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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 5 December 1989, at 3 p.m.

President:

Mr. GARBA

(Nigeria)

later:

Mr. JAYA
(Vice-President)

(Brunei Darussalam)

- Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples [18] (continued)
 - (a) 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
 - (b) Reports of the Secretary-General
 - (c) Draft resolutions
 - (d) Draft decision
- Programme of work

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 18 (continued)

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

- (a) 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/44/23, A/AC.109/975 and Add.1, A/AC.109/976-978, A/AC.109/979 and Add.1, A/AC.109/980, A/AC.982-990, A/AC.109/992-998, A/AC.109/999/Rev.1, A/AC.109/1000, A/AC.109/1007 and Corr.1)
- (b) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/44/634 and Corr.1, A/44/800)
- (c) DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (A/44/23 (Part I), chap. II, para. 5, A/44/L.55, A/44/L.56)
- (d) DRAFT DECISION (A/44/L.57)

Mr. GHAREKHAN (India): Since the middle of this century few factors have been responsible for such revolutionary change in the world order as the phenomenon of decolonization. In its most recent manifestation, the voice of the Namibian people, which had been stifled for over a century under colonial subjugation, found eloquent expression in the elections held last month to set up a constituent assembly. The international community now expectantly awaits the day when an independent Namibia, having shaken off the yoke of the occupying racist South African régime, takes its rightful place among us in this Hall. It will be the fruit of many years of sacrifice and suffering by the people of Namibia, a fitting reward and a tribute to the irrepressibility of their spirit, to their yearning, to their struggle and to their quest.

In ensuring that this delicate process in Namibia is not thwarted by those whose vested interests may lie in a continuance of their former control over the Territory, the United Nations is privileged to play an important role. It is a role that fits the highest and finest traditions and standards that the world community expects of the United Nations. For its successful execution a large measure of credit must go to the efforts that the Secretary-General himself and the

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

personnel who have worked as part of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in difficult conditions in Namibia have put into this tremendous exercise.

Our debate today assumes special significance in that it takes place on the eve of the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) - the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. In these 30 years the Declaration has served to keep decolonization in the forefront of world attention. Particular credit must also go in this connection to the Special Committee on decolonization for its tireless and thorough endeavours to monitor closely the situation in various Non-Self-Governing Territories with a view to protecting and promoting the interests of the peoples of those Territories and guiding them towards self-determination and independence.

My country is honoured to have played a leading role in the drafting of resolution 1514 (XV). As a founder member of the Special Committee, and having played an active role in its deliberations since its inception, however, we remain keenly aware of the impediments to the promotion of world peace and co-operation that remain, in the form of Territories and peoples still subject to alien subjugation, domination and exploitation, as aberrations and anachronisms in today's world order. The growth of United Nations membership, from 51 countries in 1945 to 159 today, and to 160 in the very near future, reflects the success that the Plan of Action for the full implementation of the Declaration has achieved so far. With each such successful case of decolonization, India has relived a little of the exhilaration and the joy of our own independence.

While we in the United Nations - and, I might add, we in the Non-Aligned Movement, which has championed the cause of decolonization from its very inception - can claim an impressive record in promoting these ideals of freedom

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

that we hold so dear, it cannot for a moment be suggested that the task is complete or that we can now rest on our laurels. The last few steps of a journey are always the most difficult. The report of the Special Committee on decolonization now before us highlights the continuing efforts that must be made to tackle the remaining problems, which, though happily small in number, are complex in nature. The declaration of the last 10 years of this century as the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism is thus apt, highlighting simultaneously, as it does, both the nearness of the goal and the fresh vigour and determination that is now necessary to attain it.

Even while classical forms of colonialism are consigned to their rightful place in history, forces are still at work to stem the tide of progress. We believe that no single formula can be applied universally in each Territory, with its own singular set of circumstances, for the speedy implementation of the decolonization process. While each case is unique, it is imperative that the sovereign will of the people concerned must be allowed to express itself freely and fearlessly, and that it must be respected. It is incumbent upon Administering Authorities, therefore, as long as they function in that capacity, to permit, indeed promote, a programme of political awareness and education and to refrain from engaging in such exploitative economic, military or other activities as may impede the decolonization process.

My delegation welcomes the glimmers of hope that have flickered recently, lighting possible paths towards a solution of some of the world's remaining problems of decolonization. We have thus been encouraged by the Secretary-General's report on the Western Sahara question, and affirm our full support to him and to the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in their mission of good offices concerning the holding of a self-determination

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

referendum in the Territory, without any administrative or military constraints and organized and conducted by the United Nations in co-operation with the OAU. We welcome the recent meeting between His Majesty the King of Morocco and the POLISARIO Front and hope that this dialogue will continue.

We have noted recent developments in New Caledonia and hope to see peaceful progress towards self-determination in the Territory within the agreed time-frame. I also take this opportunity to express my country's unreserved support for the will of the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories elsewhere in the Caribbean, the South Atlantic and the South-West Pacific, and, indeed, anywhere there are still vestiges of colonialism.

(Mr. Gharekhan, India)

Almost a year before India attained its independence, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, then Head of the interim Government of India, addressed the nation. This excerpt from that address is of direct relevance here:

"We believe that peace and freedom are indivisible and the denial of freedom anywhere must endanger freedom elsewhere and lead to conflict and war".

Today the winds of political change are sweeping our world and heralding a new order of coexistence and security. On the eve of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and in this centenary year of Nehru's birth it is perhaps permissible to hope that they will sweep away the cobwebs of the world's colonial remnants as well.

Mr. PEJIC (Yugoslavia): This year's session of the General Assembly will no doubt be remembered for one of the most significant results in the field of decolonization in the last 10 years. We of course have in mind the recently held elections in Namibia that finally opened the way for the people of that Territory to accede to long-awaited freedom and independence. As has happened so many times in the past, this is confirmation of the crucial role and importance of the United Nations in achieving solutions to problems of decolonization, an area in which the world Organization has made an enormous and irreplaceable contribution throughout the years.

The easing of international tension and the trend towards overcoming outstanding international issues through dialogue and negotiations have contributed to the creation of conditions favourable for the solution of the remaining colonial problems. In that sense, we have witnessed the recent positive movement after many years of stagnation in the solution of a number of colonial issues. It is particularly encouraging that the United Nations has played and continues to play an important and active role in this field.

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

Such an approach to the solution of those problems - an approach which in our opinion is the only possible one - was strongly reaffirmed in the Declaration adopted at the ninth summit conference of Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Belgrade, where

"the right of all peoples living under colonial or alien domination and foreign occupation to self-determination and independence" (A/44/551, annex, p. 16)

was pointed out as one of the main priorities in the future activities of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

On that occasion the non-aligned countries reiterated their principled position on

"the right of all peoples under colonial domination to self-determination and independence, regardless of their geographical location, size of territory or population". (ibid., p. 59)

Further, they placed particular emphasis on

"the importance and relevance of as well as their full support for the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). They emphasized that its full and effective implementation continues to be the cornerstone of the struggle to eliminate colonialism". (ibid.)

At its forty-third session the General Assembly adopted - on the initiative of the non-aligned countries - the resolution proclaiming the period from 1990 to 2000 the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. The first step towards realization of this goal should be the adoption by the General Assembly of the Plan of Action; in this respect, a concrete, concerted and direct contribution is expected from all Member States, particularly from the non-aligned countries that

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

initiated this action. A basis would thereby be created for the comprehensive implementation of the Declaration on decolonization, enabling the peoples and the countries that continue to live under colonial domination to decide on their own development freely and independently. In that way the peoples of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories would finally be able to exercise their legitimate right to self-determination and full national emancipation and affirmation, and as to take their rightful place in the community of free countries and peoples.

On that basis Yugoslavia, together with the entire international community, welcomed the results of the elections for the Constituent Assembly in Namibia, whereby the door was opened wide for the people of the Territory finally to accede to independence. The manner in which the people of Namibia exercised its sovereign will, regardless of South Africa's erecting of obstacles and its intimidation right up to the elections, deserves our full recognition. However, only one - although important - phase on the road to independence has been completed by this act. When we consider our experience with past behaviour, the international community and the United Nations, and in particular the Security Council, must continue to be very alert and mobilized so as to bring the process of Namibia's accession to independence to its conclusion as soon as possible and in accordance with the authentic aspirations and interests of the Namibian people.

In that context I should like to express our full support for, and confidence in, the efforts of the Secretary-General, his Personal Representative and the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) at this delicate stage of the implementation of the United Nations plan. We should also like to point to the exclusive responsibility of the Security Council for securing the unconditional implementation of its resolution 435 (1978) in its original and definitive form until Namibia's accession to independence.

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

Yugoslavia welcomed the achievement of consensus on the resolution on Western Sahara. It represented the continuation in the best possible way of the spirit of co-operation and the trend towards constructively solving outstanding international issues that were strongly affirmed at the ninth summit conference of the non-aligned countries in Belgrade. We hope that this will give fresh impetus to the mediation efforts of the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for a political solution to the question of Western Sahara. We also believe that the decision will have a positive echo in the initiated process of co-operation and integration in the countries of the Maghreb, as well as in the strengthening of peace and stability in that part of the world. In this context we welcome the fact that the Kingdom of Morocco and the POLISARIO Front have, in principle, accepted the peace plan for the solution of the problem which they jointly submitted to the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity. We believe that a substantive dialogue between Morocco and the POLISARIO Front under the auspices of the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the OAU would contribute to reaching agreement on the modalities for holding a free and fair referendum on the self-determination of the peoples of Western Sahara. We also hope that the nomination of a United Nations technical team will significantly contribute to efforts to that end.

Yugoslavia fully supports the inclination of Argentina and the United Kingdom to solve the problem of the Falkland/Malvinas Islands on the basis of dialogue and negotiations. In that context we welcome the results reached in the negotiations between them thus far.

We also call for full decolonization of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Pacific, Atlantic and Caribbean.

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

The non-aligned countries are convinced - and this conviction was reaffirmed at the ninth summit conference in Belgrade - that the United Nations continues to have an historical obligation to work towards the fulfilment of the aspirations to freedom and independence of the peoples and countries that still live under colonial domination. The road that we have travelled thus far is significant, but not yet complete. Unfortunately, there are still countries that have not yet realized their legitimate rights to self-determination and independence. We therefore sincerely hope that the current favourable atmosphere in international relations will be reflected also in efforts to remove the remaining obstacles that stand in the way of full decolonization.

In the spirit of the existing inclination toward dialogue and the constructive solution of remaining international issues, among which the problems of decolonization continue to occupy an exceptionally important place, we intend to focus our efforts on assistance in, and support for, the creation of appropriate political, economic, social, educational and other conditions that would enable colonial peoples and countries to prepare for independent and free development. For its part Yugoslavia, as Chairman of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, will continue to render its full and active contribution to the realization of this goal, as it has always done in the past.

Mr. TRINH XUAN LANG (Viet Nam): The world will soon be entering a new decade; and it is significant that the turning-point of this new decade has been marked by the far-reaching developments which have taken place in world politics over the last few years. Prospects have widened for co-operation between nations in tackling questions of regional and of global dimensions. However, the process is such that new challenges emerge while long-standing problems remain to be solved. The promotion of peace, independence, human rights and development still remains to be consolidated and strengthened. Thus, international efforts to do away with the evils of war, colonialism, injustice and poverty, which confront the community of nations as a whole, must be redoubled and co-ordinated.

Simultaneous with the beginning of the next decade will be the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The Declaration, adopted in 1960, is the corner-stone of the process of decolonization. Recognizing the inalienable rights of all nations, large or small, to self-determination and independence, it solemnly proclaims

"the necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations". (resolution 1514 (XV))

During the last 30 years, the Declaration has given impetus to, and been the legal basis for, the struggle of nations for self-determination and independence. In that period, with the accession to independence of some 59 former colonial countries, more than 80 million people have recovered their inalienable national rights. While this bears witness to the unconquerable will of all nations for self-determination and independence, it also reaffirms the historic significance of the Declaration and the need for its full and speedy implementation.

On the eve of the Declaration's thirtieth anniversary, let us take a retrospective look at the decolonization process over the last four decades. Significant achievements have been recorded, the most vivid of which can be seen in

(Mr. Trinh Xuan Lang, Viet Nam)

the emergence of more than 100 countries - in Africa, Asia, the Pacific and Latin America - from colonial dependence to independence, and in the growth of the United Nations membership from 51 countries at its inception to 159 today. In that process, many peoples have had to live through the most persistent and arduous struggles. Blood has been shed and human lives have been lost at the brutal hands of the colonial forces in their intransigence in maintaining their colonial rule, but this has not been in vain. It has reaffirmed the basic principles of our contemporary civilization: men are to be free and equal; and nations are to be free and equal. In the hearts and minds of peoples which remain oppressed, as well as in the hearts and minds of those in newly independent countries, the light of truth holds bright as ever: "Nothing is more precious than independence and freedom", in the words of our beloved President Ho Chi Minh, whose centenary our Vietnamese people will be celebrating next year. On that occasion, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) will commemorate him as a Vietnamese hero of national liberation and a great man of culture. In the struggle of nations, many individuals have become legendary heroes, and symbols of the high values that we all cherish. Their dedication to that noble mission has borne them beyond the bounds of the individual and the national.

However, much still remains to be done to fulfil the task set out in the Charter and in the Declaration. Some 20 Territories - from Montserrat and Bermuda to New Caledonia, Anguilla, Guam and others - still remain Non-Self-Governing Territories and subject to one form or another of colonial rule. Their long histories of colonial domination have resulted in their deep dependency on the administering Powers, especially in the economic field. For a long time now, these Territories have been highly exploited and their economic structures have been developed and transformed to ensure that they best served foreign interests. Many

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Territories continue to be used for military purposes. In view of this situation, greater attention should be given to guaranteeing that the administering Powers ensure, as an obligation under the Charter, that all the necessary conditions are met for these peoples to choose their future socio-political institutions freely.

The transition of Namibia to independence in accordance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978), now under way, is a victory for the long and arduous struggle of the Namibian people under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) and supported by all progressive mankind. We welcome the establishment of the Constituent Assembly as an expression of the sovereign will of the Namibian people. However, the final steps in the transition have yet to be achieved. The international community must therefore remain vigilant to ensure that South Africa complies fully with resolution 435 (1978) and with the agreements reached. At the dawn of Namibia's independence, respect by South Africa for the sovereign will of the Namibian people and for the integrity of Namibian territory must be ensured.

There has been progress in the search for a peaceful solution to the question of Western Sahara, beginning with agreement in principle by the two parties concerned on the joint plan of the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Secretary-General. In this respect, we believe that the consensus resolution adopted this year will facilitate the decolonization of the territory in accordance with OAU resolution AGH/Res.104(XIX).

In keeping with its principled position Viet Nam reaffirms its constant and vigorous support for the peoples of Namibia, South Africa, Palestine and all other peoples struggling for national independence and self-determination.

(Mr. Trinh Xuan Lang, Viet Nam)

The ninth Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries noted that "not all forms of dependence, particularly economic dependence, have disappeared with the accession of nations to independence ...". (A/44/551, p. 12; para. 12)

Inequitable economic relations, as well as economic exploitation and blockades, continue to be pursued by colonial and imperialist forces and have resulted in a further widening of the economic gap between the developed and the developing countries at the expense of the latter. Taking advantage of this situation, those forces have made every attempt to impose their will on the developing countries and reintroduce various forms of colonialism, to the detriment of the developing countries' sovereignty and independence. It remains, therefore, a priority task of the international community to eradicate colonialism and its vestiges and to pursue the economic independence of all peoples as well as their political independence. It must be ensured that all nations can enjoy their inalienable rights freely to choose their own way of development without foreign interference and pressure.

(Mr. Trinh Xuan Lang, Viet Nam)

The recent unfolding of the process for the settlement of many drawn-out regional questions has opened up prospects of speeding up decolonization in various parts of the world. However, so as to achieve the full and speedy implementation of resolution 1514 (XV), the task of decolonization deserves undiminished attention. The United Nations has therefore proclaimed the next decade the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. Through the joint efforts of all nations, we wish to begin the twenty-first century with a world free from colonialism and all its vestiges and to ensure the continuation of that world for our future generations. It is our lofty task to join our efforts to work out a programme of action for the Decade and to have those noble objectives realized.

Mr. KAYUMOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Our world has begun to experience a different, better system of values in international relations, with less and less room for contention, suspicion and mistrust, which have been slowly weeded out by a realization of our common civilization and the priority of general human values and interests. Indeed, the world has begun to change. Even if the process has only just begun, we still see ever more clearly the readiness of the world community to co-operate to settle acute global and regional problems on the basis of democratization, demilitarization and humanist principles, with recognition of the right of each people to choose its own development path, without any outside pressure.

Today we are all witnessing outstanding achievements in the settlement of the Namibia problem. The elections to the Constituent Assembly in Namibia, carried out in conformity with the United Nations plan and under United Nations control, and the victory of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) testify to the fact that an important milestone has been reached on the road towards the independence and sovereignty of the last colony on the African continent. The

(Mr. Kayumov, USSR)

people of the Soviet Union, which has given the people of Namibia constant aid and support over the years, sincerely congratulates SWAPO on its success.

As the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Comrade Shevardnadze, has stressed;

"The Namibian people has achieved freedom thanks to the collective actions of the world community, the firm position of the Security Council, the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the support of the front-line States and the Organization of African Unity. The United Nations played an enormous role in this, ensuring the carrying out of transitional measures and of free elections in Namibia."

The example of Namibia strengthens our conviction that the prospect of mankind's entering the twenty-first century without colonialism is not a pious hope but a realistic prospect, since the United Nations and the whole of the world community will consistently and energetically act as a united front to ensure implementation of the rights of peoples.

But much remains to be done, since there are still about 20 colonial Territories in the world, whose peoples are still deprived of the possibility of enjoying their right to sovereign freedom of choice, self-determination and independence. The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples was adopted to ensure the implementation of those inalienable rights. In it the General Assembly solemnly proclaimed the necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations. The important role of that truly historic Declaration in contributing to the freeing of colonial peoples is universally recognized.

Various United Nations bodies regularly consider the question of the Declaration's implementation, which is most important for the attainment of its

(Mr. Kayumov, USSR)

goals. The Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples deserves much praise for the work it has done this year, under the leadership of its Chairman, Ambassador Tesfaye Tadesse. We support the decisions and recommendations adopted by the Special Committee in the interests of the speediest possible freeing of the peoples of colonial Territories.

In the Soviet delegation's view, the General Assembly's working out and adoption of a programme of activities in observance of the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration would give an excellent opportunity to assess the progress achieved on implementing the Declaration and to expand the common efforts of the world community to liquidate the remnants of colonialism.

The Special Committee's work now relates particularly to the situation in small colonial Territories. This is most important, because, as a recommendation of the Special Committee rightly stresses, the rights of the peoples do not depend on the size of a Territory, its geographical location, population, resources, level of economic development or other similar factors.

We believe it is very important that all interested parties, acting in the interests of the people of the Territories, should strive to develop dialogue and co-operation with a view to finding generally acceptable solutions to the substantial problems, including the creation of conditions conducive to implementing the rights of the peoples concerned to self-determination. In that connection, we are happy that in the Special Committee and in the Fourth Committee this year most decisions have been adopted by consensus.

Our solidarity with and support for the just cause of the peoples of all colonial Territories wherever they are - on the African continent, in the Pacific, in the Atlantic, in the Caribbean - are constant. The peoples of the Territories

(Mr. Kayumov, USSR)

speak different languages and have different cultures, ways of life, history, natural resources and so on, but they are all striving to determine their own fate, decide the ways and forms of their development and enjoy their right to free choice.

At meetings of the Special Committee this year we again heard expressions of serious concern about the situation in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. It was rightly stressed that the United Nations remains responsible for that Territory's fate and that the Administering Authority is still obliged to furnish information about the situation there for consideration by the United Nations in the established manner, until the Security Council decides otherwise.

It flows from the Declaration that immediate measures must be taken to transfer to the peoples of the Trust and other colonial Territories all powers, without any conditions or reservations, in accordance with their freely expressed will, so that they may enjoy independence and freedom.

(Mr. Kayumov, USSR)

As has already been noted, many obstacles have been erected on the road to the freedom of the peoples of the last colonial possessions, and they must be cleared away. Among these is the exploitation of natural resources by foreign economic and other interests, which prejudices the sovereign rights and the interests of the peoples to which they belong. As is well known, this exploitation is described in United Nations decisions as one of the major obstacles to the full implementation of the Declaration on decolonization because it undermines the material foundations for the harmonious development of the Territories and for the future of their peoples.

We share the conclusion of the Special Committee on decolonization that the administering Powers must contribute to the social and economic development of the Non-Self-Governing Territories - ensuring that their peoples exercise their inalienable right freely to own and exploit their natural resources - and must provide education and training of cadres in order to establish an infrastructure that would help create conditions for rapid progress towards self-determination and independence.

A serious obstacle to decolonization and a potential threat to peace and security is constituted by military activities in all their guises in colonial Territories. Putting an end to such activities and dismantling military bases and installations would be an important step towards the implementation of the provisions of the Declaration. In this connection, I deem it useful to recall the proposal made by the Soviet Union at the third special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament on the world-wide dismantling by the year 2000 of all military bases and installations on foreign soil.

(Mr. Yumov, USSR)

International solidarity with the peoples fighting for the eradication of colonialism, racism and apartheid is one of the fundamental principles of the Soviet Union's foreign policy. Attaching great importance to the General Assembly's declaration of the last decade of the twentieth century as the international decade for the eradication of the remaining vestiges of colonialism, the Soviet Union, together with other States, will contribute by all means possible to the attainment of this goal. The encouraging example of the settlement of the Namibian question shows that even the most complex problems in this field can be settled through political means.

In conclusion, I should like to state that the Soviet delegation supports the recommendations drawn up in the Fourth Committee.

Mr. AGJIBUZU (Nigeria): It is with justifiable pride, Sir, that the Nigerian delegation salutes you once again as the President of the current session of the General Assembly. As a true son of Nigeria - indeed, of Africa - you can rest assured of the full and unflinching co-operation of our delegation as you discharge the onerous tasks assigned to you.

My delegation addressed the item now before us on 23 October last, during consideration of some of its aspects in the Fourth Committee. Nevertheless, we wish to reiterate our views, as we place a very high premium on the decolonization work of the Organization. It is our strongly held view that people everywhere, without exception, must be allowed freely to chart the course of their political and economic destiny. We shall therefore not relent in our opposition to colonialism until that anachronism is totally eradicated from the surface of the earth. The right of peoples to self-determination and sovereign independence is a right which is inalienable and therefore must not be abridged, truncated, qualified or limited in any form. The United Nations itself long ago recognized this by the

(Mr. Agubuzu, Nigeria)

adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) on 14 December 1960. That resolution defines the terms of reference for the decolonization work of the United Nations.

In this connection, my delegation wishes to place on record our profound appreciation of the impressive work being done by the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Under the able leadership of its Chairman, the Special Committee and its Sub-Committees have worked relentlessly to keep the issue of decolonization in the fore. Nigeria wishes to assure the Special Committee of its continued support for and co-operation with the Committee's laudable efforts to eliminate the remaining vestiges of colonialism.

The United Nations has made remarkable strides in the area of decolonization. Nothing more truly attests to this than the present variegated membership of this body. From a total of 750 million people suffering under the oppressive burden of colonialism at the inception of the Organization, the number of people yet to taste the universal elixir of freedom has dwindled to about 3 million today. The imminent independence of Namibia will further reduce this figure, by about one half. Even so, it is the view of the Government and people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that the struggle to rid our world of the pernicious disease of colonialism must continue unabated. We must not relent in waging the struggle until every oppressed and colonized man or woman, young or old, breathes the air of freedom and independence. Resolution 1514 (XV) is unequivocal in stating that neither the size of a population nor the expanse of its territory, nor for that matter the level of social and economic development, should impair its right to self-determination.

(Mr. Agubuzu, Nigeria)

The litmus test in the exercise of the right to self-determination and independence must always be the will of the people themselves, as freely and democratically expressed. It is thus our view that all freedom-loving peoples of the world must actively support efforts to complete the unfinished task of decolonization. That tragic chapter in the annals of world history, a chapter chronicling the havoc perpetrated in the wake of gunboat diplomacy and the policy of "might is right", must be brought to a long overdue close.

No continent has suffered the ravages of colonialism, and therefore bears the scars of this scourge, more than Africa. Almost all the countries on the African continent today were forcibly colonized and their natural and human resources exploited by extra-African Powers. It was in recognition of that humiliation, degradation and despoliation of the African peoples that Nigeria made the following statement on 7 October 1980, the twentieth anniversary of our admission to the United Nations:

"I believe that the time has come for the international community to address itself to the serious issue of reparation and restitution for Africa. It is pertinent to observe that there is hardly any country outside the continent which has not in one way or another benefited from the exploitation of the human and natural resources of Africa. ... I call upon the Assembly to launch a decade of reparation and restitution for Africa as a master plan for the economic recovery of Africa." (A/35/PV.24, p. 11)

Nigeria believes that that view, expressed almost 10 years ago, is still valid even today. We therefore urge the international community and this Assembly seriously to consider ways of recompensing Africa for the incalculable human and material losses it has suffered, and continues to suffer, through colonial depredation.

(Mr. Agubuzu, Nigeria)

The present international situation has had positive repercussions in the search for solutions to some regional conflicts. It also presents propitious opportunities for the resolution of outstanding colonial disputes. The formal end of the cold war occasioned by the "salt-water" summit meeting between Presidents George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev last weekend has enhanced the atmosphere for international co-operation and collaboration by sounding the death knell of unhealthy super-Power rivalry. It is our hope that the post-cold-war era we are about to enter will not witness the imposition of super-Power condominium on the rest of mankind, but will become a genuine era of peace and international co-operation in all spheres.

The opportunity of addressing the myriads of problems facing mankind through peaceful international efforts and co-operation has never in recent times been more promising than it is today. We therefore welcome the efforts being made to settle the disputes in Western Sahara, New Caledonia and the Falkland Islands (Malvinas). We urge the parties to those disputes to bury the hatchet and allow common sense and peace to prevail. We urge all concerned to build on the progress that has already been achieved. The path to the resolution of major conflicts is often narrow and labyrinthine, not smooth and hitch-free. The temporary setbacks and occasional differences of view that are bound to occur should not be allowed to interfere unduly with the attainment of the ultimate goal. We strongly believe that the concentration of the collective energies of mankind on the search for solutions to the urgent economic, ecological and social problems facing the world is an idea whose time has come. People everywhere must therefore be freed from the shackles of colonialism and domination in order to be able to take part in this global enterprise.

(Mr. Agubuzu, Nigeria)

The Government and people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria received with sadness the bad news of the assassination of Jean-Marie Tjibaou, leader of the FLNKS, and his deputy, Yiewene Yiewene, on 4 May this year. We truly share the sense of loss which the Kanaks and, indeed, the entire people of New Caledonia feel at the untimely death of those two leaders. It is however gratifying to know that relative peace and stability have reigned in New Caledonia since the signing of the Matignon and Oudinot agreements. We salute France and the people of New Caledonia for the wisdom and courage which went into the negotiations that resulted in those agreements.

The situation in Western Sahara continues to retain the interest and attention of the Nigerian Government. We urge both the Kingdom of Morocco and the POLISARIO Front to proceed immediately with the implementation of the agreements sponsored jointly by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations, which they have already accepted in principle. Africa can ill afford a continuation of this internecine conflict, which has taken a heavy toll of both sides in material and human terms. Our well-known tradition of brotherhood, good neighbourliness and respect for each other's rights must be applied to this conflict. We commend and salute the Secretary-General and his Special Representative for their ongoing efforts to move the negotiations forward.

Namibia has come a long way since the forty-third session. This body may feel justifiable pride in the role it has played in bringing about Namibia's imminent independence. On the eve of Namibia's emancipation from more than a century of colonial domination, we urge the international community to be vigilant.

(Mr. Aguhuzu, Nigeria)

It is said that the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. Nothing should be taken for granted until Namibia's admission as the 160th Member State of the United Nations. Also, we must gear ourselves for the mobilization and extension of massive financial, technical and economic assistance to Namibia during the transition and immediate post-independence period. Nigeria will contribute more than its fair share to these efforts. We are indeed proud of being closely involved in the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which paved the way to Namibia's independence. We commend the Secretary-General and the entire leadership and personnel of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) for the fine job they have done. We warmly congratulate the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) and all the people of Namibia on their victory despite the odds and the temptations.

Finally, the Nigerian delegation wishes to call on all administering Powers fully to assume their obligations in the Territories they administer. The fulfilment of the yearnings and aspirations of the local populations must be the barometer by which their actions in the Territories under their care are measured. Buying the loyalties of a few educated élite, whose selfish interests do not always coincide with the common good, cannot be a substitute for the genuine loyalty of the people, born of the conviction that their interests are being promoted and respected. The reporting obligations under Article 73e of the Charter are sacrosanct and must therefore be fulfilled. The Government and people of Nigeria actively look forward to the eradication of colonialism in the decade of the 1990s, as called for in resolution 43/47 of 22 November 1988, which we co-sponsored and supported.

Mr. THOMPSON (Fiji): In December 1946 the General Assembly listed 76 Territories as being non-self-governing. There are now only 19. In the last half-century the world political landscape has been transformed, fuelled mainly by the unstoppable welling up of the determination of the colonized peoples to be free. That the process of decolonization has progressed so well can also be attributed to the early enunciation of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the single-minded pursuit of its implementation by the Special Committee on decolonization and by the General Assembly.

Clearly the work of the United Nations in decolonization must rank among the outstanding achievements of this century. Though great strides have been made, the work is still far from over. Many remnants of colonialism continue to exist, even against the strong tide of decolonization. The remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories look to the United Nations to continue to safeguard their interests and to ensure that they are not denied their prerogative to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination.

My delegation will continue to take a strong interest in decolonization, not only because we firmly believe in the principles involved but also because most of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories are small islands not unlike my own; many of them are in our part of the world. Their smallness is accompanied by handicaps peculiar to this group of Territories, including limited resources, wide dispersal of islands and extreme isolation. These considerations, however, must not be allowed to interfere with or limit the rights of the people concerned, particularly their right to decide on their future for themselves. It is in this regard that the Special Committee on decolonization and the General Assembly play a critical role by continuing to emphasize that in the discharge of their

(Mr. Thompson, Fiji)

responsibilities the administering Powers concerned must respect these rights and enable the people of these Territories to make their decisions freely and without pressure. Further, when the people have decided, their decisions should be respected even though these might not conform closely to some of the preconceived ideas on decolonization.

After free and fair elections last month, Namibia is now on its way to independence. It is a tribute to all the parties involved that, after so much bitterness and bloodshed, a peaceful, final decolonization process is under way. The courageous struggle of the people of Namibia, supported by the unceasing pressure exerted by the international community and the United Nations, has at last been rewarded. It remains for the United Nations to continue to maintain vigilance to ensure that the new nation is not subjected to political, economic or other pressures.

Three years ago the General Assembly reinscribed New Caledonia on the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. New Caledonia is a part of the Pacific and we in the Pacific wish to see that Territory move into the future in accordance with the wishes of its people. The signing of the Matignon agreement in 1988 laid the foundation for a constructive relationship between France and the people of New Caledonia, a relationship that had formerly been bitter and divided. We understand that the institutions provided for in the agreement are in the process of being established. It will be an ongoing responsibility of the United Nations system, of the Special Committee on decolonization, of the Fourth Committee and of the General Assembly closely to monitor the situation in the Territory. Particular regard will need to be paid to the views and the socio-economic development of the indigenous Kanak people. The difficulties in New Caledonia result largely from the fact that the indigenous people do not share equitably in the political, social and economic

(Mr. Thompson, Fiji)

affairs of the Territory. It is the primary responsibility of the administering Power to rectify this situation and of the United Nations to ensure that this is done in accordance with accepted principles and practices.

My delegation is pleased to note that France is co-operating to the extent of not opposing the adoption of the draft resolution on New Caledonia. We would urge France to go further and actively co-operate with the United Nations in the full implementation of the Declaration in so far as New Caledonia is concerned.

The resolution adopted by the General Assembly last year declaring the 1990s the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism was timely. Declarations, however, are meaningless without concrete and effective action. When the twentieth century comes to an end, let us hope that colonialism, whose devastating impact has touched almost every corner of the world, will have been removed forever and that the dawn of the new millenium will usher in a new era, free from colonialism.

PROGRAMME OF WORK

The PRESIDENT: I should like to announce, in regard to the General Assembly's programme of work, that, as was previously announced, the Assembly will continue its consideration of agenda item 39, "Question of Palestine", tomorrow afternoon, in order to take action on the draft resolutions under this item.

In this regard, I should like to inform the Assembly that this afternoon I have issued a press statement in the form of an appeal in connection with this very important item on Palestine.

AGENDA ITEM 18 (continued)

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

- (a) 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/44/23, A/AC.109/975 AND ADD.1, A/AC.109/976-978, A/AC.109/979 AND ADD.1, A/AC.109/980, A/AC.982-990, A/AC.109/992-998, A/AC.109/999/REV.1, A/AC.109/1000, A/AC.109/1007 AND CORR.1)
- (b) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/44/634 AND CORR.1, A/44/800)
- (c) DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (A/44/23 (PART I), CHAP. II, PARA. 5, A/44/L.55, A/44/L.56)
- (d) DRAFT DECISION (A/44/L.57)

Mr. ROSHAN-RAWAAN (Afghanistan): As the General Assembly considers this item, members are no doubt aware that we stand at the very threshold of marking the thirtieth anniversary of a universally acclaimed and truly epochal Declaration. The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in resolution 1514 (XV) of 1960, will go down in the annals of our Organization as one of the significantly historic decisions of the General Assembly. Based on the principles and goals of the Charter, the Declaration enshrines the most valuable ideals cherished by humankind everywhere throughout history: the ideals of independence and freedom of peoples and nations.*

The Declaration, which has given momentum to the process of decolonization, is a remarkable reflection of the spirit of our times and testifies to the loftiness of the principles, ideals and dreams of the civilization we have attained. Its achievements are indeed great and epoch-making. Thanks to their relentless struggle, their intrinsic thirst for independence and freedom, and,

* Mr. Jaya (Brunei Darussalam), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Roshan-Rawaan, Afghanistan)

thanks also to the principles enshrined in the Declaration, to which all of us have expressed our faith, a great number of peoples have emerged from the dark age of colonialism as independent nations and joined the community of nations as equal members with equal rights and responsibilities.

This process has injected fresh blood in the common endeavours of humankind to attain higher levels of progress and do away with old concepts of domination, exploitation and inequality of nations. This has also brought to the ranks of our United Nations new nation States, giving it a truly universal character. That this universalization of the United Nations has significantly enhanced its capacity to tackle more efficiently, and in a more just and equitable manner, the global problems we face is, indeed, beyond doubt.

Great as our achievements in realizing the goals and ideals of the Declaration are, the time for celebrating has not yet come. Decades of efforts will be fully rewarded only when the last vestige of the old colonial system is eradicated from our world. We cannot, and must not, relinquish our common responsibility as Members of the United Nations and as parties to the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples until every nation on Earth, be it large or small, has attained its independence and liberty. For in Africa, in the Pacific, in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans and in the Caribbean Sea, there still exist Territories the peoples of which are denied the right to freedom and independence from colonial rule. This denial cannot and should not continue.

In southern Africa, our hopes, our persistence and our constant vigilance have borne fruit in Namibia. However, the intrinsically inhuman system of apartheid, which is historically linked to colonialism, has not been dismantled. We rejoice with our Namibian brothers in this moment of happiness on the eve of their full independence. We salute their heroic struggle, under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), which brought this hour of glory and

(Mr. Roshan-Rawaan, Afghanistan)

congratulate SWAPO for its victory in the elections just held in Namibia. The transition period has not been free of difficulties. South Africa, as we expected, through various illegal and oppressive measures - particularly through the use of the notorious Koevoet - did not abandon its intransigence until the last moment.

However, we are pleased - indeed happy - to note that the mechanism set up by the United Nations, as well as the delegations from the Special Committee on decolonization and the Non-Aligned Movement have through their competence and vigilance ensured an internationally supervised free and fair election, in spite of South African attempts to * contrary. We express our gratitude to all of them, especially to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for their relentless efforts. It is our hope that the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) will keep up its vigilance to the end of its mandate and ensure Namibia's smooth and fair transfer to full independence and statehood. The territorial integrity of Namibia, including full sovereignty over Walvis Bay, the Penguin Islands and other offshore islands which are the integral part of Namibia, must be preserved intact.

In Western Sahara, we welcome the new positive developments. We support the joint efforts of the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, to prepare the ground for an internationally supervised referendum.

The end of the twentieth century is fast approaching. In the year 2000, we shall be compelled to look back and take stock of the century that has ended. It has already been a century of great and awesome achievements in various fields. Decolonization - although not yet complete - is one of them. It is therefore fitting that we should finish the job before the century ends. That is why my delegation supports the decision to declare the 1990s as the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, as proposed by the Non-Aligned Movement. It is

(Mr. Roshan-Rawaan, Afghanistan)

our earnest hope that we shall enter the next millennium after having put behind us the scourge of colonialism and all its ramifications: neo-colonialism, apartheid, oppression and exploitation of nations, which have so far exacted such a heavy toll on peoples living under them. This noble attempt, we trust, is worthy of the spirit of our times, the ideals of our civilization and the dreams we entertain for the future.

Mr. MARDOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (interpretation from Russian): As has already been noted, the international situation today is characterized by the development of positive trends, among them a decrease in tension and confrontations, increased trust, expanding political dialogue and intensification of inter-State contacts at various levels. All of this taken together testifies to the development in inter-State relations of a new political thinking. One of its main principles is the recognition of the right of every people to the social and political development of its choice, a situation which is fully applicable to the peoples of dependent and colonial Territories.

Next year the international community will celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Adopted on the initiative of the Soviet Union, the Declaration has always played an important role in the process of decolonization. A decisive stage in this process will come with the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, proclaimed by the United Nations in General Assembly resolution 43/47.

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

We assess this initiative on the part of the international community as a realistic measure to mobilize its efforts in the fight against colonialism, racism and apartheid and an endorsement in world policy and practice of a democratic legal order that excludes all forms of national oppression.

A powerful impetus for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism may be provided by the complete implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), on the granting of independence to Namibia. The free and democratic elections carried out in Namibia under the aegis of the United Nations provide further proof of the real possibility of achieving the resolution of various crises through constructive, peaceful political means, and this shows the strength and viability of the new thinking, the new approach to the resolution of the most complicated problems in international affairs. We consider that the achievement of true independence by the Namibian people and the entry of Namibia into the equal family of African States and the United Nations will be a great victory for justice and common sense in international relations. At the same time, we should not forget that, despite the demands of the peoples and the efforts of the United Nations, there are still in the world today a score of colonial territories whose population is denied the exercise of the right to self-determination and independence. Therefore the United Nations and all States must make additional energetic efforts to eliminate once and for all the last vestiges of colonialism and racism in the world.

That applies fully also to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. According to the United Nations Charter, only the Security Council is entitled to change the status of a strategic Trust Territory or to terminate the Trusteeship Agreement. We are convinced that, as long as all the requirements of the United Nations Charter and the Trusteeship Agreement are not met, the United Nations is

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

obliged to bear the responsibility for those islands, and the Administering Authority must transmit information on the situation in the Trust Territory in the required manner.

One of the main obstacles to the carrying out of this task is the nefarious activity of foreign economic and other circles in colonial territories. That is convincingly stated in documents presented at the present session. The United Nations must redouble its efforts to put an end to such activity, and this is one of the main tasks to be carried out in the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

We must also pay attention to the proposal that a study be made of the possibility of providing viable guarantees of economic security for States upon their accession to independence. This task could be shouldered by the United Nations.

A serious obstacle to the implementation of the Declaration on decolonization and a potential danger to international peace is the military activity of colonial Powers in dependent and island territories in the Pacific, Indian and Atlantic Oceans and the Caribbean. This activity is prejudicial to the rights and interests of the colonial peoples.

It is also well known that in many cases these territories are used for the dumping of nuclear wastes and the emplacement of weapons of mass destruction. To overcome this serious obstacle to the complete elimination of colonialism from the Earth it is necessary to realize that the military presence of a State must remain within its own borders. Guided by this approach, States members of the Warsaw Treaty alliance propose as one of the measures for strengthening international security and ensuring confidence the elimination of foreign military bases and the withdrawal of foreign troops from the territory of other States. In our view, the

(Mr. Mardovich, Byelorussian SSR)

United Nations must play an increasing role in the achievement of that objective. It must ensure the implementation of its decisions concerning the immediate and unconditional elimination of military bases and installations in colonial territories.

In the process of decolonization the specialized agencies and other international bodies in relationship with the United Nations must play an important role. They must pursue their efforts to increase the necessary moral and material support for the peoples of colonial territories and the national liberation movements and also of the front-line States. We also hope that the specialized agencies and international bodies will make an active contribution to the establishment of an independent Namibia, carrying out the goals and objectives of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

The Byelorussian SSR has consistently called for the elimination of colonialism and the eradication of racism and apartheid. At this session, as in the past, the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR has supported all the recommendations adopted by the Fourth Committee. It was a co-sponsor of draft resolutions on such matters as dissemination of information on decolonization and the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): Since its inception the United Nations has rightfully been concerned with the right of Non-Self-Governing Territories to self-determination. It is with pride that the United States can claim its place as an architect of that policy. During the first 15 years of the United Nations many of those represented here today exercised this right.

In 1960 the United Nations approved two landmark resolutions within a day of each other. General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV) deserve to be

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

read as a single document. Between them they make clear that the process of self-determination can result in different forms of political status, including independence, free association and integration into another independent State. The key element in both these resolutions is that the citizens of a Non-Self-Governing Territory must have the right to exercise their judgement about their future, free from coercion of any kind.

The commitment of my Government to furthering the processes by which all people are granted self-determination is unwavering. The United States remains supportive of the positive role of the United Nations in that process. The year 1989 has seen a major landmark in the process of decolonization and has seen the transition of an important territory from non-self-governing status.

There is now an important question before us: How should we proceed in the 1990s? How can the Fourth Committee, the Special Committee on decolonization and its two subcommittees best address the profoundly changed circumstances of the world situation? It is obvious that the rhetoric of the 1960s has no place in the consideration of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories in the 1990s. It is obvious that certain discredited theories must be discarded. For example, to respond to the legitimate call from Non-Self-Governing Territories for transnational economic activities, which are critical to their development and beneficial to their societies - to respond to that call with little more than sterile and obsolete rhetoric on the evils of foreign economic activities would be a betrayal of our commitment to further their claim to progress and self-determination.

My delegation strongly shares the view, which was widely expressed in the course of the general debate in the Fourth Committee, that the time has come for us all to take a fresh and honest look at the procedures of the United Nations with respect to decolonization.

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

Our goal should be to rationalize the work in order to enhance the effectiveness and the efficiency of the United Nations and to benefit, above all, the inhabitants of those Territories which remain the legitimate concern of the Fourth Committee and the Special Committee. Among the concrete suggestions that have been offered are the elimination of the redundancies and overlapping which occur, for example, in the multiple consideration of draft resolutions; the elimination of inappropriate or obsolete items; concision in drafting documents, reports and texts; and increased clarity and precision in the drafting of resolutions.

My delegation strongly endorses such suggestions, which are consistent with the recommendations in the report of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations.

The interests of the inhabitants of the territories which fall within the competence of the decolonization committees are poorly served by empty rhetoric. The volume of documents produced or the number of resolutions adopted is no barometer of effectiveness in the discharge of designated tasks by those committees. It is our profound hope that in the landmark year 1990, the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the consideration of this agenda item will be undertaken in a new spirit: one that is consistent with and appropriate to the dramatically changed circumstances in the world situation.

Mr. SHAHEED (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic):

Throughout history humanity has known - and still knows - many political movements based on colonialist ideologies. Historically, these movements have spread by carefully concealing their ideological content. In many cases they have succeeded in deluding peoples, diverting their attention from the real nature of their

(Mr. Shaheed, Syrian Arab Republic)

designs. They have infiltrated the very structure of nations and controlled their fate for a certain period of time. However, some of those movements have not merely had recourse to simple political slogans in their attempts to invade certain regions. On the contrary, they have tried to hold Divine Providence responsible for colonialism. Some of these movements have attempted to justify their colonialist policy by attributing it to divine inspiration. Others have frankly proclaimed that they came about as a result of divine will to drive the inhabitants from their lands, on the pretext that the new settlers have a divine right to those lands. As has been proved, it is not easy to change such creeds, although at a formal level it may be possible to adapt to different conditions without changing the essence of those beliefs. In regions that have experienced invasions by political movements of such a colonialist nature we find that the fundamental problem is the assimilation of foreigners into the body of the indigenous population. Those foreigners feel that they are racially pure and superior, they practise various forms of racial discrimination against the indigenous population, and they deny them their national ethic. Those foreign settlers who are not tolerated, culturally in the milieu they have come to live in, because of their feeling of superiority, are so well off in material terms that they exercise their material strength to wield political power in the regions they occupy. They hinder any real progress towards economic and social development. They constitute a reactionary force which operates against the aspirations of the original population and of the neighbouring population in general. These foreign settlers have their own conception of their own future and of the future of the country and its neighbours. What they envision is completely contrary to the principles of self-determination and of the equality of rights of all peoples - that principle that is the very basis and foundation of the international community of today. One

(Mr. Shaheed, Syrian Arab
Republic)

of the most important elements of these colonial systems is the seizure of land by any means. Land is the material basis on which these foreign settlers build. Immigrants are the human basis of those systems. The link between land and immigrants is fundamental. The more immigrants there are, the more they can extend the area of the land seized, thus encouraging more immigrants to come and take part in the colonization process.

The seizure of land affects the original population to their detriment. Many pretexts were used to justify the seizure of land. They claimed that the original inhabitants did not, in fact, own the land on which they had settled. It is sometimes said that they were not looking after it properly and that the foreign settlers, since they are civilized, have come to improve the use of the land and transform it into a paradise. Sometimes the seizure of land took place without any kind of justification, whether by a genuine or formal bill of sale or by war.

There are two considerations that govern the practices of those colonialist political movements with respect to the original population. The first consideration is a racist concept arising from a feeling the foreign settlers have of their superiority over the indigenous population. In practice this means that the foreign settlers have as little as possible to do with the original population. The second consideration is of an economic nature. It arises from a feeling on the part of the foreign settlers that they have the power to exploit the original population as cheap manpower. In practice this means that they make the indigenous population work as labourers or hired hands.

The policies of any colonialist movement always fall into these two categories of considerations. The common element in those policies is their discriminatory basis. Foreign settlers do not treat the indigenous population on an equal

(Mr. Shaheed, Syrian Arab
Republic)

footing. The indigenous inhabitants are not considered as citizens in the full sense of the term. They are second-class citizens.

The discriminatory treatment of the indigenous population under colonial systems takes the form of various laws and practices which establish a principle that is not sanctioned by international law: the principle of dual nationality. The policy, pursued within those colonial settlers' systems, of encouraging the immigration of foreign settlers, does not open the way for all those who wish to immigrate. The policy requires that an immigrant be of a specific type. He is not judged by what he is: rather he is judged by his genealogy to see whether there is anything in his origins that would be a reason for his not belonging to the required racist society.

(Mr. Shaheed, Syrian Arab
Republic)

This is combined with another process in the opposite direction at of the expulsion of the original population by violence and by depriving them of their nationality or citizenship. In addition to the racist laws and measures on immigration and land, there are other racist laws and policies aimed at breaking the will of the original population. These include restrictions on freedom of movement from one region to another on the pretext of security considerations or so-called usefulness of work. These colonialist political measures restrict the original population's freedom of independent political action, prevent them from setting up their own political parties, deny them freedom of professional association and forbid them to set up labour organizations or trade unions.

Thus the democracy whose praises these intruders sing in their campaigns of propaganda in Western democratic countries is a restrictive democracy, a democracy that does not embrace the whole population. It is a monopoly of intruders. They are contravening one of the first principles of democracy: the legal equality of citizens. The alarming racism of the intruders is shown by their absolute contempt for the life of the original population. They resort without scruple to unlimited violence against the indigenous population whenever they feel that there is any danger to them from that quarter, and it is no coincidence that the worst massacres of our time have taken place in those regions.

The reaction of the indigenous population to this settler racism is revolution under the leadership of revolutionary movements that confirm that their aim is not to expel or kill the settlers or foreigners but to live with them free from any racist concepts. History and the experience of peoples demonstrate that racist and colonialist ideologies have no future.

Mr. KEITA (Mali) (interpretation from French): The adoption 29 years ago of resolution 1514 (XV) on the granting of independence to colonial countries and

(Mr. Keita, Mali)

peoples gave an impetus to the process of decolonization throughout the world. Thanks to the efforts of the United Nations and to struggles of various types nearly 60 States from all continents are seated today in this Assembly. However, this situation, which is a source of joy to the international community, does not hide the areas in shadow that remain throughout the world. In more than 15 non-self-governing territories - in Africa, the Pacific, the Caribbean and the South Atlantic - the peoples are claiming their right to self-determination.

My delegation is very appreciative of the quality of the reports, notes and documents that the Special Committee and the Secretary-General have so carefully prepared and placed before us for consideration. We pay a well-deserved tribute to the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples for the effective work that it has done since it was established. The United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, whose dedication in carrying out the important and sensitive mission with which the international community has entrusted him is exemplary, deserves our warmest congratulations.

Colonialism is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter, which, in Article 73, imposes on the administering Powers obligations that they do not fully discharge. In addition, the Declaration in resolution 1514 (XV) which reaffirms the right of peoples to decide their own fate - should be implemented in full by all those Powers. In this context, my delegation regrets that, almost 30 years after the adoption of that declaration, it is not yet being applied to all the peoples of the world. This situation is unacceptable and my delegation, which has been a member of the Special Committee since its foundation, denounces it vehemently.

The present year is undeniably a year of change in international relations, particularly in southern Africa, where the process of the decolonization of Namibia

(Mr. Keita, Mali)

is practically complete. We welcome this fact. The success of the elections, which took place under the auspices of the United Nations, has led to the formation of a constituent Assembly, which is already meeting to legislate on the destiny of this heroic people, which is determined to shoulder its national and international responsibilities. My delegation is happy to acknowledge the very positive role played by the Namibian people, under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), which has led the national liberation struggle with courage and determination.

The support of the United Nations and of the international community has been crucial to this successful outcome. In this transitional stage the organs of the United Nations and its specialized agencies must assist the Namibian State to establish and consolidate its institutions and its economy in accordance with its immense potential, with strict respect for its sovereignty.

The need for a political settlement in Western Sahara is clear. Mali, which works tirelessly within the OAU and the United Nations with a view to the ending of this fratricidal conflict, reaffirms its support for the implementation of OAU resolution AHG/Res. 104 (XIX) and General Assembly resolution 40/50. Recent developments in the situation - that is, the acceptance by the two parties of the peace plan proposed by the current Chairman of the OAU and the United Nations Secretary-General - encourage my delegation. We hope that the United Nations technical team will receive all the necessary support to enable it to complete the process leading to the organization of a self-determination referendum for the Sahraoui people. My delegation welcomes the spirit of reconciliation and compromise that has made possible the signing of the Matignon agreements. Respect for these agreements is indispensable if the Kanak people is to be enabled to exercise its right to self-determination.

(Mr. Keita, Mali)

As the twentieth century draws to an end the majority of Non-Self-Governing Territories are islands scattered throughout the Pacific Ocean, the South Atlantic and the Caribbean Sea. Their geographic location and their low population density should by no means prevent them from exercising all the legitimate and inalienable rights of peoples. Similarly, the United Nations, the Special Committee and, in particular, the administering Powers must not fail to fulfil their obligations and responsibilities with regard to these colonized countries and peoples.

Self-determination and independence are the inalienable right of all colonized peoples, whatever the size of the territory or the number of inhabitants.

Every people is an entity with attendant rights and responsibilities. That is one of the principles of that very special legal and political masterpiece, our Charter.

The establishment of military and strategic land, naval and air bases, the testing, transport and stockpiling of all kinds of weapons, including missiles and nuclear and tactical submarines, the burial of radioactive waste - all these activities are major problems of our time that must be settled as part and parcel of the process of decolonization.

(Mr. Keita, Mali)

The United Nations is a forum and a source of hope for colonized and disinherited peoples. By its courageous actions, the Organization made the years 1960 to 1970 the decade of independence for colonial Territories. My country hopes that, thanks to this precedent and despite the grey areas that I have mentioned, the decade from 1990 to 2000 will see the total disappearance of colonization in all its forms. The countries freed from colonization have a leading role to play in this decade with regard to all colonized countries.

In recommending the full implementation of the relevant provisions of resolution 1514 (XV) and of the Charter, my delegation calls on the colonial Powers that are behind the times to heed the call of history and resolutely join movement towards understanding progress, co-operation and solidarity that marks the end of the twentieth century.

The people and the Government of Mali have always supported the right of every people to self-determination. They will spare no effort to guarantee and defend, as they have in the past, the inalienable right of all peoples and countries to be the principal, indeed the only, ones to decide their own destiny.

Mr. SOTIROV (Bulgaria): The current debate takes place at a particularly important stage in the ongoing process of improvement in the international climate. This process gained a new, positive momentum from the successful conclusion of the Soviet-American summit.

It is widely acknowledged that the spirit of détente has significantly influenced the work of the United Nations. Its role has been strengthened. This has made it possible for the Organization to become increasingly involved in the search for practical solutions to almost every important issue of concern to the international community.

(Mr. Sotirov, Bulgaria)

One of those issues has been and remains the development of friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of the equal rights and right to self-determination of peoples, as enshrined in Article 1 of the United Nations Charter. The Charter also proclaims faith in the dignity of the human person and in the equal rights of nations, large and small. It was on the basis of these fundamental principles that the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples was adopted.

This debate, in our view, carries particular weight. It gives us the opportunity to review the achievements in the struggle for the complete and unconditional implementation of the Declaration. Most important, we should focus on the task of putting an end to colonialism wherever it still exists. The United Nations has the potential to achieve this lofty goal.

The successful completion of the most important phase of the transition of Namibia to independence has been a vivid expression of the potential and credibility of the United Nations in this field. The Government and people of Bulgaria are indeed deeply moved by the fact that the Namibian people is on the verge of attaining its long-awaited freedom. We have been impressed by the wisdom, realism and self-restraint of all the parties in Namibia during the election process. Our delegation shares the hope of the Security Council that the utmost political responsibility will be displayed in the transition period in order to facilitate the earliest possible accession by Namibia to independence.

We also hope that the years to come will see the abolition of the system of apartheid in neighbouring South Africa. The ending of apartheid would eliminate the main source of tension in southern Africa. Favourable conditions would be created for the peoples of the region to embark on the road of peace, co-operation and development.

(Mr. Sotirov, Bulgaria)

The People's Republic of Bulgaria is satisfied with the progress made so far in putting an end to the colonial situation in other parts of the world. In particular, we would like to stress the importance of the adoption by consensus in the Fourth Committee of the draft resolution on Western Sahara. We are convinced that further demonstrations of goodwill and constructive approach by the parties to the conflict would help the joint efforts of the Secretary-General and the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to carry out their responsible mission successfully.

Next year will mark the beginning of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. Although progress in the field of decolonization is indeed impressive, we should not be misled. The international community will not be able to announce the fulfilment of its mandate until the last colonial people is genuinely freed and all forms and manifestations of colonialism are effectively removed. We therefore reiterate our support for the idea that such factors as size of population and territory, geographical location and limited natural resources should in no way delay the speedy implementation of the Declaration. There remain a number of Territories that have the right to self-determination. This right should be exercised in full conformity with the relevant United Nations provisions. There are still many obstacles, one of the main ones being the continuing policies of certain foreign economic and other interests in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Many of them continue to regard those Territories only as sources of profit and persist in plundering their human and natural resources. These policies result in the deterioration of the economic, environmental and social situation.

Even more disturbing is the use of the dependent Territories for military purposes. The military activities are carried out in contravention of the repeated

(Mr. Sotirov, Bulgaria)

calls by the General Assembly for the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of military bases and installations from colonial Territories.

Taking into account the changing realities in the world and the ever growing demands for freedom, the administering Powers should reassess their stand vis-à-vis the dependent peoples. They should abide fully by the provisions of the Charter and the Declaration in order to promote their political, economic and social advancement of those peoples. In the light of this, the co-operation of all administering Powers with the relevant United Nations bodies becomes increasingly important.

(Mr. Sotirov, Bulgaria)

My delegation is convinced of the feasibility of the noble goal enshrined in resolution 43/47. All that is required is to translate into practice respect for the legitimate right of the colonial peoples freely to determine their destinies in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law. The political emancipation of the colonial peoples should not lag behind the positive developments in international life.

Let us hope that the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples will mark the beginning of the final stage in the elimination of colonialism, neo-colonialism, racial discrimination and apartheid. The People's Republic of Bulgaria will continue to adhere to its principled position in this field, and at the same time would welcome any manifestation of realism and constructive change in the spirit of the new trends in modern international relations.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform members of the General Assembly that in order to allow adequate time for the consideration of the programme-budget implications of the relevant draft resolutions, action on the draft resolutions submitted under agenda item 18, "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples", and on the reports of the Fourth Committee will be taken at a later date, to be announced.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.