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Chairman: Mr. Francisco URRUTIA (Colombia).

AGENDA ITEM 62

Application, under the auspices of the United Nations, of the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples in the case of the population of the island of Cyprus (A/2703, A/C.1/747, A/C.1/753, A/C.1/L.124, A/C.1/L.125) (*continued*)

1. Mr. KYROU (Greece) said that his delegation hoped to avoid marring the propitious climate that had been produced by the General Assembly's unanimous adoption of its resolutions 808 (IX) and 810 (IX) on disarmament and the peaceful uses of atomic energy respectively. In bringing the issue of Cyprus to the United Nations after the failure of all its efforts for bilateral negotiation, the Greek Government was anxious not to inject any element of invective into the debate. It hoped that an honest expression of the opposing views would help to clear the international atmosphere. Only by facing with courage and goodwill the international problems brought before it could the United Nations become a centre for harmonizing the actions of Member States.

2. The Cyprus question dividing Greece and the United Kingdom was above all a matter of justice; it involved the implementation of one of the basic principles of the United Nations. The Greek delegation hoped, therefore, that the adoption of a moderate resolution after an objective discussion would rank as one more positive achievement of the General Assembly's ninth session.

3. The Greek delegation's request was both just and moderate. It contained no thrust against the United Kingdom or against any other country. It did not proceed from any self-interest on the part of Greece. Last, but not least, it was in strict conformity with the principles and purposes of the United Nations.

4. The Cypriots were asking for freedom and self-determination. They did not want British colonial rule. That feeling was the result of an experience of more than three-quarters of a century, and there was no chance that they would now change their minds. In the circumstances, it would be inconceivable to prolong

an arbitrary foreign domination over a highly civilized people anxious to determine its own future.

5. In his statement in the General Committee (93rd meeting), Mr. Lloyd had maintained that Cyprus was not essentially Greek. On the other hand, Mr. John Parker, Member of Parliament, had stated on 23 July 1954, in a debate in the House of Commons, that more than four-fifths of the population of Cyprus spoke Greek, belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church, and thought of themselves as Greeks. He had gone on to refute the argument most commonly advanced, that Cyprus had not belonged to Greece in recent years, and had recalled that for centuries Greece had been part of the Ottoman Empire and had achieved its independence only in 1832. Cyprus could therefore not have belonged to Greece before that time. In fact, the nucleus of the Kingdom of Greece when it had become independent had been in the Peloponnese and the land to the north of it. Gradually, all the surrounding Greek-speaking territories, with the exception of Cyprus, had become part of the Kingdom of Greece. The Ionian Islands had been joined to Greece in 1863, Thessaly in 1881, Crete and Macedonia in 1913, Western Thrace in 1920 and the Dodecanese in 1945. Another argument used by the opponents of the union of Cyprus with Greece was that, although the Cypriots might speak Greek, they were not really Greeks. However, recent historical discoveries had shown that the Achaean Greeks had settled in Cyprus in the Mycenaean age, in 1400 B. C. Mr. Parker had rightly observed that the one or two Phoenician City States already there had been absorbed by the Greeks at an early stage. Throughout its history, under the rule of Alexander, the Ptolemies, Rome and Byzantium, the culture and administration of the island had been Greek. The Italians had left no trace, apart from the architecture. On the other hand, a Turkish minority had been left over from the time of the Ottoman Empire. Mr. Parker had noted that it was significant that when the British had taken over the administration of Cyprus in 1878, they had made arrangements for higher education in Greek rather than English, because of the importance retained by the Greek language on the island.

6. Another British Member of Parliament, Mr. Mallaieu, had recalled in the House on 2 November 1954 that it was no use saying that the 80 per cent of Cypriots speaking Greek were not really Greeks; race or blood mattered little if they felt themselves to be Greeks and wished to be regarded as Greeks.

7. The Cypriots had claimed their freedom ever since the first day of the British occupation of the island. The history of the liberation movement in Cyprus was full of dramatic emotions shared by the Greek people. However, there had been no bloodshed, which in view of the Greek temperament was proof of the friendship which the Greeks felt for the British people.

8. The wishes of the Greek population of Cyprus had been submitted to the Assembly by His Beatitude, the Archbishop Ethnarch of Cyprus, Makarios III, and by the Mayor of Nicosia.¹ The Archbishop, apart from his ancient rights and traditional privileges, was also the representative of the Cypriots by virtue of his election, in which the entire Greek population of the island took part. It was therefore his duty to voice the national aspirations of the people whom he represented. When the national liberty of Cyprus was achieved, his sphere of activity would be confined to spiritual matters. It should also be noted that the letter from the Mayor of Nicosia to the Secretary-General had been written on behalf of all the municipalities of Cyprus, whose mayors and municipal councillors had assembled at Nicosia on 11 August 1954.

9. The spiritual leader of the Turkish minority, the Reverend Mohammed Dana, had claimed in a document sent to the United Nations that it was only within the previous sixty years that the Greek-speaking people of Cyprus had grown into a majority. However, when the Turks had seized Cyprus in 1570 not one Turk had been living there. About 1670, the Turkish writer, Evliya Evendi, had written in his *Siyyah Namé* (Narrative of Travels in Europe, Asia and Africa) that there were 150,000 Greeks on Cyprus and 30,000 Moslems. In 1841, the Turkish Governor of Cyprus had estimated the population at 110,000, of whom he had admitted that 75,000 were Greeks.

10. The phase which the Cyprus issue had now entered had started, on 15 January 1950, with the proclamation of the Archbishop of Cyprus organizing a plebiscite, after the British Government had refused to adopt that procedure. Out of 215,000 voters of over 18 years of age, 211,000, or 95.7 per cent, had voted for union with Greece. On 27 April 1953, the Archbishop, basing himself on General Assembly resolution 637 A (VII), of 16 December 1952, had reminded the Governor of the result of the 1950 plebiscite, and suggested that the Cypriots should be allowed to exercise their right to self-determination. Since the Governor had refused, the Archbishop had submitted a petition to the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 10 August 1953, requesting the inclusion of the question of Cyprus in the General Assembly's agenda. The British Government's answer had been given in the most categorical way on 28 July 1954 in the House of Commons by the Minister of State for Colonial Affairs, Mr. Henry Hopkinson. To a question from his predecessor on the future status of Cyprus, he had replied that it had always been understood that certain territories in the Commonwealth, owing to their particular circumstances, could never expect to be fully independent. On 19 October 1954, Sir Winston Churchill, trying to smooth over the effect of the statement, had said that the word "never" should not have been used but that nevertheless no specific date could be substituted for it.

11. The Greek Government's request was not only just, but moderate. Under increasing pressure from public opinion in Cyprus and Greece, the Greek Government had found itself obliged to apprise the United Nations of the continued refusal of the United Kingdom to grant the Cypriot people its right to self-determination. The Greek Government had always been

convinced that direct negotiations with the United Kingdom could lead to a solution. It had patiently continued its efforts for many years, in the hope that it would eventually receive a favourable response. Meanwhile, during various sessions of the General Assembly, the Greek delegation had pointed out to other delegations, including the United Kingdom delegation, that public feeling was growing in strength and that the solution of the matter could not be suspended indefinitely. Finally, at the eighth session of the General Assembly (439th meeting), it had stated that although Greece would have preferred the method of bilateral discussion, it would be compelled to appeal to the United Nations if the United Kingdom persisted in its refusal to agree to that procedure.

12. The British Government had not allowed any occasion to pass without declaring that it would never discuss the status of Cyprus with Greece. It was interesting, to say the least, to note that the British Government had exchanged views on the same question with the Turkish Government. On 23 July 1954, Mr. Parker had stated in the House of Commons that he did not understand Her Majesty's Government's attitude in refusing any discussion with a friendly Government about a British territory, when it had no hesitation in discussing all sorts of issues with countries with which it was in a state of cold war. In those circumstances, the Greek Government had no choice but to submit the matter to the United Nations. It had done so, however, with the utmost reluctance.

13. The draft resolution proposed by the Greek delegation (A/C.1/L.124) was fundamentally moderate. It would have been perfectly agreeable to George Canning, that champion of the right of self-determination, and to Gladstone, who, in 1897, had vigorously advocated the liberation of Cyprus. When Mr. Mallalieu had asked Mr. Nutting, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on 21 July 1954, if he remembered what Gladstone had said in 1897, Mr. Nutting had replied that situations separated by fifty-seven years could not be compared. It was to be hoped that in saying that he had had no intention of inferring that British policy was less liberal today than it had been at the end of the nineteenth century.

14. The Greek Government's request was not only just and moderate, but contained no attack on the United Kingdom or any other country. It was encouraging that, during the discussion on the inclusion of the question in the agenda, and at the previous meeting, the United Kingdom representatives had referred to the tradition of Anglo-Greek friendship. The Greek people greatly treasured that friendship, for it dated back to the early days of Greek independence and had grown stronger in the course of subsequent history. It was not merely a matter of sentiment and tradition, but a living reality maintained by the interwoven interests of the two countries. In bringing the question of Cyprus before the United Nations, Greece had not had the least intention of forcing the United Kingdom's hand, but it could not forget the liberal traditions and political wisdom of that country, which had been so clearly displayed in the cases of India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon and, more recently, the Sudan.

15. The negative attitude of the British Government had, however, given rise to anti-British feeling in Greece. The Greek Government had taken steps to suppress any untoward demonstration, but those de-

¹ See A/C.1/747 and A/C.1/753 respectively.

monstrations had taken place in a country which had proved its loyal attachment to the United Kingdom during the Second World War and the occupation.

16. The way in which the Greek Government had approached the question had been appropriately defined by Mr. Philip Noel-Baker, who had observed that neither Marshal Papagos nor any of his predecessors had taken any steps which might give the campaign for the liberation of Cyprus an anti-British character.

17. To paraphrase an ancient philosopher, it could be said that Britain was a friend, but liberty a greater friend. British policy, however, had never for long remained incompatible with the idea of liberty. On the contrary, that policy had always been to try to foster the freedom and independence of peoples that had reached the necessary political maturity. That had been true in the days of Chatham and Fox, of Canning and Palmerston, of Russell and Gladstone. It could not be otherwise in the day of Winston Churchill. Despite the vicissitudes of everyday politics, the British people and its attachment to its liberal and democratic tradition could be relied upon in the long run.

18. The obstinacy at present shown by the British Government on the Cyprus question was certainly not shared by the majority of the British people. Thus, at the last annual conference of the Labour Party a motion had been adopted unanimously stating that the conference deplored the policy of the Government in connexion with Cyprus and urged the Parliamentary Labour Party to oppose it on all occasions. Further, Mr. Clement Davis, the leader of the Liberal Party, had declared in October 1954 that the people of Cyprus were entitled, just as the people of the Sudan were entitled, to govern their own affairs, and that the British Government's refusal to grant them that right was contrary to the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Moreover, several members of the Conservative Party had also stated that they disagreed with the Government's policy in the matter. The Church of England, through its delegation to the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches, held at Evanston (Illinois, United States of America) in August 1954, had supported a resolution recognizing the right and fitness of the people of Cyprus to determine their future status. The British Catholics had adopted a similar attitude. The *Catholic Times* of 17 September 1954 had published an article in which its author had said that to deny the desire of the majority of Cypriots for union with Greece was undemocratic and unchristian.

19. By restoring liberty to the Cypriots, the British could stay in Cyprus as friends. In March 1941, Hitler had demanded that the Greek Government should invite the British to leave the country. That ultimatum had been categorically rejected, and the Greek had paid dearly for their refusal. Recently, a British Minister, Mr. Hopkinson, had refused a request that the Cypriot's claim to freedom should be acceded to. Between the "no" of the Athenians in 1941 and the "no" of a British Minister in London in 1954 there was a striking and painful difference.

20. Mr. Lloyd had asserted in the General Assembly (477th meeting) that if the people of Cyprus were allowed to exercise its right of self-determination, the consequence would be a danger of civil war. The Greek delegation was convinced that that was not so.

Greeks and Turks had lived side by side for decades without strife, although the Greeks had always aspired to independence. That had been the case even at the time when relations between Greece and Turkey had not been characterized by the sincere friendship which united them today.

21. The British colonial administration contended that the Turks in Cyprus were in favour of the present colonial rule. The Greek delegation, however, thought that the Turks belonging to a proud and freedom-loving nation, could surely not be content to remain under colonial rule. Greece respected the Turkish minority belonging to an allied and friendly nation. Self-determination would benefit not only the Greeks but all the inhabitants of the island.

22. The British contention meant that the Turkish minority could be used against the Greek majority. Thus allusions had been made to the alleged disappearance of the Turkish population of the island of Crete. There was need only to reply that, after the 1923 agreement on the exchange of populations between Turkey and Greece, many Turkish communities had expressed their desire to remain in Greece, as Mr. Noel-Baker had testified. He had added that since then he had never believed that the Turks in Cyprus had anything to fear. The Greek minority in Istanbul and the Turkish minority in Western Thrace today represented definite assets to the friendship between Greece and Turkey. It might be noted in passing that the elementary right of free representation in the communal and religious councils had not yet been granted to the Turkish minority in Cyprus.

23. The Greek request concerning the question of Cyprus was perfectly disinterested. What was at issue was not a transfer of sovereignty, but simply the right of self-determination. It had been claimed that the Greek Government had submitted its request because it was sure that a majority of the population would vote in favour of union with Greece. At the same time it was claimed that the Cypriot nationalist movement was artificial and the creation of no one but a few clerics and Communists. The two arguments were obviously contradictory.

24. It must be recalled that, under the law of the United Nations, there was no objection to an eventual union of Cyprus with Greece, if such union was effected freely and on a basis of absolute equality. Indeed, General Assembly resolution 742 (VIII) provided that a territory could become fully self-governing either through the attainment of independence or by association with another State or group of States, if that were done freely and on the basis of absolute equality.

25. The Greek Government was anxious to reaffirm that, in advocating the application of the principle of self-determination to the population of Cyprus, it had undertaken to respect the will of the people whatever that might be. For itself, Greece asked nothing, unless the preservation of Anglo-Greek friendship. It was hardly necessary to recall that, when Hitler had been preparing his campaign against the USSR, he had offered Greece some additions to its territory, including the island of Cyprus, in exchange for neutrality. The Greek Government had categorically refused the offer, although in doing so it had been aware of the disasters which such a stand would entail. There was no need once again to refute the contention of those who claimed that, under Article 2, paragraph 7, of the

Charter, the General Assembly had no competence in the matter.

26. The Greek request was based on Article 10 of the Charter, as to procedure, and on Article 1, paragraph 2, as to substance.

27. The principle of self-determination had been one of the major forces in shaping the modern world for more than a century and a half; among other things, it had played a preponderant part in the making of modern Greece. Few of the Member States would have been Members of the United Nations today if the attempts of the Holy Alliance to prevent peoples from achieving freedom and independence had been successful. Since President Wilson had enunciated his Four Principles and his Fourteen Points, persistent efforts had been made to embody the principle of self-determination in international texts.

28. Some peoples who aspired to independence and freedom were still being kept in a condition of dependency by certain Powers on the pretext that they were too immature. While it was true that there were some peoples in the world which were not yet able to manage their own affairs, that did not apply to the population of Cyprus, whose civilization went back more than three thousand years. Systematic opposition to the efforts of peoples struggling for recognition of their right to self-government could only create distrust of the West.

29. In his speeches in the General Committee and the General Assembly, Mr. Lloyd had used some unconvincing arguments. In particular, he had mentioned the Peace Treaty signed at Lausanne in 1923 and the security problem, as well as the alleged Communist danger and the geographical argument. The last-named argument was very feeble and smacked of Hitler's *Lebensraum* theory. As for the question of Communism or anti-communism, the argument was out of place, and it would obviously be contrary to the Charter to use it in order to prevent the application of the principles of the Charter. Both Communism and anti-communism were bad excuses for depriving a people of its freedom; indeed, those who abandoned to the Communists the honour of standing for freedom were actually the most effective supporters of Communism.

30. As for the argument concerning the Treaty of Lausanne, reference to it would have been necessary only if the Greek Government had raised territorial claims to Cyprus. Nevertheless, it was necessary to refute the argument that in signing the treaty the Greek Government had subscribed to all its provisions. That apparently multilateral instrument had really been a series of bilateral agreements between the Allied and Associated Powers on the one hand and Turkey on the other. Under article 20 of the treaty, Turkey had recognized the annexation of Cyprus by the British Government. The other Allies had merely subscribed to Turkey's recognition of the annexation; they had not recognized it directly themselves. Article 16 of the treaty had indeed envisaged the possibility of a subsequent agreement between the parties concerned on the future of those islands over which Turkey had renounced its sovereignty, as, for instance, Cyprus and the Dodecanese islands.

31. The island of Cyprus was a Non-Self-Governing Territory under British administration. The freedom of the people of Cyprus was not a matter falling within the domestic jurisdiction of the United Kingdom, for

the Cypriots were not a minority within the population of the United Kingdom. They lived on their own territory, far from the frontiers of the United Kingdom. Their subject condition was therefore a colonial one. Hence, the future of the territory was a matter which fell within the competence of the United Nations.

32. Mr. Lloyd had asked (477th plenary meeting) what Greece would do if Bulgaria asked the United Nations to organize a plebiscite in Macedonia. The answer was simple. Under the Convention respecting reciprocal emigration, signed at Neuilly-sur-Seine in 1919, all the Bulgarians in Greek Macedonia had emigrated to Bulgaria; the Greek refugees, on the other hand, had come back to Greek Macedonia after 1922. The situation therefore presented no problem.

33. Mr. Lloyd had apparently mentioned the security question in order to add to the confusion. So far as the military value of Cyprus was concerned, in the Second World War Hitler could have taken the island in a few hours had he deemed it useful to do so. Moreover, what could be the use of military bases situated in the midst of a hostile population? Mr. Herbert Morrison had told the House of Commons on 2 November 1954 that Cyprus could not be a military base of importance; and Sir Anthony Eden, himself, replying to Mr. Attlee, had said that in the event of war the main British base would remain in Egypt.

34. When the item had been put on the agenda, some representatives had adopted a negative attitude as a result of clever arguments adduced to show that recognition of the right of the Cypriot population to self-determination would create a precedent and might damage the interests of every group of States represented in the United Nations. Some representatives had feared that a public discussion would arouse passions rather than bring out the truth. It was to be hoped, on the contrary, that to air the matter would render it less contentious and dispel fears.

35. It had been said for some time that a constitution was going to be granted to the population of Cyprus; but there was an obvious contradiction between the granting of a liberal constitution and the rejection of the right to self-determination. For the mature population of Cyprus, a constitution and the right to self-determination went hand in hand.

36. The Greek resolution (A/C.1/L.124) offered the United Kingdom Government a way out of the present impasse; the solution it proposed was supported by a large section of British public opinion and was in keeping with British liberal traditions.

37. Some representatives had asserted that the Greek Government had not shown patience and had chosen the wrong moment to make its request. In particular, they had felt that the request was ill-timed because it came just after the evacuation of the military base in the Suez Canal Zone. The answer could be made that in 1946 also, when the Cypriot leaders had approached the United Kingdom Government, they had been told that their request was inopportune at a time when the United Kingdom was having difficulty in maintaining itself in Suez.

38. In his book, *Old Men Forget*,² Sir Alfred Duff Cooper had written that many of the failures of British statesmanship had been due to the reluctance

² Sir Alfred Duff Cooper, *Old Men Forget*, Rupert Hart-Davis, London, 1953.

of Ministers to deal with problems so long as postponement was possible, and that too often it had been necessary to grant, unwillingly and too late, more than what would have been graciously accepted had the offer been made in time.

39. The best time for a people to acquire their freedom was always the present. In October 1940, and in April 1941, Greece had given the fascist and nazi aggressors a reply which might have made foreigners doubt its wisdom. Yet later events had confirmed the correctness of its timing and the truth that, in international politics, the realistic course to follow was always that based on the principles of morality.

40. Mr. SARPET (Turkey) said that, among the many points in the Greek representative's speech which deserved a reply, he wished to draw the attention of the Committee particularly to the statement that certain commitments in a multilateral treaty were valid only bilaterally. The idea of dividing the signatories of an international treaty into two parties, making the treaty binding on one of the parties and contending that the other party was at liberty to ignore it, was, to put it mildly, a very new rule of international law. When Greece had signed the Treaty of Lausanne, it had made no reservation concerning Cyprus. By failing to respect a treaty, the Greek Government might create a precedent from which it would itself eventually suffer.

41. It could only be regretted that the question of Cyprus had been brought before the United Nations. As he had stated earlier, it was unfortunate to discuss that item, especially at a time when the friendship and alliance among the people of Turkey, the United Kingdom and Greece had begun to take firm root, not only in the minds but also in the hearts of their respective peoples.

42. As the Turkish delegation had stated at the 749th meeting according to the Charter, the General Assembly was not competent to deal with the matter.

43. While firmly maintaining that position of principle, the Turkish delegation also considered it useful to stress the complications which would certainly ensue if the principle were ignored and to point out the unsoundness of the Greek delegation's assertions.

44. In the propaganda folders which the Greek delegation and some other organizations had so generously distributed, the word "*enosis*" kept recurring. That word could be translated as "union", but it acquired its full and true meaning only when rendered by the German word "*Anschluss*", with all its alarming and demagogic implications. "*Enosis*" inspired anxiety in a measure equal to that created by "*Anschluss*". Whether driving ambition or the lust for excitement was the greater source of inspiration for such experiments, there was no difficulty in recalling the bitter memories that they evoked. The *Anschluss*, the question of the "Sudeten Germans", and their like, had also allegedly been based on the premise of the right of peoples to self-determination.

45. The right of peoples to self-determination was a principle which Turkey respected, but the difference between its true meaning and *Anschluss* was as great as that between the real intentions behind the word "*enosis*" and the pious arguments used to conceal them. A glance at document A/2703 would show that the principle that the people of Cyprus were entitled to determine their own fate was inseparably linked to the assertion that Cyprus belonged to Greece. In

that document, the demand that the people of Cyprus should be granted the right to speak for themselves in determining their own fate was but a thin disguise for the statement, voiced in almost the same breath, that "Cyprus is Greece itself". Mr. Sarper requested the members of the Committee to reread the document and to ponder it deeply.

46. Taking up the matter from another angle, Mr. Sarper stated that, in its geographical situation, its climate and its geological, botanical and zoological structure, Cyprus was a prolongation of the southern part of Anatolia, from which it was only 40 miles distant, whereas it was approximately 600 miles from Greece.

47. Historically, after being administered by various States in ancient times, Cyprus had been a Turkish island for almost three and a half centuries. It had remained so from 1571 to 1923, prior to the acceptance of its annexation to the United Kingdom, by virtue of the Treaty of Lausanne. On the other hand, it had never been administered by Greece.

48. The people of Cyprus was no more Greek than the territory itself. Its population of 500,000 included 100,000 Turks, 11,000 people of various races and religions, and about 380,000 members of the Greek Orthodox Church who spoke a Greek dialect peculiar to the island. The Greek-speaking inhabitants had no racial link with Greece: they belonged to a race which historians described as Mediterranean or "Mediterranean Levantines", a race with very particular characteristics which was to be found along the entire south-east coast of the Mediterranean. The Levantines of the Mediterranean basin belonged to different churches and spoke different languages. For example, some Levantines living in Istanbul and belonging to the Roman Catholic Church spoke French or Italian, just as the Levantines living on Cyprus belonged to the Greek Orthodox Church and spoke their own version of Greek. From that point of view, the daily *La Mañana*, of Montevideo, had summed the situation up correctly when it had said that Cyprus Greek was Greek only to the extent that Spanish was Latin, or English was Saxon.

49. It was an historical fact that when the Lusignans had occupied Cyprus, they had closed the Greek Orthodox churches and prohibited the Orthodox clergy from teaching. When the Turks had occupied the islands in their turn, they had brought back the Greek Orthodox Archbishop and again authorized the clergy to teach the people Greek. Hence it was to the tolerance of the Turkish administration that the Greek-speaking inhabitants of Cyprus owed not only their religious freedom but also the right to speak Greek. That showed how slight the connexion was between the Greek Orthodox churchgoers of Cyprus and Greece itself.

50. On the other hand, Turks of Anatolia had settled in Cyprus from the earliest times and had laid the very foundations of Ottoman sovereignty over the island. They remained closely linked to the mother country by race, custom and collective social sentiment. Thus for 307 years, encompassing more than three centuries of all the history of modern times, the Turks had maintained the stable administration which they had set up in Cyprus, and their departure had in no way been due to any failure of that administration to adapt itself to changing times; the Ottoman Empire, threatened from the north and desiring to

securing the aid of its British allies, had temporarily entrusted the administration of the island to the United Kingdom on the strict condition that the social institutions established by the Turks would be maintained.

51. From the economic aspect also, the Greek claim was unreasonable. Cyprus could not be economically self-sufficient. In the past, it had benefited from economic co-operation with Anatolia, its hinterland, and at the moment its public services operated only because of continuous direct or indirect financial aid from the United Kingdom. The people of Cyprus could enjoy a certain level of prosperity because the United Kingdom refrained from raising taxes.

52. Greece, on the other hand, was not economically able to extend similar aid to Cyprus, which explained why many Greek-speaking inhabitants of the island, under the fear of *enosis*, and realizing that economic conditions would deteriorate and become very much more difficult were the island to be annexed to Greece, were trying to transfer their liquid assets to foreign banks.

53. From the geographical, racial, historical and economic aspects, and for contractual reasons, therefore, Turkey must be primarily affected by the status of the island. Turkey could not possibly subscribe to the argument, presented by Greece in a most interesting cloak of feigned ignorance, that there existed anything akin to a simple one-side—or even two-sided—subject for discussion pertaining to the island.

54. If the Greek Government's demand was analysed carefully, it became quite clear that, under cover of the right of peoples to self-determination, the Greek Government in fact intended to annex Cyprus despite the express provisions of an international treaty.

55. All the claims contained in the propaganda folders so liberally distributed by the Greek delegation in New York and by official Greek agencies in other countries were concentrated around *enosis*. Secondly, in the afore mentioned document A/2703, the demands of the Greek Government were based on the misinterpretation of historical facts and cloaked in a mist of poetic irredentism, alternating demands for annexation with those for self-determination. Thirdly, the Greek delegation now submitted a draft resolution demanding the right to self-determination for the people of Cyprus. What was it that Greece really wanted? Did it want the United Nations to lose sight of clear-cut facts in a demagogic fog of noisy verbiage, to trample underfoot every valid rule of international law, and to tear up existing international treaties? In short, could it be that it wanted the United Nations to permit itself to be used as a tool for such a manoeuvre? Its object was simply to take a territory away from the sovereignty of one State and place it under its own.

56. It was also interesting to see whether it was possible to corroborate and authenticate the Greek claims and demands by temporarily divesting them of their true character and analysing them in the form in which they had been presented. Even from such a viewpoint, those demands were totally lacking in sound juridical foundations.

57. Under actual conditions today, the principle of self-determination—mentioned in Article 1 of that chapter of the United Nations Charter which specified purposes and principles—figured in the Charter as a general principle which Member States should endeavour to develop. Born of the French Revolution, the

noble principle of the self-determination of peoples had been exploited to serve many different ends. It was therefore useful to refresh people's memories, not only on that principle but also on certain historic events arising out of the different ways in which that principle had been put into effect. Although it bestowed the benefits of freedom and independence on peoples and nations when applied properly, self-determination was a principle that threatened peace and tranquillity, and had therefore driven innocent peoples to anarchy when it had been misused for unworthy purposes.

58. Generally speaking, it meant that every nation was entitled to establish an independent State and to elect its own government. However, full understanding of the principle would require the definition of the concepts "people" and "nation". From that point on, opinions differed widely. Though Mr. Sarper had no wish to resume in the First Committee the prolonged arguments put forward in the Commission on Human Rights and in other competent organs of the United Nations on the definition of those concepts, he wished to point out the difficulties which confronted everybody even at the outset in putting that principle into practice. Professor Toynbee said that a "nation" was an agglomeration of people speaking the same language; Charles Maurras had said that it was an historical and naturally constituted society based on birth. A nation could therefore be defined in several ways, depending upon the aim in view. Without indulging in discussions which had taken place in the Commission on Human Rights or in the other organs of the United Nations, it was certainly necessary to admit that the non-existence of universally acceptable definitions for "people" and "nation" had rendered the application of that principle more difficult.

59. The right of peoples to self-determination was a principle set forth in the United Nations Charter; however, the possibility of erecting that principle into a right depended upon the entry into effect at least of the covenants relating to human rights. It was necessary, before claiming the principle of self-determination as a right, to know first to whom that right belonged. That was another reason for defining what was meant by "people" and "nation". Moreover, the characteristics of the principle, and its limitations, if any, must be defined. It was also necessary to say whether such a right could be applied in all circumstances. Applied to the agglomeration called a nation, the theory of self-determination contradicted the principle of the sovereignty of the State. To neglect the first in favour of the second paved the way to tyranny, but to do the contrary might lead to anarchy. Therefore no fair solution could be based on only one of those two principles. How should those two rights be reconciled? At what point should the process of disintegration resulting from the application of the right of self-determination be halted?

60. Those problems were so complex and of such a confused character that, in practice, situations often arose where the right to self-determination was not claimed by innocent peoples who were fully entitled to enjoy it, but was invoked by opportunists who had no right whatever to demand its application. Speaking objectively, and without having in mind any people in particular, it was an historical fact that some half a million Frenchmen, for example, had been moved out of Alsace-Lorraine in order that 300,000 Germans could be settled in the same region. As had been done

in Alsace-Lorraine in 1871 and 1910, any State could always drive the indigenous population out of a territory and replace it by its own citizens in order to annex the region lawfully, under the cover of self-determination.

61. It was useful at that juncture to remember the question of the people that immigrated to different countries every year. The Latin American countries in particular, as well as many others, were influenced by economic and social considerations generously to admit thousands of immigrants into their homelands each year. So long as the proper application of the principle of self-determination remained unconditional and unregulated, it was entirely within the realm of possibility that those immigrants might one day be sufficiently influenced by pressures and provocations to model themselves on what was being done in the case of Cyprus. In 1790, be it remembered, there had been 60,000 Turks in Cyprus, and only 20,000 persons speaking Greek.

62. Plebiscites justified by the application of the principle of self-determination often fell far short of reflecting general opinion. Thus when the 1862 plebiscite had enabled Greece to annex the Ionian islands, only 13,419 of the population of 250,000 had voted. That plebiscite was a sad example of the manner in which that principle could be applied at certain times and in certain circumstances, and demonstrated also the results that might be created by the political trends of the day.

63. The reasons put forward to justify the right of peoples to self-determination varied greatly with the aims of the politicians concerned, the vital interests of the parties making the demand, and many other factors. Thus, after the First World War, the Poles had used the principle in support of their territorial claims against Germany, but had rejected it in the case of Eastern Galicia. When Venizelos had spoken at the Peace Conference to formulate the Greek claims to such portions of Northern Epirus as had been inhabited by a population speaking Albanian, he had attempted to justify that demand by stating that the people concerned were "Greek by virtue of their national sentiments". There were many other examples of that kind. The recent Greek attempt was unfortunately yet another example of the abuse to which that noble principle could be subjected.

64. The activities of the Greek Government on behalf of the so-called application of the principle, but in reality for the annexation of the island, had taken various forms. Firstly, the so-called "Cyprus issue", which was entirely artificial, was being kept alive by widespread propaganda and provocation directed from Greece itself in an effort to feed the "enthusiasm" which it was trying to stir up in the Greek-speaking population of the island. Secondly, the efforts of a small but "militant" group on the island were being backed to the hilt by a certain political party which had political designs completely foreign to the problem.

65. Lastly, the pressure exerted on the conscience of the Greek-speaking people of the island by the members of the Greek Orthodox clergy of Cyprus was well known to everyone. What could be more desirable than that those persons whose work was connected with the independent Greek Orthodox Church of Cyprus should follow the example of all other men of religion, and in the natural course of events, content themselves with performing their respected reli-

gious functions by devoting their lives to enlightening their followers and instructing them in the estimable principles and tenets of religion? It was highly regrettable that those persons, under cover of religion, should be exploiting the high moral authority of the Church for purposes of a wordly and political nature, which included also provocations. There was unfortunately no doubt that the threats of excommunication accompanying that pressure were producing the desired effect on the political convictions of that deeply religious people. Those improper clerical activities were quite open; an example was provided by the recent visit paid to the United Nations by an ecclesiastical leader of that Church and the statement which he had made at a Press Conference on that occasion. Mr. Sarper's sole purpose in touching briefly on that aspect of the matter was to remind the Committee of the manner in which certain movements were developed.

66. Another aspect of the question must also be taken into account: the presence in Cyprus of more than 100,000 Turks irrevocably opposed to "*enosis*", in other words, to annexation of the island to Greece. Mr. Lloyd had spoken (477th plenary meeting) of that Turkish community when the proposal for the inclusion of the item in the agenda had been discussed, and had reminded the Assembly of the possible danger of a communal strife between the Turkish and Greek-speaking communities if the matter was kept on the agenda. Those observations on the part of a responsible British statesman merited careful consideration by the Committee.

67. From the foregoing explanation, it became clear that the arguments put forward by the Greek were based chiefly on ethnic factors. Even if Turkey set aside all its other irrefutable arguments, would the single fact that the Greek-speaking group (about whose racial origin sufficient information had been given) happened to be in the majority today be sufficient reason to justify the change in the status of the island? The answer was a categoric "no". That negative reply was based on many precedents in international law, and international jurisprudence was quite definite on that issue. Thus, for example, the League of Nations had given the Aland islands to Finland chiefly because of their geographical proximity, and not because of the ethnic composition of their population. Moreover, lying almost within Turkish territorial waters, Cyprus was merely a continuation of the Anatolian Peninsula, with which it had very close geographical, historical, economic and ethnic links. If the population factor was to be considered, it should be studied in relation to the existence of 24 million Turks on the mainland, in which case the Greek-speaking group would represent only a tiny minority.

68. Another aspect of the question deserved the attention of the members of the First Committee. At the present time, there were in various parts of the world more than 300,000 Turks who for various reasons had emigrated from Cyprus. It was only natural that their votes too should be resorted to in any situation that might bring about a change in the *status quo* of Cyprus. Thus, during the early days of the Peace Conference, after the First World War, it had been decided to give all Upper Silesia to Poland without any plebiscite. Because of the German protest invoking the right of peoples to self-determination, the Allies had decided to organize a plebiscite. Article 88 of the Peace Treaty signed at Versailles in 1919 had provided that any

person over the age of 20 born in Upper Silesia was entitled to vote. On the day of the plebiscite, 350,000 Germans who had emigrated from that territory had returned to it, and their votes had turned the scale in favour of Germany.

69. Many representatives, both in the Assembly and in the First Committee, had clearly shown that the Greek move was simply an attempt to annex a territory, sovereignty over which had been recognized by international treaty as belonging to a particular country. As the representative of Norway had said in the General Assembly (477th meeting), such a request, if granting, would start the United Nations on an entirely new course whose consequences, it was at present impossible to foresee. The Indian representative had said at the same meeting that, in his view, the present issue did not relate to the people of Cyprus, but was a quarrel between Greece and the United Kingdom over the possession of the island. The representatives of Canada, the Netherlands, Venezuela and other countries too had expressed similar views and apprehensions in that respect. There was no doubt that the example set by those delegations would be followed also by the other delegations that were sincere protagonists of human rights and of the principle of self-determination, because the just and equitable application of that principle was essential and the only way to the salvation of all those whose hopes and aspirations were genuinely linked to that principle.

70. With regard to the Greek representative's statement that the United Kingdom had promised to hand over the island of Cyprus to Greece, it was astounding that allegations of that kind, based predominantly on political haggling, could be brought before the United Nations. However, if matters were permitted to come to such a pass, it was safe to assume that other countries could advance claims over the island of Cyprus that would be much more valid than that claim by Greece. In any event, the Greek allegations had already been refuted by the United Kingdom representative in the General Assembly.

71. The real situation in Cyprus must not be forgotten in the dispute. There was nothing to support the contention that the normal political developments there were progressing in such a mistaken direction that certain States whose links with the island were very vague were justified in feeling concern. But why was such a commotion raised around that subject? The island was undoubtedly prosperous economically. Despite all provocation, the Cypriots were going calmly about their daily business, and the United Kingdom Government was seeking to introduce gradual reforms with a view to the progressive transfer of the domestic administration of the island to the people of Cyprus. The sabotage organized by extremists was largely responsible for the failure of those efforts, because they feared that the normal constitutional development would be detrimental to their nefarious designs. Nevertheless, the United Kingdom representative had confirmed that his Government intended to pursue its efforts to put a new constitution into effect.

72. Another very dangerous aspect of the Greek demand resided in the fact that, if granted, it would contravene the principles and purposes of the Organization. The Greek demand not only aimed at the

annexation of territories which belonged to another State by virtue of a treaty currently in force that had been concluded by the contracting parties of their own free will, but also would lead to the unilateral abrogation of existing and valid international treaties. To consider even for a moment that such demands could be deemed acceptable would cause disorder in international relations, which were regulated by international treaties, and would also pave the way to such anomalies as drawing up a new map of the world based on ethnic considerations. As had been pointed out by other representatives, to permit any tendency in that direction would be tantamount to the United Nations paving the way for its own disintegration. They had also pointed out that such a thing could never be tolerated by those who were sincerely attached to the ideal of the United Nations.

73. Along with almost every other Government, all those considerations had led Turkey to the faithful observance of the principle of respect for obligations, which it held no less sacred than the principle of the self-determination of nations, in which it had implicit faith and which constituted one of the fundamentals of its foreign policy. Without doubt, it was the duty of Member States to foil any and every attempt to exploit those great and fundamental principles of the Charter as an instrument to further demagogic manoeuvres. It would be wise if those engaging in demagogic manoeuvres or interpreting certain provisions of the Charter to suit themselves would reread these provisions of the Preamble relating to respect for international obligations. They would also do well to recall the wise words used by the representative of Colombia, Mr. Urrutia, when he had explained his vote in the General Assembly (477th meeting) against the inclusion of the item in the agenda by his Government's desire to maintain untouched the principle of the non-revision of treaties. Mr. Urrutia had stated that his Government could permit no doubt to be entertained as to its position in that matter, which had always been consistent and in accord with the legal heritage of the inter-American system as embodied in all its treaties, particularly in the Act of Chapultepec and the Charter of the Organization of American States. Mr. Urrutia had also said that his Government had always opposed the notion that Article 103 of the United Nations Charter might be interpreted to mean that the Organization was competent to decide that particular treaties had been superseded by the Charter.

74. Turkish public opinion was following the development of the so-called Cyprus issue with great emotion and acute sensitivity. The very restrained attitude adopted by the Turkish Government was explained by its sincere desire to respect the existing contractual situation and international law in general, and also by its loyalty to its friends, the United Kingdom and Greece. The Turkish Government considered that the present status of Cyprus, which resulted from an international agreement of which Greece was a co-signatory, without any reservation whatsoever with regard to Cyprus, could not be modified without first obtaining the unequivocal consent and co-operation of Turkey, failing which nothing could be deemed to be based on justice and equity and therefore no decision could be lasting.

The meeting rose at 6.5 p.m.