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WORKING DOCUMENT ON POINT 15 (a) OF THE AGENDA CONCERNING
THE REPORT OF THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE
FOR THE LIBERATION OF AFRICA



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The difficulties which the Liberation Committee has encountered & which it still has to face, the criticism, whether justified or not, which it has been subjected both on the inside and outside, demand that the causes of these difficulties be objectively looked for and that appropriate solutions be found to enable this important organ of the OAU to shoulder, rapidly and efficiently the heavy responsibilities entrusted to it.

It is for this reason that, in conformity with Resolution AHG/Ros.7(I) taken in Cairo on July 1964 by the Heads of State & Government entrusting the Secretariat General of the OAU with the management and control of the Executive Secretariat of the Liberation Committee, that the Administrative Secretary-General took the decision, in October 1964, to devote his first official visit to Dar-es-Salaam in order to study the organization and the work of the Executive Secretariat. During his stay the Administrative Secretary-General contacted the different National Liberation Movements who have headquarters in Dar-es-Salaam.

After a preliminary study it was obvious to the Administrative Secretary-General that the Executive Secretariat and consequently the Committee itself was working without abiding to any of the norms of the other institutions of the OAU and as an organization fully independent of the OAU. This situation, which can be justified by the fact that the Committee was functioning before the General Secretariat and the other institutions of the OAU, seemed to require an immediate remedy in order to endow the Committee and its Secretariat with structures similar to those of the other organizations of the OAU.

In order to achieve this; and as a palliative, the Secretary-General suggested the adoption of Rules of Procedure drawn from the Rules of Procedure of the Council of Ministers and those of the General Secretariat, in order to regulate the organization and work of the Committee as a political organisation and at the same time those of the Secretariat as an executive organisation. Moreover, this draft Rules of Procedure rendered obsolete the adoption of the Personnel Statutes and the Financial Regulations of the OAU at Nairobi in 1965 and not having been accepted, the Liberation Committee and its Executive Secretariat continue to function without abiding by certain provisions contained in the Charter, the Rules of Procedure of the Council of Ministers, the General Secretariat as well as the Personnel Statutes and Financial Regulations of the OAU.

It is deemed necessary to examine this situation in order to remedy it immediately. But irrespective of these facts, the Secretary General believes that the essence of the difficulties which confront the Committee and which handicap it, despite the very praiseworthy efforts, derives from the ambiguity of its true political or administrative nature.

Once and for all this ambiguity must be removed by the Council of Ministers and the Conference of Heads of State and Government, failing which, all efforts to assure the Liberation Committee its normal place within the framework of the OAU aiming at rationalizing its activities and the definite cessation of all the difficulties which in many cases hinder its mandate for the total liberation of Africa, would be in vain.

Regarding its true nature, the difficulty comes in part from the Addis Ababa Resolution creating the Liberation Committee, a Resolution which unfortunately is not very clear with regard to this. In fact, it entrusts the Liberation Committee with a twofold mandate:

- i) harmonizing and coordinating the policy of Member States aiming at the total liberation of all African territories which have not yet achieved independence;

- (ii) managing the funds created by the African States for that purpose.

If the first part of this mandate is undoubtedly of a political nature, the second is obviously of an administrative one.

The Committee having been established by simple Resolution and having consequently no direct relationship either with the Charter, or any of the fundamental rules of the OAU, it would be desirable if a new Resolution clearly defined the true political and administrative nature of the Liberation Committee and in this manner dispel any possibility of misunderstanding. This beneficial work appears to be urgent as well as necessary.

For, if the Committee be considered a political organisation, it should be given, in the same manner as the other organisation of the OAU, Rules of Procedure similar to those of its political organisations and naturally in that case one would first of all have to ensure that the Committee's activities do not overlap those of the Council of Ministers.

As the case may be, it is indispensable to clearly specify this mandate in order to avoid any ambiguity, as decisions concerning decolonisation have already been drawn up at the level of the United Nations on 15 December 1960, when they voted the Resolution on the unconditional independence of all dependent States and by the Resolutions voted during the Conferences of African Heads of State and Government as well as the innumerable sessions of the Council of Ministers of the OAU.

Bearing in mind, the foregoing one would wonder what political role the Liberation Committee could still be called upon to play, the work remaining to be accomplished in the matter of decolonisation being simply one of executing clear decisions which have already been adopted and ratified several times by all qualified political authorities of the OAU.

If on the other hand, the Committee is to be considered an executive organisation dealing with the implementation of decisions on decolonisation already adopted or to be adopted by the political bodies of the OAU, then it should receive, in order to conform with the structure of the OAU, a statute similar to that of all executive organisations in order to implement as do all other executive secretariats, the mandate entrusted to it by the Heads of State and Government.

But whatever the decision of the Council and the Conference, the Liberation Committee's budget should form part of general budget of the OAU of which it would form a distinct body to be administered and controlled according to the financial regulations decided upon for the whole of the funds of the OAU.

Such a decision is imperative not only for clarity, convenience and practicability but also to face the serious financial difficulties which beset the Committee. Moreover these difficulties recently caused the Committee to adopt a resolution asking for a special intervention by the Administrative Secretary-General to the numerous Member States who have not yet paid their contributions. Despite the immediate action taken by the Administrative Secretary-General, as the attached documents prove, the financial situation of the Committee has not improved. The best solution would be the incorporation of the Committee's budget into that of the OAU in order to simplify the payment of contributions to a unique budget and the rationalisation of the administration on the level of the executive organisation of the OAU.

In the light of the above-mentioned facts and the serious problems of structure which have been raised, in the interest of clarification, regularity and efficiency, the Secretary-General suggests that a clear and lucid decision be taken by the Conference of Heads of State and Government that would confer on the Liberation Committee a new vigour which would enable it to face the very heavy responsibilities which were entrusted to it in May 1963 which at the time was rightly considered to be one of the most important cogs in the OAU.



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