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Chairman: Mr. Majid RAHNEA (Iran).

AGENDA ITEM 23

Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples: reports 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: Southern Rhodesia (continued) (A/5691; A/5800/Rev.1, chap.III; A/6000/Rev.1, chap.III)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. RYABONYENDE (Rwanda) wished to express his delegation's great satisfaction at the almost unanimous approval, both by the Committee itself and by the General Assembly, of resolution 2012 (XX) concerning the situation in Southern Rhodesia. Its position thus strengthened, the United Kingdom could now take steps to alter the course of events.

2. As for the delegations which had voted against the proposed text, their attitude confirmed the fact that they had no place in the United Nations; the Rwandese delegation objected not so much to their vote as to their presence.

3. The Southern Rhodesian problem continued to be a matter of grave concern for international peace. In spite of the efforts of the United Nations to see justice prevail in the Territory, the situation there had all the features of a real crisis and seemed likely to add to the number of hotbeds of war. The Prime Minister, Mr. Ian Smith, was at present considering a unilateral declaration of independence, while the United Kingdom Government, whose responsibility in the matter it was no longer necessary to prove, refused to co-operate in rectifying a situation which it had itself created; instead, it made vague declarations and took refuge behind mutually contradictory constitutional arguments which had never convinced anyone. Thus, in spite of General Assembly resolution

1747 (XVI), the United Kingdom continued to claim that Southern Rhodesia was not a Non-Self-Governing Territory within the meaning of Chapter XI of the United Nations Charter. Nor did the United Kingdom pay any heed to the request in that resolution that it should take certain steps with a view to transferring full political powers to the people of Southern Rhodesia in accordance with their freely expressed wishes.

4. The United Kingdom Government's attitude, which no legal arguments could justify, was dictated by the purely economic and strategic interests which it wanted to safeguard in the Territory. The United Kingdom's temporizing policy was designed only to serve the interests of the racist settlers and of United Kingdom monopolies. There were considerable United Kingdom investments in Rhodesia, and more capital was ready to be invested there as soon as independence was proclaimed unilaterally. It was to be regretted that the desire for profits had so far taken precedence over the requirements of a true sense of responsibility; even after the present United Kingdom Government had come to power, the United Kingdom had ignored the legitimate aspirations of the Rhodesian people and had failed to comply with the recommendations of the General Assembly and the Security Council. As a result of that reluctant attitude, a new South Africa was gradually being created with London's connivance.

5. The economic sanctions which the United Kingdom promised to impose in the event of a unilateral declaration of independence was an empty threat from the point of view of the Rhodesian racists and provided no solution to the present problem. What was needed was the repeal of all racist and discriminatory laws. The United Kingdom had a moral obligation not to yield to the pressure of a handful of settlers and not to abdicate its responsibilities towards 4 million Africans. To that end, it must prevent, by every possible means, including the use of force, any unconstitutional and unilateral act; it had both the power and the duty to do so.

6. Africa would not look on unconcerned while its sons were murdered, but it was to be hoped that the continent would not be driven to settling by force a problem to which the United Nations had already proposed a solution. Rwanda, for its part, was determined to recognize a government-in-exile and to give it all possible assistance if Mr. Smith's sinister designs were carried out.

7. His delegation urged the United Kingdom to release all political prisoners and to convene a constitutional conference of all the political leaders of Southern Rhodesia in order to draw up a democratic constitution and to study the means whereby Southern Rhodesia could achieve independence in dignity. It also

addressed an urgent appeal to the members of the Commonwealth, particularly the Afro-Asian countries and all the anti-colonialist countries, to bring pressure to bear on the United Kingdom Government in order to ensure justice for the unhappy people of Southern Rhodesia.

8. Mr. DEMIDAVAG (Mongolia) said that, in spite of the important resolutions on the question of Southern Rhodesia adopted by the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence of Colonial Countries and Peoples, and in spite of the welcome given to those resolutions by world opinion and the support for them shown in the decisions of the Organization of African Unity, the Addis Ababa Summit Conference of Independent African States and the Cairo Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, the United Kingdom Government had not taken a single practical step towards a positive solution of the Southern Rhodesian problem. Instead, it had helped the unpopular settler minority régime, in one way or another, to strengthen its position in order to set up a new bulwark of colonialism in Africa on the lines of South Africa.

9. The United Kingdom Government was assisted in its policies by Portugal, South Africa, the United States of America and the Federal Republic of Germany; in that connexion, he read out an extract from the statement made by a petitioner in the Special Committee (A/6000/Rev.1, chap.III, para. 378). There was ample evidence that the countries he had mentioned and a number of other colonial Powers had deeply rooted vested interests in Southern Rhodesia, a fact which gave Mr. Ian Smith the necessary confidence to threaten to declare the independence of Southern Rhodesia unilaterally on the basis of the racist Constitution of 1961.

10. The United Kingdom Government argued that Southern Rhodesia was a self-governing colony and that the United Kingdom could not, therefore, intervene. Yet the United Kingdom had intervened both in British Guiana, which was a self-governing territory, and more recently in Aden. The fact was that the United Kingdom did not intervene in Southern Rhodesia because its own colonial interests would be adversely affected. The many appeals addressed to the United Kingdom both within the Organization and outside it had gone unheeded. Moreover, the administering Power and its allies were resorting to all kinds of subterfuges to mislead public opinion and to preserve intact the colonial status of Southern Rhodesia.

11. Mr. Smith's régime had been warned by the United Kingdom Government a year or so earlier, and more recently by the United States, of the disastrous consequences that a unilateral declaration of independence would bring. Such a declaration would arouse the African continent and the progressive forces of the entire world against the minority Government and its protectors. As the New York Herald Tribune had plainly stated in its issue of 10 October 1965, it was feared that precipitate action by Mr. Smith or his successors might speed rather than impede a black takeover in Rhodesia. The warning given to the Southern Rhodesian authorities by the United Kingdom

Government had nothing to do with a desire to protect the rights of the indigenous population: the sole aim was to gain time in converting Southern Rhodesia into a white-ruled colonial redoubt in Africa. The negotiations which the United Kingdom authorities were holding with the Smith régime were pursuing the same end; as the United Kingdom magazine The Economist had pointed out, the principle that independence would not be granted to Southern Rhodesia until an African government was in power there had been carefully avoided in United Kingdom Government statements for the past eighteen months. The present United Kingdom Prime Minister, like his predecessor, was willing to hand over Rhodesia, with its 4 million Africans, to an independent government elected from the Whites of the Territory. Ensuring the consent of the people as a whole meant securing the agreement of the chiefs and headmen, whose salaries were paid by the Smith Government. According to The New York Times of 11 October 1965, the United Kingdom Government was likely to try to make the scheme look more attractive by proposing another conference in which the African nationalists and tribal leaders would participate.

12. In those circumstances, it would not be enough merely to warn the Southern Rhodesian régime or to call upon the United Kingdom Government not to allow a unilateral declaration of independence. In the opinion of the Mongolian delegation, it was imperative that the United Nations, and in particular the Security Council, should adopt measures calculated to give the African population of Southern Rhodesia effective support in the attainment of their legitimate rights and should call for sanctions against the Southern Rhodesian régime in the event of its persisting in its defiance of the resolutions of the Security Council.

13. All Governments should be asked to give the indigenous population of Rhodesia all possible moral and material support in their struggle against the white minority settler régime.

14. Mr. DUHACEK (Yugoslavia) recalled that the Yugoslav delegation had stated its position on the question of Southern Rhodesia on many occasions, in the Special Committee, the General Assembly and the Fourth Committee. It had repeatedly drawn attention to the disturbing situation prevailing in that country and to the danger which it represented for the future. More than once, it had appealed to the administering Power to find a solution to the problem before it was too late.

15. The present situation in Southern Rhodesia had come about as a result of the ineffectiveness of the administering Power: it was the lack of any positive and specific action on the part of the United Kingdom Government that had encouraged Mr. Ian Smith to threaten to declare independence unilaterally and to begin making preparations for such a declaration. At the 1518th meeting, the United Kingdom representative had outlined the three guiding principles of his Government's policy towards Southern Rhodesia. Firstly, the United Kingdom Government would agree to grant independence to Rhodesia only on a basis acceptable to the population as a whole. In the Yugoslav delegation's view, that meant that independence would not be granted to Southern Rhodesia

until majority rule had been established. The second principle was that the solution must be sought, not by unconstitutional or illegal action, but by negotiation. There was, however, a considerable gap between that statement and reality. The negotiations conducted by the United Kingdom Government with the representatives of 5 per cent of the population could not lead to a solution so long as the true leaders of the Zimbabwe people, with whom the negotiations should be held, were in prison or exile. In view of the gravity of the situation, the United Kingdom Government should immediately set a date on which the chiefs would be consulted. The third principle stated by the United Kingdom representative was that no one should be left in any doubt of the true constitutional position or of the political and economic consequences which would flow from an illegal declaration of independence. While it was clear that the United Kingdom Government intended to resort to political and economic sanctions in the event of a unilateral declaration of independence on the part of the Smith Government, he wished to point out that if it temporized and hesitated to take specific action, it would be playing Mr. Smith's game and encouraging him to pursue a policy fraught with danger.

16. The time had come to face the situation in Southern Rhodesia with courage and dispatch. The United Kingdom should set an example, since it held the key to the solution of the problem and bore the greatest responsibility. Other countries, of course, could and should exert a certain influence, which was important, with a view to preventing the situation from deteriorating. The United Nations, and in particular the General Assembly and the Security Council, should take practical and effective steps and should unreservedly support any steps that the United Kingdom might take to prevent the dangerous action of a minority within the white minority. The General Assembly should also leave no one in doubt about its own determination to take any action that might prove necessary.

17. Mr. DE CASTRO (Philippines) deplored the fact that, although the question of Southern Rhodesia had been before the General Assembly and the Security Council for five years, no solution was yet in sight. The various United Nations resolutions had remained unheeded and the situation had become more explosive than ever.

18. The United Kingdom had shown courage in warning the Smith Government of the serious consequences of a unilateral declaration of independence, but those

warnings served merely to maintain the *status quo*, i.e., the continuation of the oppression of the African majority by the white minority. He therefore regretted that the United Kingdom persisted in maintaining that the United Nations was not competent to deal with the question of Southern Rhodesia and that the United Kingdom Government had no authority to intervene directly and effectively in the internal affairs of Southern Rhodesia. The question of the competence of the United Nations had been settled long since in the various resolutions adopted on the subject, both by the General Assembly and the Security Council, in particular resolution 1747 (XVI) of 28 June 1962, in which the General Assembly had affirmed that Southern Rhodesia was a Non-Self-Governing Territory within the meaning of Chapter XI of the Charter of the United Nations. By refusing to recognize the competence of the United Nations with regard to Southern Rhodesia, the United Kingdom Government had encouraged and was continuing to encourage the minority Government of Mr. Smith to disregard the voice of the international community. Similarly, by maintaining that it could not intervene in the internal affairs of Southern Rhodesia, the United Kingdom had emboldened the illegal Southern Rhodesian Government to continue its oppression of the Africans by suppressing their political activities, imprisoning them and detaining their nationalist leaders; the United Kingdom position had even encouraged Mr. Smith to threaten a unilateral declaration of independence.

19. The Philippine delegation hoped that the United Kingdom would reconsider its attitude and would recognize the competence of the United Nations with regard to Southern Rhodesia and assert and exercise its authority over the internal affairs of Southern Rhodesia. There was no doubt that such a change in the attitude of the administering Power would induce the minority Government of Southern Rhodesia to allow the United Kingdom to perform its responsibilities in accordance with the United Nations resolutions and, knowing that the United Kingdom was supported by the international community, that Government would allow majority rule to be brought about in a rapid and orderly manner.

20. The Philippine delegation realized, of course, that much courage would be required on the part of the United Kingdom, but it knew that that country was a stalwart leader of the free world and that it would be equal to the sacrifice. Such an action could only increase its stature as a world Power.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.