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MEETING**

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Chairman: Mr. ACHKAR Marof (Guinea).

Organization of work

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to the tentative time-table (Conference Room Paper No. 1)^{1/} drawn up by the Secretariat to assist the Committee to organize the work so as to complete it in good time.

2. Mr. MUFTI (Syria) noted that it was suggested in the tentative time-table that agenda items 49, 50 and 51, which concerned Non-Self-Governing Territories, should be dealt with in eight meetings and agenda item 13, concerning the report of the Trusteeship Council, in six. He considered, however, that six meetings would be sufficient time to allot to agenda items 49, 50 and 51, and four to agenda item 13. The Syrian delegation proposed that the four meetings thus made available should be devoted to a more thorough examination of the question of Oman.

3. Mr. Zaid RIFA'I (Jordan) supported that proposal.

4. The CHAIRMAN observed that the number of meetings allowed for the examination of the various questions was not irrevocably fixed. In regard to the question of Oman, the Secretariat's calculations had been based on the previous experience of the Special Political Committee.

5. Miss BROOKS (Liberia) recalled that at its previous session the Committee had been unable to give all the time it should have given to information concerning Non-Self-Governing Territories and to the question of renewing the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories. It ought, therefore, at its present session, to treat those two items with all the attention they deserved, and the Liberian delegation considered that eight meetings would not be too many for that purpose. The report of the Trusteeship Council had been neglected at the previous session. For those reasons it would be better not to alter the number of

meetings allotted to the examination of each item in the tentative time-table.

6. Mr. BUDU-ACQUAH (Ghana) shared that opinion.

7. Mr. SONN VOEUNSAI (Cambodia) thought that the number of meetings allotted to agenda items 49, 50 and 51 and to agenda item 13 on the tentative time-table should not be changed, but proposed that twenty-one meetings instead of twenty-three should be devoted to the question of South West Africa, and that the two meetings thus saved could be used for the debate on the question of Oman.

8. Mr. BOZOVIC (Yugoslavia) said that all the items were of equal importance. The time-table was really a suggestion by the Secretariat and should not be applied rigidly, especially since, as everyone knew, fresh events occurred every day in the field of decolonization. It would therefore be preferable to adhere to the proposed time-table, on the understanding that the Committee could decide at any time whether the number of meetings to be devoted to the examination of each question should be increased or reduced.

9. Mr. MUFTI (Syria) agreed with that view and withdrew his proposal.

10. Mr. SONN VOEUNSAI (Cambodia) also withdrew his proposal, but still thought that the Committee should devote more meetings to examination of the question of Oman.

11. The CHAIRMAN considered that the Committee adopted the provisional time-table drawn up by the Secretariat, provided that any changes which might appear necessary could be made as the session proceeded.

12. Mr. CARASALES (Argentina) asked whether the Committee would meet while the General Assembly examined in plenary session the 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 number of delegations wished to take part in that debate in plenary session.

13. The CHAIRMAN said he understood that the report of the Special Committee would not be debated in plenary session until after the conclusions of the Fourth Committee on the questions of Southern Rhodesia, the Territories under Portuguese Administration and South West Africa, which were also dealt with in the report, had been submitted to the General Assembly. Not until the Committee had examined the three items on its agenda dealing with those questions would it be able to decide whether it should cancel meetings or sit alternately with the General Assembly. He would raise the question at the next meeting of the General Committee.

^{1/} Circulated to members of the Committee only.

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/L.774) (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued) AND CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.4/L.774

14. Mr. MUFTI (Syria) said that his delegation had three principal reasons for considering that it should speak in the general debate on the question of Southern Rhodesia. First, the struggle against colonialism was indivisible and should be waged simultaneously in every part of the world where it occurred; secondly, emancipation from colonialism and the maintenance of international peace and security were only two aspects of the same problem and therefore concerned all Members of the United Nations equally, and the question of Southern Rhodesia was one of those which threatened international peace and security; lastly, the General Assembly should take note of the failure to comply with the numerous resolutions it had adopted on the question, and denounce the party responsible for that intolerable situation.

15. He would not go into details of the long debates in various organs of the United Nations and the resolutions which had been adopted or rejected, or examine the report on Southern Rhodesia submitted by the Special Committee (A/5446/Rev.1, chap. III), which was an admirable document. Those debates, those resolutions and that report were well known to all members of the Committee. He would merely stress that the situation was explosive and its prolongation might plunge Africa into a fresh conflict whose scope and consequences should not be belittled.

16. The situation was that the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee with regard to Southern Rhodesia had remained a dead letter because they had been disregarded by the United Kingdom; the draft resolution submitted to the Security Council (S/5425/Rev.1) and supported by eight members of the Council had not been adopted because of the veto by the United Kingdom^{2/} the Special Committee's Sub-Committee on Southern Rhodesia, set up to approach the United Kingdom Government in the hope of inducing it to change its intransigent attitude, had met with evasion; the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who had been invited to use his good offices, had also failed because the United Kingdom would not co-operate; lastly, the brief and frigid statement made by the United Kingdom representative at the 1434th meeting had dispelled all hope of a last-minute change in the attitude of the United Kingdom Government. In that statement the United Kingdom representative had not only maintained his Government's stubborn position but had also called misinformation and prejudice all the information on which the various United Nations bodies had so far based themselves.

17. The United Kingdom was setting itself up as the supreme arbiter and sole depositary of truth: only the arguments of its representatives, which it held to be irrefutable, should be accepted by the United Nations. What were those arguments? First, according to the

United Kingdom, Southern Rhodesia, where a minority of 221,500 European settlers exercised a brutal rule over 3,610,000 Africans against their will and without their participation, was a self-governing territory and therefore outside the purview of Chapter XI of the Charter. But in the view of the United Nations, based on sound criteria, Southern Rhodesia was a Non-Self-Governing Territory in the full meaning of the term and therefore covered by Chapter XI of the Charter. Secondly, the United Kingdom held that the United Nations was not competent to examine the situation in Southern Rhodesia and that its resolutions were consequently *ultra vires*. The majority of Members, on the other hand, held that the competence of the United Nations was beyond doubt and its acceptance was an obligation which the United Kingdom could not evade. Thirdly, the United Kingdom asserted that it could not intervene in the internal affairs of Southern Rhodesia because it was prevented from doing so by a forty-year-old parliamentary convention between it and the settler minority. That mysterious convention seemed to be an unwritten rule of United Kingdom law based on a political expedient which was in any case no longer justifiable. Indeed, article 103 of the Charter laid down that, in the event of a conflict between the obligations of the Members of the United Nations under the Charter and their obligations under any other international agreement, the former should prevail. The United Kingdom could not therefore legitimately shelter behind a convention of doubtful origin in order to evade obligations contracted under the Charter.

18. The Charter laid upon the United Kingdom, as the administering Power, a certain number of obligations with respect to Southern Rhodesia. In particular, it was bound to protect the people of the Territory against abuses, take account of their political aspirations, and do its best to further international peace and security. Instead, the United Kingdom Government was declaring its intention to transfer to the racist Government of Southern Rhodesia powers which were now in its own hands and announcing measures which it had taken in that direction—in other words, it was deliberately handing over a defenceless African majority to the mercies of a Government which had already shown its capacity for racial discrimination and oppression. To the repeated requests of the United Nations and of the African majority for the abrogation of the 1961 Constitution, the United Kingdom had responded by maintaining the Constitution, unilaterally renouncing its right to veto laws running counter to African interests, and organization elections which had been rightly boycotted by the Africans. Unconcerned by the reaction of public opinion to those measures and by the deterioration of relations which might result, the United Kingdom continued to repeat that the situation in Southern Rhodesia was in no way explosive and did not constitute a threat to peace. It was high time for the United Kingdom to show realism before blood began to flow, and for the settler minority which it supported to take advantage of the opportunity offered it to live on equal and legal terms with the African majority to which at the present time it denied all justice. In that regard, a number of warnings had been given by African nations both in the General Assembly and in the Security Council.

19. There were other disturbing elements in the situation. The United Kingdom representative had seemed to defend the policies of the white minority of Rhodesia and had regarded the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland as having been a success, whereas in fact

^{2/} See Official Records of the Security Council, Eighteenth Year, 1069th meeting.

it had been a complete failure, having been imposed on the African populations of the Rhodesias in order to enable the white minority of Southern Rhodesia to dominate Northern Rhodesia and exploit its wealth. Furthermore, the transfer of powers to the Southern Rhodesian Government seemed to have been part of a "package deal" between the United Kingdom and Southern Rhodesia of which not all the aspects were yet known. Finally, the United Kingdom seemed ready to consider amendments to the Southern Rhodesian Constitution only on the basis of such proposals as the Field Government might make at a conference in which the representatives of the African population could not participate and in the context of a promise of independence to that Government.

20. The Syrian delegation could not fail to draw a number of conclusions from that state of affairs. The United Kingdom Government was obviously about to abdicate its responsibilities under pressure from the white minority of Southern Rhodesia, for reasons which were not difficult to perceive and in accordance with an attitude not dissimilar to that which it had adopted in the case of Palestine. Such abdication would clearly be collusive and should be condemned by the United Nations. Secondly, as the Ghanaian representative had pointed out, Southern Rhodesia would constitute a grave danger to neighbouring countries and to all Africa if the new powers were transferred to the Field Government. Knowing the strength of the armed forces which that Government would have, its policy of racial oppression, its hankerings for an alliance with South Africa and perhaps with Portugal, and its interests in Northern Rhodesia, the United Nations had due cause for anxiety. The problems which were now arising in South Africa and in the Portuguese colonies might very soon arise in Southern Rhodesia.

21. Despite the evil that had already been done, the Syrian delegation did not feel that the situation was completely hopeless. If the United Nations and the United Kingdom showed sufficient firmness, the settlers in Southern Rhodesia would realize that their only possible course was to make terms with the African majority. The concrete measures which would make such a solution possible were already indicated in the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

22. The Syrian delegation believed that the United Kingdom delegation should not transfer powers to the Government of Southern Rhodesia until equitable provision had been made for African representation, nor grant independence to the Territory until the problems which would make such independence illusory for the majority of the population had been solved. It also considered that all repressive, racist and discriminatory laws in Southern Rhodesia should be repealed. Lastly, it held the view that the Commonwealth countries should declare that they would formally oppose the admission of Southern Rhodesia to the Commonwealth if that were requested by a Government not representing the African majority. Clearly the United Kingdom and the States belonging to the Commonwealth could use powerful means of persuasion.

23. The Syrian delegation still considered that the United Kingdom was the administering Power for Southern Rhodesia, that therefore the United Kingdom Government was bound to bring about the Territory's accession to full independence under the conditions

stated in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), and that that Government had the authority and the means necessary to fulfil its obligations.

24. If nevertheless all efforts should fail, the General Assembly might consider requesting an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the legal issues, on condition that the United Kingdom postponed measures for the transfer of powers until the opinion had been given.

25. Mr. MESTIRI (Tunisia) said that his delegation would be taking part in the general debate on Southern Rhodesia at a later date, and would confine itself for the time being to introducing draft resolution A/C.4/L.774.

26. The text of the draft resolution was identical with the one supported by a large majority in the Security Council, except for the insertion of a new preambular paragraph noting that the Security Council had already considered the question, and the deletion of operative paragraph 4 of the draft resolution submitted to the Security Council, there being no longer any need for it. The original draft resolution could not be adopted by the Security Council because of the United Kingdom veto. The United Kingdom delegation had already exercised its veto right in 1956, on the occasion of the Suez crisis, over a question which had also been of a colonial or neo-colonial character, and the General Assembly at the time had overcome the opposition from that quarter by a very large majority and had imposed a just settlement. The present circumstances were different in that the Assembly was considering the problem of Southern Rhodesia because of the United Kingdom Government's persistent and systematic refusal to comply with earlier Assembly decisions on the matter.

27. The Tunisian delegation was of the opinion that it would be desirable if the General Assembly took an immediate decision on the specific problem which had been the subject of the latest discussions in the Security Council. There was no need to review in detail what had transpired in the Council, but the Committee might wish to refer to the explanatory memorandum (S/5382) submitted by the African States which had requested the meeting of the Council. He drew attention, in particular, to paragraph 6 of the memorandum, with special reference to sub-paragraph (b), which he read out. The attributes of sovereignty which the United Kingdom proposed to transfer to Southern Rhodesia included responsibility for defence. In that respect paragraphs 16 and 17 of the explanatory memorandum expressed the African States' concern at the prospect of the white minority Government in Southern Rhodesia controlling a formidable air force, which would constitute at once a direct threat to the people of the Territory and a latent threat to the neighbouring countries.

28. Draft resolution A/C.4/L.774 dealt almost exclusively with those specific points and was not concerned with the problem of Southern Rhodesia as a whole. It did not spell out the specific steps which would lead the Territory to independence, but was confined to preventing what might become a most serious situation. Thus the draft resolution was of value as an interim measure. In view, however, of the fact that the transfer of the army and air force of the former Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland to the white settler Government of Southern Rhodesia would constitute a serious development, the sponsors of the draft resolution were compelled to ask that the text should be put to the vote as a matter of priority.

29. The moderate tone of the draft resolution supported by the majority of the Security Council had been sufficiently stressed in the Council, and the voting which had followed the discussion had provided additional evidence of how moderate, realistic and, at the same time, urgent the text now before the Committee was. That was why the Tunisian delegation was confident that the Committee would find it possible to vote overwhelmingly, that day or, at the latest, the next day, in favour of a text known to all and already approved by several of the groups constituting the General Assembly. It was, of course, not the final text, with which the discussion of Southern Rhodesia would be concluded. At the appropriate moment another text would be submitted, dealing with all the aspects of the question in greater detail and more thoroughly. The Tunisian delegation was confident that draft resolution A/C.4/L.774 would be supported by almost the entire membership of the Committee, which would thereby show its disapproval of recourse to the veto in defence of colonialist arguments.

30. Mr. EL-SHAFEI (United Arab Republic) said that he had little to add to what had been said by the Tunisian representative concerning draft resolution A/C.4/L.774. He reserved the right to explain his delegation's attitude on the question of Southern Rhodesia in greater detail at a later stage. The question now before the Committee was obviously urgent, since the transfer to the present Government of all powers and of absolute control over land and air forces would aggravate the situation and would sow panic among the Africans both in and outside the Territory. When the question had been brought before it by the African countries, the Security Council had been prevented by the United Kingdom veto from inviting the United Kingdom Government not to transfer to Southern Rhodesia, as at present governed, any of the powers or attributes of sovereignty, or the armed forces and aircraft. Since the situation remained critical, it was important that all the members of the General Assembly should speak their minds on that question.

31. Miss BROOKS (Liberia) indicated that her delegation would make a statement on the question of Southern Rhodesia later in the general debate. The question raised in draft resolution A/C.4/L.774 was particularly urgent and constituted a threat to peace in Africa; hence the sponsors of that text, especially the African States, hoped that it would be considered in plenary meeting as early as possible. The draft resolution made it clear that the present Government in Southern Rhodesia did not represent the people of the Territory, and it invited the United Kingdom not to transfer any armed forces to the Territory's present Government. It was common knowledge that that Government had no sympathy with the African people, and there was every reason to fear that it might misuse the weapons allocated to it. The United Kingdom could exercise control but was refusing to do so. Had it taken appropriate action at the outset, the Territory would not now find itself in such a critical situation. She hoped that the United Kingdom representative would comment on the matter, and she expressed the opinion that it was important that the Committee should take an early decision with regard to the draft resolution.

32. Mr. MONGONO (Nigeria) recalled that his delegation was a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.4/L.774. It intended to participate in the general debate on Southern Rhodesia at a later date, but he wished to stress there and then that his country had been pro-

foundly disappointed at the use of the veto by the United Kingdom Government in the Security Council. The transfer of the Federal armed forces to the present Southern Rhodesian Government seemed extremely dangerous for there was no guarantee as to the use to which that Government might put such powerful forces.

33. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Tunisian representative had asked that draft resolution A/C.4/L.774 should be considered immediately and put to the vote as a matter of priority. The list of speakers for the following meetings was, however, already very long and it would be difficult to interrupt the general debate so as to enable the delegations to take a decision on the draft resolution on the following day, in view of the fact that some of them had not yet been able to consult their Governments. It therefore seemed desirable to postpone the voting until Monday, 7 October.

34. Mr. MESTIRI (Tunisia) suggested that the general debate might be interrupted in order to enable the Committee to consider the draft resolution before it and vote on it as early as possible. In the light of what had just been said by the Chairman, his delegation thought that at the following meeting the Committee might hear the speakers who would be taking part in the general debate, as already agreed. It would, however, like to see the Committee give consideration also to the draft resolution so that the latter could be put to the vote before the end of the week. If that proved impossible, the Tunisian delegation would agree that the voting should take place on Monday, 7 October, at the latest.

35. The CHAIRMAN said that he had been informed by several delegations that they would not be able to take a decision by the following day. He therefore thought that it would be better if they voted on the draft resolution on Monday, 7 October, in the afternoon.

36. Mr. KUNDYA (Tanganyika) said that his delegation fully supported the statement by the representative of Tunisia. The European settler régime in Southern Rhodesia was notorious for its ruthless oppression of the African population and the United Kingdom was planning to equip the settlers with the yet more dangerous weapons of a powerful air force and army.

37. His delegation had already in the Security Council (1066th meeting) expressed strong opposition to the racist settler régime in Southern Rhodesia and wished once again to state that it was seriously disturbed by the threat to the peace of Central and Southern Africa implied in the United Kingdom's attitude. His delegation supported and called for speedy action on it.

38. Mr. SONN VOEUNSAI (Cambodia) supported the suggestion by the representative of Tunisia with regard to procedure. At the next meeting speakers would be able to state their position with regard to the draft resolution. If by the afternoon of Friday, 4 October, all delegations were in a position to take a stand, voting on the draft resolution could take place before the week-end. However, if a majority favoured postponing the vote until Monday, 7 October, his delegation would not oppose it.

39. Mr. UMAÑA BERNAL (Colombia) said that, as he understood it, draft resolution A/C.4/L.774 submitted by the representative of Tunisia was not a definitive text. It would, therefore, be somewhat difficult for the Committee to decide the very next day, and it might be preferable to postpone voting until Monday, 7 October.

40. The CHAIRMAN said that draft resolution A/C.4/L.774 was a definitive text and that another, more complete draft resolution would be submitted when the Committee had gone more fully into the question of Southern Rhodesia.

41. Mr. MESTIRI (Tunisia) confirmed that the draft resolution was a definitive text. If a new draft were to be circulated, it would merely include the names of delegations which had expressed a desire to be co-sponsors. As the Chairman had stated, another draft resolution might be submitted at the end of the general debate and in it the Committee could embody all the suggestions it saw fit to make for the future of Southern Rhodesia.

42. Mr. UMAÑA BERNAL (Colombia) thanked the representative of Tunisia for the explanation he had given and said that his delegation had no objection to the general debate being suspended so that the Committee might examine the draft resolution and vote on it.

43. Mr. NGANDO-BLACK (Cameroon) said that nearly all delegations were aware of the need for a swift decision and realized that the situation in Southern Rhodesia demanded vigilant efforts on the Committee's part. He thought, however, that allowance should be made for the difficulties of certain non-African delegations which wished to associate themselves with the efforts to eliminate colonialism but were not in a position to reach a decision immediately. His delegation therefore urged the authors of the draft resolution to agree to a vote being taken early the following week. In any event, the result of the vote was not in doubt. The draft resolution would be adopted on the Monday or Tuesday of the following week by the General Assembly, and the United Kingdom, even if it wished to, would not be in a position to hand over power to Southern Rhodesia before that decision was reached.

44. Mr. BENNANI (Morocco) said that his delegation would vote for draft resolution A/C.4/L.774. He recalled that his delegation, jointly with the delegations of Ghana and the Philippines, had had the honour to

submit to the Security Council the draft resolution on the subject of Southern Rhodesia (S/5425/Rev.1).

45. While the situation in Southern Rhodesia was certainly critical, his delegation thought it better to support the Chairman's proposal. If all delegations were allowed to consult their Governments, the result would undoubtedly be a more overwhelming vote, and that would be in the interest of Southern Rhodesia.

46. Mr. SIDI (Mauritania) said that his delegation, a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.4/L.774, would in due course make a statement on the question of Southern Rhodesia.

47. The CHAIRMAN proposed that at its next meeting, on Friday morning, 4 October, the Committee should hear those delegations which were down to speak in the general debate. They might at the same time, if possible, state their position on draft resolution A/C.4/L.774. Subsequently delegations would be invited to state their position on the draft resolution, and a vote would be taken on Monday, 7 October, before 6 p.m.; thus delegations would be able to consult their Governments if they so desired.

It was so decided.

48. Mr. MESTIRI (Tunisia) welcomed that decision.

49. Mr. KHALAF (Iraq) said that since a period of twenty-four hours should elapse between the submission of an amendment and the Committee's discussion of it, he feared that the Committee might be unable to vote on the day proposed by the Chairman if several amendments were submitted at the last minute.

50. The CHAIRMAN said that the decision to postpone voting until the afternoon of Monday, 7 October, had been taken in order to give delegations time to consult their Governments and submit their amendments to the draft resolution. He suggested that the Committee abide by that decision, though it could be modified if there were some unforeseen development in the situation.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.