

II. WORK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

A. General

At its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly allocated to the Fourth Committee, under agenda item 19, entitled "Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples", those chapters of the report of the Special Committee 21/ relating to particular Territories. The Assembly also referred to the Fourth Committee the following additional items:

- Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations (99);
- Activities of foreign economic and other interests which are impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in Territories under colonial domination and efforts to eliminate colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination in southern Africa (100);
- Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (101);
- Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories (103).

The General Assembly decided to consider the item entitled "Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)" directly in plenary meeting, on the understanding that bodies and individuals having an interest in the question would be heard in the Fourth Committee. On 13 November 1991, the Assembly decided to defer consideration of the question and to include it in the provisional agenda of its forty-seventh session (decision 46/406).

The General Assembly also decided to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-seventh session the item entitled "Question of East Timor" (decision 46/402).

The Assembly considered other general aspects of decolonization in plenary meetings.

B. Issues considered by the Fourth Committee

1. Organization of work

At the outset of the session, the Fourth Committee elected by acclamation the following officers:22/

Chairman: Mr. Charles Flemming, Permanent Representative of Saint Lucia;

Vice-Chairmen: Mr. Pouta Jacques Beleyi, Ambassador of Togo, and Mr. Khalid Mohammad Al-Baker, Qatar;

Rapporteur: Mr. James L. Kember, New Zealand.

In organizing its work for the session, the Fourth Committee decided to hold two general debates: activities of foreign economic and other interests would be considered together with military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers which might be impeding the implementation of the Declaration. There would be another debate on all remaining agenda items.

In considering the items allocated to it, the Fourth Committee took into account the report of the Special Committee, reports of the Secretary-General on aspects of the items and various communications.

The Fourth Committee held a total of 17 formal and 2 informal meetings. Seventy-seven representatives spoke in the general debate. Statements were made by 7 petitioners. Following its consideration of all the items, the Fourth Committee submitted to the General Assembly five reports containing its recommendations. Eight of the 12 sets of recommendations had been prepared by the Special Committee; seven sets of recommendations were adopted by the Fourth Committee by consensus.

Debate on the Committee's traditional agenda items was intertwined with the debate on the issue of reform of procedures and the form and content of resolutions. These issues, in fact, were central in a majority of statements. Most delegations referred to the conclusions of the informal Working Group established by the Special Committee at the beginning of 1991, which had emphasized the need for reform of the practices of the decolonization bodies in several aspects, including:

(a) Modulation of the language of resolutions as regards issues such as apartheid and singling out certain States for criticism;

(b) Streamlining of the form and content of resolutions;

(c) Streamlining of methods of work, procedures and structure of the Special Committee;

(d) Renewal of cooperation between decolonization organs and administering Powers with special emphasis on the question of United Nations visiting missions.

Of the Committee members participating in the general debate, the majority, including Western and East European States, supported reform. A large minority, comprising Latin American and Asian States, took no position on the question; many African States favoured retention of the status quo, especially as regards the use of strongly condemnatory language relating to apartheid.

As evidence of the tendency towards reform, a significant number of members openly criticized draft resolutions submitted by the Special Committee as being out of step with new political realities and they introduced amendments to those texts.

2. Activities of foreign economic and other interests which are impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in Territories under colonial domination and efforts to eliminate colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination in southern Africa
and
Military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration which might be impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

During the general debate, statements were made by representatives of 23 Member States.^{23/} The Committee also heard a statement by a petitioner, Mr. J.A. González-González.^{24/}

Reflecting the determination of a number of States to guide the Committee in a new direction, many representatives objected to the inclusion of an operative paragraph in the text of the draft resolution prepared by the Special Committee on foreign economic interests, which had been unquestioned in the past. That paragraph stated that foreign investments in general were exploitative and therefore must be condemned. Many speakers called for a more sophisticated assessment of the role of foreign economic interests in Non-Self-Governing Territories.

The relevance of the traditional formulation on the role of military activities of the administering Powers in Non-Self-Governing Territories, which was highly critical, was also questioned by a number of delegations, particularly from Eastern Europe, which in the past had been unwavering in their support of the formulation. New formulations were proposed for several operative paragraphs which tempered the initial draft.

The references to South Africa and apartheid were the most controversial aspect of the drafts on military and economic activities. The majority of African States, as well as a number of other representatives, argued that apartheid was an aspect of colonialism and directly relevant to the Committee's work. Most Western and Eastern European States which found apartheid morally abhorrent and repugnant felt that consideration of the issue diverted the attention of the Committee from the problems of the 18 territories on its agenda. Through a process of negotiation, a compromise text was reached which was agreeable to a majority of States.

Also controversial for many delegations was the paragraph of the draft decision on military activities condemning the acquisition of nuclear weapons capability by South Africa. Delegations which opposed the paragraph argued that South Africa had been quick to adhere to the the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and was cooperating with the International Atomic Energy Agency in the nuclear field. The paragraph was finally adopted by the Fourth Committee without amendment by a separate recorded vote of 61 to 5, with 56 abstentions. The decision as a whole was adopted as amended by a recorded vote of 88 to 33, with 12 abstentions.

3. Specific Territories and other related questions

The Fourth Committee considered specific Territories and other related questions at meetings held between 15 October and 15 November.^{25/} A general debate was held, in which 54 delegations participated. The Committee also heard 5 petitioners, whose names are listed below:

<u>Petitioner</u>	<u>Summary record</u>
<u>New Caledonia</u>	
Mr. Rock Wamytan, FLNKS	A/C.4/46/SR.7
Mr. Yann Céléné Uregei, FULK	A/C.4/46/SR.7
<u>United States Virgin Islands</u>	
Ms. Judith L. Bourne, on behalf of the Save Long Bay Coalition, Inc.	A/C.4/46/SR.7

Petitioner

Summary record

Western Sahara

Mr. Brahim Mohktar, on behalf of the
Frente POLISARIO

A/C.4/46/SR.8

Pitcairn and the Trust Territory
of the Pacific Islands

Mr. J.A. González-González

A/C.4/46/SR.8

General debate

As regards small Territories, most delegations underlined their conviction that such factors as territorial size, geographical location, size of population or lack of resources should not delay the process of self-determination. It was the responsibility of the administering Powers to promote the political, economic and social progress of the inhabitants of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, to protect their cultural and national heritage and to provide educational and training programmes for their educational advancement.

Many members emphasized the importance of visiting missions in securing firsthand information on Territories and ascertaining the true aspirations of the peoples concerning their future status; they called for the continued cooperation of the administering Powers with the Special Committee in that regard.

The majority of those delegations that spoke on the question of Western Sahara supported the joint efforts of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) aimed at bringing about a peaceful solution to the question, as well as the adoption of Security Council resolution 690 (1991) of 29 April 1991 and the entry into force of the cease-fire agreement. Algeria stated that the establishment of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and the cooperation of the United Nations and OAU in its implementation constituted an important factor in the peace process. Algeria would make a voluntary contribution of \$10 million for the implementation of the settlement plan. The position of Morocco was that no action should be taken by the Fourth Committee while the question was being considered by the Security Council.

In respect of New Caledonia, the majority of delegations considered that progress had been made. Members of the South Pacific Forum that are also Members of the United Nations emphasized the importance of promoting equitable political, economic and social development in the Territory. Regional heads

of Government had stressed that all options, including independence, must be open to the people of New Caledonia in exercising their right to self-determination. The representative of France, in reviewing the progress in New Caledonia over the past three years, stated that the Territory had enjoyed stability and civil peace. It had benefited from a large measure of decentralization, and special emphasis was given to training, as well as to social and economic development. The Assemblies of the three provinces of New Caledonia, elected by direct universal suffrage in June 1989, enjoyed extensive powers and the means to exercise them. The representative of France reiterated the reservations of his Government regarding the competence of the United Nations to deal with the question.

The Fourth Committee adopted without objection a draft resolution on the question 26/ which had been prepared by the Special Committee.

With regard to the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, the Fourth Committee, on the proposal of the Chairman, decided not to take any action at that stage on a draft resolution submitted by the Special Committee.26/

As a result of the concerns expressed by a number of delegations regarding the need for further cooperation and coordination of the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations in addressing the specific problems and needs of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, a draft resolution entitled "Cooperation and coordination of specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations in their assistance to Non-Self-Governing Territories" was adopted in the Fourth Committee by consensus.26/

In respect of the item relating to the specialized agencies, many delegations noted that those agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations had played a positive role in contributing towards the development of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, and they drew attention to the need to continue to provide that assistance on a more systematic basis. The Fourth Committee adopted a draft resolution on the item, submitted to it by the Special Committee.27/

Summary of resolutions and decisions

On 11 December 1991, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Fourth Committee, adopted a number of resolutions and decisions (see annex for voting record), a brief summary of which is given below.

In respect of its resolution on offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories (resolution 46/66), the General Assembly invited all States to make or continue to make generous offers of study and training facilities to the inhabitants of Territories that had not yet attained self-government or independence and to provide travel funds to prospective students. It urged the administering Powers to take effective measures to ensure the widespread and continuous dissemination of information relating to offers of study and training facilities.

By its resolution 46/67, relating to the question of Western Sahara, the General Assembly welcomed the unanimous adoption by the Security Council of resolution 690 (1991), by which the Council approved the report submitted by the Secretary-General on 19 April 1991 28/ and decided to establish, under its authority, a United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara; also welcomed the entry into force of the cease-fire in Western Sahara on 6 September 1991, in accordance with the proposal of the Secretary-General accepted by the Kingdom of Morocco and POLISARIO; endorsed the call by the Security Council to the two parties to continue to cooperate fully with the Secretary-General; 29/ paid tribute to the Secretary-General for his efforts with a view to settling the question of Western Sahara and expressed its full support of his efforts for the organization and supervision by the United Nations, in cooperation with OAU, of a referendum for self-determination of the people of Western Sahara, in accordance with the objectives mentioned in his report of 19 April 1991; and requested the Special Committee to continue to consider the situation and to report thereon to the Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

In respect of the resolution relating to cooperation and coordination of specialized agencies (resolution 46/70), the General Assembly invited the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations to increase their participation in the debates of the Assembly on the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, with a view to apprising it of their development programmes in those Territories and thereby facilitating more informed comments on their work. It requested the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures for promoting and expanding cooperation and coordination among the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations in their assistance to Non-Self-Governing Territories and to report to the Assembly at its forty-seventh session on the implementation of the resolution.

By its consensus on the question of Gibraltar (decision 46/420), the General Assembly took note that the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Governments of Spain and the United Kingdom had held annual meetings alternatively in each capital,

and urged both Governments to continue their negotiations with the object of reaching a definitive solution to the problem of Gibraltar.

Summaries of General Assembly resolutions 46/63 to 46/65, 46/68 A and B and 46/69 as well as decisions 46/419, 46/421 and 46/422 (see annex for titles), which were prepared by the Special Committee, are contained in section I of this bulletin.

C. Issues considered in plenary meeting

Thirteen delegations participated in the general debate on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (agenda item 19). They pointed out that the Declaration had helped to change the fate of many colonial countries by providing a basis for the struggle of oppressed peoples for their liberation.

Many representatives believed that despite many accomplishments, the objectives of the Declaration had not been fully met and the process of decolonization had not been completed. A great deal remained to be done before colonialism, racism and apartheid in all its forms and manifestations could finally be eliminated.

Many delegations considered that the problems of most of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories, most of which were small island Territories, were unique. It was evident that the inherent right of each of those Territories to decide its political future for itself was of utmost importance to the peoples concerned. It was the responsibility of the administering Powers to protect the vulnerable economies and ecologies of those islands, while providing the people with the opportunity to determine freely, from a well-informed standpoint, what they perceived to be in their best interest. The Special Committee was responsible for enabling the true interests of colonial peoples to be realized.

In the course of their statements, representatives made reference to the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, 1990-2000, which had been declared by the General Assembly by its resolution 43/47 of 22 November 1988.

Many delegations addressed the need for re-evaluating the work of the United Nations in the field of decolonization in connection with the remaining 18 Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories. In that connection, the relationship between the Special Committee and regional and subregional organizations, such as the South Pacific Forum and the Caribbean Community, should be strengthened. Delegations stressed the need for the dispatch of visiting missions to assess the situation in the

Territories and the importance of the cooperation of the administering Powers in that regard. Seminars held in the areas where Non-Self-Governing Territories were concentrated could be major channels for the dissemination of information to the people of the Territories.

On 11 December 1991, the General Assembly adopted a 21-Power draft resolution on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples 30/ by which, among other things, it renewed the mandate of the Special Committee in relation to the implementation of the Declaration with respect to the remaining colonial Territories (resolution 46/71, adopted by 137 votes to 2, with 22 abstentions). On the same day, the Assembly adopted, by 143 votes to 2, with 16 abstentions, a 23-Power draft resolution concerning the dissemination of information on decolonization (resolution 46/72), in which it called for a series of action-oriented programmes.

On 19 December 1991, the General Assembly, by adopting resolution 46/181 without objection, endorsed as a Plan of Action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism the proposals contained in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General dated 13 December 1991.31/

Notes

- 1/ A/AC.109/L.1755.
- 2/ A/AC.109/L.1756.
- 3/ For the explanation of its non-participation, see Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 23 (A/41/23), chap. I, paras. 76 and 77.
- 4/ A/AC.109/1085.
- 5/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 23 (A/46/23), chap. VIII, para. 29.
- 6/ Ibid., chap. X, para. 14.
- 7/ Ibid., chap. IX, para. 23.
- 8/ Ibid., paras. 23 and 24.
- 9/ Ibid., chap. III, para. 15.
- 10/ A/AC.109/L.1768 and Corr.1.
- 11/ A/AC.109/L.1436, A/AC.109/L.1519, A/AC.109/L.1571, A/AC.109/L.1598, A/AC.109/L.1633, A/AC.109/L.1676, A/AC.109/L.1703 and A/AC.109/L.1746.
- 12/ A/AC.109/L.1572 and Corr.1 and 2.
- 13/ A/AC.109/1088.
- 14/ A/AC.109/1073, A/AC.109/1075, A/AC.109/1077 and A/AC.109/1078.
- 15/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 23 (A/46/23), chap. IV, para. 11.
- 16/ Ibid., chap. V, para. 10.
- 17/ A/46/229.
- 18/ A/AC.109/L.1761 and E/1991/116.
- 19/ A/AC.109/L.1760.
- 20/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 23 (A/46/23), chap. VI, para. 17.
- 21/ Ibid., Supplement No. 23 (A/46/23).

22/ See A/C.4/46/SR.1 and 2.

23/ See A/C.4/46/SR.2-6 and 14-17.

24/ See A/C.4/46/SR.4.

25/ See A/C.4/46/SR.7-17.

26/ See A/46/629.

27/ See A/46/627.

28/ S/22464 and Corr.1; for the printed text, see Official Records of the Security Council, Forty-sixth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1991.

29/ S/21360; for the printed text, see Official Records of the Security Council Forty-fifth Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1990.

30/ A/46/L.27 and Corr.1 and Add.1.

31/ A/46/634/Rev.1.

Annex

RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
AT ITS FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

A. Resolutions

<u>Resolution</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Voting</u>
46/63	Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations	157-0-3
46/64	Activities of foreign economic and other interests which are impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in Territories under colonial domination and efforts to eliminate colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination in southern Africa	109-34-16
46/65	Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations	115-28-17
46/66	Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories	without objection
46/67	Question of Western Sahara	without a vote
46/68 A and B	Questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Tokelau, Turks and Caicos Islands and United States Virgin Islands	without objection
46/69	Question of New Caledonia	without objection

<u>Resolution</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Voting</u>
46/70	Cooperation and coordination of specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations in their assistance to Non-Self-Governing Territories	without objection
46/71	Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples	137-2-22
46/72	Dissemination of information on decolonization	143-2-16
46/181	International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism	without objection

B. Decisions

<u>Decision</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Voting</u>
46/419	Military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration which might be impeding the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples	108-34-16
46/420	Question of Gibraltar	without objection
46/421	Question of Pitcairn	without objection
46/422	Question of St. Helena	120-2-38