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(Sri Lanka).

AGENDA ITEM 122

Question of the Comorian island of Mayotte (*concluded*)

1. The PRESIDENT: At the previous meeting, the debate on this item was concluded. I shall now call on those delegations wishing to explain their vote before the voting.

2. Mr. PFIRTER (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): We have asked to speak in order briefly to explain our reasons for voting in favour of draft resolution A/31/L.3/Rev.1 and Add.1 sponsored by a considerable number of African States and aimed at protecting the national unity and territorial integrity of the Republic of the Comoros.

3. The Argentine delegation is convinced of the good faith with which France has sought an appropriate solution to the problem of the situation in Mayotte. We also fully understand the concern of the French Government to safeguard the principle of self-determination. However, we cannot fail to point out that in this particular case the strict implementation of that formula may mean a violation of the territorial integrity of an African State.

4. Consequently, we join those delegations that have in a friendly manner urged the Government of France to apply to Mayotte the same realistic criterion which in so many other cases permitted the attainment of peaceful and concerted independence by its colonies. Such a procedure would only reaffirm the high principles of conduct that have contributed to enhancing the moral stature of that European country.

5. The consideration of this item eloquently demonstrates once more the need so often pointed out by various delegations, including the Argentine delegation, to deal with each colonial case in keeping with its specific characteristics. We also wish to stress that the principle of self-determination is not always applicable to all colonial questions and that its automatic implementation may entail the sanctioning or perpetuation of situations contrary to the principles and purposes of the Charter. We must point

out that on the one hand this situation has prevented the establishment of a body of rules and practices that could cover all decolonization controversies, and on the other has served as a basis for the wise provision contained in paragraph 6 of resolution 1514 (XV). Both of these factors have been appropriately reflected in international doctrine and jurisprudence.

6. Mr. LECOMPT (France) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation has followed closely the debate which has just taken place, and, moreover, has taken note of the revised draft resolution submitted at yesterday's meeting. I should like to say a few words about these two aspects of the Assembly's work.

7. The draft resolution before us is unacceptable; my delegation will vote against it and can only regret the misunderstanding of the realities we have to confront which is reflected in this text. One cannot reasonably speak about a violation of the national unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Comoros in a situation in which France has only acted in accordance with the freely expressed will of the people and the existing circumstances.

8. We cannot seriously condemn processes so democratic as the referendums, whose necessity and usefulness were recognized by the United Nations itself.

9. Nor can we condemn France's presence in Mayotte. France is not there arbitrarily or by force but by the democratic choice of a freely consulted people.

10. We cannot ask France to enter into negotiations concerning the implementation of a resolution which condemns all its actions, as requested in the last operative paragraph of the draft resolution. This last paragraph is self-destructive. It is certainly not the appeal which some have seemed to wish to address to us and we cannot take it into consideration.

11. The question of Mayotte is complex. It opposes the principle of territorial integrity to the no less sacred principle of self-determination.

12. The debate that we have had is one of great scope and it should not be oversimplified. Some speakers have adopted an accusing tone, but I should like to draw their attention to certain facts.

13. Aware of the differences which it has had with the new State of the Comoros but desiring to demonstrate its goodwill, France did not oppose, on 17 October 1975, the Security Council's resolution 376 (1975) regarding the admission of the Comoros to the United Nations, and it took the same position on 12 November 1975 in the General Assembly.

14. The French Government has always been ready to co-operate with the Comoros—a co-operation, which I should like to recall, has not been interrupted by its own act. We spared no effort to reach an area of agreement with the Comorian authorities before they put an end to the dialogue with the unilateral declaration of independence on 6 July 1975.

15. I should like to state once again that my country has no territorial ambitions or selfish interests to protect in the Mayotte affair.

16. But all that belongs to the past. Let us “leave open all possibilities for the future”, as was said here by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs [9th meeting, para. 116].

17. Many speakers have used the language of reason and have called for a reconciliation. I should like to thank them for that. I should like to tell them that France has heard of their words and has heeded their appeal for dialogue, which it will never try to shirk.

18. My Government wishes to encourage the people of Mayotte and of the Comoros to review their relations at all levels, and I should like to recall the words used on the first day of this debate, which remain the view of my country: “One day it will be desirable that that dialogue should be as thorough and real as the existing reasons for disagreement are deep and real.” My country “will always be prepared to assist in bringing about pacification and in overcoming contradictions” [34th meeting, para. 10].

19. Mr. VERGAU (Federal Republic of Germany): My delegation will abstain in the vote on the draft resolution on the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte. This attitude does not imply that the Federal Republic of Germany would hesitate in any context to recognize rights to which the Republic of the Comoros is entitled. On the contrary, in the case of a newly independent State we understand well that it seeks firmly to secure its new position and to obtain respect for itself and that it presents its case with determination.

20. On the other hand, our restraint with regard to the draft resolution before us can by no means be construed as restraint in our full respect for the principle of the territorial integrity of States. Dialogue in search of understanding with the aim of arriving at a conciliation of contrasting interests constitutes the main element of international co-operation. The Federal Republic of Germany can claim to have based its policy consistently on these principles and to have been generally successful in doing so.

21. It would run counter to the philosophy underlying this policy if we were to vote for a draft resolution which, in a controversial and complicated situation, cannot be conducive to a reconciliation of common interests but is liable to aggravate the situation. In particular, we consider it inappropriate to attach to the attitude of one of the partners the rather far-reaching blame of a strong condemnation at a time when that very partner has repeatedly offered dialogue and when his goodwill to reach an understanding cannot, in our view, be doubted.

22. We are therefore unable to join in an initiative which would be tantamount to rejecting a hand stretched out for a reconciliation.

23. May I assure the delegation of the Comoros, on behalf of my Government, that the Federal Republic of Germany is prepared to co-operate fully with the Republic of the Comoros on the basis of mutual respect and complete equality and in doing so will have regard for the particular problems of its welcome new partner. We thus adhere to the principle of unrestricted international co-operation at both the multilateral and the bilateral level.

24. We welcomed the accession of the Republic of the Comoros to membership in the United Nations and we are convinced that the presence of its delegation in this world Organization implies a chance for a dialogue that should not be wasted.

25. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom): No one would deny the importance of the issues that have been raised in this debate. The principles of self-determination and of territorial integrity that have been invoked are principles of direct concern to my own country as it considers the future of the remaining British dependent Territories.

26. We spoke at some length last February in the Security Council on the question of Mayotte.¹ I now wish to explain why my delegation will abstain on the draft resolution before us.

27. My Government believes strongly in the right of colonial countries and peoples to self-determination that is set out so cogently in paragraph 2 of our resolution 1514 (XV). We have acted on this belief and will continue to do so in the future.

28. But there have been very few of our former dependent Territories where a minority did not seek a separate identity in the years before independence. As the day of independence approaches, so certain groups or certain districts become worried about their future. Some of those groups still petition the United Nations from time to time to complain about events that took place 20 years ago.

29. It is very seldom that in this Organization one hears appeals for understanding of the problems of decolonization, but I should like to make such an appeal on this occasion. It is all too easy to say that the majority must have its way. In principle we agree, and we have certainly tried to maintain the territorial integrity of our own dependent Territories. We have usually succeeded but, as my delegation remarked in the Security Council last February, we have failed at times. Island archipelagos present particular problems, and there are a number of reports of visiting missions 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 or the Trusteeship Council which illustrate the suspicions that are often voiced by a small island about its larger neighbours. An administering Power

¹ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-first Year, 1888th meeting.*

has the obligation to seek to bring together to self-determination or independence all the peoples of the Territories under its administration, but, while we completely understand the strong views held by African countries on this matter, it would be unrealistic to ignore the fact that geography, race and at times political differences do complicate this task.

30. Turning to the specific case of the Comoros, we have noted the statement by the Foreign Minister of France:

“The proposal on the status of Mayotte, to be submitted to the French Parliament, will indeed leave open all possibilities for the future, with due respect for the wishes of the peoples.” [9th meeting, para. 116.]

We have also noted that a French Minister said on 17 September that the French Government would not propose the adoption of a rigid formula and that nothing would be done which might hinder a progressive reconciliation. It may be, after all that has happened in the past two years, that only time can bring about the reconciliation between Mayotte and its three sister islands for which my own delegation certainly hopes. We have studied the statement of the representative of the Comoros carefully [33rd meeting] and we note that the Comoros Government seems somewhat disenchanted about the efforts made so far to resume a dialogue with the French Government on the question of Mayotte, but we continue to believe that dialogue is the only answer, and it may well be that in the course of such discussions both sides will show a willingness to look at the problem in a new light and to study fresh approaches. We believe that the draft resolution before us will not assist the prospects of a constructive dialogue.

31. I wish to state, on behalf of my Government, that we look forward to increasing our dealings with the Government of the Comoros at every level, both on a bilateral basis and through our common adherence to the Lomé agreement.² We believe that the European Community will not be unsympathetic to the Comorian Government's needs in the development field, and we wish the Government of the Comoros every success in its own efforts to raise the standard of living of its people.

32. I should like to conclude by making it clear that my delegation has no doubt about the sincerity and good faith of the French Government in this matter. We understand its parliamentary requirements. We believe that, with goodwill, a solution can be found that meets the wishes of all the Comorians and satisfies the principles by which this Organization rightly sets such store.

33. Mr. BARREIRO (Paraguay) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The delegation of Paraguay would have liked to vote in favour of this draft resolution on the Comoro islands. We fully share the legal, political and rational bases that underlie it. My country has always supported the cause of decolonization and the sound principle of national unity and territorial integrity of countries as basic norms of international coexistence.

34. But my country will abstain in the vote because we believe that the terms of the draft resolution are not the most conducive to the opening of negotiations that will enable us to achieve our aims. We do not believe that the use of blunt language is the most appropriate way to provide a legal and moral basis in this matter. On the contrary, very often emotionally loaded language in the form of resolutions beclouds the substance of the issue and prevents friendly understanding and agreement.

35. Paraguay, a founding Member of the United Nations, would like a distinction to be always drawn between the language that can be used in any given body and the language that should be used in an assembly of free and sovereign States that have come together to serve the lofty causes of peace and security in the world.

36. Mr. DE PINIES (Spain) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Last year, in regard to the request by the Comoro islands for admission to membership in the United Nations, my delegation fully supported General Assembly resolution 3385 (XXX). Apart from our wish to see that country enter our Organization, we could not have acted otherwise, in view of the fact that the position of Spain is consistently in favour of the principle of territorial integrity.

37. At this time, in regard to the draft resolution on which a vote is about to be taken, we understand that to maintain that principle it is essential to promote, by all available means, negotiations between the French Government and the authorities of the Comoros that may lead to an agreement that will prevent the disruption of the territorial integrity of the archipelago. Because we believe that the language used in the draft resolution might ruffle feelings and thus prevent agreement, my delegation will abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.

38. Mr. INCVARSSON (Iceland): The Nordic countries supported the consensus on General Assembly resolution 3385 (XXX) by which the Comoros was admitted to membership in the United Nations. That resolution reaffirmed the necessity of respecting the unity and territorial integrity of the Comoro archipelago, composed of the islands of Anjouan, Grande-Comore, Mayotte and Mohéli, as emphasized in resolution 3291 (XXIX) and other resolutions of the General Assembly.

39. It is the opinion of the Nordic Governments that the decolonization process should be effective and in accordance with the well-known resolution adopted by the fifteenth session of the General Assembly concerning the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples, which guarantees the national unity and territorial integrity of such countries.

40. The delegations of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden will not be able, however, to vote for draft resolution A/31/L.3/Rev.1 and Add.1 owing to the language and content of that draft which might adversely affect the possibility of finding an acceptable solution. Our delegations will consequently abstain in the vote.

41. At the same time, our delegations wish to express their sincere hope that talks between the Comoros and France will be resumed in the near future with a view to

² APC-EEC Convention of Lomé, signed on 28 February 1975 at Lomé.

reconciling differences and arriving at a solution fully acceptable to all parties.

42. Mr. JAIPAL (India): My delegation desires to explain why it will vote in favour of the draft resolution submitted by more than 40 African Member States on the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte.

43. The facts are that the Comoro archipelago attained its independence on 6 July 1975 and thereafter was admitted to the United Nations on 12 November 1975. General Assembly resolution 3385 (XXX), which admitted the Comoros, underlined the necessity of respecting the unity and territorial integrity of the Comoro archipelago, consisting of a group of four islands, including Mayotte.

44. France did not oppose the admission of the Comoros to the United Nations. In these circumstances, it was surprising that three months after the admission of Comoros to the United Nations France should have conducted two referendums in Mayotte, which was recognized by the United Nations as an integral part of the Comoros.

45. Indeed, the continued presence of France in Mayotte after the independence of Comoros could only be at the request or with the permission of Comoros. We cannot, therefore, accept as legitimate any referendum held by France in Mayotte after the independence of Comoros.

46. Also, the nature of the referendums held in Mayotte after the independence of Comoros is equally unacceptable. It is tantamount to a wrongful application of the principle of self-determination in a part of the territory of an independent Member State by an outside authority, which has the effect of detaching that part and giving it a separate identity and status. Such an act clearly constitutes a violation of the unity and territorial integrity of Comoros.

47. There is a certain madness in the logic of the indiscriminate application of the principle of self-determination. We are firmly opposed to the misuse of the principle of self-determination in any manner leading to the destruction of the territorial integrity and unity of sovereign Member States.

48. We have no doubt that France is acutely aware of the contradictions and the dilemma created by its own actions in Mayotte. We feel sure that France intends to resolve those contradictions honourably and to achieve harmony between the principle of self-determination and the principle of the unity and territorial integrity of Comoros.

49. We would join the general appeal to France to take appropriate steps fully to respect the unity and territorial integrity of the Comoro archipelago in terms of General Assembly resolution 3385 (XXX).

50. The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now vote on draft resolution A/31/L.3/Rev.1 and Add.1. A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia,

Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Kampuchea, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Republic, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: France.

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Guatemala, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Portugal, Spain, Surinam, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay.

The draft resolution was adopted by 102 votes to 1, with 28 abstentions (resolution 31/4).³

51. The PRESIDENT: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their vote after the voting.

52. Mr. GIGNAC (Canada) (*interpretation from French*): The Canadian delegation, like other Members of our Organization, was glad to be able to welcome the Republic of the Comoros to the United Nations as a full Member on 12 November 1975. The Canadian Government has considerable sympathy for the concerns of the Government of Comoros, with which we enjoy friendly relations, and we remain aware of the difficulties presented by the unusual circumstances existing in respect of the island of Mayotte. It is our earnest hope that the differences between the Government of Comoros and that of France can be resolved and that the peoples of the four Comorian islands can be encouraged to develop a constitutional framework which might allow the archipelago to resume its former unity.

53. We abstained in the vote on the draft resolution which has just been adopted because, in the view of the Canadian delegation, the wording of some of its paragraphs did not maintain a desirable balance between the parties to the dispute and could only help to continue to exacerbate the dispute. We believe that the General Assembly should issue a simple appeal to the Governments concerned to intensify their efforts to achieve a peaceful solution of this problem.

³ The delegation of Mozambique subsequently stated (see below, para. 90) that it wished to have its vote recorded as having been in favour of the draft resolution. The delegations of Democratic Yemen, Nigeria and Yemen subsequently informed the Secretariat that they wished to have their votes recorded as having been in favour of the draft resolution.

54. Mr. TALLARIGO (Italy): I wish to explain briefly the reasons why the delegation of Italy was not in a position to support the draft resolution which has just been adopted.

55. As representatives are aware, Italy, as a member of the Security Council, voted in favour of resolution 376 (1975), which recommended to the General Assembly the admission of the Comoros to membership in the United Nations. At that time, we also expressed our confidence that France would be able to solve the internal legal problems with which it was confronted.

56. When the question of Mayotte was again raised in the Security Council in February this year we stated very clearly that we fully supported the principle of territorial integrity and that it was wrong, in our view, to take a position which would sound so inflexible as not to take into account the factual situation, thus even weakening the effectiveness in practice of that very principle.

57. Having said that, we believe it our duty to stress here that it is very difficult for us to question the goodwill shown by the French Government in order to solve the legal problems mentioned above. We feel, moreover, that the best way to deal with the question of Mayotte is to avoid confrontation and to co-operate amicably to achieve the goal of helping the State of Comoros to develop its independence and statehood with all the necessary economic, political and geographical components.

58. As my delegation stated in the Security Council on 6 February 1976:

"... we see neither the purpose nor the usefulness of a confrontation on the issue of the island of Mayotte, for we believe that it is, rather, the interests of the populations in all the Comoro Islands that we should pursue here. It seems to us that the interests of those populations call for some kind of an agreement on a realistic basis..."⁴

59. In our view, the wording of the resolution which has just been adopted does not coincide with this hope and principle, and it will therefore not be favourable to the process of negotiation, which we very firmly support. Only a constructive approach, we believe, will bring about progress towards a solution of the problem confronting us.

60. We appeal for such a constructive approach and we declare our full readiness to improve our bilateral relations with the State of the Comoros and to co-operate with it within the framework of the Lomé Convention.

61. Mr. SALAZAR (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The delegation of Costa Rica has always taken a firm position in support of the self-determination, independence and sovereignty of peoples and the process of decolonization.

62. Consistent with that position, my delegation voted in favour of the resolution which has just been adopted. None the less, my delegation believes that this resolution contains

language which could interfere with the peaceful settlement of the question—namely, the territorial integrity of the Republic of the Comoros—in conformity with resolution 1514 (XV), containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

63. Therefore our vote does not imply acceptance of all the language in the resolution which has just been approved.

64. Mr. BROWN (Australia): The Australian delegation wishes to explain its abstention in the vote on the resolution just adopted.

65. The Australian delegation at the thirtieth session of the General Assembly supported the adoption of resolution 3385 (XXX) admitting the Republic of the Comoros to membership in the United Nations. In that resolution a preambular paragraph defined the Comoro archipelago as composed of the islands of Anjouan, Grande-Comore, Mayotte and Mohéli. The Australian delegation wishes to emphasize the necessity of respecting the unity and the territorial integrity of the Comoro archipelago as defined in General Assembly resolution 3385 (XXX).

66. The Australian delegation ardently hopes that the Governments of France and the Comoros can come to an early agreement that will preserve the territorial integrity of the Comoros. In this regard we welcome the terms of paragraph 6, requesting France "to enter into negotiations immediately with the Comorian Government".

67. We wish to say the the resolution as a whole contains several positive features. In particular, we support the principle of territorial integrity which lies at the heart of the resolution. The Australian delegation, however, does not believe that the resolution creates a favourable atmosphere for an early solution of the problem. We believe that the resolution should have confined itself to an expression of the principle of national integrity together with a request for negotiations between the parties. Australia would have voted in favour of such a resolution.

68. We do not believe that the resolution should have contained expressions which can serve only to exacerbate the differences between the parties. The Australian delegation therefore has had to abstain in the vote on the resolution which has just been adopted.

69. Mr. TÜRKMEN (Turkey): My delegation abstained in the vote on the resolution just adopted on the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte.

70. This abstention does not imply that we disagree with the substance of the resolution. Indeed, we consider that the island of Mayotte is an integral part of the independent Republic of the Comoros and that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Comoros should be respected.

71. However, the wording of some of the paragraphs of the resolution is not conducive to constructive and fruitful negotiations, as called for in paragraph 6. We believe that in issues where negotiations are essential for a solution the General Assembly should avoid unduly rigid and harsh language.

⁴ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Thirty-first Year, 1888th meeting*.

72. It was for that reason that my delegation felt unable to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

73. Mr. STRASSER (Austria): The Austrian delegation has followed very carefully and with great interest the debate on item 122 of the agenda.

74. Austria has always strongly adhered to the principles of the territorial integrity and national unity of newly independent States, as well as the right to self-determination. For that reason and in that context, the Austrian Government has always been and continues to be a fervent supporter of the decolonization process in Africa.

75. It was thus with the greatest sympathy that my delegation joined in last year's consensus under which the Republic of the Comoros was admitted to the United Nations.

76. Today, however, we are faced with an existing situation in the island of Mayotte and with the arguments put forward by both parties to the dispute. Various representatives who spoke during the debate explicitly favoured the early resumption of a constructive dialogue and negotiations between the two Governments involved. The resolution that has just been adopted contains some elements which might have an adverse effect on the speedy implementation of the provisions of the resolution. For that reason the Austrian delegation abstained in the vote on it.

77. Mr. DE ROSENZWEIG DIAZ (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Mexican delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/31/L.3/Rev.1 and Add.1 on the basis of the principles enshrined in the Charter, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples [resolution 1514 (XV)] and paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 3291 (XXIX) and resolution 3385 (XXX).

78. Because of the close, friendly ties between Mexico and France, my delegation joins with other Members of the United Nations in its expressing absolute certainty that France, faithful as always to the principles of the Charter, will respect the territorial integrity of the Republic of the Comoros.

79. Mr. SAYAR (Iran): In keeping with our consistent policy on decolonization and our support for the peoples' endeavours to free themselves from the colonial yoke, the Iranian delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/31/L.3/Rev.1 and Add.1.

80. Nevertheless the Iranian delegation is of the view that the language used in some paragraphs of the resolution is not appropriate. Had those paragraphs been put to the vote separately, the Iranian delegation would have abstained.

81. Mr. GUTIERREZ (Bolivia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I think it is appropriate to point out why my delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution just adopted by the General Assembly. It contains two principles which, in the Bolivian delegation's opinion, the General Assembly should always keep in mind.

82. The first principle is that of the territorial and geographical integrity of a State. At its thirtieth session the Assembly confirmed the independence of the Comoro archipelago. It is obvious, therefore, that we have to recognize that historical fact in all its scope and in its proper geographical context.

83. Furthermore, this has a direct bearing on the full exercise of a Government's sovereignty. That sovereignty cannot be fully exercised when attempts are made to dismember the territory for one or another reason.

84. Finally—and I should like to stress this—the principle of the self-determination of peoples must be applied to the whole and not just to a part. It is true that the Government of France carried out a referendum in the island of Mayotte, but the purpose was to disrupt the territorial and geographical unity of the Comoro archipelago, a new State and already a Member of the United Nations. That runs absolutely counter to our view of the principle of self-determination, which is admitted when it relates to a people as a whole to the freely expressed wishes of a sovereign people.

85. It would, however, be dangerous to allow certain pressures to be exerted in order to disrupt the territorial unity of a State. That would be an unfortunate precedent, which could lead to truly irreparable consequences for international harmony in various regions of the world.

86. That is why the delegation of Bolivia believes that, with regard to the principle of self-determination, it is not possible to discriminate concerning the sovereign, free expression of a people's will by applying that principle to a part rather than to all of the people of the region.

87. In Latin America, when we were struggling for our independence, we witnessed some clear and striking examples of this trend towards applying the principle of self-determination selectively and promoting the creation of artificial States, separated from the geographical, natural, legal and historical context in which they had developed.

88. On the other hand, like various other delegations, we believe that the resolution contains some language which is unnecessary and which in fact prevented some members from supporting the text. We feel that that language could in the final analysis interfere with free and friendly negotiations between the Government of the Republic of the Comoros and the Government of France.

89. In conclusion, the delegation of Bolivia expresses the hope that, overcoming these unfortunate circumstances, the two Governments—that of France and that of the Republic of the Comoros—will be able to carry out successful negotiations that will put an end to the problem that has arisen between them.

90. Mr. LOBO (Mozambique): My delegation wishes to make it clear that the Republic of Mozambique not only supported draft resolution A/31/L.3/Rev.1 and Add.1 on the question of Mayotte but was one of its sponsors. For technical reasons not yet clear to us, our affirmative vote did not appear on the voting board. Mozambique sponsored the draft resolution, and voted "yes".

91. Mr. KAUFMANN (Netherlands): The Netherlands delegation abstained in the vote on the draft resolution just adopted on the question of the island of Mayotte. Our abstention was based mainly on the unbalanced manner in which the resolution reflects the situation and the position of the French Government. I should, however, like to state that the Netherlands abstention does not detract from the position of the Netherlands Government that as a matter of principle colonial Territories should gain independence within their historic boundaries.

92. Mr. MORENO MARTINEZ (Dominican Republic) (*interpretation from Spanish*): The delegation of the Dominican Republic voted in favour of the draft resolution because it is based on the fundamental principles of the United Nations Charter and of the Dominican Republic's foreign policy. But we should like to express our disagreement with some of the provisions of the draft which do not contribute to a solution of this issue. However, we hope that France, faithful to its democratic traditions, will not pay attention to that language and will initiate without delay a constructive dialogue with the Government of the Comoros.

93. Mr. ERNEMANN (Belgium) (*interpretation from French*): During the debate on this item my delegation has heard many arguments that warrant consideration with regard to recognition of the principle of territorial integrity and respect for the principle of self-determination.

94. We were also struck by the will expressed by several delegations to bring positions closer together despite their apparent irreconcilability.

95. We are rather worried that not all the terms of the resolution will promote a solution of the problem. We would have preferred to see the parties concerned invited to find common ground. Tomorrow's negotiations must be set up now.

96. As far as we are concerned, we would welcome the development of co-operation in all fields between the Comoros and Belgium as well as between the Comoros and all nine members of the European Economic Community, especially within the framework of the Lomé Convention.

97. Finally, we are convinced that the results of the vote just taken do not reflect the confidence in France felt by the very large majority of delegations present. We continue to assure France of this confidence, knowing that with regard to this problem France's main concern will continue to be the people of the Comoros and the future of the Republic of the Comoros. That concern is also ours. It is in that spirit that Belgium abstained in the vote.

98. Mr. QUARTIN-SANTOS (Portugal): The Portuguese delegation abstained in the vote on the draft resolution concerning the question of the Comorian island of Mayotte.

99. Last year, Portugal voted in favour of resolution 3385 (XXX), which approved the admission of the Comoros to the United Nations and reaffirmed its national unity and territorial integrity. Therefore it was with regret that my delegation felt unable to support the draft resolution just adopted in spite of our continued support

for the national unity and territorial integrity of the Republic of the Comoros.

100. Portugal upholds the principle contained in paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) concerning the integrity of colonial Territories acceding to independence. In this context I should like to recall that we scrupulously abode by this principle when decolonizing the Territories under our administration. However, in the opinion of my delegation the use of certain expressions qualifying the position of France on this matter does not reflect the present willingness expressed by France to keep open the dialogue and the possibility of the satisfactory solution of this problem.

101. My delegation expresses its hope that such a solution will take into account the principles of national unity and territorial integrity of the Comoros, for which my delegation would like once more to reaffirm its support.

*Address by Mr. Odvar Nordli, Prime Minister
of the Kingdom of Norway*

102. The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway. I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Odvar Nordli and in inviting him to address the General Assembly.

103. Mr. NORDLI (Norway): Mr. President, at the outset, allow me to confirm what my Foreign Minister has already stated before this Assembly when he spoke in the general debate last month [6th meeting]. To the Norwegian Government it is a great pleasure to see you presiding over this important session of the General Assembly. We know from the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea what outstanding leadership qualities you bring to your high post. We see your election also as a tribute to your country, Sri Lanka. I had the privilege earlier this month of welcoming as a guest to my country your highly respected Prime Minister, Mrs. Bandaranaike, thereby opening an era of closer development co-operation between our two countries.

104. I would also like to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kurt Waldheim. My Government is most impressed by the devotion and dedication he has shown in his service to the United Nations and to mankind as a whole. On the conclusion of his first term of office, my Government wants to assure him of our desire to see the world Organization benefit from his service also in the years to come.

105. The United Nations was born out of a world-wide war against fascism, and the basic role assigned to it was the prevention of future wars. Throughout its more than 30 years of existence the world Organization has been able to make substantial contributions to the settlement and prevention of dangerous conflicts. However, many of the hopes voiced in San Francisco in 1945 for a safer and better world have not been fulfilled. The co-operation which had prevailed between the victorious Powers during the war could not be sustained and developed globally and serve as the basis of a United Nations strong enough to repulse all threats to peace and security.

106. Events took another course: new divisions along the lines of power politics and ideologies emerged, and confrontations inside the Organization often paralysed the United Nations during serious international conflicts. Peace, to the extent it was achieved, was based on a balance of power rooted in increasingly sophisticated and frightening weapons systems instead of being based on international law and order.

107. The struggle for freedom and human dignity moved south and east, where people revolted against political and economic suppression. The gap between the poor and the rich countries of the world was widened and could no longer be ignored.

108. Gradually, however, events took a more encouraging turn and involved the United Nations increasingly in the process of decolonization and the struggle for political and economic liberation.

109. Through this process an ever-increasing number of new nations joined the world Organization. Small nations and their just demand for influence and a voice inside the United Nations became as much a part of the daily life of the Organization as is the influence of the big Powers.

110. During the last few years the United Nations has emerged as the main global instrument in the quest for international economic and social solidarity. In this area the United Nations has taken up a historic challenge, and a realistic appraisal will tell us that in this area it has today its most important peace-building task. The priority now accorded to the needs of the poor in United Nations activities should also encourage us to take an optimistic view of the future role of the world Organization.

111. This in no way means a United Nations without problems. We have seen—and I am afraid we shall still see—armed conflicts in which the United Nations is powerless. Too many people on this globe are still living in conditions of suppression, suffering and fear. Human rights are being violated in many parts of the world, with adverse consequences far beyond the borders of the countries concerned.

112. These hard facts should not be ignored in an appraisal of the challenge with which the United Nations is confronted or when we take stock of the present situation of the world Organization.

113. The need for strengthening the United Nations as an instrument for concerted action and co-ordination in international politics is no less today than was the case 30 years ago. The small countries have the largest stake in a United Nations in a position to act, but actions by the Organization will always have to take account of the reality which the big Powers represent in global politics.

114. But of equal importance is a recognition of the rights of small and new nations to independence, social justice and a voice in the international community.

115. It is important to encourage the big Powers to make full use of the United Nations and not yield to the temptation to solve their problems outside the framework

of the world Organization. Only through constructive co-operation between large and small countries will it be possible to solve the immense problems confronting the United Nations today.

116. We must always bear in mind the fact that the authority of the Organization is undermined whenever it is associated with resolutions which are not rooted in reality.

117. Moderation and a negotiated compromise inside the United Nations are preferable to a confrontation on which the Organization can exercise no influence.

118. But here, of course, the substantive effects of the compromise are the decisive factor. The call for moderation and compromise must not serve as a cover-up for the preservation of existing injustice in the international community.

119. In wide areas of the world, progress towards human dignity has been too slow. This goes above all for southern Africa.

120. The Norwegian Government has for years supported the struggle of the oppressed black population against the white minority régime's policies of racial discrimination and economic exploitation. We have from this rostrum stressed the particular responsibility resting with Western countries for the developments in southern Africa. This responsibility stems from Western colonization and from the economic dependency of the white minority régimes on the Western world.

121. The initiative taken by the United States Secretary of State Henry Kissinger in conjunction with the British Government and the efforts of the five front-line Presidents have created new hope that the Rhodesian conflict can be resolved at the conference table. The United States initiative and subsequent developments confirm the necessity for outside pressure on the white minority rulers.

122. Also, as far as Namibia is concerned, we can discern the outline of a negotiating process.

123. In this new and more hopeful situation it is of the utmost importance that Western countries concentrate and intensify their pressure on the Government of South Africa to abolish its system of *apartheid*—the core of the problems which we are facing in southern Africa.

124. If the Government of South Africa does not demonstrate its readiness to meet the demands of the black population for basic human rights, sanctions will have to be adopted by the United Nations. I would think of a binding arms embargo as an initial step.

125. Independence and majority rule for Zimbabwe and Namibia are important aims in themselves. But southern Africa will remain an area of international conflict until a democratically elected majority government has emerged also in the Republic of South Africa. I would make an urgent appeal to the white minority leaders of southern Africa to come forward and comply with the demands of the black population for human dignity and majority rule while there is still time left. The alternative is most

frightening and could result in a tragedy for all races in southern Africa, and further threaten world peace.

126. The last few years have witnessed the initiation of new contacts between the nations of the world with a view to seeking through negotiations a relaxation of tension and disarmament. To many of us it is a most frightening paradox that peace among the peoples of the world is based on an ever increasing and more efficient arsenal of weapons of mass destruction, but this is a political reality.

127. We also have to accept as a fact that the modest contacts initiated between the super-Powers with a view to reducing strategic armaments stem from this paradox. It is also an indisputable fact that a shift in this mutual balance will threaten existing stability and peace.

128. But we must never accept a peace based on a balance of terror as the final and lasting solution.

129. A most convincing argument, although not the only one, in this connexion is the need to release for more constructive purposes the enormous human and material resources tied up in the military field in a world where the majority of mankind has still to see its most basic needs fulfilled.

130. My Government sees in the concept of the new international economic order an ambitious programme for global justice and solidarity. I want, however, first to focus on the important efforts for development already made by the developing countries themselves. Developing countries as a whole are themselves, through their own savings, financing three fourths of their total investments. Foreign resources account for only one fourth of the capital raised for investment purposes.

131. Norway is also taking a favourable view of the strong mobilization of their own resources which developing countries are aiming at through the launching of the principle of collective self-reliance. This has given international development co-operation a new dimension and will have the active support of my Government.

132. But, as we all know, in spite of the impressive efforts made by many developing countries, growth in the industrialized part of the world has been even greater. As a result, the gap between the poor and the rich has increased over recent years. This has logically led to a call for new ways to attack the problems, not as an alternative but as a supplement to the previous approach where the main efforts have been made by the developing countries themselves, supported by the mobilization of outside assistance.

133. The fourth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development [UNCTAD] in Nairobi was a first serious attempt by the nations of the world to start the implementation of the new international economic order. We all know the outcome. It was characterized by such compromises as proved necessary to reach a broad consensus. Compromises usually fail to meet all the expectations of any part to them. Thus we may all find ourselves in a position where we, for various reasons, feel disappointed at the concessions that had to be made in order to reach the Nairobi compromise. We do understand developing countries which regard the compromise as limited in scope.

134. The Norwegian Government was committed to contributing to a solution of the problems submitted to the fourth session of UNCTAD. We went to Nairobi ready to support the integrated programme for commodities, not only politically but also financially, by making our contribution to the common fund. To my Government this follows naturally from the idea of solidarity so fundamental to our form of democratic socialism. Norwegian policy at home has for years been aiming at eliminating social injustice and imbalances between groups of our people and regions of our country. It is logical to extend this solidarity also to the international field.

135. We consider the integrated programme for commodities an important instrument for the support of commodity-producing countries and also for providing a more orderly functioning of a key sector in international economic relations. No country can escape national intervention in free market forces—neither can we internationally, if we want a more equitable world economic order.

136. I agree with the critics of the integrated programme for commodities when they argue that all the components of the programme, including the common fund, have not yet been fully examined and are not ready for immediate implementation; but I disagree with the same critics when they maintain that the preparatory work has to be fully concluded before the necessary political decisions can be taken. If I find it important to make this point months after Nairobi, the reason is that I am afraid that the same arguments may surface again.

137. I want to state at this stage that the arrangements for commodities which we shall be invited to establish cannot possibly be already perfect at the initial stage. Years may be required before they function perfectly—if they ever do—but this does not alter the fact that such arrangements, although imperfect, are fundamental to the relationship between the developing and the industrialized countries. They will be the decisive indication of whether rich countries take seriously their responsibility for attacking the underlying factors determining the present inequitable distribution of income between the countries of the world.

138. The United Nations started as an expression of a devastated world's dream of a better future, characterized by justice, democracy, co-operation and peace. The Organization and the men and women who have served it faithfully can look back on achievements of historic significance.

139. There is no alternative to the United Nations as a global forum for co-operation among all nations of the world; but there is still a long way to go till we see achieved the ultimate goal of a world of justice and security for all, built on co-operation between free and equal people. There is a need at all times to remind ourselves of the fact that there is only one proven method for making a long way shorter: that is, to move forward.

140. The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly and on my own behalf I thank the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway for the important address we have just heard from him.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.