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## SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE, 553rd MEETING



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### CONTENTS

#### Agenda item 35:

*The policies of apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa (continued):*

(a) Report of the Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa;

(b) Report of the Secretary-General. . . . . 15

Chairman: Mr. Humberto LOPEZ VILLAMIL  
(Honduras).

### AGENDA ITEM 35

The policies of apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa (continued) (A/6688, A/6818 and Corr.1):

(a) Report of the Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa (A/6864 and Add.1);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General (A/6825, A/6873)

1. Mr. BOUATTOURA (Algeria) observed that the United Nations had for some years found itself at an impasse in its efforts to deal with the problem of apartheid. The reason undoubtedly was that it had not been considering the problem in the right context. It had regarded apartheid essentially as a violation of human rights. The Special Political Committee in particular had discussed apartheid, like the question of Palestine, as though it were a specific matter unrelated to colonial or security problems. If it continued to deal with apartheid in that limited context, open conflict might break out in southern Africa and throughout the African continent, just as it had in the Middle East.

2. In order to move forward out of the impasse, the Committee must adopt a new approach. First, it should try to apply the lessons learnt from the crisis in the Middle East. Secondly, it should consider apartheid as one aspect of the larger problem of colonialism; and, most important of all, it should deal with apartheid within the broader context of southern Africa.

3. In Palestine, a European minority had established itself by force. South Africa, too, was dominated by a minority of Europeans descended from Dutch settlers. In Palestine, Zionist theory based on the principle of the chosen people and the theocratic State was now reflected in a policy whereby Zionists imposed their will on the indigenous inhabitants. In South Africa, the European population regarded the policy of apartheid as its sole guarantee for the survival of European and Christian civilization in Africa.

In both countries, the situation was the product of European expansionism and had not been provoked by the accession of indigenous peoples to independence. In both countries, colonies of settlers were trying to impede the normal process of decolonization.

4. The first lesson to be learnt from recent events in the Middle East was that prolonged failure to devise an equitable solution to a problem of universal concern inevitable created an explosive situation. Secondly, the maintenance of colonies of foreign settlers merely delayed the explosion, and created a permanent atmosphere of insecurity both in the area concerned and in neighbouring countries. Thirdly, unless an earnest attempt was made to solve such problems as they arose, they became more acute and more difficult to solve as time went on.

5. The Committee should consider the question of apartheid in a regional context, because it was clear that the existing régimes in South Africa, South West Africa, Southern Rhodesia and the Territories under Portuguese domination had now joined forces to oppose the aspirations of African peoples. They were determined to maintain their domination, and were intensifying their political, economic and military co-operation to that end. Recent events in Southern Rhodesia, where South African armed forces had intervened against the Zimbabwe people, were positive proof of the military collaboration between the Salisbury and Pretoria Governments. The unconditional support provided to Southern Rhodesia by the South African and Portuguese Governments showed that those régimes were determined to oppose any action by the international community, and to defy decisions taken by the United Nations. The South African authorities were now pursuing a policy of expansionism based on economic power. They were bringing economic pressure to bear on neighbouring States in order to extend their domination and obtain further support for the principles of segregation. Racist and discriminatory principles were now being applied throughout southern Africa, and the Committee should therefore direct its attention to problems common to the entire region.

6. The first step in that direction had already been taken. In resolution 2202 A (XXI) the General Assembly had in fact called for a study of the problems of apartheid, racial discrimination and colonialism in southern Africa as a whole. The International Seminar on Apartheid, Racial Discrimination and Colonialism in Southern Africa convened at Kitwe, Zambia, from 25 July to 4 August 1967, in pursuance of that resolution had provided ample proof of the political, economic and military links between Salisbury, Pretoria and Lisbon, and had warned the United Nations of the

increasing dangers inherent in the present situation in southern Africa. It had recommended that the General Assembly should consider means to promote greater co-ordination in dealing with the problems of apartheid, racial discrimination and colonialism in southern Africa, and had further suggested that consideration be given to the creation of a special United Nations committee to deal with those problems. That suggestion should be given serious consideration by the Committee. A body established specifically to investigate the situation in southern Africa would help the international community to identify the problems of that area more clearly and prevent any further deterioration in a situation which was daily becoming more dangerous.

7. While the minorities were intensifying their oppression, the African peoples were offering greater and more organized resistance. The nationalist movements in Southern Rhodesia had recently resorted to armed struggle, and popular movements in South Africa were contemplating similar action. The international community had a duty to assist those movements, which were trying to apply the principles, that it had itself incorporated in the United Nations Charter. Some countries, moved by financial considerations, were hesitant to provide assistance and preferred to maintain the status quo. But such an attitude should be condemned as it could only perpetuate tension and insecurity.

8. The Committee should begin its deliberations by deciding whether or not apartheid constituted a threat to peace. His delegation believed that it did, and that the situation in southern Africa, as in Palestine, had been provoked by the efforts of foreign settlers to obstruct the process of decolonization. If it were said that the United Nations should try to devise a peaceful solution, he would have no objection; but he would like to know what peaceful measures were capable of solving the problem of apartheid. His delegation had no predilection for violence as such, but after events in Palestine and elsewhere, it was justifiably sceptical. If a threat to peace really existed, the United Nations should immediately take vigorous measures and establish a long-term policy to eliminate the threat. Unless it adopted a new approach to the problem of apartheid, it would remain a helpless spectator of the tragedy of the peoples of southern Africa and Africa as a whole.

9. Mr. LANNUNG (Denmark) said that the Danish people and Government had always regarded any form of racial discrimination as abhorrent. For years they had tried to help in promoting peaceful developments in South Africa and creating conditions in which all groups of the population could live in peace with one another and participate as equal partners in the development of a country whose vast natural and human resources offered such promising prospects for establishing a true non-racial community.

10. It was distressing to note that the past year had brought no improvement in the situation, but only new disappointments. Internally, the South African Government had, in defiance of United Nations resolutions and world public opinion, intensified its inhuman measures against the African majority. The most recent example of legislation violating basic human rights

was the Terrorism Act under which a person could be detained indefinitely without being brought before a court or judge. Externally, the South African régime had endeavoured to consolidate white supremacy in southern Africa by co-operating with neighbouring countries and initiating a massive campaign to counter the international condemnation of apartheid.

11. The oppressed people of South Africa felt, not surprisingly, that the time was near when they would have no choice but to take their destiny into their own hands. Apartheid was much more than a denial of political rights. It was a problem which inflamed passions to such an extent that arguments about non-intervention in domestic affairs were meaningless. A racial war in southern Africa was bound to affect the other States of Africa, as well as relations between white and non-white peoples all over the world, and thus to endanger international peace and security.

12. Many delegations had an ominous feeling that the United Nations was approaching the point of no return, and should most seriously consider what action it could take in the present circumstances. The key to the solution of the problems in southern Africa lay in the Republic of South Africa itself. Valuable suggestions for further United Nations action were contained in the reports of the International Seminar on Apartheid, Racial Discrimination and Colonialism in Southern Africa (A/6818 and Corr.1) and the Special Committee on the Policies of Apartheid of the Government of the Republic of South Africa (A/6864 and Add.1).

13. His delegation fully agreed that the United Nations had an important responsibility for preventing, through energetic international action, any escalation of violence. His country recognized that the victims of apartheid were waging a legitimate struggle to attain freedom, equality and justice, and it was prepared to continue its humanitarian assistance to them and its support of educational and training programmes designed to prepare them for full participation in the political, economic and social development of their country when they attained freedom. Accordingly, it had made contributions for that purpose to the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other organizations to a total amount of \$246,000 for the fiscal year 1967/1968.

14. His country was also prepared to support a new resolution, in reaffirmation of General Assembly resolution 2054 (XX), drawing the attention of the Security Council—the only United Nations organ competent to invoke enforcement measures under Chapter VII of the Charter—to the fact that the situation in South Africa constituted a threat to international peace and security, that action under Chapter VII of the Charter was essential to solve the problem of apartheid and that universally applied mandatory economic sanctions were the only means of achieving a peaceful solution.

15. However, if confidence in the United Nations was not to be eroded, any sanctions adopted must be effective, and that implied the full co-operation of all States, not least the major trading partners of South Africa. He had therefore noted with interest the suggestions of the International Seminar on Apar-

theid and of the Special Committee for intensified dissemination of information on the evils and dangers of apartheid in order to promote greater international support for effective action.

16. A violent conflict could still be avoided but time was running short. He therefore called upon all sections of opinion of the United Nations to find a common ground for a stand against apartheid. He also appealed to the South African Government not to ignore the historic developments of recent decades which had brought freedom to millions of people and had given them the right to determine their own destiny.

17. Mr. BORSANYI (Hungary), after reviewing the circumstances which had led to the establishment of the Special Committee, said that two conclusions could be drawn from that Committee's successive reports. First, the South African Government, ignoring United Nations resolutions and defying world opinion, had intensified its policy of apartheid and was extending it to South West Africa. Secondly, the efforts of the United Nations had been fruitless because it had not been possible to obtain concerted action and to persuade all Member States faithfully to apply economic sanctions. The United Nations would clearly be unable to bring pressure to bear on the Republic of South Africa so long as certain States, including three permanent members of the Security Council, refused to apply those sanctions. Those countries derived economic and military advantages from the policy of the South African Government. The oppression and exploitation of the African inhabitants of South Africa brought enormous profits not only to the white minority but also to South Africa's economic partners, particularly the United States and the United Kingdom. Consequently, a special form of colonialism existed there, in which the white settlers, the former colonialists and the neo-colonialists had joined forces. As a result, an African worker earned only \$106 per year whereas the average white man's income was \$1,790. Because of its strategic position, South Africa also had important military ties with a number of Western countries. Those facts explained why the United Nations had been unable to persuade the United States to take practical steps to induce South Africa to abandon its policy of racial discrimination.

18. Furthermore, South Africa was endeavouring, with the assistance of the Federal Republic of Germany, to develop nuclear capacity and to devise new

weapons. Former Nazi officers assisted in the training of the South African army. By contrast, the German Democratic Republic had given whole-hearted support to United Nations action designed to put an end to apartheid and had contributed \$5,000 to the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa.

19. As it was obvious that the South African Government would not change its policy so long as it was assured of the assistance of the United States, the United Kingdom and other western countries, the Committee should devote its efforts to alerting public opinion to the role those countries were playing. His delegation supported the International Seminar's recommendations (see A/6818, para. 123), the most important of which were the following. First, the Security Council should recognize that the situation in southern Africa constituted a threat to international peace and security and consequently should impose mandatory sanctions to compel the South African Government to abandon its policy of apartheid. Secondly, the General Assembly, in addition to condemning that policy, should also condemn those who, by their co-operation with the South African Government, directly or indirectly facilitated its continuation. Thirdly, the Special Committee on Apartheid should study, with a view to submitting a report to the General Assembly and the Security Council, the economic, financial and other activities in southern Africa and the South African Government's activities abroad. Fourthly, the General Assembly should recognize the right of the indigenous inhabitants of southern Africa to freedom and independence and the legitimacy of their struggle for that right, to which the United Nations should give its moral support. Fifthly, the United Nations should help to inform public opinion and should condemn not only the policy of apartheid but also the propaganda by which the South African Government sought to justify its inhuman practices. Sixthly, in order to attain those objectives, the Special Committee should establish closer ties with the specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations for concerted action against the policy of the South African Government.

20. The General Assembly should give those recommendations careful consideration at the current session with a view to adopting a resolution designed to facilitate the solution of an extremely serious problem.

*The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.*