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ENGLISH

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND  
EIGHT HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SIXTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 31 October 1989, at 12.30 p.m.

President: Mr. FORTIER

(Canada)

Members: Algeria  
Brazil  
China  
Colombia  
Ethiopia  
Finland  
France  
Malaysia  
Nepal  
Senegal  
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics  
United Kingdom of Great Britain and  
Northern Ireland  
United States of America  
Yugoslavia

Mr. DJOUDI  
Mr. NOGUEIRA-BATISTA  
Mr. YU Mengjia  
Mr. PEÑALOSA  
Mr. HAGOSS  
Ms. RASI  
Mr. BIANC  
Mr. RAZALI  
Mr. RANA  
Mrs. DIALLO  
Mr. BELONOGOV  
Sir Crispin TICKELL  
Mr. PICKERING  
Mr. PEJIC

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The meeting was called to order at 12:55 p.m.

EXPRESSION OF SYMPATHY

The PRESIDENT: It was with very great sorrow that the members of the Security Council learned of the severe natural disasters that occurred recently in China, the United States of America, the Philippines and Viet Nam, and of the one that has now occurred in Algeria. I should like, on behalf of the Security Council, to express heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathy to the Governments and peoples of these countries on the tragic loss of life and extensive material damage that they have suffered.

EXPRESSION OF THANKS TO THE RETIRING PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT: As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of October, I should like to take this opportunity to pay a tribute, on behalf of the Council, to Mr. Paulo Nogueira-Batista, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of September 1989. I am sure I speak for all members of the Security Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Nogueira-Batista for the great diplomatic skill and unfailing courtesy with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION IN NAMIBIA

LETTER DATED 18 OCTOBER 1989 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF KENYA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/20908)

The PRESIDENT: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in response to the request contained in a letter dated 18 October 1989 from the Permanent Representative of

(The President)

Kenya to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council, document S/20908.

Members of the Council have before them documents S/20883 and Add.1, containing the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 640 (1989) concerning the question of Namibia. Members of the Council have before them also a revised draft resolution submitted by Algeria, Colombia, Ethiopia, Malaysia, Nepal, Senegal and Yugoslavia, document S/20923/Rev.1.

I should like to draw the attention of members of the Council to the following other documents: S/20894, S/20897, S/20899 and Corr.1 and S/20910, letters dated 10, 12, 13 and 19 October 1989 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/20889, letter dated 6 October 1989 from the Permanent Representative of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; S/20909, letter dated 18 October 1989 from the Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General; and S/20914, letter dated 23 October 1989 from the Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

Members of the Council have received also photocopies of a letter dated 31 October 1989 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/20927 in the course of this afternoon.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear an objection, I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Algeria, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Malaysia, Nepal, Senegal, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Yugoslavia

The PRESIDENT: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has therefore been adopted unanimously as resolution 643 (1989).

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Sir Crispin TICKELL (United Kingdom): It seems a little curious to be welcoming you to the Chair, Sir, on the last day of your presidency, but on Hallowe'en all things are possible. The witches have looked after you during the long month of October.

I take this opportunity to thank your predecessor, our colleague from Brazil, for all he did for the Council in September; we are most grateful to him.

My delegation took a full and positive part in the consultations which led up to the adoption of the present resolution. We are particularly grateful to you, Mr. President, and your staff for the valiant efforts you made in the negotiations which led to the adoption of the final text. My thanks also go to our Colombian and Yugoslav colleagues for their patience and skill in negotiation. Throughout, we had in mind the two themes to which I referred in my statement of 29 August: the need for the Council to be even-handed in overseeing the process leading up to the independence of Namibia, and the need to demonstrate the unity of the Council in its support for the Secretary-General and the implementation of resolution 435 (1978) in all its aspects by all parties.

We must all commend the Secretary-General for the thorough and painstaking report which he presented to the Council on 6 October. It shows that much progress has been made, even if, as the Secretary-General noted, there are areas in which compliance by the parties with the requirements of the settlement plan has been less than complete. This has extended as much to the difficulties which the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) has encountered in verifying the confinement to base of South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) combatants in Angola as to the exceptional problems it has experienced in its dealings with the South-West Africa Police and over the continued presence in that force of former members of the counter-insurgency unit Koevoet. The statement earlier today in Windhoek by the Administrator-General confirming that the remaining ex-Koevoet

(Sir Crispin Tickell, United Kingdom)

members still serving in the South-West Africa Police had been fully demobilized by 30 October should resolve this last problem, on which we have left the South African authorities in no doubt of our strong views. Like the Secretary-General, we believe we are now on course for free and fair elections.

As the Secretary-General's report makes clear, the period between now and the Namibian elections will be particularly delicate. There are problems still to be overcome, including the continuing negotiations with the Administrator-General over the proclamation on the Constituent Assembly. I take this opportunity to repeat that my delegation regards the constitutional principles negotiated in 1982 and set out in document S/15287 as binding. Indeed, this was reaffirmed by the Council in resolution 632 (1989). The Security Council should not, and I know will not, approve the new Namibian constitution unless it incorporates those principles and is adopted by the two-thirds majority required under the settlement plan.

The Secretary-General has also pointed out the vital importance of the co-operation of the Namibian political parties with UNTAG in the implementation of the settlement plan. I appeal to them to abide strictly by the code of conduct which their leaders have signed, to renounce all use of violence and to ensure that their supporters do the same. They must likewise co-operate fully with UNTAG in the performance of its mandate.

Against this background, we have continuing doubts about the tone of the resolution we have just adopted. We would have preferred something simpler and more direct. As in August, we shall work on the assumption that the language of operative paragraph 5 of the resolution is an acknowledgement of the special responsibilities we all recognize that South Africa should uphold during Namibia's transition to independence. This does not diminish the responsibility of the other parties to fulfil their commitments under the settlement plan.

(Sir Crispin Tickell, United Kingdom)

The Council's priority must be to unite behind the Secretary-General in his efforts to ensure the success of the settlement plan. We must be ready to support his Special Representative's final judgement on the process, whatever that judgement may be, and to sustain the unanimity necessary at this difficult and delicate stage. It was for this reason that we voted in favour of the resolution.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. PICKERING (United States of America): First, Sir, I should like to join in welcoming you to the presidency on this the last day of October, and tell you how much we have appreciated your important labours and endeavours here in the Council. We certainly know that your period of service will be crowned with success.

I should like to join as well in thanking your predecessor for his contributions in the leadership of the Council.

I should also like to thank you, Sir, for your kind words of condolence to the United States in connection with the recent tragic earthquake in San Francisco. We are indeed deeply grateful for your expression of sympathy on behalf of the members of the Council.

The United States joined in the unanimous adoption of the present resolution because we feel very strongly that the Secretary-General, his Special Representative and the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) deserve our full and undivided support as the process of elections begins in Namibia. A draft resolution which failed of adoption or a divisive and bitter debate in the Security Council on the situation in Namibia would serve only to undermine them as they do their level best to implement the mandate we have entrusted to them. Let us keep in mind our overriding priority: Namibia must be given the chance of self-determination and independence through internationally recognized elections.

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

Violence must be avoided. Negotiations must succeed. Confrontation must be put aside in favour of co-operation. Unanimity needs to be given preference over division, both in Namibia and in this Chamber.

The Secretary-General has told us that he and his Special Representative feel that the stage is set and the building blocks are all in place for free and fair elections. We believe him. The fact is that things in Namibia are in pretty good shape. The climate of fear and intimidation which prevailed a few months ago has dissipated. Allegations of intimidation are increasingly rare. Inter-party violence, a real problem last month, has faded as the parties adhere faithfully to the code of conduct which they all signed. The election campaign has proceeded amidst great enthusiasm on the part of the Namibian people.

It is in this spirit that the United States joined in the adoption of the present resolution. We, like the Secretary-General, believe that it focuses on the need for all parties to continue to co-operate in resolving all details relating to the implementation of the United Nations settlement plan.

We wish to make clear, however, our understanding of certain specific issues addressed by the resolution. It is true that not all the provisions of resolution 435 (1978) are being fully complied with, of course. For example, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) has still not provided a full accounting of Namibians it detained in exile. We call upon SWAPO to resolve immediately this and other questions regarding its adherence to all the provisions of the United Nations plan. In particular, we call upon it to release all remaining detainees or provide a full accounting of those it held while in exile.

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

On the other hand, we note that the command structures of the South-West Africa Territorial Force have been dismantled as required by the plan. We also welcome the action taken by the South African Government and the Administrator-General yesterday in demobilizing the last remaining ex-Koevoet members of the South-West Africa Police, supervised by monitors of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), who have declared their satisfaction with it; this demobilization demonstrates continuing compliance with the United Nations plan.

We underscore the importance of the code of conduct signed by the Namibian parties; this is noted in the Secretary-General's report of 6 October, which the Council has welcomed in this resolution. This agreement among the parties has contributed greatly to the positive atmosphere during the campaign. We note as well its explicit reaffirmation that the parties undertake to honour the outcome of free and fair elections, so certified by the Special Representative, which should go far to reassure those who fear a renewed outbreak of violence after the elections.

Further, we note that the Secretary-General has determined that all laws that might impede the holding of free and fair elections have already been repealed. We endorse the resolution's reiteration of the need to ensure that no such laws are now enacted that could draw into question the validity of the election.

We stress our full support for the statement by the Secretary-General, as approved by the Council in resolution 632 (1989), that the United Nations plan for Namibia includes agreements and understandings reached by the parties since the adoption of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) and confirmed as such to the Secretary-General. These agreements and understandings remain binding on the parties. In this connection, we reiterate the full and unequivocal support of the United States for both the impartiality package (S/20635) which governs the

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

behaviour of the parties and of the United Nations throughout implementation, and of the principles concerning the Constituent Assembly and the Constitution for an independent Namibia (S/15287), which requires the Constituent Assembly to incorporate specific rights and guarantees in the Constitution and that the Constitution be adopted by a majority of two thirds of the total membership of the Assembly. The Council has repeatedly endorsed these principles - in resolution 632 (1989), in resolution 640 (1989) and in this resolution today.

Finally, we wish to stress that principal responsibility for the security of Namibia under the United Nations settlement plan rests with the Administrator-General until independence. The present resolution mandates the Secretary-General to ensure that all necessary arrangements are made in this regard, and we fully support that position.

For those reasons, we endorse the work of the Secretary-General, his Special Representative, the men and women of UNTAG, and this Council, and we look forward to the elections in Namibia next week. We welcome the Secretary-General's conclusion that we remain on course for free and fair elections and that continuation of the current activities under the settlement plan are thus sufficient in themselves to ensure free and fair elections.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the United States for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. NOGUEIRA-BATISTA (Brazil): Mr. President, let me first of all express to you our appreciation for your leadership role in guiding our deliberations in the informal and formal work of the Council during the month of October. Let me also thank you and the representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States for the kind words addressed to me.

When we spoke on the question of Namibia last August, we reiterated our strong support for the Secretary-General and for UNTAG, as well as our call for close,

(Mr. Nogueira-Batista, Brazil)

permanent surveillance by the Security Council to ensure the full implementation of resolution 435 (1978). We continue to think that the Council should remain mobilized until the process of independence for the Namibian people has been fully completed. We believe ample information and, whenever necessary, open debate contribute to that end rather than hampering its achievement.

The latest report of the Secretary-General on the question of Namibia shows that since we last debated this issue in the Council some of the obstacles then existing to the implementation of the settlement plan have been removed. The report also shows that some of those obstacles remain and some new ones have been identified. In addition, as the election date approaches it becomes increasingly apparent that some essential aspects of administrative and political life in the Territory in the post-election period are not sufficiently covered by existing provisions. The question then arises of how the Council should deal with the situation so as to ensure not only the holding of free and fair elections but also the peaceful and swift adaptation to what the Secretary-General calls

"... the new realities which will come into being upon certification of the results ...". (S/20883, para. 39)

We believe the Security Council should seriously consider the latter aspect of the evolution of the independence process in Namibia. The existence of grey areas in this process as originally conceived is a cause for some concern. We, for our part, would feel more reassured if the respective responsibilities of all actors on the Namibian political scene in the period between certification of election results and promulgation of the Constitution could be clarified. Lack of definition in this regard and hesitation in closing loopholes are not the best guarantee of a smooth transition.

(Mr. Nogueira-Batista, Brazil)

Namibia will soon be acceding to independence. Not only should the last remaining obstacles to it be removed and undefined areas clarified, but all support should be given to its people in order that they may fully exercise their hard-won rights from the very beginning of their independent life. Within its limited possibilities, Brazil is making its contribution by hosting a seminar next December on international technical assistance for an independent Namibia - a seminar co-sponsored by the Council for Namibia and the Brazilian Government.

It is our hope that we shall soon see Namibia taking its rightful place as a full member of the community of South Atlantic States.

We believe that the original draft resolution submitted to the Council by its non-aligned members went a long way towards meeting the identified needs in the three areas I have referred to - namely, removing the remaining obstacles, clarifying responsibilities in the post-election period, and providing the required assistance to the Namibian people. We were of course ready to join the consensus on the resolution just adopted, as a way of expressing our common resolve. We realize in any case that resolution 643 (1989) is not the last word the Council will have to say on this very important issue.

We remain ready to co-operate with other Council members to ensure the attainment of our common objective: an independent Namibia capable of exercising fully its rights and obligations as a new member of the international community whose territorial integrity and security have been ensured from birth.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Brazil for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. PEÑALOSA (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): Mr. President, first of all I congratulate you on behalf of the non-aligned countries members of the Security Council. We express our gratitude to you for the devoted, intelligent and fair manner in which you have carried out your task as President of the Council during the month of October. Thanks to your dedication and your diplomatic talents, we have been able to conclude our work by adopting today's resolution by consensus. You represent a country which, particularly in the past two decades, has demonstrated an increasing interest in the problems of the developing countries and a desire to participate in solving them.

We also thank Ambassador Nogueira-Batista for the outstanding way he carried out his duties as President of the Council for the month of September.

Frankly, the non-aligned countries that introduced the draft resolution for the Council's consideration would have wished it to be adopted by a total and genuine consensus. In fact we are not as optimistic as some others are in regard to the situation in Namibia. Indeed, if one reads the Secretary-General's report closely and objectively one can conclude that many problems are still pending. Very much has already been achieved, but, for example, the news that has arrived today that the Koevoet has finally been demobilized demonstrates that for many months the Government of South Africa failed to fulfil its obligations. We have not been told whether this demobilization is a total demobilization or a disguised demobilization, as has been the case with other paramilitary forces in Namibia. In some cases the uniform is taken off, but the person concerned continues to belong legally and actually to the armed forces, inasmuch as salary is received from the South African Government, and logically such a person could at any time be reincorporated by simply being conscripted.

(Mr. Peñalosa, Colombia)

We are not optimistic because the electoral provisions were issued only a few days ago, whereas the elections are to take place next week. Another reason why we are not optimistic is that, as was pointed out by the representative of Brazil, the provisions are not very clear, particularly those concerning the manner in which Namibia will be administered from the time when the elections are certified to the time when independence is declared. The non-aligned countries share the concerns of the delegation of Brazil in this regard. We are ready to co-operate fully in efforts to fill any gaps - and such gaps certainly exist.

The mere fact that the present resolution has been adopted eight days before the elections in Namibia begin shows that it is because of the South African Government's failure to co-operate and to implement Security Council resolution 435 (1978) that we are unfortunately in this situation.

We wish the elections to be held in the best possible circumstances, so that we may be able to proclaim that they have been free and fair. We hope that Namibia will soon be able to enter the United Nations family. We offer all our support to the people of Namibia, which for so many decades has made so many sacrifices and seen so many hopes dashed.

That is what we wish, and we assure the Secretary-General that what prompted the non-aligned countries to put forward the draft resolution - which was negotiated with considerable patience over a period of three weeks, during which we frequently made compromises in order to achieve a consensus - was our desire to co-operate with him and demonstrate our respect for him because of the energetic and intelligent manner in which he has administered the whole process. We were prompted also by our desire to make the people in Namibia and South Africa well aware that the Security Council and specifically the non-aligned countries members of it support the Secretary-General totally.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Colombia for his very kind words addressed to me and to my country.

There are no further names on the list of speakers. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.