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Chairman: Mr. ACHKAR Marof (Guinea).

Tribute to the memory of Mr. Wilfrid Benson

1. Mr. BUDU-ACQUAH (Ghana) said that the death of Mr. Wilfrid Benson, formerly Secretary of the Fourth Committee and Director of the Division of Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories, and more recently the first Resident Representative for the United Nations Technical Assistance Board in Ghana, had come as a profound shock to all who had known him.
2. Mr. Benson had been one of those few who, imbued with the spirit of internationalism, had decided after the First World War to devote their lives to the cause of international peace. He had spent his entire life as an international civil servant, first with the League of Nations, then with the International Labour Office and finally, until his retirement, with the United Nations.
3. It was notable that, at a time when such a view was unpopular, he had foreseen independence and self-determination for Non-Self-Governing Territories. Convinced that the freedom of the colonial peoples was a necessary element in world peace, he had striven to bring it to being; for many years he had been the guiding spirit of the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories. Had his advice been followed or even understood at the time, the transition from colonialism to independence might well have been far smoother than it had sometimes proved. Mr. Benson had been one of the chief architects of Chapter XI of the United Nations Charter, which had represented such a substantial advance over the League of Nations provisions with regard to colonial territories.
4. It was not surprising that, with the United Nations represented by such a man as Mr. Benson as Resident

Representative, Ghana's relations with the United Nations had from the outset been so cordial and so based upon mutual understanding.

5. The Ghanaian delegation wished to pay a tribute to his memory, and extended its sincere condolence to his wife and family.

6. Mr. Benson's life was an example to all who were working for peace, and the delegation of Ghana hoped that his spirit of internationalism would be an inspiration to members of the international community.

7. Mr. BOZOVIC (Yugoslavia) had been deeply shocked at the sad news of Mr. Wilfrid Benson's death. Mr. Benson had been a friend not only to those who had known him, but also to all the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. He personally had been able to appreciate Mr. Benson's friendship in Ghana, where he had had the good fortune to co-operate with him in his capacity as the first United Nations Resident Representative in that country.

8. He asked the Chairman to convey the sympathy of the Committee's members to Mr. Benson's wife and family.

9. Mr. KING (United Kingdom) had learnt with deep sorrow of the death of Mr. Benson, who had been well known to the members of the United Kingdom Mission associated with the Committee's work; they had regarded him as a personal friend. Mr. Benson had devoted all his life to the cause of internationalism and had always been a devoted international civil servant. The United Kingdom delegation asked the Chairman to convey its sympathy to Mr. Benson's wife and family.

10. The CHAIRMAN was sure that the entire Committee shared the feelings of the previous speakers. He would convey to Mr. Benson's family the deep sympathy of all delegations.

Requests for hearings (continued)

REQUESTS CONCERNING SOUTH WEST AFRICA
(AGENDA ITEM 55) (A/C.4/599/ADD.2) (continued)

11. The CHAIRMAN suggested that if there were no objections, the request for a hearing contained in document A/C.4/599/Add.2 should be granted.

It was so decided.

12. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that he had received another request for a hearing concerning South West Africa and suggested that, in accordance with the usual procedure, the request should be circulated as a Committee document for consideration at a later meeting.

It was so decided. 1/

^{1/} See A/C.4/599/Add.3.

REQUESTS CONCERNING TERRITORIES UNDER PORTUGUESE ADMINISTRATION (AGENDA ITEM 23) (A/C.4/600/ADD.1) (continued)

13. The CHAIRMAN suggested that if there were no objections, the request for a hearing contained in document A/C.4/600/Add.1 should be granted.

It was so decided.

REQUESTS CONCERNING ADEN (AGENDA ITEM 49) (A/C.4/612 AND ADD.1) (continued)

14. Mr. KING (United Kingdom) said that his delegation reserved its position concerning the requests for hearings on the subject of Aden, contained in documents A/C.4/612 and Add.1. As the Committee knew, the United Kingdom delegation had always objected to hearings from petitioners coming from Non-Self-Governing Territories, since they were not provided for in the Charter.

15. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee took note of the reservation expressed by the United Kingdom representative.

16. He suggested that, if there were no objections, the requests for hearings contained in documents A/C.4/612 and Add.1 should be granted.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 75

Question of Southern Rhodesia: report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (A/5446/Rev.1, chap. III; A/5448 and Add.1-5; A/C.4/603; A/C.4/606; A/C.4/L.776) (continued)

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION
A/C.4/L.776

17. Mr. ARTEH (Somalia), introducing draft resolution A/C.4/L.776, said that it had been drawn up after thorough and careful study by the African-Asian group. Its paragraphs were clear and needed no explanation. In drafting it, the members of the African-Asian group had taken into due consideration the feelings and ideas expressed by the members of other groups, but their principal concern had been to seek the best means of serving the interests of the great majority of Southern Rhodesia's population.

18. To a great extent, the draft resolution re-stated positions which had already been affirmed in the past; the new elements introduced would be clearly apparent from a reading of the preamble and the operative part.

19. The Somali delegation hoped that the Committee would adopt draft resolution A/C.4/L.776 unanimously.

20. Mr. EL-SHAFFI (United Arab Republic) said that the problem of Southern Rhodesia had two essential aspects: one was the denial of political rights to the vast majority of the African population; the other was the usurpation of power by a minority of white racist settlers, condoned by the administering Power.

21. The denial of political rights to the African majority had created an explosive situation which had warranted consideration of the question by the Security Council.^{2/} The negative attitude of the United Kingdom

in the Council had not improved the situation, which was becoming progressively more aggravated. The General Assembly had expressed its concern at the situation in Southern Rhodesia by adopting by an overwhelming majority resolution 1883 (XVIII), recommended by the Fourth Committee.

22. It was regrettable that, of the thirteen countries which had abstained when that resolution had been adopted on 14 October (1241st plenary meeting), eight were members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization—which left no alternative but to think that Western military alliances and strategic objectives still exercised a predominant influence on the policies of certain Governments with regard to those particular questions. His delegation regretted that a group of countries was thus opposing the aspirations of the peaceful population of Southern Rhodesia, and indeed the aspirations of the population of the entire African continent. That was continuation in a wrong and dangerous policy, the past consequence of which had not yet been forgotten. Such an attitude was particularly wrong in the present-day world, as it hindered co-operation between the developing and the developed countries by creating tensions and therefore wasting human and material resources.

23. His delegation wished to draw the attention of those who in the past had hesitated to recognize the gravity of the Southern Rhodesian problem to the fact that nobody could predict what would happen if the situation continued to deteriorate. The solution which the African-Asian group was presenting to the Committee was not new, as was proved by operative paragraphs 5 and 6 of the draft resolution, paragraphs which he read out to the Committee.

24. The sponsors of the draft resolution had drafted their text in terms which should be acceptable to all, and had refrained from any reference to the negative attitude adopted by the United Kingdom Government during consideration of the question of Southern Rhodesia by the Security Council, although a large number of African and Asian delegations would have preferred to mention it.

25. The Secretary-General would be asked to continue to lend his good offices to promote a just and speedy solution of the problem. His own delegation appreciated the willingness of certain Governments having special ties with the United Kingdom Government to help promote such a solution. It urged those Governments to use their influence with a view to ensuring the realization of the legitimate aspirations of the people of Southern Rhodesia. In every step they took, however, it would be essential that they should take into account the views expressed by the nationalist leaders of the African population, and the various General Assembly resolutions adopted on the question of Southern Rhodesia.

26. He assured members of the Committee that all suggestions and proposals made known during the debate or otherwise had been carefully examined. If the present draft did not contain or cover those proposals, that should not be taken to mean that doubt was cast on their usefulness.

27. The United Kingdom representative was undoubtedly aware of the historic decisions taken by the Summit Conference of Independent African States held at Addis Ababa in May 1963, on decolonization and in particular on the elimination of colonialism in Southern Rhodesia. Those decisions did not represent the end of

^{2/} For the Council's consideration of the question, see Official Records of the Security Council, Eighteenth Year, 1064th-1069th meetings.

united African action, which would be continued with a view to ensuring the realization of the legitimate aspirations of the people of Southern Rhodesia. The world of today was undoubtedly different from that of 1923 or 1953, and the United Kingdom representative should draw the logical conclusions. What was now needed was action—speedy and in the right direction.

28. Mr. MUFTI (Syria) emphasized that draft resolution A/C.4/L.776 was remarkable for its moderation, and should therefore secure a large number of votes. If the Committee adopted that draft resolution by a massive vote, it would show that it had the interests of the Southern Rhodesian population at heart.

29. Mr. YOMEKPE (Ghana) stated his delegation's views on the draft resolution. In the eighth preambular paragraph, the situation in Southern Rhodesia was described as constituting "a threat to international peace and security". In the past, some delegations had not felt able to accept that view, but general agreement had now been reached on that point and the soundness of the affirmation had been established. No one could deny that international peace and security were threatened when the majority of the population in a country was denied all rights. Moreover, the Heads of African States and Governments, meeting at Addis Ababa, had agreed to do all they could to give moral and material aid to the population of Southern Rhodesia for the recovery of power, and their warning was addressed both to the present Government of Southern Rhodesia and to the whole world. Finally, the avowed intention of the United Kingdom to transfer to the Southern Rhodesia Government powerful military and air forces which had previously been at the disposal of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was in itself a threat to peace in Africa and in the world. The sponsors of the draft resolution had taken into account the opinion of other delegations concerned before they had included that paragraph, and it would accordingly be difficult for them to agree to its amendment.

30. In operative paragraph 5, the General Assembly would call upon the United Kingdom Government not to accede to the request of the present minority Government of Southern Rhodesia for independence until majority rule based on universal adult suffrage was established in Southern Rhodesia. It was known that the United Kingdom Government had stated officially that it would not grant independence to Southern Rhodesia until it had received from the Government of that Territory proposals for the broadening of the franchise. For the sponsors of the draft resolution, that statement implied that the exercise of power in Southern Rhodesia must be based on the principle of universal adult suffrage, and on that principle alone. Any electoral reform which did not take that principle into account would be unacceptable. Moreover, the United Kingdom Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had said in the General Assembly (1222nd plenary meeting) that his Government unreservedly accepted the principles of self-determination and of majority rule. The sponsors of the draft resolution were requesting no more than the immediate application of those two principles, and an opportunity for all the inhabitants of Southern Rhodesia, without exception, to exercise their right of self-determination.

31. Operative paragraph 6 invited the United Kingdom Government to hold a new constitutional conference. The United Kingdom should use its prerogatives and its parliamentary and constitutional powers in order

to convene that conference, without waiting for the Southern Rhodesia Government to take the initiative—the Field Government having clearly indicated that, in so far as it was concerned, the chapter of constitutional reforms was closed. Responsibility for action in that field therefore fell on the United Kingdom. Operative paragraph 6 had a wording similar to that used in earlier resolutions passed, and he hoped that it would be adopted unanimously.

32. In paragraph 7, the General Assembly urged all Member States, and in particular those having the closest relations with the United Kingdom Government, to use their influence to the utmost with a view to ensuring the realization of the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of Southern Rhodesia. That appeal was addressed in particular to all the Commonwealth countries, which must see to it that justice was done and that no rights were violated in the Commonwealth as a whole.

33. With reference to operative paragraph 8, he recalled that at the Committee's 1446th meeting, the Under-Secretary for Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories had made a statement concerning the conciliation efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General. At the same meeting, the Ghanaian representative had suggested—and his view had been shared by many delegations—that the Secretary-General should consider sending a representative or representatives to the Territory to discuss the situation with the parties concerned. The Ghanaian delegation thought that such a representative's contacts should not be limited to Southern Rhodesia but should be extended to other Commonwealth countries and to the United Kingdom.

34. He hoped that the draft resolution would be received in the spirit in which it was submitted. The text was the result of a compromise. Its form might not be to every delegation's liking, but the crucial point, in the opinion of the sponsors, was that there should be general agreement on the principles.

35. Mr. COOMARASWAMY (Ceylon) stressed the importance of the third preambular paragraph. The "continued denial to the vast majority of the African population of their basic political rights" was a major feature of the present situation in Southern Rhodesia. Again, in the sixth preambular paragraph the sponsors had taken into consideration the decisions taken at the Summit Conference of Independent African States held at Addis Ababa, since they constituted a landmark in the decolonization process in Africa and it was essential that the General Assembly should confirm them. The explosive situation referred to in the seventh preambular paragraph was due to the fact that the white minority in the Territory was clinging to power and continuing to deny political rights to the African majority. The Committee and the General Assembly should take a realistic view of the situation: in the light of the reports of various General Assembly organs and of the statements by petitioners, it was beyond question that the situation was explosive. There was therefore no reason why that should not be stated in the draft resolution. The eighth preambular paragraph merely took realities into account: the oppression of the indigenous inhabitants in Southern Africa, and in Southern Rhodesia in particular, was a matter of great concern to every African of the continent; the situation was being further aggravated by the proposed transfer of powerful land and air forces to the Southern Rhodesia Government. The second preambular para-

graph of General Assembly resolution 1755 (XVII) had already referred to "the deplorable, critical and explosive situation obtaining in Southern Rhodesia"; if the General Assembly had been of that opinion at a time when Sir Edgar Whitehead had been in power, it must certainly regard the situation as graver still under the Field Government. The operative part of the draft resolution—in particular paragraphs 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8—was very important and proposed fair and realistic action, including the introduction of universal adult suffrage in the Territory.

36. The Ceylonese delegation appealed to the Committee to see to it that the draft resolution was adopted unanimously and implemented before it was too late.

37. Mr. SAHNOUN (Algeria) said that draft resolution A/C.4/L.776 gave concise and clear expression to the Committee's feelings and did not go beyond attempting to meet the aspirations of the people of Southern Rhodesia. It took into consideration the decisions of the Heads of African States and Governments who, at the Addis Ababa Conference, had expressed their concern over the situation in Southern Rhodesia and had stated that it constituted a threat to peace and security in Africa and in the world. That was why the Heads of the African States and Governments had urged the United Kingdom not to transfer power to a racist minority and had decided, should the United Kingdom fail to pay heed, to take such measures as the situation demanded—in particular, to break off diplomatic relations with any State which recognized the independence of Southern Rhodesia and to lend their moral, material and financial support to the patriots struggling for the liberation of their country.

38. The draft resolution requested the United Nations not to give the stamp of approval to the emergence of a new Southern Africa: operative paragraphs 5 and 6 in-

vited the United Kingdom not to grant independence to Southern Rhodesia until universal adult suffrage was introduced, and to convene a new constitutional conference. The draft resolution was a minimum, and the Algerian delegation hoped that it would be adopted unanimously.

39. Mr. DIALLO Seydou (Guinea) thought that the Committee realized the importance of one feature of the present situation in Southern Rhodesia: it seemed appropriate, at that stage in the discussion, to recall the statement made by the United Kingdom Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the General Assembly to the effect that his Government whole-heartedly accepted the principles of self-determination and of majority rule. Such a statement was calculated to give grounds for some optimism, and he thought that the adoption of the draft resolution might encourage the United Kingdom to apply those principles.

40. Mr. MGONJA (Tanganyika) stressed that the draft resolution was very moderate and that its sponsors had endeavoured so to word it that it would be acceptable to most delegations. The problem of Southern Rhodesia was a matter of grave concern to Tanganyika and had been the subject of a special debate in Parliament at Dar es Salaam. The Tanganyikan delegation hoped that, if implemented, the draft resolution could save a truly dangerous situation which was being continuously aggravated by, *inter alia*, the co-operation between the present Southern Rhodesia Government and South Africa. Several members of the Commonwealth, including Tanganyika, were endeavouring to induce the United Kingdom Government to shoulder its responsibilities. He hoped that the draft resolution would enjoy massive support and that the United Kingdom would not let the final opportunity slip.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.