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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF
INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWELVE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FOURTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 8 August 1985, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. KOROMA (Sierra Leone)

CONTENTS

Question of Western Sahara

Question of East Timor (continued)

Organization of work

Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

QUESTION OF WESTERN SAHARA (A/AC.109/832; A/AC.109/L.1563 and L.1565; A/40/529)

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has before it a working paper prepared by the Secretariat (A/AC.109/832) as well as a related communication (A/40/529).

At the 1278th and 1279th meetings, held on 1 and 2 August, respectively, by approving the 249th and 250th reports of the Sub-Committee on Petitions, Information and Assistance, the Committee granted requests for hearing to Mr. Ali Habib Kentaoui, of the POLISARIO Front; Mr. Maaelainine Mohamed Taquiollah; and Mr. Zerouali Breika.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Ali Habib Kentaoui (POLISARIO Front) took a place at the petitioners' table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Kentaoui.

Mr. KENTAQUI (POLISARIO Front) (interpretation from Spanish): Allow me first to thank you, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the POLISARIO Front and the Government of the Sahraoui Arab Democratic Republic, for allowing me to speak during this important meeting dedicated to the question of Western Sahara. The situation prevailing in Western Sahara is the persistence of a colonial presence in my country and the denial to the Sahraoui people of their legitimate right to self-determination and independence. We are sure that under your guidance, Sir, the situation of peoples still suffering under the yoke of colonialism will be given special attention, inasmuch as you have personally experienced the torment of colonialism and the insatiable desire of peoples to live as free and sovereign masters of their own destiny. My thanks also go to the other officers of the Committee.

This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The Declaration was of historic importance for all mankind, symbolizing as it did the beginning of the end of the infamous colonial system and the coming of a new age of emancipation and independence for all peoples. Nevertheless, and in spite of the great strides made in the struggle against colonialism, this evil still has not been completely eradicated from the face of the Earth.

As in other cases, the situation in the Western Sahara is an example of the existence of colonialism on the continent of Africa. Since 1966 the United Nations has attempted to find a definitive solution to the problem. It has addressed the problem of the Western Sahara within the framework of decolonization, based upon

(Mr. Kentaoui)

the principle of the free exercise by the Sahraoui people of its right to self-determination and independence. Just as those noble efforts were frustrated earlier by Spanish colonialism, today they continue to be impeded with the same tenacity by another colonialism, this time Moroccan colonial expansionism.

North-West Africa lives under the constant threat of Moroccan colonial expansionism, the successor to European colonialism in the region. All Morocco's neighbours have had the same experience. Morocco has laid claims to them, violated their sovereignty, or simply waged military aggression against them, for the sake of building an illusory "sherifian" empire. Morocco has built upon expansionism as the State philosophy and policy of behaviour towards all its neighbours. The policy of expanding frontiers, which knows no respect for territorial limits, conventions, and international norms, has taken the place of the principles of good neighbourliness and peaceful co-existence. What is even more serious is that this colonial dream has yet to dissipate. Hence, the continuation of the war in Western Sahara threatens peace and stability in the region and international peace and security as well.

The Committee has had evidence of the wish of the Sahraoui people, expressed during the Committee's visit to the Territory in 1975 and reflected in its report of that year. I refer to the unanimous desire of the Sahraoui peoples to live freely and independently, and to its total rejection of all foreign occupation. Today, 10 years later, the Sahraoui people perseveres in its struggle for the same principles and ideals.

As I have mentioned, the Moroccan Government maintains its desperate intention of suffocating the aspirations of our heroic people. But, far from achieving such ignoble objectives, and contrary to the goals of expansionism, the struggle of the Sahraoui people not only persists but also consolidates itself day by day and is increasingly accepted and respected throughout the world.

The consolidation of the institutions of the Sahraoui Arab Democratic Republic, its widespread recognition, and the position it enjoys in the African continent have not only been reinforced this year but have reached new heights, as was apparent at the recent summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Addis Ababa, where the Sahraoui Arab Democratic Republic was unanimously elected to the vice-presidency of that Organization. That gesture symbolized not only solidarity with the Sahraoui people and confidence in its struggle but also an international rebuff to Morocco's criminal aggression against that African nation.

(Mr. Kentaoui)

Despite all efforts to cloud the issue and the systematic campaign of disinformation that Moroccan diplomacy has spread throughout the world, no Government, no international body, recognizes or supports the Moroccan Government's claims concerning Western Sahara. Although that unanimous rejection still prevails - along with concerted international efforts, especially through the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations, to put an end to the conflict - the aggression continues. It is common knowledge that the only obstacle to peace is the illegal presence of the Moroccan occupation forces in the territory of the Sahraoui Arab Democratic Republic and in the Moroccan Government's negative attitude towards co-operating with and applying the relevant resolutions of international bodies.

The road to peace has already been mapped out. Resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) of the OAU, adopted unanimously by African Heads of State and Government, which in turn was adopted unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session, in resolution 39/40, in December 1984, clearly establishes the modalities for a solution, the only possible solution being peaceful negotiations between the parties to the conflict - the Kingdom of Morocco and the POLISARIO Front - as unambiguously defined by those resolutions.

The response of the Moroccan Government to those laudable efforts by the international community has been military escalation and a vehement refusal to comply with the demands of international bodies. Intransigence and greed obscure the Moroccan Government's view of reality and make it opt for the continuation of its military adventure, to the detriment of the well-being of the Moroccan people themselves and to the peace and stability of the entire region.

The Moroccan Government, in its vain attempt to achieve a military victory, has not hesitated to introduce into the conflict all types of sophisticated armaments and to resort to the most diverse sources in search of military advisers and financial resources. But none of those efforts has borne fruit. The strategy of defensive walls has not been crowned with success, as Moroccan propaganda would have us believe. Despite the deployment of more than 120,000 troops, with a large quantity of military matériel, the occupation forces continue to find themselves in a desperate situation.

(Mr. Kentaoui)

The Sahraoui People's Liberation Army (SPLA) is intensifying its operations and harassment with dynamic combativeness and exemplary heroism. All the positions of the Moroccan army along the defensive wall come under daily SPLA attacks. Moroccan losses - human as well as material - desertion and demoralization have reached unprecedented levels - as Moroccan soldiers captured in recent combat by the SPLA have attested to in the international press. Lacking all desire for peace, the Moroccans impetuously rush to construct another wall each time one of their walls fails to meet its objective. That is done in the hope that more walls will render better results. In reality, those are but hallucinations directed at achieving the unattainable.

Colonial walls cannot stop the struggle of people for their emancipation. However many defensive walls the Moroccans build, they can never avoid the unavoidable. They cannot avoid the victory of the Sahraoui people's just cause. What is certain is that the walls demonstrate the adventurist mentality of the Moroccan leaders and their determination to keep the region in a constant state of anxiety. That situation is comparable only with the position of the racist régime of South Africa in its constant obstruction and blocking of the application of United Nations resolutions on the independence of Namibia.

In spite of its dangerous attitude, the Moroccan Government attempts to cover up its real aggressive intentions, resorting to the now well-known false promises of a referendum and of its claimed willingness to co-operate in a solution to the conflict. It is very apparent, nevertheless, that Morocco's real objective is to escape responsibility and to avoid international condemnation and isolation. It is our obligation to alert the international community to Morocco's insincere position. It is obvious that only international pressure will force Morocco to return to legality and accept the norms of conduct which rule humanity. In that sense, it is prudent for all countries which still finance and arm Morocco to cease doing so. Their aid makes them accomplices in the destabilization of the region, the violation of international resolutions and the prolongation of the conflict. Finally, that external aid worsens the internal Moroccan crisis, leading to more bloodshed and diversion of its economic resources. For those reasons it would be honourable if instead those countries would join in efforts of the international community to restore peace in the region.

(Mr. Kentaoui)

In the search for peace the United Nations assumes a fundamental responsibility, since its own credibility is also threatened by the subterfuge and procrastination which have become the norm and standard practice of the Moroccan Government when it comes to compliance with the demands of international bodies. Hence, it is important that this highly regarded international organization exert all its moral and political pressure so that Morocco will respect its resolutions and immediately implement them.

I conclude by affirming that the position of the Government of the Sahraoui Arab Democratic Republic is identical with that of the international community, since a final solution must necessarily involve the full implementation of the peace plan of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations. The Sahraoui Republic will spare no effort in contributing to the implementation of that peace plan.

I should like to make a brief comment on the document distributed to the Committee this morning (A/40/529). I have already clarified certain aspects with regard to that letter from the Moroccan representative to the Secretary-General and to you, Sir, but I should like to shed further light on certain facts that the Moroccan delegation is trying to distort.

That letter reflects the same time-worn arguments that Morocco has repeated since 1975. Reading the document, one may conclude that it is the best demonstration of the fact that Morocco is blindly persisting in its complete disregard for, and sabotage of, efforts aimed at a peaceful solution.

(Mr. Kentaoui)

It continues to disregard the resolutions and their content, in particular the recent decisions reached by the Organization of African unity in its resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) and by the United Nations in General Assembly resolution 39/40. These resolutions clearly speak of negotiations between the parties to the conflict, the POLISARIO and the Kingdom of Morocco, as a means of finding a solution.

In this document the representative of Morocco also speaks of willingness to hold a referendum. It is well known that the only thing preventing the self-determination of the Sahraoui people is foreign aggression by the Moroccan armed forces. It is contradictory to launch armed aggression against a people and at the same time to claim to be a defender of that people. It is like a crocodile that devours its prey while shedding tears - tears not of sorrow but of pleasure.

In the letter the representative of Morocco says that the King accepted a referendum in Nairobi as a concession. But that confuses no one, since it is well known that that verbal statement was an attempt to avoid international pressure and to delay the admission of the Sahraoui Arab Democratic Republic to the Organization of African Unity. A statement made by the King just a few days after Nairobi is illustrative of this; he said Morocco would not give up a single grain of sand of the Sahara, since so much blood and so many financial resources had been spent for it. The King has never wanted the Sahraoui people peacefully to exercise its right to self-determination and independence. The Organization of African Unity was very patient, but it finally reached the same conclusion. This is reflected in working paper A/AC.109/832, where reference is made to the efforts of the Committee to resolve the conflict:

"...the Implementation Committee stated that, although it had failed to organize and conduct the referendum envisaged in resolution AHG/Res.104 (XIX) owing to Morocco's refusal to undertake direct negotiations with a view to bringing about a cease-fire to create the necessary condition for a peaceful and just referendum". (A/AC.109/832, para. 5)

It is also surprising how easily the representative of Morocco falsifies the historical and legal facts, even the most recent ones still very fresh in the minds of all of us, for example, the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. This document is available to everyone, and it reflects with absolute

(Mr. Kentaoui)

clarity the fact that no relationship of sovereignty exists between the Kingdom of Morocco and the inhabitants of the Western Sahara, and that therefore nothing can impede implementation of the Sahraoui's people right to self-determination. It is also known that the United Nations boycotted the meeting, organized by Morocco, of the Jama'a, to which the Ambassador refers in his letter. It is also a historical fact that that Jama'a, established during the Spanish occupation, disbanded itself months earlier and set up the Provisional Sahraoui Council. Its members joined in the struggle against the new colonialists.

In his letter the Ambassador also mentions that the King visited El-Aaiun, the capital of the Sahara. Yes, that is true. But he neglects to mention that the diplomatic corps accredited at Rabat rejected the invitation and refused to join the royal party in its violation of the sovereignty of the Saharoui Republic, demonstrating that the King was alone in his adventure.

That royal gesture is typical of the colonialists, particularly those blinded by expansionism. It is illustrative to recall the defiant visit of Hitler to Paris during the Nazi occupation of France, which did not mean that France was a part of Germany or that it had lost its sovereignty, since arrogance grants no justice. The same thing applies to the Democratic Arab Saharoui Republic in connection with Moroccan aggression.

This only confirms the real intention of Morocco to attempt to perpetuate its aggression and not make a peaceful gesture, as stated by the Moroccan representative in his letter. In that letter the Ambassador accuses other countries of being responsible for the climate of instability in the region. None the less it is well known that the accusing finger of the international community is unequivocally pointing at Morocco, and this reality shows that Morocco alone is responsible for instability and aggression in the region, and for preventing peace, stability and justice from reigning there.

Mr. Kentaoui withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Taquiollah and Mr. Breika took places at the petitioners' table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Taquiollah.

Mr. TAQUIOLLAH (interpretation from Spanish): I should like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing me to address this Committee.

As a petitioner who is the authentic representative of the populations of the Sahara, I am here to express the true feelings and convictions of our citizens and to provide the Committee with more detailed information on the situation prevailing in the Sahara.

(Mr. Taquiollah)

On behalf of the organizations that represent the masses, those who have fought valiantly for the liberation of the Sahara, which was under the colonial yoke, and for its territorial integrity with the motherland, the Kingdom of Morocco, I bring a message of peace to the Committee, above all at this time, when the peoples of the Sahara are fully shouldering their obligations with a great deal of certainty and calmness, as well as carrying out their social, economic and cultural development in our provinces. Those peoples are prepared to contribute to the building of our nation, in the framework of the general programme established by the State of Morocco, in order to speed the development of the Saharan provinces. That programme is based on a democratic struggle aimed at uniting, without reservations, all the interests that must be involved in order to achieve that. Hence, the inhabitants of the Sahara themselves have participated in community and regional elections to appoint council members who will have to administer the towns, cities and provinces.

The peoples have also chosen their representatives who are now members of the Moroccan Parliament, and I myself have the privilege to be among them, representing the province of Dakhla, and at the same time being Vice-President of the Parliament. Those representatives have contributed, together with their electors, to bringing about major reforms at the national level. I cannot fail to mention that our peoples for 10 years have had the opportunity to demonstrate their democratic education, with the ability to participate in all popular consultations in a lawful and orderly way. If in the future the United Nations decides on a referendum process and its application, finally to resolve the question, we are prepared freely and democratically to express our opinions and our convictions.

Since 1975, when our territory was liberated from the colonial yoke, our provinces have enjoyed socio-cultural development - hospitals, schools, universities and cultural centres have been built - and this has made it possible for us to achieve literacy and to acquire university education and professional training, while health and hygiene conditions have been improved. The transportation infrastructure has also been developed to improve communications between all parts of our provinces. Urban construction will provide housing and the major services needed for city life.

The historic links that bind our people to the motherland are well known. They have been mentioned repeatedly in international forums. The Kingdom of

(Mr. Taquiollah)

Morocco is known to all, and the limits of its national territory have been known for many centuries.

Colonial domination in its various forms, whether zones of influence, occupation or protectorates, has not managed to separate us from Morocco, which has also been the victim of division into many zones with different status.

As a result of constant bargaining between the colonial Powers on the so-called question of Morocco, the Sahara, with the same title as the Sidi Ifni enclave, the Tarfaya zone and the northern zone on the Mediterranean coast, was awarded to Spain. The Kingdom of Morocco, which was partially decolonized in 1956, mobilized all its resources to recover what the colonizers had divided up, regaining in succession Tangier, in 1956, Tarfaya in 1958 and Sidi Ifni in 1969, following negotiations with Spain, on the recommendation of the General Assembly.

The participation of our peoples of the Sahara in that long and constant liberation struggle waged since 1956 required a joint French-Spanish armed operation in 1958, known as Operation Ecovion, to stem the advance of our liberation army, which had crushed the Spanish occupiers in some fortified posts along the coast. In order to achieve decolonization by peaceful means, the Kingdom of Morocco took the initiative, and in 1963 asked the United Nations that the question of the Sahara be included on the Special Committee's agenda, together with that of Sidi Ifni.

Faced by the manoeuvres of Spain, the Kingdom of Morocco in 1974 once again asked the General Assembly to request the arbitration of the International Court. That judicial request was answered on 16 October 1975, when it was recognized that the Sahara at the time of its occupation by Spain was not a no-man's land, terra nullius. The Court also recognized the existence of long-standing legal links that joined us, the inhabitants of Sahara, to the Moroccan crown.

The Court also emphasized the right to self-determination of the inhabitants of the Sahara, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), of 14 December 1960. The Kingdom of Morocco, certain of its rights and carrying out its original objective of decolonization by peaceful means, organized a march of 350,000 citizens carrying the Holy Koran and proclaiming their faith that the provinces of the Sahara were Moroccan.

(Mr. Taquiollah)

It was under these conditions that the Security Council adopted resolution 380 (1975) of 6 November 1975, in which it called upon the parties concerned to hold negotiations in accordance with Article 33 of the Charter. Those negotiations, which were concluded on 14 November 1975, produced the Madrid Agreement, which was endorsed by the General Assembly on 1 December 1975. On 26 February 1976 the Jamaa, the sole organ representing our tribes, gave its own approval to the Madrid Agreement, thereby concluding the process of peaceful decolonization for the territory.

The Algerian authorities, and only they, have opposed that peaceful process by creating a mercenary movement. That movement cannot have any legitimacy since it did not exist prior to the evacuation of colonial troops. Thus it is clear that the Algerian leaders were trying to set up some protection behind which to pursue their hegemonistic designs in the Maghreb region. It is no secret that the Tindu mercenaries are totally dependent on the Algerian leaders and that they exist only because those leaders want them to exist. That is proved by the following facts, which I would like to make clear to the Special Committee:

First, the so-called POLISARIO enjoys no credibility among our populations and much less does it represent them.

Secondly, the so-called POLISARIO never fought against Spanish colonialism, which is why it only emerged after the liberation of our Saharan provinces.

Thirdly, the so-called POLISARIO is nothing more than a group of mercenaries who live in camps inside Algerian territory; that group receives from that country's authorities not only military and logistic training but also political guidance to serve now and in future the destructive aims of those authorities, creating a threat to peace and security throughout the region.

Today, that tense, artificially created situation poses a threat to international peace and security. It may lead to a conflagration in which our peoples will, unfortunately, be the principal victims. In order to prevent that eventuality and to avoid a conflict with disastrous consequences, in June 1981 His Majesty King Hassan II, speaking at the eighteenth meeting of African Heads of State or Government held at Nairobi, said that the Kingdom of Morocco was prepared to organize a free and general referendum in the territory of the Sahara. Our populations are prepared to participate in such consultations under United Nations

(Mr. Taquiollah)

auspices, thus contributing to the restoration of peace in the region. A definitive solution to the Saharan conflict will enable us to begin a new era of co-operation in the Maghreb, of which the populations of the entire Saharan region will be the main beneficiaries.

I hope that the Special Committee, thanks to its Chairman's excellent and enlightened leadership, will continue its efforts to work towards a peaceful solution based on the wishes of our populations in the Sahara. As far as the technical plan is concerned, the Committee of Experts appointed by the Organization of African Unity has considered all the aspects and modalities to conduct consultations. It is fitting that the United Nations immediately organize a general, free and democratic referendum.

If self-determination is to have any meaning at all, that meaning is that the final word must rest with the peoples concerned, without prejudging the results by proclaiming an imaginary republic or by appealing to a sovereign State to negotiate with a minority that serves a policy of hegemony.

Only the referendum will bring an end to all the disputes that are delaying the establishment of a just and lasting peace in the region.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Breika.

Mr. BREIKA (interpretation from Spanish): Speaking in my capacity as a genuine representative of the inhabitants of the Saharan provinces, I am most grateful to you, Mr. Chairman, and to the Committee's officers, for having given me this opportunity to express before the Special Committee - composed as it is of outstanding diplomats and militants working untiringly to ensure the triumph of just and legal causes of concern to world opinion - the aspirations of the political and social associations that represent the various Saharan populations, including in particular the association of the families of the kidnapped in Tindouf, a city in the far south of Algeria.

My country, Morocco, was the victim of a colonial occupation that divided it into three zones: the North, the Far South and the enclave of Ifni, occupied by Spain, the Centre, occupied by France and the zone of Tangiers, occupied internationally by a group of nations.

(Mr. Breika)

The restoration of our independence was not served up to us on a golden platter. We bent all moral and material means in a struggle for liberation waged against colonialism, to the point that our own King, supreme symbol of the nation, and the Royal Family were exiled far from their homeland in order to guarantee the freedom and dignity of the country.

(Mr. Breika)

My country's independence, as all members are aware, did not automatically lead to the complete integrity of all its territory. A large part of it was left under Spanish domination, in particular the Tarfaya region, the Ifni enclave, the Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro region and the cities of Sebta and Melia, to the north.

We, the inhabitants of the Sahara, have unceasingly called for the elimination of colonialism from those territories, just as we have unceasingly called for and insisted upon their return to the motherland, from which they were separated only by colonial deed, and if part of the territories I have mentioned was restored to us between 1958 and 1969, Spain, on the contrary, did not follow the same policy in connection with Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro. This contentious position taken by the administering Power obliged my country to bring this dispute to the International Court of Justice in the Hague, which gave its well-known answer on 16 October 1975. That answer stipulates that, in accordance with the information and reports obtained by the Tribunal at the time when Spain occupied the territory of the Sahara, there were links of law and sovereignty between the King of Morocco and the tribes inhabiting the Western Sahara.

That is the answer of the International Court of Justice in connection with a simple dispute that Algeria attempted to complicate in order thus to divert public opinion.

That is the right of my country, as attested to by history, confirmed by international law and solemnly reaffirmed by the highest forum of international justice.

Supported by that right, and in order to avoid all further delay, Morocco organized the glorious and historic Green March, a peaceful march in which 350,000 subjects participated armed with our Holy Book, the Koran, and with our unswerving faith that that territory is an integral part of the motherland, Morocco.

That event led to the Security Council's inviting the colonial Power to negotiate the future of the region. Thus the Madrid Agreement was prepared and signed on 14 November 1975. One month later it was approved by the United Nations.

In the framework of legality and justice my country recovered its territory formally in November 1975 and definitively on 26 February 1976, having consulted with the indigenous inhabitants of the region through the Jama'a, the only body recognized by the administering Power, in the presence of the parties included in the agreement I have just mentioned. This recovery accorded with the provisions of the Madrid Agreement and the norms of international law.

(Mr. Breika)

The implementation of the Madrid Agreement completely put an end to the existence of colonialism in the Sahara, and that means that the artificial problem that this Committee is studying today is not a problem of decolonization but rather a political problem between Morocco and Algeria.

The fact is that the recovery of the Sahara by Morocco did not meet the geopolitical and hegemonic designs of the Algerian authorities. It was for that reason that, immediately after the application of the Madrid Agreement, Algeria took steps to gather together a group of mercenaries of different nationalities. That group is the one appearing today before this Committee, claiming to represent the inhabitants of the Sahara.

I was a petitioner before the Fourth Committee in 1966, and this statement is therefore intended to contribute to the present discussion of the Special Committee on the artificial problem of the Sahara.

In 1966 no one belonging to what is today called the POLISARIO appeared as a petitioner to the United Nations, nor did anyone appear before 1966 and 1976.

The decision of the International Court of Justice completely disregarded the existence of a political association called the POLISARIO in the Sahara. That means that that front of Algerian mercenaries did not in any way struggle against the colonial Power, just as it means that the components of that band of terrorists of different nationalities have no direct or indirect link with the indigenous population of the Western Sahara. As clear proof that it was Algeria that invented this problem, we need only refer to an article that appeared in the French newspaper Le Monde of 7 August 1976 entitled "The Western Sahara", which reads as follows:

"On 5 March, in a room of the Hotel San George, in Algiers,

Ahamed Baba Meska announced the establishment of the 'Republic of the Sahara'".

Now, who is this Ahamed Baba Meska, founder of the POLISARIO and of the puppet Sahraoui Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), or ART - because it is the Algerian Republic of Tindouf, and not the Sahraoui Republic? Well, he is Mauritanian who is very well known and who was his country's Ambassador to the United Nations. For a long time he lived in Algeria and in France; he now lives in Mauritania, his country of origin. As for the other known elements of this group of mercenaries, we shall not give the whole list but confine ourselves to mentioning those that are Moroccan in origin and who left their homeland after having participated in a student strike at the Mohamed V University, in Rabat. They were welcomed in Algeria and were then trained by the Special Services of Algeria. They were given

(Mr. Breika)

special guerrilla training, and then they were established near Tindouf, in southern Algeria, where in concentration camps they gathered subjects of different nationalities that were affected by the drought in the Sahel, together with some Sahraoui families, nomads near the Algerian border who had been kidnapped by the Algerian forces. They are the persons Algeria describes as "Sahraoui refugees".

(Mr. Breika)

These persons are: Ahamed Mahamoud Lilia, who went by the name Mohamed Lamin and who today claims to be minister of education; he was born at Tan-Tan, a town to the south of Agadir, in 1948; he received his primary and secondary schooling in Tan-Tan and Tiznit, and obtained a degree in law at Mohamed V University in Rabat. Another is Erguibi Hametto, known as Mohamed Abdelaziz, who claims to be leader of the group of POLISARIO mercenaries; he was born at Marrakech in 1943 and received his primary and secondary education in Marrakech province, after which we studied for one year at the Rabat School of Medicine. A third is Bachir Moustafa Seyed, who claims to be under-secretary-general of the above-mentioned group; he was born at Tan-Tan in 1953 and received his primary and secondary schooling in Tan-Tan, Tiznit and Agadir. Fourth is Ali Beiba Ould Hamad Ould Duihi, known as Mahafoud Ali Beiba, so-called minister and minister of the interior of the puppet "Saharan Arab Democratic Republic" (SADR); he was born in 1950 at Tarfaya and attended primary and secondary schools in Tarfaya and Tan-Tan. Lastly, there is Mohamed Ali Kentai, well known in divers United Nations corridors; he is from Goulimine province south of Agadir; his father and brothers are tradesmen in Goulimine, in El Aaiun and in Casablanca. For further information, representatives can refer to an article that appeared in Jeune Afrique, Number 1280, dated 17 July 1985.

The families of all those persons live in Morocco, their homeland, enjoying all constitutional rights and subject to all legal obligations. That is the POLISARIO; that is the puppet republic that is attempting to replace the indigenous inhabitants of the Sahara and flout their will.

In one of his statements at the United Nations, one of the representatives of that mercenary group declared that only a strip 500 kilometres long in the extreme north of the Sahara remains in the control of our State. The facts, however, are quite different, for our Royal Army controls all the territory of the Sahara, as has been observed and attested to by all the members of the press who have visited the region on numerous occasions, and above all by Latin American journalists who visited the Sahara as recently as last June.

I shall not cite all the articles that have appeared in various newspapers, but confine myself to mentioning the following: during his visit to the Sahara last June a Uruguayan journalist, Jose Luis Aguiar, published a long report in the Sunday edition of El País of Montevideo, which stated:

(Mr. Breika)

"Various Latin American Governments, including Mexico, have exchanged ambassadors with the SADR. Nonetheless, the SADR has no territory. It is, on the one hand, Algerian diplomacy, and propaganda promulgated worldwide on the other hand, that has led to the belief that the POLISARIO Front in fact controls part of the Sahara. The fact is that the Kingdom of Morocco exercises indisputable sovereignty over that territory, which we have been able to verify for ourselves on the spot.

"Semara is a city of approximately 30,000 inhabitants where, thanks to the urban infrastructure set up in recent years, a large part of the population has been able to remain settled. In the region, we were able to see weaponry that had been left behind two years ago by the POLISARIO - combat tanks with Algerian plates."

Another article was written from the Sahara by Mr. Alvaro Pineda, Madrid correspondent for the Bolivian daily newspaper Los tiempos de Cochabamba. Referring to the irresponsible decision taken by certain States in recognizing the separatists, Mr. Alvaro Pineda stated:

"The 'Saharan Arab Democratic Republic' does not exist; it is a fantasy that blinds and obscures, like the desert sands, it is a mirage... an illusion. That is why we can say that dealing with the POLISARIO can be interpreted as a political act ... but recognizing the SADR is a very serious mistake."

Mr. Armando Fuentes, special correspondent of the Argentine daily Tiempo Argentino, who visited the region on 19 and 20 June of this year with a group of South American journalists, recently published an article on Morocco in which he says the following:

"According to the POLISARIO, the port of Dakha is the base of operations for their Canots; however, we paid an exhaustive visit to that coastal town and found it totally in Moroccan hands."

"The South American reporter indicates that in three days he covered more than a thousand kilometres of the Sahara by jeep and helicopter, that he visited the defence perimeter established near the border of Algeria and Mauritania and that he was able to verify in El-Aaiun, Semara and the Boukraa mines that life was going on normally in those provinces and that there was no military activity whatsoever; he said:

(Mr. Breika)

"There is at the present time no locality where POLISARIO has any permanent installation, much less a naval base from which it could conduct operations against Spanish fishing vessels."

As a deputy from El-Aaiun province, I should like to testify before this United Nations body that an atmosphere of peace and harmony prevails throughout the Moroccan Sahara region. Its inhabitants live in complete security that enables all of them to live their daily lives and to bend their efforts towards improving the economic, social and cultural development of our provinces.

The visit of His Majesty King Hassan II to the Sahara provinces last March and the exceptional reception he received there are but further undeniable proof that there can be no difference between the inhabitants of the northern provinces and those of the Sahara. This has also been confirmed by diplomatic observers and by the international press.

(Mr. Breika)

As for development in the economic and social services, the provinces of the Moroccan Sahara have benefited from the special interest paid in them by the Administration, within the framework of regional development action, as demonstrated by the large credits granted to those provinces, under both the general State budget and the special regional development programme. In this connection, there took place in the provinces of the Sahara in 1976 the first planting operation, which led to 600 hectares being put to use in the town of Daura, and to agricultural production rising from 10 quintals to 24 quintals to the hectare. Today over 2,000 hectares are being cultivated. Since 1984 the region has provided the provinces of the Sahara with all kinds of vegetables and livestock feed.

In the search for water, drilling has been carried out in all the provinces of the Sahara to find new sources of drinking water for human consumption, for irrigation and for the watering of animals. Today the region has 69 wells varying in depth from 150 metres to 650 metres. They meet all the region's drinking water needs. There are also 20 distillation units, each of which produces 8,000 cubic metres of water per day.

Furthermore, the National Fisheries Office has created a number of fisheries co-operatives in the province of El-Aaiun and in the provinces of Boujdour, Tarfaya and Dakhla. They have been provided with ultra-modern fisheries equipment, such as vessels, motors, nets and other materials. They also benefit from a special system for the provision of fuel, and in order to make it possible for the members of the co-operatives to preserve their products properly two ice-producing factories have been built at El-Aaiun and Rio de Oro, with big refrigeration plants for the preservation of fresh fish.

As regards electrical energy, a hydro-electric plant has been built recently, linked to the Mansor Edhbi Central, and the main centres of the Saharan provinces are linked to the national electrical network.

As for the social sector, the provincial delegation of the Ministry of National Education began its activities in the Saharan provinces in February 1976. When Spain left the region there were only 500 students in the various primary and secondary classes. Today there are 7,849 students in 271 classes. Four high schools have been built in El-Aaiun, two in Semara, two in Boujdour and three in Dakhla. Most of the students receive free education. Recently an institute of applied technology was built in El-Aaiun, and 58 classes on the Koran are being given in the four provinces.

(Mr. Breika)

There is now an inspection unit overseeing national education standards, as well as a school health inspection unit. There is also an intense literacy campaign in progress, organized periodically in all the provinces of the Sahara.

I turn to the public health sector, where, since 1975 seven clinics have been built and equipped in various towns. An anti-tuberculosis centre, a centre for the protection of child health, two schools for the training of nurses and paramedics and four hospitals have been built, equipped and provided with the necessary medical staff. Those hospitalized receive free treatment as well as free food and medication.

The State has also organized a municipal public health service and a service for preventive care, vaccination and the fight against infectious and contagious diseases. In addition, mobile health units monitor the health of all inhabitants, both in the country and in the towns.

In the housing sector, the settlement of the inhabitants of the region and therefore the normalization of their lives demanded the development of a significant housing construction programme. That programme has been completed, and the inhabitants of the Sahara now have one house per family. The results of that exceptional programme were recently seen by Latin American journalists.

Many other social activities have been initiated in the region, activities such as the protection of children, youth and sports activities, social security, the Alauita organization for the protection of the blind and organizations for the elderly, the disabled and so on.

As regards the service sector, the Saharan provinces benefited from a special effort in the field of road infrastructure. A number of asphalt roads and highways have been built, of which I shall mention only the most important, as follows: Tan-Tan to El-Aaiun, 360 kilometres; Buizakarn to El-Aaiun, 540; Tan-Tan to Semara, 280; Goulimin to Zak, 380; El-Aaiun to Boujdour, 186; El-Aaiun to Daura, 62; and El-Aaiun to Hagvounia, 86.

As for the railway infrastructure, studies of the line between Marrakech and El-Aaiun - some 1,000 kilometres - were completed recently, and the implementation phase will soon begin.

A commercial port is now being built at El-Aaiun, and a fishing port was finished last year. It was recently equipped with facilities for all kinds of fishing vessels. A fishing port has also been built in the province of Boujdour, together with a commercial port in Dakhla.

(Mr. Breika)

Also worthy of mention is the fact that the city of El-Aaiun has an international airport capable of handling all types of airplanes. Similarly, the cities of Dakhla and Semara each has an airport for domestic air traffic.

In the telecommunications field I wish to mention the provision and improvement of various telephone lines in all the Saharan provinces. A tropospheric station has been established in Semara and a 400-line automatic centre has been installed in Semara, Boujdour and Dakhla. As for El-Aaiun province, it has been connected to the national communications network since 1976.

Finally, mention must be made of the fact that all the Saharan provinces are covered by national broadcasting facilities that have been greatly improved and provided with regional television stations, making it possible for the inhabitants to receive national television broadcasts regularly. Contact between the studios at Rabat and the regional station at El-Aaiun is provided by satellite.

Our country's efforts in the region in the social, economic, cultural and service fields are very important, as the Committee may judge from the details I have just given. For further information representatives may refer to the television broadcast "Novedades Mundiales" on the San Pedro Sula in Honduras, Channel 2.

(Mr. Breika)

That television channel has related the history of colonialism from the very beginning up to the triumphal entry of His Majesty King Hassan II in El-Aaiun.

Honduran television has reported in detail on the immense activity now under way, especially in Semara and El-Aaiun, and in the social sphere the building of mosques, schools, hospitals, sports facilities, and so on.

The families of those kidnapped by the Algerian forces and by the mercenaries from 1976 to 1980 - those who did not die from that situation are now in concentration camps that the Algerian authorities have made available to the mercenaries near Tindouf - have specifically asked me to ask, on their behalf, that this competent organ of the international Organization intervene - through the Algerian authorities and through the International Red Cross - so that those innocent civilians under house arrest may have their freedom restored and return to their cities and rejoin their families and participate in building the future of their provinces and promote the economic and social development activities now taking place in their region.

My country has always given pride of place to peaceful means for the settlement of conflicts, and it will very closely follow all the international debates that take place from time to time on this question of the Sahara, although for us the recovery of these territories has taken place in accordance with international law, just as we consider that all discussions in connection with this problem constitute intervention in the internal affairs of an independent and sovereign State.

None the less, in order once more to demonstrate its good will, and in order to put an end to an artificial conflict, my country has proposed to the Organization of African Unity the organization of a referendum in the Sahara in order to make it possible for the entire international community to be sure that the indigenous inhabitants of the region are able freely to express their will. Thus in June 1981, at the Eighteenth Summit Meeting of African Heads of State, in Kenya, His Majesty King Hassan II stated that Morocco was prepared to organize a referendum in the territories of the Sahara.

The important thing, the fundamental aspect of this issue, is the expression of the will of the inhabitants. That expression will take place through a referendum. My country has accepted that principle, and His Majesty King Hassan II declared on 27 November 1983, before the United Nations, Morocco's readiness to

(Mr. Breika)

organize a referendum in the Sahara and to provide every facility for all observers, whoever they may be, and that Morocco solemnly committed itself to respecting the results of the referendum.

We, the indigenous inhabitants of the region, though not convinced of the need to organize a referendum in provinces that form an integral part of the Kingdom of Morocco, and though we have been part of it since time immemorial and are today participating in all the noble endeavours under way for the prosperity of our provinces, just as we participate in the democratic consultations that make it possible for us to make political decisions, such as participation in Parliament, in the revision of the Constitution of 1981 and in the referendum of Arab-African unity that linked our country with the fraternal people of Libya of 1984 - in spite of all this, we, the inhabitants of the Sahara, accept that referendum proposed by His Majesty Amin el Mouminin Hassan II.

We are in favour of all attempts at consensus in the United Nations, consensus that implements the idea underlying the organization of a referendum as stipulated by the African Summit in Nairobi in 1981; we are prepared to co-operate. None the less we cannot tolerate any artificial idea which might be taken as a pretext to delay that referendum - for example, recognition of a State which does not meet legal conditions under international law; and much less direct negotiations with a movement that exists only in the minds of those that created it, as a proof of which I should like to quote from the French newspaper Le Monde, which on 20 July 1985 reported, inter alia:

"The war that took place at that time, when the Royal Armada clashed with Algerian soldiers in Angala, has not always been legally declared. None the less, after the disengagement of Libya and, later, Mauritania, the POLISARIO installed in Tindouf exists only thanks to Algeria."

These illegal acts may have certain consequences that could indeed be serious.

In conclusion, my country is firmly resolved to use every possible peaceful means to put an end to a problem created in connection with the recovery of its Saharan provinces. However, no privilege should be given in advance and without verification to an insignificant minority established outside the territory over a majority which is living quietly in peace in its own homeland and in the very provinces where it was born, enjoying all democratic constitutional rights. This

(Mr. Breika)

would be the case if that minority were given the right to international negotiations, which constitutes one of the attributes of the Government of a State; not only are the rights of Morocco, a sovereign State, at stake, but also the rights of the inhabitants of the Sahara.

(Mr. Breika)

It is through a referendum - and only through a referendum - that a decision can be made between those who chose the path of violence and those who chose to continue to be Moroccan like their ancestors.

We are convinced that, under the present circumstances, the only appropriate international body that can carry that process forward on the basis of existing achievements and bring about a situation in which peace and stability will prevail in the region is the United Nations.

Mr. Breika withdrew.

Mr. DEYHIM (Islamic Republic of Iran): First of all, I should like to express my delegation's pleasure and satisfaction at seeing you, Sir, again presiding over our Committee on a very important item: decolonization. Your dedication, deep knowledge and, especially, the fact that you are from an African country, give my delegation the confidence and conviction that, under your guidance, our Committee can make significant progress in discharging the objectives and responsibilities with which it is entrusted. Indeed, God and the human conscience are witness to what we intend, say and exercise.

The General Assembly in various resolutions has reaffirmed the fact that the question of Western Sahara is one of decolonization the solution to which lies in the exercise by the people of that territory of their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.

Furthermore, having welcomed the report of the Implementation Committee of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), as well as resolution AHG/RES/104 (XIX) adopted by the Heads of State or Government of the OAU at the meeting held at Addis Ababa on 12 June 1983, the General Assembly underlined once again the necessity for the undertaking of direct negotiations between the two parties concerned.

It is much to be regretted that so far the King of Morocco has refrained from giving a positive response to the appeal of the international community in this respect.

The Islamic Republic of Iran supports the courageous struggle of the Moslem brothers in Western Sahara. We are convinced that building walls with the help of the other colonial Powers cannot discourage the people who are determined to fight for their genuine freedom from following their just aspirations.

Mr. JOUSHAN (Afghanistan): Since this is the first time I have spoken in the Special Committee at this session, I should like to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the efforts you have made in the course of our work.

The international community this year will celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations, as well as the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, adopted on 14 December 1960. Unfortunately, although 25 years have gone by since the adoption of that historic resolution, many peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America are still suffering from colonialism, neo-colonialism, apartheid, domination and other forms of pressure. However, experience has shown that nothing can stop the right struggle of the colonial people for self-determination and independence. One of the peoples that have been struggling for several years is the people of Western Sahara, led by the POLISARIO Front, the sole, legitimate representative of the people of Western Sahara. The people of Western Sahara, under the leadership of the POLISARIO Front, have already lost many lives in the course of their right struggle for self-determination, independence and territorial integrity against the occupying Power, which is supported by the imperialist Powers.

The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan has consistently supported the all-national liberation movement, as well as the struggle of the Saharan people and their legitimate right to self-determination and independence, under the leadership of the POLISARIO Front. The occupation, oppression and exploitation of the colonialist régimes remain as one of the sources of tension and conflict on the African continent, as does the unresolved question of Western Sahara, which is one of grave concern to the international community. In the view of my delegation, a peaceful solution must be found to the question of Western Sahara on the basis of direct negotiation in which all parties must participate in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity.

We believe that resolution 104 (XIX) of the Organization of African Unity and General Assembly resolution 39/40 comprise the peace plan formulated by the international community for a definitive solution to the conflict in Western Sahara. Unfortunately, those resolutions have been frozen since the moment of their adoption. We are confident that full implementation of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and Organization of African Unity resolution 104 (XIX), and all subsequent General Assembly resolutions on Western Sahara, could serve as the basis for the practical and peaceful settlement of the conflict.

(Mr. Joushan, Afghanistan)

Therefore, in conformity with the principles of our foreign policy, we call for the recognition of the right of the people of the Sahraoui Arab Democratic Republic to self-determination.

Ms. BERMUDEZ (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like briefly to reiterate my country's position with regard to the problem of Western Sahara which, despite the 25 years that have elapsed since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and the forty years' existence of the United Nations, is still one of the Territories under colonial occupation and staunchly fighting for its self-determination and independence.

The Sahraoui people, under the wise guidance of its sole, legitimate representative, the POLISARIO Front, has already shed much blood in its long history of struggle for liberation, and for that it deserves our admiration, respect and solidarity.

Unfortunately, the situation in Western Sahara continues to pose a threat to international peace and security because of the obstinacy of the occupying forces and the role being played by the main imperialist Power, the United States, in supplying arms and military advisers to Morocco.

(Ms. Bermudez, Cuba)

Therefore, the international community's hope of speedily finding a just and peaceful solution on the basis of the agreements of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) has been frustrated time and again.

It is impossible to understand how Morocco, which made a historic contribution to the independence of African peoples, keeps up such an intransigent attitude with regard to the will of those same peoples, as expressed in agreements of their principal regional organization, the OAU, and the international community; we hope and believe that it will soon adopt a position consistent with the principles that it defended in the past, and that it will help find a solution to the conflict, which is of so much concern to us.

My country's position is unchanging. We support the independence, self-determination, freedom, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Sahraoui Arab Democratic Republic and the implementation of the agreements of the OAU and the General Assembly. At the same time, we demand an end to the Moroccan occupation of that people's territory.

The CHAIRMAN: As there are no further speakers, may I take it that, subject to any directives which the General Assembly may give in that connection at its forthcoming session, and in order to facilitate the Fourth Committee's consideration of the question, the Committee decides to transmit to the Assembly all the relevant documentation?

It was so decided.

QUESTION OF EAST TIMOR (A/AC.109/836; A/AC.109/L.1563 and L.1565) (continued)

Mr. MAUNA (Indonesia): At the outset my delegation would like to register its categorical objection to consideration of the so-called question of East Timor by this Committee.

The incontrovertible fact is that the decolonization of East Timor was achieved on 17 July 1976, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV). The people of East Timor became independent through the exercise of its right to self-determination, by opting for integration with the Republic of Indonesia, a prerogative recognized by resolution 1541 (XV). It is also important to recall that the East Timor people's decision to integrate was a clear repudiation of the attempt by a minority group which sought to impose,

(Mr. Mauna, Indonesia)

through force of arms, a fait accompli on the Territory, in contravention of the principle of self-determination. In the years since integration East Timor has been transformed from a neglected colonial outpost into an integral part of the Republic of Indonesia, enjoying the full benefits of development, freedom and security, just like every other province of my country.

This recurrent exercise in the Committee has become a seasonal farce, as all it does is to entertain the obsessions of those bent on perpetuating a wholly untenable portrayal of the prevailing situation in East Timor. Indeed, the debate on this item has long since degenerated into nothing more than the ad nauseam repetition by Indonesia's detractors of their same well-worn allegations and spurious tales of disinformation.

Having listened to what the petitioners had to say this time, we were not surprised that all they succeeded in doing was to impose on the Committee's valuable time their long-rehearsed litany of baseless claims and charges against my Government. However, in hindsight, perhaps there was little else they could do. For, having propagated year after year the same falsehoods that we have again been subjected to today, the petitioners have in effect painted themselves into a corner, and are now in a difficult position to extricate themselves from their own self-induced hysteria and delusion.

One can hardly characterize the situation otherwise, in the light of ever-greater progress being made in all aspects of life in East Timor. Indeed, as the people of East Timor reach new levels of progress in the fields of public health and agriculture, their detractors become even more strident in their ludicrous contention that the province is suffering massive malnutrition and famine. The more the people of East Timor develop their economic infrastructure, the shriller become our opponents' claims of exploitation and destitution. The more the people of East Timor are provided the means fully to exercise their cultural, religious and social rights, the more those same quarters seek to portray them as culturally, spiritually and socially oppressed. Truly, the gap between the petitioners' claims and reality could not be any wider.

My delegation has time and again exposed this persistent pattern of disinformation. At previous sessions we have already refuted - and, I might add,

(Mr. Mauna, Indonesia)

by citing reputable independent sources - the allegations and charges that have again been levelled today. Although my delegation has brought up the issue of credibility in the past, I must re-emphasize that the petitioners or the organizations which they purportedly represent have again, as they have on numerous occasions in the past, knowingly provided the Committee with false testimony or have intentionally omitted information favourable to Indonesia. As if that were not enough, Amnesty International, with characteristic arrogance, publicly proclaimed 1985 as the year of an international campaign to vilify Indonesia and then sanctimoniously admonished Indonesia for its lack of co-operation with it, as reported in the Australian newspaper The Age on 26 June 1985. Such attempts at obfuscation were squarely addressed by my Foreign Minister in a statement issued in Jakarta on 28 June 1985, which states in part:

"Basically, Amnesty International is an organization with good intentions, but this does not mean that it cannot be manipulated. If, however, concern is expressed in a responsible manner, as is done by bona fide international organizations like the ICRC, which has been operating here for several years, making visits on the spot, examining conditions, talking to the people concerned, then this kind of criticism, if you can call it that, is beneficial both ways. We are made aware of things that might not be known in Jakarta and it can be shown that we have corrected the conditions and that things have improved considerably. We do not mind people going to East Timor, but we want these people to be responsible people, reputable people and people whom we can be reasonably sure of giving a balanced report."

In this context, in 1984 alone over 40 visits were made to East Timor by senior representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Catholic Relief Service (CRS), the World Health Organization (WHO), dignitaries and journalists. In 1985, 36 visits have already been conducted including, inter alia, visits by the ICRC survey team; a delegation of the United States Government; ambassadors of Canada, New Zealand, Nigeria and Venezuela; officials of France, Great Britain and Japan; the parliamentary delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany; the Apostolic Pro Nuncio, Monsignor Pablo Puente; journalists from The New York Times, Asia Week,

(Mr. Mauna, Indonesia)

Agence France Presse and Far Eastern Economic Reviews; and the editor of Nusantara Magazine. I emphasize that there is nothing new in this policy, as those visits reflect the ongoing practice of maintaining access to East Timor on a regular basis for foreign representatives, parliamentary missions, international agencies, journalists and others.

(Mr. Mauna, Indonesia)

In response to the assertion this morning that such visits are controlled and manipulated by the Indonesian authorities to hide the alleged desperate situation of the population, I will respond merely by quoting what Mr. David Lange, Prime Minister of New Zealand, had to say after he received a report on the trip to East Timor by his ambassador. In an interview with New Zealand Radio on 13 December 1984, Prime Minister Lange stated, inter alia:

"The report shows that the ambassador travelled widely, in fact more widely than he thought he would be able to, that there was evidence of Government security activity but no substantial evidence of resistance to it. And, indeed, life seemed to be functioning as well as could be expected. Further, human rights situations are being dealt with by court process. And in fact rather than the traditional ... military action against people thought to be insurgents, people are now being put on trial, given effective legal aid and in some cases have been acquitted ... The ambassador's report shows firmly that there is marked improvement in the quality of life."

In addition, I should like to refer to the visit by the ICRC survey team, as reported by Laurie Oakes in the Australian newspaper Bulletin, dated 16 July 1985, which should also effectively put to rest the petitioners' claims earlier today that the ICRC is restricted in East Timor and that there are food shortages and impending famines, and that the people have been reduced to surviving by eating leaves, roots and so on. The report states:

"Claims that Jakarta will not permit full-and-free access to East Timor by independent observers have been undercut by a visit made by an International Red Cross survey team. No details of the visit have been made public but some diplomats have been briefed. The findings are a plus for the Indonesians. The team was in East Timor for 17 days in late May and early June. According to diplomatic sources, the ICRC decided the itinerary and the Indonesian authorities allowed the team to go everywhere they asked. The itinerary covered 30 villages in seven districts. Australian diplomats say that the survey found the situation in East Timor had improved since the last ICRC team was there in early 1983. The team decided that there was no need for a resumption of ICRC humanitarian relief activities in the former Portuguese colony. In all areas visited the food situation was in hand and nutritional levels were better than expected."

(Mr. Mauna, Indonesia)

"The ICRC team apparently reported very good co-operation from the Indonesian authorities. It was able to move around the villages and talk freely to people. Because three of the team members had considerable prior experience in East Timor, their observations are considered reliable and their judgements given considerable weight."

In this context, my delegation wishes to recall our statement before the Committee that, due to the increased capacity of the Indonesian Government and to the significant progress made in the development of East Timor, relief and aid activities on the main island of East Timor would as of mid-1983 be provided by the Indonesian Red Cross and the Provincial Government of East Timor, and that the ICRC appreciated those programmes. In a typical response to that information, some of the same petitioners who have appeared today charged that the ICRC was being barred from East Timor and that another famine was imminent. Hence, it is incomprehensible that even after the ICRC survey and after the visit by so many reputable impartial observers the petitioners should still cling to their discredited falsehoods and misrepresentations.

I shall not strain the Committee's patience by giving a point-by-point rebuttal to the allegations of human rights violations brought against my Government. My delegation has responded in considerable detail in the past, and we see no reason to lend them further credence by doing so again. In any case, such charges should be more appropriately directed to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, to which indeed they have been. The significance of the fact that the Commission on Human Rights in March this year rejected those same allegations and decided not to continue consideration of the human rights situation in East Timor cannot go unnoticed by the Committee.

In view of that decision by the Commission on Human Rights, it must be asked why those same non-governmental organizations now come before the Committee to repeat the same allegations based on fabricated "facts", rumours and so-called reports from ex-FRETILIN political exiles and anti-Indonesian elements abroad. One obvious explanation is that those non-governmental organizations are determined to appear before any United Nations body that affords them an opportunity to continue their campaign of slander against Indonesia. Indeed, what could be gained by the Committee from that politically inspired manoeuvre? My delegation sincerely hopes

(Mr. Mauna, Indonesia)

that the Committee will henceforth not allow itself to be dragged into an exercise of political revenge by those non-governmental organizations still smarting from the rebuff by the Commission on Human Rights at its last session.

I would at this point conclude my statement, were it not for the assertions that little is being done to promote the welfare of the people and that the efforts already under way somehow undermine the interests of the East Timorese themselves. Hence my delegation feels it necessary at least briefly to provide the Committee with a picture of the true prevailing situation in the province.

In the field of economic and social development the Government has set priorities in five sectors: agriculture, public health, education, communications and the promotion and protection of cultural and religious rights.

Increased production of food and export commodities has been achieved through programmes of rehabilitation, extensification, intensification and diversification of food-producing areas and the promotion of animal husbandry and fisheries. In addition to the Government's efforts, international organizations such as UNICEF, the Indonesian Red Cross (IRC), the ICRC and the Catholic Relief Service (CRS) are participating in the rehabilitation and development of the agricultural sector. Through these efforts, it is expected that by 1990 East Timor will not only be self-sufficient in food crops but will even become an exporter of a small surplus. In fact, the districts of Ainaro, Bobonaro, Covalima, Baucau, Manatuto and Liquica have already achieved surplus food production. Those encouraging results have been fully corroborated by the international organizations involved, as well as by the various foreign governmental delegations and journalists that have visited the province.

(Mr. Mauna, Indonesia)

Stress in the public health sector has been on building health facilities and increasing the number of medical personnel. While there was only one hospital in East Timor prior to integration, there is now a hospital in every district capital, and each sub-district has a public health centre headed by a doctor. The 84 doctors working in East Timor, assisted by 1,665 paramedics, represent the highest ratio of doctors to population in any of the Indonesian provinces - better than 1:7,000, while, for example, Java has a ratio of 1:23,000.

In the field of education, as of March 1985 there were 149 elementary schools, with 100,637 students and 2,674 teachers, and 43 junior high schools, with 11,576 students and 522 teachers. At the senior high school level there are schools for general studies and economic studies and teacher training schools with 2,694 students and 133 teachers. In addition, East Timorese students who are training to become teachers as well as students from East Timor who are on scholarships outside the province have been given first priority to be granted teaching positions in East Timor. It is expected that within a few years the requirement for teaching staff can be met by the East Timorese themselves.

I should also point out that at the present time the Tetum language is used as the language of instruction up to the third grade in all primary schools throughout the province. Moreover, it is expected that Tetum will soon be taught as a separate linguistic subject in all junior and senior high schools. For that purpose a study has been undertaken by the Language Institute of the University of Malang to develop a course for the teaching of Tetum in East Timor.

Those policies in indigenous teacher development and the language programme are yet another indication of the efforts being made and the attention being given to develop the educational sector in line with preserving the specific character of the East Timorese ethnic identity and cultural heritage.

It is the established policy, and, indeed, the constitutional duty, of the Indonesian Government to preserve and develop the cultural heritage of each ethnic group of the nation, including East Timor, to maintain the rich cultural diversity of the Indonesian people. In East Timor all aspects of the people's culture encompassing the ethnic, linguistic and cultural heritage and the specific expression of their artistic forms and customs - including music, dance, art, folklore, handicrafts, traditions - as well as cultural and religious ceremonies and practices are exercised without restriction and are freely handed down through

(Mr. Mauna, Indonesia)

structured as well as informal instruction by the older generation to the younger ones, as well as through Government-sponsored and/or supported programmes and projects. In that regard, the Regional Office of the Ministry of Education and Culture not only develops programmes in its own sector, but also participates in the planning of all other sectoral projects, with a view to assuring respect for the traditional culture within the broader framework of social, political and economic progress.

Each district level representative of the Regional Office of the Ministry of Education and Culture has been trained and provided with the necessary materials to develop and promote cultural programmes. As a result of those efforts, scores of choral, dance and music ensembles have been organized throughout East Timor. Based on that auspicious beginning, every year there is a week-long Festival of East Timorese Culture organized in each of the 13 districts, with over 200 performing groups participating, after which an All-Provincial Cultural Festival is held in Dili, with the best groups from the districts performing. At the Annual National Cultural Festival Week held in Jakarta in 1984, the Tebe Wekeke and Tari Daerah dances from East Timor were among the five big winners in the competition. Moreover, numerous books on East Timor were among the five big winners in the competition, and many books on East Timor's history and culture have been published and distributed throughout the province. They include a book on East Timorese music, song and dance; a historical and archeological book on East Timor's cultural heritage; a book on the appreciation of museums, history, traditional values, archeology and heritage; and a catalogue of East Timor's historical monuments, buildings and other sites, including ways to preserve and safeguard them.

As in all other regions of Indonesia, the people of East Timor enjoy complete freedom to profess and to practise their respective religions, particularly the Catholic faith, both in privacy and in public places of worship. In many regions of Indonesia, including East Timor, such religious practice fully takes local traditional customs into account, and this again is a manifestation of the religious tolerance that exists in Indonesia.

The Catholic Church, as well as its head in East Timor, Monsignor Belo, the Apostolic Administrator of East Timor, has full freedom to conduct all religious activities. For example, between August 1984 and February 1985 the Monsignor celebrated mass and performed the sacrament of confirmation in parishes throughout

(Mr. Mauna, Indonesia)

the various districts of East Timor. The Indonesian Government has also promoted co-operation between the Apostolic Administrator and the Bishops' Conference of Indonesia. In recent statements to the press, the Chairman and the Secretary-General of the Bishops' Conference of Indonesia have expressed their appreciation of such co-operation and the way in which the Indonesian Government has facilitated assistance by the Bishops' Conference to the people of East Timor.

The Catholic Church runs many social welfare projects in East Timor, including schools. There are over 20,000 children in Catholic primary schools and 3,000 in secondary schools. A total of 101 religious teachers have been appointed in East Timor and 171 will be appointed in the near future. All Catholic schools have full freedom in formulating their curricula.

The Indonesian Government has initiated and funded a special programme in East Timor to promote religious teachings through educational media, such as elementary and secondary schools, and to grant scholarships to those who wish to further their studies in the Catholic religion in other parts of Indonesia. The Government has also allocated funds for allowances to priests and nuns in East Timor. In addition, a Catholic Teachers Training school was opened this year. Significantly, the plan to build a cathedral in Dili has been approved by Monsignor Belo and the Governor of East Timor. The design for the Cathedral has been completed, and the construction will be funded by the Department for Religious Affairs.

In the past three years alone the Government has expended \$US 1,184,595 for religious activities in East Timor.

All of those programmes and projects have led to impressive results, as reflected by the fact that the average of 100 to 200 baptisms conducted at parochial districts before integration has increased to an average of 1,000 to 2,000 baptisms since integration.

Since integration the Indonesian Government has allocated over \$US 360 million for the development of East Timor, and the annual budget for 1985/86 has been increased by a full one third to \$US 80 million. That is again a clear affirmation of the Government's determination to make ever-greater strides in overcoming the legacy of centuries of colonialism and the ravages of civil war that preceded East Timor's emancipation into independence through integration with the Republic of Indonesia.

(Mr. Mauna, Indonesia)

My delegation regrets that due to constraints of time we are able to present only the tip of the iceberg of the whole range of development programmes and activities. None the less, we believe that the facts and figures that reflect rapid economic and social development, as depicted here, are eloquent testimony that the people of the province of East Timor, with the assistance of their fellow Indonesians and their national Government, are working hard and are making significant progress towards the goal of achieving economic and social parity with the other provinces of the Republic of Indonesia.

Equally, it is hoped that the preceding statement has also laid to rest all of the fantastic claims of the denial of cultural and religious freedom in East Timor. The ethnic, linguistic, cultural and religious heritage of the province is being protected, including its traditions and values, language and customs, religious beliefs and practices. Moreover, the cultural and religious heritage of East Timor is not only being preserved, it is being actively promoted by the Regional Office of Religious Affairs and the Regional Office of Education.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that, truly, the gap between what Indonesia's opponents have asserted and the actual reality in East Timor cannot be any wider. The United Nations Commission on Human Rights, at its forty-first session, recognized this fact. The findings of the United Nations own agencies - the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Health Organization (WHO), and other international humanitarian organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Catholic Relief Service (CRS), as well as the scores of independent observers who have visited East Timor - all contradict the claims of our detractors and generally praise the development efforts, which are improving the welfare of the East Timorese people in the economic, social, cultural and religious fields. Moreover, the United Nations General Assembly has for the past two years deferred consideration of this question.

It is my delegation's view that this Committee, too, will recognize that continued consideration of this item will only serve to encourage the anti-Indonesian elements who seek, to promote not the well-being of the people, but rather the personal and political ambitions of those who failed nearly a decade ago to impose their ruthless will through force of arms on the majority of the people of East Timor. Therefore, we urge the Special Committee to recognize that the people of East Timor have chosen and have decided their future by becoming independent through integration with the Republic of Indonesia.

The CHAIRMAN: As there are no further speakers, may I take it that the Special Committee decides to continue consideration of the item at its next session, subject to any directives which the General Assembly might give in that connection at its forthcoming session?

It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: At its next meeting scheduled for tomorrow morning, as agreed, the Special Committee will take up the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) with a view to concluding consideration of the item and, time permitting, the question of Gibraltar and the ninetieth report of the Working Group. At our afternoon meeting, we will take up the 246th and 248th reports of the Sub-Committee on Petitions, Information and Assistance and the proposals relating to the specialized agencies, with a view to taking action thereon.

Preceding the morning meeting, as agreed, at 10 a.m., there will be the viewing of a film relating to the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) in the Economic and Social Council Chamber.

The representative of Cuba has asked to make a statement, and I now call upon him.

Mr. CABALLERO (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): My delegation has asked to speak at this juncture not on any of the items of the Special Committee's agenda, but on a subject that has in recent days been given a great deal of attention by members of our Committee and by the international community as a whole. I refer, of course, to the situation prevailing in South Africa.

Every day we read with great concern and indignation of the events occurring in South Africa. An ever-growing number of men, women and children are falling victim to the criminal actions of the apartheid régime's forces of oppression. My delegation considers that even though this question is not on the Special Committee's agenda we should, in order to be consistent with the commitment of all members of this Committee and with the attention our Committee has given to the policy of apartheid from various angles issue, as soon as possible, a special declaration in which we reiterate our solidarity with the long-suffering people of South Africa and in which we condemn, in the strongest possible terms, those criminal actions and appeal for an immediate end to such actions.

My delegation also believes that, perhaps through you, Mr. Chairman, it might be possible for some action to be initiated to request an urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider once again the situation in South Africa and the

(Mr. Caballero, Cuba)

evolution of events there since the Council's last meetings on this subject, in order that relevant action may be taken.

My delegation makes this a formal proposal to the members of the Special Committee in the conviction that it will meet with their support.

The CHAIRMAN: The Special Committee has heard the proposal by the representative of Cuba with regard to the grave situation in South Africa. Indeed, within the context of its mandate, the Committee has concerned itself with various aspects of the question, while other aspects have not been specifically included in our agenda as a separate item in relation to the list of Territories to which the Declaration applies. It is a fact that the people of South Africa have never exercised the right of self-determination, be it internal or external; they have never been able to take part in constituting an internal Government, let alone determine their own external authority.

(The Chairman)

We have all heard the statement of the representative of Cuba regarding the serious situation in South Africa, the killings that have continued unabated with every day that passes, and his request that we issue a statement condemning such killings, expressing solidarity with the people of South Africa and requesting a meeting of the Security Council to take action in view of the grave situation in South Africa. Having in mind the mandate of the Special Committee against Apartheid, I will certainly hold consultations with the Chairman of that Committee, as well as with members of this Committee as to how best to proceed further. We shall return to this subject at the earliest opportunity following those consultations, which will be held most expeditiously.

Mr. BJURNER (Sweden): Although I have just heard the proposal made by the representative of Cuba for the first time, I will certainly support his call on the Chairman to consult further to find an appropriate way to express our strong condemnation of the latest brutal actions by the apartheid régime and our call for measures to abolish apartheid. This question is certainly of the greatest concern to my Government and, I hope, to the rest of the members of this Committee as well.

I was wondering, however, if, as a basis for the Chairman's further consultations his mandate might be expanded to include not only the Security Council taking action but also that it might consider the adoption of mandatory economic sanctions.

The CHAIRMAN: I take note of the suggestion made by the representative of Sweden, and I assure him that it will be borne in mind in carrying out my consultations.

QUESTION OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS (MALVINAS)

Mr. CABALLERO (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): I note that at tomorrow morning's meeting the members of the Special Committee and other interested parties will be invited to view a film on the Malvinas. I do not want to prejudge the contents of that film, but I do hope it will contribute to our consideration of the subject of the Malvinas and, specifically, that the film will refer to matters that are of great concern to the Committee - matters such as the military presence of the United Kingdom in the Malvinas. We hope that it will deal with the activities of the 4,000 troops of the United Kingdom stationed on that

(Mr. Caballero, Cuba)

Argentine territory, as well as with military bases and the strategic airfield that has just been built and inaugurated there.

We also hope that the film will deal objectively with the economic life of the inhabitants of the Malvinas. That aspect is of particular interest because my delegation is convinced that the citizens of the Malvinas, British subjects, are officials of the Crown. We hope, therefore, that the film will deal with the system of landholding and with the life of the population in the islands.

As I say, my delegation is not prejudging the film's content, but we hope that it will deal with all the aspects that can assist us in our consideration of the subject.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.