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Chairman: Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon).

AGENDA ITEM 79

The problem of Mauritania (A/4445 and Add.1, A/C.1/L.261, A/C.1/L.262) (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE (concluded)

1. Mr. ALEMAYEHOU (Ethiopia), noting that Indonesia, Jordan and Libya had submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.261), reserved the right to submit another draft resolution if necessary.
2. Mr. HASAN (Pakistan) said that the attitude of his delegation to the question under discussion was the same as it had been with regard to the application of the principles of freedom and self-determination to Morocco and Tunisia. The nature of the question could, it seemed, be defined in three ways.
3. First, the problem of Mauritania was not merely a question between Morocco and Mauritania. It was difficult to consider that France was not involved, because the problem had arisen as a direct result of the agreement concluded between the French Government and the President of the existing administration in Mauritania on the transfer of independence to Mauritania. The issue under consideration related to the effects of that agreement on the discharge of the obligations jointly assumed by France and Morocco in regard to the delimitation of Morocco's frontiers.
4. Secondly, the question was not whether or not Mauritania should have independence, but whether the secession of Mauritania from Morocco reflected the will of the people of Mauritania. The determining factor was neither history nor ethnology, but the will of the people concerned.
5. Thirdly, the issue was not simply an irredentist claim put forward by Morocco. The position of Morocco would have been more correctly appreciated if Morocco had stated that since Mauritania was a part of Morocco, its separation would be prejudicial to the national sovereignty and integrity of Morocco.
6. Consequently, the main subject of concern was the implementation of the agreement between France and Morocco implicit in their joint declaration of 2 March 1956, whereby Morocco was to recover sovereignty over all the territories which constituted

the Kingdom of Morocco before France assumed the protectorate over it. The question was, of course, whether Mauritania was one of those territories. The representative of France had said (1109th meeting) that it was not, and that there was no historical evidence that Morocco had ever established durable and effective authority over any portion of Mauritania. It should be noted, however, that the indices of sovereign authority varied in different social and economic environments and that the same criteria could not apply in a nomadic community as in a more settled society. On the other hand, the Moroccan delegation had argued that, until quite recently, prayers had been said in Mauritania in the name of the King of Morocco. In that connexion it might be noted that in India, before partition, the Caliph of Turkey had been mentioned by the Muslims in their Friday sermon, for he had been their spiritual leader until the abolition of the Caliphate by Turkey; yet there had never been any question of temporal suzerainty or authority of the Caliphate of Turkey over the Muslims of India.

7. As for the French representative's argument that the end of the French protectorate over Morocco could not entail the restoration of Mauritania to Morocco, because Mauritania had been constituted as a civilian territory and included in the Federation of French West Africa in 1904, it should not be forgotten that a colonial Power did not always establish domain over an overseas territory in a single operation.

8. During the debate both parties had cited many historical facts from which the Committee could draw no conclusions, because history proved nothing and a given historical era might be chosen in support of any argument. The main concern should be to determine whether the constitution of Mauritania as a separate State was in accord, first, with the international agreements between France and Morocco and, secondly, with the wishes of the people of Mauritania itself. But the Committee was not in a position to determine whether the wishes of the people of Mauritania were being satisfied, and the rights of Morocco respected, by the arrangement currently contemplated. The right of self-determination could be properly exercised only in an atmosphere of full observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The solution of the problem should therefore be sought by consulting the people of Mauritania in such a way as to enable it freely and genuinely to express its wishes.

9. Mr. BOUCETTA (Morocco), replying to those representatives who had asked why Morocco had waited so long to raise the question, explained that his Government had first chosen the way of negotiation. It was through negotiation that Morocco had recovered its sovereignty over various parts of its territory since 1956. It had therefore hoped that the efforts exerted, the diplomatic notes exchanged, and

the protests made and reservations presented to France would yield results. Yet today France was presenting Morocco with the "fait accompli" of a unilateral act whereby it was taking away part of Moroccan territory in order to use it as the territorial prop for a State which it was creating, and was asking the United Nations to recognize and ratify that act.

10. Morocco regarded independence as a sacred and inalienable right; but in the present case the territory involved was a Moroccan province of more than a million square kilometres, inhabited by less than 600,000 people who had for centuries been Moroccan citizens. However, that part of Moroccan territory represented for France a reservoir of economic wealth and a strategic position. That was substantiated by the statement made on the subject on 15 November 1960 by the rapporteur of the Committee on National Defence before the National Assembly of the French Republic, to which he had referred in his statement at the 1113th meeting.

11. Those who were asking Morocco to allow Mauritania's independence to be proclaimed in joy and happiness should understand the present situation in that unfortunate province, where the most representative political organizations, the Nadha party and the Moslem Socialist Party, had been dissolved and their leaders exiled or thrown into prison. The trade union and youth organizations had suffered the same fate. Arrests and searches were being made daily. Martial law had been in force for more than a month at Atar and Kiffa and in the "cercle" of Tagant. Since 12 November, a curfew as from 9 p.m. had been imposed throughout the region of Mauritania. Thus, against the will of the people and their qualified representatives, a situation endangering peace and security in that region of Africa was being created.

12. As for the expression of the popular will, to which the French representative had referred at the 1109th meeting in connexion with the referendum of 28 September 1958, the inhabitants of Mauritania had not been asked whether they wanted to remain attached to their Moroccan fatherland or whether, on the contrary, they wished to be separated from it.

13. Morocco had been among the first to congratulate the countries of Africa upon their independence and their admission to membership in the United Nations, but those countries should not seek to compare things which were not comparable. The Moroccan delegation had shown that the problem of Mauritania was different from the problem of the African countries and that, moreover, one week before the 1958 referendum the French military courts had sentenced many Mauritians to penalties ranging from ten years' imprisonment to death.

14. Morocco reaffirmed the fundamental principle of respect for the territorial integrity of all States and would not seek to traverse any equitable decision, for it was convinced that the overwhelming majority of the Mauritanian people wanted and recognized only one fatherland: Morocco, of which the Mauritanian region had always been an integral part.

15. The Mauritanian region had never been a political or juridical entity separate from Morocco, and its inhabitants were in all respects identical with those of the rest of Morocco. The case was therefore a typically colonial one, in which the territorial

integrity of a State was being threatened. The United Nations was being asked to confirm the division of a territory, while Morocco, on the contrary, was striving to promote the unity of all peoples without hatred and without hostility.

16. Mr. BERARD (France), exercising his right of reply, observed that several speakers had made a point of implicating the French Government and French policy—a convenient form of tactics, which extricated them from a difficulty; had they not resorted to it, they would have been compelled to admit that they were attacking the Mauritanian Government and, behind it, the Mauritanian people which had chosen that Government by an overwhelming majority.

17. France was in no wise a party to the current debate. It was not defending any personal interest; it was merely asking that the independence of the Mauritanian people, and that people's right freely to decide its own destiny in all fields, be acknowledged.

18. The main purpose of all the arguments, historical or otherwise, advanced by the representative of France at the 1109th meeting had not been to reply to the Moroccan claim. They had been intended rather to explain how Mauritania had become independent, and why France had felt that it could not reject its request for independence, but should support that welcome development as it had done in the case of all the other countries of the former French Union.

19. It had been pointed out that the present frontier of Morocco lay at a distance of several hundred kilometres from the Oued Noun, thus including the entire region of Tarfaya. But it had been thanks to France that Morocco, as a result of the Convention of 27 November 1912 between France and Spain, signed by France on behalf of the Sultan under the Protectorate Treaty, had received that substantial extension of its territory to the south at the beginning of the century.

20. Mention had been made of the Convention between France and Germany respecting Morocco, signed at Berlin on 4 November 1911, in which it was indicated that Morocco included all of North Africa between Algeria, French West Africa and the Spanish colony of Rio de Oro. But Mauritania had been part of French West Africa since 1904, and to assert that Morocco at that time had been bounded by Algeria and French West Africa demonstrated that Morocco had not included Mauritania.

21. Reference had been made to the border command ("commandement des confins") which had existed between 1930 and 1956, with headquarters at Agadir and an area of operations including Mauritania up to latitude 25° north. But that border command had covered Moroccan, Algerian and Mauritanian territories alike; it had been a purely military body with no political or administrative jurisdiction.

22. The Moroccan Government had reproached the French Government for refusing to agree that the mixed commission on the delimitation of the frontiers of Morocco should be empowered to consider or endorse its territorial claims to Mauritania. But how could the demarcation of a frontier legitimately have been turned into a decision entailing the annexation of a territory of a million and a half square kilometres? In many diplomatic notes, the French

Government had requested the initiation of negotiations on the demarcation of the frontier, and it was still prepared to engage in such negotiations, but it wished to point out that the frontier question had nothing to do with the annexation of a territory, larger than Morocco itself, which had freely chosen independence.

23. With regard to the Société des mines de fer de Mauritanie, all disinterested observers had regarded the establishment of that company as a "piece of good luck for Mauritania", and as an operation which should have the most beneficial effects in all branches of the country's life. Even the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development had decided, despite Moroccan protests, to grant the company a substantial loan.

24. The installation of a defence system in Mauritania was merely the consequence of military and other attempts from outside to prevent, by force, the independence of Mauritania, or to provoke serious disturbances in that country. Some three years previously, attempts at infiltration had necessitated military measures, and had ultimately failed. In that connexion, appeals for violence and assassination, and threats of force against the Mauritanian people, which were being made periodically from certain broadcasting stations, in certain newspapers and in certain speeches, were incompatible with the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter. What had been alleged to be French military occupation in Mauritania was simply the consequence of acts of aggression, and of threats made, against the integrity of a State for which France had been responsible.

25. France had spoken in the debate only because Mauritania was not yet a Member of the United Nations. France had had the duty of speaking on Mauritania's behalf but it had only one wish—that Mauritania, having been admitted to the United Nations, should speak in that forum as soon as possible.

26. With regard to the three Frenchmen who were in Mauritania, he pointed out that Senegalese, Lebanese, Guineans and Malians were also providing technical assistance in that vast State. Of the three Frenchmen in question, there was, first, Mr. Franz Bourgarel, who had been placed at the disposal of the Nouakchott Government at its request. Secondly, there was Mr. Maurice Compagnet, Minister of Finance, who had been living in Mauritania for over forty years; as Municipal and Territorial Councillor, and then as Deputy, he had been constantly re-elected by the Mauritanians. It was not clear how he could secure a monopoly of transport, since more than twenty transport companies were operating in the country. Finally, there was Mr. Henri Bruno, who had been living in Mauritania for forty-five years and had married a Mauritanian. He, too, had constantly been elected to positions of responsibility by the people. It was not true to say that he had a monopoly over fishing; he was chairman of a company, and it was he who had built and launched Port-Etienne.

27. Everyone knew that there had been in Mauritania a series of municipal and legislative elections and a referendum, all under universal male and female suffrage, which had enabled national, democratic institutions to be set up. The fact that Morocco had chosen a different system did not entitle it to

criticize that free exercise of democracy. To challenge those elections and that referendum would be to challenge the referendum which had led twelve African republics to independence. Moreover, having chosen immediate independence, Mauritania was entirely free, subsequently, to form an association with Morocco.

28. In three days' time Mauritania would celebrate its accession to full sovereignty. If the Mauritanians had had the least uncertainty as to the legitimacy of their cause, or if France itself had had selfish designs, it would have been easy to precipitate events before the opening of the General Assembly's fifteenth session. The Islamic Republic of Mauritania could quite well have chosen to proclaim its independence at the same time as its sister African republics. It had not done so because it had wished that event to coincide with its National Day, and because it was firmly convinced of the lawfulness of its position. The time-table which it had itself laid down had been respected. The Mauritanian nation must therefore be allowed to accede to independence in peace, and to decide its own destiny.

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

29. Mr. FEKINI (Libya), introducing the draft resolution submitted by his delegation and those of Indonesia and Jordan (A/C.1/L.261), said that a wrongful attempt had been made to represent Morocco, and those who supported its standpoint, as wishing to impede an African territory's accession to independence and admission to the United Nations. In actual fact, the Committee had before it a complaint made by one Member State against another Member State which, by unilateral acts, was bringing about a threat to the territorial integrity and national unity of the first-named State. It was the French Government's refusal to fulfil its commitments and obligations and enter into negotiations with the Moroccan Government, as had been agreed, with a view to seeking a peaceful solution for the problem, which had led to consideration of the question by the United Nations. In addition, the measures adopted by the French Government had been taken against the wishes of the inhabitants of Mauritania, and it was to be feared that they would constitute a threat to peace and security in Africa in general and in that region of Africa in particular.

30. Those considerations had led Indonesia, Libya and Jordan to submit a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.261). In the second preambular paragraph, it was recalled that Morocco and France had agreed in 1956 to form a Franco-Moroccan commission to settle the questions relative to the frontiers of Morocco—an agreement which the French representative, in his speech, had just confirmed. The sponsors of the draft resolution had likewise considered it important, in the operative part, to reaffirm the need to respect the principle of the territorial integrity of Member States—not only because of the imminence of the threat with regard to Morocco, but also because attempts at secession in the Congo had already seriously endangered the territorial integrity and national unity of the Congo. There was cause to fear, moreover, that other threats might be directed against other African States, such as Algeria—States which, it was to be hoped, would shortly recover their full international personality. Finally, it had seemed to

the sponsors of very great importance that the United Nations should enjoin the two parties to the dispute to enter into negotiations. They had taken care to mention the two parties, France and Morocco, by name; for, despite any considerations in regard to the future, those were the parties concerned and it was the duty of the United Nations to state its decision in the light of that fact. As for the negotiations themselves, the French representative had himself stated that his country was still ready to conduct them, and he had described their character. The Libyan delegation therefore hoped that the three-Power draft resolution would be favourably received by the Committee.

31. Mr. BERARD (France) explained that France was ready to conduct negotiations in conformity with the 1956 agreement on the fixing of the southern frontier of Morocco, but that what was involved was a demarcation agreement and there could be no question now of shifting the southern border of Morocco 1,500 kilometres. Any Power interpreting a demarcation agreement in that way would be condemned by international opinion. There was therefore no point in referring to the 1956 agreement in a draft resolution concerning the problem of Mauritania.

32. What was more serious was that France was being asked to negotiate with Morocco on the future, or on the frontiers, of Mauritania. Such a step was quite impossible: France was no longer responsible for the future of Mauritania, to which sovereignty had been transferred under a treaty approved on 9 November 1960 by the Nouakchott Parliament and on 15 November by the French Parliament. As all powers, both external and domestic, were now exercised by the Mauritians themselves, it was completely inconceivable, from the legal standpoint, for France to embark on negotiations with Morocco under powers which it no longer possessed.

33. The Islamic Republic of Mauritania was acceding to independence free of all conditions, for France had imposed no condition upon it. It would therefore be paradoxical for the United Nations to consider imposing conditions on it, and thus obstructing the self-determination of the Mauritanian people. The Mauritanian nation must be allowed to decide its own future, without dictation from any other source, and certainly not from France, which had given Mauritania its independence; such dictation would constitute a clear violation of the principles of the United Nations Charter. Mauritania, now independent, would not understand any attempt by France or the United Nations, through a resolution or otherwise, to intervene in its internal affairs. France for its part considered that the present debate, in which it was not involved, must end solely in a vindication of the interests of the Mauritanian people, now independent, in a few days to become a member of the international community, and free in every respect to establish relations with its neighbours in the manner which it deemed most in keeping with its aspirations. For those reasons the three-Power draft resolution appeared to lack all justification.

34. Mr. BOUCETTA (Morocco) quoted a statement made in the French National Assembly by Mr. Jean Foyer, Secretary of State for Relations with the States of the Community, which had appeared in *Le Monde* of 17 November 1960. Mr. Foyer had said there that Mauritania had no intention of breaking

with the Community, but that it had wished to appear on the international scene free from all commitments, at a time when a neighbour State was trying to confiscate its independence; he had added that it was the duty of France to resist Morocco's claims. In the same edition of that newspaper, Mr. Philippe Decraene had written that, in the event of a resort to force on the part of the Rabat Government, Mr. Ould Daddah would not fail to seek the support of France and that there would certainly be co-operation between the Mauritians and the French with regard to the defence of frontiers, if only in order to protect the south-western flank of Algeria. Those statements, in his view, contradicted those of Mr. Bérard, who had claimed that France was not involved in the question.

35. Mr. BERARD (France) said that he saw no discrepancy between the statement of Mr. Foyer, quoted by the Moroccan representative, and his own words.

36. Mr. PAZHAWAK (Afghanistan) said that the all-important considerations were, first, the well-being of the Mauritanian people, whose right to determine its own future was recognized by all, and, secondly, the maintenance or creation of conditions whereby the peoples of Mauritania and Morocco could live peacefully with each other and friendly relations between Morocco and France could be preserved. Those considerations had led the Afghan delegation to submit certain amendments (A/C.1/L.262) to the three-Power draft resolution. Those amendments were perfectly clear, and he hoped that the sponsors of the draft resolution would be able to accept them.

37. Mr. COULIBALY (Ivory Coast) expressed the view that the three-Power draft resolution did not approach the problem correctly. The Moroccan claim seemed completely out of place, as neither the historical nor the geographical arguments advanced on its behalf were convincing. Moreover, the Mauritians, who had fought on their native soil to free themselves from foreign domination and create a nation, had no idea that that nation should be anything but an independent Mauritania. That had been affirmed as late as 16 October 1960 by Sidi Moktar N'Diaye, President of the Mauritanian National Assembly, who, after rejecting the Moroccan claims, had emphasized the fierce determination of Mauritania to defend its wealth and the integrity of its national soil. That expression of determination had constituted an example which had spread, and had received the support of the Nadha opposition party, whose chairman had likewise rejected any Moroccan claim to the territory of Mauritania. There had also been the statement made on 2 November 1956 by the Emir of Trarza who, after enumerating the benefits brought by France, had reminded all Mauritians that, if a foreign personality made claims in respect of them, those claims would be false and inadmissible. Finally, there was the statement made on 15 July 1957 by Mr. Dey Ould Sidi Baba, who had expressed his joy at seeing the young people of a country now becoming conscious of its identity working together for the victory of a stable, prosperous and united Mauritania, deeply attached to its great traditional values; he had also said that Mauritanian soil was coveted, because of its considerable mineral deposits, by certain greedy interests in collusion with a nationalism which made the mistake of seeking to

decide the future of a people against that people's wishes.

38. It was not for the United Nations to promote the annexation of one nation by another on the basis of unilateral aspirations. In any case, if an independent Mauritania thought it well to unite with Morocco, the United Nations would merely have to take note of that decision. But to express an opinion on the question at the present juncture would constitute untimely interference in the internal affairs of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, and an encouragement for the annexation movement. Accordingly, the delegation of the Ivory Coast, appealing to the fairness of all, asked representatives to reject any resolution concerning the future of Mauritania on the eve of the proclamation of its independence and of its entry into the international family of the United Nations.

39. Mr. BOUCETTA (Morocco), exercising his right of reply, said that he wished to say something about the persons quoted by the representative of the Ivory Coast—apart from Sidi Moktar N'Diaye, who was a Senegalese. First, the Emir of Trarza undoubtedly continued to uphold the views he had put forward, but he had none the less fled to Morocco, since he had been prevented from expressing his opinion that the province of Mauritania, and more particularly the province of Trarza, formed part of Morocco. Similarly, Mr. Sidi Baba, who had been a member of the Mauritanian Government and who was now a member of the Moroccan delegation, stood by all the statements he had previously made; and he affirmed that Mauritania formed part of Moroccan territory. Finally, the chairman of the Nadha party was currently in prison in Mauritania, for the same reasons.

40. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) considered that, to judge from the discussion, the problem of Mauritania was closely linked to the general problem of the liquidation of the colonial system and its aftermath on the continent of Africa. Being guided by the Leninist principles of foreign policy and taking due account of the peoples' desire for freedom, the Soviet Government based its position on respect for the right of self-determination and the right to independence. It considered that the African States, even if their independence was still limited and purely formal, should be given support and that the patriotic forces of those countries should be helped to turn nominal independence into real independence.

41. There was no doubt that the elimination of the French administration was an essential step towards the liberation of Mauritania. Yet many African and Asian countries, which were well acquainted with the situation, supported the position of Morocco. It would therefore appear that further study was required, particularly as the presence of foreign troops and bases complicated the situation in Mauritania, where the population was virtually shackled.

42. In those circumstances the three-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.261) represented a step in the right direction: the principle of respect for the unity and territorial integrity of Member States should not cause any difficulty and the proposed negotiations between France and Morocco constituted a peaceful means of settling a dispute which was creating serious tension in the area and causing anxiety to a large number of countries. The objections raised by the

French representative against the proposal were artificial and unconvincing; he claimed that his country was not involved, but the mere fact of the presence of French troops and of Mauritania's participation in the French Community was sufficient to refute his arguments. If France was not involved in Mauritania, there would be no dispute between Morocco and France. In point of fact, France's attitude showed that, contrary to the provisions of the United Nations Charter and of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at the current session, it did not wish to settle the question peacefully.

43. If the wording of the three-Power draft resolution created purely formal difficulties for France, the first Afghan amendment would provide a ready means of overcoming them. The second Afghan amendment was fully in keeping with the provisions of the Charter and therefore seemed acceptable. Moreover, the United Nations had frequently had recourse to a referendum to determine the wishes of populations under colonial rule.

44. The texts before the Committee would therefore make it possible to reach a just and peaceful solution of the problem, taking account of the views of the parties concerned and more particularly of the Mauritanian people. Such a solution would not be at variance with the general policy which the plenary Assembly might be expected to adopt when it discussed the problem of colonialism under agenda item 87. That being so, the Soviet delegation would vote for the three-Power draft resolution and, if its sponsors saw no objection to them, for the Afghan amendments (A/C.1/L.262).

45. Mr. RIFA'I (Jordan) pointed out that, contrary to what the French representative had asserted, the countries which shared Morocco's view were not opposed to the independence of Mauritania; they were in favour of the independence of that territory but as an integral part of Morocco. In fact, Mauritania ought to have become independent at the same time as Morocco. Furthermore, the draft resolution by no means had the effect of delimiting a frontier, as had been claimed by the French representative; it merely recalled that Morocco and France had agreed in 1956 to set up a commission to settle the frontier question, which was quite a different matter. There was nothing in the draft resolution that could be regarded as controversial. As for the amendments submitted by Afghanistan, there was every reason to believe that the three sponsors of the draft would give them favourable consideration.

46. Mr. BISBE (Cuba) said that the discussion on Mauritania had thrown light upon the manoeuvres of the imperialists, who were succeeding in dividing the African group by once more applying the policy of "divide and rule". There was one point to be stressed: the absence of radical differences between the Moroccan people and the Mauritanian people. The Cuban delegation therefore rejected the charges of "annexationism" made against Morocco, which only misled those who were ready to be misled. There was no danger of Moroccan aggression against Mauritania; it was France which was attacking Morocco by preventing it from achieving its unity, whereas Morocco was denouncing the policy of balkanization which once again was obstructing the efforts being made to free Africa from all colonialist penetration and influ-

ence. It was that same policy which accounted for the secessionist movement in Katanga and Kasai. The fact that there was one more constitution, one more national anthem and one more national flag was of little consequence to the colonialists so long as their interests were safeguarded, but when those interests were threatened, they defended themselves with the powerful weapon of a mendacious Press. Morocco did not make any allegations against Mauritania, only against France. It could not be otherwise: the Moroccan and Mauritanian peoples had nothing to reproach each other with.

47. The referendum of September 1958 was valueless because the Mauritanian people had not been consulted about the possibility of union with Morocco. The effectiveness of such consultations was determined by the questions asked. Playing at plebiscites with loaded dice which, however they were thrown, always came to rest with "colony" face up, was a well-known colonialist manoeuvre. Determining and respecting the will of the people was quite another matter. Moreover, Morocco had never spoken of imposing a solution by force. In the final analysis, the solution must be found by the Mauritanian people, acting in full knowledge of the facts and in an atmosphere of complete freedom.

48. One could not be against colonialism without being in favour of independence, but that did not mean that one had to back the colonialists when they were exploiting nominal independence for their own benefit. The Mauritanian problem was not a quarrel between Arabs and Africans. It was merely evidence of a policy of division pursued by the imperialists who were unwilling to accept the fact that the only solution dictated by history was the establishment of a free and united Africa. France and Morocco had agreed in 1956 to set up a commission to settle the frontier question; that problem should have been solved before independence had been granted to Mauritania. The Cuban delegation would therefore support the three-Power draft resolution and the amendments submitted by Afghanistan.

49. Mr. SALL (Senegal) said he wished to point out that Sidi Moktar N'Diaye was not a Senegalese but a Mauritanian; he had been born in Mauritania, had been educated there and had spent the whole of his life there. The Moroccan delegation was ill-advised in seeking to insinuate that Senegalese were trying to interfere in the internal affairs of Mauritania. It could not be unaware of the fact that the population of Mauritania was made up of two-thirds Berbero-Arabs and one-third African Negroes. The fact that Sidi Moktar N'Diaye was President of the National Assembly of Mauritania should not raise any doubt in anyone's mind.

50. Mr. WIRJOPRANOTO (Indonesia) said he accepted the amendments proposed by Afghanistan. Such acceptance in no way prejudged his delegation's position with regard to West Irian, which was an integral part of the Republic of Indonesia and was unlawfully occupied by the Netherlands.

51. Mr. IGNACIO-PINTO (Dahomey) said he appreciated the praiseworthy efforts made by the three sponsors of the draft resolution and by Afghanistan; wisdom demanded however that Mauritania should be allowed to attain independence unconditionally, since it alone possessed the right to decide whether or not it intended to become integrated or federated with Morocco. In any case, since the independence of Mauritania was to be proclaimed in two days' time, it was difficult to see how France and Morocco could negotiate without consulting the parties concerned.

52. Any number of frontier problems might arise in Africa; but the newly independent States of that continent had preferred to abide by the *status quo*. If the situation of one State was thrown into the melting-pot, there would be a danger of setting the whole of Africa alight. There would be no reason, for example, for not asking for a referendum in Nigeria, whose population included thousands of Dahomans.

53. The question of independence had been raised and there had been talk of puppets. Why should such remarks be addressed only to the Africans? Were there not foreign troops stationed in Europe? All States stood face to face with their responsibilities, and the Africans for their part would be capable of assuming theirs, with their heads held high, not in opposition to Morocco, not in favour of France, against which Dahomey had waged a hard struggle, but in support of Mauritania and of the safeguarding of an intangible principle without which the whole edifice would collapse—the right of self-determination. The Africans would find the appropriate solution, perhaps by giving part of Mauritania to Morocco, or else perhaps by preserving Mauritania as a single entity so that its three elements, Malian, Senegalese and Berbero-Arabs, could live there together in peace, as in an African Switzerland. Dahomey could not accept any infringement whatsoever of the principle of freedom of expression, which was seemingly being denied to the Mauritanians today.

54. Mr. BOUCETTA (Morocco) pointed out that he had always spoken dispassionately and that he bore no hostility to any person, bloc or nation, or to the countries which did not intend to vote for the draft resolution. Morocco had waited four years to raise the question for the reasons which he had already explained. The situation now was that it would soon find itself no longer confronted with a nation occupying part of its territory but in opposition to all the States which had pronounced the verdict.

55. Mr. N'GOUA (Gabon) pointed out that no nation could negotiate with Morocco in the name of Mauritania, for the latter had been independent since 19 October 1960, the date on which the acts of transfer of power had been signed. It was regrettable that those who spoke so much about the end of colonialism were eager to re-establish it in Mauritania on the pretext of the presence of foreign bases. What was required was to allow Mauritania time after attaining its independence to enter into negotiations on the subject. The three-Power draft resolution was entirely

unfounded. The United Nations, whose action had proved ineffective where it had been required, was not called upon to do anything in Mauritania.

56. Mr. AMADEO (Argentina) moved the adjournment of the meeting, in accordance with the Committee's practice of giving delegations time to study

the texts submitted and, if necessary, to consult their Governments.

The motion was adopted by 40 votes to 13, with 35 abstentions.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.