

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION

Official Records



**FOURTH COMMITTEE, 1873rd  
MEETING**

Monday, 21 September 1970,  
at 3.30 p.m.

NEW YORK

*Chairman:* Mr. Vernon Johnson MWAANGA  
(Zambia).

*Statement by the Chairman*

1. The CHAIRMAN said that his election was an honour not only for him but for his country, Zambia, and for Africa, and he thanked the Committee for the confidence it had placed in him. He hoped that all delegations would extend to him the co-operation that they had given to his distinguished predecessors.
2. The current year, which marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations and the tenth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, was an exceptionally important one for the Fourth Committee. It must be acknowledged that the work of the United Nations in the field of decolonization had been particularly difficult and, at times, frustrating. Despite the fact that in 1960 the complete liberation of Africa had seemed to be only a matter of time, the hopes of the early sixties had not materialized. The African revolution had been halted at the Zambezi and at the Congo-Angola border by an "unholy alliance" between Portugal, Southern Rhodesia and South Africa. Apart from the special cases of Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland, the tide of independence had ceased to flow and even threatened to ebb. Although the United Nations must of course help to accelerate the process of decolonization, the prime responsibility for putting an end to colonialism and racism in southern Rhodesia must surely rest with the peoples of that region. It was no less true, however, that the liberation movements must have the support of other nationalist movements and of the free countries of the world, particularly in those places where no course other than armed struggle had been possible.
3. In South Africa, racialism was the basic principle of the minority Government. Non-white citizens played no part whatsoever in political life; in the economic sphere they were relegated to a subordinate position and their social life was strictly controlled by the State.
4. In Southern Rhodesia the nationalist movements had been outlawed and the African people were second-class citizens in their own homeland. The United Kingdom, which held legal responsibility for the government of Southern Rhodesia was unwilling or unable to exercise control over the rebel Territory. Meanwhile, the fact that such legal responsibility lay with the United Kingdom limited the possibilities for action by the international community in that problem.
5. The Portuguese Government stubbornly refused to accept the principle of self-determination for the colonies of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau). Although the Western countries denied any responsibility whatsoever for Portugal's actions outside the area of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), no African Government really believed that the politics of alliances had no influence on Western attitudes to the problem, or that NATO aid did not further the Portuguese war effort in Africa. It would be more honest if the countries which sincerely condemned Portugal's policy in Africa were to use the NATO forum to bring pressure to bear on Lisbon to abandon its criminal and outdated policy.
6. The peoples in those areas were therefore preparing themselves for armed struggle. They had resorted to force because no other road to freedom was open to them. They were, however, challenging the most heavily armed State in Africa and a European Power which devoted more than 40 per cent of its budget to colonial wars. In that struggle, the traditional weapons of Africa were worthless. The liberation movements must obtain modern weapons and train themselves in their use, and for that they needed outside support.
7. Furthermore, it was deplorable that it had not been possible to solve the political problem of Namibia. The United Nations could not remain indifferent to South African intransigence, especially when its constitutional responsibility towards that Territory was unequivocal. It was therefore clear that the situation in southern Africa posed a grave threat to international peace and security, as also to the independence and stability of neighbouring African States.
8. Zambia was irrevocably committed to the complete eradication of colonialism in all its manifestations: the struggle against minority régimes in Africa and other areas of the world was for it a matter of national priority.
9. Those were only some of the problems to which the Committee would have to apply all its energy and its imagination. In addition, there were many other Non-Self-Governing Territories, to which the General Assembly had drawn attention in resolution 2189 (XXI) of 13 December 1966, and there was the question of small Territories.
10. The United Nations had long recognized the legitimacy of the liberation movements in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. In some of them, notably the Portuguese colonies, the movements had started to lay the foundations for nation-wide organization. It was desirable that the United Nations should render them more material support through the specialized agencies and that the Western countries should change their attitude, which had so far been negative, towards the liberation struggle.

11. It was no longer enough for the Western countries to make pious affirmations of support for the cause of peaceful change in southern Africa if they were to enjoy respect in international life. Their continued opposition to violence, especially when they had no alternative to offer, made their sincerity suspect and gave the impression of being merely an excuse for inaction.

12. During the current session, the Committee would once again take up items which it had been discussing for some years. Its task now was to act more decisively, to exert the maximum possible pressure to support the forces of freedom and to prevent the oppressors of southern Africa and other dependent Territories from becoming stronger. Ways and means must be found to enable the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to enjoy the human rights and fundamental freedoms recognized in the Charter of the United Nations.

13. As in previous years, the Committee had a heavy agenda which included many intricate problems with unpleasant facts. Refusal to confront those problems would not make it any easier to solve them in the future. He therefore trusted that the members of the Committee would extend the necessary co-operation to enable it to adopt recommendations which would advance the cause of "Peace, Justice and Progress" for all dependent peoples everywhere.

#### *Election of the Vice-Chairman*

14. Mr. GRINBERG (Bulgaria) nominated Mr. Assad K. Sadry (Iran).

15. Mr. NAVA CARRILLO (Venezuela) and Mr. BEL-KHIRIA (Tunisia), the latter speaking on behalf of his delegation and the group of Arab countries, supported the nomination.

*Mr. Sadry (Iran) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.*

#### *Election of the Rapporteur*

16. Mr. ABDULLA (Southern Yemen) nominated Mr. Horacio Sevilla Borja (Ecuador).

17. Mr. RUPIA (United Republic of Tanzania) and Mr. CACERES (Peru) supported the nomination.

*Mr. Sevilla Borja (Ecuador) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.*

18. Mr. SADRY (Iran), Vice-Chairman, said that he would do everything possible to be worthy of the confidence which the Committee had placed in him. His country, which had submitted the draft resolution that had subsequently been adopted by the General Assembly as resolution 1514 (XV), of 14 December 1960, ardently defended the cause of decolonization.

19. Mr. BENITES (Ecuador) said that Mr. Sevilla Borja had been unable to attend the present meeting but that he would certainly take part in the Committee's activities at the following meeting. He was certain that Mr. Sevilla Borja

would place all his enthusiasm and ability at the service of the Committee.

#### *Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Trusteeship and Non-Self-Governing Territories*

20. Mr. DJERMAKOYE (Under-Secretary-General for Trusteeship and Non-Self-Governing Territories) said that the year 1970 had not witnessed any outstanding developments in the matter of decolonization. It was true that on 10 October 1970 Fiji would attain national sovereignty by virtue of an agreement between the parties directly concerned, but apart from that territory there was little progress to report. The fact that the process of decolonization was slowing down was particularly noticeable in southern Africa, namely in Southern Rhodesia, in Namibia and in the Territories under Portuguese domination.

21. In the address which he had given in Addis Ababa on 1 September 1970 before the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, U Thant, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, had said:

"After the gigantic upsurge from 1955 to 1965, the great wave of liberation which swept over Africa appears to have met a solid wall of defiance in the southernmost part of the continent. Despite all the efforts of the General Assembly and the Security Council, the forces of racism and reaction still remain strongly entrenched in that part of the world, and derive aid and comfort from the failure of certain Powers to lend their whole-hearted co-operation to the United Nations in the application of effective solutions."

22. It was common knowledge that the situation in Southern Rhodesia had scarcely improved during the past year. On the contrary, despite the condemnations and appeals, the minority régime in Southern Rhodesia was still in power and was still subjugating the majority of the African population of the Territory, enforcing racist laws and practising *apartheid*. It was true that the vigorous action undertaken by the United Nations from 1965 onwards had brought about the isolation of the illegal régime of Southern Rhodesia, since up to the present no Member State had recognized that régime, but despite that the recommendations and decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council had not yet succeeded in restoring law and justice in that part of the world. In particular, the economic sanctions decided on by the Security Council did not seem to have produced the expected results. In fact, as the Committee established in pursuance of resolution 253 (1968) of the Security Council to supervise the application of the sanctions had stated in the report it had submitted on 15 June 1970,<sup>1</sup> the sanctions imposed against Southern Rhodesia had not been fully effective and had not led to the desired results. That Committee had pointed out in particular that South Africa and Portugal, in spite of repeated appeals by the Security Council and in defiance of its resolutions 253 (1968) and 277 (1970), were continuing to trade with Southern Rhodesia, thus considerably reducing the effectiveness of the

<sup>1</sup> See *Official Records of the Security Council, Twenty-fifth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1970*, document S/9844.

sanctions called for by the Security Council in those resolutions. It should also be pointed out that, far from having been weakened, the régime in Southern Rhodesia seemed to have acquired greater security, since on 2 March 1970 it had broken the constitutional links which had united the Territory of Southern Rhodesia with the United Kingdom and had proclaimed the republic. That new step on the road of illegality had naturally produced an immediate reaction on the part 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, which, taking into account the events which had occurred in the Territory, had decided to give priority to the question of Southern Rhodesia and on 9 March 1970 had approved the text of a consensus (see A/8023/Add.1, para. 17), which had been communicated to the Security Council.

23. For its part, the Security Council had met at the request of thirty-nine African States and on 18 March had adopted resolution 277 (1970), in which, among other things, it had condemned the illegal proclamation of republican status in Southern Rhodesia, extended the sanctions and especially requested Member States immediately to sever all diplomatic, consular, trade, military and other relations with the illegal régime in Southern Rhodesia and immediately to interrupt any existing means of transportation to and from Southern Rhodesia.

24. It was of course difficult to assess the effectiveness of the sanctions, since their application required complicated machinery which would take some time before it could function fully. Nevertheless, it was clear that if the sanctions machinery was improved, the sanctions would become more effective. The problem would not be solved, however, so long as they were not applied by South Africa and Portugal.

25. There was another problem of great concern to the international community—that of Namibia. Despite the decision taken by the General Assembly four years earlier to withdraw the mandate which South Africa had held over the Territory, that country was still occupying Namibia illegally, extending South African laws to it and arresting, trying and sentencing more and more Namibians. Faced with this continuing challenge, the Security Council in January 1970, by its resolution 276 (1970), had established an *Ad Hoc* Sub-Committee to study, in consultation with the Secretary-General, ways and means by which the relevant resolutions of the Council could be effectively implemented. In the light of the report and recommendations of the *Ad Hoc* Sub-Committee, the Security Council had on 29 July 1970 adopted two resolutions, in which it had reaffirmed the position adopted by the United Nations concerning Namibia and had recommended various measures designed to affirm once again the special responsibility of the United Nations concerning the Territory and people of Namibia. In particular, in resolution 284 (1970) the Security Council had decided to submit in accordance with Article 96, paragraph 1, of the Charter, the following question to the International Court of Justice with the request for an advisory opinion which shall be transmitted to the Security Council at an early date:

“What are the legal consequences for States of the continued presence of South Africa in Namibia, notwithstanding Security Council resolution 276 (1970)?”

The United Nations Council for Namibia, established by the General Assembly to administer the Territory, had multiplied its efforts to carry out its task. It had set up various standing committees and had been especially concerned with the question of the issue of travel and identity documents to Namibians. In July 1970 a mission of the Council had concluded agreements with the Governments of Uganda and Zambia, and agreements were shortly to be concluded with Ethiopia and Kenya. The mission had established fruitful co-operation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the representatives of the Namibian nationalist movements, as also with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The Special Committee, too, had continued to give consideration to the situation prevailing in the Territory and on 11 August the Chairman of the Special Committee made a statement which would shortly be submitted to the General Assembly (see A/8023/Add.2, para. 16).

26. In the Territories under Portuguese administration, the hopes raised by the change of régime which had occurred at Lisbon two years earlier had gradually diminished in the face of the persistence and obduracy of the Portuguese authorities in regarding Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau) as African provinces and integral parts of Portugal, against the will of the people of those Territories. Moreover, there had been more and more military operations threatening neighbouring States such as Zambia, Senegal and Guinea, which had denounced those acts before the Security Council. Yet the Lusaka Manifesto,<sup>2</sup> which had been warmly approved by the General Assembly the previous year, could have constituted a basis and a platform for the peaceful settlement of the problems which remained in southern Africa. The African Heads of State deserved praise for the political maturity and generosity they had shown and for the efforts they had made to indicate a peaceful way of settling a situation which threatened peace and security in Africa and was of concern to the international community. Unfortunately, the Governments of Portugal and South Africa had interpreted that as a manoeuvre and had preferred to turn their backs on peaceful methods. They had continued to arm in order to maintain their illegal presence and their domination in the Territories against the will of the people.

27. Forty-five Territories, inhabited by about 28 million people, were still under foreign domination. Most of those people, namely some 18 million persons, lived in the Territories of southern Africa. The other Territories, which were scattered all over the world, presented special problems owing, among other things, to their small area and their isolated position. For example, there were the problems peculiar to small islands or groups of islands such as Pitcairn, which had only 92 inhabitants, and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands, with less than 700 inhabitants. There were also the special problems of Territories such as Gibraltar and the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), which presented sovereignty problems. Such problems required special solutions which would take into account the special situation of the respective Territories. The Special Committee and the General Assembly had therefore particularly stressed the need to send visiting missions to the small

<sup>2</sup> Manifesto on Southern Africa. For the text, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 106, document A/7754.

Territories in order to obtain information directly on the political, economic and social situation and on the inhabitants' desires and aspirations. Many Member States felt that the reluctance of the Powers concerned to authorize the Special Committee to visit those Territories had impeded that Committee's work and in some cases threatened to delay the decolonization process.

28. At all events, the Territories of southern Africa continued to constitute the most serious problem. From the legal viewpoint, the questions of Namibia, Southern Rhodesia and the Territories administered by Portugal were different, but from the political and human viewpoints, the problems were basically the same. In each case, contempt for the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations, refusal to accept the authority of the Organization, racial discrimination and disdain for the fundamental and inalienable rights of the inhabitants had provoked armed resistance, which threatened to plunge that part of Africa into a race war.

29. The United Nations was now celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary. When the representatives of 51 States assembled in San Francisco to draft the Charter, few could imagine that twenty-five years later their number would have grown to 126 and that the political scene would have been transformed by one of the most noteworthy events of our age, namely, the end of colonialism for hundreds of millions of people. The influence of the Charter on that process and the role played by the United Nations in that field could not be overlooked. At first that role had been essentially moral and had consisted in consolidating the anti-colonial forces by giving them the impetus, cohesion and direction they required. It had subsequently been strengthened by the adoption of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in 1960, and by the establishment of the Special Committee in 1961.

30. He wished to pay a tribute to the sustained efforts of that Committee, which had been examining all aspects of colonial problems for nine years. The Special Committee had held many meetings in Africa in order to hear petitioners and appraise the situation on the spot. In 1970, the Special Committee had sent a mission to Algeria, Zambia and Ethiopia in order to contact the liberation movements and OAU. Its decisions and recommendations, which had been endorsed by the General Assembly, had made a significant contribution to the decolonization process. At the present time, the legality of the struggle of the peoples under colonial domination to exercise and truly enjoy their rights to self-determination and independence was widely recognized, and the need for all States and all specialized agencies to provide them with moral support and material assistance was generally acknowledged. The current year coincided with the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Two years previously, the General Assembly, feeling that that anniversary would provide a unique opportunity to reflect on what had been achieved and consider what still remained to be done, had requested the Special Committee to prepare an analytical study and a programme of action for the future. Guided by its skilful Chairman, Mr. Nicol, Ambassador of Sierra Leone—to whose ability, energy and intelligence Mr. Djermakoye paid a tribute—and with the

efficient and dedicated co-operation of all its members, the Special Committee had conscientiously fulfilled the task assigned to it. The Special Committee's study and programme of action would shortly be submitted to the General Assembly.

31. There was no cause for complacency, when 28 million people were still being denied their inalienable right to self-determination and independence. The tragic situation prevailing in southern Africa was all the more deplorable because it poisoned international relations and entailed a threat of permanent racial hatred. A peaceful solution depended on Portugal, South Africa and the minority régime in Southern Rhodesia, for if South Africa and Portugal finally decided to respect the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, an Organization of which they were States Members, and if Southern Rhodesia decided to return to a lawful course, an age of co-operation, friendship and stability would begin in Africa and throughout the world. The African nations had often shown that they were well intentioned. He had already referred to the Lusaka Manifesto and the response it had elicited. Recently OAU had decided to send high-level missions to the European States to express its concern and explain its position. In any case, all States should co-operate faithfully in order to implement the decisions of the United Nations, in order that the spirit of the Charter might be respected and an equilibrium based on the principles of equal rights might be preserved throughout the world. Millions of human beings had put their trust in the United Nations. Strengthened by the confidence of world opinion, all those who took part in the work of the United Nations should strive to eliminate colonialism and racism from the world for ever and to inaugurate, at last, an era of peace and justice among nations.

32. Mr. EL MASRY (United Arab Republic), supported by Mr. OUCIF (Algeria), Mr. KASSE (Mali) and Mr. SADRY (Iran), proposed that in view of the importance of the Under-Secretary-General's statement, the text should be reproduced in full in the summary record of the meeting.

*The proposal of the representative of the United Arab Republic was adopted without objection (see paras. 20-31 above).*

#### *Organization of work (A/C.4/726)*

33. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the letter from the President of the General Assembly (A/C.4/726), containing the list of agenda items allocated to the Fourth Committee for consideration and report. The Committee would have to decide how to deal with the various chapters of 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, and would have to establish an order of priority for the various items allocated to it. Since the Special Committee had not yet completed its report, he suggested that those decisions should be deferred until a later meeting.

*It was so agreed.*

*The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.*