

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-SECOND SESSION

Official Records



**1670th
PLENARY MEETING**

Tuesday, 11 June 1968,
at 7.30 p.m.

NEW YORK

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President: Mr. Corneliu MANESCU (Romania).

AGENDA ITEM 64

Question of South West Africa (continued)

1. Mr. KABANDA (Rwanda) (translated from French): It is a signal honour for the delegation of Rwanda to submit to the General Assembly, on behalf of many delegations representing four continents, a revised draft resolution^{1/} on the question of Namibia.

2. It is time for the General Assembly to chart a new and realistic course of action that will, we believe, enable our Organization to meet the obligations to the Namibian people which it undertook by its resolution 2145 (XXI).

3. The concern animating the recent consultations, which ended this evening, among the various political groupings within the United Nations family was to take a further step in the direction chosen by the United Nations. In fact, it is essential that the United Nations should take appropriate steps to meet the challenge issued by the Pretoria authorities.

4. The closing by those authorities of the territory of South West Africa to the United Nations Council and the Commissioner for South West Africa impels us to act with greater determination and firmness on our concern to grant the Namibian people what we have promised them: self-determination and independence; and also to restore the flouted prestige and authority of the United Nations.

5. The time has come to stop considering the problem of Namibia as a purely African problem and to look on it as a United Nations problem. All United Nations Members must therefore agree on a certain number of minimal steps that will enable this Organization to cope successfully with a situation which, until the contrary is proved, constitutes a latent threat to international peace and security. If the steps we are proposing in the present draft resolution prove ineffective; if, in other words, some Members that can play a greater part in resolving the crisis take refuge behind their customary arguments instead of implementing the measures called for in that draft; then we shall have to despair—not of the justice of the cause we are defending, but of

the ability of the United Nations to meet the basic demands of the peoples who are still being subjected to the tyranny of colonization.

6. The revised draft resolution we are introducing today lays emphasis on a certain number of functions that the United Nations Council for South West Africa should fulfil in priority, until the situation becomes propitious for its fulfilment of the political tasks assigned to it in resolution 2248 (S-V). We have to lighten the Council's task, since its failure is not its own but that of the United Nations and of each Member, and especially of those Members which, though they have the appropriate means, are not applying these because their primary interests stand in the way.

7. Earlier resolutions concerning this question have been accused of lacking realism. The General Assembly has been accused of dictating Security Council decisions. Those accusations may or may not have been justified; but one fact is certain: no resolution, no matter how sugar-coated, will ever be exempt from criticism. We continue to hope that the Security Council, for which the present draft resolution prescribes no line of conduct, as many delegations would have wished, may be able to fulfil its obligations under the Charter.

8. It is unfortunate that the world does not learn enough from the lessons of history. Indeed, it does not seem very wise purposely to bar consideration of a given situation as a threat and a danger to international peace and security until preventive measures are no longer sufficient and we are forced to take hasty measures to prevent the conflicts from spreading. We are counting heavily on the wisdom of the Security Council; but we take care not to confuse wisdom with procrastination. We believe that wisdom consists in taking preventive measures, not in seeking remedies for situations that have degenerated into conflict. My delegation remains convinced that the United Nations still has the ability to put an end to the situation prevailing in South West Africa through the means placed at its disposal by the Charter; for we do not believe that any country, including South Africa itself, is interested in seeing that situation turn into open warfare between that country and the people who are demanding nothing save freedom, justice and a minimum of well-being. We find it difficult to believe that there are countries interested in prolonging the situation; for that would make their responsibility before the world and before history too great—a responsibility that could be accepted only if they had lost all moral sense. I am certain that none of the countries represented here is ready to assume those responsibilities; for that would be the beginning of its downfall.

^{1/} Issued later as document A/L.546/Rev.1.

9. Each of our States has, by subscribing to the obligations contained in the United Nations Charter, agreed to defend for itself and for others the values in which it believes: justice, peace and freedom. Let us be generous enough to share with others the fruits that we harvest in our own countries. As soon as we have interpreted that moral obligation towards peoples who are still dependent, and especially as soon as we have begun to act accordingly, the United Nations will have reached its goal.

10. We cherish the hope that the draft resolution we are introducing will meet with unanimous approval. Before reading it I should like to express here, on behalf of its co-sponsors, our appreciation for the spirit of co-operation we have found among the various political groups that make up the United Nations family, and in particular among the Latin-American group.

The speaker read draft resolution A/L.546/Rev.1.

11. The PRESIDENT (translated from French): Members of the Assembly have just heard the statement of the representative of Rwanda. The revised draft resolution will be distributed as soon as possible.

12. Mr. PANYARACHUN (Thailand): The draft resolution [A/L.546 and Corr.1] on the question of South West Africa as originally presented to the General Assembly by the representative of Tanzania on behalf of the Afro-Asian Group, at the 1667th meeting of the plenary Assembly, represents a reaffirmation of some very basic thinking of all those co-sponsors, including Thailand, who desire to see an immediate end of the illegal occupation of the Territory of South West Africa by the usurper forces of the Government of South Africa. Such illegal occupation, in our view, constitutes a grave threat to international peace and security. The desire of the co-sponsors flows fundamentally from the past resolutions that the General Assembly has overwhelmingly adopted in regard to the termination of the Mandate exercised by the Government of South Africa over the Territory of South West Africa, the ending of South Africa's right to administer the Territory [resolution 2145 (XXI)], and the creation of the United Nations Council for South West Africa to carry out political, administrative and legal duties entrusted to it [resolution 2248 (S-V)].

13. That the South African Government has adopted an intransigent stand in openly flouting the above-mentioned United Nations resolutions and flagrantly defying the authority of the United Nations has become all too clear. South Africa has unashamedly ignored international public opinion and made a mockery of the sanctity of the world Organization and its generally accepted authority. Its recent actions in regard to the illegal trial and conviction of a group of South West Africans, the announced measures to give the Territory of South West Africa a local administration, and particularly the systematic obstruction of the United Nations resolutions on the transfer of the Territory of South West Africa to the international responsibility of the United Nations, have all been aimed at frustrating and undermining any attempt, however reasonable and legally justified, of the world community to guide the people

of South West Africa along the path to eventual freedom and independence.

14. The deliberations that the Afro-Asian group has been conducting in the past few days, together with the negotiations that the group has had with the Latin American group, have been most intensive and thorough. Major points were all thrashed out in a spirit of give-and-take. Neither group can claim that the revised draft, as introduced by the representative of Rwanda, represents what each may regard as ideal. But the fact that both Groups have been able to reach a compromise without sacrificing fundamental concepts is something in which all of us can take pride. Once again, as often in the past, the Latin American group, whose friendship and co-operation we in the Afro-Asian group highly value, is marching forward with us, and the Afro-Asian group has been greatly heartened by the fact that we have the Latin American delegations on our side. This development is both reassuring and productive.

15. The delegation of Thailand, which has been a consistent co-sponsor of all relevant resolutions relating to South West Africa, deems it a great honour to second, on behalf of the Afro-Asian group, the revised draft resolution. We particularly wish to record our deep appreciation to Ambassador Kabanda of Rwanda, the President of the Afro-Asian group for the month of June, and to Ambassador Cuevas Cancino of Mexico and his colleagues in the Latin American contact group, who, with great patience and perseverance, have played a vital part in bridging the gap between the positions of the Afro-Asian and the Latin American groups.

16. The representative of Rwanda has introduced the revised draft resolution on this question in great detail and with great eloquence. My delegation therefore has no intention of going over all the points once again. We should like, however, to touch upon some provisions which we view as basic and important.

17. Whatever action we take in relation to the question of South West Africa must take into account fully the general wishes and views of the people of South West Africa. It is therefore with the greatest pleasure that we regard operative paragraph 1 in the revised draft resolution, since it is a statement of proclamation which is consonant with the will of the people of Namibia. From now on, the United Nations Council for South West Africa will be known as the United Nations Council for Namibia, and another link in the long chain of servitude in which South Africa has been holding the people of Namibia has been broken.

18. The new operative paragraph 4 is in effect a continuation of an action that the General Assembly has already taken in regard to the establishment of the Council, as evidenced in resolution 2248 (S-V). The paragraph takes fully into account the provisions of the said resolution and does not in any way detract from the basic concept or importance of the resolution. The Council, as evidenced in the wording, still remains in effect, and the original responsibilities and functions of the Council are likewise kept fully intact. The Council has merely been given some additional functions which, under existing circumstances, have a better chance of being performed in

the immediate future. In short, these supplementary functions will not replace the original mandate given to the Council, but, with a realistic and sober view taken of the present reality, the Council has, in this new paragraph, been given an additional set of duties as a matter of priority.

19. It is still our cherished hope as well as our strong determination, however, that the Council, as time passes and circumstances permit, will be enabled to discharge all the functions laid down in resolution 2248 (S-V).

20. It is a matter of special disappointment to my delegation that activities and dealings of nationals and companies of some States, wittingly or otherwise, have the effect of perpetuating the South African régime and its illegal occupation of Namibia and, as a result, have the effect of increasing the effectiveness of that régime's racist policies in Namibia. That is why the delegation of Thailand warmly welcomes the maintaining of the original paragraphs 9 and 10 in the revised draft, in slightly modified form.

21. In view of the considerations I have just stated, the Thai delegation wishes strongly to commend for the support of the General Assembly the revised draft resolution on the question of South West Africa.

22. Mr. IDZUMBUIR (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (translated from French): Like my colleagues who have just preceded me at this rostrum, I should like on behalf of the co-sponsors to thank all delegations for the patience they have shown throughout the negotiations that have been held among various ideological groupings in the United Nations on the question before the General Assembly at the present time, namely the question of South West Africa.

23. I should especially like to pay tribute to the Latin-American delegations, whose spirit of co-operation and understanding has today enabled us to submit a revised text to the General Assembly for its consideration.

24. Of course the revised text, which is the result of consultations held among various delegations each of which had its own views on the different aspects of the question, is of necessity a compromise—and by definition a compromise never satisfies its sponsors one hundred per cent—which expresses a common denominator relating to the United Nations responsibility with regard to this problem of South West Africa arising out of resolution 2248 (S-V). This common denominator also relates to the responsibility of all Members, and especially of all States wealthy enough to have the power—in other words, those States whose economic and military strength has earned them the title of great Powers. It also relates to the need for special co-operation by the Powers whose economic interests in South Africa and South West Africa constitute an important weapon capable of exerting adequate pressure on South Africa.

25. The responsibility of the United Nations is set forth in resolution 2248 (S-V), and I do not think that by recalling that resolution in the preamble we are creating any new situation. The responsibility of the great Powers arises from the fact, which we have all recognized, that the United Nations Council for

South West Africa, the body established by the General Assembly to exercise with regard to South West Africa functions that are clearly defined in resolution 2248 (S-V), has not been able to exercise them because of obstruction by the South African Government. And it is here that we think it essential, and furthermore in conformity with the provisions of resolution 2248 (S-V), to appeal to the Security Council, the organ empowered to take the appropriate decisions to force South Africa to respect resolution 2248 (S-V).

26. For our part, we think that the special responsibility of the great Powers is to take care not only that decisions suiting their own interests are respected, but above all that the decisions and wishes of the General Assembly are respected, especially when these are expressed unanimously; for those wishes, arising out of democratic processes, are the wishes of the international community.

27. Nevertheless, we cannot ignore that the United Nations Council is not in Namibia and therefore cannot exercise completely the functions entrusted to it. We are asking that it may be enabled to exercise what functions it can at the present time without thereby prejudicing the specific mandate entrusted to it by resolution 2248 (S-V). Those functions are clearly set forth in paragraph 4 of our draft resolution.

28. It is clear that the United Nations Council will exercise its functions until Namibia's accession to independence, and that as soon as that territory accedes to independence its leaders will be obliged, in agreement with the United Nations, to decide first on the need to continue assistance and then on the form—the type of United Nations assistance and the channels through which it will, when the occasion arises, have to be given to the territory.

29. Since resolution 2248 (S-V) clearly specifies the duration of the mandate of the United Nations Council, we did not think we need repeat it in the draft resolution.

30. We have indicated that the common denominator relates to the responsibility of certain Powers whose economic interests in South Africa and South West Africa, as I have stated, are a formidable weapon capable of exerting adequate pressure on South Africa. We should like to ask those Powers not to place economic and material interests above even the dignity of our Organization, above mankind, some of whose sons are suffering in South West Africa; we are asking them not to place above those interests the international community.

31. That is why we are appealing to them by inviting them in certain of the operative paragraphs to become aware of that phenomenon and to exert on the South African Government the pressure they can exert, either directly or through the bodies representing those economic interests in the territory of South West Africa. We venture to hope that that appeal will not be in vain.

32. In conclusion, allow me to pay tribute to the United Nations Council for the efforts it has been able to make and also, on behalf of the co-sponsors,

to the Acting Commissioner for South West Africa, and to express here the hope that they will be able to continue to exercise equally satisfactorily in the future the functions the General Assembly asks them to fulfil urgently and as a matter of priority.

33. In view of those considerations, and especially of the spirit of understanding which prevails among all delegations—co-sponsors, delegations of other

ideological groups and particularly the Latin-American delegations—and has brought about this result, this compromise that represents, as I have said, a common denominator, the expression of the Organization's common will—allow me to recommend to the General Assembly a unanimous vote in favour of the revised draft resolution.

The meeting rose at 8.25 p.m.