



Security Council

PROVIS IONAL

S/PV.2918
17 April 1990

ENGLISH

PROVIS IONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND
NINE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 17 April 1990, at 3.30 p.m.

President: Mr. TADESSE

(Ethiopia)

Members: Canada
China
Colombia
Côte d'Ivoire
Cuba
Democratic Yemen
Finland
France
Malaysia
Romania
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland
United States of America
Zaire

Mr. FORTIER
Mr. LI Luyé
Mrs. CASTAÑO
Mr. ESSY
Mr. ALARCON de QUESADA
Mr. AL-ASHTAL
Mr. TORNUDD
Mr. BLANC
Mr. HASMY
Mr. MUNTEANU
Mr. BELONGOV

Mr. RICHARDSON
Mr. PICKERING
Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA

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

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

ADMISSION OF NEW MEMBERS

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE ADMISSION OF NEW MEMBERS CONCERNING THE APPLICATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA FOR ADMISSION TO MEMBERSHIP IN THE UNITED NATIONS (S/21251)

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Brazil, Mali and South Africa, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the application of the Republic of Namibia for admission to membership in the United Nations. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Nogueira-Batista (Brazil), Mr. Diakite (Mali) and Mr. Sheerar (South Africa) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 17 April 1990 from the President of the United Nations Council for Namibia, which reads as follows:

"On behalf of the United Nations Council for Namibia, I have the honour, under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, to request an invitation for the Acting President of the United Nations Council for Namibia, His Excellency Mr. Mustafa Aksin, to participate in the Security Council's consideration of the item presently on the agenda."

On previous occasions, the Security Council has extended invitations to

(The President)

representatives of other United Nations bodies in connection with the consideration of matters on its agenda. In accordance with past practice in this matter, I propose that the Council extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to the Vice-President of the United Nations Council for Namibia.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the report of the Committee on the Admission of New Members concerning the application of the Republic of Namibia for admission to membership in the United Nations, which appears in document S/21251. In paragraph 3 of the report, the Committee recommends to the Security Council the adoption of a draft resolution on the application for membership of the Republic of Namibia. In accordance with the procedure followed on previous occasions, I propose that the Council first proceed to the vote on the draft resolution and that those who wish to make statements do so thereafter. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that that procedure is acceptable to the members of the Council.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in paragraph 3 of the report of the Committee on the Admission of New Members concerning the application of the Republic of Namibia for admission to membership in the United Nations, document S/21251.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: Canada, China, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Malaysia, Romania, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Zaire

The PRESIDENT: There were fifteen votes in favour. The draft resolution has therefore been adopted unanimously as resolution 652 (1990).

(The President)

In paragraph 4 of its report the Committee on the Admission of New Members has proposed that the Security Council request the inclusion of an item entitled "Admission of new Members to the United Nations" in the supplementary list of items for the agenda of the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly. I understand that the proposal was made in light of the wish expressed by the President of the Republic of Namibia in the application letter that the application be given consideration on a priority basis so as to enable the Namibian delegation to participate in the work of the special session of the General Assembly, and in conformity with rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. May I take it that the proposal of the Committee to request the inclusion of the supplementary item meets with the approval of the Security Council?

There being no objection, it is so decided.

As President of the Security Council, I am sure that my sentiments of great happiness on the adoption of this historic resolution correspond to those of the members of the Council. This resolution marks the culmination of a long and complex process in which the Council and the United Nations as a whole have been closely involved. I feel privileged to be in the Chair on this momentous occasion.

In extending warm congratulations to the Government and the people of the Republic of Namibia, it is fitting to note that Namibia's admission to United Nations membership will be a tribute to the courage, dedication and sacrifice of its people and their leaders. They have waged a long struggle for self-determination and genuine independence. They will now be facing diverse challenges of nation-building and should be able to enjoy the continued support of the entire international community in connection with their efforts to achieve successful economic and social development. In this regard the Council has already taken the lead in its resolution 643 (1989) of 31 October 1989, in which it

(The President)

urgently appealed to Member States, United Nations agencies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to extend, in co-ordination with the Secretary-General, generous financial, material and technical support to the Namibian people, both during the transitional period and after independence.

I am now pleased to call upon the Secretary-General.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: The adoption today of the resolution recommending the admission of the Republic of Namibia to membership in the United Nations is a historic event. For this Council and for the United Nations as a whole it marks the culmination of an effort sustained over long years to enable the people of Namibia to take charge of their destiny and assume the place to which they are entitled in the community of nations.

The achievement of this goal was not easy. It involved a protracted and often complex process. Almost every phase of that process was beset with difficulties. At many a stage on the way, hopes wavered and lives were lost. Now that Namibia is about to join the ranks of sovereign Member States in the Organization, we can look back with a sense of fulfilment on our perseverance in the struggle. It is indeed a source of great satisfaction for me that ultimately the solution to the question of Namibia was reached through free and fair elections, under the supervision and control of the United Nations, in implementation of the settlement plan that was adopted in this very Chamber 12 years ago.

The steadfastness, the vision and the co-operation of the members of the Security Council - with one another, with the people of Namibia, with other interested parties and with the Secretary-General - have provided a most instructive example of how just goals laid down in our Charter can be achieved and how, with unity in aim and coherence in effort, multilateralism can be both fruitful and dynamic.

(The Secretary-General)

It was the Security Council which set the framework for a settlement in Namibia. It was the Secretary-General to whom the Council entrusted the task of helping to implement the Council's resolutions. It was the General Assembly which appropriated the necessary funds. It was the Council for Namibia which, in the transition period, represented the people of Namibia in international forums and assisted their preparations for independence. It was the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), headed by my Special Representative, that carried out the will of the Organization, with the co-operation of the parties concerned, notably, South Africa and the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). Above all, it was the Namibian people who, despite severe tests and hardships, in the end triumphed. It was my honour and pleasure to administer the oath of office to their first President, Sam Nujoma.

Moreover, the accomplishment by the United Nations of its mission in Namibia demonstrates how long-standing conflicts, seemingly insoluble, can be made to yield to the procedures of peaceful settlement once the international community agrees to join hands and use the world Organization for its intended purposes. The gains that are thus made strengthen the international rule of law and the principles of democracy and human rights and thus consolidate peace.

The Government of Namibia has indicated its willingness to accept the obligations contained in the Charter and to assume the responsibilities inherent in membership of the United Nations. I should like to express the confident hope that the international community, for its part, will not forget its continuing responsibilities to the people of Namibia. The warm, universal goodwill which has greeted its birth will need to be translated into all possible assistance, when requested. The new State should be assured of the full support of the United Nations in the onerous tasks of nation-building it has now assumed.

Mr. HASMY (Malaysia): I should like at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the high office of the presidency of the Council for the month of April and to extend my delegation's fullest co-operation to you. I am confident that, given your well-known diplomatic skills and personal attributes, you will be able to steer the work of the Council for this month to a successful conclusion. I should also like to express my delegation's appreciation to His Excellency Ambassador Abdalla Saleh Al-Ashtal, Permanent Representative of Democratic Yemen, for the outstanding manner in which he conducted the work of the Council during the busy month of March.

I should also like to express my appreciation to you, Mr. President, and to His Excellency the Secretary-General for the most edifying remarks you have both just made to the Council on the matter that is the subject of our consideration today.

My delegation strongly and wholeheartedly supports the Republic of Namibia's application for membership of the United Nations. Namibia's entry into the community of sovereign and independent nations represented here in this Organization is the culmination of the long years of struggle for nationhood, a struggle in which the Organization itself played a crucial role, of which it should be justifiably proud. Malaysia would like to pay the highest tribute to the Namibian people and its leadership, particularly the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), for their great courage, fortitude and sacrifices in their long and arduous struggle for nationhood. We warmly congratulate them on the successful outcome of their first general election and on the formation of the first post-independence Government, under His Excellency President Sam Nujoma, whose astute leadership and statesmanship we salute.

(Mr. Hasmy, Malaysia)

The independence of Africa's last colony is a cause for celebration for the entire international community. My delegation would therefore pay tribute to the United Nations, its Secretary-General and the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) for the exemplary manner in which each played a part in, and contributed to, the Namibian independence process. We also pay tribute to the Council for Namibia for its tireless efforts in protecting the rights of the Namibian people and in preparing it for self-determination and independence.

As a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, which has been in the forefront in championing the cause of Namibia's independence, Malaysia is proud to have been closely associated with the international effort to bring freedom to the people of Namibia. As a member of the Council, Malaysia is gratified to have played a role in the implementation of resolution 435 (1978), which paved the way for Namibia's independence. We are particularly honoured to have presided over the Council at the adoption of resolution 629 (1989) in January last year, and to have made a contribution to UNTAG.

The young Republic of Namibia will face many challenges of nation-building. It will have to grapple with the tasks of building a strong and united nation and a viable economy and of uplifting its people's standards of living, while not only ensuring its continued independence, but also proceeding with the early reintegration of all its sovereign territories, including Walvis Bay and the offshore islands, as provided for in Security Council resolution 432 (1978), adopted unanimously by the Council. In all of those tasks Namibia will have to rely on the continued assistance and support of the international community, which clearly continues to have a responsibility towards the young Republic, not the least of which is in supporting Namibia's efforts to reintegrate all of its sovereign territories. Malaysia stands ready to play its part in all these efforts.

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

Mr. AL-ASH'AL (Democratic Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to extend to you our sincere congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the current month. I wish to express our appreciation of your efforts in the past and our confidence that your diplomatic skill will enable you to guide the Council's work successfully.

On 21 March the world's attention was focused on Namibia, when it celebrated its independence in its capital, Windhoek. At midnight on that joyful day the celebrations reached their peak when Mr. Sam Nujoma took the oath of office before the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Perez de Cuellar, inaugurating the beginning of a new era for himself and his country. When Namibia achieved its independence on that day and Mr. Sam Nujoma became its first President, that historic event symbolized in a few minutes the place of the United Nations and its role in supporting the Namibian people in its liberation struggle, under its experienced leadership, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO).

Since the United Nations assumed responsibility for administering Namibia it had provided all forms of moral and political support to enable the Namibian people to determine its national fate in an independent and sovereign State. The Security Council established the framework for a peaceful political solution and elaborated the plan for Namibia's independence by its resolution 435 (1978). It also contributed significantly by using the resources of the United Nations to preserve the peace and supervise the elections in an exemplary manner. This led to the final transition to independence. In that regard I pay tribute to the Secretary-General for his arduous efforts in dealing with the most difficult peace operations during the transition period. I also pay tribute to the international civil servants who dedicated themselves to their duties.

(Mr. Al-Ashtal, Democratic Yemen)

As we welcome Namibia to the United Nations, we also welcome the beginning of a new era in which national reconciliation will prevail under democracy and with regional co-operation. We also look forward to the day when Namibia gains complete independence by regaining sovereignty over Walvis Bay and the adjacent islands, just as we look forward to the day when the State of Palestine takes its place among the nations so that the United Nations becomes truly universal.

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

Mr. BAGBENI ADEITO NZENGEYA (Zaire) (interpretation from French): On behalf of my delegation, Sir, I congratulate you most warmly on your accession to the presidency of the Council for the month of April. It is significant that it is under your presidency that the Security Council has just unanimously voted in favour of recommending the admission of the Republic of Namibia as the 160th Member of our Organization. Your country, Ethiopia, has played a particularly historic role in the process of decolonization in Africa. In providing the headquarters of the Organization of African Unity since 1963 and the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa, your country has made it possible for African leaders to get together often to decide upon measures that, with the help of the international community, have led to Namibia's independence. Please be assured of my delegation's full co-operation during your term of office.

In addition, Sir, I wish to express my great respect for the remarkable, competent way in which your predecessor, Ambassador Abdalla Saleh Al-Ashtal of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, conducted the Council's work for the month of March, to the complete satisfaction of all its members.

Ever since the adoption on 29 September 1978 of resolution 435 (1978), embodying the United Nations plan to bring independence to the Namibian people, the

(Mr. Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya,
Zaire)

Security Council has played a leading role in the matter. Aiming at a peaceful resolution of the question of Namibia, the Council began a large-scale endeavour in support - although 12 years later - of General Assembly resolution 2145 (XXI), of 27 October 1966, which terminated South Africa's Mandate over the Territory of Namibia.

I must also refer to the contribution also made to the building of that nation by the International Court of Justice, which on 21 June 1971 handed down its advisory opinion that South Africa was under an obligation to withdraw its administration from Namibian territory.

Although it is a long time since 1978, the Security Council has shown perseverance in seeking to implement its decision, taking the most appropriate steps, such as the setting up of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) by its resolution 435 (1978), and it has spared no effort to promote the chances of peace and dialogue in southern Africa.

It was in that context that the tripartite negotiations were carried out. Those negotiations, encouraged by the members of the Security Council and supported by the African States, including my own country, Zaire, culminated in the creation of a climate of confidence in southern Africa which was the basis for Namibia's gaining independence and which justifies its request for admission to membership of the United Nations.

(Mr. Baqbeni Adeito Nzengeya, Zaire)

This is the place for my delegation to pay a well deserved tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for his skill and tenacity in discharging his noble mission of leading Namibia to independence. To all his associates closely involved in the transitional operation in Namibia, my delegation expresses sentiments of profound recognition.

My country, Zaire, hails Namibia's entry as the next Member of our Organization, in which it is called upon to play within the concert of nations a dynamic role that may lead its neighbour State South Africa to emulate its example in the building of a similar multiracial nation. We address to the heroic people of Namibia our sincere best wishes for success in its struggle to preserve the territorial integrity of its country in accordance with Security Council resolution 435 (1978) and in its efforts to ensure the harmonious economic and social development of its country.

In conclusion, my delegation expresses the hope that the Security Council resolution recommending Namibia's admission will receive the enthusiastic support of the General Assembly at its eighteenth special session so that Namibia will indeed become the 160th Member of our Organization.

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

Mr. ESSY (Cote d'Ivoire) (interpretation from French): When the African Heads of State gathered in Addis Ababa on 25 May 1963 to establish the Organization of African Unity, their primary objective was to struggle to achieve the total decolonization of Africa and to put an end to all racial discrimination, notably apartheid.

It is therefore particularly significant that a felicitous happenstance saw to it that it would be you, Sir, the representative of the country that plays host to the Organization of African Unity, Chairman of the Special Committee on the

(Mr. Essy, Cote d'Ivoire)

Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, and President of the Security Council for the month of April, would be directing our work to realize not only the emergence of a new State on the international scene but also, and above all, fulfilment of the aspirations of the founding fathers of the Organization of African Unity and of the African peoples to bring about the decolonization of the African continent.

My delegation is sure that, thanks to your great political experience and your exceptional professional qualifications, the work of the Council during this month will be crowned with success.

I would express to your predecessor, the Ambassador of Democratic Yemen, Mr. Al-Ashtal, our fullest appreciation and admiration of the professional competence and the judicious manner in which he conducted the work of the Council during the month of March, a month in which we did a great deal of work.

It is a source of particular satisfaction to see that, along with the many complex questions often debated by the Council in a tense atmosphere, Council members are sometimes present at a positive event such as the admission of a State to the United Nations.

The Security Council, which has through its resolutions and decisions played a major role in the peaceful transfer of power to a united, free and independent Namibia, has just unanimously adopted a historic resolution recommending Namibia's admission to the United Nations.

The honour and joy felt by Cote d'Ivoire on this blessed day is explained by the fact that for us, the people of Cote d'Ivoire, the Republic of Namibia is not just another nation among nations; it is a sister nation within the great African family that is today seeing the consecration of the courageous struggle waged by its people to vindicate its right to dignity and national sovereignty. It was with

(Mr. Essy, Cote d'Ivoire)

much anguish that Cote d'Ivoire followed the many alternations in the struggle of Namibia for independence.

It is thus quite natural for us joyously to hail the successful conclusion of the liberation struggle, which is coming to an end in peace, with unity regained, thus bearing witness to the determination and maturity of the Namibian people and its capacity to overcome, through dialogue and negotiation, all the differences, thus enabling a democratic, peace-loving State to emerge.

It is a source of acute pain to recall on this day of joy the colonial history of Namibia and the hopes, disappointments and frustrations our Organization has felt since the adoption of resolution 435 (1978) as it has psychologically prepared itself to welcome an independent Namibia in its midst. That has now been accomplished, and better late than never. This is the place and time to pay tribute to the magnificent job done by specific bodies of our Organization such as the United Nations Council for Namibia and the Committee of 24, and the tireless efforts they in particular have made throughout the long struggle to bring independence to Namibia. The troops of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) and the civilian units that participated in the great adventure of the democratic decolonization of the last bastion of colonialism in Africa are worthy of our fullest admiration for the remarkable way in which they discharged their tasks under trying conditions. It was a noble mission indeed.

Scarcely a few years ago, in the context of international relations then dominated by doubts and scepticism, in his statements and reports to the General Assembly our Secretary-General never failed to emphasize the unique role to be played by the United Nations and its capacity to confront and cope with the many challenges the world over.

(Mr. Essy, Cote d'Ivoire)

If it enjoyed the confidence and support of the Member States, the success of the operation carried out in Namibia by the United Nations, which history will record as one of its greatest achievements, confirms the forward-looking vision he had then with regard to the data and factors that fashion the evolution of the world in which we live. This success is his success, just as it is the success of the team that assisted him day by day in times of extreme tension that marked the various stages of that "sui generis" operation.

Objectivity compels us to acknowledge, with regard to the present authorities of the former administering Power, that they have indeed shown the merit of co-operating in the final phase of the process of bringing independence to Namibia in orderly and dignified circumstances and through democratic institutions.

The difficult economic context in which Namibia is acceding to independence renders all the more complex the future battles to be waged by the Namibian people and its Government as they seek through dialogue to secure territorial integrity and to succeed in economic and social development. Cote d'Ivoire joins in the appeal launched by the President of the Security Council, in keeping with resolution 643 (1989) of 31 October 1989, for generous material and technical support for the Namibian people, which we are convinced is prepared to mobilize, alongside other peoples, to face and cope with new non-military threats to peace: unemployment, drugs, the absence of development, third-world indebtedness and destruction of the environment.

The admission of the Republic of the Namibia will confirm - there can no be doubt about this - one of the fundamental principles of the United Nations, universality.

With impatience and much hope, we await the admission of the 160th Member of our Organization.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Cote d'Ivoire for the kind words he addressed to me and my country.

Mr. PICKERING (United States of America): I would first like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council and to assure you that we look forward to working closely with you this month. I would in addition like to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Abdalla Saleh Al-Ashtal of Democratic Yemen, for his enormous contributions to our work last month, when he was President of the Council.

The United States is especially pleased and proud to support Namibia's application for membership in the United Nations. The matter we are discussing today is not just a routine formality but the outcome of 14 years of continuing and determined effort in which we played a role as a deeply engaged participant. Beginning with the formation of the Contact Group in 1976, we joined with others in working to create the agreements that ultimately led to the resolution of the conflict in Namibia. Two Americans, a diplomat and a military officer, gave their lives in that effort.

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

As we observe how the Namibian people are preparing for their future, we are sure that our efforts were worth while. We are gratified to see that the Namibian people have created an excellent constitution, one which ensures them democracy and all of its benefits. It also appears that they will pursue sound, pragmatic economic principles. They have set themselves on a course of social tolerance, openness and forgiveness to heal the wounds of conflict. They will be warmly welcomed by all of us into this Organization, which has had so much to do with their freedom and independence. And we would like in that regard to congratulate the Secretary-General on the manner in which he, his staff, and all other United Nations personnel have acted in this regard.

Having helped bring Namibia to the threshold of the United Nations, we also pledge our continued support to Namibia as it establishes itself in the community of nations.

Namibia's birth has been protracted and difficult, but it now appears that the star under which it comes into the world shines brightly. We have every hope for Namibia's successful future.

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

Mr. BLANC (France) (interpretation from French): First of all, Sir, I should like to extend my delegation's and my own congratulations to you on Ethiopia's accession to the presidency for this month. We are very happy that Namibia's admission to the United Nations is taking place during the presidency of an African colleague.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Abdalla Saleh Al-Ashtal for having guided our work during the past month.

(Mr. Blanc, France)

Our Council has just unanimously recommended to the General Assembly that it accept Namibia's application for membership of the United Nations which was addressed to the Secretary-General by President Nujoma.

In the view of the French delegation this meeting is of special importance for several reasons. First of all, the admission of a new Member to the United Nations has become a rather rare occurrence; but above all it is because it is Namibia, for whose independence the United Nations has worked so long, that we are about to welcome here among us. And this so long awaited independence has come about after an operation unprecedented in our Organization's history. The guiding principles of the operation had been defined in Security Council resolution 435 (1978). That resolution's implementation, so efficiently ensured by our Secretary-General and his team, was followed very closely by the Security Council from April 1989.

On this solemn occasion our thoughts are turned to the people of Namibia, who have struggled so long for independence. Recently that people have demonstrated their responsibility and maturity, in particular by their massive participation in the November 1989 free and fair elections to choose a constituent assembly. And it was by consensus that that assembly adopted a democratic constitution which is fully in keeping with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

In this connection, my delegation wishes to pay a tribute to the resolve and wisdom demonstrated by President Nujoma.

Accordingly, France warmly supports the application for membership submitted by Namibia. We are especially happy to welcome in our Organization a new State from Africa, a continent with which my country has long had close ties of friendship and co-operation.

(Mr. Blanc, France)

France hopes that Namibia will benefit from the active support of the international community, particularly through the United Nations, as it pursues its objectives in the field of economic and social development. For its part, France will continue to do what it can to help in the attainment of those objectives.

I cannot conclude without paying a tribute to the work done by the Secretary-General and his Special Representative; their contribution was decisive in the successful conclusion of the process of independence and the success of one of the most difficult operations ever undertaken by our Organization.

Lastly, my delegation extends its warmest congratulations and sincerest best wishes for success to the Government and the people of Namibia.

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

Mr. BELONOGOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): First of all, I should like warmly to congratulate an African country a friend of the Soviet Union and you personally, Sir, on acceding to the presidency of the Security Council at this time, which is indeed an historic one for the world community and for Africa. I wish you every success as you discharge your mandate. I should also like to extend thanks to the Permanent Representative of Democratic Yemen, Ambassador Al-Ashtal, for the exemplary manner in which he discharged his mandate as President of the Council in March.

Today's meeting of the Security Council on this item on the admission of the Republic of Namibia to membership of the United Nations is indeed a remarkable one. For this is, indeed, the final link in the chain of the efforts of the world

(Mr. Belonogov, USSR)

community to implement Security Council and General Assembly decisions, and it is an important step in the international political standing of this young State.

On 21 March this year the last page in the colonial history of Africa was turned when Namibian independence was proclaimed and the last bastion of classic colonialism crumbled. General democratic elections were then held in Namibia, as a result of which the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) was given a mandate to govern the country.

This Namibian experience has shown clearly that the most complex problems can be resolved by political means, if the efforts of the parties concerned and of the world community are bound together by a common goal. From that standpoint, the freedom of Namibia is not only the fruit of the heroic efforts made by the people of Namibia; it is also the result of international joint action based on new political thinking.

Namibia's example is convincing proof and evidence of the enhanced effectiveness of the United Nations and its Security Council and of the efforts of the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar.

(Mr. Belongov, USSR)

There is one more important conclusion that we think can be drawn from this: the improvement in international relations makes it possible to work productively on finding settlements to regional conflict situations and breathes new life into the search for compromise solutions based on a balance of interests.

We have all witnessed the inception of far-reaching changes in South Africa. The settlement of the Namibian question offers good prospects for the settlement through national conciliation of the internal conflict in Angola; it also has an influence on Mozambique. What is more - and this may be the most remarkable of all the things that await us in the future - is that we have glimpsed the beginning of the process of the elimination of the system of racial segregation in South Africa. What will be required is a demonstration by all parties of consistency, patience and mutual understanding. The Soviet Union is willing to do all it can to promote this process.

I turn now directly to the item that has brought us all together here today at the table of the Security Council. I take this opportunity to extend my congratulations once again to the people of Namibia on the fulfilment of their age-old dream. The Soviet Union has already declared that it will co-operate with the Government of the free and independent Namibia.

In supporting Namibia's request for membership of the United Nations, we are expressing our belief that this young Republic, which will become the one hundred and sixtieth Member of the Organization, will make a positive contribution to the multifaceted activities of the United Nations.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics for the kind words he addressed to me and my country.

Mr. FULTON (United Kingdom): It is particularly fitting that this meeting of the Security Council should be taking place under your presidency, Sir. Ethiopia was one of the four African founder Members of the United Nations and has

(Mr. Fulton, United Kingdom)

played host for many years to the headquarters of the Organization of African Unity. The resolution we have just adopted is in many ways a milestone in the history of Africa: it is thus doubly appropriate that you should be in the Chair today. I should also like to pay a tribute to your predecessor for the way in which he guided the Council's work in March.

I was very glad to have had the honour to vote, as I have just done, on behalf of the British delegation in favour of the admission of Namibia as a Member of the United Nations. As the Secretary-General has said, the United Nations has had, since its inception, a special responsibility for Namibia. The independence of Namibia is an event of great significance both for southern Africa and for the Organization. It marks the end of the colonial era in Africa and provides a portent for peace and reconciliation in southern Africa. It is also a major triumph for the United Nations. It is right on this occasion to pay a tribute to the Secretary-General and to his Special Representative, Mr. Martti Ahtisaari: in fulfilling their mandate from the Council they have successfully conducted one of the largest United Nations operations ever mounted. Nor should we forget the contributions made to Namibia's transition to independence by others, from all sides of the political divide.

For many years Britain has been deeply involved in efforts to bring Namibia to independence. It is a source of particular satisfaction that this came about through the holding of free and fair elections in fulfilment of the United Nations settlement plan. That plan was presented to the Security Council in 1978 by the Western contact group, of which Britain was a member. It has stood the test of time well. So have the associated understandings negotiated by the Secretary-General and the contact group between 1978 and 1982. I should also like to pay a tribute to the efforts of all those involved in the negotiations that

(Mr. Fulton, United Kingdom)

culminated in the signing of the agreement between Angola, Cuba and South Africa in December 1988, which cleared the way for the implementation of the settlement plan.

The elections in November last year, which took place under United Nations supervision, were a model of the democratic process in action. They were a great credit to the Namibian people and the spirit of reconciliation, which led to agreement on a Constitution more quickly than allowed for in the settlement plan. The Secretary-General has since reported to the Council that the Constitution reflects the Principles for the Constitution for an Independent Namibia adopted in 1982 by all the parties concerned.

The international community must now see to it that the new Republic of Namibia gets the best possible start. In addition to its substantial contribution to the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) - which included finance of some \$27 million, a signals unit, 50 election monitors and a team of fingerprint experts - Britain has made a major contribution to the repatriation effort of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and to the help for Namibia provided by the World Food Programme. On 21 March the British Foreign Secretary announced a bilateral aid package of \$16 million for commitment over three years. We have already responded to requests for help for the new Namibian Government, and are helping in education, the police, fisheries, and public-service reform. We are also providing military training for the new Namibian army. Our involvement will continue. Our bilateral aid will focus on technical co-operation and rehabilitation; we shall also be providing substantial assistance through multilateral channels, including the European Community and the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation.

(Mr. Fulton, United Kingdom)

The Government of Namibia has left the Council in no doubt of its determination to play an active and constructive role on the international scene. We are very glad that Namibia has joined the Commonwealth as its fiftieth member. We strongly support its application for membership of the United Nations and look forward to working closely in the future with the Namibian delegation.

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

Mr. TORNUDD (Finland): May I first express my delegation's warm congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. We pledge our full co-operation to you as you fulfil your responsible duties, and we are confident that your leadership will successfully advance the Council's work during the current month.

I wish also to thank Ambassador Abdalla Saleh Al-Ashtal of Democratic Yemen for the effective way he handled the presidency during the month of March.

It is a rare pleasure nowadays to admit a new Member State to the United Nations. It is an even rarer pleasure when the new State being recommended for membership is a nation for whose freedom and independence the Organization has campaigned for so long and so hard.

Let me take this opportunity to extend Finland's warm congratulations to the people and Government of Namibia on their accession to independence.

(Mr. Tornudd, Finland)

I am sure that Namibia will make a great contribution to the work of the Organization. Many of its constituent parts are already very familiar to Namibians, who know the work of the United Nations at first hand. Successful implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), and the harmony and goodwill displayed by Namibians in drafting a constitution for the new nation embodying constitutional principles that have stood the test of time, augur well for the future of Namibia.

Finland is proud to have lent a hand to Namibians in the course of their long quest for freedom and independence. As a member of the Security Council, as a contributor to the United Nations Transition Assistance Group, and as a member of the United Nations Council for Namibia, we now have the immense satisfaction of witnessing the new nation of Namibia assume its rightful place at this table of nations, the United Nations.

My last words will only be: Welcome, Namibia.

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

Mr. LI LUYE (China) (interpretation from Chinese): At the outset, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I am certain that you will discharge your important duties with distinction. At the same time, I should like to thank Ambassador Al-Ashtal of Democratic Yemen for his successful completion of the Council's heavy work last month.

Today is a day of great joy for us. We all vividly remember that, during the extended period before Namibia became independent, the Security Council met on numerous occasions to deliberate the situation in that country, which was then occupied by colonialist rulers. Today, the Republic of Namibia has become a fact, and we are again gathered here to discuss its application for membership in

(Mr. Li Luye, China)

the United Nations. That has a special significance indeed. The Chinese delegation wishes to express its sincere congratulations to the Namibian people, which has just won its long-awaited independence, and wishes to see Namibia admitted to membership in the United Nations. With one more Member, the United Nations will gain strength with fresh forces in its efforts to maintain world peace, in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter. We are convinced that the Republic of Namibia will contribute both to United Nations affairs and to the cause of human progress.

As the last remaining colony in Africa, Namibia's declaration of independence marks the beginning of an era in which the continent is once and for all liberated from colonial rule. This is a major event of epochal importance and far-reaching impact, from which the international community can draw a great deal of inspiration. In order to win state independence and national liberation, the Namibian people carried out a tenacious struggle over a long period and sustained enormous sacrifices. The people of the entire world hold the Namibian people and their leaders in high regard for their dauntless fighting spirit and bravery. Namibian independence is the result of the protracted struggle of the Namibian people. It is also inseparable from the vigorous support of the African countries - the front-line countries in particular - the United Nations Council for Namibia and the international community as a whole. We would like to express our appreciation to the United Nations Secretary-General and the United Nations Transition Assistance Group for their active endeavour in implementing the Namibian independence plan.

The Chinese Government and people have always deeply sympathized with and firmly supported the Namibian people in its just struggle against colonial domination and for national independence, and never wavered in their conviction that the Namibian people's just cause would triumph in the end. The fact that

(Mr. Li Luye, China)

Namibia established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China immediately after its independence indicates that the profound friendship between the Chinese and Namibian peoples, forged over long years of common struggle, will be further consolidated and developed on a new foundation. Namibian independence has added a new chapter in the annals of African history, and the Namibian people has also entered a new historical period. We are confident that under the leadership of President Nujoma the Government and the people of Namibia will achieve still further successes in their cause of maintaining national independence and building their new-born nation.

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

Mrs. CASTAÑO (Colombia) (interpretation from Spanish): Sir, my delegation is pleased that you have assumed the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. We are especially pleased that an African country should have thus been honoured precisely at the moment we are accepting Namibia's application to become the 160th State Member of the United Nations. Furthermore, we welcome the fact that Ethiopia should now hold the presidency of the Council, for it is a country with which we are bound by close ties of friendship and co-operation, in addition to its being a fellow member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

We are also pleased that Ambassador Tadesse should be the person holding that office. His long career in the public service of his country, and his proven skills as a negotiator and diplomat, guarantee success for the Council's work.

We wish to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Ambassador Al-Ashtal, Permanent Representative of Democratic Yemen, for his exemplary guidance of this body during the difficult month of March.

(Mrs. Castaño, Colombia)

In the majority of cases, the Security Council meets to debate issues of international concern when the peace and security of the world are threatened. Rarely does it have the opportunity to meet for purposes as pleasant as that of celebrating the admission of a State as a new, fully-fledged Member of our Organization.

We are dealing here with a very special case. The United Nations is opening its doors to a State to which it has extended solidarity, effort and work for over 23 years, a State at whose people's side we have stood in its struggles and dreams, and with which we are now climbing the first step leading to the forum of the United Nations.

For over 20 years the Council for Namibia protected the rights and interests of the Namibian people, administered its affairs, and strove to ensure representation for its people by training its future leaders. Above all, the Council for Namibia has helped it in its quest for ways to bring about the withdrawal of South Africa and to achieve independence, freedom and self-determination.

Colombia had the good fortune to be a member of the Council for Namibia, and in that way observed at first hand that historic process of struggle for the freedom of the Namibian people. We are overcome with joy, as all are, but we feel a certain pride in knowing that we have made our own, albeit modest, contribution to our Organization's gigantic endeavour, together with the people of Namibia and the resolute support of brotherly African countries, which led to a happy conclusion on 21 March, when independence was declared.

Today is a day of joy and gratitude for the United Nations. The effort undertaken more than two decades ago by the United Nations is reaching a successful conclusion. This is the time to thank the Secretary-General, who, with dedication, skill and astuteness, guided Namibia's transition. It is the time to recognize the

(Mrs. Castaño, Colombia)

major role played by the Security Council in adopting the resolutions that in turn provided for an end to South Africa's mandate over Namibia, lent legitimacy to the struggle of the Namibian people against South Africa's presence on its territory, and declared illegal the steps taken by the Government of South Africa on behalf of Namibia. Particular mention must be made of Security Council resolution 432 (1978), which declared that the territorial integrity and unity of Namibia had to be assured through the reintegration of Walvis Bay within its territory. We also extend our appreciation to the General Assembly for its steadfast vigilance and support for Namibia's struggle for its independence and freedom.

(Mrs. Castaño, Colombia)

We must pay a special tribute to the heroic people of Namibia who, under the wise leadership of President Sam Nujoma, have been successful in winning and keeping the support and solidarity of the international community because their ideas were on the side of justice. That people, led with dignity, militancy, determination and wisdom by the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), have also enjoyed the resolute backing of fraternal countries throughout Africa.

Lastly, today is a day of happiness for the Security Council. We are meeting to recommend the admission of the Republic of Namibia as the 160th State Member of the United Nations. We are gathered here to salute its arrival in our midst, certain that the same support it won in its struggle for freedom will now be given it to keep intact a strong, independent and sovereign State that will be the master of its own destiny in order to foster the kind of economic and social development that will provide for its people the well-being and happiness they have hitherto been denied.

Welcome, Namibia.

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

Mr. MUNTEANU (Romania): I am very pleased to congratulate you most cordially, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the current month. My delegation trusts that under your able guidance the Council will exercise its high responsibilities in a most satisfactory manner. I also wish to express once more my delegation's high appreciation for the excellent performance of Ambassador Al-Ashtal as President of the Council last month.

The achievement of national independence has always been the most sacred aspiration of any people. At one time or another every nation has had to go through suffering and sacrifice before enjoying the fulfilment of that noble aspiration. The Namibia people are no exception. Their path towards independence

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

was not an easy one. Therefore, when independence came three weeks ago the people of Namibia had every reason to feel proud and happy and to celebrate that great moment in their history. Nor were they alone in celebrating that historic event. High officials from all over the world gathered in Windhoek on 21 March to share the feelings of fulfilment of the Namibian people.

Today, we have just witnessed in the Council another important event in the life of the newly independent nation of Namibia. In the resolution just adopted the Security Council, acting on the request of the President of the Republic of Namibia, recommends the admission of that country to membership of the United Nations.

For all of us, the Namibian request for United Nations membership immediately after its proclamation of independence is fully understandable. In no other previous instance has the United Nations been so deeply involved in the birth of a nation. In fact, for almost a quarter of a century the world Organization fully identified itself with the struggle of the Namibian people for independence. In that connection I wish to pay the warmest tribute to the Secretary-General for his outstanding contribution to the successful outcome of a most complex and difficult process, one that eventually led to Namibian independence.

Romania, for which the idea of national independence has always been a way of existence, has firmly sided from the very outset, together with many other countries, with all United Nations efforts to assist the Namibian people to achieve their goals. Thus, my country has been directly associated from the beginning with the activities of the United Nations Council for Namibia, which played a prominent role in bringing about the situation that made the Windhoek celebrations of 21 March and today's meeting of the Council possible.

My country also had the privilege of being one of the sponsors of Security Council resolution 385 (1976), which called for free elections under the

(Mr. Munteanu, Romania)

supervision and control of the United Nations as a means of enabling the people of Namibia freely to determine their own future. The message from the President of the Provisional Council of National Unity, Ion Iliescu, to the President of the Republic of Namibia, Sam Nujoma, on the day of the country's independence expressed the satisfaction of the Romanian people at the happy outcome of the long struggle of the Namibian people against colonial rule and apartheid and for national dignity and democracy.

The emergence of an independent Namibia is a historic and crucial event for the Namibian people, as well as for Africa and the whole world, and a major contribution to the ideals of peace, understanding and co-operation among all nations. As a country which has firmly embarked upon the path of a genuinely democratic development based on individual freedom, political pluralism and the widest possible co-operation with all nations, Romania is convinced that its relations with Namibia, which have been raised to the ambassadorial diplomatic level and are based on a long tradition of sympathy and mutual solidarity, will further develop to the benefit of both nations.

Mr. President, my delegation fully shares the sentiments of happiness and the congratulations and support you conveyed on behalf of the Council to the Government and the people of Namibia on this auspicious occasion.

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

Mr. FORTIER (Canada): Allow me first to congratulate Ethiopia on having assumed the presidency of the Council for the month of April. My delegation is very pleased indeed to see you, Sir, at the head of our table at this important and crucial time. It is also my pleasant duty to pay a tribute to our colleague, Ambassador Abdalla Saleh Al-Ashtal of Democratic Yemen, for the exemplary manner with which he presided over our deliberations during the very busy month of March.

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

Canada takes special pleasure in supporting this historic resolution today. It was during our previous term on the Council that we had the honour of participating in the negotiations which led to the adoption of the United Nations settlement plan for Namibia. Throughout the intervening years we remained fully committed to the implementation of the plan. We therefore take great satisfaction in preparing to welcome Namibia into the United Nations. The road to nationhood has been long and difficult, and the Namibian people must be warmly applauded for their courage and their commitment. The dignity and the determination with which they have embraced democracy is an inspiration to all who aspire to such freedom as well as to those who take such liberties for granted. In exemplary fashion their elected representatives worked assiduously and with common purpose to adopt a model constitution that entrenches and guarantees a full range of human rights. It is indeed an auspicious debut for the world's youngest nation, and we welcome the example they have set.

We all have good reason to be proud, for Namibian independence is a victory of the entire international community. The implementation of the Namibian settlement plan, involving two-thirds of the United Nations membership, has been a truly international effort. The Secretary-General, his Special Representative Martti Ahtisaari, and all those who served with such distinction in the United Nations Transition Assistance Group must be congratulated for the outstanding success with which they have fulfilled their mandate and the trust placed in them by the Namibian people and the Member States of the United Nations.

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

Some 700 Canadians participated in UNTAG as military personnel, civilian police and electoral experts and supervisors. Many more supported the struggle of the Namibian people through their work with churches and non-governmental organizations.

Political independence is, however, but the first step. As Namibia embarks upon the road of nationhood it will look to the continued support and goodwill of the international community to develop its economic and social infrastructure and to ensure that its citizens enjoy the rights and freedoms for which they have struggled so valiantly.

I am therefore pleased to inform the Council that in the current year Canada will provide more than \$4 million in development assistance to Namibia through the United Nations, the Commonwealth and Canadian non-governmental organizations. The initial projects include a major effort on immunization with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), police training and drought relief. Additional projects will be developed in response to the United Nations Development Programme donors' conference in June.

In closing, I want to express Canada's pleasure and honour in having had the opportunity to work so closely with both present and past members of the Council, the international community and the people of Namibia in realizing this happy event. The resolution we have adopted today is the culmination of decades of dedicated work by the Namibian people and the international community. It also stands as a powerful reaffirmation of the fundamental principles and purposes of the United Nations in promoting the peaceful resolution of threats to international peace and security through international dialogue and common action.

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

Mr. ALANCON DE QUESADA (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish to say first, Sir, that my delegation is very pleased to see you presiding over our work. We are convinced that, with the benefit of your experience and skill, the Security Council will fully live up to its responsibilities this month. We are particularly pleased to see the representative of Ethiopia, a country so closely involved in African independence and unity, presiding over a meeting with such significance in the overall struggle against colonialism.

I also wish to take this opportunity to carry out a pleasant duty - that of paying a special tribute to Ambassador Al-Ashtal for the very effective way in which he guided the Council's work during March.

The Council has just recommended the admission of Namibia as a new Member of our Organization, a decision that comes at the beginning of the Decade that the Organization has proclaimed as the one in which we shall see the total elimination of colonialism in all its forms and manifestations. We are confident that, as in the case of Namibia, after such a long and selfless struggle, those peoples that still cannot exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence will one day, sooner rather than later, be able to do so.

As previous speakers have said, this is the time to express recognition of, and to congratulate, first, our Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, and his associates, such as Mr. Goulding, and the others at Headquarters who day after day sought the implementation of resolution 435 (1978), and particularly Mr. Antisaari, Mr. Legwaila and General Prem Chand, whom we are very pleased to see in this Chamber. They managed to do a complex and very difficult job on the ground in ensuring that the plan adopted by the Council in resolution 435 (1978) was fully and successfully implemented. Other United Nations bodies, particularly the

(Mr. Alarcon de Quesada, Cuba)

United Nations Council for Namibia and the Special Committee responsible for implementing General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, over which you, Sir, so effectively preside, also deserve our recognition. For long years they took care of the legitimate interests of the Namibian people and sought to create the conditions in which that people might finally fulfil its main national aspiration - independence.

However, we also feel that we should recognize the main factor that has brought us to this happy moment: the selfless liberation struggle waged for so many years by the Namibian people, headed by the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). In that struggle SWAPO enjoyed the active solidarity and backing of Africa, particularly the front-line States, all the members of the Non-Aligned Movement and all those others around the world who have struggled to put an end to colonialism. Throughout that struggle Cuba, its people and Government have had the most solid fraternal ties with SWAPO, which we gave our fullest material, diplomatic and moral support.

We believe that that international solidarity, particularly that of the People's Republic of Angola, given to the SWAPO combatants for more than a decade, will always head the list whenever recognition is given to events in the long process leading to Namibia's independence. Angolans, Namibians and Cubans struggling together forged indestructible ties of friendship and solidarity, confirmed in the trenches at Cuito Cuanavale and the battles in south-west Angola.

(Mr. Alarcon de Quesada, Cuba)

But if we knew how to fight with determination on the battlefield, we also knew how to conduct ourselves in the more constructive arena of consistent, patient diplomatic effort. So it was that we regarded the signing of the December 1988 agreements, first in Brazzaville and later in New York, and the establishment of the joint Commission, made up of the People's Republic of Angola, the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Cuba, as an undeniable contribution to that years-long diplomatic effort. Despite the major differences that separated the countries making up the Commission, we felt that constructive joint action was taken, action that contributed significantly to the implementation of, in particular, the plan adopted by the Council at the beginning of April last year. We are especially pleased that the whole process of combat and negotiation has at last borne fruit with the very auspicious occasion that brings us together today.

(Mr. Alarcon de Quesada, Cuba)

On 21 March we hailed the coming to independence of a new State, and we established full diplomatic ties between our two Governments. We hope and expect, to the extent of our potential, to be able to contribute to the process the Namibian people is now beginning, the process of rebuilding, of economic construction, of the building of a new life, drawing on a colonial experience that lasted too long and was too bitter.

In this connection the Security Council continues to have a responsibility we cannot dodge. The international community in general, and the Council in particular, must see to it not only that appropriate co-operation is given the Namibian people but also that everything possible is done to ensure that Namibia's sovereignty, national independence and territorial integrity are guaranteed, including the reincorporation into its territory of Walvis Bay, as stipulated in a resolution adopted unanimously by this Council, resolution 432 (1978). Like all other members of the Security Council, we extend a cordial welcome to the new Member State, Namibia, and we thank you, Mr. President, for the masterful way in which you are guiding our deliberations.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Cuba for the kind words he addressed to me and my country.

The next speaker is the representative of Brazil, who wishes to make a statement on behalf of the States of the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. BATISTA (Brazil): Mr. President, allow me to start by extending to you our appreciation for giving us the opportunity to participate in this debate on behalf of the States of the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic. May I also congratulate you warmly on your assumption of the presidency of the

(Mr. Batista, Brazil)

Security Council for the month of April and on the skill with which you have guided the Council's work.

Our thanks also go to Ambassador Al-Ashtal of Democratic Yemen for his efficient handling of the Council's affairs in the month of March.

I have the great honour and privilege to speak at this meeting of the Security Council especially convened to consider the application of Namibia to become a Member of the United Nations, on which the Council has taken the historic decision unanimously to recommend its acceptance to the General Assembly.

I have been asked, in my capacity as Co-ordinator of the 22 States of West Africa and South America members of the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic, to express our great satisfaction and pride at seeing Namibia occupying its rightful place in the community of nations. Namibia's independence is a goal that has in fact been with us for several decades as a fundamental case for the application of the principle of self-determination worthy of our utmost attention and care. The long and overdue process of its accession to statehood has to a great extent been the result of common resolve and of actions taken by the United Nations either through the General Assembly or this body in support of the Namibian people's unswerving and heroic determination to become free. The independence of Namibia certainly took much longer than we desired or expected. It has been completed, however, in a peaceful, democratic and orderly way, in a manner which augurs well for its future as a peace-loving Member of this Organization.

We, the 22 States of the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic, feel particularly close to Namibia, a country which we have always considered a natural and integral part of the zone we decided to constitute with the blessing of the General Assembly in 1986. We are extremely pleased to witness the coming into reality of the expressions of hope we then manifested that representatives of a

(Mr. Batista, Brazil)

free and independent Namibia would be able to join us in the community of South Atlantic nations.

The States of the Zone of Peace and Co-operation of the South Atlantic will be meeting again in Nigeria next June to evaluate the implementation of the objectives we set for ourselves at our first meeting, in Rio de Janeiro in July 1988. We very much hope that Namibia will be in a position to be present at that meeting in Nigeria as one of the first demonstrations of its ability to exercise to the full the recently acquired prerogatives of statehood.

I should like to place on record on this occasion the congratulations of the States of the Zone to the Secretary-General for the skilful and able manner in which he discharged his responsibilities in the course of the independence process in Namibia. The Security Council, as ultimately responsible for this process, is also deserving of praise for its consistent action on behalf of the Namibian people's quest for independence.

Lastly, we should be remiss if we failed also to thank those Members of the United Nations which made a special contribution to the attainment of this lofty goal through their participation in the work of the United Nations Council for Namibia as well as in the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG).

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

The next speaker is the representative of South Africa. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. SHEARAR (South Africa): Mr. President, it is indeed appropriate that a representative of Africa should preside over the Security Council at the time of Namibia's application for membership of the United Nations. May I congratulate you on the way in which you have carried out your duties as President and wish you success during the remaining term of your presidency.

(Mr. Shearar, South Africa)

It gives me great pleasure to join those delegations that have spoken and will speak today to welcome Namibia's application to become the 160th Member of the United Nations. It is with a great sense of achievement that the South African Government has participated in the long and arduous process that has enabled the new State to be born amid circumstances of considerable promise.

There are many who deserve thanks and appreciation for their sacrifices and the work they have done to promote the independence process of Namibia and to make it a reality, who have chiselled away at this unyielding rock in order ultimately to make peace a reality. In the process many of them gave their lives. They are not and shall not be forgotten.

When he spoke in the South African Parliament on 14 and 15 March 1990, during the second reading debate on the Bill to recognise the independence of Namibia, which was signed into law by the South African State President, Mr. F. W. de Klerk, on 20 March, the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. R. F. Botha, reminded his audience:

"Those who are familiar with the complexities of the Namibian dispute would agree with me that all the debates, confrontations and conflicts surrounding this dispute did not in the end bring about a solution to the problem. The solution came about when we heeded the instruction in the Charter of the United Nations which requires that disputes be settled peacefully."

(Mr. Shearer, South Africa)

He added:

"It is the earnest hope of the South African Government that this fundamental concept - the commitment to peaceful negotiation - will form the basis for resolving other conflicts in southern Africa and beyond.

"I would like to express the hope that what has happened in Namibia will serve as an encouragement in the field of negotiations to all the leaders in southern Africa to resolve the problems of the region in a peaceful manner."

The international dispute about the administration of the Territory is behind us. Namibia is now a free, independent sovereign State which has earned the recognition and good wishes of the nations of the world and those of southern Africa, the sub-continent of which both it and South Africa are an integral part, in particular.

Progressive phases of internal self-determination have given the people of Namibia vital experience in self-government at various levels. Over the years, with the extensive concrete assistance and encouragement of South Africa, they have worked together to produce an enviable infrastructure which will equip the new country for the challenges that lie ahead in terms of economic development, towards a quality of life to which the people naturally aspire.

We join the international community in the hope that the future of this vast and beautiful land will be one of peace, security and prosperity for all its people. My Government once again wishes to make a serious appeal to that community to recognize the need for tangible assistance to be provided to Namibia as it joins the community of nations. Now is the time for a commitment from the United Nations and the international community.

(Mr. Shearar, South Africa)

South Africa has during the protracted negotiations over the past years derived particular satisfaction from being able - within the framework of the new circumstances created by the tripartite discussions with Angola and Cuba and the constructive role of not only the United States of America and the Soviet Union but also several African Heads of State - to help initiate the final implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978). Close co-operation with them and, thereafter, with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and with the Force Commander of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), General Prem Chand, has demonstrated that where the political will exists negotiated solutions can be found to seemingly intractable problems.

In particular, I would recall the remarks of the South African Foreign Minister on 15 March 1990:

"At last, after years of tussling with each other, I also want to convey my sincere gratitude to Mr. Martti Ahtisaari, the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative, who, being between the devil and the deep blue sea, also brought his ship safely to shore. I also thank Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar. We were sometimes at serious loggerheads with one another, but now that our troubles are over we may thank each other."

Many of us have been touched in some way by the long process which has led Namibia to this day. Few have been so deeply involved for so long as the man who is now South African Foreign Minister, or given so much of themselves as he in his pursuit over 30 years of a fair solution to the aspirations of all the Namibian people. I would therefore close my statement with a reflection of his thoughts as he looked back over the past, last month:

(Mr. Sheerar, South Africa)

"They say that the Skeleton Coast was not so much given that name owing to its God-forsaken and inhospitable appearance. Inch by inch, the giant sand dunes are continually being moved by the wind. Concealed skeletons are uncovered and covered up again by the wind - hence the name Skeleton Coast. In this way, all the footprints of everyone who has ever walked there are swept away. To all my colleagues who have walked with me through the Namib: Your footprints of friendship will never be swept away, even after our skeletons have come to rest on the Skeleton Coast."

The people of South Africa wish the Government and people of Namibia prosperity, happiness and stability. We look forward to a constructive and mutually rewarding relationship with Namibia and with all the sovereign States in the southern African region.

The PRESIDENT: The next speaker is Mr. Mustafa Aksin, Vice-President of the United Nations Council for Namibia, to whom the Council has extended an invitation under rule 39 of the provisional rules of procedure. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. AKSIN (Turkey), Vice-President of the United Nations Council for Namibia: Let me at the outset, Sir, express to you our deep sense of satisfaction at your presidency of the Security Council at this important time. Your nation's commitment to the principles of freedom, justice and equality needs no confirmation. Your country has been involved intimately with the resurgence of Africa, and you personally, Mr. President, are the able and articulate Chairman of the Special Committee on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Namibia's freedom has considerably lightened the rigours of your responsibilities, even as it has reflected the efficacy of your efforts.

(Mr. Aksin, Vice-President, United Nations Council for Namibia)

We also express our appreciation to Ambassador Al-Ashtal of Democratic Yemen for the outstanding way in which he conducted the presidency of the Council last month.

For the United Nations Council for Namibia this is a moment of both pride and humility. The trust placed in us by the international community 23 years ago stands fulfilled. We did not achieve this alone: our efforts were inspired and invigorated by the solidarity the world community displayed on this critical issue. Above all, the vision, grit and determination of the Namibian people themselves gave us direction.

The United Nations Council for Namibia provided a unique instance of international trusteeship. Its creation formalized a number of tenets and principles the Organization was built upon. Namibia offered a dramatic and tangible possibility to make those principles work in a precise, defined instance. Universal acknowledgement of staked interest in Namibia's future underscored collective responsibility. Programmes of international assistance and co-operation compelled the realization of the indivisibility of man. The care and diligence with which the often rocky and always arduous road to independence was negotiated made manifest the essentiality of statesmanship, grace and reconciliation in the conduct of international relations.

On this last aspect, the role of the Security Council has been of essential value. Only last week, at one of its special plenary meetings in Windhoek, the United Nations Council for Namibia declared that the Security Council had

"... ensured the critical implementation of its resolution 435 (1978) by the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) for Namibia and its completion under the guidance of the Secretary-General."

(Mr. Aksin, Vice-President, United Nations Council for Namibia)

It went on to assert that:

"... the fulfilment of this mandate is a tribute to the strength, resilience and capacity of the world body."

The Declaration of the Special Meeting underscored the sharing by the United Nations Council for Namibia of

"... the commitment of the world community that independent Namibia be assured of complete territorial integrity, security of frontiers, sovereignty over its resources as well as unhindered and equal opportunity for its citizens to realize their full human potential."

It reflected the pride of the Council at the assistance it had been able to extend to the Namibian people throughout its existence and,

"... While expressing deep appreciation for the generosity extended by freedom-loving peoples",

went on to call upon all

"... to address with equal fervour and concern the immense challenges facing the new nation."

(Mr. Aksin, Vice-President, United Nations Council for Namibia)

The United Nations Council for Namibia has returned from Windhoek with a sense of joy and fulfilment. The sense of diligence and purpose with which the Namibian nation, under the leadership of its popular and democratically elected Government, has embarked on the journey of self-rule has moved us all. Trust, vision and hope are the hallmarks of this proud people. We are grateful for the opportunity we have had to share their voyage. We look forward to our new journey together, as fellow Member States of this comity of nations. In the concluding words of the Windhoek Declaration of the Council for Namibia:

"Today we celebrate the dawn of a new era and welcome the rise of a new star on the African continent. The Namibian people have finally regained liberty and are now working towards the establishment of an equal and just society.

"Namibia, we salute you."

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Vice-President of the United Nations Council for Namibia for the kind words he addressed to me and my country.

The next speaker is the representative of Mali, who wishes to make a statement in his capacity as Chairman of the Group of African States for the month of April. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. DIAKITE (Mali) (interpretation from French): As Chairman of the Group of African States for the month of April, I extend our warm congratulations to you, Sir, on your accession to the presidency of the Security Council, and thank you sincerely for the opportunity you have given me to participate in this important consideration of the question of Namibia's admission to membership of the United Nations.

(Mr. Diakite, Mali)

Africa is proud to see a distinguished son of Ethiopia presiding over the Security Council at a crucial moment in the history of our continent. Your country has spared no effort with a view to speeding up the process of the complete decolonization of Africa. During the long colonial night, Ethiopia's material, financial and diplomatic assistance to the colonial countries and peoples of Africa was never lacking. For example, it will be recalled that in 1960 Ethiopia, together with Liberia, initiated proceedings at the International Court of Justice against South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia. And, finally, I extend to you, Mr. President, our whole-hearted thanks for your personal commitment to the struggle waged by oppressed peoples to free themselves from the colonial yoke. The members of the Special Committee on decolonization - that important body which you have presided over so successfully for many years - have been able to appreciate your courage and your resolve.

I also wish, through you, Sir, to congratulate the Ambassador of Democratic Yemen on the remarkable way in which he presided over the Council last month.

On 21 March the Namibian people celebrated with joy and elation their country's accession to independence. All of Africa saluted that event, and many African Heads of State went to Windhoek to pay a tribute to the courage of a people that had made such enormous sacrifices to put an end to South Africa's illegal colonial occupation. Namibia's independence is the result of the armed struggle waged by the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) to restore dignity, freedom and equality to its country. The blood of the martyrs has not flowed in vain, for today the people of Namibia are the sole master of their fate.

The road to Namibian independence was a long, difficult and arduous road. During the many years of struggle the Organization of African Unity, the front-line States and the United Nations supported the cause of the Namibian people with

(Mr. Diakite, Mali)

determination. Here I should like to pay a heartfelt tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, whose perseverance and courage made possible the implementation of Security Council 435 (1978). Africa salutes also all the States Members of the United Nations that, for these long years, made their contribution to Namibia's liberation.

Namibia's accession to independence has not put a miraculous end to the suffering of the Namibian people. The young nation will for a long time bear the wounds inflicted by apartheid and colonialism. To remedy the situation it will be necessary to create jobs, to improve social and economic conditions, to build schools, health centres, housing. Also, in the interest of the Namibian people, agriculture, mining and fishing will have to regain their importance. We believe that the international community, given its historical responsibility for the country, should provide Namibia with sufficient assistance to enable it to overcome the difficulties inherited from the long period of colonial exploitation and hence to set forth on the path to economic liberation.

The Security Council, in keeping with chapter X of its provisional rules of procedure, has just recommended that the young State of Namibia be admitted to membership of the United Nations. So far as the States Members of the Organization are concerned, there could be no objection to this admission, because the applicant is, if I may say so, "the child of the United Nations". Indeed, Namibia was under United Nations administration for over 40 years. That responsibility came to an end only on 21 March 1990, when the United Nations Secretary-General administered the oath to Mr. Sam Nujoma, the first President of the Republic of Namibia. In conferring upon Namibia legal personality at the international level, the United Nations believed that the State of Namibia was in a position to shoulder its international responsibilities as a full-fledged Member of our Organization.

That is the point of view of Africa; it is also the point of view of Namibia.

(Mr. Diakite, Mali)

On behalf of the African Group, I thank the Security Council for unanimously recommending approval of Namibia's application for admission to membership of the United Nations.

Given Namibia's glorious past and its people's legendary wisdom, we are convinced that the new State will make a real contribution to the United Nations.

In conclusion, I urge the international community strongly to support the territorial integrity and indivisibility of Namibia; Walvis Bay and the offshore islands are indeed an integral part of the territory of Namibia.

Africa will, as in the past, spare no effort to ensure that Namibia will be able to cope with this new situation.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Mali for the kind words he addressed to me and my country.

As there are no other names on the list of speakers, I should now like, in my capacity as representative of Ethiopia, to make a statement on this solemn occasion when the Council has recommended that the Republic of Namibia be admitted to membership of the United Nations.

On rare occasions such as the one afforded us today the Security Council discharges the pleasant duty of acceding to requests for membership by newly emerging States. None the less, I submit that the request which the Council has just considered is unique in every sense of the word.

(The President)

It is unique not only because it marks the culmination of the long and arduous struggle of a people for freedom, justice and independence, but also because it is the end of a saga involving a trust betrayed and a process in which numerous resolutions were violated and few upheld. It is a unique occasion because it concerns an ex-colonial Territory over which the United Nations had assumed direct juridical responsibility. It is unique because it pertains to a newly born nation in whose emergence the United Nations has played the significant role of midwife.

For my own country, Ethiopia - which, along with the sisterly African Republic of Liberia, was in the forefront of taking the historic step of bringing the Namibia question to the International Court of Justice - the occasion is one that evokes emotions of all varieties. That this same country should, by a pleasant coincidence of history, be presiding over the deliberations of the Council focussing on the admission of Namibia, is a matter of great satisfaction to me personally and to the country I have the honour to represent.

As many of the previous speakers have mentioned, this happy occasion did not come about without human and material sacrifices associated with the kind of protracted armed struggle which the heroic people of Namibia had to wage under the leadership of its vanguard movement, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). Without rancour or ill-feeling towards those in the Territory who inflicted so much on the people of Namibia - whose patience and tenacity is well known even to the most disinterested observer - we pay well-deserved homage to all the sons and daughters of that land who have contributed to the struggle for independence. Indeed, we pay a tribute to all of Namibia's fallen heroes and to those who have lived to capture the commanding heights of independence and to witness this historic outcome.

(The President)

Those of us who had the pleasant opportunity to observe the election process in Namibia also know that the Namibian people was willing to live and let live, to forgive and reconcile even with those who were not on its side at its moment of trial and tribulation. Indeed, it is that same degree of maturity and wisdom that this great people continues to demonstrate under the able and, I might add, tested leadership of President Sam Nujoma. The world was witness to his astute sense of political judgment when the new Government in Windhoek very carefully and judiciously chose its cabinet members, ensuring the democratic participation of all the people of Namibia in the governance of their beloved country. It is therefore our view that the political infrastructure for an independent and sovereign Namibia is well in place.

On this solemn occasion, I should like to place on record our appreciation to the United Nations Council for Namibia for its perseverance in the fulfillment of an important task. Likewise, we would like to congratulate the entire team of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), under the brilliant stewardship of the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, who had to overcome numerous difficulties in the delicate mission of ensuring the smooth conduct of free and fair elections in that country.

As the Council is well aware, Namibia is a generously endowed country headed by a democratically constituted Government. Indeed, we are happy to note that the new Government is already asserting the country's sovereignty over its marine resources. None the less, we also know that the newly independent State must, as a matter of necessity, grapple with the exigencies of a State, and that the struggle the new Republic will have to wage on the economic and developmental front will be just as challenging. It therefore behooves the international community to render all material and political support to Namibia, with a view to enabling it to become increasingly viable and preserve its unity as well as its territorial integrity.

(The President)

In welcoming the Republic of Namibia to the assembly of free nations, Ethiopia is fully aware of Namibia's potential contributions to the maintenance of peace and security within its own region and, indeed, to the furtherance of the objectives laid down in the Charter of the United Nations. My country, therefore, is delighted to have supported the application of Namibia for membership in the Organization. We are equally confident that the General Assembly will unanimously admit the Republic of Namibia to membership of this growing family of nations.

I now resume my function as President of the Security Council.

I note that the list of speakers for this item has been exhausted. I take it that the Council has concluded its consideration of the matter before it.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.

