

UNITED NATIONS

Press Section
Office of Public Information
United Nations, N.Y.

(FOR USE OF INFORMATION MEDIA -- NOT AN OFFICIAL RECORD)

Special Committee of 24
on Implementation of Declaration
on Granting Independence
871st Meeting (PM)

Press Release GA/COL/1292
16 May 1972

SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF 24 ON DECOLONIZATION BEGINS CONSIDERATION
OF IMPLEMENTATION OF DECLARATION BY SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

The Special Committee of 24 on Decolonization*, at its meeting this afternoon, began consideration of the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations, and heard a statement by the representative of Czechoslovakia.

The Chairman, Salim Ahmed Salim (United Republic of Tanzania), formally welcomed the new United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Decolonization, Tang Ming-Chao, who attended the meeting of the Committee for the first time.

Also at this afternoon's meeting, the Committee decided that Bulgaria and Indonesia would represent it at the International Conference on Namibia, scheduled to meet in Brussels from 26 to 28 May. The Secretary of the Committee, Thomas Tanaka, stated that travel and subsistence costs of the two members would involve an expenditure of \$1,600.

On another invitation, from the World Peace Council for the Committee to send a delegation to a conference on racism on 30 and 31 May in Cologne, Federal Republic of Germany, the Committee decided that Syria and the Philippines, who will represent the Special Committee on Apartheid, should inform it of the deliberations at the conference. The Committee took this action following consent by the Apartheid Committee, and because of its own heavy schedule.

The Committee will next meet at 3 p.m. on 17 May.

(more)

* Members of the Committee are: Afghanistan, Bulgaria, China, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ivory Coast, Mali, Sierra Leone, Sweden, Syria, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, USSR, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela and Yugoslavia.

Report of Secretary-General

On the role of the specialized agencies on implementation of the Declaration on decolonization, the Committee has before it a report of the Secretary-General (document A/8647) containing replies on this subject from 22 specialized agencies and international institutions.

At its twenty-sixth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 2874 (XXVI) of 20 December 1971 concerning implementation of the Declaration on decolonization by the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations. Under paragraph 13 of that resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General: "(a) To prepare for submission to the relevant bodies concerned with related aspects of the present item, with the assistance of the specialized agencies and other organizations within the United Nations system, a report on the action taken since the circulation of his comprehensive report (document A/8314 and Add. 1-6) or envisaged by those organizations in implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions, including the present resolution; (b) To continue to assist the specialized agencies and other organizations within the United Nations system in working out appropriate measures for implementing the present resolution and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session."

In identical letters dated 24 January 1972, the Secretary-General transmitted the text of the resolution to the executive heads of 22 specialized agencies and international institutions forming part of or associated with the United Nations and invited them to submit the information requested for inclusion in the report referred to in paragraph 13 (a) of the above resolution.

The report before the Special Committee of 24 reproduces substantive portions of the replies received by the Secretary-General. These replies are as far as possible organized under following broad headings:

1. Provision of assistance to refugees from the colonial Territories, including assistance to the Governments concerned, in the preparation and execution of projects beneficial to these refugees, and introduction of the greatest possible measures of flexibility in the relevant procedures;
2. Provision of assistance, with the active co-operation of OAU and, through it, of the national liberation movements, to the peoples of Southern Rhodesia, Namibia and Territories under Portuguese administration, including in particular the populations in the liberated areas of those Territories; and
3. Discontinuance of all collaboration with the withholding of financial, economic, technical and other assistance from the illegal regime in Southern Rhodesia and with the Governments of Portugal and South Africa.

(more)

New Under-Secretary-General

At the beginning of this afternoon's meeting, the Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, welcomed the new United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Decolonization, Tang Ming Chao.

Mr. Salim said that Mr. Tang's presence at the meeting symbolized the beginning of a new era. Mr. Tang was a national of a country which was committed to serving the best interests of oppressed people wherever they might be. He had had the pleasure of working with Mr. Tang in a different capacity, and he was aware of Mr. Tang's devotion.

The Chairman added he was sure that Mr. Tang would continue in the tradition of his "distinguished predecessor", Issoufou S. Djermakoye. In Mr. Tang, the Committee had an Under-Secretary-General who would serve the interests of the United Nations, and of decolonization.

Mr. Tang, responding, thanked the Chairman, and said he was honoured to be present at the meeting. He would endeavour to do his best to discharge the tasks assigned to him, and that he would put all the resources of his Department at the disposal of the Committee.

The Committee, he said, had accomplished "a great deal", and he had no doubt that, under its Chairman, the Committee would continue to discharge the duties assigned to it by the United Nations.

He assured the members that his Department was always ready to provide service and to give its full support and co-operation.

Statement by Tunisia

RACHID DRISS (Tunisia) extended greetings to the new Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs and Decolonization upon his appointment.

In his view, the Committee had undertaken a very important task. A very important on-the-spot visit had been made when the Special Mission of the Committee had visited and participated in the life of the freedom fighters in the liberated areas of Guinea (Bissau).

That visit, he observed, was being contested in the mass media.

He specifically wished to call attention to the desires of the people and the liberation efforts in the territory under Portuguese domination. It was time, he said, to remove the contradictions and time for United Nations delegation to go there officially. Portugal, on the other hand, must prove that all of Guinea (Bissau) was under its domination.

(more)

The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee would take the statement of the Tunisian representative into consideration. Speaking personally, he said, only people in Lisbon now believed "the lies and fabrications" put forward by Portugal.

Implementation by Specialized Agencies

The Committee then took up the item, work of specialized agencies on decolonization.

The CHAIRMAN noted that, on 16 March, the Committee had decided to take up the item on its return from its meetings in Africa, and had invited the Chairman, with a view to facilitating relevant provisions of General Assembly resolutions 2874 (XXVI) and 2878 (XXVI) on the question, to undertake necessary consultations with the President of the Economic and Social Council, and to report on the consultations to the Committee.

A meeting of the two officers had been scheduled for Thursday, 18 May, he said.

The Chairman noted that, during the Committee's Africa session, various members had expressed their views on the item, and had exchanged views with representatives of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) concerning assistance to the colonial peoples by the specialized agencies. He said that he would convey to the President of the Economic and Social Council, for the attention of the Council, the views expressed by the members of the Committee on the question.

He went on to say that the "exchange of views" on the question in the Committee at the present stage was only preliminary, to assist him in his consultations with the President of the Council. It was understood, he stated, that at the meetings in August, when the Committee would have received the report of his consultations, the Committee could then embark on the examination of the question "in depth".

He then drew the attention of the Committee to the report of the Secretary-General on the item (document A/8647).

Statement by Czechoslovakia

STANISLAV SUJA (Czechoslovakia) said he considered it an honour to work personally with the Chairman, in "one of the most important organs of the United Nations".

He commended Mr. Djermakoye on the work he had performed regarding Trusteeship and Non-Self-Governing Territories affairs, and congratulated Mr. Tang, his successor, wishing him success in his new assignment.

Turning to the role of the specialized agencies regarding decolonization, he noted that the Committee was not actually just beginning to discuss it. It had touched on the item at its meetings in Africa. At the African session, a number of useful proposals had been advanced, particularly by the liberation movements, on the specific needs of the liberated parts of the Portuguese Territories.

The results of the discussions with the movements and with the OAU should now be analyzed.

He wondered if thought could not be given to how the proposals could be submitted without delay to those for whom they were intended.

Mr. Suja went on to say that the report of the Secretary-General was a timely document, which reflected the state of affairs to-date. The document made clear that some of the specialized agencies were still devoting more time to exchange of views, or consultations, and, at best, were giving "modest" support to the liberation movements. Some agencies had even refused outright to implement General Assembly resolution 2874 (XXVI) and other resolutions on the matter.

He said that Czechoslovakia considered the present discussion on the item a preliminary one. His delegation, in August, would take a specific position, when it had the necessary documentation, such as records of the conferences and assemblies of the specialized agencies and of the Economic and Social Council.

Other Action

The CHAIRMAN "noted with satisfaction" that representatives of various specialized agencies were present at the Committee, despite the fact that the Economic and Social Council was also meeting now.

Regarding the designation of Bulgaria and Indonesia to represent the Committee at the Conference on Namibia in Brussels, the Chairman said that the Deputy Permanent Representative of Bulgaria and the Permanent Representative of Indonesia had agreed to participate in the mission.

BARAKAT AHMAD (India), KOFFI KOUAME (Ivory Coast) and SATYA N. NANDAN (Fiji) said that, while they supported the composition of the mission, they would like to record that their delegations were not consulted on the choice.

The CHAIRMAN apologized to them, and explained the special circumstances that might have accounted for the omission.

MOHAMAD SIDIK (Indonesia), on behalf of his delegation, thanked the Committee, and said that, along with Bulgaria, it would try to give the Committee the best representation. His delegation would welcome any ideas or suggestions by members of the Committee.