage that the decolonization mission of the United Nations will be nearing completion in the not-too-distant future, the moment, alas, has not yet come to relax our efforts. The régimes in southern Africa, whose blindness is only equalled by their tenacity, continue to cling to territories such as Rhodesia and Namibia, thus endangering the interests, which they think they are defending, of all peoples, whatever their origin or colour. Before it is too late, those régimes must realize that the wind of history and of change, which began to blow after the Second

World War, will not die down until the archaic situations which it gave rise have disappeared.

5. Let us earnestly seek peaceful solutions to these major problems for the future of Africa and the world; unless we do so the cycle of violence which has so often inflicted suffering and misfortune on innocent people may well increase in intensity. We must also patiently try to ensure that the smaller territories scattered throughout the world, which do not have the economic and demographic resources necessary for development, are helped in a realistic way so as to enable their peoples to exercise their right to self-determination.

6. Decolonization has been synonymous with transfer of sovereignty and with the emancipation of peoples from colonialism imposed from abroad. The colonial Powers, realizing the scope of their responsibilities and the fact that they had to limit their ambitions, have withdrawn towards more natural frontiers. At the same time, the colonized people have strengthened their determination to govern themselves. Not everyone has experienced the same sense of awareness. Far from it. It has often been a painful process and has even resulted in bloodshed. Impossible to avoid, it has prevailed.

7. We must now do more. A flag, an army, a new name for a country or its capital are, of course, clear evidence of a fierce determination to achieve national identity. Yet they do not suffice in themselves to ensure for our peoples their inalienable and lasting right to self-determination, both internal and external, which is the supreme expression of their sovereignty.

8. A break with the past is taking place yet not all ties with the past are being severed. Who would want them to be? New links are being forged. We must still build the future.

9. Economic and social development is our most pressing task. Freedom for the poor is precarious indeed. Poverty and destitution are a lasting offence to man's moral conscience. It is incumbent upon us to do something about it. With each passing day we are aware of our political, economic and, as I said yesterday in connexion with human rights, moral interdependence.

10. We need one another. Our actions and our failure to act may well have a positive or negative effect on our neighbours. Markets, resources, skills, capital—all these factors should form part of a consistent and reasonably effective whole which will allow everyone to live better, in greater dignity and freedom, and as he sees fit. That is the meaning of self-determination. Hence, new links based on subjugation should not be established under cover of co-operation, assistance, or even ideology. This is primarily the responsibility of the rich and powerful.

11. I venture to hope that the remaining vestiges of colonialism will shortly disappear from the world. I hope, in particular, that the United Nations and more especially this Assembly of sovereign States will become a forum in which all can meet to discuss their problems together and to seek equitable solutions in a spirit of conciliation and co-operation.

12. On this day of commemoration let us celebrate our successes but let us also remain vigilant so that men and the States which serve them may continue freely to exercise those fundamental options without which there can be no survival in dignity, peace and security for anyone.

13. I now call on the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kurt Waldheim.

14. The SECRETARY-GENERAL: Fifteen years ago, on 14 December 1960, the General Assembly took an historic decision that marked a turning-point in the annals of the United Nations. This was the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples which represented a great step forward in the application of the principles of the Charter.

15. That Declaration has had a far-reaching effect on many aspects of international life, and, above all, on the evolution of the United Nations itself. When the General Assembly, without a single dissenting vote, called for the speedy independence of all colonial peoples, it greatly strengthened the moral authority of the United Nations. Furthermore, it enhanced the effectiveness of the United Nations as an agent of peaceful change in an area and at a time when that was most needed. This role was foreseen in the Charter itself, when it set forth among the fundamental principles which our Organization is pledged to uphold the principle of equal rights and the self-determination of peoples. It was the all-too-painfully slow application of those principles in the colonial Territories and the increasingly urgent demands of the colonial peoples for self-determination and independence which led in 1960 to the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

16. It is, therefore, both appropriate and fitting that this fifteenth year should also mark the thirtieth anniversary of the signing of the Charter of the United Nations. The proximity of these two anniversaries serves to remind us of the paramount place which decolonization has occupied since the founding of the Organization. It should also help us to reflect upon the role which the United Nations has played, and must continue to play, in discharging its special responsibility towards the peoples of dependent Territories.

17. The adoption of the Declaration was an act of conscience on the part of the international community. It was a clear affirmation by the General Assembly of the right of peoples under colonial domination to share fully in the benefits of the Charter and of its determination to eradicate once and for all colonialism, which it saw as a major impediment to the achievement of world peace and genuine international co-operation. For the more than 80 million people who were then still living under colonial rule, the Declaration conveyed a message of hope for an independent and sovereign future.

18. On the basis of the principles set out in the Declaration, the United Nations has over the past 15 years made a sustained and concerted effort to accelerate the process of decolonization. This has been a formidable task, and at the outset many of the obstacles seemed to be insurmountable. One at a time, however, difficulties have been overcome, and I am confident that the end of colonialism is now in sight. The achievements to date have been both great and far-reaching. Since 1960 more than 70 million people have emerged from dependent status and the membership of the United Nations has as a consequence increased from 100 to its present total of 144. This has brought us closer to the goal of universality. Indeed, this year has been another important landmark because of the number of countries in Africa and elsewhere which have attained independence.

19. I believe the international community can be proud of the truly crucial role it has played in bringing this about. This can be attributed to the efforts which have been made to keep world attention focused on the problems of decolonization and to mobilize both moral and political support for the dependent peoples in their efforts to realize their right to self-determination. Much of the credit for this is due to the constant endeavours 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. Since 1961, it has not only discharged the task of reporting on the implementation of the Declaration but has suggested effective measures by which to achieve its goals. There is no doubt that the Special Committee's untiring efforts have been decisive in bringing about a concerted approach to decolonization throughout the world. I wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Mr. Salim A. Salim, the Chairman of the Special Committee, for his leadership and personal dedication to the goals of the Declaration.

20. This Declaration has brought new life to the United Nations and enhanced its capacity to deal with the vital issues which confront the world today. It has produced a great movement towards independence; it has had a tremendous impact on international relations, and it has considerably strengthened global peace and security. At the same time, this has created a new challenge. For, as newly independent States emerge, it is only natural that they should demand a more effective participation in the affairs of our increasingly interdependent world. If we are to meet that challenge and continue towards a truly just and equitable society, we must make increasing efforts to reduce the tremendous gulf which exists between the rich and poor nations of the world. The successes so far achieved in the 15 years since the adoption of the Declaration lend encouragement to the hope that this, too, can be accomplished.

21. All these accomplishments, sadly, do not signal an end to the work of decolonization. We are all very much aware that millions of people in different parts of the world still live under alien rule—for them, the Declaration remains an unfulfilled promise and hope, which it is our duty to realize. In particular, our thoughts go to the peoples of Southern Rhodesia and Namibia, where progress towards self-determination remains painfully slow. In other territories, too, the process of decolonization has raised complex prob-

lems and we cannot underestimate the difficulties which still lie ahead.

22. On this fifteenth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples I therefore appeal to the international community to renew its support for the aspirations of peoples still under colonial domination and to strengthen still further its resolve to assist the newly emerging States in consolidating their freedom and independence.

23. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I now call on Mr. Salim A. Salim of the United Republic of Tanzania, Chairman 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.

24. Mr. SALIM (United Republic of Tanzania), Chairman 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: As we solemnly commemorate today the fifteenth anniversary of the Declaration on decolonization, it may perhaps be appropriate to recall what my predecessor, Mr. Davidson Nicol of Sierra Leone, said five years ago to the Assembly in his capacity as Chairman of the Special Committee on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Declaration. After reviewing the slow progress in the process of decolonization during that decade, the Chairman of the Special Committee then stated that:

“As long as a single individual remains a colonial citizen, unable to choose his own government, unable to travel freely in the country of his birth and to own land, unable to shape his own destiny and that of his loved ones, the Committee on decolonization will consider its work unfinished.”

25. Of course, there have been significant changes and considerable progress in the field of decolonization since that statement was made five years ago. But there still remain over 12 million people scattered throughout the world, whose official status, in the language of the Organization, falls under the term of Trust or Non-Self-Governing Territory. Moreover, some 7 million of these people are languishing under the most inhuman system of repression and discrimination in the hands of the minority régimes in southern Africa. And although the recent victories scored by the liberation movements in Africa, culminating in the liquidation of Portuguese colonialism, have certainly brought out positive elements and greater possibilities for the liberation of Zimbabwe and Namibia, we should not underestimate the formidable obstacles that still lie ahead.

26. As was pointed out so correctly by the Chairman of the Special Committee in 1970, the work of the Committee, as indeed of the United Nations as a whole including in particular the Security Council, in the field of decolonization can hardly be considered completed, viewed especially in terms of the urgent and critical need of the struggling people of these territories for moral and material assistance within the framework of the United Nations and its family of organizations.

27. Thus, at the 2437th meeting, the overwhelming majority of the members of the Assembly—many of whom, I must emphasize, consist of countries which

were formerly Trust or Non-Self-Governing Territories—approved a series of recommendations designed to expedite the agonizingly slow progress towards the final emancipation of the peoples still under colonial and alien rule. Such an unequivocal commitment on the part of the Organization is a clear testimony that the United Nations cannot and will not coexist with or tolerate the remaining vestiges of colonialism.

28. On behalf of the members of the Special Committee, I wish to reiterate the Committee's resolute commitment and determination, in accordance with the terms of the resolution adopted yesterday [*resolution 3481 (XXX)*] and other related resolutions of the Assembly, to continue its search for the most suitable ways and means towards the full and speedy implementation of the Declaration. In that endeavour, the Special Committee derives a measure of comfort and confidence from the assurances of, and pledges for, continued co-operation in its work by several administering Powers. The full co-operation of the administering Powers, particularly with respect to the sending of visiting missions to the territories concerned, is an indispensable factor in the successful work of the Special Committee, as was clearly demonstrated in a series of visiting missions which it was able to dispatch to some of the territories in the recent past. The members of the Special Committee are especially grateful to the Governments of Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom for their readiness to receive further visiting missions to the territories under their respective administrations.

29. As we move towards the brighter day when the remaining colonial territories have all attained self-government, freedom and independence, it is more necessary than ever that we at the United Nations rededicate ourselves to the principle of the paramountcy of the genuine interests of the inhabitants of these territories. In so doing, we will need to redouble our efforts to bring about the completely free and unrestricted conditions which would enable the peoples concerned to express their true aspirations, as well as to take steps to ensure that the national unity and territorial integrity of these territories are fully respected and safeguarded. Any violation of this sacred principle will clearly constitute an open breach of the obligations which the Member States undertook to carry out in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. Clearly, therefore, as we commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the Declaration, we must not only pledge ourselves to overcome the traditional obstacles against the liberation of colonial peoples but also, with no less vigilance must guard against any new obstacles.

30. Finally, I should like to pay a particular tribute on this occasion to the Secretary-General for the active and effective efforts he has undertaken and continues to undertake in order to assist in the fulfilment of the aspirations of the peoples of the colonial territories. The positive initiatives he has taken in several instances and the close attention he continues to pay in this regard are a source of encouragement and inspiration to many of us, particularly the members of the Special Committee. To him I wish to reiterate, on behalf of the Special Committee, the assurances of the continuing readiness of the Com-

Committee to work closely with him towards the full implementation of the Declaration.

31. On a personal note, I should like to express my gratitude to the Secretary-General for the kind and generous remarks that he has addressed to me.

32. Before concluding my brief remarks at this commemorative meeting, I wish, in all solemnity, to pay a tribute to the thousands of known and unknown heroes who have sacrificed their lives in the cause of freedom, justice and independence, and most certainly, on an occasion of this nature, we must remember such great African leaders of liberation as Eduardo Mondlane and Amílcar Cabral. Our tribute also goes to those in many countries who have been subjected to persecution for the cause of freedom and for the principles to the realization of which we all aspire.

33. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I now call on Mrs. Jeanne Martin-Cissé, Chairman of the Special Committee against *Apartheid*.

34. Mrs. CISSÉ (Guinea), Chairman of the Special Committee against *Apartheid* (*interpretation from French*): The fifteenth anniversary of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples is for us an occasion to recall the many nations that have acceded to independence since 1960. It is also an occasion to pay tribute to the memory of the martyrs who have fallen in the struggle for freedom, and to the many men and women who suffered torture and persecution so that their countries might be freed from the yoke of colonialism and thus join the community of nations. It is, too, an occasion to reaffirm our common commitment to action for the liberation of the last remaining colonial territories.

35. The majority of States Members of the Organization, including my own country, Guinea, were not present 30 years ago at the San Francisco Conference when the Charter of the United Nations and its noble principles were drafted. Nevertheless, as a country that acceded to independence in the course of this generation, we contributed to the drafting of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and other instruments that complement and reinforce the Charter. These declarations represent the international order of freedom, human dignity and international co-operation which we strive to establish in the United Nations.

36. This celebration coincides, happily, with the first anniversary of the no less historic Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States [*resolution 3281 (XXIX)*] adopted exactly a year ago today, which clearly proclaimed that all States have the duty to eliminate colonialism, *apartheid*, racial discrimination, neo-colonialism and all forms of aggression, occupation and foreign domination. That Charter also represented a preliminary step towards the development and establishment of the international order we desire and seek to build.

37. Certain powerful forces, recalling their privileged past, continue to resist the establishment of a new international order, but there is no doubt that the principles of justice will triumph, for the peoples of the world

are prepared to pay the necessary price to ensure that they are respected.

38. It was not the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, but rather the historic struggle of the colonial peoples that marked the beginning of the end of colonialism. However, the Declaration is extremely important, for it accepts that the victory of justice is inevitable and irresistible, and constitutes a commitment on the part of the community of nations to play its proper role and do its duty to assist in the establishment of the new order.

39. It was the oppressed nations and their liberation movements that bore the brunt of the struggle, but the solidarity of the international community, symbolized by the Declaration, was a factor of great importance. The defeat of colonialism likewise contributed decisively in tipping the scales in favour of the forces combating racism. Indeed, in modern history, colonialism and racism are indissolubly linked, to such an extent that it is often difficult to separate colonial problems from racial problems.

40. Today, in the wake of the dissolution of the Portuguese empire, the most acute problems of colonialism are those of Zimbabwe and Namibia. As the Special Committee against *Apartheid* has repeatedly pointed out, and as the Organization of African Unity [OAU] officially declared this year, the main enemy of freedom in all of southern Africa, whether it be in Zimbabwe, in Namibia or in South Africa proper, is the white minority racist régime of Pretoria.

41. There is a confrontation between the United Nations and all progressive forces, on the one hand, and the Pretoria régime and its allies and friends on the other. The General Assembly has, at the current session, proclaimed that the United Nations has a special responsibility towards the oppressed people of South Africa [*resolution 3411 C (XXX)*], just as it accepted in 1960 that it had a special responsibility towards the people of Namibia [*resolution 2145 (XXI)*], and, as it implicitly admitted in imposing sanctions against the illegal Smith régime, a special responsibility towards the people of Zimbabwe. The eradication of colonialism and racism from all these territories and the exercise by the whole population of the right to self-determination is one of the most urgent tasks of the international community.

42. The Special Committee against *Apartheid*, which has been carefully following the situation in South Africa since 1963, is quite aware that the struggle will not be an easy one. It realizes fully that there are considerable forces, particularly certain economic and military interests, that are banded together against it.

43. Whether it is a matter of colonialism in Zimbabwe, of illegal occupation in Namibia or of *apartheid* in South Africa, the forces backing the oppressors are identical. The same is true of the forces supporting the cause of liberation. But the latter are the progressive forces which increase day by day, and they will inevitably be the victors. Every blow dealt to colonialism, every victory in the cause of freedom of the peoples, is a victory against racism and *apartheid*. The liberation movements count among their allies the States that have recently acceded to independence, as well as the countries that have rid them-

selves of their colonizing past; and here I wish to pay a tribute to the many Western countries which are giving ever-increasing support to the international fight against *apartheid*.

44. Given the rapid evolution in the balance of forces, the Pretoria régime and its allies endeavour to survive by sowing discord among the anti-colonialist and anti-racist forces. They even endeavour to challenge and deny the victories of peoples against colonialism, thus creating grave threats to international peace. The recent criminal aggression of the South African racists against the people of Angola is a warning for us because we know that in its despair the *apartheid* régime will not hesitate to embark on dangerous adventures.

45. The Special Committee against *Apartheid* accordingly, with stubborn perseverance, has requested concerted international action by Governments and organizations, whatever their ideological or other differences may be, in order to eradicate *apartheid* and colonialism from southern Africa. It has established close co-operation with the United Nations Council for Namibia and with the Special Committee on decolonization. With these bodies, it has endeavoured to promote co-ordinated action by all the United Nations bodies and institutions, by the intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned. It has emphasized the need to inform public opinion so as to mobilize the support of peoples throughout the world for the cause of liberation. We are convinced that by intensifying its activities the United Nations can discharge its solemn obligations towards oppressed peoples and thus totally and finally defeat colonialism, racial discrimination and *apartheid*, which are the greatest obstacles to international co-operation.

46. On behalf of the Special Committee against *Apartheid*, I should like to pay a special tribute to the Special Committee on decolonization for the important role it has played since its establishment in 1961 in the struggle against colonialism. May I also pay a special tribute to the Chairman of the Special Committee, the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, Salim Ahmed Salim, for the exceptional manner in which he has presided over the work of the Special Committee during recent years.

47. Finally, I should like to associate myself with other speakers in saluting all peoples oppressed by colonialism and *apartheid*, and their liberation movements, and express our solidarity with them.

48. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I now call on Mr. Dunstan Kamana of Zambia, President of the United Nations Council for Namibia.

49. Mr. KAMANA (Zambia), President of the United Nations Council for Namibia: I am honoured to speak on behalf of the United Nations Council for Namibia on this important occasion marking the fifteenth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. This historic Declaration, which represents the clearest elaboration of the principle of self-determination proclaimed in Articles 1 and 55 of the Charter of the United Nations, was a milestone in the process of decolonization. It is indeed fitting that the General Assembly should today hold a special meeting to commemorate its adoption 15 years ago.

50. The wisdom and foresight of the General Assembly in adopting the Declaration are clearly manifested in this Hall. A considerable number of Member States of the United Nations drew inspiration from the noble principles enshrined in the Declaration in their struggle for self-determination and independence. The Declaration contributed in no small measure to their emancipation from the bondage of colonialism and ruthless exploitation.

51. One cannot talk about the Declaration without referring to the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. As is well known, the Special Committee, originally comprising 17 States, was established in 1961 by resolution 1654 (XVI) for the purpose of examining the application of the Declaration and making recommendations on the progress and extent of the implementation of the Declaration to the seventeenth session of the General Assembly. The following year, by its resolution 1810 (XVII), the General Assembly decided to expand the size and scope of the Special Committee; in other words, to increase its membership to 24 and to charge it with the responsibility of ensuring the speedy and total application of the Declaration. Thus the Special Committee on decolonization became the main instrument for the full implementation of the Declaration.

52. I wish, on this occasion, to pay tribute to the Special Committee for its tireless efforts in seeking the full and early implementation of its mandate. The Special Committee has certainly done tremendous service to the Organization in the area of decolonization. The work it has done and continues to do is simply invaluable. We have been particularly lucky that in the last four years or so the Chairman of the Special Committee has been none other than that dynamic and imaginative African revolutionary, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim of Tanzania. I wish to pay a particular tribute to my friend and colleague for serving the Committee and indeed the cause of decolonization with distinction.

53. To those of us who genuinely believe in the cause of justice and uphold the principle of self-determination, this is an occasion we cannot but take with mixed feelings. While we rejoice at the success achieved so far in the field of decolonization, we would much rather celebrate today the end of the whole process of decolonization. Unfortunately, this has been a very, very slow process. Fifteen years after the adoption of the Declaration the international community has not yet put the era of colonialism behind it. This anachronism is still very much with us. Millions of fellow human beings continue to live under the yoke of colonial and minority rule. They continue to be denied their right to self-determination and independence. In this regard, this is very much an occasion for regret and sadness.

54. Equally regrettable, saddening and disquieting is the tendency, which has been more manifest at this session of the General Assembly, to sacrifice the principle of self-determination on the altar of expediency. We have been treated to a scenario of attempts by certain Member States to seek the United Nations blessing for their claims and designs to integrate neighbouring non-independent countries into their territory

without due regard for the wishes of the people concerned. This situation represents a most dangerous trend which, if condoned, could not only adversely affect our future work in the field of decolonization but also threaten the very existence of many States represented here today. In other words, we should be set on the path of destroying what we have built in the last 15 years. This is obviously inadmissible in terms both of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and indeed of the Charter of the United Nations.

55. The United Nations Council for Namibia is of course concerned with the liberation of Namibia. For us in the Council for Namibia, the principle of self-determination must remain sacrosanct. We have repeatedly called upon South Africa to terminate its illegal occupation of Namibia and to allow the people of that Territory to exercise their right to genuine self-determination. For, indeed, only the exercise of the right to self-determination by the people of Namibia offers us a chance for the peaceful solution of the problem of Namibia.

56. South Africa has already shown its intention to trample on and make a mockery of the principle of self-determination by organizing a bogus constitutional conference in the Territory, attended by hand-picked tribal leaders and white officials. The sole purpose of South Africa in this exercise is to seek the legitimization of its illegal occupation of Namibia and its designs to balkanize the Territory into so-called homelands and thereby keep the people of Namibia weak and subjugated.

57. During this session the General Assembly, in its resolution 3399 (XXX), has called for a free and democratic national election in Namibia, under United Nations supervision and control. It is a challenge to all of us to ensure that that election is held in the very near future. This is one clear example of the defence of the principle of self-determination enshrined in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and in the Charter of the United Nations.

58. We must reject with the contempt it deserves the South African scheme to organize a bogus constitutional conference in Namibia. It is important in this connexion that we do not give South Africa a pretext for going ahead with the deplorable scheme by appearing to acquiesce elsewhere in schemes that trample on the noble principle of self-determination. In the interest of world peace and security, that principle must not be called into question.

59. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I now call on Mr. Essonghe of Gabon, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

60. Mr. ESSONGHE (Gabon) (*interpretation from French*): There are colonial Powers which did not wait for a United Nations decision to decolonize. That was the case with France and Great Britain in particular.

61. But the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the fifteenth anniversary of which we celebrate today, enshrined the principle of decolonization and accelerated the process. Thus, that which until 1960 was a voluntary granting of independence by the colonizers has,

since 1960, become a moral code accepted by the universal conscience.

62. Of the 46 independent African States today, 18 became independent after the adoption of the Declaration: in 1961, Tanzania; in 1962, Algeria, Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda; in 1964, Kenya, Malawi and Zambia; in 1965, Gambia; in 1966, Botswana and Lesotho; in 1968, Mauritius, Swaziland and Equatorial Guinea; in 1974, Guinea-Bissau; and in 1975, Mozambique, Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe.

63. Africa is grateful to the Organization for all the benefits it has enjoyed in the field of human dignity.

64. Africa is grateful to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Kurt Waldheim, for all the efforts he has made in the pursuit of decolonization.

65. Africa's goal is the independence of all Africa. That which today appears utopian will become a fact tomorrow, because the current of history is for ever irreversible.

66. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I now call on Mr. Akhund of Pakistan, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

67. Mr. AKHUND (Pakistan): I am privileged, on behalf of the Group of Asian States Members of the United Nations, to join today in commemorating the anniversary of the General Assembly's adoption of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

68. The 15 years which have elapsed since the Declaration was adopted have witnessed a remarkable transformation of the international political map. Few could have foreseen in 1960 that the community of sovereign and independent nations would increase so rapidly as virtually to treble the membership of the United Nations. One after another empires that were once great and powerful have disappeared. In many cases colonial countries have attained independence through a seemingly orderly and constitutional process. Noteworthy as these facts are, they cannot make us forget the long, determined and bitter struggle which the colonized peoples have had to fight in their quest for freedom.

69. Facts do not support the idea sometimes implicit in what one hears, that decolonization came about through some process of natural evolution. Nor is there any basis in reality for its corollary, that imperialism and colonialism were, for the colonized people, an education in democracy and progress, and that the period of subjugation was a preparation, a probation, for their fitness to live as free men in a free world.

70. As we commemorate today the Declaration of 1960, let us do honour to those who paid for freedom with years of imprisonment and exile, and sometimes with their lives. Truly remarkable has been the solidarity of the freedom struggle, uniting as it has the peoples of far-flung colonial countries. No less significant has been the solidarity between them and peoples elsewhere and, indeed, enlightened and forward-looking opinion in the ruling countries themselves.

71. It was this human solidarity, transcending considerations of geography, race and even ideology, which was expressed when the General Assembly adopted

without a dissenting vote resolution 1514 (XV). The Declaration gave voice to the determination of the United Nations, earlier proclaimed in the Charter, to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom for all. Through it the nations of the world recognized the yearning for freedom of all dependent peoples and their desire to end colonialism in all its manifestations. Through it they expressed their conviction that the continued existence of colonialism prevents the development of international economic co-operation, impedes the social, cultural and economic development of dependent peoples and militates against the United Nations ideal of universal peace.

72. Today the last of the empires has crumbled, but the approaching end of colonialism in its traditional forms must not make us complacent about its remnants in the shape of pockets of minority rule and racial discrimination, especially in southern Africa. The struggle there is, if anything, likely to be more bitter and long-drawn-out, for there the subjugated peoples are fighting not rulers in some distant metropole but an obdurate and desperate minority fighting to protect its entrenched privilege, a group of people which arrogates to itself the right to rule in perpetuity over the majority. However absurd the pretension may seem, it has the support of modern arms and is not yet altogether deprived of sympathy, political support and perhaps protection from outside.

73. Finally, let us bear in mind that formal independence is only the first stage in true emancipation. The movement for economic and social progress and for the modernization of societies, which was inhibited by colonial rule but, paradoxically, may have been set in motion by its impact, has still a very long way to go. History has placed the countries of the third world in the vanguard of the struggle to bring about a re-ordering of the world's economic structures and systems so that all its peoples may get a fair share of its resources and enjoy equal opportunity. The task ahead will be long and arduous. Its successful accomplishment will be, let me say, not a matter of retribution or of expropriation but one that can only lead to the enrichment of life for all the people of the earth.

74. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I now call on Mr. Datcu of Romania, who wishes to speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

75. Mr. DATCU (Romania) (*interpretation from French*): It is a particular pleasure for me to participate, as Chairman for this month of the Group of Eastern European States, in this special meeting to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which was an outstanding event in the history of the Organization.

76. Since its inception the United Nations has set as one of its major objectives the elimination of colonialism in all its forms, which even at that time was considered an extremely harmful phenomenon contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter and contrary to the interests of all peoples.

77. It cannot be denied that during the 30 years of the existence of the United Nations great successes have been achieved in supporting the struggle of the peoples for freedom from the colonial yoke. The simple fact that, as compared with 51 Member States in 1945, the United Nations now has 144 Member States, more than half of which are former colonies, fully bears out this observation. At this session alone we have had the great pleasure of welcoming six new independent States to the United Nations.

78. The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which was adopted on the initiative of the Soviet Union in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), undoubtedly represents a great moment in the notable activities of the United Nations in the field of decolonization.

79. I should like to stress the very active and substantial contribution made by the socialist countries, as well as by progressive forces everywhere in the world, in achieving the results obtained by the United Nations in the field of decolonization. I would like on this solemn occasion to express our deep thanks and appreciation to the Special Committee on decolonization and its devoted Chairman, our brother and friend Mr. Salim of Tanzania, and also to the Special Committee against *Apartheid*, the United Nations Council for Namibia and the Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim, for their dedicated and tireless activities in the cause of the liberation of all colonial territories and peoples.

80. The significance of the adoption of the Declaration and the success obtained by the United Nations in decolonization, strengthens still further our determination to give active support to the struggle against the racist minority régimes of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia and against the policy of *apartheid* and racial discrimination.

81. I should like on this solemn occasion to reiterate our active support for all peoples still under the colonial yoke and for their legitimate representatives, the national liberation movements, which are sparing no effort in their heroic struggle to achieve their sacred right to freedom, human dignity, sovereignty and national independence.

82. The maintenance of certain peoples under foreign domination is in flagrant contradiction with the realities of today's world, and the requirement of the free and independent development of all nations. For this reason, we feel that it is the duty of the United Nations and all its Member States to redouble their efforts and take determined action to bring about promptly, completely and definitively the ending of colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, *apartheid* and all forms of imperialist force and domination. We wish to express our firm will to achieve these noble objectives.

83. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I call on Mr. Waldron-Ramsey of Barbados, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American States.

84. Mr. WALDRON-RAMSEY (Barbados): We are convened here today in a meeting commemorative of the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. In chronological measurement, 15 years is but a moment in the history of man. And

yet, measured against the background of its known achievement, the Declaration would seem to have run the successful course of a millennium, for it has almost fulfilled the charter of its original objectives.

85. If I have come to this podium in this commemorative meeting to hail the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, I have done so charged by a mandate of the Group of Latin American States. This group of States would bid me sing the praises of the historic Declaration in their name and in the names too of Simón Bolívar, O'Higgins, Henri Christophe and Toussaint L'Ouverture. The Group of Latin American States would urge me to proclaim its adherence to the purposes and principles of freedom and self-determination enshrined in the Declaration. And I am commanded by this group to reaffirm our faith in the inalienable right of all subject peoples to recapture their complete sovereignty and independence. I am equally enjoined to declare the continuing support of the Group of Latin American States for the survival of the Declaration until all colonial and vassal territories everywhere have emerged from the benighted labyrinth of "un-freedom".

86. The very reasons which bring us to this proud reflection, in this ceremony, upon the last 15 years of the successful course of the Declaration must suffice, in my respectful submission, to cause us to recall how the Declaration came into existence in the first place.

87. If the history of the systematic colonization of Africa started with the Berlin Conference of 1884, then the history of the scientific decolonization of Africa started on 6 March 1957, when Kwame Nkrumah reconverted the colonial Gold Coast into the independent State of Ghana and thereby unleashed an inexorable tidal wave of freedom, which brought 13 sovereign and independent African States into the United Nations in 1960. For the far-sighted General de Gaulle of France saw quite clearly that, if his new Fifth Republic was to avoid the calamitous disintegration of the Fourth Republic, he had to release the French colonies in Africa and let them live in freedom again. Because colonialism as an historical experience is *malum in se*—bad in itself—it has always brought iniquitous consequences both upon its perpetrators and upon its victims. Its fatal and nefarious end can never come too soon.

88. Thus it was at this juncture of the history of the United Nations—indeed, at its fifteenth commemorative anniversary in 1960—that the gallant leaders of the Soviet Union, possessed of the science and sense of history, encapsulated the passing drama of the colonial experience in what has now become the famous Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. You will no doubt permit me to recall that the General Assembly of 1960 is renowned for the attendance of many Heads of State. And the most important proposal that emerged from the fifteenth session was the proposal we commemorate here today.

89. It was the late Mr. Nikita Khrushchev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union, who proposed for the first time this historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. After the usual discussion the proposal was immortalized in what has become resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960. At that very

session a Committee of 17 Member States was set up to oversee the implementation of the Declaration. I recall with satisfaction that, owing to the far-sightedness of the great and illustrious President Nyerere of Tanzania—Tanganyika, at that time—who saw his own freedom bound up in the fight for the freedom of others, it was my good fortune to serve on the original Committee of 17, in the distinguished company of Ambassador Aké of the Ivory Coast, who happily is present in the Assembly today.

90. In my considered opinion, the Organization will be everlastingly in the debt of the late Nikita Khrushchev and the Government and the people of the Soviet Union for the noble service they rendered the international community in proposing the Declaration for adoption by the General Assembly. Whenever the name of the Declaration is used here, we, former subject peoples, must perforce be reminded of our deep gratitude to the Government and people of the Soviet Union.

91. It is true that liberation is always in the hands of a colonial people, but the Declaration established once and for all the principles and legal framework which should marshal the aspirations and sharpen the dreams of a people determined to recapture its dignity and sovereignty. Today the success of the Declaration can be measured in quantified terms in millions of souls. We salute the Government of the Soviet Union for this great act of statesmanship.

92. Alas, there are still pockets of "un-freedom" in Africa and the Latin American region and other places around the world. But the nature and the style of imperialism has become more benign, due in large measure, in my submission, to the insistence of the imperatives of the Declaration.

93. Freedom will come to all the peoples that want it, as surely as night follows day; then the Declaration will have run its magnificent course. But its legacy will linger and will be indelibly burnished into the scrolls of history and the affairs of men. And we who have played our small parts in this unfolding epoch will be able to look back in the declining years and say: "Thank God we have done our duty".

94. But I would be remiss in my duty if I were to conclude this statement without paying respectful tribute to some of the great heroes of liberation and of the liberation movement as a whole who have fallen on the field of honour in their legitimate attempt to bring about the fulfilment of the purposes of this Declaration. And so today, Mr. President, by your leave, I salute from this podium of the Assembly Eduardo Mondlane, Albert Luthuli, Tom Mboya, Amílcar Cabral, Herbert Chipeto and the dozens of gallant Algerians—all great African leaders who have made the supreme sacrifice in the liberation of the African continent. Their names will be immortalized in the history of the struggle we celebrate today.

95. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I now call on Mr. Peter Jankowitsch of Austria, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States.

96. Mr. JANKOWITSCH (Austria) (*interpretation from French*): I am pleased for several reasons to have the honour to address the Assembly this morning as Chairman of the Group of Western European and

Other States. First of all because we are today celebrating the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, which was adopted here 15 years ago. That Declaration has become, in a way, the essential point of reference for a development which, more than any other event, has left its imprint on the history of the United Nations—and therefore of the world—in the past decade. I am speaking of the process of decolonization, which, as an event, can be considered as one of the most significant and most positive developments of the second half of the twentieth century. The decolonization process has been indeed historic in the sense that it has profoundly changed the political face of the world; and if proof of this change is needed, one need merely examine the evolution of this very Organization, which today has become an increasingly faithful reflection of the entire world and of all its regions and peoples.

97. To describe decolonization as a creative and positive event seems to me justified, first of all because of the fact that this process corresponds to the accession to the right to self-determination by a great number of peoples, which has opened the way for the increasingly active participation of all nations in the affairs of the present-day world, a right formerly limited to a small group of Powers. Thus "co-determination" has been added to self-determination. Unquestionably, decolonization is the result of the will and of the action of peoples in all parts of the world, but I should also like to pay a brief tribute here to the memory of all the great statesmen of the world who, by their wisdom and by their just recognition of the course of history, made a significant contribution to the progress and success of the decolonization process.

98. In speaking of decolonization, it is fitting to recall here among many others the memory of Clement Attlee, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Government, who as early as 1947 took the historic decision to liberate India and Pakistan, which preceded so many others on the road to national independence. It is equally fitting to recall here, among many others, the memory of General de Gaulle, whose courageous action paved the way to freedom for so many African nations. But it is even more fitting to recall here the memory of the great liberators of Africa, Asia and Latin America who contributed to this process and whose wisdom made it possible for this process to take place with a minimum of bloodshed and violence. I would simply evoke the memory of Pandit Nehru, Gamal Abdel Nasser and Kwame Nkrumah, and pay tribute to the many others who, happily, are still living.

99. To describe the decolonization process as positive is justified, in my view, because of the further fact that it is precisely decolonization which has made possible the establishment, among a large number of nations of our world, of a new kind of relations—relations characterized by the happy word "co-operation"; and this co-operation is particularly dear to the Group of countries which I have the honour to represent here this morning.

100. The founding countries of the United Nations, desirous of establishing a system of lasting peace and security, certainly could not have imagined the importance and scope which the decolonization process was

to acquire. Now that this process is largely concluded, we can already perceive that this is an event of historic significance, and that the values of peace and security, which marked the first years of the Organization, have been supplemented by the values of independence, sovereignty and self-determination.

101. This task of liberation, so closely linked with the names of the great statesmen whose memory I evoked a moment ago, is now largely the responsibility of the Organization itself. The efforts of the Organization have, as previous speakers have said, been symbolized, above all, by the tireless efforts of the various bodies set up by this very Assembly, such as the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the Special Committee against *Apartheid* and the United Nations Council for Namibia. I should like to associate myself with the vibrant tribute paid this morning to their members and presiding officers, and pay tribute also to all the Secretaries-General of the Organization—Dag Hammarskjöld and U Thant, as well as our current Secretary-General—who have contributed so much to this task. Thanks to all these efforts, thanks to all these developments, the Organization has nearly completed its aim of universality, which has left a profound mark on it.

102. On the occasion of the celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, let us not forget that at the same time this is the thirtieth anniversary of our Organization, and we should not be content with the recollection of history, however inspiring it might be. The sometimes brutal breath of reality, to which the Organization is not as indifferent as some believe, reminds us that we have not yet reached the end of our efforts. First, there remains that group of peoples that has not yet found its freedom and its right to self-determination. Our efforts to assist them to achieve those rights will be a notable part of the work of the Organization in the years to come.

103. But there is still another task. If territorial decolonization appears to be almost achieved, there are still serious and difficult problems to be solved in the light of the same principles as have guided us so far. Furthermore, we must recognize that freedom, sovereignty and independence must now be accompanied by independent economic development and the full attainment of human rights and social justice. This new stage in the struggle for a better world and a more just and humane world order requires that all the countries in the Assembly unite in a common effort.

104. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I call on Mr. Ouattara of Mali, Executive Secretary of the Organization of African Unity to the United Nations.

105. Mr. OUATTARA (Executive Secretary of the Organization of African Unity) (*interpretation from French*): The victorious liberation struggle of the African peoples, which made it possible for a great number of new African States to join the United Nations at the beginning of the 1960s, and the deep love for mankind and sacred respect for human dignity expressed by the Heads of State and Government of the African continent were sufficient reasons for the founding fathers of the OAU in May 1963 in Addis

Ababa, to inscribe in letters of gold in the charter of their continental organization their unshakable will and solemn pledge to free the entire African continent from colonial domination and exploitation and racial oppression.

106. In the constant quest to achieve those objectives, they decided to co-ordinate their action with that of the United Nations. That was the logical result of the similarity of the objectives of the two Organizations in their constant search for freedom and in their absolute determination to respect the dignity of all mankind. For this reason it is quite natural for the OAU to be associated with today's ceremony.

107. On behalf of the Secretary-General of the OAU, I should like to express our deep appreciation of the invitation that was extended to us to participate in today's celebration. But, over and above that formal aspect, we see in this recognition an appreciation of the great contribution made by the African people and the OAU to the implementation of the historic Declaration that was adopted by the international community.

108. But, in addition to the legitimate pride which we feel today in having been able to contribute to giving meaning, effect and content to the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, we should like to take this opportunity to hail the great liberation effort made by the United Nations during the past 15 years.

109. First of all, we should like to express to the Secretary-General our deep appreciation of the sustained and consistent personal interest he has always shown in questions concerning the liberation struggle of the colonized peoples. Such interest is the expression of a true love for mankind, a love which embodies understanding, which is always the first quality of great men.

110. I should also like to take this opportunity to extend the profound and sincere congratulations of the African peoples to the members of the Special Committee and particularly to its Chairman, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim of Tanzania, without whose strong support it would have been almost impossible for the United Nations to achieve the many positive results that we are celebrating today.

[The speaker continued in English.]

111. The members of the Assembly are all too familiar with the many difficulties of all kinds created by the enemies of colonial freedom in order to hamper the work of the United Nations in the field of decolonization. The Assembly is all too conversant with all the vicious and malicious attacks levied against the Committee of 24 by the colonial Powers, with the support of some Western countries, their traditional allies. The African people will always recall with bitterness the flagrant attitude of non-co-operation with the Committee of 24 adopted by those same Powers, and with similar bitterness the resignation from membership of the Committee of some of its Western members, which were just frightened to take stock of the revolutionary liberation struggle of the oppressed peoples of the world. And, finally, the collusion of some Western developed countries with the moribund colonial régimes is only too well known to the As-

sembly, and there is no need for me to dwell on that any further.

112. However, on an occasion such as today's celebration, we believe we should be failing in our duty were we not to single out and denounce the hypocritical attitude of the same Western countries, in particular, which only yesterday were the unscrupulous and unholy allies of a misguided Fascist Portugal and who today pose as the shameless defenders of the white minority racist and colonial régimes which are actively engaged in murdering and oppressing the peace-loving people of Africa. Yesterday, at the peak of the struggle of the freedom fighters against the worst forms of human degradation, those sudden friends remained deaf to the call for assistance. We therefore strongly deny them any right to pretend to be their defenders today.

113. The General Assembly remembers only too well the manoeuvres and the desperate attempts made at various levels by the same materially super-developed Western countries in order to contain the tumultuous surge of the liberation struggle. Yet no human being has ever contained the flux of the sea with his naked hands. And the cause of the just liberation of the people has gone on irresistibly and inexorably.

114. With patience and perseverance, but above all with the faith which constantly sustained them, through their strong belief in the United Nations, their high regard for human dignity, their deep conviction that colonialism and racism are contrary to the true nature of man, the members of the Special Committee did not allow themselves to be diverted from the righteous path chosen by the United Nations. Today, on this historic occasion, on this solemn anniversary on behalf of the OAU, I should like publicly to pay them a deserving tribute for a job very well done indeed.

115. The international community is today going through very exalting moments. This is due to the persistent efforts of the members of the Special Committee of 24, and also to the vast majority of this body who have remained strong believers in the freedom of the people. Today, finally, decolonization has for ever ceased to be an erratic concept and an unreasonable demand. After a long march during which the freedom fighters and the peoples whose hopes they represent were spared no atrocity, we are now reaching this ultimate goal to which all men aspire: that is, liberty, dignity, the right and the power to determine their own destiny.

116. It has required numerous sacrifices, an unshakable determination, an organization at the level of the ambitions, a political awareness daily strengthened and asserted, and African solidarity and that of the peace-loving peoples to achieve these gratifying developments in the process of decolonization. It has also required the persistent and unflinching efforts of the international community, through the Special Committee on decolonization, to shake centuries of stagnation, obscurantism, alienation and conservatism.

117. It was thus that in the process the legitimacy of the liberation struggle was recognized by the General Assembly. It was thus that those who were yesterday branded as terrorists have become today decent nationalist militants who command the respect of even their avowed enemies. In the process the General

Assembly decided to offer all sorts of assistance—moral, political, diplomatic and material—to the liberation movements directly and through the specialized agencies.

118. Indeed, this was the turning-point, the point of no return in the liberation struggle. From that moment on, the liberation struggle of the oppressed people gained a new dimension, the dimension of the whole world; and this is precisely what led to the final débâcle of the colonial Powers.

119. However, while we can proudly hail the successes thus far recorded, on this anniversary day we must remember that the struggle of the colonial people is not yet over. In Zimbabwe the white minority régime continues to resort to delaying tactics and manoeuvres in a desperate attempt to postpone the advent of majority rule in this Territory. Let there be no doubt and no illusion. The liberation struggle will continue to be intensified in that Territory until complete independence, if the white racist minority is not wise enough to grasp the significance of the wind of change which is engulfing southern Africa.

120. One cannot speak of Rhodesia without referring to South Africa, the only country in the world in this century of emancipation which dares to boast of having the right to institutionalize racism and racial discrimination.

121. The quiet, arrogant and haughty power of South Africa should not give rise to illusions, as the laws of history are relentless. The freedom fighters in South Africa will triumph in spite of all the sophisticated means of repression, in spite of the materialization of the complicity of the big Powers blinded by their immediate and short-term mercantile interests.

122. Quite naturally, the problem of Namibia cannot be understood except in the framework of decolonization. In order to perpetuate its illegal occupation of this Territory, the South African régime continues undisturbed its policy of bantustans, in spite of the fact that the international community has rejected and condemned this concept. Repression is being intensified in this Territory; mass arrests and intimidation of the population are daily taking place. The shameful exploitation and plunder of the mining resources of Namibia continue in an organized manner.

123. The situation in this international territory has deteriorated during the last year. The continued occupation of Namibia by Pretoria is a flagrant act of aggression against the Namibian people. The sustained policy of bantustans also prejudices the national unity and territorial integrity of the country. The OAU has reaffirmed its total and unconditional support to the people of Namibia, under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization, in its legitimate struggle to put an end to the illegal occupation of their Territory by the Pretoria régime.

124. As for the other territories still under foreign domination, the OAU sincerely hopes that the colonial Powers concerned will establish a time-table for the granting of independence to those territories.

125. The freedom and independence of peoples are sacred and not negotiable. It is a just cause. Those who have always believed and accepted the challenge of working for its defence are today gratified in welcoming the basic changes which have taken place in the former

Portuguese colonies and elsewhere, and tomorrow, undoubtedly, the same just cause will triumph and sweep away the régimes of the racist, oppressive and exploiting minority.

126. The OAU wishes once more to express its appreciation for the tremendous positive role played by the United Nations in the legitimate struggle for national liberation in Africa. The results achieved are impressive, but what remains to be accomplished is still considerable.

127. It must be known that the African peoples are convinced that as long as a single African nation remains under oppression, the freedom of the others cannot but be a hypothetical freedom. We remain convinced that the harmonious application of power by the majority in these countries would create in Rhodesia, South Africa and Namibia decisive conditions, if not on the military level, at least on the political and psychological levels, for the liberation of these countries from the hideous yoke of racism and domination.

128. It is up to the racist Governments of South Africa and Rhodesia to learn from the lessons of history and to advance in the direction of the light of independence and liberation. If they remain deaf and blind to the irreversible trend of the times, they will be carried away by the swift current of the African revolution for dignity, freedom and progress.

[The speaker resumed in French.]

129. I will conclude by extending to you the warm congratulations of the OAU for the outstanding and effective way in which you have piloted the vessel of the General Assembly through the stormy seas of our very stimulating debates. You, like most of the representatives of African countries, represent a small country which has never had any wish for power or hegemony, and our countries have not lost any of the friendly feelings for you that they felt at the time of your election. Throughout these weeks of joint activity we have had a strong feeling of greater understanding between us and Luxembourg, a country which is for many of us living proof that a small country, despite its size, can make a major contribution to civilization and world peace.

130. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I call upon Mr. Driss, representative of Tunisia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

131. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) (*interpretation from Arabic*): My brother Abdalla Saleh Ashtal, Ambassador of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, as head of the Arab Group of States for this month at the United Nations has asked me to speak on his behalf on this occasion in order to express the Group's appreciation of the efforts exerted by the Secretary-General and his assistants and by the Special Committee on decolonization to urge on the fight against imperialism and to enable all peoples and countries to exercise the right to self-determination.

132. Two days ago we commemorated Human Rights Day here at the United Nations, and today we are commemorating the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The Arab peoples, which also suffered under the yoke of imperialism and have, through their own struggle, liberated

themselves, fully understand the importance of this great day.

133. We should like here to salute the ~~martyrs~~ who have fallen on the field of honour for ~~democracy~~, and those who, particularly in the African States, continue to struggle, to die, to make sacrifices and to fall as martyrs for their dignity and honour.

134. On this great and glorious occasion we look forward to the day when all peoples will be liberated, when they will dedicate all their latent powers to co-operation, to prosperity and the happiness of mankind, to the implementation of human rights, to the right of mankind to dignity and honour, to liberty and to prosperity.

135. We renew our pledge as Arab States and Arab peoples, and reaffirm this pledge of solidarity; we salute all the militant fighters everywhere, in every part of the world, on this glorious occasion.

136. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I call upon Mr. Malik of the Soviet Union.

137. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*interpretation from Russian*): Speaking on this solemn occasion on behalf of the Soviet Union, the country which took the initiative in proposing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, I should like to express our profound satisfaction that the General Assembly has devoted a solemn meeting to the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of that Declaration, which has also been called the Declaration on decolonization.

138. That historic occasion not only enables us to assess the admirable course which has been pursued in such important fields of human relations as the liberation of peoples from the colonial yoke, but also to consider the work that the United Nations and mankind must do to achieve the complete and swift elimination of the last vestiges of colonialism.

139. I believe that today no Member of the United Nations can deny or underestimate the considerable importance of the role played in the destiny of peoples and in the activities of the United Nations by the Declaration on decolonization. It was adopted despite the forces of racism, colonialism and imperialism, and immediately became the anti-colonialist document *par excellence* of the United Nations, a kind of anti-colonial manifesto. It struck a final moral and political blow at all efforts to maintain the discredited colonial empires or to maintain colonialism behind a slightly modified façade.

140. The fact that the Soviet Union took the initiative on the Declaration gives us legitimate pride, and we note with satisfaction the important and constructive contributions made by other Members of the United Nations, above all the socialist and non-aligned countries which were the sponsors of the Declaration.

141. The celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of the Declaration coincides with two important historic occasions: the thirtieth anniversary of the victory over fascism and of the establishment of the United Nations. The historic victory of the united and allied nations over the dark forces of fascism, a victory to which the Soviet people made an enormous contribution, liberated a large part of the world, had a considerable impact on post-war history and hastened the

downfall of all colonial systems of imperialism. It meant that the major events that occurred after the war were reflected first of all by the strengthening of the socialist system and the entry into the United Nations of a large number of young States from Africa, Asia and Latin America, which has changed the face of the world in a positive manner. There was thus created a favourable situation which made it possible in the 1950s and 1960s to raise the question of the total liquidation of that execrable image of the imperialist policy of the past colonialism, which enslaved and subjugated millions.

Mr. Paguene (Mozambique), Vice-President, took the Chair.

142. The Declaration on decolonization represents a new era in the history of the United Nations. In that Declaration the Organization stated that the subjection of peoples to the colonial yoke and imperialist exploitation and the violation of fundamental human rights were contrary to the Charter and a barrier to co-operation among peoples and to the maintenance of peace. The Declaration proclaims "the necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations", and confirms the right of peoples to self-determination. The General Assembly, in that Declaration, also declared that all peoples, whatever the colour of their skin, had a right to build their national life in freedom and to follow a free domestic policy of social, economic and cultural development in accordance with their own aspirations. The Declaration gave new life and a new and formidable task to the United Nations.

143. The question of the application of the Declaration has played a considerable role in the work of the whole Organization and of the specialized agencies of the United Nations family. The principles proclaimed in the Declaration were subsequently developed in many resolutions of the General Assembly and other organs of the United Nations, in particular in the programme of action for the full implementation of the declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples [*resolution 2621 (XXV)*], the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination [*resolution 2106 A (XX)*, *annex*], the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of *apartheid* [*resolution 3068 (XXVIII)*, *annex*], and other conventions. The United Nations has recognized the legitimacy of the struggle of colonial peoples, by all means, for their freedom and independence, and has invited all Member States and international organizations to give material and moral support to colonial peoples in that struggle.

144. Implementing the ideals and principles formulated in the Declaration, the colonial peoples, with the support of all the progressive forces of the world and, in particular, of the socialist countries, have achieved remarkable success in the fight against colonialism and imperialism.

145. Comparing the past with the present, it can be seen that while at the time of the adoption of the Declaration there were more than 90 Territories which were under trusteeship or non-self-governing, in which lived tens of millions of people, today most of those Territories have become Members of the United

Nations and participate in the struggle for the final elimination of colonialism.

146. We congratulate today all the States which, having become members of the United Nations after 1960, that is after the adoption of the Declaration, have given the Organization a new impetus for fruitful activities and participate in the process of the development of humanity on the road of progress and peace.

147. We are delighted that today the United Nations represents almost the entire world. This Organization has become truly universal. In that lies the strength of the Organization. In that is the supreme hope of all mankind—that this universal Organization can achieve the principal objective set for it by its founders; to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

148. In summing up the results achieved by the national liberation movement in the world in recent years it must be said that the most favourable conditions for the struggle of peoples for their liberation were created by détente, which, thanks to the persistent efforts of the Soviet Union, the other socialist countries, the non-aligned countries and all progressive forces, became a powerful factor in the positive changes in the international arena.

149. It was precisely when, thanks to détente, the process of radically changing international relations on the basis of peaceful coexistence among peoples began, that the peoples witnessed an unprecedented attack by the liberation movements against colonialism and imperialism, thanks to which those movements, with growing aid from their natural allies, forced the colonizers to withdraw and abandon their positions in the great majority of colonial Territories.

150. The decline of the last colonial empire, that of Fascist Portugal, was an event of considerable historical importance which exercised, and will continue to exercise in the near future, enormous influence on the situation in Africa as regards the pursuit of the struggle of the peoples of that continent against the remnants of the racist and colonial régimes in Southern Rhodesia, Namibia and South Africa. We salute the liberation of the peoples of Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Angola which, having thrown off the yoke of the Portuguese Fascists have become independent. In the course of 1975 alone, the United Nations welcomed six new Member States.

151. In celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of the Declaration, we must not forget that the aims announced in that Declaration have not yet been completely achieved. Because of the ferocious opposition of colonialism and racism, supported by the forces of reaction and imperialism, which cling to their positions, the peoples of more than 40 Territories are still living under the yoke of colonialism. The gravity of the colonial problem is in no way lessened by the fact that the majority of colonial and dependent Territories which still exist today are relatively small Territories. The Declaration on decolonization applies with equal force to all colonial Territories, large or small.

152. The Programme of Action for the Full Implementation of the Declaration, adopted by the General Assembly in 1970, emphasizes that “the question of territorial size, geographical isolation and limited

resources should in no way delay the implementation of the Declaration”. In southern Africa the colonizers and racists, with the support of international reactionary forces, nevertheless try to carry out a counter-attack. The illegal régime of Ian Smith, under their tutelage, actively provokes the national liberation movements of Zimbabwe, thus insolently flouting the decisions of the United Nations. The racist Government of South Africa, following the abhorrent policy of *apartheid* and illegally occupying Namibia, has started to commit acts of open aggression against the young independent African States.

153. The Declaration on decolonization, in its spirit and in its content, is completely consistent with the essential interests of the oppressed peoples and constitutes a powerful political and moral base for their struggle for self-determination and independence.

154. The Soviet Union, which, from the beginning of its existence, has been in the forefront of the great movement towards freedom from imperialism and colonialism and which took the initiative which led to the adoption of the Declaration on decolonization, attributes, as in the past, the greatest importance to, and joins in the struggle of the peoples of Africa for, the complete implementation of the principles and purposes of the Declaration.

155. The Soviet Union and the countries of the socialist community believe that genuine and stable peace on our planet can never be completely guaranteed so long as colonialism, racism, *apartheid* and other forms of foreign domination of peoples continue to exist. The programme for peace proclaimed five years ago by the XXIVth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union stated clearly that “the decisions of the United Nations on the eradication of the vestiges of colonialism must be fully implemented. Racism and *apartheid* must be condemned and generally boycotted.”

156. Today, on the eve of the XXVth Congress of the Party, when our people draw up a balance sheet of what it has accomplished in the past five years, the Soviet Union can only draw great satisfaction from the fact that the various measures it has taken during those years in implementing the programme for peace have contributed to the success of the struggle of peoples against colonialism and the racist yoke.

157. We look forward to the future with optimism because we are convinced that the task of eradicating colonialism from the earth, completely and definitely, as laid down in the Declaration 15 years ago, will soon be concluded.

158. Finally, in the name of the Soviet delegation, I should like to express at this high rostrum our gratitude to the Special Committee on decolonization and to the Special Committee against *Apartheid* for all their efforts for the implementation of the Declaration on decolonization. I should also like to express our gratitude to the Chairmen of those Committees, the Ambassador of Tanzania, Mr. Salim, and the Ambassador of Guinea, Mrs. Jeanne Martin Cissé, for their valiant and tireless work for the success of the liberation struggle of the peoples still suffering oppression.

159. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I declare closed the special meeting to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the Declara-

tion on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

NOTE

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fifth Session, Plenary Meetings*, vol. I, 1866th meeting, para. 159.