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**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records



**FOURTH COMMITTEE, 1984th
MEETING**

Friday, 13 October 1972,
at 3.20 p.m.

NEW YORK

Chairman: Mr. Zdeněk ČERNÍK
(Czechoslovakia).

*In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Samuels
(Guyana), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

AGENDA ITEM 65

Question of Territories under Portuguese administration (continued) (A/8723/Add.3, A/8758, A/C.4/745)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. YOSHIDA (Japan) recalled that on 27 September the head of the Japanese delegation had stated in the General Assembly (2042nd plenary meeting) that Japan felt profound sympathy for the peoples of the Territories under Portuguese administration and for their struggle to win the right to self-determination. It was because Japan supported the principle of self-determination underlying the struggle of those peoples that it had been rendering them assistance through the United Nations under the relevant United Nations resolutions of the past years.

2. The Japanese Government deplored the fact that Portugal was continuing to strengthen its domination over its African Territories. It sincerely hoped that, under the pressure of world public opinion, the Portuguese Government would recognize the necessity and advisability of acknowledging the right to self-determination of the peoples of its colonial Territories and would take the necessary steps to enable them to attain independence.

3. As was clearly stated in the reply of the Japanese Government, contained in the report of the Secretary-General (see A/8758), concerning the steps which it had taken to implement the provisions of General Assembly resolution 2795 (XXVI), the Japanese Government did not grant approval for the sale or supply of arms and military equipment which the Portuguese Government might use in its war of repression against the peoples of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau). Nor did Japan provide Portugal with any assistance which might help it to pursue its colonial war in Africa. The steps taken by the Japanese Government to liberalize its overseas investment policy did not extend to southern Africa. In fact, under the present system, any firm which wished to invest in that area was required to obtain prior approval from the Government, and he assured the Committee that no such approval had been given.

4. Mr. MIKHAILOV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) observed that the Portuguese imperialists did not shrink from committing any crime in order to maintain their domination in Africa. Portugal used napalm and chemical methods of warfare against defenceless peoples and left them exposed to sickness, poverty and hunger. It did not flinch from continuing and even intensifying its colonial war, despite United Nations strictures. It sent large military forces to its African Territories and set aside half of its colonial budget for the war in those Territories, while it enjoyed the assistance provided to it by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the form of foreign currency in return for the bases which Portugal allowed NATO to instal on the Portuguese islands. It was also strengthening its alliance with Southern Rhodesia and South Africa. In the previous year, South Africa had sent troops to Mozambique, and South African police had participated in the repression in Angola; in exchange, Portugal was assisting South Africa in Ovamboland and was also supporting the Southern Rhodesian "settlement" which perpetuated the hold of the minority Government over that Territory. All that did not prevent Portugal from making the hypocritical claim that it was defending Western civilization in Africa and acting in the best interests of the population—an assertion which was treated as it deserved in the report of the Special Mission 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 (see A/8723/Add.3, annex I) to Guinea (Bissau). The national liberation movements for their part, while intensifying their struggle, were attempting to lay the foundations for a new life in the liberated areas and had in a very short space of time done more than Portugal had in several centuries.

5. The United Nations was of course very concerned about the fate of the Portuguese Territories, as the Security Council had recently shown by adopting resolution 312 (1972); the Special Committee for its part had sent the above-mentioned Special Mission to carry out an on-the-spot survey of the situation in the liberated areas of Guinea (Bissau). The Byelorussian SSR, which had suffered greatly during the Second World War, sympathized with those unfortunate peoples and desired their liberation. Aware as it was of the need for a broad solidarity movement involving all anti-imperialist forces, his delegation supported the suggestion of the Soviet Union (1981st meeting, para. 25) that the General Assembly should request all Governments to observe each year a week of solidarity with the colonial peoples of southern Africa. During that week, collections could be made for the national

liberation movements. Furthermore, his delegation believed that the United Nations should adopt without delay other measures calculated to provide effective assistance to the peoples of the Portuguese Territories in their struggle for freedom; the Organization should proclaim and apply sanctions against Portugal and South Africa and demand that the Western countries should cease their aid to Portugal. Faithful to the Leninist principles of equality, the Byelorussian SSR would steadfastly condemn colonialism and imperialism.

6. Mr. MINIKON (Liberia) observed that the Portuguese colonial myth had been created in the 1930s in an attempt to revive the national pride of the Portuguese people and help the country over its economic difficulties. In 1955, just before its admission to the United Nations, Portugal had hastily revised its constitution so as to give the Portuguese colonies the status of "provinces", in the vain hope of being able to avoid charges of colonialism. It was highly regrettable that the Western countries had not protested at that time, since Portugal had subsequently believed itself authorized to disregard the principles on which the United Nations Charter was based. Since its admission to the United Nations, Portugal had always refused to recognize the competence of the United Nations to discuss its Territories and had failed to comply with the various United Nations resolutions on that subject, thereby, as the Secretary-General had emphasized in the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization (see A/8701/Add.1, sect. VII), retarding the fundamental historical process of decolonization. Not content with prosecuting a colonial war in Angola for 11 years, in Guinea (Bissau) for 8 years and in Mozambique for 7 years, Portugal seemed increasingly determined to accept a long-term war. Obviously, being a small and poor country, it could not continue to oppress Africans without substantial military aid from some of its European allies, who believed that the interests of the members of NATO should be defended throughout the world. It was difficult to comprehend how countries which claimed to be champions of freedom, democracy and justice could render assistance to régimes that perpetuated colonialism and violated the very principles of the United Nations. As the Secretary-General had stated (*ibid.*), the failure to put an end to racism and colonialism was partly due to the failure of the international community to concert its efforts and to mobilize effectively all resources available to it.

7. The situation in southern Africa continued to deteriorate as a result of the intensification of military operations by Portugal, which was also engaging in threats and acts of aggression against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the independent African States. His delegation would therefore support the strongest possible United Nations measures against Portugal's presence in Africa; it called upon all countries to increase their assistance to the liberation movements in the Portuguese Territories, and urged the NATO countries to desist from their collaboration with Portugal; finally, it hoped that Portugal would bring itself to accept current world trends and allow the peoples of the African Territories under its administration to attain independence and freedom.

8. Mr. HASSRAT (Afghanistan) observed that since the question of the Territories under Portuguese administration had first been included in the agenda of the General Assembly, his delegation had supported the right of the peoples of the Portuguese Territories to self-determination; he deplored the fact that despite the pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly, the Portuguese Government continued not only to violate the principles of the Charter but also to defy world public opinion. Thus, almost 12 years after the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, Portugal had taken no measures to apply that Declaration in its African Territories. It continued to deny those peoples their right to self-determination and to oppress and humiliate them, leaving them no alternative but to resort to armed struggle; it therefore bore a heavy responsibility for the situation in that part of Africa.

9. Much had already been said in the Committee regarding Portuguese collaboration with South Africa and Southern Rhodesia and the existence of various projects for exploiting the wealth of those Territories for Portugal's benefit. His delegation, which had expressed its views on the subject both in the Fourth Committee and in the Special Committee, would not repeat them in detail, but would confine itself to stating that Portugal's refusal to abandon its colonial policy and to take into account the will of the indigenous population was motivated by the economic advantages it derived from the Territories under its rule.

10. Finally, his delegation held the view that the gravity of the situation was such that the United Nations and its specialized agencies should intensify their moral and material assistance to the peoples of the Portuguese Territories in order that they might exercise their right to self-determination. It welcomed the representatives of the national liberation movements which had been invited to participate as observers in the Committee's work on their Territories.

11. Mr. DIENG (Senegal) pointed out that the fact that the same crimes were described again every year during the general debate on the Territories under Portuguese administration should not make members forget that the fate of hundreds of thousands of Africans was involved. Under the pretext of a "civilizing" mission and in defiance of the principle of national self-determination which it was the mission of the United Nations to defend, Portugal was relentlessly waging a merciless war against the peaceful populations on which it hoped to impose its will. At its 1980th meeting the Committee had heard the petitioners from Mozambique describe the atrocities committed there by the Portuguese army. What was true of Mozambique applied equally to Angola and Guinea (Bissau). Torture, murder, pillage and rape were Portugal's main weapons in its efforts to "convince" the people. Under the circumstances, the only course open to the population was the armed struggle which the national liberation movements were carrying on boldly and with determination. To show the United Nations at first hand that it had liberated vast areas of Guinea (Bissau), the Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo

Verde (PAIGC) had invited it to send a special mission. On that subject it should be noted that Portugal, for its part, had been completely unresponsive to the request made of it by the United Nations in that connexion, and had stopped at nothing to prevent the Special Mission sent by the United Nations in April 1972 from accomplishing its task. The Mission had not allowed itself to be intimidated, had visited the liberated areas, and had noted that they were indeed under the control of PAIGC, which was working to set up in them the various sectors of a national life. To aid it in that task, the United Nations and its specialized agencies should render every type of assistance and he was gratified that the Committee had decided to admit representatives of the national liberation movements to its debates as observers (1975th meeting).

12. Senegal was aware of its responsibilities towards the oppressed populations and the heroic liberation movements, and had welcomed almost 80,000 refugees from Guinea (Bissau), giving them land and food and providing them free of charge with medical care and education. It had in addition actively sought solutions capable of winning the support of the contending parties. The President of Senegal had publicly proposed to Portugal a three-stage peace plan; the first stage would consist of a cease-fire followed by negotiations without preconditions, the second would begin, after the negotiations, with a period of internal self-government, the modalities of which would be freely discussed with the representatives of political movements in Guinea (Bissau), while the third would involve the granting of independence within the framework of a Portuguese-African community. Those proposals, which the President of Senegal had confirmed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, had been consented to by the liberation movements; it was Portugal which had chosen not to act on them. On the contrary, it was committing repeated acts of aggression against Senegal's territorial integrity, burning villages, violating air space, laying mines on roads and bridges, etc. The inquiry carried out by the Special Mission sent by the Security Council in 1971 to the frontier between Senegal and Guinea (Bissau) had established Portugal's guilt vis-à-vis Senegal, which was moreover clearly apparent from the attack made by Portugal on Senegal, using tanks, during the evening of 12 October of that year. Its guilt in respect of the Territories it administered and the neighbouring African States was no longer a matter of doubt to anyone. The Special Mission of the Special Committee which had visited Guinea (Bissau) in April 1972 had noted in its report that the Government of Portugal had "resorted to the extensive use of armed force, involving all the techniques of modern warfare, against the defenceless peoples", and referred to "the widespread and indiscriminate bombing of villages and the use of napalm to destroy crops" (see A/8723/Add.3, para. 36). The crimes committed by Portugal in its war of extermination were now known to all, and the time had come to act; some must assess their share of the responsibility for the situation and alter their policies accordingly while others must contribute to easing the distress of the innocent populations of the Territories of Portugal in Africa.

13. Mr. BENYAHIA (Algeria) congratulated the officers of the Committee on their election, and the new Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Decolonization on his appointment.

14. He welcomed the representatives of the African liberation movements, and assured their peoples of the unshakable solidarity and unconditional support of the Algerian people. The granting of observer status was a tangible result of the progress the movements had achieved in their struggle against colonialist domination; it indicated a considerable expansion of their audience in the world as well as the trust which the international community placed in their representatives. The Algerian nation would spare no effort to consolidate that first success.

15. More than a decade had passed since the United Nations had adopted the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Many resolutions had been adopted since then, both by the General Assembly and the Security Council, but because of the lack of responsibility on the part of certain Powers, the process of decolonization continued to encounter serious setbacks. Portugal, encouraged in its arrogance towards the United Nations, remained obstinate in its perpetuation of a colonial régime in the face of general opposition in a world which was largely decolonized. Impervious to progress, it appeared not to be aware that the world had changed considerably and that large and powerful colonial empires had dissolved under the pressure applied by the peoples of Africa and Asia, who had determined to keep fighting until colonialism in all its forms was completely eliminated. Completely disregarding the lessons of history, it refused to assess the situation realistically or to negotiate with the true representatives of the peoples of Guinea (Bissau) and Cape Verde, Mozambique and Angola, and had deliberately chosen war in the hope of crushing the liberation movements and stifling any inclination on the part of the people to resist. It believed that it could succeed in that goal, *inter alia*, by its membership in NATO and its close alliance with the minority racist régimes at Pretoria and Salisbury. As resistance to its war of repression and reconquest increased, it was becoming a great danger to the security of the African States close to the combat area.

16. The situation in southern Africa also gave rise to the most serious concern, from the military as well as the political and economic standpoints. The world was witnessing the installation there of powerful Western interests whose avowed goal was to transform the whole region into a bastion of colonialism and imperialism. The Portuguese Government and the South African and Southern Rhodesian minority régimes had established a real coalition, not only to repress the struggle for liberation of the African peoples but also to build an economic unit closely linked with the West. The example of the Cabora Bassa dam and the population policy vigorously pursued by Portugal and its allies showed that Portugal and the racist régimes were not ready to apply the principles of the Charter or to accept the fundamental right of peoples to self-determination and independence.

17. Faced with that intolerable situation, the United Nations must adopt concrete measures rather than content itself with resolutions which were bound to remain a dead letter. He welcomed the initiative taken by the United Nations at the beginning of the year in sending to Guinea (Bissau) a Special Mission of the Special Committee which had been able to gain information at first hand on the life and activities of the population in the liberated areas, and thereby to confirm the authority of PAIGC over the greater part of the Territory. The devotion and self-denial of the members of that Special Mission did honour to their countries as much as to the United Nations. All justice-loving countries should extend increased moral and material assistance to national liberation movements in Africa. His delegation hoped that the Powers which still hesitated to remove their obstacles to the process of decolonization would be able to bow to the facts before it was too late, for all colonial Powers must either recognize the national rights of peoples and fundamental human rights or suffer a humiliating defeat.

18. Mr. BEAVOGUI (Guinea) said that consideration of the situation in the Territories under Portuguese administration was particularly important for his country since the Republic of Guinea, which had been colonized for more than half a century and which had now been independent and sovereign for 14 years, felt that it could not be truly independent as long as some African Territories remained under foreign domination.

19. Portugal, a small under-developed country which was unable to solve its own internal problems, defied the United Nations by trampling on its numerous resolutions, in particular resolution 312 (1972), in which the Security Council had called on it: (a) to recognize immediately the right of the peoples of the Territories under its administration to self-determination and independence in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV); (b) to cease immediately the colonial wars and all acts of repression against the people of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau); (c) to withdraw all its armed forces as were presently employed for the purpose of the repression of the people of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau); (d) to promulgate an unconditional political amnesty and the restoration of democratic political rights; and (e) to transfer power to political institutions freely elected and representative of the peoples, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). It was no secret to anyone that Portugal utilized the most modern techniques of war, including napalm, defoliants, etc., to inflict countless losses of human lives on peaceful civilian populations and to destroy economic and social achievements in the liberated areas. Villages, hospitals, schools and fields were daily subjected to senseless and barbarous bombardments.

20. The international community could not be an inactive witness to the crimes perpetrated by Portugal; it could not and should not allow Portugal to flout the principles of the Charter. His country, for its part, was giving constant moral and material support to the African liberation movements, as was frequently

pointed out in the Special Committee's report (A/8723/Add.3). His country had also assisted the Special Mission of the Special Committee in the difficult task it had carried out in the liberated areas of Guinea (Bissau).

21. Portugal's persistence in its struggle to oppress the peoples of Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau) was due to the considerable assistance it received from the members of NATO. In order to assess the size of that assistance, it was enough to refer to the tables in the appendices of Annex I of the above-mentioned report (A/8723/Add.3), which also noted the statement by the Lisbon authorities that the Portuguese Government was fighting to maintain Western civilization in Africa. Ninety-nine per cent of the population were illiterate, in all the Territories combined a total of 14 Africans had studied at the university level, and the agrarian economy used archaic means of production—such was Portugal's contribution to those Territories after several centuries of its "civilizing mission".

22. His delegation felt that the United Nations should not only induce Portugal to apply General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) but should persuade the members of NATO, which were bound by the Charter, to cease their assistance to that country. Since any direct or indirect collaboration with the Portuguese colonialists constituted an act of hostility against all African peoples, all Member States should also take appropriate measures to prevent their nationals and enterprises under their jurisdiction from participating in the execution of economic development projects in the Portuguese Territories.

23. In conclusion, he wished to congratulate the Special Committee and its Special Mission to Guinea (Bissau), thanks to whom the international community had been able to appreciate properly the many victories won by PAIGC over the Portuguese troops. He also welcomed with satisfaction the Fourth Committee's decision to grant observer status to representatives of African national liberation movements (1975th meeting).

24. Mr. BISHARA (Kuwait) said he agreed with the other members of the Committee that the United Nations should express its disapproval with regard to the Portuguese colonialist authorities in vigorous terms. But such condemnation, as valuable as it might be on the moral level, was not sufficient. The representative of the Byelorussian SSR had rightly referred to the importance of active solidarity among all States Members of the United Nations and to the usefulness of sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter. Nevertheless, the Security Council, which had imposed sanctions against Southern Rhodesia in 1967, had not adopted any against Portugal. Portugal was obviously only an agent of the Western countries, to which it sent the resources it stole from its colonies.

25. He would not repeat the crimes and atrocities perpetrated by the Portuguese colonialists but wished to state, like the representative of Guinea, that no coun-

try in the world could or should feel free as long as there were still Territories and peoples under the colonial yoke. His delegation felt that the United Nations should substantially increase its aid to national liberation movements in the Portuguese Territories. In order to do so, he proposed the convening of an annual conference similar to the Pledging Conference of the

United Nations Development Programme during which Member States would give a firm undertaking to provide those movements with material and financial aid. He reserved the right to speak again on the matter at an appropriate time.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.