

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
**TWENTY-EIGHTH SESSION**

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**FOURTH COMMITTEE**

**Summary records of the 2025th to 2077th meetings,  
held at Headquarters, New York, from 19 September to 6 December 1973**

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**2025th meeting**

Wednesday, 19 September 1973, at 9.10 p.m.

*Temporary Chairman:* Mr. Leopoldo BENITES (Ecuador).

A/C.4/SR.2025

*Election of the Chairman*

1. Mr. SMID (Czechoslovakia) nominated Mr. Leonardo Díaz González (Venezuela) as Chairman.
2. In the absence of further nominations and in accordance with rule 105 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly the TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN declared Mr. Díaz González (Venezuela) elected Chairman by acclamation.

*Mr. Díaz González (Venezuela) was elected Chairman by acclamation.*

*The meeting rose at 9.15 p.m.*

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**2026th meeting**

Monday, 24 September 1973, at 3.40 p.m.

*Chairman:* Mr. Leonardo DIAZ GONZALEZ (Venezuela).

A/C.4/SR.2026

*Statement by the Chairman*

1. The CHAIRMAN recalled that colonialism had begun to suffer its first reversals early in the life of the Organization. It had been the voice and, more important still, the vote of Latin America, and of Venezuela in particular, a vote that had been decisive in the early years of the Organization's existence, that had dealt the first blow to colonialism in the United Nations. The blow had been a mortal one, for it had been the admission to the United Nations of States recently

freed from the yoke of colonialism or trusteeship that had made it possible to intensify United Nations action in the field of decolonization and, hence, to increase the pressure of world public opinion on the colonial Powers. As the President of the current session of the General Assembly, a distinguished Latin American of whom the region was proud, had pointed out in his opening statement (2117th plenary meeting), there were only three African and seven Asian and Arab States in the United Nations in the year of its foundation.

2. The first historical step had been the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and the subsequent establishment 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, of which Venezuela was proud to be a founding member. Despite the deficiencies, the element of trial and error and the vicissitudes in the action undertaken, the United Nations had played a fundamental role in the attainment of peaceful decolonization, in accordance with the principles and provisions of the United Nations Charter.

3. Nevertheless, colonialism and racism still existed in the world. It was hardly conceivable that, in the latter part of the twentieth century, when civilized man recognized and proclaimed anti-colonial principles, there should still exist colonized peoples and territories carved out of other States in Africa, Asia, America and the Pacific and even, paradoxically, in colonialist Europe, in violation of the principles laid down in the General Assembly's historic resolution 1514 (XV), which enshrined the basic formulas for the total elimination of both forms of colonialism.

4. It was interesting to note, with a view to the Committee's future work, that it appeared to be the general rule to make virulent attacks on the declining empires, which had also lost their military power, while taking tepid measures, or no measures at all, against those colonial countries that had military and economic power and held on to, or attempted to hold on to, colonies acquired as the spoils of imperialist wars, or that even tried to establish a new form of economic and cultural colonialism based on terror and force. His delegation believed that the colonies of the declining empires were as much colonies as those of the embryonic or growing empires. Both kinds of colonies, which in his view were one and the same thing, fell within the scope of resolution 1514 (XV), and that resolution must be applied to them, regardless of the form or deceptive appearance with which people tried to disguise them, or of the continent in which they were located.

5. There were States which still refused to accept reality. Those States were trying to ignore the fact that decolonization and the liberation of peoples constituted an irreversible process. They were deceiving themselves, because the only reaction to their obstinate attitude was tenacious resistance by the subjugated peoples. As those peoples became aware of the futility of peaceful means, they were reaching the conclusion that only force and violence would enable them to achieve freedom and independence. One had to be blind not to realize that bombs, massacres and napalm were not arguments which convinced but that, on the contrary, they inflamed the peoples and made them fight for their freedom with more zeal and determination.

6. The peoples, frustrated in their aspirations, were uniting to form liberation organizations: that had been the process in Africa. Those persecuted movements had grown stronger and had begun a war of liberation. In that connexion, the action decided on by the United Nations should be remembered: first the Special Committee and then the General Assembly, through the Fourth Committee, had admitted the representatives of those movements as obser-

vers to participate in the discussions on their respective colonial territories. That was only fair, since it was their responsibility to defend the interests of their peoples. . .

7. Although it was true that colonialism had been almost completely defeated, it was also true that the newly freed States had swelled the ranks of developing countries faced with tremendous economic and social problems. That situation deserved the attention of the world community. The Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, at Algiers from 5 to 9 September 1973, was proof of that fact. On the occasion of that Conference, the President of Algeria, Mr. Boumediène had pointed out that many countries felt that political freedom was not enough and that economic freedom was also necessary. The countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America had to fight against the new forms of domination and exploitation, and to do that they had no alternative but to unite in order to defend themselves, since otherwise they would once again be the conquered nations of history. Their desire to assert themselves had already been displayed in the United Nations and had gradually taken shape in the defence of permanent sovereignty over natural resources, its logical consequence. The participation of the developing countries in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor beyond the Limits of National Jurisdiction with a view to holding a conference on the law of the sea, was another affirmation of the will of the peoples to defend, for example, the right of coastal States exclusively to exploit the natural resources of the waters adjacent to their coasts and similarly to preserve their right over the continental shelf, as defined in the relevant 1958 Geneva Convention.<sup>1</sup>

8. The agenda which the General Assembly had assigned to the Fourth Committee (A/C.4/758) and the voluminous report submitted by the Special Committee on its work during the year, chapter IX of which had already been issued (A/9023/Add.3), were unequivocal signs of the arduous task awaiting the Committee. He hoped that members would find adequate measures that would help to accelerate the decolonization process in the world.

9. On behalf of the Committee and on his own behalf, he expressed appreciation to and admiration of Mr. Černík, who had presided over the work of the Committee at the previous session in a most capable manner.

10. He also wished to pay a tribute to the memory of two persons who had been prominent in the fight against colonialism: first, Mr. Amílcar Cabral, legendary heroic fighter, assassinated at the beginning of 1973, and, secondly, Mr. Mangalam Chacko, Assistant to the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs, a tireless worker in the Committee and in the Special Committee.

11. Finally, he extended a warm welcome to the three new States which had been admitted to the Organization at the present session: the German Democratic Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Bahamas.

<sup>1</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 499 (1964), No. 7302.

*Election of the Vice-Chairmen*

12. Mr. IBRAHIM (Sudan), supported by Mr. STOBY (Guyana), nominated Mr. Henricus A. F. Heidweiller (Netherlands) and Mrs. Famah Josephine Joka-Bangura (Sierra Leone) for the posts of Vice-Chairmen.

*Mr. Heidweiller (Netherlands) and Mrs. Joka-Bangura (Sierra Leone) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.*

13. Mr. HEIDWEILLER (Netherlands) congratulated the other officers on their election and thanked the representatives of Sudan and Guyana for having nominated him for the post of Vice-Chairman. He also thanked the Committee for the honour conferred on him.

14. Mrs. JOKA-BANGURA (Sierra Leone) thanked the Committee for the honour conferred on her and expressed her appreciation to the representatives of Sudan and Guyana and to the members of the African group of States. She also congratulated the other officers of the Committee.

*Election of the Rapporteur*

15. Mrs. WEISS (Austria) nominated Mr. Ivan G. Garvalov (Bulgaria) for the post of Rapporteur.

*Mr. Garvalov (Bulgaria) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.*

16. Mr. GARVALOV (Bulgaria), Rapporteur, congratulated the German Democratic Republic, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas on their admission to the United Nations. Bulgaria maintained excellent relations with the German Democratic Republic, and its admission was a recognition that that Socialist State was an important factor in the achievement of peace and international co-operation. The admission of the Bahamas was a success for the United Nations in its efforts to ensure that all colonial peoples exercised their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.

17. He congratulated the other officers of the Committee on their election, thanked the Committee for the honour it had conferred on him and assured members of his full co-operation in carrying out the tasks assigned by the General Assembly.

*Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Decolonization*

18. Mr. TANG (Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Decolonization) welcomed all members of the Fourth Committee and congratulated them on their excellent choice in electing Mr. Díaz González to preside over the work of such an important Committee of the General Assembly. The Chairman's long experience in international affairs and his outstanding qualities as a diplomat were fitting qualifications for so eminent and responsible an office. He also congratulated the Committee on having elected, as Vice-Chairmen, Mr. Heidweiller of the Netherlands and Mrs. Joka-Bangura of Sierra Leone, and, as

Rapporteur, Mr. Garvalov of Bulgaria. There could be no doubt that the choice of such distinguished officers would contribute much to the success of the Committee's work.

19. The problems which the Committee would be called upon to examine during the following weeks were among the most critical and challenging confronting the United Nations. He used those terms advisedly because colonialism—even where it had not led, as it had in Africa, to situations which menaced international peace and security—was none the less contrary to the principles of the Charter and was therefore an obstacle to the strengthening of the Organization. How could one speak of the fundamental right of all peoples to self-determination, freedom and dignity, when it was known that millions of one's fellow-men still lived under colonial rule, deprived of the basic right to manage their own affairs? How could one speak of justice, when colonial people, including women and children, were being massacred? How could one speak of peace, when for more than a decade southern Africa and Guinea (Bissau) had been the scene of barbarous colonial warfare and when the territorial integrity and security of independent African States were being threatened? Finally, how could one hope to attain the goal of universality of membership of the United Nations as long as millions of people in colonial Territories throughout the world were not represented in the Organization as equal and sovereign Members?

20. Thirteen years earlier the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV)) had been adopted with the hope that before long the era of colonialism would be brought to an end. But, contrary to that hope, progress had been painfully slow. There had undoubtedly been some progress—as witnessed by the admission of the Bahamas to membership in the United Nations—but such progress as had occurred in recent years had been limited to a very few Territories. The continuing lack of progress towards the goal of decolonization in the case of Africa had resulted in an explosive situation which not only endangered the peace and security of neighbouring independent States, but also contained elements capable of provoking a serious and extensive confrontation, with consequences spreading far beyond the confines of that continent.

21. As members would see from the reports before the Committee, according to the findings of the Special Committee and the United Nations Council for Namibia the situation in the Territories in southern Africa had further deteriorated during the past year and, with the intensification of colonial warfare, repression and oppression, posed an even more critical threat to international peace and security in the area than before, a threat that had been brought vividly to the attention of the Organization by the action taken by the illegal régime in Southern Rhodesia in January 1973 with regard to the border with Zambia. All the evidence contained in those reports, including in particular the shocking evidence of brutal massacres of villagers in Mozambique, pointed to the fact that the colonialist and racist régimes, acting in collusion, had intensified their oppression of the peoples under their domination in an attempt to stem the tide of national

liberation and to perpetuate their exploitation of the human and other resources of those Territories. That ruthless policy of enslavement of dependent peoples was in direct conflict with the fundamental principles of the United Nations.

22. He had recently visited a number of independent African States and held consultations with Heads of Government, Ministers for Foreign Affairs, officials of the General Secretariat of the Organization of African Unity and the leaders of the national liberation movements concerned.

23. Throughout the countries he had visited, he had found a unanimous determination to free Africa from the last remnants of colonial domination. For their part, the Governments and peoples of those African States felt that they had done their utmost to implement United Nations resolutions on decolonization by carrying out their responsibilities in adherence to the ideals of the Charter, and it could be said that they had been doing so at great sacrifice to themselves. Faced with the intransigence of the colonial and racist régimes, they had seen no alternative but to support the armed struggle of the peoples of the Territories for their liberation and independence, because the perpetuation of colonial rule in Africa, the alliance of the colonial Powers and the escalation of colonial wars constituted a grave threat to the security of the region as a whole.

24. In all his talks with African leaders, he had been impressed by their faith in the United Nations and their belief in its moral force and its ability to bring a rapid end to colonialism, provided that all Member States strictly applied the provisions of the relevant United Nations resolutions. There was a widespread conviction in Africa that, if certain States Members of the United Nations would refrain from supplying arms and other forms of support to the colonial régimes, those régimes would soon be obliged to negotiate for a peaceful settlement. He appealed to all those who felt that their interests lay with the maintenance of the *status quo*, to give thought to what that view represented and to consider the need for a far-sighted policy from which they themselves might benefit in the long run. His talks with the African liberation movements had convinced him that they were resolved to fight their own battles and to continue the struggle to a successful end. However, they warned that the perpetuation of the present situation and the continuation of the armed struggle could eventually result in a total confrontation, which would make future harmonious relations very difficult, if not impossible.

25. He was confident that the Fourth Committee, in its deliberations in the current year, would pay particular attention to the seriousness of those colonial problems in southern Africa and to the urgent need for more effective action in granting assistance to the national liberation movements concerned. His talks with the national liberation movements had convinced him also of the need for the United Nations to intensify its efforts to arouse the consciousness of the world by widely disseminating information on the situation in the colonial Territories.

26. He had spoken at some length on the problems of decolonization in Africa because, without doubt, they were among the most critical and most complex problems before the General Assembly. In addition to the burning issues in Africa, the Committee would, of course, be giving careful attention during the session to the situation which prevailed with regard to the decolonization of the many dependent Territories which still existed in other parts of the world. The fact that many of those Territories were small and situated in remote areas, and had therefore escaped the spotlight of world attention, did not in any way diminish the responsibility of the United Nations to assist in hastening their decolonization, for, as the General Assembly had clearly stated (resolution 2621 (XXV)), the question of territorial size, geographical isolation and limited resources of a Territory should in no way delay the implementation of the Declaration or detract from the inalienable right of its inhabitants to self-determination and freedom from colonial rule.

27. The attainment of the goal of decolonization in many of those Territories presented complex problems calling for individual solutions which could best be developed on the spot in consultation with the inhabitants and on the basis of first-hand information. As the Special Committee had repeatedly emphasized in its conclusions and recommendations, and as past experience had amply demonstrated, the capacity of the United Nations to assist effectively in hastening the process of decolonization was greatly enhanced when the administering Powers cooperated with the Special Committee by permitting the access of visiting missions to the Territories under their administration. In that respect, he wished to commend the example set by the Governments of New Zealand and Australia, which had invited the Special Committee to send visiting missions to certain of the Territories for which they were responsible, and to reiterate the hope expressed by the Secretary-General in his statement at the 894th meeting of the Special Committee on 30 January 1973 that the example set by those two Governments would encourage other administering Powers to take similar action.

28. Three years earlier, the General Assembly had adopted a programme of action for the full implementation of the Declaration (*ibid.*) which called for a number of concrete measures to be undertaken by all Governments, the specialized agencies and other institutions within the United Nations system, and the various United Nations bodies concerned. Since then, the United Nations bodies whose reports would be examined by the Committee had greatly intensified their efforts and had done much to mobilize international support for, and assistance to, the colonial peoples struggling for independence. He was confident that the work of the Committee would result in a further contribution towards the achievement by the dependent peoples of the goals set out in the Declaration.

29. Mr. SUJA (Czechoslovakia) thanked the Chairman and members of the Committee for the kind words that they had addressed to his country and, in particular, to Mr. Černík, who had had the honour to preside over the work of the Committee at the twenty-seventh session and to whom he would transmit that message.

*Tribute to the memory of Mr. Amílcar Cabral, Secretary-General of the Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde, and Mr. Mangalam Chacko, Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Security Council Affairs*

30. Mr. TEYMOUR (Egypt) proposed that the Committee observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of the two great leaders who had died.

*On the proposal of the representative of Egypt, the members of the Committee observed a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of Mr. Amílcar Cabral and Mr. Mangalam Chacko.*

*Organization of work (A/C.4/758, A/C.4/759)*

31. The CHAIRMAN first informed the Committee that a number of members had suggested that the Committee should consider as a matter of priority agenda item 71 (Question of Territories under Portuguese administration). He felt that until he had held consultations it was

inappropriate for the Committee to take a decision on the order in which the other items should be considered.

32. Secondly, he drew attention to document A/C.4/759, in which the Chairman of the Special Committee recommended that the Fourth Committee should invite the leaders of those national liberation movements of the colonial Territories in Africa which were recognized by the Organization of African Unity to continue to participate as observers in its proceedings relating to their respective countries. In that connexion, he announced that a statement of the administrative and financial implications of that recommendation would be circulated shortly. Accordingly, he suggested that a decision on that matter should be postponed.

33. If he heard no objection, he would assume that the Committee accepted his suggestions.

*It was so agreed.*

*The meeting rose at 5 p.m.*

## 2027th meeting

Thursday, 27 September 1973, at 3.45 p.m.

*Chairman:* Mr. Leonardo DIAZ GONZALEZ (Venezuela).

A/C.4/SR.2027

*Organization of work (continued)  
(A/C.4/758, A/C.4/759, A/C.4/L.1033)*

1. Mr. DA COSTA LOBO (Portugal) pointed out that, at the twenty-seventh session (1975th meeting), his delegation had emphasized the illegal nature of the invitation extended to representatives of particular political movements to participate as observers in the work of the Committee. At that time a number of delegations had expressed their opposition to the extending of such invitations, but the proposal had finally been approved and the representatives of the political movements in question had participated at the preceding session. However, the breaking of a rule of the Committee's work did not affect the essence of that rule, and the arguments advanced against the decision taken at the twenty-seventh session continued to be valid at the current session. Consequently the Government of Portugal categorically rejected the proposal contained in document A/C.4/759.

2. Mr. STEWARD (South Africa) said that the Committee had decided the previous year, at its 1975th meeting, to invite representatives of political movements to participate "in an observer capacity" in the Committee's proceedings, after a perfectly reasonable request for a legal opinion to interpret that ambiguous and unprecedented proposal had been overridden by the Committee majority. The Committee was now requested to repeat that decision, although he noted that the individuals had emerged from behind the smokescreen of "observer capacity", to be described in

document A/C.4/L.1033 as observers. The proposal had been and remained illegal. There was no constitutional provision for participation in the debates of the General Assembly or its Committees by representatives of mere political movements in any capacity; only Member States could be represented and only States and international organizations could qualify for observer status. The United Nations was an organization of sovereign States, not a forum for dissidents. The programmes of the movements to which the Committee wished to accord observer status were based on force and the violent overthrow of Governments of States Members of the Organization. The United Nations had been established to prevent force and violence, not to promote them. There was no moral or legal justification within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations for granting any status whatever to those movements, whose objectives were the antithesis of those of the Organization.

3. There was no scarcity throughout the world of dissident movements, dedicated to violent change and illegal action, and thus the Committee would be naïve to assume that the precedent which it was in the process of establishing would be overlooked by other movements in the future. The political implications of that decision would be far-reaching, and countries that were prepared to close their eyes to the commission of an unconstitutional act today would not consider themselves immune from similar treatment in future. It was not surprising, given the unconstitutional basis for the expenditure, that the Advisory Com-