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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF
INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR THE ERADICATION OF COLONIALISM

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 22 November 1988, at its forty-third session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 43/47 entitled "International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism". In paragraph 2 of the resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General "to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session a report that would enable the Assembly to consider and adopt an action plan aimed at ushering in the twenty-first century, a world free from colonialism".

2. It will be recalled that the General Assembly had acted upon the related recommendation contained in the Final Document adopted by the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Nicosia from 7 to 10 September 1988 (A/43/667-S/20212, annex, sect. I, para. 239).

3. On 31 January 1989, the Secretary-General transmitted the text of resolution 43/47 to all States and organizations of the United Nations system and invited their suggestions in connection with the preparation of the report requested of him.

4. Replies received from 16 Member States, one non-Member State and three organizations from within the United Nations system were published in the report of the Secretary-General (A/44/800).

5. In his report, the Secretary-General had noted recent actions taken by the international community in support of resolution 43/47. At the Ninth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Belgrade from 4 to 7 September 1989 (A/44/551), members had expressed once again their desire to contribute effectively to the carrying out of a United Nations plan of action for the implementation of the Decade and had decided to assign the Coordinating Bureau the task of developing a Non-Aligned Movement work plan and of creating a Non-Aligned Movement work group. Furthermore, States members of the Organization of American States had adopted a resolution on the International Decade committing their organization to participating fully in the activities to be conducted by the United Nations during the Decade.

6. In its decision 44/429 of 11 December 1989, the General Assembly took note of the Secretary-General's report (A/44/800) and recommended that he should request those States and organizations of the United Nations system which had not yet done so to reply not later than 1 April 1990 to his communication of 31 January 1989, and that he should invite them once again to submit suggestions so that they might be taken into account in the final report to be submitted to the Assembly at its forty-fifth session.

7. Replies received from 14 Member States, one organization from within the United Nations system and one intergovernmental organization were published in the Secretary-General's report (A/45/624).

8. In its decision 45/410 of 20 November 1990, the General Assembly took note of the interim reports of the Secretary-General (A/44/800 and A/45/624) and recommended once again that the Secretary-General should request those States and organizations of the United Nations system which had not yet done so to reply to his letter of 31 January 1989 and subsequent communications, not later than 1 April 1991.

9. On 3 October 1991, the Permanent Representative of Yugoslavia to the United Nations, current Chairman of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, transmitted to the Secretary-General the report of the Working Group of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on Decolonization, which had been adopted by the Tenth Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries held at Accra from 2 to 7 September 1991.

10. Replies received from Member States are reproduced in section II of the present report. The text of the above-mentioned report is contained in the reply from Yugoslavia.

II. REPLIES RECEIVED FROM MEMBER STATES

BOLIVIA

[Original: Spanish]

[5 July 1991]

1. The Government of the Republic of Bolivia is of the view that the struggle for peace, freedom, independence, human rights and the eradication of colonialism in all its forms is a principle that should be observed by all the nations which comprise the international system. It therefore condemns all forms of exploitation of the human and natural resources in those few Territories that are still under a colonial regime, and reaffirms the legitimate right of such Territories to enjoy, through self-determination, the exercise of their full sovereignty.

2. The Government of Bolivia notes with satisfaction that one of the principal achievements of the United Nations has been its key role in bringing into the international community many of those nations which had been deprived of their sovereign rights and therefore suffered the limitations of dependency and the lack of full legal representation reflecting their ethnic roots, their culture and the personality of their peoples. The solution to the problem of decolonization and any action plan that is elaborated to achieve that objective should therefore accord with and take inspiration from General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960 and other relevant resolutions, which are in keeping with the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

3. The remarkable growth experienced by our Organization has been due largely to the fact that it has served as the bridge between the past and the future of these peoples. The presence of the new States has consolidated the

universal vocation of the Organization and has enriched it by enhancing its international range.

4. Bolivia supported General Assembly resolution 43/47 of 22 November 1988 entitled "International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism", with the aim of promoting the search for new mechanisms of international scope that would permit the application of the principles and norms of the United Nations in this area. It takes this opportunity to reiterate that support and to express its most fervent hope that at the conclusion of the Decade we shall have completed the task which we set for ourselves on 14 December 1960 and that no vestige whatsoever of colonialism will remain upon the face of the earth.

IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF)

[Original: English]

[26 June 1991]

1. In view of the rapidly changing political atmosphere at the international level, General Assembly resolution 43/47 of 22 November 1988 declared the period 1990-2000 as the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism. Along the same line of thought, the Ninth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Belgrade in September 1989, also demanded the immediate and complete implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

2. The customary definition of "colonialism" by the United Nations does not encompass the whole phenomenon of colonialism and its various patterns world wide; none the less, in the framework of the United Nations system, there are still 18 Territories under the colonial rule of the administering Powers. The process of the complete elimination of the remnants of colonialism in Non-Self-Governing Territories as well as other unlisted Territories should be designed with the following points in mind:

(a) To define clearly and objectively colonialism as a living concept of the modern age. In our view, colonialism requires a broader definition to include all forms of racism and occupation. Such a broader definition would consequently require a reconsideration of the work of the United Nations;

(b) To shed light on the concept of self-determination and its various interpretations;

(c) To help create political and economic conditions necessary for the people of colonial Territories to speed up the process of self-determination;

(d) To design a mechanism whereby new States will be guaranteed resources, support and genuine international solidarity, particularly during the early stages of their independence;

(e) To formulate effective and practical measures to encourage the administering Powers to cooperate with the United Nations renewed efforts for the decolonization process under Article 73 of the Charter of the United Nations.

3. In this context, the Islamic Republic of Iran is of the view that if the Decade is to achieve its goal of eradicating the scourge of colonialism, the various organs of the United Nations, particularly the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, and the States Members of the Organization, will have to play a more active and concerted role. Moreover, priority measures should include the issuance of an appeal by the United Nations to present administering Powers to provide a realistic timetable for each of their respective colonial Territories for the application of the Declaration and the holding of a referendum for self-determination in accordance with the principles and practices of the United Nations.

4. The Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples itself, needs to play a more dynamic role in overseeing the process of decolonization in these Territories. The Committee should carry out its tasks in a constructive manner and in cooperation with the administering Powers, taking into account factors such as lack of political awareness, economic dependence, changes in demographic patterns, military interest, environmental security and other problems of those Territories. Intensive and specific efforts need to be made for the dissemination of information on the Committee's findings, the political evolution in the Territories and the views of the international community.

5. To this end, the Department of Public Information should play an important role by establishing centres in the Territories to collect and disseminate reliable information. Visiting missions to each of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories should be arranged as close as practical to the onset of the Decade.

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC

[Original: Arabic]

[3 April 1991]

1. The Syrian Arab Republic, proceeding from the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and in implementation of the Organization's continuous resolutions for the elimination of colonialism, strongly supports the Organization's speedy efforts to eliminate colonialism definitively. It regards as a positive step the declaration by the General Assembly at its forty-third session of the period 1990-2000 as the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (resolution 43/47). The Syrian Arab Republic, which continues its effective participation in the work of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

and which is a party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and also to the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid, fully supports the implementation of the goals of this Decade and has long adhered to all United Nations resolutions on this subject and also to the Plan of Action for the Full Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 35/118 of 11 December 1980, and the plan of activities for the period 1990-1993 to combat racism and racial discrimination (resolution 42/47). The Syrian Government believes that all forms and phenomena of colonialism are totally contrary to the provisions of the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and constitute a grave threat to international peace and security. It has always participated in international efforts against racism and has constantly supported the struggle of the peoples of Africa, Asia and Latin America to free themselves and enjoy the right to self-determination.

2. The ending and eradication of colonialism is regarded as a basic prerequisite for the achievement of a world governed by the principles of peace, cooperation and freedom. Accordingly, the Syrian Arab Republic calls upon the international community to intensify efforts to support a halt to the Israeli occupation of the Arab Territories, to grant the Palestinian people its right to self-determination and the establishment of its independent State and to implement United Nations resolutions, which would help to bring stability to the Middle East region and establish peace there. The Government also supports the right of the people of South Africa to self-determination and the achievement of full independence and condemns all the racist policies applied by the Pretoria Government against this oppressed people. It stresses the importance of adopting effective measures to eradicate all forms of racial discrimination, racism, colonialism and alien occupation remaining in the world.

YUGOSLAVIA*

[Original: English]

[3 October 1991]

Report of the Working Group of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on Decolonization to the Tenth Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Ghana, from 2 to 7 September 1991

1. The Working Group of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on Decolonization, composed of Yugoslavia (Chairman), Burundi, Cuba, Egypt,

* On behalf also of States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Ethiopia, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Mali, Trinidad and Tobago, Vanuatu, Venezuela and Zambia, has been set up on the basis of the decision of the Ninth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, with the task of contributing to the carrying out of a United Nations plan of action for the implementation of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

2. The Group decided to focus its activities at this stage on assisting the Secretary-General of the United Nations in preparing the United Nations plan of action to be presented to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session. Following extensive deliberations, the Group is presenting a number of ideas and suggestions for approval by the Tenth Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, at Accra, Ghana, with a view to submitting them to the Secretary-General. In doing so, the members of the Group had in mind that the United Nations action plan should be formulated in such a way as to enjoy the widest possible support of all States Members of the United Nations, while preserving the principles and positions of non-aligned countries regarding decolonization.

3. In order to ensure successful implementation of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries proposes the following ideas and suggestions for the United Nations plan of action:

(a) The ultimate goal of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism should be the full implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples through the exercise of the right to self-determination and independence by the population of each and all of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories. This should be done freely and without outside pressure, in a form reflecting their authentic interests and aspirations, with the United Nations playing an appropriate role;

(b) A comprehensive review of the situation in each of the Territories should be made by the appropriate United Nations organ in order, inter alia, to assess the possibility of organizing referendums on self-determination. Where conditions permit, the referendum should be conducted as soon as possible or, in any event, not later than 31 December 1999, the end of the Decade;

(c) In that context, it would be beneficial if the Secretary-General or his Special Representative visited each of the Territories as early as possible during the Decade and made a report to the General Assembly;

(d) The administering Powers should be urged to take the necessary measures to promote the political, economic, social, cultural and educational advancement of the population of the Territories, thus creating the conditions for their autonomous and independent development and enabling them to exercise the right to self-determination;

(e) The international community, Member States, the whole United Nations system, other governmental and non-governmental organizations should unite their efforts to assist effectively the populations of the Territories and actively participate in the implementation of the United Nations plan of action to be adopted for the Decade;

(f) Concrete mechanisms of international assistance should be worked out, especially in terms of economic growth and development, as well as protection of the environment, in the Territories. In this area, the specialized agencies of the United Nations and international financial institutions could play a major role and therefore should be called upon to prepare adequate programmes;

(g) Efficient international assistance should also be provided in upgrading the political awareness of the populations of the Territories of the various options available in the actual exercise of their right to self-determination, bearing in mind General Assembly resolution 1541 (XV) of 15 December 1960. In that context, particular emphasis should be placed on the improvement of the educational systems in the Territories, the provision of scholarships and training facilities, the protection and enhancement of the human rights of their populations. The Governments of the Member States as well as the specialized agencies should be actively engaged in this respect;

(h) Member States should be invited to consider adopting at the national level such measures, including legislation, that would:

(i) Discourage all actions and activities, commercial or otherwise, which could be prejudicial to the exercise of the right to self-determination and independence by the peoples of the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories;

(ii) Promote full respect for the human rights of peoples living under foreign domination and facilitate their recourse to judicial proceedings in order to gain economic and social restitution;

(i) The Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly have an important role to play in the process of implementation of the action plan for the Decade and therefore Member States should give full support to the activities of the Special Committee and to its current efforts for the improvement, strengthening and rationalization of its work, as well as to the activities of the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly. In this context, the Special Committee should continue its efforts to send visiting missions to the Non-Self-Governing Territories;

(j) It is necessary to improve the cooperation of the administering Powers with the Special Committee. An appeal should be launched to the administering Powers to resume cooperation with and actively involve themselves in the work of the Committee;

(k) The relevant United Nations bodies, particularly the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, should be entrusted with intensifying the dissemination of information on the situation in the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories as well as on the Decade itself through special publications on decolonization, public film projections, photo shows, seminars, etc. The necessary resources should be allocated for these purposes in the context of the programme budget exercise undertaken by the pertinent United Nations bodies. Depending on the availability of resources, the Department of Public Information should be encouraged to establish the appropriate correspondent network in the remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories.
