

UNITED NATIONS



# SECURITY COUNCIL OFFICIAL RECORDS

TWENTY-SEVENTH YEAR

**1680<sup>th</sup>**

MEETING: 1 DECEMBER 1972

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## SIXTEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTIETH MEETING

Held in New York on Friday, 1 December 1972, at 3.30 p.m.

*President:* Mr. Samar SEN (India).

*Present:* The representatives of the following States: Argentina, Belgium, China, France, Guinea, India, Italy, Japan, Panama, Somalia, Sudan, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Yugoslavia.

### Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/1680)

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. The situation in Namibia:

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 319 (1972) concerning the question of Namibia (S/10832 and Corr.1).

*The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m.*

### Expression of thanks to the retiring President

1. The PRESIDENT: I should like to begin this meeting by expressing our gratitude to my predecessor, Mrs. Jeanne Martin Cissé, the representative of Guinea. The skill and charm with which she discharged her duties as President of the Security Council for the month of November earned our admiration, as was evidenced by the many remarks made around this table yesterday and at other meetings during the month of November. We thank her for guiding our deliberations with such wisdom and enabling us to work through a lengthy agenda during the past month.

### Adoption of the agenda

*The agenda was adopted.*

### The situation in Namibia:

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council resolution 319 (1972) concerning the question of Namibia (S/10832 and Corr.1)

2. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decisions taken by the Council at the 1678th and 1679th meetings I propose now, with the consent of the Council, to invite the representatives of Chad, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mauritius, Morocco, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Burundi and Zambia to participate, without the right to vote, in the discussions of the Council.

3. In view of the limited number of seats available at the table, and in accordance with the usual practice, I now invite the representatives I have mentioned to take the seats

reserved for them in the Council Chamber, on the understanding that they will be called to the Council table when it is their turn to speak.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. A. Oueddo (Chad), Mr. Z. Gabre-Sellassie (Ethiopia), Mr. R. Weeks (Liberia), Mr. R. Ramphul (Mauritius), Mr. A. Benhima (Morocco), Mr. I. Taylor-Kamara (Sierra Leone), Mr. E. Ogbu (Nigeria), Mr. N. Terence (Burundi) and Mr. K. Nyirenda (Zambia) took the places reserved for them in the Council Chamber.*

4. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decision taken by the Council at the 1678th meeting, I now invite the President of the United Nations Council for Namibia, Mr. Olcay, to take a place at the Council table.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. O. Olcay, President of the United Nations Council for Namibia, took a place at the Council table.*

5. The PRESIDENT: At the 1679th meeting of the Security Council it was decided, under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure, to extend an invitation to Mr. Peter Mueshihange, as requested in a letter dated 28 November 1972 from the representatives of Somalia and the Sudan, which is contained in document S/10841. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to hear Mr. Mueshihange's statement. I invite Mr. Mueshihange to take a place at the Council table.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. P. Mueshihange took a place at the Council table.*

6. Mr. MUESHIHANGE: I should like to express the heartfelt gratitude of SWAPO (South West Africa People's Organization) for this opportunity to address this august body for the third time as representatives of the people of Namibia.

7. Mr. President, we should like to congratulate you on being elected to the presidency of the Security Council for the month of December 1972. We are aware of the role that your country and your Government have played in the struggle against colonialism and racism. Specifically, we remember very well that it was your country which raised the Namibian issue in the General Assembly in 1946 when the spokesmen of the Namibian people could not be here to express the wishes and aspirations of our people. Your personal efforts in defence of the colonized peoples' right to self-determination and national independence are well known to us.

8. We should like also to thank members of the Security Council for having accorded our revolutionary comrades from Angola, Mozambique and Guinea (Bissau) the privilege of addressing this body on behalf of the struggling peoples of their countries. The decision to grant this privilege was most timely. It came at a time when oppressed nations are demanding liberation, countries are demanding independence, and humanity is demanding social revolution.

9. SWAPO would also like to express its congratulations to your predecessor, Mrs. Jeanne Martin Cissé, whose glorious record in the service of her country—a country which has been in the vanguard of the African peoples' struggle for liberation and social revolution under the dynamic leadership of Comrade Ahmed Sékou Touré—and in the service of the millions of African women, from both independent and colonized countries of Africa, is well known.

10. May we also express our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his indefatigable efforts in the course of the last nine months to establish conditions so as to enable the people of Namibia, freely and with strict regard to the principles of human equality, to exercise their right to self-determination and independence, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

11. Since the national liberation of Namibia is the main content of our organizational activity, SWAPO of Namibia has been following with keen interest the consultations initiated this year by the Security Council with a view to enabling our people to rid themselves of the illegal and racist administration of South Africa.

12. We recall the fact that at its 1638th meeting, held in Addis Ababa on 4 February 1972, the Security Council adopted resolution 309 (1972) by which the Secretary-General was entrusted with a specific mandate concerning the question of Namibia. Specifically, the resolution invited the Secretary-General, in consultation and close co-operation with the Security Council's group of three, to initiate as soon as possible contacts with all parties concerned, in order to establish modalities for South Africa's evacuation from our country. Furthermore, the resolution authorized the Secretary-General to call upon the racist régime of South Africa to co-operate fully with the Security Council in the implementation of the resolution.

13. SWAPO has noted with great appreciation that by resolution 309 (1972) the Security Council has once again reaffirmed the inalienable and imprescriptible right of our people to self-determination and independence. Similarly, the resolution has upheld the territorial integrity and national unity of our country. Moreover, SWAPO has taken note of the fact that the resolution states quite explicitly that it must be implemented without prejudice to other resolutions on Namibia adopted by the United Nations.

14. As is well known, the adoption of resolution 309 (1972) by the Security Council was due primarily to the views advanced by the representative of Argentina. In introducing the discussion leading to the adoption of the resolution, the representative of Argentina put forward the

proposition that South Africa may have arrived at the stage at which it is prepared to relinquish its illegal occupation of Namibia.

15. SWAPO was, and remains, doubtful about the veracity and wisdom of the Argentinian proposal. However, despite our doubts and apprehensions, we nevertheless feel that the Security Council, in adopting resolution 309 (1972), acted in good faith in making available to the South African authorities an ample opportunity to transfer political power peacefully to the Namibian people.

16. Pursuant to paragraph 1 of the resolution, the Secretary-General initiated contacts with the South African Government and other parties concerned, and after all the preliminary contacts had been made, the Secretary-General proceeded to South Africa and Namibia in February of this year.

17. The central aim of the Secretary-General's visit to South Africa and Namibia was to resolve the two contradictory interpretations of the concept of self-determination and independence. For the United Nations, self-determination and independence mean a decision by the people of a country as to its future political status; in other words, self-determination and independence mean the right of the people as a whole, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion, to determine its own future, and in particular freely to determine without external interference its political future, and to pursue its social, economic and cultural development.

18. The objectives here defined relate to the entire people and territory as a distinct and total entity. On the other hand, the South African Government's definition of self-determination and independence is a matter of public record. Over the years South Africa has enacted a series of laws which contain South Africa's conception of self-determination and independence.

19. In its political conclusions the Odendaal Commission, for instance, declared itself convinced that the only judicious way in which to grant independence to Namibia was through "homelands" for each of the respective ethnic groups of Namibia. As a consequence of the Odendaal report of 1964, the all-white South African Parliament enacted the Native Nations Act (1968), together with other related measures, with a view to partitioning Namibia into 10 so-called "homelands" for the Africans and one for the whites.

20. Since 1968 the illegal administration of Vorster has been creating "Bantustans" in Namibia, the latest of which is the Eastern Caprivi "homeland" created shortly after the departure of the Secretary-General from Namibia in 1972. Others are scheduled for implementation in the near future.

21. *The New York Times* of 21 November 1972 reported that the racist Prime Minister of South Africa had indicated during a press conference in Pretoria on 20 November 1972 that it was his Government's intention to press ahead with the plan to grant 10 non-white "homelands" in Namibia.

22. About the same time, according to the *Windhoek Advertiser*, Vorster's political agent in Namibia, J. de Wet, the so-called Commissioner-General for the Native Peoples of South West Africa, announced his plan to tour Damaraland between 20 and 24 November in order to explain the policy of the South African Government. Among other things, de Wet planned to consult senior spokesmen of the Damaras about the establishment of a legislative assembly for Damaraland in accordance with the relevant articles of the Development of Self-Government for the Native Nations in South West Africa Act. In other words, the South African Government means precisely "Bantustans" when it speaks of self-determination and independence for Namibia.

23. Conscious of these two contradictory conceptions of self-determination and independence, the Secretary-General explained to the South African authorities at the outset of his mission to South Africa and Namibia that the United Nations definition along the lines indicated above should form the basis of any meaningful discussions of the Namibian question.

24. Owing to the fact that the South African Government never really intended honestly and seriously to resolve the conceptual and policy differences between the United Nations and itself, the Secretary-General was unable during his short visit to obtain from the South African Government a satisfactory clarification on the substantive question of self-determination and independence for Namibia.

25. Against this background, the Secretary-General's mission, it was felt, had to be continued by a special representative. For this reason the Secretary-General was authorized, by resolution 319 (1972), to appoint his personal representative, who would try to get satisfactory answers to many of the fundamental questions that were left unanswered, namely: South Africa's unequivocal and precise definition of the concept of self-determination and independence; South Africa's willingness to withdraw its illegal administration from Namibia in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2145 (XXI) and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice of 1971;<sup>1</sup> South Africa's acknowledgement of the inviolability of the national unity and territorial integrity of Namibia; creation of necessary conditions for the Namibian people as a complete entity to establish institutions and structures through elections based on universal adult suffrage; democratization of political processes with regard to popular participation, and freedom of speech, movement and association; release of political prisoners and return of exiles without reprisals or intimidation; termination of all reactionary "Bantustan" schemes; abolition of all restrictive and repressive racist *apartheid* legislation; immediate cessation of the Fascist South African police brutality and terroristic activities against innocent Namibian people.

26. To this end the Secretary-General appointed his representative, in the person of Mr. Alfred Escher, Ambassador of Switzerland, on 24 September 1972.

<sup>1</sup> *Legal Consequences for States of the Continued Presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) notwithstanding Security Council resolution 276 (1970), Advisory Opinion, I.C.J. Reports 1971, p. 16.*

27. In its aide-mémoire to the Secretary-General contained in annex I to the report of the Secretary-General [*S/10832 and Corr.1*] the consultative group of three reiterated the point that:

"The main task of the representative should be to obtain a complete and unequivocal clarification from the Government of South Africa with regard to its policy of self-determination and independence for Namibia, so as to enable the Security Council to decide whether it coincides with the United Nations position on this matter and whether the efforts made under resolutions 309 (1972) and 319 (1972) should be continued."

28. Furthermore, the group recalled and confirmed the need to maintain the national unity and territorial integrity of Namibia, and called once again for the discontinuance of all the "Bantustan" schemes.

29. The group of three also stated in its aide-mémoire that:

"The contacts to be carried on with the Government of South Africa and all the parties concerned should always be conducted in accordance with the mandate of resolutions 309 (1972) and 319 (1972). This should be made absolutely clear in every case from the beginning of the implementation of the above-mentioned resolution."

30. With those specific instructions, Mr. Escher left for Namibia via South Africa. At the outset of his talks with the Government of South Africa he reiterated the position of the United Nations with regard to the self-determination and independence of Namibia.

31. As was to be expected, South Africa's response was dubious and at worst negative. To begin with, the South African Government has in our view not even acknowledged its acceptance of resolutions 309 (1972) and 319 (1972). As may be recalled, the initial reaction of the Government of South Africa to resolution 309 (1972) was expressed by Vorster in an address to the House of Assembly on 4 February 1972. According to the *South Africa Digest* of 16 June 1972, Vorster said that "if the Secretary-General wished to come to South Africa to act as a mouthpiece for the extremists of the Organization of African Unity and others, I can tell him in advance that he would be wasting his time". Vorster went on to say: "We do not recognize any United Nations rights over South West Africa".

32. Thus, the South African Government's attitude towards the United Nations remains as it has always been, one of open defiance and intransigence.

33. The United Nations is anathema to South Africa. And that is why the racist régime in Pretoria conceptually and in practice draws a distinction between the United Nations, on the one hand, and the person of the Secretary-General, on the other.

34. It is against that background of defiance and intransigence that, instead of obtaining the necessary clarification of the South African Government's readiness to withdraw

its repressive and racist illegal administration from Namibia, Mr. Escher was led astray by the unscrupulous leading clique in Pretoria.

35. Vorster's argument was that it was not yet an appropriate time to go into detailed discussion of the interpretation of self-determination and independence. For him, "this could be done with better results, once . . . the inhabitants have had more administrative and political experience", and "this could best be achieved on a regional basis". Furthermore, the South African Government has not recognized the Namibian people's right to exercise its right to self-determination and independence on the basis of universal adult suffrage, in the same way it has consistently refused to heed the call of the South African people who for the last 60 years have been demanding freedom and national liberation under the banner of the African National Congress of South Africa. Rather, Vorster prefers to establish an "advisory council" drawn from "representatives" from various regions—a council over which Vorster will assume direct over-all control.

36. After the more than 52 years during which the South African Government was supposed to have "promoted" to the utmost the material and moral well being and social progress, including administrative and political experience, of the Namibian people, Pretoria has no shame in asking for additional time—by implication, more than 52 years—to see to it that the inhabitants have more "administrative and political experience".

37. Mr. President, as you yourself can testify, it is common knowledge that it is when they are pressed to end their colonial domination and exploitation that imperialist and colonial Powers always find it necessary to demand additional time to "prepare" their colonial subjects for self-determination and independence. The objective truth is, however, that that was never the intention of colonialism. The same is true with respect to South Africa's policy concerning Namibia.

38. That being the case, the Namibian people remain uninterested in such deceptive colonial gimmicks. We of the South West Africa People's Organization are proud of having been faithful to the wishes and aspirations of our people. Time and again we have told the United Nations that the Namibian people want an immediate end to the South African Government's illegal administration in Namibia.

39. As may readily be noted by reading the report of the Secretary-General's representative, the Namibian people said with convincing clarity that they are opposed to any continuation of the racist rule by the South African white minority Government. They demand nothing short of immediate and total independence for their country as a single and unified entity.

40. As Mr. Escher has candidly admitted, the conclusion that must be drawn from his discussions with a wide cross-section of the Namibian population is that those people in fact want immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Namibia of the South African occupying régime.

41. As for the notion of "regional governments" supposedly a prerequisite for "eventual" self-determination and independence, SWAPO of Namibia sees it as nothing other than a new name for the same old idea of divide and rule—that is, whether it is called "native reserves", "homelands" or "Bantustans", the content remains the same—division along ethnic lines to facilitate white-minority racist domination and exploitation.

42. During the past 52 years the Namibian people has suffered immensely under the policy of divide and rule. To stifle our people's sense of national purpose and collective action, the South African régime has systematically prevented all meaningful political interaction among the Namibian communities. Each one of those communities has been literally locked up in an exclusive and isolated enclave. The Namibian people was forced into those enclaves and suffered exploitation and economic retardation. On the one hand, all those enclaves—reserves—have been used as reservoirs of cheap labour. On the other hand, since by definition every African in Namibia belongs to one of those reserves, and since, in reality, those reserves were never intended to be economically viable, they serve as indirect mechanisms for forced labour—that is, forced by the sheer necessity of survival, the African people had to leave those enclaves to seek employment as migrant workers or semi-permanent residents in the urban areas. In both cases pressure is applied to oblige our people to sell cheap labour to the local white settlers and the international corporate monopolies that are daily draining Namibia of its natural resources. Those arrangements, in which each one of those communities is forced to exist, have meant cultural stagnation, social isolation, economic retardation and political emasculation.

43. To the Namibian people, this has been a bitter lesson about "homelands", "reservations" and "Bantustans". And this they see as the obvious meaning of the new concept of "regional authority". Thus they categorically reject it.

44. Regarding the notion of "advisory council", it is equally obvious that such a "council" will be nothing more than a conglomeration of government-paid puppet chiefs, rather than democratically elected representatives of the people. Vorster has, in our view, made it clear that what he wants is an "advisory council" directly accountable to himself, and not a people's assembly.

45. On the basis of those arguments, SWAPO completely rejects these new colonial tricks by the Government of South Africa.

46. We have already stated the fact that from the very beginning of the current consultations between the Government of South Africa and the Secretary-General, we have been doubtful and apprehensive as to the possibility of any positive outcome. We felt and still feel that the Government of South Africa wanted only to implement its policy of meaningless "dialogue". Feeling the weight of the negative judgement of the world's people, the South African Government understandably needs "dialogue".

47. We are not against "dialogue" *per se*. But we are profoundly aware that the embattled people of Namibia are

suffering under severe repression at the hands of Vorster's Gestapo and the occupying troops. Given the suffering of our people, we find it unacceptable to support meaningless diplomatic exercises or "dialogue".

48. Our deep concern with the sufferings of our people has always guided our decisions. It was precisely because of this that we stated, through Comrade Nujoma during his meeting with the Secretary-General on 29 February 1972, that: first, his visit should not in any way be allowed to be interpreted as a softening of the United Nations attitude towards South Africa's illegal occupation, nor acceptance of same; secondly, the visit must not become a reason for working out half-way measures and compromises with the South African authorities over Namibia; thirdly, we can accept only full and total independence for Namibia now. The resolve to take up arms in 1966 came after a let-down by the international community. We want to emphasize the point that we will continue to fight for our freedom where international action leads to no results, until we have achieved independence.

49. Moreover, while visiting New York, at the invitation of the *Ad Hoc* Sub-Committee on Namibia established by the Security Council, Comrade Nujoma reiterated this standpoint, emphasizing that the only thing SWAPO is interested in is the immediate and total withdrawal of the illegal South African administration from Namibia. On the eve of the publication of the Secretary-General's report of 15 November 1972, the President of SWAPO again re-emphasized our position that if by 15 November 1972, the South African racist régime does not concretely commit itself to withdraw its illegal administration from Namibia and table the modalities facilitating the withdrawal, clearly state its acceptance to recognize the legitimate rights of our people to self-determination and national independence, and commit itself in no ambiguous terms to recognize that Namibian people's political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights to freely determine their future without external interference, SWAPO of Namibia will categorically reject any further contact between the United Nations Secretary-General and the illegal occupying South African forces in respect to the question of Namibia.

50. At this juncture, we feel that the current talks initiated by the Secretary-General under Security Council resolutions 309 (1972) and 319 (1972) are not being focused on the central question, which is the freedom and independence of the Namibian people. Rather, we have been observing with great dismay that the South African racist Government has managed to divert the discussions with the Secretary-General and his personal representative to issues of secondary importance. This means that talks are focused on bits and pieces of policy adjustments, such as regionalism and the creation of an advisory council under Vorster, which in themselves presume the continuation of the illegal régime of South Africa in Namibia.

51. However, because of our unyielding commitment to our people's demand for the immediate and total withdrawal of the occupying forces of South Africa, and because of our conviction that the current talks have failed to produce any positive results, we openly call for the termination of all talks being conducted under Security

Council resolutions 309 (1972) and 319 (1972), between the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the cynical ruling clique in Pretoria.

52. We in SWAPO, however, remain fully convinced that the United Nations is quite capable of more effective and direct measures to oblige the Government of South Africa to comply with the collective demand of the majority of the States Members of this Organization.

53. In our view, General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) of 1960, 2145 (XXI) of 1966, 2248 (S-V) of 1967, and Security Council resolutions 245 (1968), 246 (1968), 264 (1969), 283 (1970), 301 (1971) and 310 (1972), in addition to other related resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly on Namibia, together with the advisory opinion of 1971 of the International Court of Justice, express and reaffirm the special responsibility that the United Nations and its Members had and continue to have towards the people of Namibia.

54. Those resolutions provide a wide latitude, within the Charter of the United Nations, for political, economic and military pressure that could and must be brought to bear upon the South African Government until the latter accepts the authority of the United Nations. Another relevant step that should be taken with a view to strengthening the United Nations machinery, in order to assist the Namibian people to achieve their national liberation, is the immediate appointment of a full-time commissioner to the United Nations Council for Namibia. It is our considered opinion that with the collective backing of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the specialized agencies of the United Nations, the United Nations Council for Namibia could be empowered to discharge its mandate from the General Assembly in Namibia.

55. In this regard we note with satisfaction the intention of the People's Republic of China, the USSR and Burundi to join the United Nations Council for Namibia. This, we believe, will strengthen the Council and make it, we hope, an effective force in support of the Namibian people's struggle for national liberation.

56. We should also like to repeat our demand that those States Members of this Organization whose capitalist nationals plunder the material resources of our country and exploit the labour of our working masses should forthwith put an end to such criminal activities against our people.

57. We have repeated time and again that the ready availability to South Africa of financial resources from those corporate monopolists has enabled Pretoria's racist régime continually to elaborate its instruments and techniques of oppression.

58. Before concluding, allow me, on behalf of SWAPO of Namibia and the embattled masses of our country, to express our most sincere gratitude to the Organization of African Unity, the non-aligned movement and the socialist countries, all of which have given us moral and material support in our struggle against colonialism, imperialism and racist reaction.

59. May we also express our appreciation to the Chairman of the Committee of Twenty-Four<sup>2</sup> for his energetic efforts to recommend to the Fourth Committee the granting of observer status to the genuine African liberation movements which are recognized by the Organization of African Unity.

60. In conclusion, allow me to express our unreserved commitment to continue the struggle until the liberation of our fatherland is achieved. We are sustained in our struggle by a profound conviction that ours is a just and legitimate cause. The bitter resistance which the Namibian workers, youth, students and religious community are daily carrying on is clear testimony of our peoples' burning desire to be free and independent. To their wishes and aspirations, we of SWAPO will always remain faithful.

61. We should like to express our solidarity and revolutionary salutations to all anti-imperialist forces the world over, especially the heroic people of Viet-Nam, Cambodia, Laos, Palestine, so-called French Somaliland, Spanish Sahara, and the Comoro Islands and the anti-imperialist forces in Latin America, as well as our brothers and sisters in North America.

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<sup>2</sup> Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

62. I should be failing in my duty if I did not take this opportunity to express our unwavering solidarity with the people of Zambia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Guinea, Senegal, the People's Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Zaire, Syria, the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, who are facing constant imperialist plots designed to undermine their independence and economic development.

63. Last but not least, we should like to reaffirm our fraternal and comradely solidarity with the genuine liberation movements of southern Africa and Guinea (Bissau) and Cape Verde, men and women with whom we share the daily hardships and agony of the revolutionary struggle.

64. The PRESIDENT: I thank Mr. Mueshihange for the kind words he addressed to me personally.

65. I understand that consultations have already begun among the delegations of the Council for working on the final outcome of our discussion and debate on this important question. During the weekend those consultations will no doubt continue and it is my hope that at our next meeting the members of the Council will be in a position to express their views, keeping in mind the statements they have already heard.

*The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.*