COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Forty-fourth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 10th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva on Monday, 8 February 1988, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. SENE (Senegal)

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The right of peoples to self-determination and its application to peoples under colonial or alien domination or foreign occupation (continued)

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Any corrections to the records of the public meetings of the Commission at this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.
The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

The Right of Peoples to Self-Determination and Its Application to Peoples Under Colonial or Alien Domination or Foreign Occupation (agenda item 9) (continued) (E/CN.4/1988/13, 14, 41; E/CN.4/1988/NG0/10, 17, 19; A/42/616-S/19174, A/43/66-S/19381)

1. Mr. STRUYE (Belgium) said that article 1 of both of the International Covenants on Human Rights was a reminder that the right to self-determination had much broader implications than the mere fact of not being subjected to colonial or alien domination. Besides, article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and article 25 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights stated that everyone had the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. Article 25 of the Covenant added that every citizen should have the right "to vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot, guaranteeing the free expression of the will of the electors". His delegation believed that genuine periodic elections were part of the exercise of the right to self-determination, which was a dynamic and continuing process involving the establishment of democratic societies in which the individual ought to be able to make his voice heard in the conduct of political affairs. Belgium therefore regretted that the General Assembly at its forty-second session had been unable to adopt a text on the question of genuine periodic and free elections, thereby missing an opportunity of reaffirming a principle that held out hope for many peoples.

2. The Commission, for its part, should do everything possible to call the international community's attention to denials of the right to self-determination of peoples under colonial or alien domination or foreign occupation. The most flagrant cases were, first of all, apartheid in South Africa, which deprived the majority of the population of its most elementary rights. More than 20 million people in that country were being denied the right to self-determination. Belgium, which had been a member of the United Nations Council for Namibia since 1979, had always been associated with the international community's efforts to obtain rapid independence for the illegally-occupied territory of Namibia. But for 10 years implementation of the independence plan adopted by the Security Council had been held up by the delaying tactics of Pretoria. Belgium was closely following the efforts of the Secretary-General of the United Nations under Security Council resolution 601 (1987) to arrange a ceasefire between South Africa and SWAPO and open the way to implementation of resolution 435 (1978), and it hoped that South Africa's latest objections to self-determination for the people of Namibia could be removed.

3. Belgium had already expressed its views, in connection with agenda item 4, on the violation of human rights in the occupied territories. He would therefore confine himself to repeating that time was running out and that a negotiated settlement must be found to the Middle East conflict. All the parties involved should clearly accept the right to existence and security of all States in the region, including Israel, and the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, with all its implications.

4. The continued Soviet military presence in Afghanistan constituted a flagrant violation of that country's right to self-determination. Belgium supported all endeavours to find a negotiated solution to the conflict, which
had resulted in a million dead and in the flight of nearly one-third of the country's population, creating severe problems for neighbouring countries which had taken in refugees. His delegation was encouraged by the statements of the Soviet authorities concerning the determination of the USSR to leave Afghanistan, but was waiting for them to be put into effect. The Commission's duty would be to call on the Soviet Union to withdraw its occupation forces from Afghanistan.

5. The continued military occupation of Cambodia by Viet Nam constituted a flagrant denial of the right to self-determination of the Cambodian people. Belgium endorsed the principles set out in the declaration adopted by the International Conference on Kampuchea and was a member of the Ad Hoc Committee of the International Conference on Kampuchea which was responsible for helping to find a global political solution that was in conformity with the principles of the Charter and took account of the interests of all the countries concerned. Brussels intended to encourage any initiatives that might lead to the complete withdrawal of foreign troops and the holding of free elections under international supervision.

6. Mr. BRANCO (Sao Tome and Principe) said that his country, independent since 12 July 1975, had been struggling to live up to its commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. However, like many other countries, it was facing great problems in creating the conditions that would enable its citizens to enjoy in the fullest possible way all the rights to which they were entitled. It was nevertheless determined to proceed towards that goal. The right of peoples to self-determination, which was now a fundamental principle governing international relations, had been proclaimed both in the Charter and in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), which contained the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Those instruments had helped peoples subjected to colonial and foreign domination to realize their fundamental right to freedom, independence and development.

7. States such as Sao Tome and Principe, which had come into being through the untiring efforts of the United Nations to implement General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), regarded that right as a question of principle which offered no room for compromise. In various parts of the world, however, there were peoples still living under foreign domination who were victims of policies of repression and institutionalized violence. The mass media today made it impossible to ignore the plight of the peoples of Namibia, South Africa and Palestine who were daily subjected to violence by their oppressors. His Government stood shoulder to shoulder with the peoples of South Africa, Namibia, Palestine and Western Sahara.

8. But there was one people that was not in the headlines every day. That was the people of East Timor which was being subjected to the brutality of the Indonesian forces, including summary executions, torture, imprisonment without trial and the use of civilians as walls in front of Indonesian troops fighting guerrilla forces. Those practices had been reported by bodies such as Amnesty International and Asia Watch, as well as by the churches. In his 1985 report, Mario Carrascalejo, the Governor of East Timor, had stated that 100,000 people had died since 1985 and that the island had 20,000 orphans, 13,000 widows and 8,000 crippled or maimed persons. To anyone who might question the accuracy of those figures he would quote a statement by the Indonesian General L. D. Moerdani in the Jakarta Post: "We are not a colonial
power ... if they come down and behave themselves we will accept them. If they threaten us with weapons we will shoot them ... there are now only about 500 of them. Six to 10 years ago there were an estimated 10,000 such people in East Timor". The same General had recognized that it would take "some time" before the threat of armed rebellion could be totally eliminated. But the Indonesian army had been in East Timor since 1975.

9. Further, it was interesting to note that General Moerdani was the Chairman of the East Timor Development Committee. Indeed the question of the decolonization of East Timor was of concern to the Governments of the five Portuguese-speaking African countries (Angola, Mozambique, Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe), which reaffirmed their solidarity with the struggle of the people of East Timor and appealed to the States Members of the United Nations and to the humanitarian organizations to give every possible help to the people of East Timor to realize their fundamental right to freedom and self-determination.

10. It was encouraging to hear voices raised in concern at the violation of human rights in East Timor: non-governmental organizations, United States' Senators and even Pope John Paul II himself. Moreover, the efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to fulfil the mandate entrusted to him in 1982 by General Assembly resolution 37/30 gave reasons for hope. However, no satisfactory solution would be found unless the people of East Timor was allowed to exercise its fundamental right to self-determination. He urged all members of the Commission not to forget the people of East Timor, for silence was all too often the accomplice of tyranny.

11. Mr. MADAR (Somalia) said that since the right to self-determination was the most fundamental human right, its denial always led to violations of all other rights. Legitimate struggles for self-determination and liberation from colonial domination and foreign intervention, and even occupation, were currently taking place. In many cases - Palestine, Lebanon, the Golan Heights, Afghanistan and Kampuchea - specific United Nations resolutions existed, but they were being flouted. Somalia had always supported and would continue to support the struggle of oppressed peoples for self-determination and independence.

12. The time had come for all States to co-operate in implementing the measures long promoted by the United Nations for the establishment of a just society in South Africa. All political prisoners, including Nelson Mandela, should be released at once and without preconditions. There should be an end to the harassment of schoolchildren, students, clergy and black mineworkers. The Namibian people had suffered enough and the United Nations had been humiliated enough. An end must now be put to the illegal occupation of Namibia by South Africa by the peaceful means available under the Charter.

13. The conflict in the Middle East persisted because the people of Palestine were denied the right to self-determination and nationhood. Somalia believed that there could be no peace in the Middle East without Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, including the Holy City of Jerusalem, and without the realization of the Palestinian people's legitimate aspiration. With respect to Kampuchea, Somalia urged all the parties concerned to take part in discussions to promote an agreement on the format for negotiations and on the main elements for a comprehensive settlement. Lastly, Somalia
strongly supported the call by the Non-Aligned States for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan, for respect for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-aligned status of that country and for the principles of non-interference and non-intervention and the right of Afghan refugees to return to their homes in freedom and safety and with honour.

14. A protracted conflict in the Horn of Africa had already resulted in large-scale human suffering, massive destruction and huge refugee influxes. It was essential that concerted action be taken to remove the sources of tension and conflict and to establish a solid foundation for peace and stability in the region. Somalia and Ethiopia had set up a joint ad hoc committee which had been holding talks aimed at creating conditions for the normalization of relations and the establishment of a just and lasting peace between the two countries. The committee had so far held three meetings and the fourth was expected to be held in Somalia. Unfortunately no progress had been made so far, but his Government was determined to promote the peace process in the interest of the peoples of the region.

15. Mr. GOODMAN (United States of America) said that the first round of elections taking place that very day in the United States to select presidential candidates from the two major political parties demonstrated that self-determination was a continuous process which did not end with accession to independence. Indeed, self-determination did not necessarily even begin with independence. Millions of people living in nominally independent and sovereign countries could by no stretch of the imagination be said to be exercising the right to full self-determination. What could be said about a country that built a barricade across its capital, not to keep others out but to pen its own citizens in? What could be said of a country such as Cuba which held no free elections and where one dictator had ruled for almost 30 years?

16. Nor did genuine self-determination necessarily depend upon full national independence. Peoples of several areas had repeatedly exercised their right to self-determination by choosing to remain associated with other political entities. An example was Puerto Rico, which had freely chosen to be associated with the United States and where those favouring independence had never received more than 5 per cent of the votes. That choice was made freely. Self-determination was therefore the process by which the people of a nation created for themselves their national goals and participated in the achievement of those goals. Though difficult to define, self-determination was recognized as a fundamental human right.

17. The Charter of the United Nations recognized that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms was a vital factor in the establishment and maintenance of a peaceful international order based upon the principle of equal rights and self-determination. The International Covenants on Human Rights also acknowledged the link between self-determination and respect for human rights. The United States knew of only one way to protect rights and freedoms: that was to ensure a domestic political order responsive to the will of the people as expressed in genuine periodic elections. Genuine self-determination had to do with a great deal more than national independence and sovereignty and might in fact require neither. Self-determination did, however, require a deep commitment to basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. A people under the boot of a foreign oppressor could not exercise that right and neither could a people under the boot of a native-born oppressor.
18. The most glaring examples of the denial of the basic right to self-determination today clearly included southern Africa, with Namibia. In accordance with Security Council resolution 435, the United States had a commitment to Namibian independence and had worked to that end. The people of Namibia must be afforded the opportunity to determine its own future, free of interference from South Africa or from foreign mercenaries based in another neighbouring country. But self-determination was not merely a value to be debated at the conference table. Everyone knew how Libya had violated the territorial integrity of Chad and sought to deny that country's people the right to determine their own political status. But those efforts had suffered a stunning defeat because of the courage of the Chadian people.

19. In South East Asia, the agony of the people of Cambodia had yet to end. The cruel military occupation of Cambodia by Viet Nam had led to a mass exodus of refugees, threatening the very survival of the Cambodian people and culture. Viet Nam's war against Cambodia also posed a direct threat to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Thailand and had caused deaths among its people. The horror and suffering would not end until Hanoi abandoned its imperialist policies in South East Asia, halted its colonization and withdrew its troops from Cambodia. The Commission should send an unequivocal demand for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Cambodia.

20. The Afghan people were still defending with their lives their right to self-determination. Afghanistan, a small, once non-aligned country, had been subjected to one of the most brutal military occupations of the present century, and with what result? Three to five million Afghans had been forced into exile, millions had been displaced within the country, perhaps over a million Afghans had been killed and untold numbers of people had been wounded, maimed or imprisoned or had disappeared. The promises of glasnost were cruel and empty words in Afghanistan. The international community had a clear moral obligation to demand that the Soviet Union should respect the right of self-determination of the Afghan people and withdraw rapidly from that country according to a definite timetable that would lead to a comprehensive and global settlement. Until then the people of Afghanistan, supported by the world community and its strong belief in God, would continue to resist and suffer.

21. In Central America, the Marxist-Leninist dictatorship which had taken power in Nicaragua was not only denying the Nicaraguans their human rights, including the right of self-determination, but was seeking to undermine the process of genuine self-determination that was under way in El Salvador. The people and the Democratic Government of El Salvador were under assault from guerillas and terrorists armed and supported by Nicaragua.

22. In Europe, the Baltic Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania had been denied their right to self-determination for some 50 years as a result of a deal between Stalin's Soviet Union and Hitler's Germany. Stalin's successors, for all their alleged repudiation of his political methods, had never renounced the gains acquired as a result of that cynical pact with Nazism. Throughout the Soviet empire in eastern Europe, military forces, secret police, espionage, prisons, "psychiatric hospitals", armed guards, barbed wire and landmines were used to deny the people of that region their fundamental rights, including the right of self-determination. Only the week before, the authorities of one eastern European country had deported peaceful protesters, although a month before the Security Council had criticized the deportation of
far fewer people elsewhere in the world. The attitude of the so-called socialist countries towards freedom was illustrated by the existence of the Berlin Wall, now over 25 years old, and by the emigration policies of most of those countries. The Wall and the policy which had created it were a flagrant and tragic manifestation of massive and cruel denial of the rights of individuals to self-determination.

23. Wherever the right to self-determination had been violated there had been suffering and death. Genuine peace depended upon the unhindered enjoyment of that right, which in turn depended upon the exercise of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. Everything must be done to ensure that the peoples of the world did in fact enjoy such rights and freedoms.

24. Mr. FISENKO (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that numerous documents of the United Nations, in particular the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and the International Covenants on Human Rights, stated that all peoples had the right of self-determination, the right to determine their political status and form of development and the right freely to dispose of their natural wealth and resources. The Byelorussian SSR condemned those who did not acknowledge that peoples under colonial or alien domination or foreign occupation, particularly in South Africa and Palestine, had those rights. It also condemned the use of mercenaries, which was a violation of international law and in particular of the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of States, of territorial integrity and independence, and hindered the exercise of the right to self-determination. It therefore condemned the recruitment, training and use of mercenaries to overthrow the government of any country or to combat national liberation movements. The report of the Special Rapporteur on the question of mercenaries (E/CN.4/1988/14) was a useful contribution to the study of that problem, and should be expanded.

25. In southern Africa, the racist régime of Pretoria, supported by its protectors, was flouting the decisions of the United Nations by continuing to practice its policy of apartheid, to violate the human rights of the people, to occupy Namibia and to carry out acts of aggression against neighbouring independent African States. A political settlement to that situation on the basis of the decisions of the United Nations and in particular of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) was urgently needed.

26. In the Middle East, Israel was continuing to violate the Palestinian people's right of self-determination. In the discussion on agenda item 4, the Byelorussian delegation had already condemned the policy of Tel Aviv and those who supported it. To solve that problem, the right of the Palestinian people to have its own State must be guaranteed.

27. The aftermath of colonialism was also visible in all the major oceanic regions of the world, where small territories subjected to various neo-colonialist systems had been transformed into strategic bases and subjected to a policy of diktat, and support was being given to repressive régimes. Examples of situations that hindered the attainment of self-determination included the campaign of threats and defamation against Cuba, the military occupation of Grenada, the violation of the rights of the Palestinian people and various illegal actions carried out in Lebanon, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Afghanistan, Nicaragua and Kampuchea by those who would claim to give others lessons in morality! The General Assembly in
resolution 42/94 had stated that, among all those actions, the use of mercenaries constituted a typical violation of human rights and an obstacle to the enjoyment of the right of peoples to self-determination, and had invited the Commission to consider that aspect of the matter.

28. As to the statement by the United States representative, that country was clearly seeking to shroud Cuba and other peaceful countries in a veil of disinformation and calumny through a false interpretation of their political system and of their achievements in the field of civil and political rights. The United States delegation had attacked Cuba and other free countries where social problems had been settled far better than in the United States. Anyone who talked about human rights in the Commission had to have the moral right to do so. He wondered whether the millions of people deprived of the right to work, the Indians and the innumerable homeless people in the United States were truly satisfied with the moral lessons the United States delegation was trying to give.

29. The Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic condemned any attempt to discredit Afghanistan and to undermine the process of normalization under way in that country, which would lead to dialogue and a better future. Changes were indeed taking place in Afghanistan and the policy of the Government of Afghanistan, reflecting developments throughout the world, was making a positive contribution to improvement of the international climate. The participants in the conflict should understand that the process under way was in their interest. Thanks to a similar development it was possible to speak of a peace process in Kampuchea and to foresee an end to the fratricidal struggle dividing that country. Contacts between the Kampuchean Government and groups of Kampucheans abroad were a sign of a desire for national peace moves. The Commission should make a positive contribution to that process.

30. His delegation would continue to work on its draft resolutions in a positive spirit aimed at strengthening peace and international co-operation.

31. Mr. QUIAN Jiadong (China) said that the right of peoples to self-determination had remained one of the priority items on the agenda of the Commission for several years because of the violations of that right taking place throughout the world. Many peoples were, deprived of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, and world peace and security were jeopardized. Since the Commission was the major organ dealing with the human rights issues in the United Nations system, it was natural for it to give priority to consideration of such violations.

32. Recent events in the Middle East were causing serious concern to the international community. The crimes committed by the Israeli authorities in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories had been revealed in detail during the discussion under agenda item 4. It was clear that the Israeli authorities had been able to violate the basic human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Palestinian people with impunity because they had first deprived that people of their right to self-determination. Millions of Palestinians had been driven away from their homeland, condemned to live in exile or under Israeli military occupation, and constantly threatened with being arrested, chased, killed and suppressed. Because of the policy of aggression and expansion that Israel had been pursuing with the support of a great Power, the Middle East question had remained unsolved for several decades. That state of affairs must not be allowed to continue.
had always supported the struggle of the Palestinian people, considered that a comprehensive, just and reasonable settlement of the Middle East question would be for Israel to give up its policy of aggression and expansion and end its occupation of Palestine and other Arab territories. The national rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to self-determination and the right to establish an independent State, should be respected; and the Palestine Liberation Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, should have the right to participate on an equal footing in the search for a solution. In order to achieve that settlement and restore peace and stability to the region at an early date, an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations should be convened and at the same time Israel must immediately stop all its atrocities against the Palestinian people.

33. The Commission had also long been concerned with the question of the right of the Namibian people to self-determination. It was 20 years since the United Nations had decided to end South Africa's mandate, but the South African authorities were continuing their racist and colonialist policy by refusing to transfer power to the Namibian people and intensifying their repression of that people in order to perpetuate their occupation. On 30 October 1987 the Security Council had adopted by 14 votes to none a resolution authorizing the Secretary-General to arrange a cease-fire between South Africa and SWAPO, so as gradually to bring about Namibia's independence. SWAPO had indicated its willingness to implement Security Council resolution 435 (1978) and to sign a cease-fire agreement with the South African authorities, but the latter, on the contrary, continued to create obstacles and invoked pretexts of all kinds to delay the implementation of the resolution. In addition, the South African authorities had intensified their military attacks on neighbouring countries, thus worsening the situation in southern Africa. The Chinese Government and people continued to support the Namibian people in the struggle for their right to self-determination. The members of the Security Council and all States Members of the United Nations should exert greater pressure on the South African authorities and should consider adopting sanctions against South Africa if it continued its racist and colonialist policy.

34. Nine years before, the Vietnamese authorities, confident of their superior military strength, had invaded Kampuchea with 200,000 troops in an attempt to subdue that little country. But Viet Nam had had to give up its ambitions as a result of the heroic resistance of the patriotic Kampuchean forces. The Hanoi's policy of aggression and expansion had brought disaster to the Kampuchean people, but it had also placed Viet Nam itself in a disastrous political, economic and diplomatic position. At its latest session, the General Assembly had adopted by an unprecedented majority a resolution demanding yet again the withdrawal of Vietnamese forces from Kampuchea and the world community had called for an urgent political solution so that lasting peace and security could be achieved in South East Asia. Under that pressure, the Vietnamese authorities had advanced "proposals" and "formulas", claiming to withdraw their troops from Kampuchea by 1990. However, people of good sense knew very well that that was nothing but an attempt to legitimize the fait accompli of their military occupation, so as to impose on the Kampuchean people a so-called "coalition government" with the puppet régime of Phnom Penh as its backbone.
35. In the view of the Chinese Government, the solution to the Kampuchean issue involved prompt withdrawal of all Vietnamese troops from Kampuchea, respect for the interest of all the parties concerned, genuine national reconciliation under the auspices of Prince Sihanouk and a guarantee of respect for the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, neutrality and non-aligned status of Kampuchea, to allow the Kampuchean people to exercise their right to self-determination without external interference.

36. It was also nine years since the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan. In imposing that war on the Afghan people, the Soviets had violated the national rights of the Afghans. There had been vast numbers of deaths and great destruction of property, and millions of people had had to seek refuge in neighbouring countries. However, Soviet aggression had met with dogged resistance from the Afghan people and strong condemnation from international public opinion. The General Assembly of the United Nations had year after year adopted resolutions by an overwhelming majority calling for an immediate withdrawal of the Soviet forces and restoration of the sacred national rights of the Afghan people. Although the Soviet Union had now indicated its willingness to seek a political solution and withdraw its troops, it was still insisting on the ending of the so-called "outside interference" and "national reconciliation" as its preconditions, which was obviously unacceptable to the Afghan people and the international community.

37. For a political solution to the Afghan issue, the Soviet Union must act in accordance with the spirit of the United Nations resolutions by withdrawing all its forces from Afghanistan so that the Afghan people might truly exercise their right to self-determination and once again make that country a sovereign, independent, neutral and non-aligned State. The Soviet Union should demonstrate its sincerity in concrete deeds instead of limiting itself to verbal pronouncements.

38. Times were changing, and the days when force and power could deprive a nation of its right to self-determination should also come to an end. Only through peace and development could solutions be found to the problems of the Middle East, Namibia, Kampuchea and Afghanistan. The Chinese delegation hoped that the Commission, whose mandate was to safeguard and promote human rights, would continue to make a positive contribution to the universal realization of the right of people to self-determination.

39. Mr. SELE (Mozambique) said that every human being had a fundamental right of self-determination. The United Nations and the international community had endeavoured through various resolutions, to ensure that all peoples were able to exercise that right. However, at the close of the twentieth century, some peoples in Africa, Asia and Central America were still subjected to colonialism, apartheid and external aggression.

40. In southern Africa, the region to which Mozambique belonged, the education, place of residence and even the places of leisure of citizens of South Africa were predetermined, from birth, by the apartheid system in South Africa where 4.5 million whites were dominating, oppressing and exploiting 25 million blacks, Indians and persons of mixed race. By way of discrimination and ethnic segregation, the black population had been exiled to bantustans where it constituted a reserve source of labour and where the most deadly famines and diseases were rampant. The opposition was currently so great that the apartheid régime was no longer able to govern the country.
without killing, murdering and carrying out arbitrary arrests. Those acts were an affront to the conscience of mankind, and South Africans of all origins and all convictions were now united in the struggle against apartheid. He reiterated his country's support for the African National Congress and for all the democratic forces struggling for an equitable social system. Peace could be restored in South Africa only by dismantling the system of apartheid. In Namibia, South Africa was violating the norms of international law and the resolutions of the United Nations, particularly Security Council resolution 435 (1978), by seeking to maintain its illegal administration of that Territory. Mozambique condemned the policy of endeavouring, at all costs, to link that situation to completely extraneous issues and reaffirmed its support for the Namibian people struggling for independence under the leadership of SWAPO.

41. The overthrow of Portuguese colonialism in Mozambique and Angola in the 1970s had extended the frontiers of freedom and democracy and pushed back those of racism, colonialism and oppression. Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Angola and Mozambique had already been victims of direct attacks by South Africa, to which almost all the countries of the region were exposed. South Africa was also organizing, training, equipping and financing groups of bandits who were spreading death and destruction in those countries of southern Africa. Armed banditry exhibited the characteristics of mercenary activity through its very origin and its methods of action. There could be no respect for self-determination, independence and the right to development in southern Africa as long as colonialism, apartheid and the attacks carried out by the racist régime of South Africa were allowed to continue.

42. In the Maghreb, parts of the territory of the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic were still under occupation. Mozambique was convinced that a solution must be sought through implementation of the resolutions of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations, and it reiterated its support for the Saharan people. Mozambique also fully supported the Palestinian people in its struggle, under the leadership of the PLO, for the realization of its legitimate and inalienable rights, including the establishment of a Palestinian State. His country demanded the withdrawal of the Israeli forces from all the territories occupied since 1967, as well as respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all the States of the region, including Lebanon. Mozambique was also in favour of the holding of an international conference on the Middle East to settle that question.

43. Foreign forces were still occupying East Timor in order to prevent the people of that country from freely exercising its right to self-determination and independence in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council of the United Nations. He expressed his country's solidarity with the people of East Timor, under the leadership of FRETILIN, and demanded the immediate withdrawal of foreign forces from that territory.

44. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the Commission would continue to work for the implementation of United Nations General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), so that all peoples could freely determine their destiny.

45. Mr. AKYOL (United Nations Council for Namibia) stressed the importance of the General Assembly's adoption, in 1960, of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples (resolution 1514 (XV)), which had made a vital contribution to the process of decolonization.
Although considerable progress had been made in regard to self-determination since that time, much still remained to be done and Namibia was one of the most deplorable cases. The constant deterioration the situation in southern Africa in general, and the impossibility of applying Security Council resolution 435 (1978) concerning the independence of Namibia, were giving rise to mounting concern among the overwhelming majority of Member States. The deliberations of the General Assembly at its forty-second session confirmed the existence, within the international community, of an identity of views concerning all the fundamental questions relating to the independence of the Territory on the basis of the United Nations plan that had been approved by the Security Council in resolution 435 (1978). However, on various pretexts and in defiance of the wishes expressed by the entire international community, South Africa was refusing to transfer the power that it was holding to the Namibian people. At the same time, the South African occupation forces were engaging in increasingly violent repression in Namibia and the system of apartheid was being perpetuated. The Council had learnt that South Africa was planning to hold elections by ethnic group in Namibia, which highlighted Pretoria's intention of imposing an internal settlement with a view to establishing a political structure subject to its authority. Furthermore, South Africa had not ceased its military activities and its acts of aggression beyond the borders of Namibia in the territory of neighbouring countries, which remained a matter of concern.

46. In addition to threatening stability and peace in southern Africa, the rapid deterioration in the situation created by South Africa was also giving rise to fundamental problems concerning international rules of conduct and ethics. Greater efforts must be made to put an end to that unacceptable situation, and the United Nations must take all the urgent measures needed to enable Namibia to achieve independence without further delay. The decision taken by the Security Council in 1987, under which the Secretary-General was authorized to proceed to arrange a cease-fire for the emplacement in Namibia of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (resolution 601 (1987)), undoubtedly constituted a very important step towards the solution of the problem. In that respect, he commended the tireless efforts that the Secretary-General had made pursuant to resolution 435 (1978), as well as the diplomatic activities in which he was planning to engage in the near future to ensure the application of resolution 601 (1987). At that critical stage, he needed the assistance of all the States Members of the Organization, and the international community must exercise vigilance in order to prevent South Africa from obstructing his endeavours. All countries should also bring pressure to bear on the South African Government in order to induce it to apply the United Nations plan without further delay and, in particular, they should not hesitate to take decisive measures, including those provided for in Chapter VII of the Charter. To solve the problems of apartheid and the independence of Namibia, it was essential that consistent and resolute policies be adopted by the influential countries.

47. The United Nations Council for Namibia strongly condemned all South Africa's manoeuvres aimed at delaying the independence of Namibia, as well as its efforts to disguise the nature of the problem, which was intrinsically a problem of decolonization. The settlement of the question of Namibia must not be subject to any condition that had no bearing on the root of the problem.
48. The United Nations Council for Namibia also denounced South Africa's persistent endeavours to impose a so-called internal solution in Namibia for the sole purpose of preventing SWAPO, which the General Assembly recognized as the sole authentic representative of the Namibian people, from playing its due role in the territory's self-determination. The Council regarded the establishment of the so-called transitional government as null and void and condemned all the outside support that was impeding progress.

49. The United Nations Council for Namibia appealed to all Governments to join it in supporting the United Nations endeavours to defend the rights of the Namibian people pending the achievement of its independence and, in particular, called upon them not to tolerate the exploitation of the resources of the Territory by foreign economic interests, in violation of all the relevant provisions and decisions. In 1985, the Council had decided to institute legal proceedings before national courts against companies or individuals participating in the exploitation, transportation, processing or purchase of Namibia's natural resources and would continue to make every effort to protect that Territory's economic resources and to keep public opinion constantly informed.

50. The independence of Namibia constituted a challenge and a noble objective for the United Nations and tribute must be paid to the Commission on Human Rights, which had always shown support for that just cause.

51. Mrs. CHAALAN (Observer for the Syrian Arab Republic) said that numerous United Nations instruments emphasized the principle of self-determination, disregard of which was contrary to the Charter and posed a threat to international peace and co-operation. Since its establishment, the United Nations had played a notable role in the process of independence from which, however, the Palestinian and Namibian peoples remained excluded. Israel and South Africa were still refusing to apply the resolutions of United Nations organs and were relentlessly pursuing their policy of aggression and annexation. Israel, whose grand design was to build an empire stretching from the Nile to the Euphrates, had even obtained a foothold in Lebanon as a result of two wars that it had waged, in 1978 and 1982, during which the population of that country had suffered greatly. As had been indicated in the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories (A/42/650), it was the undeniable intention of the Israeli leaders that the lands on which they were establishing settlements should become an integral part of their country. Although the Palestinian cause was widely supported by the international community, it was still impossible to compel Israel to respect the rights of the Palestinians because of the economic and military backing it was receiving from the United States, which was really aiding and abetting all the crimes committed by Israel in that part of the world, as well as those committed in southern Africa, where the Pretoria régime was also benefiting from the unlimited support of the North American super-Power. That country's attitude was incompatible with its responsibilities as a great Power and as a permanent member of the Security Council.

52. The deteriorating situation in both Palestine and South Africa made it even more imperative fully to implement the resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly and to respect the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations.
53. Mr. BENHIMA (Observer for Morocco) said that at every session of the
Commission representatives vied in eloquence to express their attachment to
justice and liberty and their support for the principles of the right of
peoples to self-determination and the right of States to sovereignty and
territorial integrity. While there was some reason for encouragement in the
evolution of certain conflicts, the escalation of tension and violence in the
Middle East and in southern Africa was highly disturbing.

54. For 40 years the Palestinian people had known only exile, sacrifices,
suffering and privation and the events which had been taking place in the West
Bank and the Gaza Strip in recent weeks confirmed that Israel's objective was
the total appropriation of the land of Palestine and the erasing of its Arab
class after the physical extermination of its people, in fulfilment of the
dream based on the Messianic message of the chosen people. The present
uprising of the Palestinians served to remind the world community that justice
must be done to that people, which had a right to a fatherland, to
self-determination and to a sovereign and independent State. In 1987 the
Moroccan delegation had voiced its fear of a possible conflagration in
Palestine and it now regretted to see that a solution had never been further
off, owing to Israel's persistent refusal to heed the calls for peace. For
20 years that country had been systematically rejecting all plans and
proposals for a just, lasting and comprehensive solution of the conflict. It
was imperative to persuade it to associate itself with the international
consensus that was now emerging in favour of the convening of an international
conference of all the parties, including the Palestine Liberation
Organization, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people,
and the permanent members of the Security Council. The Arab Peace Plan
adopted at the Fez Summit in 1982 and approved by the United Nations, the
Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Movement of Non-Aligned
Countries was considered the soundest plan for settlement of the conflict.

55. Notwithstanding the reiterated determination of the world community,
Namibia was still not independent and its people were subjected not only to
the most backward colonialist practices, but to all the manifestations of the
South African apartheid régime, which had been unanimously denounced and
condemned. South Africa was persisting in its refusal to implement the
resolutions of United Nations bodies and it was continuing to impose
conditions and raise obstacles to implementation of the proposals for
settlement, including Security Council resolution 435 (1978), which the
international community should impose on Pretoria. His delegation reaffirmed
its full support for the Namibian people for the realization of its aspiration
to independence and the unity of Namibia.

56. The Afghan conflict appeared to be moving favourably towards the solution
advocated by the world community - withdrawal of foreign troops, return of the
refugees in security and dignity and the right of the Afghan people to choose
its political, economic and social régime without foreign interference -
thanks to indirect negotiations conducted under the auspices of the Special
Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Moroccan
delegation hoped that those efforts would be successful and it expressed the
same hope with regard to Democratic Kampuchea, which was struggling to secure
respect for its identity and rejected a view of society which it did not share.
57. **Mr. AL QUASIMI** (Observer for the United Arab Emirates) recalled the importance that was attached to the right of self-determination in international instruments, particularly those emanating from the United Nations, where it was regarded as a universal right of all peoples, enforceable under customary international law.

58. The popular uprising which had been taking place since September 1987 in the territories occupied by Israel was simply the clear expression of the determination of the Palestinian people to assert its legitimate rights and no longer to stand Judaization and the brutal and widespread repression it was suffering. Israel's policy was similar to the official policy of repression pursued by the racist régime of South Africa which was also imposing martial law on the population and prohibiting black workers from remaining in the white cities after sunset, just as the Israeli Government sent the Palestinian workers back to their camps after their day's work. Israel had even exceeded South Africa and was guilty of veritable war crimes which could not remain unpunished. All countries should mobilize to safeguard the lives of the Palestinians and guarantee their legitimate rights. The time had now come to act and no longer be satisfied with words in all situations where human rights were violated, regardless of any ideological considerations.

59. All the reports of United Nations bodies - in particular the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli Practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Population of the Occupied Territories - and of the specialized agencies highlighted the massive violations of human rights affecting the civilian population of the occupied territories. That population had now decided to resist and that was exacerbating tensions which were liable some day to result in a tragic confrontation. International peace was threatened by several factors for which Israel was primarily responsible. In the first place, that State persisted in rejecting the resolutions of United Nations bodies, thus placing obstacles in the way of achieving peace, and it respected none of the provisions of humanitarian law, in particular the fourth Geneva Convention. Secondly, the Palestinian problem was a central aspect of the Middle East crisis and as long as it was not settled, under the active direction of the PLO, all peace initiatives would be doomed to failure. Thirdly, the Palestinian resistance which the world was now witnessing was not being carried out by terrorists, as was alleged by the Israeli leaders, but by a people which had chosen to struggle to free itself from domination and oppression. What the world community was now witnessing was actual genocide, which was a crime against humanity.

60. The situation in Lebanon was also a matter of great concern and stability could not be restored until Israel withdrew from those parts of Lebanese territory which it was occupying in violation of all the resolutions of the Security Council and of the provisions of international law.

61. His delegation believed that all peoples, without exception, enjoyed the right to self-determination and it condemned Pretoria's policy and the illegal occupation of Namibia by South Africa, as a crime against humanity and an affront to the world's conscience. It reaffirmed its support for the struggle of the persecuted people of Namibia and of South Africa and again denounced the complicity between the Israeli and South African régimes. It called on all countries to cease collaborating with those two States, whose policy constituted a threat to peace and international security.
62. The use of force being unacceptable wherever it occurred, it was imperative to settle the conflict in Afghanistan by ensuring respect for the sovereignty of that country and for its non-aligned country status. The same applied to Democratic Kampuchea and to the countries of Central America.

63. Recognizing the crucial role played by the United Nations, the delegation of the United Arab Emirates stressed the importance of international co-operation if the present unsettled world was to become a world of peace. The historic initiative recently taken by the world's two greatest Powers had been welcomed with satisfaction by the Government of the United Arab Emirates, which nevertheless realized that the consensus was a precarious one and should be preserved by every possible means.

64. Mr. NEOU (Procedural Aspects of International Law Institute) said that he wished, as a survivor of the Cambodian genocide, to convey to the Commission a message from the Kampuchean people. First, as long as the Cambodian people were denied the right to self-determination free of outside interference it would be necessary for the Commission to continue to recognize, recall, emphasize and deplore the illegal occupation of Kampuchea and to insist on the prompt removal of the foreign army. Secondly, the denial of the right to self-determination was of course accompanied by other gross violations of human rights: arbitrary imprisonment and torture by the foreign occupation forces and political authorities in Kampuchea; unjust imprisonment, torture and extra-judicial execution by two of the three parties in the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea. He urged the Commission to express its serious concern at the grave violations of human rights by the foreign occupation forces and by the Kampuchean political authorities on both sides. Thirdly, the movement towards a resolution of the conflict noted by the Secretary-General in his report to the General Assembly had increased. The prospect that the negotiations would lead to the withdrawal of the foreign forces meant that the international community must clarify further the conditions for a just settlement of the conflict. The international community must seek to prevent the recurrence of massive human rights violations against the Kampuchean people.

65. The Commission must resolve and emphasize that the Kampucheans responsible for genocide and other massive violations of human rights should not be enabled to return to positions of State power in Kampuchea following the withdrawal of foreign forces.

66. The Commission, at its forty-second session, in resolution 1986/18 had reaffirmed the necessity of international co-operation in order to liberate mankind from the odious scourge of genocide. The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, in its article VIII, conferred jurisdiction on the "competent organs of the United Nations" with respect to the prevention and suppression of genocide. Previously, the Special Rapporteur on the situation in Kampuchea had reported that the 1975-1979 violations in Democratic Kampuchea had been genocidal and the worst to have occurred since Nazism. The Special Rapporteur on the revised and updated study of the question of the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide had stated that the massacres committed by the Khmer Rouge had constituted genocide even under the most restrictive definition of the term.
67. The Cambodian victims would continue to seek redress. However, the Commission should not look back but should look to the future and specifically to prevention of the recurrence of genocide and of extreme violations of human rights in Kampuchea. Preventing the return to power of those responsible for those violations following the withdrawal of the foreign occupation forces must surely be the intent of the sponsors and supporters of the resolutions on Kampuchea adopted in the United Nations. They must now say that unambiguously and clearly enough for Kampucheans inside Kampuchea to hear and understand. By so stating, the Commission would assuredly hasten the realization of self-determination.

68. Mrs. LAW (Indigenous World Association), speaking also on behalf of the Comisión de Paz y Autonomía, referred to resolution 42/96 in which the General Assembly had condemned the recruitment of mercenaries for the purpose of destabilizing the governments of southern Africa and Central America and of other developing States and had recognized that the activities of mercenaries were contrary to the fundamental principles of international law. She wished to draw the Commission's attention to the infringements of the fundamental rights of the indigenous peoples of Nicaragua, Misquito, Sumo and Rama committed through mercenary activities financed by the Government of the United States of America. The Sumo and Misquito communities were still being subjected to kidnapings and murders by the mercenary forces grouped under the banner of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN).

69. The Sumo people, numbering 10,000 persons, was about to be annihilated by the FDN solely because its sons had opted for peace and support for the process of autonomy undertaken by all the indigenous peoples of the Atlantic Coast siding with the Government of Nicaragua. On 20 December 1987 the mercenaries had attacked the civilian population of three Sumo villages, had carried away 55 persons, had destroyed and pillaged 32 houses, had murdered 11 persons and had mutilated a dozen children. On 22 January 1988 a Misquito pastor had been murdered and 32 persons had been kidnapped.

70. As seekers of peace, the indigenous people had welcomed the recent decision by the United States House of Representatives to prohibit the granting of funds for financing a war whose principal victims were the indigenous populations and peasant co-operatives. The Indigenous World Association hoped that the Commission would give firm support to the Central American Peace Plan, would not forget the violations of human rights committed in various parts of the world and would continue to work to protect the freedoms and fundamental rights recognized in the various relevant international instruments.

71. Mr. ZOLLER (Pax Christi - Catholic International Movement for Peace) said that his Movement attached great importance to consideration of the present agenda item, as it realized that situations of injustice and the fact that many peoples could not freely decide their destiny constituted insurmountable obstacles to peace. Countless situations could be cited as examples. At its recent sessions, the Commission had adopted resolutions on southern Africa, Palestine, the Western Sahara, Afghanistan and Kampuchea. But there were also Irian Jaya, Tibet, Erytrea and Kurdistan. He asked whether their oppressed peoples in forcibly annexed countries whose culture the occupying Power had often sought to destroy, had been able to exercise their right of self-determination.
72. The Commission, at its forty-third session, had also considered another aspect of the question, interventions by foreign Powers which, using mercenaries or specially set up armed groups, sought to modify the destiny freely chosen by independent countries. The Commission's Special Rapporteur on that question would be doing pioneering work and Pax Christi hoped that his study would make it possible to develop, over the next few years, appropriate monitoring machinery. Merely to denounce specific situations which were in any event common knowledge might only impede the development of essential machinery.

73. The United Nations had in several cases used its good offices in order to contribute to the peaceful solution of disputes. Afghanistan and East Timor were cases in point. One could not fail to be surprised, however, at the lack of consultation of the populations directly concerned or at the fact that they had not participated directly in the negotiations. How could one speak of self-determination and forget to invite to the negotiating table the representatives of the peoples concerned? That omission, which was partly attributable to the diplomatic aspects of the issues involved, would inevitably result in subsequent questioning of the validity of any agreements concluded.

74. Thus, in the case of East Timor, the Indonesian leaders, after having alleged that the Timor resistance forces had been crushed and after having asserted that the people of Timor had "exercised their right of self-determination" by opting for Indonesia, now recognized that overcoming the armed Timor resistance would take a further 10 years. Was the massacre of that people to be witnessed in silence for a further 10 years? Was it possible to continue negotiating without the presence of the Timorese? Meanwhile, the available information on the situation in East Timor was even more disturbing than it had been. The world community could no longer stand idly witnessing the extermination of an entire people.

75. The members of the Commission could not fail to have been touched by the testimony of a survivor of the genocide committed by the Khmer rouge. Kampuchea was entitled to self-determination but the relevant resolution traditionally adopted by the Commission failed to take note of one basic fact: there was a risk that the efforts of the United Nations might result in the return to power those who had exterminated a large part of their people. It was therefore essential that the resolution on Kampuchea should include a further provision denouncing the genocide of the preceding decade and demanding due punishment of those who had committed that crime against humanity.

76. Mr. OMAR (Observer for the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the discussion on agenda item 9 was taking place in a climate marked by serious and objective statements, without any verbal attempts to interfere in the internal affairs of States. The United States representative, however, had given a travesty of the facts in his statement and had been unable to endure the sharp criticisms addressed to the Government of his country. He had sought to refer to the relations between Chad and Libya under the agenda item on the right of peoples to self-determination, even at the risk of being declared out of order. The Government of the United States was unwilling to accept the fact that the OAU was endeavouring to extinguish the spark that Government had lit and was seeking, on the contrary, to exacerbate the conflict.
77. The people of the United States had a long history of self-determination, but the record of its rulers in that regard was not a brilliant one. In the view of the United States, colonization and occupation were working in favour of the right of the Puerto Rican people to self-determination. But how could colonization and occupation be compatible with the right of self-determination, whatever paradise the Puerto Rican people might be said by the United States representative to live in? Was it not the United States that was impeding the exercise by the Namibian people of their right to self-determination by exercising its right of veto in the Security Council, that was employing terrorism in Nicaragua and that wished to place the Palestinian people under tutelage. If the United States representative was sincere, he should be asking himself why his country had supported so many dictatorships throughout the world and harmed so many democratically elected régimes—the case of Salvador Allende in Chile was a case in point—despite the opinion of the world community.

78. Mr. HEREDIA (Observer for Cuba), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, noted that the United States representative had sought to link the right of self-determination with the electoral process, two things which were completely unrelated. The United States representative had been partial in his statement, referring only timidly to the problem of Namibia. He feared that the United States Government's engagement in Namibia and South Africa would prevent it from pursuing a policy favourable to elections in a country where more than 20 million blacks were unable to exercise the right of self-determination. Likewise, no reference had been made to the right of the peoples of the occupied Arab territories to self-determination. On the other hand, how could one speak of self-determination and mention Nicaragua, a country which had held elections with the presence of international observers and which had given itself a legally constituted Government?

79. The allegation had been made that the Puerto Rican problem had been created by the Cuban Government. He drew attention to the fact that in 1892 José Martí, the hero of the Americas, had set up the Cuban Revolutionary Party in order to liberate the Cuban and Puerto Rican peoples and give them independence. Even at that time the United States had opposed that effort. Moreover, they still kept control of the Guantanamo base, a part of Cuban territory, against the will of the Cuban people, although Cuba occupied no part of United States territory. That was why the General Assembly, in adopting its resolution 1514 (XV) in 1960 had referred, not to any electoral process, but to the granting of independence to countries under colonial rule.

80. Referring to Cuba, he said that since 1976 periodic elections had been held, as provided for in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The candidates were elected by secret ballot in public assemblies. After Batista had come to power, however—not following elections, but following a coup d'état—the United States Government, which had supported Batista, had never called for the holding of elections.

81. In the United States, candidates for the presidency had to have millions of dollars of campaign funds. Furthermore, the current President had been elected by a 26 per cent vote, only 50 per cent of the electorate having participated in the election. Worse still, when a president no longer pleased, he was eliminated, as in 1963, or was induced to resign, as in 1974. Election was therefore an entirely relative formality.
82. In conclusion he noted that elections alone did not give people the right of self-determination. A substantial proportion of children in Latin America and other regions of the third world died before they had learned to read and write and therefore before attaining the right to vote. The Arab children in the occupied territories were being felled by the clubs of the occupiers with the complicity of the United States Government. As for the children of South Africa, they would never exercise any voting rights because even if they did not die of hunger they were the victims of apartheid and oppression.

83. Mr. GOODMAN (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that he must have touched a sensitive cord in the Observers for the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Cuba, since he had devoted only a few brief minutes of his statement to the relations between Chad and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and an even shorter time to the situation in Cuba. Were the valient Chadian people to have their say, the picture given of the situation in their country would be different from that obtained from the statement by the observer for the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

84. The observer for Cuba had raised a number of matters on which he himself had made no comments. It was true, however, that, had he wished to make detailed observations on the absence of self-determination throughout the world, he might have mentioned regions other than those to which he had referred. He would like to know, however, whether the observer for Cuba would be prepared to discuss at the earliest opportunity the question of the self-determination of the Kampuchean people and of the Afghan people.

85. With regard to elections in Cuba, was it not a fact that that country had been governed for more than 30 years by the same person, without any election whatsoever? If elections had actually been held in Cuba no news of them had so far come out. Could the observer for Cuba give details of the unlucky candidates in any such electoral consultations and of the results of the elections which had kept that same leader in power for so long?

86. Mr. OMAR (Observer for the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his reply must not be summarized in terms of number of minutes. However, the behaviour of the United States and its violation of the right of self-determination should serve as a yardstick for measuring that country's respect for that right.

87. Mr. HEREDIA (Observer for Cuba), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the Cuban people had chosen Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro as leader because he had been equal to the task entrusted to him and capable of leading the Cuban people forward.

88. Mr. VALLADARES (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, pointed out that Fidel Castro was at one and the same time First Secretary of the Communist Party, Prime Minister, President of the Council of State, President of the Council of Ministers, President of the Republic and Commander-in-Chief of the Army, the Air Force and the Navy and
General Supervisor of all the ministries. He would be head of the Church if Cuba had a religion. The Cuban Government had at one time held a plebiscite in which 99.99 per cent of the population had participated; officially, 10,000 Cubans were opposed to the revolution while the remainder of the population supported it. Later, in April 1980, 12,000 Cubans had sought refuge in the Embassy of Peru and, the following week, 140,000 had fled the country. At present, one million Cubans holding airplane tickets were ready to leave as soon as they obtained permission. The Cubans were "voting with their feet", the only genuine means at their disposal for expressing their views.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.