

GENERAL  
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TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

MEETING

Monday, 16 October 1972,  
at 11 a.m.

NEW YORK

Chairman: Mr. Hady TOURÉ (Guinea).

## AGENDA ITEM 38

The policies of *apartheid* of the Government of South Africa (*continued*) (A/8666 and Corr.1, A/8670, A/8689, A/8703, paras. 501-519):

- (a) Reports of the Special Committee on *Apartheid* (A/8722, A/8770);  
(b) Reports of the Secretary-General (A/8822)

GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

- Mr. SAWYERR (Ghana) congratulated Mr. Farah and Mr. Ahmad, the Chairman and the Rapporteur of the Special Committee on *Apartheid*, on their report (A/8722) and statements (809th meeting). The latter had noted that the situation in southern Africa had even worsened as a result of the South African Government's aggressive expansionist policies. It had intensified its racist and repressive rule and had sought to extend *apartheid* to Namibia. It was also helping the illegal government of Rhodesia to defeat the United Nations sanctions and to introduce *apartheid* in its own territory and was assisting Portugal in the extermination of the African population of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau). South Africa itself was being encouraged and assisted in its policy of *apartheid* by the aid it received from certain Western countries. The unwillingness of those countries to implement United Nations resolutions on South Africa was the main obstacle to the attempts to uproot the inhuman policies of that country, and the powerful economic support given to it was one of the bulwarks of the *apartheid* system. The report of the Special Committee on *Apartheid* showed that there had been an incredible increase in investment levels and capital inflow from Western countries.
- World public opinion had failed to dissuade South Africa's trading partners from breaking trade relations with it. With their eye on profits, they had persistently opposed an economic blockade of South Africa, arguing that the African population would be the first to suffer. In fact *apartheid* was strengthened and sustained by South Africa's economic growth, while the economic disparity between the rich white minority and the poor non-white majority continued to grow, a situation in which investments played a part. It was true that some international companies had endeavoured to improve the lot of their non-white workers, but apart from the fact that they could not do more than the law allowed, they provided the racist South African régime with the means for controlling their non-white population. A proof of the economic inequality of the two groups was the fact that the white population received 74 per cent of the total national income although it made up only 19 per cent of the country's population. By continuing to attract skilled workers from Europe, by offering them higher wages and tax benefits, the South African Government was blocking the social and vocational advancement of skilled non-whites. The system which South Africa's friends were helping it to perpetuate thus served to aggravate in every way the living conditions of the African majority of the country.
- Separate development under the Bantustan scheme was aimed at separating the various tribal groups and thus rendering them incapable of resistance. Those tribal groups—which made up five sixths of the population—had been forced out of their arable land and pushed into barren areas—12 per cent of the total—that were separated by the white-owned farms. Far from promoting training in self-government, the Bantustans served to ensure absolute control and the denial of all freedom. As they had no industries or business enterprises to make them viable, it was no wonder that their chiefs were constantly asking for more land, assistance in industrial development and the right to control those sectors themselves.
- At the same time the racist South African Government was constantly devising ever more inhuman methods to suppress any resistance among the non-whites. Protests resulted in arbitrary arrests, banning orders, indefinite detention, police brutality and torture. He recalled the detention of the Anglican Dean of Johannesburg, who had helped victims of *apartheid*, and the placement under house arrest of a Franciscan priest who had undertaken a survey of resettlement areas and brought to light the overcrowding and impoverishment of the resettled populations. In the past year, the number of Africans arrested under discriminatory laws had reached almost 1 million. A number of discriminatory laws prevented the advancement of Africans, imposed educational segregation and prohibited interracial contracts. It was a consoling fact that despite all repressive measures, *apartheid* was still being resisted in the country.
- With financial, technical and scientific backing from abroad, South Africa had acquired an arms industry which enabled it to export arms and military equipment. Its defence budget for 1972-1973 showed an increase of R29,956,000 over that of the preceding

budget year. It was adding to its military potential through imports from NATO countries, whose complicity enabled it to intensify with impunity its policy of oppression and to extend that policy to Namibia and attack certain neighbouring countries. Such arms supplies were a flagrant violation of the Security Council resolutions, which made no distinction between arms for internal repression and arms for external defence. They were also a violation of Article 103 of the United Nations Charter which had been reaffirmed under paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 2734 (XXV).

6. His delegation believed that those supplies of arms were intended to assist South Africa in suppressing any non-white reaction to *apartheid*, or at any rate that they helped to perpetuate an inhuman system and maintain a racist government in power. It appealed to those who supplied South Africa with arms to desist from such acts and thus help to restore the non-white population to a position of dignity and freedom.

7. His Government did not believe that a dialogue with the Government of South Africa would be a way of effecting changes in the policy of *apartheid*. If a dialogue was to be effective, it should be held between the South African Government and the accepted leaders of the people, like Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu and not between that Government and leaders chosen by it. As long as no such dialogue was held, and as long as political prisoners had not been set free, the Government of Ghana could not take seriously expressions of willingness on the part of South Africa to conduct a dialogue with African countries.

8. While the South African Government had been increasing in strength over the past 20 years, the United Nations had adopted a hypocritical approach to the problem of *apartheid*. Ghana did not want to believe that those who had struck down nazism would adopt a lenient attitude towards South Africa because its victims were not white, or that one could become an accomplice of *apartheid* for reasons of economic gain and military advantage, or again that men could be exposed to inhuman treatment because of the colour of their skins. Yet that was what was occurring in South Africa.

9. The moral condemnation of *apartheid* must be translated into action. That was a moral duty. The time had come for concerted action to suppress racism, *apartheid*, colonialism and neo-colonialism in Africa. His Government would continue to give unqualified support to Africans struggling against the illegal régimes of Southern Rhodesia, Namibia and the African territories occupied by Portugal. It considered that it was its duty to help the African liberation movements, since the colonialists and racists had closed their ears to reason. It supported the establishment of a United Nations special fund to help the oppressed peoples of southern Africa, as proposed by the Sub-Commission for the Protection of Minorities and Prevention of Discrimination. His delegation recommended the proposal for the establishment of a United Nations special fund in aid of liberation movements in Africa to all

Members of the Organization and called on Members to contribute generously to it.

10. He urged all members of the Committee to regard the elimination of *apartheid* as a moral duty. The United Nations was mankind's only hope for survival. Ghana had always taken part in the debates on *apartheid* because it had never lost faith in the United Nations. But if the problem was to be solved, political determination as well as a selfless approach were essential.

11. Mr. SUMNER (Sierra Leone) congratulated the Chairman of the Special Committee on *Apartheid* on its comprehensive report (A/8722). The issue of *apartheid* had long been a thorny item on the agenda of the United Nations and would probably remain on that agenda as long as the countries that could put an end to *apartheid* continued to give open support to the white minority régime in South Africa. Despite the recommendations made in General Assembly resolution 2671 A (XXV) on geographical distribution, no representative from the group of Western countries had agreed to serve on the Special Committee, a clear indication that those countries put material before moral values. All the major trading partners of South Africa listed in annex II to the Special Committee's report were Western countries. Not only did they violate the Security Council resolutions on trade sanction against South Africa, but some of them, in particular the United States of America and France, also ignored the Security Council resolutions on an arms embargo against South Africa.

12. Those countries condemned *apartheid* in the General Assembly, but if armed intervention was suggested, they rejected the suggestion on moral grounds, arguing that the Africans would be the first to suffer. They claimed that trading with South Africa and supplying it with arms were the acts of private firms, though they had the means to put an end to all such trade with South Africa. They should put their words into action.

13. The crimes perpetrated against the non-white population of South Africa were too numerous to enumerate. The Special Committee's report (A/8722) gave a clear picture of those crimes and it also listed in its separate report (A/8770) individual cases of violation of the human rights of non-whites in South Africa.

14. His delegation wished to commend the efforts made by church organizations, labour unions and student movements to put an end to *apartheid*. It also wished to commend the work of the Committee of Trustees for the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa. It appreciated the contribution already made by various countries to that Fund and noted the absence among them of certain major Powers. To abolish *apartheid*, both contributions and moral support were needed.

15. Mr. FRELLESVIG (Denmark) said that however frustrated the world community might feel on the question of *apartheid*, which had been on the United Nations agenda for 25 years, it should not accept the

failure by a Member State to observe certain fundamental principles of civilized behaviour. The United Nations, one of whose aims was the elimination of *apartheid* and racial discrimination, should give every possible encouragement to the victims of such a policy.

16. Since the twenty-sixth session, the developments in the *apartheid* situation, both in and outside South Africa, had hardly been encouraging. The Special Committee's report (A/8722) showed that the actions of the South African authorities were tending to make more and more irreversible a situation which inflicted great suffering on all inhabitants not belonging to the white minority. Internal opposition to *apartheid* was weak and scattered. However, the student demonstrations that had taken place in several towns in South Africa since June 1972, and the attitude of trade unions and church groups held out hope that the opposition to the system of *apartheid* within South Africa itself might be strengthened.

17. With regard to the world-wide struggle against *apartheid*, his delegation felt that Security Council resolution 311 (1972), adopted on 4 February 1972, during the Council's meetings in Addis Ababa, was an important document in that it recognized the legitimacy of the struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa for their human and political rights as set forth in the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

18. As for the question of what action could be taken by Member States and United Nations organs, it was of the utmost importance that all States should abide by the Security Council resolutions imposing an arms embargo on South Africa. Denmark, for its part, had always fully implemented those resolutions.

19. His delegation hoped that the Security Council, which had decided in its resolution 311 (1972) to examine methods of resolving the situation arising out of the policies of *apartheid* of the Government of South Africa, would find realistic ways to deal with the question.

20. Referring to the allusions made to possible attempts to integrate South Africa into the NATO system, he stressed that there were absolutely no links between South Africa and that organization. The establishment of such links would be completely outside the scope and spirit of the North Atlantic Treaty, and Denmark, as a party to the Treaty, would be categorically opposed to any such action.

21. His country felt that measures to apply economic sanctions could be taken only by the Security Council. He stressed the decisive role in that regard of the attitude adopted by South Africa's major trading partners. As the Secretary-General had said in the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization: "the present impasse is due not only to the failure of the Governments directly addressed in the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions to implement them, but also to the failure of the international

community to concert its efforts and to mobilize effectively all the resources available to it" (A/8701/Add.1, chap. VII).

22. His delegation noted with interest the contacts established between the Special Committee and the international trade union movement. The International Labour Conference, to be held in Geneva in June 1973, would undoubtedly provide an opportunity to discuss the action to be taken under the auspices of the international labour movement with regard to *apartheid* and the labour situation in South Africa. In connexion with the improvement of working conditions in South Africa, it was to be hoped that the foreign firms operating in the country would set an example by the conditions they offered to locally recruited workers.

23. Denmark was convinced that the United Nations should continue to keep the question of racial discrimination, and particularly the *apartheid* policies of South Africa, under careful scrutiny. The United Nations and the specialized agencies could do much to ensure the promotion and dissemination of continuous and reliable information on *apartheid*.

24. His country, which was gravely concerned about the plight of the victims of the policy of *apartheid*, considered it a natural obligation to make substantial contributions to the programmes established to help such persons and hoped that many other Member States would make higher contributions than in the past. On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Denmark had contributed \$71,000 to the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa and \$114,000 to the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa as well as \$150,000 to the International University Exchange Fund and \$15,000 to the World University Service.

25. Mr. FLEITAS (Uruguay) felt that, as the first decade of the mandate conferred upon the Special Committee on *Apartheid* by General Assembly resolution 1761 (XVII) was now drawing to a close, it was time to review the situation in the light of the Special Committee's report and to ask what the future would hold if action by the United Nations, which represented the reaction of the world's civilized conscience, was incapable of influencing the course of events. His country deeply deplored the situation which existed in southern Africa and hoped that the great Powers, which were responsible for maintaining peace in the world and for promoting the implementation of human rights, would exert all their influence to solve the problem. More than any other form of violence, that born of *apartheid* was a threat to peace, and it was one which had been steadily growing for a decade.

26. The Special Committee's report showed in detail how those responsible for *apartheid* were defying and flouting the Security Council—and in particular its resolution 311 (1972), which had been adopted almost unanimously, with only one abstention—namely, by the brutal actions of the security police, the harassment

of prisoners and witnesses, and repressive measures against the opponents of *apartheid*. Certain States which had voted in favour of the Security Council resolutions had responded to the arms embargo by sending South Africa hundreds of aircraft, tanks, armoured vehicles, ships and other weapons manufactured in countries belonging to NATO; furthermore, negotiations were said to be under way to provide South Africa with guided missiles.

27. As the representative of Somalia had suggested at the 809th meeting, a change in strategy was necessary: the implementation of the policy on *apartheid* laid down by the General Assembly and the Security Council should be entrusted to a single organ which would centralize all functions. As for the policy itself, the peoples of the world should take a greater part in the struggle in order to intensify the moral pressure on those guilty of such serious crimes against humanity and isolate them from the international community.

28. The time seemed ripe, for example, for the General Assembly to authorize the Chairman of the Special Committee on *Apartheid* to address the entire world, on television and radio, to denounce the crime of *apartheid* and reach the maximum number of people, the understanding being that he could do so, by agreement with the Secretary-General, whenever grave new developments justified such action. It was incumbent upon the United Nations to arouse a world-wide movement of conscience against *apartheid*. His delegation would vote in favour of any proposal that would keep the peoples of the world better informed and increase their ability to combat the crime of *apartheid*.

29. Mr. CHARLES (Haiti) said that his country was interested in the question of *apartheid* because of the ancestral links and the long-standing liberal tradition which united it with the African peoples in their struggle

for independence. In addition, his country's foreign policy reflected constant concern with all matters affecting human rights. The barbarous policy and practices imposed by the white racist minority reflected no credit on the Western civilization of which it claimed to be a part.

30. His delegation still had some reservations concerning paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 2397 (XXIII), which provided for legal assistance to persons persecuted under the repressive and discriminatory legislation of South Africa. Under a system where judicial and legislative power was in the hands of the executive authority and the basic guarantees of justice had been done away with, how could any one hope to obtain justice for the wrongs done to the Coloured population? Political trials were merely acts of genocide under the guise of justice, and the evil genius which inspired the South African leaders left no room for the exercise of a right which was the heritage of all civilized societies.

31. In view of the obstinacy of the South African authorities, who believed that time was on their side, he suggested that the Secretary-General should consider establishing an *ad hoc* group, with funds to cover the cost of legal assistance, to collect information with a view to preparing dossiers on South African leaders suspected of having committed crimes against humanity. If such persons were apprehended outside South Africa, they could be brought before a competent foreign court.

32. The CHAIRMAN urged those representatives who wished to speak in the general debate on *apartheid* to add their names to the list of speakers, which would be closed later the same day.

*The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.*