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**Chairman:** Mr. Victor A. BELAUNDE (Peru).

**AGENDA ITEM 55**

**Question of Cyprus (A/3120 and Add.1, A/3204 and Add.1, A/C.1/788, A/C.1/789, A/C.1/L.168 to A/C.1/L.170) (*continued*):**

- (a) **Application, under the auspices of the United Nations, of the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples in the case of the population of the Island of Cyprus;**
- (b) **Complaint by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland of support from Greece for terrorism in Cyprus**

1. Mr. ZEINEDDINE (Syria) said there were two distinct issues before the Committee, each related to the question of Cyprus. The first issue was the basic one, namely, the liberation of Cyprus from colonial rule. Observing that there were provisions of the Charter proclaiming the right of self-determination, he stated that the parties in that connexion were neither Greece nor Turkey, but the people of Cyprus and the United Kingdom.

2. The second issue turned on the British claim that Greece was aiding the people of Cyprus. The Government of Greece had denied that accusation. The nature of the second issue was one of international friction between two Member States of the United Nations. He pointed out that normally such a matter would have been brought to the Security Council, but the United Kingdom Government after some delay, had decided to bring that aspect of the question to the General Assembly (A/3204 and Add.1). Mr. Zeineddine wondered about the meaning of that move and whether the aim had been to counteract the submission of the Greek Government (A/3120 and Add.1) or to divert attention from the actual situation on Cyprus.

3. Emphasizing that each issue differed with respect to the bearing of the Charter provision which governed them, he declared that the Committee had to deal with the two questions separately. Discussion of one should not influence the discussion of the other. Even if the United Nations were able to verify the allegations against the Greek Government, that would not detract

from the right of the people of Cyprus to self-determination.

4. He wished to draw attention to some of the important contingencies and international implications of the question. In addition to the parties, Turkey and Syria had good reasons for being concerned. The first reason was Syria's proximity to the Island of Cyprus; Cyprus was nearer to Syrian shores than to any other. The second reason was that both Turkey and Syria were heirs of the Ottoman Empire and thus had been equally affected by the juridical aspects of the dissolution of that Empire.

5. Observing that Cyprus had been part of the Syrian Empire four times as long as it had been under any other rule and that there existed on Cyprus a small Syrian minority, he declared that Syria, however, had no actual claim whatever to Cyprus.

6. He pointed out that the Turkish minority on Cyprus constituted one-fifth of the population and, therefore, that Turkey, in particular, was entitled to demand that the rights of the Turkish minority should be safeguarded. But the rights of the minority must not be safeguarded at the expense of those of the majority or *vice versa*. Both groups constituted the population which must make the decision as to the future of Cyprus.

7. The interest of Arab countries in Cyprus was an actual one of practical import. It related to the right of the Arabs, particularly of Syria, to security and peace. He recalled that Cyprus had constantly served in the past as a stepping-stone for the invasion of Syria. Observing that Syria's future was, therefore, closely tied to that of Cyprus, he cited occasions on which Syrians had fought against numerous invaders based on Cyprus.

8. Since 1878 Cyprus had been part of the design of British imperialism against the Ottoman Empire and the Middle East. It was the last stronghold of British imperialism in that area. Recalling that it had been used for the recent aggression against Egypt, he declared that Cyprus was also being prepared for possible use in an attack against Syria, either in support of Israel or in a unilateral action. Noting that Syria had cause to be worried, he cited the discovery by the Syrian Secret Service of a plot against the Syrian Government based upon arms smuggled into Syria from Cyprus for the purpose of an insurrection. Also, he noted that the Cyprus Radio, under British control, was continually inciting the Arab people against their Governments. At the present time, the Syrian delegation was satisfied merely to call the attention of the United Nations to those facts.

9. Recalling that the United Kingdom had made it clear that it needed Cyprus to police the Arab East, he contended that such an assignment had not been given to the United Kingdom by the United Nations. He reminded the Committee that the action against Egypt had also been called a police action. The liberation of Cyprus was a dire necessity for Arab States for it

was the last stumbling block in the path of the liberation of the Arab States.

10. None of the Member States or the parties, including Syria, had the right to fashion the future of Cyprus to their liking. That future should be decided by the Cypriots themselves in accordance with the principle of self-determination.

11. Recognizing the international interest in the nature of the solution of the question of Cyprus, he recalled the statement of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece, Mr. Averoff-Tossizza (847th meeting) concerning the means by which the final solution could avoid making Cyprus a threat to any party or country in the area. In that connexion, the representative of Syria recalled suggestions for arrangements leading to the military neutralization of Cyprus. Whatever the final arrangement, Syria was concerned to have the solution obviate the present difficulty. The Syrian Government sincerely hoped that the United Kingdom would come to realize that its interests in the area were not furthered by police actions. The answer, for the United Kingdom was to base its dealings on mutual co-operation. Such a policy would also further the right of self-determination by the Cypriots.

12. The Syrian Government regretted that Greece and Turkey were at odds with one another over the Cyprus question. Syria was proud of its good relations with Greece and cherished the brotherly ties it had with the Turkish people. As to their ties under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), he declared that the less one dwelt on that aspect of the question, the better it would be for Cyprus.

13. Regarding the future developments between Greece and Turkey, he referred to two possibilities. First, if the differences between them continued to grow, that would only allow the United Kingdom to maintain its rule over Cyprus. The second possibility was that Greece and Turkey would resume negotiations to relieve the tensions affecting them. The Syrian Government hoped that such negotiations would be resumed.

14. Turning to that aspect of the question which the Syrian delegation considered basic for the Cypriots, he declared that, as on other, similar questions, Syria stood squarely on the right of self-determination. That right was the cornerstone of Arab national, as well as international, policy. In that connexion, the Syrian delegation favoured the first Greek draft resolution (A/C.1/L.168), but was open minded and would consider any other draft resolution which safeguarded effectively the right of self-determination.

15. The United Kingdom's view on the right of self-determination seemed to be that it could be invoked only if the exercise of that right did not conflict with British economic and military interests. He took issue with the British contention that the matter fell within the domestic jurisdiction of the United Kingdom (847th meeting). The United Nations was being asked to act not in accordance with the Charter, but in accordance with "British liberalism". The United Nations, however, must act only in accordance with the Charter and the right of self-determination which was recognized by it.

16. Recalling that the United Kingdom had never reconciled itself to the inclusion of the principle of self-determination in the Charter, he maintained that the preambular reference to the principle was of a binding character and that the United Kingdom could not give a unilateral interpretation to a multilateral treaty. In that connexion, he recalled the remarks of

the United Kingdom representative (847th meeting) concerning the sanctity of treaties, which was recognized by the Charter. But he asked whether the Charter itself was not such a treaty, and whether the right of self-determination was not a part of it. That principle could not be disregarded, just as the Charter itself could not be treated as a mere scrap of paper. The deeds of the United Kingdom in Egypt and Cyprus had to be compared with the words regarding the sanctity of treaties.

17. The right of self-determination might best be implemented by means of a plebiscite under international control. Talks between Cypriot leaders and British Governors were not real negotiations. He recalled the talks between Field-Marshal Sir John Harding and Archbishop Makarios, the former ending the talks merely by turning the latter into a forced house-guest. Today, according to the British, Archbishop Makarios was a terrorist, and the world discovered once again the existence of the Seychelles Islands, where he was now being held. Mr. Zeineddine reminded the Committee that other colonial Powers had also made similar use of such islands, but he felt certain that Archbishop Makarios would come back to Cyprus, as the Sultan had returned to Morocco. The future of Cyprus, he concluded, lay in the hands of the sons and daughters of Cyprus.

18. Turning to the second issue, that submitted by the delegation of the United Kingdom, Mr. Zeineddine was of the opinion that the Committee was not in a position to pronounce final judgement in the matter. On balance, the Syrian delegation had been favourably impressed by the convincing statement of the Greek representative on that point. Certain issues appeared quite clear, regardless of the confusion surrounding the question. First, Greece itself had asked for an investigation. The United Kingdom delegation could not expect the Committee to approve its draft resolution (A/C.1/L.169), which would mean a finding against Greece. The Syrian delegation, therefore, was in favour of the Greek draft resolution on the subject (A/C.1/L.170) and was opposed to the United Kingdom draft. Secondly, British terrorism had called forth the terrorism of the Cypriots. While the Syrian delegation could not condone terrorism, it recognized the fact that the Cypriots had no other choice in the face of the actions of the British administration.

19. In conclusion, Mr. Zeineddine observed that Syria had attempted to maintain an objective attitude toward the question of Cyprus and wanted only to see that peace was ensured and that the Cypriots were given liberty.

20. As to the question of *enosis* (union with Greece), it was only one of several possible eventualities; Cyprus might be neutralized or it might be independent. But for the time being, the real issue was to see that the Cypriots were liberated from British control and were assured the exercise of the right of self-determination.

21. The United Nations could order an investigation; it could order the United Kingdom to withdraw from Cyprus; or it could decide to hold a plebiscite under international control. But what the United Nations could not do was to ignore the problem and become a spectator. Also, he warned, to find a solution of expediency would only result in an unworkable solution. Strict application of the Charter was the only answer. The issue before the United Nations was the liberation of the people of Cyprus—that was what had to be dealt with.

22. Mr. BRYN (Norway) said that it was with some reluctance that he spoke on the question of Cyprus. Norway had no direct interests in the matter except for its friendship for the three countries primarily involved, Greece, United Kingdom and Turkey. Also, Norway wished that the Cypriots might be able to return to a normal life. He observed that all three countries were members of the same alliance, wholly defensive in character, to which Norway also belonged. Vexed by the situation in which the Committee found itself, the Norwegian Government was of the opinion that the matter might have been settled elsewhere.

23. Observing that he had no desire to speak on the substance of the fundamental question of Cyprus and that his delegation had opinions which might prove to be not wholly palatable to any of the three countries involved, Mr. Bryn wished to make certain remarks concerning the use and support of violence in conflicts similar to that of Cyprus. The Norwegian Government was against the use and support of violence in principle. While recognizing that there had been occasions in the course of human history when violence had been practically inevitable, his Government did not consider the Cyprus conflict to be in that category. Recalling that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece had quoted an article by a member of the British House of Commons drawing a parallel between the fight of the Greeks against the German invaders during the Second World War and the armed conflict in Cyprus (847th meeting), Mr. Bryn could not agree that the parallel was valid. Surely the British in Cyprus were not invading conquerors.

24. Acts of violence did not constitute a good method for the solution of differences between friends. One evil effect of violence was that it bred counter-violence which, in the case of Cyprus, included military and police measures of extreme harshness, which, in their turn, caused new violence in a vicious circle.

25. As to the three draft resolutions before the Committee, Mr. Bryn stated that his delegation could not see any useful purpose served through the adoption of any of them. The Norwegian delegation would find it extremely difficult to vote for any of the draft resolutions. But he did not feel there was any necessity to press them to a vote. On the contrary, the Norwegian delegation was convinced that there existed the elements of a compromise solution, and it would support efforts in that direction. In that connexion, he favourably referred to the efforts made by the representative of Iran.

26. The hopes of the Norwegian delegation now rested on the parties themselves. Since disputes between Member nations less closely linked with each other had shown themselves tractable in the past; his delegation refused to believe that the question of Cyprus was not susceptible of an equitable and sensible solution.

27. Mr. GEORGES-PICOT (France) pointed out that there were two essentially different problems before the General Assembly. One concerned the question of the competence of the United Nations to pronounce itself on the application of the principle of self-determination with regard to Cyprus, and the other related to the question of the support accorded by a Member State of the United Nations to the subversive activities of certain sections of the population of another Member State.

28. The issue before the Committee was whether the Charter as defined at the United Nations Conference on International Organization at San Francisco or as

interpreted in the Assembly by some Members would be applicable in cases like Cyprus. Another question posed itself: whether a Member State had the right to use the General Assembly to try to detach part of the territory of another State.

29. His Government was sorry to have seen a debate take place between two States which were linked to France by long traditions, and which were, like France, members of NATO, of the Organization for European Economic Co-operation and of the Council of Europe. In addition, over and above the problem itself, it was necessary to take into account the danger hanging over the West, rather than abet conflicts of such nature.

30. Referring to the statement made earlier by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Greece outlining the position of his country towards Cyprus (847th meeting), Mr. Georges-Picot could not find justification for the Greek arguments for an appeal to the United Nations. He observed that the Greek representative had made solemn statements, recognizing that British sovereignty in Cyprus had existed since 1914; that Greece had no territorial claims over Cyprus; that it respected the Lausanne Treaty;<sup>1</sup> and that Cyprus had never belonged to Greece. What was left of the Greek argument was a reference to an isolated point relating to Article 1, paragraph 2 of the Charter. That that paragraph dealt with the principle of self-determination, no one could deny. No less important, however, were the provisions of the Charter dealing with the maintenance of international peace and the prohibition on intervention in matters which were essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of States, for if all ethnic, religious and linguistic groups were given the right of self-determination, it would be the end of the national unity of most of the States represented in the First Committee.

31. In support of his argument, he quoted a statement by the head of the Government of Thailand to the effect that no nation, ethnically and culturally, could be called 100 per cent pure. He shared the view of the United Kingdom representative that the question of Cyprus fell within the domestic jurisdiction of that country (847th meeting), and that view was in conformity with the interpretation of the Charter as defined at San Francisco. The General Assembly, in his opinion, was not competent to consider the Cyprus question and would be abusing its powers if it did so.

32. Regarding the British charge that Greece had given aid to the terrorists in Cyprus, Mr. Georges-Picot observed that a Government which tolerated on its territory a radio station calling for insurrection in another country could not deny that charge. He regretted that the Greek Minister for Foreign Affairs had openly stated that his Government would not oppose the union of Cyprus with his country if that would be the eventual result of the uprising. If that procedure were tolerated, there would be no more international security, and the United Nations would become the accomplice of excessive nationalism and possibly even of a new form of colonialism. It would mean annexation by application of Article 1, paragraph 2 of the Charter. He could not believe that the majority of the General Assembly would be in favour of such a development.

33. He reminded the Committee that the United Kingdom Government had given sufficient assurances that

<sup>1</sup> Treaty of Peace between the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan, Greece, Roumania and the Serb-Croat-Slovene State, and Turkey, signed at Lausanne on 24 July 1923. League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. XXVIII, 1924, pp. 11 ff.

the matter would be settled in a just manner. He concluded that a climate favourable to a peaceful solution was essential.

34. Mr. MIR KHAN (Pakistan) stated that his delegation had taken keen and sincere interest in the peaceful and amicable settlement of the question in conformity with the interests of the three Governments concerned, the United Kingdom, Greece and Turkey. It was highly regrettable that the dispute between Greece and the United Kingdom over Cyprus continued to divide the allies and weaken the structure of peace. His Government was deeply concerned over the continued disagreement of the three Powers. It believed sincerely that a peaceful solution of the problem was essential for the peace and security of the region. He stressed that violence and terrorism, which had caused heavy loss of life and property, must stop in order to enable the parties concerned to reach a settlement in an atmosphere free from acrimony and civil disorder. His delegation was convinced that such a settlement must take into account the interests and aspirations of the Cypriot nationals.

35. He noted that a strong opinion existed in Turkey on the issue and that the Turks of the island as well as of the mainland felt that any change in the status of Cyprus would amount to a modification of the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923 which would upset the whole pattern of the area and affect the future of the large Turkish population of Cyprus. He observed that nearly half of the arable land on the island belonged to the Turks. If adequate safeguards for their future were not provided, another very serious refugees problem was likely to be created. He believed that the Greek proposal envisaged unilateral revision of a freely negotiated and accepted international treaty, namely, the Lausanne Treaty. He shared the view of the representative of Turkey that its historic bond with Cyprus and its geographical proximity to the island strengthened further its claim that future developments in Cyprus should be consistent with its own security requirements and interests.

36. Referring to the Radcliffe proposals,<sup>2</sup> he noted

<sup>2</sup> Lord Radcliffe, *Constitutional Proposals for Cyprus* (London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956), Cmd. 42.

that the patterns of the proposals for the self-government of Cyprus were well known in India and Pakistan as a recognized step towards progressive realization of self-government. He, therefore, was inclined to support their consideration by the parties concerned, so that they might lead to the realization of the aspirations of the people of Cyprus.

37. Mr. AZIZ (Afghanistan) noted with great interest the suggestions and views expressed on three main points in the course of the debate. The first point was related to the principle of self-determination of peoples and nations. His country recognized the right of self-determination of all peoples. It had always rejected the idea that self-determination was only a political principle and not a right. At the African-Asian Conference, held at Bandung in 1955, it had been recognized that that fundamental right was a prerequisite to the observance of all human rights. Article 1 of the draft International Covenants on Human Rights contained the same idea.

38. The second point dealt with the desirability of the parties concerned taking measures to create normal conditions in Cyprus and to put an end to the unrest from which the island was suffering. His delegation would support any measures toward that aim.

39. The third point related to the peaceful negotiations between the parties concerned. He believed that such negotiations were most desirable and, indeed, the most practical way for a peaceful solution of the problem. He reminded the Committee that the main purpose of its deliberations and the resolutions of the General Assembly on the question should be the interest of the people of Cyprus. It would be unfair if the equal rights of both the people of Greek and of Turkish origin were not taken into consideration. His delegation therefore would vote in favour of any draft resolution which would be in conformity with the principles which he had stated.

40. After a procedural debate in which the CHAIRMAN and Mr. HAYMERLE (Austria) took part, it was decided that the time for the closure of the list of speakers should remain unchanged: 6 p.m., 20 February 1957.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.