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President: Mr. Nasrollah ENTEZAM (Iran).

Palestine: (b) assistance to Palestine refugees. Report of the Director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East: report of the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee (A/1566)

[Agenda item 20]

The draft resolution contained in the report of the Ad Hoc Political Committee (A/1566) was adopted by 46 votes to none, with 6 abstentions.

Treatment of people of Indian origin in the Union of South Africa: report of the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee (A/1548)

[Agenda item 57]

1. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): Yesterday [313th meeting] the General Assembly decided unanimously not to hold a debate on the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee's report on this item. The delegation of the Union of South Africa has informed me that it voted in error for the proposal that no discussion should be held; it asked me to make this statement for the record.

2. I call upon the representative of the Union of South Africa, who wishes to explain his vote.

3. Mr. DONGES (Union of South Africa): The President has been so kind as to place on record the circumstances which oblige me to make this statement. He has also placed on record the fact that the South African delegation objected to the decision not to have

a debate on the present item in this Assembly. The President's courtesy in this matter is indeed appreciated.

4. Perhaps I may be allowed, before I explain my vote, to refer very briefly to the reasons why the South African delegation has been deprived of an opportunity of endeavouring, at the appropriate time, to reopen a discussion on the draft resolution before the General Assembly on a matter which is of the most vital importance, not only to South Africa but also to the Organization as a whole.

5. As you are aware, the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee, which had originally dealt with the matter,¹ was in session at the time when the General Assembly decided against the discussion. We therefore had every reason to believe that no aspect of this item would be dealt with in the General Assembly without prior warning to us. That we were justified in holding this view is strengthened by the fact that, when on Thursday last, 30 November, a representative inquired of the Chairman of the Fourth Committee, at its 191st meeting, whether there was any danger of Fourth Committee items being dealt with in the Assembly while the Committee was still in session, the representative in question was assured that sufficient warning would be given, and that the Committee would be adjourned in order to enable representatives to attend the plenary meetings of the General Assembly.

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifth Session, Ad Hoc Political Committee*, 41st to 48th meetings inclusive.

6. I am obliged, with the greatest deference to the President, to express my great regret that, due to these unfortunate and unforeseen circumstances, the South African delegation has been deprived of an opportunity of seeking the reopening of the debate in order to resist the adoption of the draft resolution before the General Assembly.

7. Perhaps I may be allowed to state very briefly the views of my delegation on the draft resolution. I do not propose to repeat my legal argument on the question of the competency of the Organization to deal with the matter in the light of Article 2, paragraph 7 of the Charter. I have dealt with that very fully, and I think I can say with fairness that the argument has emerged from the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee unscathed and only half-heartedly challenged on legal grounds.

8. The first reason why my delegation objects to this draft resolution is because of its flagrant violation of Article 2, paragraph 7 of the Charter. The pattern of intervention envisaged in this draft resolution which is now before the Assembly has become more clearly defined in the course of the discussions and is evidenced by the very nature of the draft itself. What was implicit before is now explicit, namely, that the interference extends to the general internal policy of a country and includes interference with domestic legislation, even though it does not discriminate against any particular race or group but is equally applicable to all.

9. It should be clear by now that the real implications of this draft resolution are wider than the question of the position of Indians in South Africa, wider than the issue of discrimination, wider than the question of minorities in any country. The precedent set by this draft resolution and the legal arguments advanced to sustain it cover intervention in the internal policy of any country in the economic, cultural or social sphere as well. Whenever the Charter in any Article speaks of human rights, it speaks in the same breath of economic, social and cultural matters, as reference to Articles 1, paragraph 3, 13, paragraph 1 b, 55, 62, 68 and 76 will show. Consequently, if the Organization has jurisdiction in respect of human rights in spite of Article 2, paragraph 7, it must also have jurisdiction in regard to unsatisfactory economic, social and cultural conditions in any country. If Article 2, paragraph 7 was a broken reed to curb interference in the domestic affairs of South Africa in this case, how can it ever be invoked with success to hold inviolate a nation's economic or social policy, its form of government or its methods of administration? If we sell this pass, if we surrender this bastion, the way is open to every invader of our sovereign power. That is the point that I wanted to impress on the General Assembly as the necessary implication of passing a resolution of this nature.

10. By allowing this kind of interference in the domestic affairs of a country, the Organization is sowing the seeds of its own dissolution. It violates its own constitution. It makes membership intolerable, and it forfeits the respect and confidence it ought to inspire.

11. A vote for this draft resolution is a vote for interference in the most naked form in the internal policies and domestic legislation of a Member State. It is a vote for the violation of what has been described as one of the corner-stones of the Charter, namely, Article 2,

paragraph 7. It is a vote for a flagrant breach of faith against those who signed the Charter at San Francisco on the strength of assurances given by its authors. It is a vote to make false the representations by which many nations were induced to subscribe to the Charter. My government cannot acquiesce in a political interpretation of the Charter. We take our stand on the sanctity and inviolability of Article 2, paragraph 7, which we refuse to regard as a scrap of paper to be torn up on grounds of political expediency. By that we stand, and that is one of the reasons why we cannot support this draft resolution now before the General Assembly.

12. But apart from that question, the draft resolution as a whole is an objectionable text, the most objectionable that one can imagine. It is a draft resolution which by its very terms makes it incapable of being carried out. In the first place, it is significant for what it omits to say. When I charged the Indian Government, in the Committee, with having pursued a policy of provoking my government to withdraw from the conference, so that India could put the blame on us, I put certain pertinent questions, to which no reply has been given. I pointed out that if India was prepared to hold a round table conference in February, in spite of existing legislation and the declared policy of my government, it was frivolous and irresponsible for it to withdraw from the conference by reason only of the passage of the Group Areas Act.

13. To demonstrate this, I should like the General Assembly to recall the picture painted last year² by the representative of India, to compare it with that presented this year, and to ask in what respect the current picture is worse than last year's edition. If the 1949 edition did not deter India from the conference, how then can the 1950 edition have such an effect? Why should Pakistan have been agreeable to continue with the conference? But if one looks at the draft resolution, one fails to find a single word of condemnation for this irresponsible conduct on the part of India.

14. In its operative part, too, the draft resolution is unacceptable, whether regarded as a whole or in its individual provisions. On 17 November I indicated, at the end of my speech in the Committee, the only basis on which the proposed round table conference could hold out a reasonable hope of success. I said that in my opinion the wiser course in the troubled times in which we were living would be for India to withdraw its complaint and proceed to hold the round table conference, the door to which was still open.

15. That is the royal road to a resumption of talks, without prejudice to either side either on the merits or on the views they might hold on domestic jurisdiction. If India persists, as it is apparently doing, however, the Assembly should, on the assumption—which I do not admit—that it is competent to do so, content itself merely with an expression of regret that the conference has broken down and ask the parties to consider the holding of a conference on the basis decided at the preliminary talks, and unshackled by any further conditions on either party. To do more, as this draft resolution does now, would be to require one of the parties to enter the conference on a footing of inequality and with the dice heavily loaded against it. It would, in effect, be

² See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Third Session, Part II, First Committee*, 263rd and 267th meetings.

a violation of paragraph 3 of the draft resolution now before the General Assembly, even before it was passed. It would be strangled at birth.

16. I have done my duty as a representative of my country, but I also have a duty to discharge as the representative of a Member of this Organization, and I should be failing in that duty if I did not warn the General Assembly, with all the strength at my command, that it must not make it impossible for a Member State to move in the direction which it might desire by requiring of that Member State something inconsistent with its national self-respect. That is not statesmanship, but mischievous and irresponsible conduct which bodes no good for the future of the Organization or for good relations among Member States.

17. For these reasons, we are wholeheartedly opposed to the draft resolution now before the General Assembly.

18. Mrs. PANDIT (India): I should not have asked for permission to stand before this Assembly today but for the remarks of the previous speaker. I am aware that many important decisions face the General Assembly and it is not right that its valuable time should be wasted.

19. I merely want to point out that the address of the representative of the Union of South Africa was hardly an explanation of a vote. He raised points which should be answered but which I believe have been so well thrashed out during the last few days in the Committee and during the last few years, both in the Committee and in the General Assembly, that it would be almost futile again to answer the same questions in the same manner. Therefore, although there are many points which I might have raised in answer to the questions he has already put, I would prefer to abide by the decision taken yesterday by the General Assembly that no speeches should be made. I shall be content to leave the decision to the conscience of the General Assembly.

20. Mr. AL-JAMALI (Iraq): I am going to vote in favour of the draft resolution. I shall do so on two assumptions.

21. In the first place, I believe that the question involved is not a local but a world-wide one of great international significance. The question of racial discrimination in the world today is a burning issue with relation to international peace and harmony.

22. In the second place, my delegation believes that this General Assembly must do its best in all circumstances to tear down all walls existing among men, whether they be political, religious, racial or economic. We must have one world. We must have one human brotherhood. Let us tear down these walls. (e)

23. Mr. PRICE-MARS (Haiti) (*translated from French*): The delegation of Haiti will vote in favour of the draft resolution under discussion because it is entirely in accordance with the traditional policy of my government and my people in respect of one of the most odious forms of racial discrimination, wherever such a shameful phenomenon exists.

24. Mr. TANGE (Australia): I should like to explain why the Australian delegation will find it necessary to vote against the draft resolution before the Assembly. The attitude of the Australian delegation was indi-

cated throughout the debate in the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee which preceded the submission of this draft to the General Assembly. The Australian delegation expressed the view from the outset that action on this matter by the Assembly would represent an infringement of Article 2, paragraph 7 of the Charter, and was therefore outside the competence of the General Assembly.

25. The Australian Delegation has expressed no opinion on the substance of the complaint made by the delegation of India. It has based its attitude on the opinion that the Assembly has been called upon to make recommendations which constitute interference with matters essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of the Government of the Union of South Africa.

26. I should like, at this time, to state that had the draft resolution submitted to the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee by the delegations of Bolivia, Brazil, Denmark, Norway and Sweden come to the vote in the Committee in its original form, the Australian delegation—while maintaining its attitude on the question of competence—would not have opposed the adoption of that draft resolution by the General Assembly. In the view of the Australian delegation, that joint draft resolution represented a reasoned and constructive attempt to settle the question with the least possible friction. I should like, on behalf of my delegation, to pay tribute to the representatives of the sponsoring Powers, and particularly to the representatives of Bolivia and Brazil, for their efforts to find a satisfactory settlement for this contentious issue. However, before that draft resolution came to the final vote in the Committee, it was amended, particularly in respect of paragraphs 2 and 3. In our view the amendments carried the draft far beyond the competence of the General Assembly.

27. The draft resolution is therefore unacceptable to the Australian delegation and we accordingly propose to vote against it.

28. I would move that the draft should be voted upon in parts; that the first three paragraphs of the preamble should be taken together, so that the fourth paragraph of the preamble can be voted upon separately, and subsequently that each paragraph of the operative part should be voted upon separately.

29. Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) (*translated from Spanish*): My delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution presented by the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee, for the reasons already explained in detail in that Committee.

30. My delegation considers that, in this time of great uncertainty and anxiety for all, it is the duty of the United Nations to reaffirm the principles of the Charter and to endeavour, by all possible means, to make the ideals for which the United Nations is fighting clear to the peoples of the world.

31. If the United Nations applies different policies in similar situations, considering only the international position of the country concerned, it will lose all its moral authority to act on other occasions. The United Nations has proclaimed, on many occasions, that the defence of fundamental human rights is one of its primary duties and obligations. It has also repeatedly affirmed that concern for the observance of fundamental human rights in a country does not mean interference

in the domestic affairs of that country. That is all the more true when the infringement of human rights is causing friction or enmity between two countries, as in the present case.

32. My delegation, as I have said, will vote for the draft resolution of the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee; it is morally entitled to do so because it has consistently championed, in the United Nations, the theory and the principles to which I have just referred. It hopes that the final part of the proposed resolution will produce the desired effect and lead to a friendly agreement between India and the Union of South Africa. It also once more draws attention to the fact that persistence in racial discrimination, such as that referred to in the draft resolution, jeopardizes the cause of democracy, and that is a serious matter in times like these.

33. Mr. ANZE MATIENZO (Bolivia) (*translated from Spanish*): My delegation had the honor of being associated with the delegations of Brazil, Denmark, Norway and Sweden in an attempt at conciliation, represented by a text which we submitted for the consideration of the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee.

34. The Bolivian delegation abstained from voting on that draft resolution after amendments had been adopted which in fact nullified the attempt at conciliation. Nevertheless, it will vote in favour of the draft resolution presented to the General Assembly by the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee, because it wishes to reaffirm its views concerning respect for human rights and its firm attitude towards discriminatory measures. Bolivia condemns such measures, in accordance with the principles enunciated in the document which is the corner-stone of the United Nations, namely, the Charter.

35. Mr. ICHASO (Cuba) (*translated from Spanish*): The Cuban delegation wishes briefly to explain why it will vote in favour of the draft resolution approved by the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee on the item now before us.

36. My delegation considers that the racial discrimination practised in the Union of South Africa is not only an offence against the dignity of the human person, but also a grave danger to democratic principles and world peace. At a time when we are striving hard to defend democratic principles and our civilization against the most serious threat it has ever faced, it seems very unfortunate that some countries represented here, countries with a democratic system of government, should give the bad example of segregating one race from another, placing one under the subjection of another, and thus jeopardizing the sacred principle of equality.

37. Cuba is proud of having taken an active part in the discussion on this question and of having contributed an amendment to the draft now before the Assembly. In that amendment it is stated unequivocally, and as a matter of principle, that the policy of racial segregation (*Apartheid*) practised in the Union of South Africa is necessarily based on doctrines of racial discrimination.

38. Mr. THORS (Iceland): The item now before the General Assembly, namely, "Treatment of people of Indian origin in the Union of South Africa," is, if I may say so, an old acquaintance of the United Nations,

as it has been before us every year since 1946. It is now about time that some solution should be reached so that this item should not become a permanent problem before the United Nations. The Icelandic delegation has always considered the complaints of the Indian delegation in this matter with great sympathy. We shall now confirm our stand of previous years and vote for each and every paragraph of the draft resolution. We think humanity will be best served if the parties concerned solve this matter themselves, once and for all.

39. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): We shall now proceed to vote on the draft resolution. Certain delegations have requested a vote by division, that is, that the preamble should be put to the vote first, and then the operative part, paragraph by paragraph.

40. In addition, the French delegation has requested a vote by division on paragraph 3 of the operative part.

41. If there are no objections, we shall follow that procedure.

42. The delegation of the Union of South Africa has requested a roll-call vote on each paragraph. A roll-call is in order.

43. The Australian delegation informs me that it had requested a separate vote on the first three paragraphs of the preamble.

44. I therefore put those three paragraphs to the vote.

A vote was taken by roll-call.

Iran, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Iran, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia.

Against: Luxembourg, Union of South Africa, Belgium.

Abstaining: Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Australia, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, Greece.

The first three paragraphs of the preamble were adopted by 46 votes to 3, with 10 abstentions.

45. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): I now put to the vote the fourth paragraph of the preamble.

A vote was taken by roll-call.

Denmark, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Bolivia, Burma, Chile, China, Cuba.

Against: Greece, Luxembourg, Union of South Africa, Australia, Belgium.

Abstaining: Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, France, Israel, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Sweden, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Argentina, Brazil, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia.

The fourth paragraph of the preamble was adopted by 29 votes to 5, with 25 abstentions.

46. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): We come now to the vote on the operative part of the draft resolution. I put paragraph 1 of the operative part to the vote.

A vote was taken by roll-call.

The Dominican Republic, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark.

Against: Luxembourg, Union of South Africa, Belgium.

Abstaining: Greece, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Australia, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia.

Paragraph 1 of the operative part was adopted by 48 votes to 3, with 9 abstentions.

47. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): I now put paragraph 2 of the operative part to the vote.

A vote was taken by roll-call.

Peru, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Chile, China, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay.

Against: Union of South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Australia, Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg, Netherlands.

Abstaining: Peru, Poland, Sweden, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Venezuela, Argentina, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, New Zealand.

Paragraph 2 was adopted by 39 votes to 7, with 14 abstentions.

48. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): We come now to paragraph 3 of the operative part. I put to the vote the first part, which reads: "Calls upon the governments concerned to refrain from taking any steps which would prejudice the success of their negotiations . . .".

A vote was taken by roll-call.

Ecuador, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic.

Against: Luxembourg, Union of South Africa, Australia, Belgium.

Abstaining: Greece, Israel, Netherlands, Peru, Argentina, Costa Rica.

The first part of paragraph 3 of the operative part was adopted by 50 votes to 4, with 6 abstentions.

49. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): I put to the vote the second part of paragraph 3 of the operative part.

A vote was taken by roll-call.

France, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Thailand, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Bolivia, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Chile, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia.

Against: France, Greece, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Paraguay, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Dominican Republic.

Abstaining: Israel, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Sweden, Turkey, Venezuela, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, El Salvador.

The second part of paragraph 3 of the operative part was adopted by 35 votes to 13, with 12 abstentions.

50. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): I put to the vote paragraph 4 of the operative part.

A vote was taken by roll-call.

Turkey, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Thailand.

Against: Union of South Africa, Australia, Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg.

Abstaining: Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Venezuela, Argentina, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic, France, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Poland, Sweden.

Paragraph 4 of the operative part was adopted by 38 votes to 5, with 17 abstentions.

51. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): I put to the vote the draft resolution as a whole [A/1548].

A vote was taken by roll-call.

Australia, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Bolivia, Burma, Chile, China, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Thailand, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan.

Against: Australia, Belgium, Greece, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Union of South Africa.

Abstaining: Brazil, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, France, New Zealand, Norway, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Sweden, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Venezuela, Argentina.

The draft resolution as a whole was adopted by 33 votes to 6, with 21 abstentions.

Former Italian colonies: (d) report of the United Nations Commission for Eritrea and (e) report of the Interim Committee of the General Assembly on the report of the United Nations Commission for Eritrea: reports of the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee (A/1561 and Add.1) and the Fifth Committee (A/1574)

[Agenda item 21]

52. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): I shall put to the vote the two draft resolutions submitted by the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee [A/1561 and Add.1]. Then I shall put to the vote the draft resolutions submitted by the delegations of Poland [A/1564 and Corr.1] and the Soviet Union [A/1570].

53. Although the draft resolution submitted by the Polish delegation is dated 29 November and hence should be put to the vote first, the Polish delegation

has informed me that it is agreeable to having the USSR draft resolution, which was submitted at a later date, put to the vote first.

54. Mr. AKLILOU (Ethiopia) (*translated from French*): I asked to speak in order to give you a short explanation of the vote of the Ethiopian delegation. In view of the serious events that are taking place, it behoves us all to express our views as briefly as possible and to show a real spirit of conciliation in our discussions and observations. In that spirit I shall simply explain our vote, endeavouring thus to facilitate the work of the Assembly, although the question of Eritrea is of vital interest to my country and concerns it to the utmost degree.

55. I shall be obliged to refer to my previous statements in the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee.⁸ In the course of those observations, I had occasion to recall once again that the findings of the two commissions of inquiry sent to Eritrea fully confirmed my country's assertion that the wishes of the great majority of the population, as well as economic factors and considerations of peace and security in East Africa, indicated that that territory should be reunited with its mother country, Ethiopia. Consequently the compromise formula submitted to the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee by fourteen delegations, and contained in that Committee's draft resolution, does not, in our opinion, entirely meet the aspirations of the majority of the population or my country's claims; it is a formula of conciliation between the divergent wishes of the majority and the minority of the population. Assuredly the serious events which are now taking place call upon us all to show a spirit of conciliation, whatever the questions with which we are dealing.

56. As I have already said in the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee, Ethiopia has the interests and well-being of the population of Eritrea too much at heart to agree that the problem should be left unsolved by this Assembly, particularly after three years of discussion in the United Nations. Although the compromise formula does not fully satisfy either the aspirations of the majority of the population or my country's claims, the Ethiopian delegation accepts it as being the only solution which, in the present circumstances, could obtain the requisite majority to ensure its adoption by the United Nations.

57. If, therefore, this formula is adopted in its present wording, Ethiopia will scrupulously respect it and will make very effort to see that it is put into effect.

58. I here repeat that my government willingly gives the guarantee needed to allay the anxieties of all indigenous and foreign minorities. Steps will be taken to ensure absolute respect for the rights and privileges of the Moslem minority in Eritrea; the members of that minority will be eligible, in the same way as everyone else, to fill any posts both in Eritrea and in Ethiopia, where they will enjoy all civil and political rights.

59. Moreover, the political position adopted by the various groups in Eritrea will expose them neither to retaliatory nor to discriminatory measures. The essential thing is that the Eritreans are indeed our brothers;

⁸ For the discussion on this subject in the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee, see *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifth Session, Ad Hoc Political Committee*, 37th to 40th and 48th to 56th meetings inclusive.

they are the brothers of the Ethiopian people; they will find brotherly love and enjoy its blessings at every point in their association with Ethiopia; that love will render our relations with our Eritrean brothers permanently fruitful, regardless of whether they are unionists or members of the Moslem League, great or small, Moslem or Christian.

60. With regard to the Italian minority, I have the honour and the pleasure to reaffirm that the Italians in Eritrea will continue to enjoy all their rights and privileges as in the past and that they will, moreover, be considered as friends, since the way is now open for sincere and loyal co-operation between former enemies.

61. In short, there will be neither majority nor minority, neither Moslems nor Christians, neither former political opponents nor former enemies; there will be only Eritreans and friends who were once enemies, all co-operating with us, the Ethiopians, to write a new chapter of history which will bring to an end a long era of exile and suffering and show in these critical hours the deep truth and justice on which the work of the United Nations is founded.

62. The PRESIDENT (*translated from French*): This is the first time that I have listened with pleasure to an explanation of a vote that was perhaps not absolutely in accordance with the rules of procedure. But we have all been deeply moved by the assurances that have just been given us by the representative of Ethiopia; if, in this case, I did not wish to call attention to the rule, it was because I believed that on such occasions it would not be fitting to attach undue importance to its literal application.

63. Sir Frank SOSKICE (United Kingdom): I should like to say just a very few words in explanation of the vote which my delegation will cast.

64. May I begin by expressing with the President the great pleasure which we had in listening to the statement just made by the representative of Ethiopia.

65. The future of Eritrea, as this Assembly well knows, has been exhaustively discussed here, and the draft resolution was considered at great length by the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee. I therefore do not think it necessary to comment any further on the proposals approved by the Committee. I should only like to say, on behalf of my delegation, how glad we are that it proved possible to arrive at a solution of the problem in the Committee and to express the hope that the General Assembly will in turn give its approval to the proposals embodied in the draft resolution.

66. On behalf of my delegation, I should like here in this Assembly to renew the pledge which I gave in the Committee: that my government will do its best, in so far as it lies with it, to implement the proposals for a federation between Ethiopia and Eritrea. We are glad that these proposals are acceptable to the Ethiopian Government. We are glad also that the Italian Government is prepared loyally to abide by the proposals if they are adopted by this Assembly. It is the hope—and, indeed, the earnest wish—of my government that the acceptance of these proposals and their implementation in due course not only will contribute to the happiness and well-being of Eritrea, but also may open a new chapter for that part of Africa which we are considering. We hope that they may lead to real reconciliation and fruitful collaboration

between former enemies, and that they may lay the foundations of an understanding among Italians, Eritreans and Ethiopians.

67. We, for our part, intend to recognize and, so far as possible, reconcile the interests of all those concerned. We recognize the desire of many Eritreans to be reunited with Ethiopia. We recognize also the fundamental rights of those Italians duly established there to continue to live and work in Eritrea. We intend to do our utmost to safeguard all these rights. We realize—and I am sure we are not alone in this—the contribution which Italian skill and enterprise has made and is making to the well-being of Eritrea. It is obviously right, in the view of my delegation, that conditions should be such that this contribution may continue.

68. I should like further to take this opportunity of repeating once again that, whatever may be the difficulties in store for Eritrea, we intend to do our best to see that justice is done there and that, as a result, past conflicts are forgotten and a new era of co-operation is inaugurated.

69. My delegation hopes, therefore, that the General Assembly will approve by a large majority the draft resolution submitted to it by the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee. We shall vote in favour of that draft and against the USSR and Polish draft resolutions.

70. Mrs. FIGUEROA (Chile) (*translated from Spanish*): The delegation of Chile wishes very briefly to explain how it will vote on the draft resolution providing for the federation of Eritrea with Ethiopia which was originally submitted by fourteen countries in the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee.

71. During the discussion of this question in the Interim Committee⁴ and later in the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee, my country advocated independence for the Eritrean people as a matter of fundamental principle. We advocated it because of our respect for, and our faith in, the self-determination of peoples, the high moral principles of the Charter and the principles of freedom which are fundamental to the life of the Latin-American countries. Nevertheless, in view of the complexity, gravity and urgency of the problem, my delegation was always prepared to consider a compromise solution, both in the Interim Committee and during the meetings and discussions of the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee.

72. But although we were perfectly willing to envisage a compromise solution, and although we were prepared to consider federation as such a compromise solution, it must be emphasized that my delegation has always taken the view that federation must be a consequence of the establishment of independence, not of annexation. For that reason, we consider that the plan for a federation which is now before us does not adequately safeguard the rights of the Eritrean people.

73. We expressed our criticisms and entered our reservations on this point during the discussions in the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee. Since the Chilean delegation did not approve of the plan for a federation, it abstained from voting on it. It abstained, as I then said, for two reasons: because it was necessary to treat this problem as a matter of grave urgency, and because my delegation felt that an unsatisfactory solution such as the present one was better than no solution at all.

⁴ See documents A/AC.18/SR.39 to A/AC.18/SR.45 inclusive.

74. However, at the present time, the position of my delegation is as follows. We feel that today the peace and security of the world are gravely threatened, and that it is the responsibility of all Members of the United Nations to avoid, by all possible means, the emergence, in any part of the world, of potential or actual sources of friction. To avoid such a possibility, we feel that we must give the greatest possible moral support to the resolutions approved by the majority of the Members of the United Nations.

75. In the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee, the draft resolution providing for federation obtained a substantial majority. That is why we feel that we must vote for it in order to give it the moral support required to ensure that the inhabitants of Eritrea do not seriously oppose its implementation.

76. The fact that we vote for this draft resolution does not mean that we are abandoning our principles; it does not mean that we are not maintaining our principles. We are maintaining them and we have undiminished faith in the principle of self-determination, but we believe that we must vote in favour of the draft resolution in order to strengthen the moral support which the Assembly has already given it.

77. We hope, however, that the constitution of Eritrea, for which the United Nations will be largely responsible, will provide the inhabitants of Eritrea with the necessary safeguards and will ensure the observance of their rights.

78. We believe that the first phase of the problem will be settled if the United Nations approves this solution; but we do not believe that the whole problem will thus be disposed of. There will still be the second phase, namely, the carrying out of this solution in actual practice. In that connexion I must state that my delegation listened with deep emotion and respect to the statement just made by the representative of Ethiopia. We believe in the good faith of Ethiopia, in the good will of the Government of Ethiopia, and in the light of that statement my delegation is confident that the federation will work for the good of the people of Eritrea.

79. Nevertheless, I must also state that this confidence will not prevent us from paying close attention to the course of future developments and to the opportunities the people of Eritrea are given to attain complete autonomy; we hope, too, that the rights of the inhabitants of that region will be fully safeguarded.

80. Mr. ARUTIUNIAN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): The USSR delegation would like to explain its vote on the various draft resolutions. Three draft resolutions have been submitted to the General Assembly on the question of Eritrea: a draft resolution submitted by the Soviet Union [A/1570], providing that Eritrea should be granted independence immediately, a draft resolution submitted by Poland [A/1564 and Corr.1], providing that Eritrea should be granted independence after three years, and a draft resolution submitted by the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee, providing that Eritrea should be federated with Ethiopia.

81. The USSR has consistently supported the proposal that Eritrea should be granted independence and has continued to do so at the current session. We base

our argument on the fact that all peoples have a right to self-determination and national independence.

82. The national liberation struggle of the colonial and dependent peoples for their independence and freedom has grown in strength as a result of the Second World War. The colonial system is going through an acute crisis. Accordingly, in considering the fate of Eritrea—one of the former Italian colonies—the United Nations must take a decision which will satisfy the longing of the Eritrean people for independence and freedom from national oppression. The General Assembly cannot tolerate a deal by the colonial Powers at the expense of the population of Eritrea.

83. In the circumstances, the only just solution to the problem of the future of Eritrea is to grant it independence. And here it should be noted that the continuation of British administration for any period whatsoever would be fatal to the normal development of Eritrea.

84. The situation in Eritrea has considerably deteriorated during the period of British administration. Significant facts testifying to this are given in the report of the United Nations Commission for Eritrea,⁵ in the memorandum submitted by the delegations of Guatemala and Pakistan. In that memorandum the following conclusion is drawn from the examination and analysis of those facts: "During the last decade nothing has been done towards the economic improvement of the territory, whereas much has been done to the contrary", that is to say, towards worsening the situation.

85. Eritrea must not be left for any further period under the administration of the United Kingdom, which is pursuing a policy clearly designed to worsen the situation in Eritrea. Any further deterioration of the situation in Eritrea can be prevented by the immediate grant of independence, which a large part of the population of Eritrea itself is demanding. The memorandum to which I have already referred states that: "The great majority of the inhabitants of the eastern and western lowlands, and groups of varying importance in the plateau, were in favour of immediate independence".⁶

86. The arguments used against the proposal that Eritrea should be granted immediate independence are those habitually adduced in defence of the colonial system. It is alleged, for instance, that Eritrea is a backward country and is not ready for independence, that an independent Eritrea would not be able to ensure its own independent economic development and, as the United Kingdom representative said at the meetings of the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee, that to grant independence to Eritrea would lead to political chaos. Thus we see that the usual arguments which are advanced to defend the colonial system are being used here.

87. I know of no single instance in history where a colonial country has won its independence without being confronted by the allegation that it was not ready for independence.

88. The General Assembly cannot attach importance to arguments of this kind. On the contrary, it should reject them once and for all, and decide to grant Eritrea

⁵ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifth Session, Supplement No. 8*, page 32.

⁶ *Ibid.*, page 30.

independence immediately. Furthermore, the British occupation forces should be withdrawn within three months of the day on which the General Assembly decision to grant Eritrea independence is adopted. The continued retention of United Kingdom occupation forces in Eritrea is absolutely unjustified, and is incompatible both with the national interests of Eritrea itself and with the fundamental principles and purposes of the United Nations.

89. It is clear from the foregoing that the USSR delegation objects to the proposal for the federation of Eritrea with another State, as such a federation would disregard the right of the Eritrean people to self-determination by preventing the Eritreans from exercising that right. The delegation of the Soviet Union bases its position on the fact that such a decision is being imposed on the Eritrean people without its consent and, hence, in violation of the fundamental principle of the right of self-determination of peoples.

90. A number of speakers here have referred to federation as a compromise solution. The USSR delegation considers that if federation is indeed a compromise solution, it represents a compromise among the colonial Powers. It is being imposed on the Eritrean people and, in effect, on Ethiopia also, and it will be equally unsatisfactory to Ethiopia.

91. In reality, this solution is not the kind of compromise which should be proposed by the General Assembly. In the first place, how can one speak of a compromise if it has been adopted without the participation of the peoples concerned, that is, without the participation of Eritrea? Furthermore, it has been adopted, notwithstanding the Eritrean people's wishes, against their interests and in violation of their most vital, fundamental right—the right of self-determination.

92. Federation cannot therefore be called a compromise solution. In reality, it is the outcome of the contest among the colonial Powers for a new partition of the former Italian colonies.

93. We are told that a part of the population of Eritrea desires federation. Even if that were so, the question should be decided by the Eritrean people themselves, and not by some international organization. In any case, it cannot be settled by an agreement among the colonial Powers. The federal solution has in fact been put forward by the colonial Powers, under the guidance of the United States.

94. This idea of a federation was submitted by the United States at the last session of the General Assembly. That fact in itself proves that the problem is not now being settled in the interests of the Eritrean people. In recent times, the United States has become the dominating Power in Africa, and determines the colonial policy of the various States in that continent.

95. This is what an American newspaper says about the colonial interests of the United States in Africa. *The Sunday Compass* of 19 November 1950 says: "Though it possesses no colonies in Africa, the United States is today the dominant Power in Africa. And it is using its power, not to promote and support anti-colonialism in Africa, but to strengthen and extend the old colonial pattern. Such changes as it has brought about are changes which divert profits from London and Paris to New York."

96. Thus the United States has become the dominant Power which directs the colonial subjugation and exploitation of the African peoples, and the proposal for federation, which was put forward by the United States delegation, reflects the interests of the colonial Powers, headed by the United States.

97. The USSR delegation cannot therefore support the proposal for federation, which is the outcome of the struggle among the colonial Powers for a new partition of the former Italian colonies.

98. The USSR delegation appeals to all the other delegations to vote in favour of Eritrean independence, which is the equitable solution to this problem. An independent Eritrea would have the right to decide all questions concerning its relations with neighbouring States.

99. With regard to Ethiopia's just claim for access to the sea, both the draft resolution of the Soviet Union delegation and the draft resolution of the Polish delegation provide for the ceding to Ethiopia of Eritrean territory which is essential to Ethiopia for access to the sea through the port of Assab.

100. In the light of all these considerations, the USSR delegation continues to urge that a decision should be taken to grant Eritrea immediate independence, to withdraw the British occupation troops from Eritrea within three months and to give Ethiopia access to the sea through the port of Assab.

101. These are the principles by which the delegation of the Soviet Union will be guided in voting on the three draft resolutions submitted to us on the question of the future of Eritrea.

102. Mr. GAJEWSKI (Poland) (*translated from French*): The Polish delegation has maintained a constructive attitude with regard to the future of Eritrea ever since this question was brought before the United Nations. My delegation has also shown a spirit of broad understanding in the matter of seeking a compromise solution, on condition that such a solution should be just and in keeping with the United Nations Charter. It has continued to demonstrate the same spirit during the present session and will express it when we come to the vote.

103. We consider that in a decision concerning the fate of a people, the General Assembly should act in accordance with the principles which form the very foundation of the United Nations Charter, namely, the principles of equal rights and self-determination as stated in Article 1 of the Charter.

104. After studying closely all the arguments adduced during the discussion on the disposal of Eritrea, my delegation considers that the draft resolution presented by the delegation of the Soviet Union [A/1570] proposes the fairest solution of the problem. This draft resolution, which is based upon the principle of self-determination and which provides for the immediate independence of Eritrea, envisages the fulfilment of those conditions without which neither the independence nor the free self-determination of the Eritrean people is conceivable, one of those conditions being the prompt withdrawal of the British occupation forces. In the opinion of my delegation, this is the solution which best answers the aspirations of the Eritrean people and the requirements of peace and security in East Africa.

105. My delegation has given sympathetic consideration to the claims put forward by Ethiopia, and considers that such of them as are justified will be satisfied by the USSR draft resolution, which would grant Ethiopia that part of the territory of Eritrea which is necessary to secure Ethiopia's access to the sea through the port of Assab. My delegation will accordingly vote for that draft resolution.

106. On the other hand, after carefully examining the draft resolution of the fourteen Powers submitted by the *Ad Hoc* Political Committee, my delegation considers it to be in flagrant opposition to the principles proclaimed in Article 1 of the Charter. This draft resolution decides the future of a people without considering its aspirations, although they have been voiced and brought to the notice of the United Nations. It disposes of this people as if they were so much inanimate

matter. Under the name of federation, it provides for nothing less than annexation.

107. It is impossible, however, to create a federation without the consent of the parties concerned. In the case of Eritrea, one of the parties concerned, namely, the Eritrean people, has not been consulted. The Eritrean people have been given no chance to express their will, although even when they were under a colonial régime they never ceased to demand independence. Such a resolution would ignore the aspirations and well-being of the inhabitants of Eritrea and the opinions expressed by the majority of the population. It could not satisfy the requirements of peace and security in East Africa. For these reasons, my delegation will vote against that draft resolution.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.