

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

FIFTEENTH SESSION  
*Official Records*



**931st  
PLENARY MEETING**

Thursday, 1 December 1960,  
at 8.30 p.m.

**NEW YORK**

**CONTENTS**

Page

*Agenda item 87:*

*Declaration on the granting of independence  
to colonial countries and peoples (continued) 1063*

President: Mr. Frederick H. BOLAND (Ireland).

**AGENDA ITEM 87**

**Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial  
countries and peoples (continued)**

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Hasan (Paki-  
stan), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

1. The PRESIDENT: I will give the floor to the representative of Netherlands, exercising his right of reply.
2. Mr. EINAAR (Netherlands): This morning [930th meeting] the representative of Honduras mentioned a number of territories in the region of Latin America which were still colonial possessions of other countries. Among those territories still having a colonial status he included "Aruba, Curaçao and Surinam".
3. The reason why I have asked for the floor is merely to point out to the representative of Honduras that the inclusion must have been due to a slip of the tongue, no doubt unintentional.
4. Under the Charter of the Kingdom of the Netherlands of 1954 the three parts of the realm, that is, the Netherlands, Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles, have, of their free will, established a new constitutional order of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, in which the three countries henceforth form a free association of completely equal partners, and in which they conduct their internal interests autonomously, their common interests on a basis of equality, and accord each other reciprocal assistance.
5. Since 29 December 1954—the date on which this jointly drafted and agreed Charter entered into force—colonialism in any form whatsoever in Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles has been a thing of the past.
6. The General Assembly has recognized this by adopting resolution 945 (X) of 15 December 1955 by which the cessation of the transmission of information under Article 73 e of the United Nations Charter in respect of Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles by the Government of the Netherlands was approved.
7. I trust that the representative will accept this correction and will understand that we in Surinam and the Antilles are proud of our full self-government and cannot accept being called colonies.
8. Mr. AW (Mali) (translated from French): In taking part in the present debate on the end of colonialism—the first such debate in the General Assembly in the

annals of the United Nations—the delegation of the Republic of Mali does not intend simply to take part in the trial and conviction of the system known by the name of colonialism. My delegation and the other co-sponsors of draft resolution A/L.323 and Add.1-4 who preceded me on the rostrum are hoping for more and are asking for more, because they consider that colonialism has already been judged. We hope that, by adopting unanimously the draft resolution we are submitting, the General Assembly will express to the whole world its determination to make an end at last of dying colonialism, although certain ill-intentioned hypocrites would like to make us sorry for it by reiterating—without conviction, I must say—that colonialism has not had an entirely bad effect on the peoples under its domination, since there were schools and hospitals built, roads laid out, etc.

9. Before replying to such hypocritical remarks, I should like to pay a tribute to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, who asked the President to submit to the General Assembly for consideration the item which we are discussing, entitled: "Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples" [A/4501]. This proposal, which was received with well-deserved enthusiasm, is now the subject of our debate, and my delegation is convinced that the United Nations will not fail to seize this opportunity of accomplishing its mission of justice, freedom and peace in what is a particularly sensitive area, involving as it does the fate of tens of millions of human beings exploited in the name of an outdated paternalism for which no one would wish to be responsible before history.

10. Whether the colonialist countries accept or refuse to co-operate conscientiously in the great and noble work which we are undertaking is for them to decide; but let the representatives of those countries not appear here as wolves in sheep's clothing, protesting their innocence of all the sins of which they are accused and trying to divert our just complaints to the shifting sands of the cold war. Let them not tell us that by shooting peaceful and defenceless crowds they are contributing to their well-being, that by torturing patriots they are educating the people, or that by compelling women, children and old men to do forced labour they are raising the level of living. Let those who are trying to salve their conscience and conceal their crimes not tell us: "Before we came to those territories, there was nothing there." How wrong that is! There was nothing there—but before the advent of the colonialists there was independence, and independence means freedom. Is there anything in the world more precious to a people than freedom?

11. When General de Gaulle, in his vexation, told the people of Guinea in August 1958, "You want independence? Well, take it, with all its disadvantages", you will remember President Sékou Touré's retort: "We will take independence with its advantages!"

12. Who can fail to be aware today that the myth of the good Christian leaving his home to bring civilization to the Buddhists of Asia or the pagans of Africa and Oceania is now a matter for ridicule? Who would venture to deny that the general laws of human evolution would, by means of free and friendly exchanges, have allowed the colonial peoples to become happy and prosperous nations had not the colonialists appropriated their wealth, thus denying them all possibility of harmonious development? No enumeration of schools or hospitals built can conceal the dreadful truth of the crime against humanity perpetrated by the bearers of this sacrosanct civilization of theirs.

13. The point is not that colonization may have brought some degree of literacy to the children of the exploited countries or that it brought railways and roads; the point is whether a farmer who calls a veterinarian to care for his sick cow does so for humane reasons or simply to preserve his source of income.

14. Colonization was imposed by force or treachery on peoples which had their own civilization and asked nothing of anyone. Listen to the message dispatched in 1895 by an African emperor, the Moro Naba of Ouagadougou in Upper Volta, to Captain Destenaves who had been sent to him by the French Government to conclude a treaty:

"A long time ago I consulted the omens and they told me that if I saw a white man I would die. I know that the white men want to make me die so as to take my country; yet you assert that they want to help me organize my country. But I think my country is fine as it is. I have no need of them; I know what I need and what I want; I have my traders, so count yourself lucky that I do not have your head cut off. Go, then, and above all never come back."

15. That is clear enough. What, then, was the reason for colonization? There is no more authoritative voice to explain that than Georges Hardy, who wrote in his *Histoire sociale de la colonisation française*:

"For the statesmen of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in France and elsewhere, colonization was merely business, a mercantile enterprise, an element in the great maritime trade."<sup>1/</sup>

And Georges Hardy continues:

"There is nothing by which the mainsprings of that colonization are more clearly revealed than the economic system which was imposed upon the colonies and which is known as the colonial system or, more specifically, the exclusive system.

"Each trading company, in compensation for its responsibilities, was granted certain privileges, e.g., sovereign prerogatives in the occupied territories and various exemptions and subsidies. Its main advantage, however, was the monopoly of trade in the areas forming its domain. The inhabitants were obliged to sell their produce to it and to buy from it the goods which they needed; all other trade was excluded from that private preserve.

"This system was of course aimed against foreigners, but it was at the same time designed to prevent possible competition between the colonies and the metropolitan country. Already present in

outline when the first colonies were founded, it took on under Colbert, who was particularly concerned about the shortage of money, the character of an established policy and, despite some modifications, persisted until the revolution. The various regulations to which it gives rise can be summed up in the following general statements: . . . colonial produce exists to supply the French consumer, and only French goods have access to the colonial market. Industries may be established in the colonies only if they do not duplicate French industries. Maritime transport between France and its colonies is permitted only under the French flag."<sup>2/</sup>

16. This, as described by Mr. Georges Hardy, whom no one could suspect of having subversive or Communist ideas, is the economic system, misleadingly called the "colonial compact", which is the basis and essence of colonization.

17. The truth, however, is sometimes ugly, and the colonialists have had their experts in falsification and cynicism to present the great colonial epic through rose-coloured spectacles, depicting it as a philanthropic enterprise and a disinterested work of pacification and civilization.

18. Aimé Césaire, in the colourful style that is his own, has written as follows in his famous treatise colonialism:

"Colonization and civilization?"

"The most common misfortune in this connexion is to be, in all good faith, the dupe of a collective hypocrisy which is expert in presenting the problems in a misleading way so as better to justify the odious solutions which are provided for them.

"This amounts to saying that the essential thing here is to see clearly, to think clearly—that is to say, dangerously—and to reply clearly to the innocent original question: what in essence, is colonization? To do this is to concede that it is not the preaching of the Gospel, nor a philanthropic enterprise nor a desire to push back the frontiers of ignorance, disease and tyranny, nor the expansion of the kingdom of God, nor the extension of law. It is rather to acknowledge once for all, without fear of the consequences, that the decisive motive here is that of the adventurer and the pirate, the wholesale grocer and the shipowner, the gold seeker and the merchant, of greed and force, and that lurking evilly behind them, is the shadow of a form of civilization which, at a given moment in its history, feels an inner compulsion to extend on a world scale the competition of its antagonistic economic systems.

"Continuing my analysis, I find that the hypocrisy is of recent date, for neither Cortez discovering Mexico from the top of the great Teocalli, nor Pizarro before Cuzco (and still less Marco Polo before Cambaluc) claimed to be the harbingers of a superior system. They killed; they pillaged; they had helmets, lances and covetous instincts; but the loud-mouthed talkers came later. The chief culprit here is sanctimonious Christianity, because it formulated the false equation that Christianity is identical with civilization, and paganism with savagery, so that the inevitable result was the hideousness of

<sup>1/</sup> Georges Hardy, *Histoire sociale de la colonisation française* (Paris, Editions Larose, 1953), p. 13.

<sup>2/</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

colonialism and racism, and the victims were the red, the yellow and the black races."<sup>3/</sup>

19. I have taken the liberty of quoting this remarkable passage, the relevance of which I am sure will escape no one. Aimé Césaire concludes with these words:

"I acknowledge, of course, that it is good for different civilizations to be brought into contact with each other and that the marriage of different worlds is to be commended, for whatever the inner genius of a civilization, it inevitably loses its vigour if it withdraws into itself. I agree that international trade is like oxygen, that Europe's great opportunity lay in having been the crossroads, the geometric locus of all the ideas, the receptacle of all the philosophies and the home of all noble feelings, and that this has made it the best possible redistributor of energy.

"But having said this, I must then ask whether colonization really brought people into contact or, if you prefer, whether it was the best possible way of establishing contact.

"My answer is no, and I say that there is an infinite distance between colonization and civilization. I say that all the vast numbers of colonial expeditions, all the collections of colonial statutes and all the ministerial circulars which have been issued have not succeeded in producing a single human value."<sup>4/</sup>

20. These words of Aimé Césaire are clear and precise; they seem to us to constitute an extremely sound argument and lead us naturally on to put another question. Is decolonization historically possible? This neologism certainly conceals a dangerous vagueness. The dizzying series of countries which became independent in 1960 has marked that year in the history of mankind and proves to us, if any proof were needed, that it is impossible to speak of progressive evolution when we see events unfolding at such a rate, for the fact is that there are no immature peoples incapable of governing themselves freely. Of course there are bad governments, but it must be admitted that they are to be found everywhere and at all levels.

21. Between Bandung and today, it seems as if several centuries have passed, so far-reaching are the upheavals which are everywhere shaking the edifice of colonialism to its foundations.

22. Fifteen years have passed since San Francisco. Those who, only five years ago, called countries of Asia and Africa their possessions, no longer deny that a people cannot be a possession. The analogy between a colonial subject and a slave has become obvious. If I am not mistaken, it was President Franklin D. Roosevelt who said that future generations would one day ask how it was that slavery had been abolished and yet, so long afterwards, the colonial system of relations between States was still accepted.

23. What was a slave? A human being bought in the market or a prisoner brought back from the battlefield after victory; a human being treated as a personal possession.

24. What is a colonized person? It should be pointed out that he does not exist as an individual phenomenon; individual persons or small groups are not objects of colonization. Colonization is the occupation of a whole

country and the subjugation of an entire people. Like the slave, the colonized person obeys the wishes of his master, the colonizer, who treats him as a personal possession.

25. There can be no doubt about the immoral character of colonial rule, which it must be admitted in no way differs from slavery. Consequently all of us here are now unanimous in our condemnation of colonialism, but there does not seem to be the same unanimity when it comes to taking action. Who is it that disrupts this unanimity on the immediate liquidation of colonialism? It is of course the countries which still possess colonies. Their favourite argument is the gradual advancement of the colonial countries, and they base this argument on their experience as predestined metropolitan countries, particularly well versed in the problem of the advancement of colonies.

26. They like to tell us: we know from experience that by speeding up matters we would be doing these countries a disservice; and they add: look at the example of the former Belgian Congo—it could so easily happen to anyone. I should like to tell the proponents of that kind of argument that they have been overtaken by events.

27. The United Nations is no longer an assembly where, on the one hand, there are countries which can lay claim to long experience as expert colonizers and, on the other, countries which have no colonies and whose praiseworthy intentions concerning oppressed peoples are quickly denounced as demagogic manoeuvres. There are now other voices in the United Nations which can give irrefutable and impressive evidence on the subject of colonialism. There are now in the United Nations the representatives of peoples whose bodies and whose human dignity have suffered under colonialism. It is usually said that every generation feels that it is at a turning point in history. Present generations in dependent and colonial countries are undoubtedly at a turning point in their history, in fact at a turning point in all history. The delegations which speak in this Assembly of their colonial experience or proclaim the benefits of colonization can unfortunately only speak of the empire of their fathers' day; they speak of it as a heritage.

28. If their countries were colonized at some time in history, they know it only from history books. Therein lies the fundamental difference between those delegations and ours, who have personal experience of colonial rule. Our knowledge is not based on hearsay or on what we learnt in school; we were for decades the living embodiment of that system. Ours was a generation which, on coming of age, did not have the right to vote in its own country.

29. May we remind certain delegations that henceforth we, the peoples who were once colonized and dependent, but who are now peoples in our own right, are ready to give super-abundant testimony against the perpetuation of colonialism on any pretext whatsoever.

30. When we hear such commonplace arguments as those which reduce the positive accomplishments of colonialism to the presence of a few good speakers from the newly independent countries, this does not trouble us. On the contrary, we think it proves that the apologists of colonialism have no other arguments left. Perhaps we shall disillusion some delegations when we say that most of the advanced elements in the newly independent countries were not trained under

<sup>3/</sup> Aimé Césaire, *Discours sur le colonialisme* (Paris, Présence Africaine, 1955), pp. 8-10.

<sup>4/</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

normal conditions by colonial Powers; most of them were subjected to a special kind of education which opened no horizons and which imbued them with the cult and the superiority of the metropolitan country, while emphasizing their own congenital incapacity. Many of the advanced elements of today reached adolescence at school without having had any opportunity of learning that there were other countries in the world besides the metropolitan country, which was always described as a magnanimous saviour.

31. If these advanced elements have now shown themselves able to face their responsibilities, this should not be regarded as evidence of the colonial Power's intention to lead the dependent peoples towards their maturity, in accordance with the spirit of the United Nations Charter. On the contrary, the successes—which in our opinion are unfortunately too few—should be regarded as proof that no system of education, however severe, can destroy the qualities of a people determined to become free.

32. Our present experience in Africa shows, in any case, how fast the wheel of history can turn, making the astonished colonial Powers giddy, since they cannot understand that they have no choice but to accept the loss of their paradise, a paradise which was a hell for the millions of human beings who for too long had been reduced to the level of beasts of burden in the name of an imaginary racial superiority. Like Mr. Jean Bruhat, we pity the writers of geography textbooks who, he says,

"are hastily making and remaking maps of the Africa of 1956, which had six independent States, as against twenty-six in 1960. No sooner are these States 'set up' (to use the accepted form of words) than their institutions must be transformed."

33. And whenever the colonialists throw off some ballast, they hope to keep the main cargo, for we should never forget that they never lightly give up the exploitation of the countries they dominate.

34. We know that two Powers have thought that they could shelter themselves from the irresistible wind of independence blowing through the continent of Africa by inventing the legal artifice of overseas provinces in order thus to draw a modest veil over the frantic colonialism which they practise in their colonies. We are very pleased by the decision of the Fourth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly,<sup>5/</sup> which has just levelled this last rampart by voting, by a commendable majority, for a draft resolution declaring that the so-called overseas provinces are simply colonies and should be considered such from now on.

35. The process of liberation has begun and cannot be turned back. In the words of Abraham Lincoln:

"It is true that you may fool all the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all the time; but you can't fool all of the people all the time."

36. We should like to tell the die-hard colonialists that the critical point in the liberation of the peoples under foreign domination was passed in 1960. The awakening is now universal, and all attempts to integrate the inhabitants of colonies with the nationals of

metropolitan countries will be in vain. It must be realized, moreover, that the metropolitan country is never sincere in its desire for integration; integration always creates insoluble problems for the metropolitan country, and is directly against its interests, which are based essentially on defrauding those whose rights are ostensibly being restored.

37. Neither the balm of an illusory assimilation, as in Angola, nor organized subversion, as in the Congo, nor open war, as in Algeria, can save colonialism, for its doom has irrevocably been sealed. We repeat that the process is historic and irreversible, and we maintain that it is independent of the colonial Power's will. Let us remember this.

38. In the London Guildhall on 10 November 1942, Sir Winston Churchill said this of the colonies:

"We mean to hold our own. I have not become the King's Prime Minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire."

39. We should also remember the famous Brazzaville Conference, which, according to the Gaullists, was a liberal achievement of decolonization. This Conference began its recommendations with these words:

"The purposes of the work of civilization which France has carried out in its colonies rule out any idea of autonomy and any possibility of development outside the French bloc of the Empire. Possible self-government in the colonies, even in the distant future—mark this, even in the distant future—is out of the question."

40. Nor should we forget that the French Prime Minister said on 9 June 1960 in the French National Assembly: "We intend to protect our country's political interests, its strategic interests, its intellectual influence and its economic opportunities."

41. Nothing could be clearer. The exploiters of the colonial countries intend to give the colonial peoples with one hand only what they can take away with the other, since Africa produces, for example, 38.4 per cent of the world's diamonds, 66.4 per cent of its cobalt, 45 per cent of its gold, 35 per cent of its phosphates, 29 per cent of its manganese and nearly 25 per cent of its copper, apart from natural reserves of lead, zinc, bauxite, iron and radio-active minerals. The continent of Africa is also the world's largest producer of cocoa, ground-nuts and palm oil.

42. Should we conclude from all this that any independence which is granted is necessarily a false independence that is to be despised? We do not think so, because we are convinced that whenever a colonial people gains a fragment of freedom, it owes it above all to a certain awakening of its masses. Another reason why we do not think so is that we know that whenever a colonial people achieves some form of self-determination, this victory inevitably gives it another opportunity to win a greater victory over the forces of foreign domination.

43. General de Gaulle has understood this very well as he desperately clings to an "Algerian Algeria" while refusing to allow the Algerian people to speak for itself under United Nations control. We would be willing to wager that France, in its obstinate attempt to stifle the will of the proud and brave people of Algeria, will soon awake to the dazzling realities of a radiant Algeria, which will have burst its chains and

<sup>5/</sup> See Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifteenth Session, Fourth Committee, 1048th meeting.

laid down its arms at the feet of the United Nations, to hear the voice of its people in their new-found confidence.

44. Meanwhile, let us act in such a way that those who are not yet fighting to seize their freedom may be grateful to the United Nations for sparing them from a useless and unjust war. Is that not the first duty of a world-embracing organization that issued from the victory of peace-loving and freedom-loving peoples over the forces of Nazism and Fascism?

45. My delegation hopes that the Assembly will unanimously adopt all draft resolutions giving concrete form to the complete liquidation of colonialism which may be submitted to it. The Assembly must do this, not only because such an attitude is in keeping with the spirit of the Charter, but in particular because it would be the most effective possible contribution to the maintenance of world peace. As long as the United Nations recognizes that some people have the right to control other people, there will be the prospect of conflicts, which at any moment might break out in some corner of Africa, Asia or America and, in view of the present world political situation, lead to a large-scale conflagration.

46. The Assembly should not postpone its decision on the pretext that a State should reach a certain stage of development before being given control of its own affairs. Although it is easy to speak of the principle of a minimum level of development, we do not see how such a level could be defined nor how the criteria for setting time limits could be fixed. We see what Belgium did in the Congo in eighty years; we see what has been done in the other parts of the world in several centuries. When, moreover, we hear references being made to a level, we remember that the Nazi régime of Hitler regarded the countries of Europe as unfit to govern themselves. Everything, of course, is relative.

47. The right of peoples to self-determination is based, above all, on respect for human dignity, which must come before all other considerations. In the name of this sacred principle, my delegation has co-sponsored draft resolution A/L.323 and Add.1-4 and is ready to support any other efforts to speed the movement for the liberation of all peoples under foreign domination and to promote the unconditional granting of independence to all colonial and dependent countries.

48. Mr. DOSUMU-JOHNSON (Liberia): At the outset of my statement, I wish to express my delegation's great satisfaction at the trend of the world attitude towards this most debased political conception which is known as colonialism, and at the fact that we have wisely decided to discuss its complete eradication at this time. By this awareness, the United Nations is set to remove one of the greatest risks and dangers to world peace, and consequently to remove all obstacles between nations. The possession and non-possession of colonies and raw materials have been one of the chief sources of international conflict among the Western Powers, and definitely the cause of the two world wars. The theory of the "haves" and the "have nots" has its origin in colonial reflection and had always engendered jealousy and hatred among industrially developed States. The elimination of colonialism is therefore a contribution to the peace and prosperity of mankind.

49. My contemporaries in African nationalist movements, no matter how divergent our interpretations of present trends may be, will agree with me that World War II was a critical turning-point in modern colonial history. It put an end to complacency towards colonial political, economic and cultural aspirations. It marked the beginning of the positive liquidation of colonial empires, and the recognition of nationalist leaders not as hot-heads and ambitious radicals, but as men of sincere dedication to the cause of their people, entitled to the respect and recognition of the world.

50. But it would be fallacious to conclude that the profound changes now taking place in the interest of subject peoples are manifestly the result of our individual or even collective efforts. To my rather naive mind, looking back over the road we have travelled since 1919 when we organized the National Congress of British West Africa, with a secretariat in the then Gold Coast, and the Congress of the African Peoples of the World here in the United States, and viewing the speed with which things are happening in the colonial world of these days, I am inclined to conclude that some supernatural force, which we call God and others call Allah, is responsible for it all. Some may not agree with me, but this is my belief. We, the agitators, were only instruments in God's hands; and no ingenious manipulation of words from quarters however exalted will shift me one inch from the bed-rock of my confidence in God as the arbiter of human events. How else can you account for great colonial Powers giving up the bread-baskets of their colonial territories without a fight, if God's hand is not in it? I put my faith in God—this not as a set doctrine of belief, but as a tendency towards action, the matrix of a formulated creed and an inspiration to endeavour. Fear not, take courage; thy great sorrows are carved in marble and they will not be inscribed there in vain.

51. This, however, does not imply quiescence or passive gradualism. It does not mean that we should relax our efforts. It means that Heaven helps those who help themselves, and that that God who made possible the independent Ghana, Nigeria, Congo (Leopoldville) and, soon, Sierra Leone, and all the former French colonies now members of the French Community, will soon—possibly in a few years hence—make all Africa free, so that even South Africa and Algeria, I dare say, will be ruled by Africans.

52. My friends tell me that as I become older I become conservative. Nothing could be further from the truth. The simple fact is that my utterances are now governed by circumstances and time. While in the past I agitated with pugnacity, venom and emotion, now I endeavour to deliberate with logic, patience and intellect to achieve the same end. Life is a dynamic equilibrium.

53. Inherent in the Atlantic Charter is the principle of self-determination for all peoples. This principle was, at the formation of the United Nations, embodied in Article 73 of its Charter which I quote in extenso:

*[The speaker read the text of Article 73 of the Charter of the United Nations.]*

54. This article of the Charter is the basis of the declaration which the African-Asian members of this Assembly have submitted for the unqualified approval of the Assembly.

55. Colonialism has been the subject of much literature of description, analysis and dogma. Its origin is

found in that pathological political attitude which predicated national greatness and prestige on overseas possessions. The subject of our declaration is to the effect that domination of any nation over another is a travesty of human justice; that it is always a source of conflict and, in this age of modern communication and rabid nationalism, can more easily than in the past provoke an international crisis. Any attempt to condone or uphold or support any form of colonialism is, to say the least, immoral.

56. The essence of colonialism is domination of one nation over one or several others. It may take several forms, such as conquest, outright purchase, extra-territoriality or economic condominium. Whatever aspect it assumes, in essence it is a group of persons coming from another land and imposing its will and pleasure on the original inhabitants without regard to their elementary interests, and they are invariably reduced to the position of hewers of wood and drawers of water, forever consigned to providing for the colonizers the prerequisites of a refined and cultured life, while they themselves are prevented by their poverty and ignorance from any share or part in that life.

57. Colonial empires have been built on the sweat and wretchedness of the aborigines. The great explorers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in their search for adventure, knowledge, glory for their kings, riches for themselves and their friends under the guise of the so-called civilizing mission, exploited, ravaged and pillaged colonial peoples and territories, leaving many of them homeless and debauched. Their complex of superiority left the aborigines no right which the colonizers were bound to respect. The atrocities and deprivations that accompanied colonialism are too sordid for recital here. Suffice it to say that it was a black era for Asia and Africa.

58. With the advent and growth of modern capitalism with its concomitant of commercial and trade expansion, remote areas were penetrated with the protection of Governments. Reluctant mandarins in China were subdued by foreign warships. The East European armies moved against the Emir of Bokhara.

59. Seized by so-called national needs and strategic interests, the British and French became involved in North America and India; Russia and Japan in Manchuria and Korea; Britain, France, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy and Germany were all involved in Asia and Africa, each netting as part of its booty colonial land areas several times larger than its size. The colonial mentality continued to be so strong an instrument of national policy that the Third Reich planned to turn Poland and Russia into vast colonies to be peopled by foreign farmers who would be served by the slave labour of the population that remained unexterminated.

60. This is among the compelling reasons why this Assembly should take positive steps to remove all traces of colonialism from the face of the earth. To this end my delegation is committed.

61. Here I would like to interpose that we note with satisfaction that the Spanish Government has agreed to review its position and to submit reports on its colonies to the United Nations periodically.

62. Despite the fact that colonialism has been a major topic in all African and Asian conferences of recent

years—Bandung, Accra, Monrovia, Addis Ababa and elsewhere—we have never asked for the final ending of it in the United Nations. We must, therefore, appreciate the Soviet Union's action in placing this question on the agenda of the United Nations.

63. If the British and French were the only colonizing Powers in the world today, our argument would have been very much weakened by recent trends in their colonial policies. Although we are not in complete agreement with them on Algeria, Kenya and the Federation of Rhodesia, we are comforted by their willingness to co-operate, as they are setting their colonies free. They have perhaps learnt that they have more to gain by setting their colonies free and retaining their friendship than by forcing them to war; and the sooner they do this for the remaining colonies the better it will be for them.

64. However, there are die-hards, such as Portugal and Spain, which seek to make Africa a part of Europe. The Portuguese and Spanish colonies are the most deplorable and inhuman in the colonial history of these times, although they have been longer in the colonial field than any other European nations.

65. The Africans in Mozambique—5,780,000—and Angola—4,145,000—live under a dictatorship of the cruelest kind. I was not told this; I went there. All the fancy talk of equal rights and no colour bar, and that colonies are an integral part of Portugal, is a fraud and an insult to the conscience of mankind, because these are benefits designed for civilized persons, and under Portuguese practice few Africans qualify as such. The Africans in these territories live in abject poverty. Forced labour is practised on them, as they are always handed over to employers if they fail to pay the poll-tax. They are not even permitted to drive taxis, as such employment is reserved for Portuguese. Strangers are not permitted to talk to Africans in these two countries unless in the Portuguese language. This is official policy. Bissau and São Tomé are even worse than these. This Assembly must take positive measures to relieve the plight of the Africans in Spanish Fernando Po and the Portuguese colonies, and in the former British colony of South Africa. South Africa was a British colony, and in the transfer of power Britain should have protected the African population. Consequently, it shares responsibility for the plight of the African in the Union of South Africa.

66. Uganda, Kenya, the Central Federation of Rhodesia, South West Africa, Bechuanaland, Basutoland and a few others here and there on the colonial list cry out for independence. They are exposed to a colour bar and other inhuman treatment. Although there are hopeful signs, these are too small. The only remedy open to the Africans is complete political independence as a means of raising themselves from the degrading position of an incarnate Lazarus feeding on the crumbs of alien taxmasters to the posture of equality and human dignity which is their rightful heritage.

67. It is needless to compile statistics to prove the immorality of colonialism. It is a system that takes the manhood out of those exposed to it. It robs the people of their resources and gives them nothing comparable in return.

68. Viewing it in the light of the declaration which my delegation has co-sponsored with alacrity, let us examine this baneful system with regard to its political, economic and cultural implications and, where

possible, disprove all pretexts for delaying independence.

69. Contrary to the belief often entertained by people whose education just suffices to elevate them from the status of boors, the Africans, prior to the advent of European traders in Africa, had a well-ordered and highly developed system of family life, community development, education for boys and girls, arts and health.

70. The heart of African society, since before the European invasion, has been the family. A broad view is taken of family relationship and responsibility. It is composed of every link in the family chain. Marriage is the business of the whole group. The cultural pristine value of the community and the chieftaincy will be attested to by all those who have observed it with unbiased minds, whether they be missionaries, anthropologists or sociologists. Because the African believes in the continuity of family and community, he does his level best to instil in his children the things for which the family and the community stand. The educational processes were by observation, involvement and formal learning. Notwithstanding all its aspects, this culture was ridiculed and the social system ignored or disrespected.

71. To say that the African had no government and that it took the Europeans to introduce political system in Africa is to make a statement without foundation in fact. When God divided the world, He gave a portion each to Shem, Ham and Japheth. Ham took Africa as his portion. With his sons, Cush, Phut and Mizraim, the government of Africa began and later gave rise to the empires of Sokoto, Gando, Kano, Conghoi and the various dynasties of Egypt. When European colonization of Africa began under the intrepid mariners of Prince Henry in the fifteenth century, Africans on the Atlantic shores were in trade contact with Mediterranean traders since as far back as 600 B.C. and were enjoying the benefits of a cultural evolution with its seat in the Nile, Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The claim that they came to protect us is balderdash, for when enemies really came we were usually left to our own fate.

72. Many of the things you hear about today, such as diseases, curable and incurable, did not begin to afflict the African until the invasion of alien forces, which ravaged and pillaged the homes of Africans and in some instances sold them into slavery. Being forced to do things against their will and to work for masters instead of for themselves was too bitter a pill to swallow. Death or indolence or shiftlessness was resorted to as a way of life. Freedom and democracy, the keystone of English liberty and the watchword of Europe, was never exported to the colonial territories. A strange form of freedom was inaugurated in dealing with Asians and Africans.

73. Colonialism in any shape or form is bad. It brought to Asia and Africa a great deal of evil which was encouraged in some instances by the colonizing Powers. Interested in the wealth that they could find to enrich the coffers of merchant princes in Europe, pirates and adventurers like Drake, Frobisher and Hawkins burnt down African towns and villages and sold their inhabitants into slavery. In many places the Africans were only beasts of burden. This is what Kipling's white man's burden did for Africa. We should thank God for the mosquitoes in West Africa.

74. Within forty years Africa's 11,545,000 square miles, with the exception of the areas occupied by sovereign Liberia and Ethiopia, were staked out among the great Powers, with unhappy consequences for the inhabitants. Despite the lofty humanitarian principles which were echoed in the platforms of Europe, the practices of these early colonizers were neither lofty nor humane. If you look at the treaties with their X's as symbols of acceptance by unlettered chieftains, you cannot but be convinced of the varying degrees of deception employed to induce Africans to sign papers they did not understand. If I do not understand these treaties today, you can imagine how much less they understood them then.

75. In some instances political affairs were left to private companies and individuals who were willing to condone the treatment of the African, which was not in harmony with their protestations of concern for his life and liberty. Some of the methods used to recruit labour and to keep it were the same as those employed by the slave driver, and resistance by the conscript met with counter-measures of the most brutal sort.

76. If we are anxious to have a declaration on colonialism in the face of the kaleidoscopic changes taking place in Africa today, it is because consistency is not a part of the vocabulary in colonial circles. The stream of colonial policy has many tributaries which are sensitive to changes in the intellectual climate of the home country.

77. The argument that the colonies are not yet prepared for independence is untenable. They said that about all the colonies that have attained independence. No amount of political tutelage can give a people the real robustness that independence supplies. Go there today and see what Africans have done for themselves since independence. The Africans managed their own affairs before the colonial era; I have no doubt that they can manage them today with the United Nations as their guide.

78. It would be a travesty on the principles of the purest justice if I failed to express my indebtedness to Western missions which set me and many others on the road to modern political practice, yes, my indebtedness to Western science and medicine, engineering, welfare, administration and other modern paraphernalia. But these cannot be substituted for the independence of my brethren who are systematically deprived of the right to speak and move about with the dignity that characterizes manhood.

79. All that the Africans—East, West, North or South—are asking the colonial and administering Powers and the great democratic nations is that they accord the colonies political independence so that they may develop better houses, better food, a higher standard of living generally; a vigorous national economy; a stable society with its concomitants of schools, colleges, welfare centres, hospitals, disciplined army and police, civil and political liberty.

80. People in territories under colonial domination desire a better life. It is not necessary for their children to be damned to come into the world with disease or for them themselves to be subject all their lives to its debilitating and incapacitating effects.

81. It is peculiarly obtuse for any Member of the United Nations to claim any section of Africa as part of his metropolitan territory, as is also the assertion

recently made by a certain European Head of State, that in discussing Africa the United Nations is meddling in the domestic affairs of his country. This is an outmoded subterfuge. Any inhuman practice perpetrated on subject peoples, every colonial question in any part of the world, is within the competence of the United Nations, and it is so understood.

82. The year 1960 should be made complete in its claim as the "African Year" by the adoption of this declaration as a charter of freedom for the remaining colonial territories from exploitation and servitude, and thus make them beneficiaries of the fundamental human rights which the United Nations assures to all peoples.

83. Prepared or unprepared, experience has taught us that they will develop faster under a government of their own choosing.

84. The PRESIDENT: Before I call on the next speaker, I should like to draw the attention of the Assembly to document A/L.323/Add.5, which informs us that Gabon and the Philippines have been added to the list of sponsors of the draft resolution.

85. Mr. TOURA GABA (Chad) (translated from French): The delegation of Chad has listened with clearly understandable interest to the speakers who have preceded it to this rostrum. Indeed, of all the discussions in which it has had the honour to take part, my delegation considers the one in which we are engaged today as being by far the most important because it has a direct bearing on both the present and the future. Colonialism is not a stranger to the ills from which our unfortunate planet suffers.

86. My delegation would in this connexion like to address itself particularly to the delegations of those nations which still have political and economic responsibilities overseas.

87. For reasons which are well known, this debate concerns them as deeply, if not more deeply, than it concerns us, the representatives of the young nations that have co-sponsored the draft declaration on the end of colonialism which will be proposed, towards the end of our discussion, for the acceptance of this Assembly.

88. Since they boast of a Christian civilization which is built, so we are taught, on charity, justice, love for one's neighbour and other such principles, the representatives of the nations indicted in the declaration will undoubtedly find themselves on the horns of a dilemma and, as so many of their co-religionists, the victims of severe attacks of conscience. They certainly know the consequences, happy or disastrous as the case may be, of the vote they will cast at the end of this debate. Never has a vote had so much importance for the whole of the world, and for the white race in particular, paralysed as it is by its deep-rooted instinct of self-preservation. Never, owing to a handful of backward-looking people who obstinately cling to the last vestiges of an irretrievable past, has Christianity, of which the white race is apparently so proud, been in so great danger in the dependent countries. Never have other religions known such popularity in these colonies.

89. My delegation would like to hope that the colonialist nations will, this year, make a magnanimous gesture. They cannot show themselves inferior to those nations which have voluntarily recognized the necessity of liberating their colonies.

90. No one hesitates to proclaim from the roof-tops that he is free and democratic. But can a free and democratic person oppress other men? It is unthinkable to refuse to others what one demands for oneself.

91. Are not the flags and anthems of the colonialist countries themselves a sign of their great love for independence? The need to be free and independent is inherent in the human person. It would therefore be criminal, futile and against the will of God to refuse on any ground whatever to give full and total independence to an individual, and even more to a people, that demands it.

92. My delegation would further like to hope that the colonialist nations, which for well-known reasons have spread progressive ideas throughout the world, will not reverse themselves here; they must not fail to be logical with themselves. Hence my delegation directs a pressing appeal to them to unite their efforts with ours so that we may build a new world from which slavery will be banished and where justice, equality, brotherhood and harmony at last will reign.

93. In order to rouse its people to the struggle for national independence, one of the older republics which sits among us here reinvigorated the religion of its ancestors. Though clothing it in Christian rites, it drew Jesus Christ and his faithful apostles in its own image, excluding Judas of course. These people proudly tell us that without this metamorphosis they would never have succeeded in driving the invader from their country. If the colonialists continue to reason as their ancestors did, and like them allow themselves to be overtaken by the times, we fear that this phenomenon will recur on a large and devastating scale. It will carry everything before it, and nothing which recalls colonialism will remain.

94. Let us see to it together that, for the good of mankind, this calamity, which in poetical language has been described as a return to the well-springs of humanity, does not come about.

95. This sombre prospect gives singular importance to the debate which you, Mr. President, are directing with your customary competence and distinction. Would it be asking too much to beg you to use your influence so that those whom the colonial Powers heed might make an extra effort to bring about the freeing of colonies which all the peoples of the world so ardently desire? Our Assembly, the reflection of these peoples who thirst for justice and deeply believe in the necessity for peaceful coexistence, could not fail to be grateful to you.

96. The African continent is shaped somewhat like a question-mark, but also somewhat like a pistol pointed, as if by chance, at the Union of South Africa. It is for the colonial Powers to see to it that the continent is not transformed into a real pistol, but remains a peaceful question-mark. To do this the colonial Powers must henceforth show that they can respond in time to the questions put to them. This is vital to the interests of peace and friendship among peoples.

97. Africa does not bear malice or seek revenge; it is not racist and has no special dislike for foreigners. All races live there together, all opinions are freely expressed, except of course in the territories which are still under the colonial yoke. Africa also knows how to forget. The proof of this is in the young nations where the indigenous people and colonizers live and work together in friendship and dignity.



98. The draft resolution which is before you in document A/L.323 and Add.1-5 comes from most, if not all, of the formerly colonized nations. It is the expression of those who know the colonial régime better than anyone else and who can assess its advantages and disadvantages in a true perspective. The domination of one people by another, a condition contrary to fundamental human rights and to the Charter of the United Nations, is something that is known to all people. But henceforth colonialism is condemned, and its perpetuation is recognized to be a clear threat to international peace and security.

99. All peoples have the right of self-determination; no political, economic or social pretext may be used to deprive them of this right. We address a pressing appeal to all the great nations to put an end to all armed action and all other repressive measures directed against the still dependent peoples that peacefully claim their independence. Such is the spirit of our draft resolution.

100. Our continent knows its origins and its potentialities; it knows its value both for the present and

for the future. Thus, when Africa and its sister continent Asia have occasion to speak of other continents, they sometimes wear the tender smile of an indulgent mother.

101. Africa cannot therefore ignore or dispense with the other continents. Perhaps more than them it needs outside assistance to develop its fabulous latent riches. It cannot, in the interdependent world of today, set itself apart or withdraw into itself. As in the past it wants to be both donor and recipient of everything that enriches and does honour to our common heritage: civilization.

102. The time has come when Africa as a whole must occupy the select place it deserves in the family of sovereign nations. Its intentions are pure, and, as in the past, it is worthy of confidence.

103. I shall conclude by renewing my appeal to the colonial Powers to join disinterestedly with us so that the breadth of the historic vote we shall take will not be lessened by a discordant note.

*The meeting rose at 10.20 p.m.*