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DECOLONIZATION



A publication
of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs,
Trusteeship and Decolonization

No. 24
December 1985

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING
OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

Commemorative activities of the General Assembly
at its fortieth session

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I. INTRODUCTION

At the conclusion of the 1985 session 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, the Chairman of the Committee, Ambassador Abdul G. Koroma of Sierra Leone, remarked:

"It is befitting the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration this year that the Committee has been able to agree to put forward for consideration by the General Assembly the text of a draft resolution ^{1/} encompassing all the fundamentals in the unceasing process of decolonization. In adopting the draft resolution, the Assembly would uphold the validity of the objectives of the Declaration and reiterate the collateral responsibility of Member States and the United Nations and its system of organizations in that regard ...".

The subsequent adoption by the General Assembly at its fortieth anniversary session of the draft resolution without a single dissenting vote indeed represented the culmination of a series of activities undertaken by the Special Committee and other United Nations bodies concerned, as well as organizations of the United Nations system and the Secretariat, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 39/93 of 14 December 1984, marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

A detailed account of the activities during 1985 of the Special Committee in observance of the anniversary is contained in Decolonization Bulletin No. 23 of October 1985. An account of the related activities of the General Assembly at its 1985 session is given below.

II. STATEMENTS MADE AT THE SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE MEETING IN OBSERVANCE OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION

At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 20 September 1985, the General Assembly, on the basis of the consultations held by its President and the Chairman of the Special Committee, decided that the Assembly, during its special commemorative plenary meetings for the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, should hold, on 16 October 1985, the special commemorative meeting in observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration, in accordance with its resolution 39/93 of 14 December 1984. The statements made on that occasion are summarized below.

A. President of the General Assembly

The President of the General Assembly stated that truly dynamic changes had taken place in world affairs as a result of the evolving process of decolonization: during the short span of 40 years the number of dependent peoples had diminished from some 800 million to fewer than 3 million, while the membership of the Organization had trebled.

The sweeping changes thus brought about in the geo-politics of the world had as their foundation the basic tenets embodied in the Charter of the United Nations: respect for the principles of equal rights and the self-determination of peoples and human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. In order to attain those fundamental objectives, the United Nations had resolved to be, and became, a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations.

The realization that accelerated international action had to be taken to meet the rising aspirations of the peoples of dependent Territories had led to the adoption by the General Assembly in 1960 of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and to the establishment in 1961 of the Special Committee entrusted with the task of following its implementation. The Special Committee, serving over the past 25 years as a focal point of the conscience of the international community in support of peoples under colonial rule, had greatly facilitated the emergence of scores of newly independent States.

Today, the foremost concern of the world community centred on developments in and around Namibia and the rapidly deteriorating situation in South Africa itself. The course of action to be taken in that regard had been clearly charted in numerous decisions and resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly. In order to prevent chaos in the region, the Organization must act forthwith and decisively to bring about the faithful implementation of those decisions and resolutions.

With regard to other colonial Territories in various parts of the world, the Special Committee would no doubt, with the necessary co-operation of the administering Powers, continue to contribute to the speedy attainment by the peoples of those Territories of the purposes of the Charter and of the Declaration in all their aspects.

The President was confident that the organizations of the United Nations system would, within their respective spheres of competence, continue to strengthen their programmes of assistance to the peoples concerned.

It was incumbent upon the international community to redouble its efforts to bring about the full and speediest possible implementation of the Declaration and the elimination of the remaining vestiges of colonialism.

B. Secretary-General

The Secretary-General stated that, by adopting the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the General Assembly had helped to accelerate the historic march towards greater freedom promised by the United Nations Charter 15 years earlier. Evoking the themes of the Charter, the Assembly had recognized that there was a passionate yearning for freedom among all dependent peoples, that those peoples had the right to self-determination, and that by virtue of that right they should freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

The Special Committee, established to oversee the implementation of the Declaration, had been at the centre of the efforts of the General Assembly to speed up the progress of dependent peoples towards self-government and independence. It had evolved innovative procedures and practices, whereby the co-operation of the administering Powers had been elicited. In particular, the sending of visiting missions and the observation or supervision of democratic processes by the United Nations, such as elections, plebiscites and referendums, in co-operation with the administering Powers, had greatly enhanced the capacity of the Organization to promote and protect the interests of the peoples concerned.

Notwithstanding its singular success in the decolonization process, a peaceful settlement in Namibia continued to elude the United Nations, for reasons which the Security Council had described as irrelevant and extraneous. The special responsibility of the United Nations for Namibia imposed on all Member States an obligation to redouble their efforts to ensure a peaceful settlement of the Namibian situation.

The Secretary-General once again urged the Government of South Africa in particular, and all others in a position to help, to make a renewed and determined effort to expedite the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), so that the people of Namibia could exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence without further delay.

While Namibia was of deep concern to the United Nations, there also remained other Territories to which the Declaration applied. Certain of those Territories were small in size, limited in resources or remotely located. Those difficulties, however, should not be allowed to retard their political and economic advancement. On the contrary, special attention should be paid to assisting them in overcoming their problems so that their inhabitants could exercise the same inalienable rights as peoples elsewhere.

The process of decolonization for some Territories posed complex and controversial problems, and in such circumstances it was essential to bear in mind that without some degree of flexibility on the part of all concerned viable solutions might remain elusive.

The Organization had arrived at a stage which was very difficult to envisage clearly when it was founded. Its membership was now practically universal, thanks to the fact that scores of newly independent countries had rallied to the Charter of the United Nations. The Organization had benefited greatly from the principle of universality and from it had flowed much of the authority for collective action in a number of fields. It was the responsibility of each Member State to make the Organization work effectively, to gear its efforts towards the achievement of goals that were in line with the Charter and the obligations thereunder. Only thus would the Organization maintain a central relevance to international life. Only thus would the achievements of the first 40 years, including the noble process of decolonization, endure and blossom fully in a world of peace, justice and human advancement.

C. Chairman 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

Forty years ago the drafters of the Charter of the United Nations, imbued with the belief in the equality of human beings and with the conviction that the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories had an inalienable right to self-determination, and that colonialism in whatever form represented a denial of fundamental human rights and a manifestation of injustice, had proclaimed that one of the purposes of the United Nations was:

"To develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples,"

and had prescribed a specific role to be played by the Organization to enable the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories to exercise their right to self-determination and ultimately to put an end to colonialism in all its forms and manifestations.

Concomitant with the basic principles enshrined in the Charter and in response to the yearning aspirations of dependent peoples for political freedom and economic advancement, the General Assembly had adopted in 1960 the now famous Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. That Declaration had simultaneously signified a reaffirmation by the community of nations of faith in the dignity and worth of the human person, while giving hope and faith to millions of people throughout the world who were still living under colonial rule.

In reviewing the pace of decolonization over the past 25 years, Member States could take just pride in the fact that, as a result of the continuing process of decolonization, the United Nations was far more representative, far closer to the goal of universality and a stronger body than at its creation four decades ago. As its membership had increased, the role of the United Nations in support of dependent peoples

had been exemplary and often crucial, and dependent peoples had continued to invest their hopes and trust in the Organization. That role reflected the commitment of the United Nations which the Declaration symbolized.

The results of tireless and unremitting efforts during the past 25 years were to be seen in the fact that over 150 million people of some 50 former colonial Territories had emerged from dependent status during that period, and the majority of those new nations had since joined the membership of the United Nations. The Special Committee had played an important role in that process.

During the second decade after the adoption of the Declaration, the pace of the process of decolonization accelerated, and some 25 Territories had emerged as free and independent States.

The positive results achieved in the process of decolonization elsewhere during the past 25 years remained overshadowed by the grave situation still prevailing in Namibia. Despite efforts on the part of the international community, the people of the Territory had still not achieved their basic rights and fundamental freedoms. At the current stage of the Namibian conflict, the international community must resort to every available means to ensure that the Namibian people exercised their legitimate right to self-determination and independence. Furthermore, it must continue to give its unequivocal moral, political and material support to the Namibian people, under the leadership of their national liberation movement, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO).

Some 3 million people still remained under colonial rule, over one third of whom lived in Namibia under a very reprehensible form of repression. Only when the true aspirations of all dependent peoples were fulfilled and colonialism had been eradicated from the face of the earth, could the United Nations afford to feel a full measure of satisfaction.

As the day moved closer when the last vestiges of colonialism would be eradicated, it was necessary, now more than ever, to ensure that the genuine interests of the inhabitants of those remaining Territories continued to be of paramount concern. The United Nations must do its utmost to bring about the free and unrestricted conditions which would enable the peoples concerned to express their true aspirations and, at the same time, ensure that the national unity and the territorial integrity of those Territories were fully respected and safeguarded.

The Chairman paid a special tribute to the thousands of known and unknown heroes who had sacrificed their lives in the cause of freedom, justice and independence and to those in southern Africa who had been subjected to persecution for the cause of peace and freedom.

On the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations and on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration, the Chairman urged Member States to pledge anew their determination to assist effectively all colonial peoples in the attainment of their right to self-determination and independence in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

D. Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid
and the Group of African States

The Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, Ambassador Joseph Garba of Nigeria, speaking also in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of African States, stated that the Declaration was rightly considered a landmark in the history of the United Nations, for through it tremendous progress had been made in the difficult and painful task of decolonization. Such progress had resulted in the attainment of national independence by a large number of States, all of which had since taken their rightful place in the community of nations. The increase in the membership of the Organization had reinforced the principle of universality from which it derived its strength.

Despite the laudable achievement, however, a sizeable number of Territories were still under colonial subjugation and the peoples of those Territories, particularly those of South Africa and Namibia, were being denied the opportunity to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination.

The Special Committee against Apartheid and the Group of African States were disturbed by the situation in southern Africa, where the indigenous black population of South Africa and Namibia, which constituted the overwhelming majority, continued to be subjected to the degrading and harrowing experience of apartheid domination. The perpetrator of the dual act of criminality was the racist minority régime in Pretoria, aided and abetted by its Western allies.

The events recently unfolding in South Africa had given cause for both hope and concern. On the one hand, the international community was more hopeful than ever as it witnessed the foundation of the apartheid system crumbling, which gave a clear indication that the years, if not the days, of apartheid were numbered. On the other hand, it was gravely concerned that the régime had intensified further its brutality and ruthlessness as a sequel to its imposition of the so-called state of emergency in the summer of 1985. The continuing wave of massacres of defenceless black men, women and children was gathering new force. It was acknowledged even in the régime's official account that about 800 black people had been killed by its police and military machinery during 1985. Thousands were languishing in detention without trial and hundreds were being tortured daily. Their only crime was that they sought to exercise their right to self-determination - the right which the United Nations had declared to be inalienable 25 years ago when it had adopted the Declaration.

The situation was not much different from the pathetic one prevalent in Namibia, a Territory for which South Africa's Mandate had been terminated 19 years ago but over which South Africa had continued to exercise authority. South Africa's continued illegal occupation of Namibia, in violation of relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, was a serious challenge to the

United Nations. As the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations was being commemorated, serious thought should be given to that unprecedented challenge to the authority of the Organization. Namibia remained a classic colonial problem and should be seen in that context in the efforts to resolve it. The attempts to portray it in contexts different from that must be repudiated.

The Pretoria régime had defied the international community successfully and with impunity. In so doing, the régime had been continuously shielded by its Western allies, particularly those that were permanent members of the Security Council. The Council's attempts to take adequate measures against the régime had been frustrated on countless occasions through the use of the veto by those members. With that immunity accorded it, the régime had not stopped at dominating and subjugating the blacks in South Africa and Namibia but had in fact gone a step further by launching unprovoked armed attacks against independent neighbouring States.

Despite the numerous calls made by the General Assembly for the imposition of sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Security Council had not been able to act because of the positions of the two ardent supporters of the racist régime. It was a matter of deep regret that those same countries, which often proclaimed the superiority of their values of freedom and democracy and which had arrogated to themselves the apostleship of democratic choice, should become the celebrated defenders of such a pariah régime as that in Pretoria because of narrow economic expediency and short-sighted strategic considerations. The Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid sincerely hoped that those States would reconsider their positions and join the majority of Member States in order to facilitate action by the Security Council to expedite the decolonization of Namibia and the eradication of apartheid. No occasion seemed more suitable for them to do so than the current session, which marked not only the fortieth anniversary of the Organization but also the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

E. Acting President of the United Nations Council for Namibia

The Acting President of the United Nations Council for Namibia, Ambassador Noel G. Sinclair of Guyana, stated that, in observing the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration, the General Assembly was celebrating what was one of the more successful aspects of the work of the Organization. The Declaration was not only the freedom charter of peoples under colonial domination; it had also laid the groundwork for the development of law in some of the most vital areas of relations between States and peoples.

The adoption by the General Assembly in 1960 of the Declaration had been a historic step in the development of international law with regard to self-determination. Whereas in the Charter the self-determination of peoples was stated as a principle, the Declaration of 1960 proclaimed that self-determination was a right which all peoples possessed. The Declaration itself did not confer the right of self-determination. That right, like other rights, predated that Declaration; it predated even the creation of the Organization.

The evolution in law which had taken place following the adoption of the Declaration in 1960 had been clear and unambiguous. Since decolonization was more than a political phenomenon, it was both relevant and necessary, in analysing that evolution, to recall related decisions of the General Assembly, such as the adoption of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and, of course, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

Those instruments, including the Declaration of 1960, together reflected a generalized awareness by the international community that colonialism constituted a denial of human rights and of fundamental political freedoms, and an awareness of a number of rules, which, among other things, provided that the fate of a territory should be determined by the people who live in that territory, that the resources of a territory were owned and should be controlled by the people of that territory and consequently that the exercise of such control was an essential aspect of the exercise of political sovereignty, and that the pursuit of racial policies to perpetuate political domination was a violation of international law. As had been pointed out by the Secretary-General, the United Nations was entitled to feel a measure of pride for creating an international consciousness of the imperative of decolonization. Indeed, the United Nations system and the Special Committee on decolonization, as both its conscience and its activator in that regard, had rendered service of inestimable value.

No one could argue against the contention that in contemporary international law the pursuit of colonial policies was illegal and that peoples subjected to colonial domination had the right to struggle to free themselves therefrom.

In 1960, some of the colonial Powers had withheld their support from General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). Those attitudes were not surprising at the time. It was certainly an indication of the manner in which historical attitudes had evolved over the years that those very Powers were now expressing support, however measured, for the objectives of the Declaration.

As the United Nations marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration, it should use the opportunity to rededicate its energies to pursuing aggressively that part of its task which was still incomplete, focusing its attention first of all on Namibia.

The General Assembly, the Security Council and the International Court of Justice, each acting independently of the other two, had proclaimed that South Africa's continued presence in the Territory was illegal and that South Africa was therefore under obligation to withdraw so that the people of Namibia could accede to independence. Security Council resolution 435 (1978) provided the framework for such withdrawal and accession. But, above all, there was the consideration that the people of Namibia had a fundamental, inalienable right to self-determination. That right had been proclaimed in the Declaration on decolonization in 1960. The United Nations Council for Namibia hoped that the commemorative meeting would serve as an additional pressure on South Africa to co-operate in implementing Security Council resolution 435 (1978) and that it would bring home to those States which, by their actions, still gave support to South Africa in its continuing occupation of the Territory the urgency of the need for them to respect the principles of international law and of justice where Namibia was concerned.

The need for respect for the principles of justice was most dramatically seen in the case of South Africa, where the oppressed people were daily, with growing courage, defying the apartheid régime in their struggle even for the enjoyment of their right to be treated as human beings. The process by which people through the ages had freed themselves from alien domination was inexorably at work in South Africa, and it was hoped that the people of that country would be free in the shortest possible time.

The decolonization agenda also included a number of Territories with peculiar characteristics of size, geographic location and population which would require innovative approaches by the Special Committee and by the administering Powers concerned. There was a consensus, however, that those factors should not constitute an obstacle to the full implementation of the Declaration, and the international community looked forward to the early removal of their names from the agenda of the Committee.

The United Nations Council for Namibia hoped that the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration would serve to stimulate a total and active involvement in support of the early and complete eradication of colonialism from the face of the earth and the establishment of a régime of freedom and justice not only for some but for all peoples.

F. Chairman of the Group of Asian States

Ambassador Dia-Allah El-Fattal of the Syrian Arab Republic, speaking on behalf of the Group of Asian States, stated that the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration was an expression of the solidarity of the States Members of the Organization and their commitment to accelerating the achievement by all countries still subjected to foreign colonialism of their national independence and freedom, without any pre-conditions. It was a commemoration in which States renewed their commitment to the implementation of the objectives and principles of the Declaration, including the principle that all colonized countries must be liberated. Those principles were included in the Charter of the United Nations. Subsequently, General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) enshrined those principles very clearly and gave new impetus to the process of decolonization, encouraging the struggle of colonized peoples for self-determination and independence.

One needed only to glance at the list of Members of the United Nations to see that the struggle against colonialism had had a tremendous effect on international life. The Group of Asian States had benefited greatly from that struggle, since many Territories from that region had become Members of the United Nations - the body which the peoples of the world regarded as embodying the hopes for the attainment of freedom and independence by millions of persons living under foreign colonialist rule.

The fate of no colonized Territory could be decided without taking into account the freely expressed aspirations and wishes of the people of that Territory. It was the will of those heroic peoples and their determination to continue their struggle that, in the final analysis, had enabled, and would continue to enable, those peoples to overcome the intransigence of colonialism.

Despite those positive developments, the United Nations was still seeking the means to ensure the fulfilment of the aspirations of millions of persons in some 18 Territories that still did not enjoy self-government. More than 4 million people from Palestine as well continued to be deprived of their legitimate rights in their homeland. More than 20 million Africans in South Africa and Namibia were still being subjected to the worst forms of discrimination, repression and racist military occupation. They were deprived of the right to their own nationality and were subjected to repression and humiliation in their own homelands. The area as a whole continued to be one of the worst examples of traditional colonialism in its most extreme form.

States members of the Asian Group were convinced that that commemoration would give new impetus to the Special Committee of 24 to bring about the implementation of the Declaration. They were equally convinced that the Committee would continue with its excellent work until the last vestiges of colonialism were eradicated from the earth. Members of the Group hoped that that would be achieved in the shortest possible time.

G. Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States

Ambassador Guennadi I. Oudovenko of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, speaking on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, said that the twentieth century had been the era of the collapse of colonial empires and the emancipation of dependent countries and peoples from their age-old status of colonial slavery. Among the extremely important stages in the liberation struggle in the century were the great October socialist Revolution, the victory of the peace-loving peoples in the Second World War and, as a result of the great victory, the establishment of the United Nations. Those historic events had established conditions favourable to a powerful upsurge in the struggle of oppressed and dependent peoples for national liberation.

The adoption by the United Nations in 1960 of the historic Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, on the initiative of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, had marked the beginning of a new stage in the process of the liberation of peoples who had been living in the chains of colonial slavery. The Declaration was a powerful stimulus and lent moral and political support to the struggle of colonial peoples for freedom and independence. In the 25 years since its adoption, great successes had been achieved in implementing its goals. There had been a final collapse of the colonial empires, and from their ruins had arisen dozens of new States. Many peoples of Africa, Asia, the Americas and Oceania had embarked on the path of independent development and social renewal.

Those new States had been welcomed into the international community as full partners on an equal basis. Their international authority was growing, as was their positive contribution to solving world problems. That was a great achievement by the peoples of the world and an important step along the road towards the total elimination of colonialism.

Despite the significant successes of national liberation movements, colonialism had not been completely eradicated. It continued to poison the international atmosphere and was a dangerous source of tension and conflict. The stubborn resistance of the colonial Powers to the full implementation of the Declaration had its roots in the very nature of imperialism and in that system's political, economic and military-strategic interests. The existence of colonialism created conditions highly favourable to the huge profits monopolist capital and transnational corporations were able to gain by stealing the natural resources of peoples and by exploiting the populations of the colonial Territories. The unwillingness of the aggressive forces of imperialism to acknowledge whole-heartedly that all States had a right to sovereignty and genuine independence, to free self-determination and development, and the attempts of those forces to impose their will upon peoples and continue their economic exploitation represented one of the main threats to the peoples of the world and created a threat to international peace and security.

That policy was the main reason why colonialism persisted and why the sacred right to self-determination and independence was still only a dream for the peoples of the remaining colonial Territories. The racist South African régime was continuing its occupation of Namibia, exploiting that Territory's natural and human resources and attempting to destroy its national liberation movement under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), the sole legitimate representative of the Namibian people.

For many years the Pretoria régime, with the assistance of the United States of America and some other Western countries, had been impeding the implementation of United Nations decisions on granting independence to Namibia. The socialist countries advocated the immediate exercise by the people of Namibia of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence, the immediate and complete withdrawal of the occupation forces and of the colonial administration of South Africa from Namibia, and the transfer of full power to the people of Namibia as represented by SWAPO.

The socialist countries condemned the attempts of the Pretoria authorities to direct the solution of that colonial problem along neo-colonialist lines, through a so-called internal settlement and through the creation of a puppet régime in Namibia. The socialist countries supported Security Council resolution 566 (1985) and other United Nations decisions that rejected linkage between independence for Namibia and extraneous issues.

The basis for a political solution to the question of Namibia was Security Council resolution 435 (1978), the immediate implementation of which must be undertaken without any changes, any reservations or any prior conditions whatsoever.

In celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration, the international community could not be silent as regards the question of the inhumane policy of apartheid, which had been extended by the racist régime of South Africa to Namibia. The policy and the practice of apartheid were incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations.

Encountering the unrestrained growth of resistance by the African people of South Africa to the apartheid régime and actually losing control over the situation in the country, the ruling circles of South Africa were attempting to strengthen their position with the help of military adventures. There were more frequent and more intensive acts of aggression by Pretoria against independent African States, to perpetuate colonialism in Namibia and to stifle the aspirations of the African peoples to freedom, independence and social progress.

To attempt to stop the will of the African peoples to freedom was a hopeless and doomed cause. The socialist countries unfailingly stood at the side of the peoples of Africa, who were defending their right independently to determine their own social, economic and political development. They stood in solidarity with the front-line States, which were opposing the neo-colonialist manoeuvres of the imperialists and racists; they decisively supported the struggle of the national liberation movements in southern Africa.

The Security Council should have an authoritative say in restoring legality and order to southern Africa. The United Nations should strive for the full observance by all States of the embargo established by the Security Council on the delivery of arms and military equipment to the racist régime of South Africa and the embargo against any co-operation with Pretoria in the production and development of nuclear weapons. The socialist countries supported the demand immediately to impose mandatory comprehensive sanctions against South Africa in accordance with Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

Unswervingly observing all decisions and recommendations of the United Nations intended to isolate and boycott the Pretoria régime, the socialist countries maintained no relations with the régime. They condemned the policy of a number of Western countries of maintaining and developing co-operation with that régime; they condemned the policy of so-called constructive engagement with South Africa and the violation by that régime of decisions adopted by the Security Council and the United Nations. They condemned the position of those Western countries that verbally denounced apartheid and its crimes but in reality hindered the adoption of effective measures to curb the racists in South Africa.

There remained the unsolved question of decolonization of a number of so-called small colonial Territories. The strategic military position of those Territories and the militaristic plans of the most aggressive circles of imperialism were the real reasons behind the stubborn attempts made by the Administering Authorities to preserve their remaining colonial possessions.

Also of serious concern was the policy of splitting up and annexing the strategic Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The islands and the peoples of Micronesia had had imposed upon them a free association status that was neo-colonialist in nature. The militarization of Micronesia, and its transformation into a military nuclear base for the United States, ran counter to the aspirations of the States of the area to establish a nuclear-free zone in the southern part of the Pacific Ocean. In accordance with the Charter, any change in the status of a strategic Trust Territory could be carried out only by decision of the Security Council.

The military activities of the colonial Powers in Territories under their administration were of a particularly dangerous nature. Hence the United Nations must, in keeping with decisions already taken, demand

decisively that the colonial Powers end all military activities that were incompatible with or ran counter to the Charter and the Declaration, including the immediate elimination of all military bases on colonial and dependent Territories.

The socialist States supported the demand of the developing countries that the elimination of colonialism be extended to the economic sphere, as well as the demand that economic relations be restructured on a just and democratic basis, and the demand for the establishment of a new international economic order. Those just demands were being blocked by the imperialist Powers, which had decided on a policy of undermining equitable economic co-operation and of using a policy of diktat in international economic relations.

The socialist countries fully acknowledged the inalienable right of peoples under the oppression of colonialism to struggle by all means available at their disposal, including armed struggle, against those who suppressed their legitimate aspirations to liberty, self-determination and independence.

H. Chairman of the Group of Latin American States

Ambassador Alfredo Canales of Chile, on behalf of the Group of Latin American States, affirmed that the dynamics of history had shown that because of his origins as a social creature man instinctively sought independence for his community and sought to earn a livelihood for himself and for the group of which he was a part. That characteristic of human nature had prompted nations, throughout history, to throw off the colonial yoke laid upon them by other peoples and to seek their own identity. On the long road to the achievement of those goals - goals born with the birth of mankind - peoples had had to appeal to the courage and wisdom of their most enlightened sons. That stage had been marked by the valour of warriors.

The Latin American States were no exception to that rule of history; more than 160 years ago they fought with sacrifice, vigour and dedication to attain their identity. Many of the greatest Latin Americans of the time had sacrificed their lives for that noble cause; to them a tribute was due today.

But more often than not, that heroic course had of necessity been sown with the seeds of confrontation. Thus, the idea of an international community had gradually been developed, along with an awareness that efforts had to be made to ensure that the just aims of peoples did not have to be achieved through war.

When 40 years ago the world had emerged from an unprecedented conflict, the survivors had pledged to eradicate the scourge of war and to stand together in their determination to build a better world. But it was necessary to understand that there would be no better world and no

end to bloodshed unless a civilized, peaceful way was sought for colonial peoples to achieve their independence without recourse to armed struggle. That had led to international recognition of the principle of the right to self-determination, and in that framework lay the efforts of the United Nations to make it possible for nations that had been colonies to attain, through the exercise of the right to self-determination, their desired freedom. General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) was the corner-stone of that peaceful process, and its implementation was the finest example of the achievements of the United Nations during its 40 years of existence.

Resolution 1514 (XV) had helped peoples exercise their right to self-determination in the fullest possible way; in cases where some of them, as nations, had freely and in a sovereign manner expressed their wish not to accede to independence and to exist in a status chosen by the majority, that wish had been respected and recognized. The Special Committee of 24 had played a primary role in the implementation of the goals attained through resolution 1514 (XV).

But regrettably there were still peoples denied the opportunity to attain their identity. The most serious case was that of Namibia, where, despite international resolutions adopted by a wide variety of bodies, an archaic colonial system continued to be imposed upon the people; that was a throw-back to a past which should have disappeared long ago. On behalf of Latin America and the Caribbean, Ambassador Canales expressed his solidarity with those peoples and wished that they would soon exercise their right to self-determination, freely and in a sovereign manner.

As the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the foundation of the United Nations coincided with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1514 (XV), he reiterated the unequivocal condemnation of all forms of colonialism by the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, the Group's sympathy with peoples struggling for self-determination and its determined support for the complete implementation of resolution 1514 (XV).

I. Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States

Ambassador Robert McDonagh of Ireland, on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, stated that the essence of the right of peoples to self-determination was expressed in Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations. The responsibilities and obligations concerning the Non-Self-Governing and Trust Territories, which the administering Powers had accepted by joining the United Nations, were described as a sacred trust and were outlined in Chapters XI and XII of the Charter.

The founding fathers of the Organization had, therefore, clearly believed that only equal rights and self-determination for all peoples could help guarantee peace and prosperity for future generations. The Charter left no room for doubt that peace and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms were inextricably linked. To that extent, it could be said that the Charter had ushered in the era of decolonization, although it was not until the adoption of historic General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and Assembly resolution 1541 (XV) that specific international documents had been formulated in that regard.

In a number of instances, the administering Powers had already begun to encourage, or had even brought to its conclusion, the process leading to the free exercise of self-determination and eventual independence. Nevertheless, for many years peoples in colonial countries had often looked to the United Nations as the guarantor of their national right to freedom and self-determination.

To colonial peoples everywhere, therefore, the adoption of the Declaration without a single negative vote had constituted a landmark in the application of the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples enshrined in the Charter, and had conveyed the promise of a world order based on those principles.

Largely as a result of the ongoing process of decolonization, the United Nations was now very much closer to its goal of universality. The Group of Western European and other States welcomed the progress that had been achieved in the field since the adoption of the Charter and the Declaration, and noted with satisfaction the number of Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories that had attained independence and joined the Organization in the past 25 years.

Notwithstanding the progress thus achieved, Namibia still remained one of the major preoccupations of the international community. It was particularly so in view of the special responsibility of the United Nations for that international Territory and its people. There should be no doubt that the United Nations would live up to that responsibility and that the international community would not rest until the Namibian people had freely exercised those rights proclaimed in the Declaration.

In his capacity as Chairman of the Group of Western European and Other States for the month of October, Ambassador McDonagh emphasized the deep commitment of the members of the Group to promoting the ideals embodied in the Charter and reiterated in the Declaration and to seeking the implementation of the principle of equal rights and self-determination among all peoples.

III. MESSAGES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES ON THE OCCASION OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DECLARATION

The following messages were received by the President of the General Assembly on the occasion of the special commemorative meeting held on 16 October 1985: 2/

CHINA

Message from Mr. Zhao Ziyang, Premier of the State Council
of the People's Republic of China

On the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, I wish to extend, on behalf of the Chinese Government and people, our warm congratulations to the special commemorative meeting of the United Nations General Assembly.

Twenty-five years ago, on the proposal of the Asian and African countries and thanks to their efforts, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The principle of national self-determination set out in the Declaration has since been widely accepted by the international community. In the past 25 years, the United Nations and the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples have made many-sided efforts to implement the Declaration, thus making a valuable contribution to accelerating the decolonization process. Having shaken off the yoke of colonialism, numerous former colonial and semi-colonial countries have won independence and taken their place in the international political arena. Today, they are playing an increasingly important role in their endeavour to maintain world peace and promote social and economic development.

It must be pointed out that, though colonialism as a system has already disintegrated, its vestiges and after-effects are still far from being thoroughly wiped out. Some colonial countries have not yet won independence. The Namibian people are still under the brutal rule of the South African authorities. The newly independent countries are still faced with the arduous task of consolidating independence and developing the national economy. Complete elimination of the colonial rule and its scourges requires further major efforts on the part of all countries and the United Nations.

The Chinese Government and people have all along firmly opposed colonialism of all descriptions and supported the third world countries' struggle to win and safeguard national independence. While marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration, we wish to reiterate our determination to continue to work with the United Nations and the Special Committee on decolonization for the implementation of the principles and spirit of the Declaration and for the acceleration of the decolonization process.

DEMOCRATIC KAMPUCHEA

Message from His Royal Highness Samdech Norodom Sihanouk,
President of Democratic Kampuchea

On the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV)), I should like, on behalf of the people and Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, to express our warmest congratulations and profound gratitude to all those who contributed, by their efforts, to the adoption of that historic Declaration in 1960. I should like also to pay a tribute to the United Nations General Assembly and more particularly, on this solemn day, to the Special Committee, its members and successive chairmen for their noble devotion to the service of mankind.

In the course of the last 25 years, the face of the world has changed greatly as millions of people have gradually been freed from alien domination and exploitation and attained independence. Since 1960, some 50 former colonial territories have acquired sovereign status, thereby bringing the United Nations closer to one of its primary goals, namely universality. The attainment of independence and sovereignty by these former colonies is a result, to be sure, of their own struggles and sacrifices. Nevertheless, we should not minimize the role which the United Nations and the Special Committee, as the instrument entrusted with the task of supervising the implementation of the goals of the Declaration, have played in accelerating progress towards independence. Therefore, on this occasion, the United Nations and the Committee are entitled to a legitimate feeling of great pride.

As we celebrate the achievements of the past, we should not forget that the roots, old and new, of colonialism have yet to be destroyed completely and that millions of people still live under the colonial system. The drama suffered by the peoples of Namibia and South Africa illustrate clearly that state of affairs. In Namibia, the apartheid régime of South Africa continues to deny the Namibian people their sacred right to determine freely their destiny. The commendable efforts made by the international community to find a peaceful and lasting solution to that painful question are constantly being thwarted by the racist régime of Pretoria. Furthermore, the use of Namibia as a springboard for launching premeditated attacks against independent neighbouring States, the installation of a so-called "provisional Government" and the stubborn intransigence of the South African régime constitute a challenge to the international community as a whole and to the United Nations in particular. In that regard I should like, on behalf of the people and

Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea, to reaffirm our unwavering support for the courage and determination of the Namibian people in their heroic and persistent struggle under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization to realize their inalienable right to self-determination, and to express our full support for the United Nations in its untiring efforts to ensure the speedy implementation of the plan for independence contained in Security Council resolution 435 (1978).

There is an undeniable link between the independence of Namibia and the struggle for the eradication of the apartheid system. The racist régime of South Africa continues to resort to Draconian measures in order to oppose the struggle of the liberation movements and the South African people for their right to pursue freely their economic, social and cultural development. Without the complete elimination of apartheid and the enjoyment of the right to self-determination by all the peoples of South Africa and Namibia, without any distinction as to race, colour or creed, peace and security can never be established in that region.

If the people and Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea join in commemorating the adoption of the Declaration, they do so because they are deeply committed to the ideals and goals embodied in that historic document. Kampuchea, since its admission to the United Nations in 1955, has spared no effort to support and encourage the peoples struggling throughout the world for their independence and freedom. Now, for almost seven years, it has been forced to wage its struggle against a new form of alien domination, oppression and enslavement. This new phenomenon claims to be the advocate of respect for human rights and the strict defender both of the right of peoples to self-determination and of international peace and security, yet it tramples on the freedoms of other peoples, launches wars of aggression and genocide, destroys the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, and threatens all the rights acquired at such cost by peoples and nations. Known as hegemonism or expansionism, it manifests itself in the flagrant and cynical violation of all the instruments of the International Bill of Human Rights. These violations involve the destruction of the achievements of the peoples over several generations, massacres, rape, torture, imprisonment, religious intolerance and famine created and used as a weapon of genocide: all these disasters are created by the insane ambition of this new phenomenon and are the principal causes of the mass outflows of refugees.

The present struggle being waged by the people of Kampuchea against the Vietnamese occupying forces supported by the Soviet Union is, to be sure, a struggle for the survival of the Kampuchean nation and for the recovery of its independence attained at such cost almost 32 years ago, but it is also a tangible contribution to the implementation of the goals of the Declaration, which are, inter alia, the right of the people to self-determination and the cessation of all measures of alien repression, exploitation and domination, and also the maintenance of peace, stability and progress in South-East Asia and the Pacific.

Like the struggle of the Namibian people and other peoples in different parts of the world, the struggle of the people of Kampuchea is admittedly an arduous one, but it is a struggle which can only result in victory. The fact that the United Nations has thus far been unsuccessful in forcing colonialists and expansionists -

whether it be the Pretoria régime or Viet Nam - to comply with the request of the international community must not discourage us. Quite the contrary, we must redouble our efforts to exert the necessary pressure and seek ways of opposing those forces which prevent the United Nations from accomplishing its task to the full extent.

On this occasion, I should like to reaffirm our faith in the noble purposes and principles of the Charter, in which mankind as a whole and the peoples of medium-size and small countries in particular have always placed their hopes for a better, just and peaceful world. I should like also to reaffirm our full support for the Special Committee and our determination to continue to make our modest contribution to the liberation of all peoples and nations from all forms of colonialism, foreign expansionism and alien domination.

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Message from Mr. Erich Honecker, General Secretary of the
Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany
and Chairman of the Council of State of the German
Democratic Republic

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples gives the German Democratic Republic reason to reaffirm its determined and active solidarity with the struggle of peoples for national and social liberation.

This truly historic Declaration manifests the will and resolve of the United Nations, which emerged from the anti-fascist struggle of the anti-Hitler coalition, to help implement the right of all peoples to independence and self-determination. It marks a highlight in the struggle for the elimination of the imperialist colonial system. Many peoples have set out on the road to a new world. The liberated States of Asia, Africa and Latin America have joined the broad front of forces devoted to peace, disarmament, social progress and equitable international co-operation.

As long as peoples are still suffering from colonial oppression and exploitation it remains the task of the United Nations and its Member States to translate the letter and spirit of that Declaration into reality. Therefore, the anniversary session of the General Assembly is rightly expected to provide fresh impetus to collective efforts in finally eliminating colonialism, racism and apartheid and in protecting the hard-won independence and state sovereignty of the nationally liberated countries.

The German Democratic Republic opposes imperialist attempts to obstruct or reverse the process of national and social liberation and to misuse the still dependent territories for aggressive military purposes. It strongly condemns the South African régime of apartheid, which is escalating its state terrorism inside

and outside the country. Such a peace-threatening policy that disregards the peoples' right to self-determination must be answered with effective sanctions by the Security Council. The people and the Government of the German Democratic Republic reaffirm their unqualified solidarity with the African National Congress (ANC) and the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), with all patriots of South Africa and Namibia. The passionate desire of the peoples for self-determination, peace and freedom will come true all over the world.

I assure you that the German Democratic Republic will also in the future actively support the comprehensive implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

MONGOLIA

Message from Mr. Zhambyn Batmunkh, Chairman of the
Presidium of the Great People's Khural of the
Mongolian People's Republic

In this year, which marks the fortieth anniversary of the great victory of the Soviet Union and other States of the anti-Hitler coalition over fascism and militarism and the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, the international community observes yet another important date - the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

The adoption of that historic Declaration at the initiative of the Soviet Union marked a turning-point in the relationship of the United Nations to the peoples' national liberation movement. The United Nations, in reaffirming the historical irreversibility of the process of liberation, declared its full support for the national liberation movement against colonial oppression and recognized the justice and legality of the struggle of peoples for independence by all necessary means at their disposal. The Declaration solemnly proclaimed the necessity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations.

United Nations efforts for the implementation of the Declaration continue to contribute substantially to the struggle of colonial peoples for self-determination and to mobilizing international and national actions in support of the national liberation movement.

The colonial system of imperialism has totally collapsed. During the period of application of the Declaration, more than 50 States have attained their freedom and independence. Newly independent countries now constitute about two thirds of the membership of the United Nations.

In full conformity with the purposes of the Declaration, the United Nations devotes great attention to supporting the struggle of young States for the

attainment and consolidation of their economic independence and the establishment of a new international economic order on a fair and democratic basis. The Government of the Mongolian People's Republic attaches great importance in that regard to such United Nations instruments as the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

An increasing number of newly independent States are choosing the path of fundamental socio-economic transformations and the democratic restructuring of social life in their countries.

In spite of those successes, the struggle against the vestiges of colonialism and against the political and economic activities of neo-colonialism continues to be an important task for the United Nations and the forces struggling for freedom, independence and social progress.

Colonialism, racism and the policy of apartheid still violate the rights of many peoples to self-determination and equality. The actions of colonial and racist forces in defiance of the clearly expressed will of the peoples and the United Nations create dangerous sources of tension and increase the threat to international peace and security. The racist régime of Pretoria and its imperialist protectors are persistently sabotaging the granting of independence to the Namibian people and equal rights to the indigenous population of South Africa, and they are pursuing a policy of state terrorism against neighbouring States and defying the United Nations and world public opinion.

The United States of America and certain other imperialist Powers are in practice annexing many dependent territories and transforming them into military and strategic bridgeheads.

For that reason, particular importance now attaches to the further intensification of United Nations efforts and the struggle of all progressive mankind for the complete eradication of colonialism in all its forms and manifestations, including racism and apartheid, in the spirit of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

The Mongolian people, having previously endured the colonial yoke and its pernicious effects, always supported and continue to support the just struggle of peoples against colonialism, neo-colonialism and racism.

The Government of the Mongolian People's Republic advocates the speedy and total application of the United Nations Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and wishes the international community further success in attaining that noble goal.

NICARAGUA

Message from President Daniel Ortega Saavedra

This year, mankind is joyfully celebrating three events which have shaped the recent history of the peoples of the world: the fortieth anniversary of the defeat of fascism, the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

Since the founding of this Organization, some 100 former colonies have attained independence, with the result that millions of human beings around the world now enjoy the right of self-determination.

Nicaragua, which was a victim of colonialism and which is still fighting to rid itself of the vestiges of neo-colonialism, salutes the immense achievements of the United Nations in this domain and those of other organizations such as the Organization of African Unity.

We salute the glorious liberation struggles waged by the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America in order to win their freedom and independence. In this connection, Nicaragua is proud of the role played in attaining this objective 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.

Yet the process of decolonization is far from complete. There are still territories whose inhabitants are ignorant of such fundamental rights as self-determination, independence, sovereignty, and the right to life and freedom. The most glaring example of colonialism is Namibia; this shameful relic requires redoubled efforts on the part of the international community so that the Territory may win its sovereignty and final independence.

We reiterate our belief that liberation struggles are a legitimate means of eradicating colonialism. They have enjoyed and shall continue to enjoy our support and solidarity.

On this occasion, we also wish to express our gratitude to the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which has played an important role in the decolonization process, and whose strength derives largely from the membership of many countries which were victims of colonialism and which have attained their independence.

The celebration of this twenty-fifth anniversary will no doubt give the States Members of the United Nations and the members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries new vitality and impetus to continue their task until colonialism, in all its forms and manifestations, is finally eliminated from the face of the earth.

TUNISIA

Message from Mr. Habib Bourguiba, President of the
Republic of Tunisia

The Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples was one of the fundamental acts by which the international community clearly and resolutely pointed the way to peace, harmony and co-operation among nations. In commemorating that Declaration, the United Nations reaffirms its determination to see it put into practice in every country that remains under foreign domination, wherever a people is prevented from exercising its right to self-determination and wherever human rights are still unrecognized or flouted. No member country, particularly those which have known the anguish of colonization and the bitter struggle for liberty and dignity, can fail to rejoice in this reaffirmation. Tunisia, as one such country, considers it a signal honour to join in that act. It takes this opportunity to declare once more its solemn commitment to spare no effort to ensure that all peoples of the world shall enjoy their inalienable right to independence, to the exercise of their sovereignty and to the integrity of their national territory. It reiterates its steadfast faith in the human being and his inalienable right to freedom and dignity without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

On the occasion of this twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration, our sympathies naturally turn to those countries and peoples for whom it has not yet become a reality. We are thinking in particular of the peoples of Namibia, South Africa and Palestine and would assure them of our full and active support. We are sure that they will continue the struggle until the triumph of their rightful cause. We would remind those who deny them the right to self-determination and subject them to domination and exploitation that their acts are contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration which we are now commemorating. We enjoin them to take immediate steps to transfer all powers to those peoples without any conditions or reservations, in accordance with their desire and their freely expressed wishes, and without any distinction as to race, creed or colour, in order to enable them to enjoy complete independence and freedom. Otherwise the international community shall be obliged to adopt such resolutions as would compel them to respect the principles and rules of international law which they continued to flout.

On this occasion our thoughts also go to the peoples of Afghanistan and Kampuchea, which, although sovereign countries, are subjected to a foreign military occupation that calls their independence into question and seeks to destroy their national unity. These peoples, who are struggling to regain their inalienable right to self-determination, may rely on our firm support of their rightful cause. Their attackers are acting in a manner contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter. The international community owes it to itself to dissuade them from that course by taking energetic action through the means open to it under the Charter.