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**ORGANISATION DE L'UNITE
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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE ACTIVITIES
OF THE AFRICAN GROUP AT THE UNITED NATIONS



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If the Twenty-Seventh Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations could fairly be described as an African Session by reason of the successes scored by the African Group on all important questions, particularly those concerning decolonization, the Twenty-Eighth Session which opened on 18 September 1973 was, in its turn, a profitable session for Africa. For questions of paramount importance for the future of the African continent were thoroughly scrutinized. The many decisions and resolutions adopted by the General Assembly testify to the dynamism of the African States which met within the African Group.

Revitalized at the Summit of June 1973 in Addis Ababa, where the declaration on general policy and the declaration on economic problems won the unanimous support of Member States on vital problems affecting the continent's future, the Spirit of Rabat continued throughout the Twenty-Eighth Session to inspire the African Group in its approach to all the items on the agenda of the various United Nations bodies.

Again, the Fourth Summit of Non-Aligned Countries held in Algiers a few short weeks before the opening of the Twenty-Eighth Session of the General Assembly likewise contributed to inject greater dynamism and cohesion into the consideration of African questions in particular, as well as those of the Third World in general by the bodies of the International Organization.

In the now traditional way, the African Group held several meetings in order to draw up an appropriate strategy in dealing with the more important problems. During these meetings the African Group was able to benefit by the advice of the Current Chairman of OAU, the President of Zaire, and the President of Upper Volta, whose brilliant interventions in the General Assembly forcefully and lucidly illustrated Africa's views with regard to outstanding international problems, such as economic and social development, the Middle East, International Security and Disarmament.

The Group also enjoyed the privilege of benefiting by the active participation of several Ministers for Foreign Affairs, the OAU Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General for Political Affairs.

Throughout the Session, African problems continued to take up much of the General Assembly's time. Although other matters of genuine interest to the International Community such as disarmament, International Security and the crisis in the Middle East received their due share of attention, priority was again accorded to problems of decolonization. The credentials of the Representatives of Pretoria were once again questioned, and, although those credentials were not invalidated, Africa, with the support of its friends, held up normal debate in the Plenary for a whole day.

With the proclamation of the independence of Guinea-Bissau, Portugal and its allies suffered a crushing political defeat. The resumption of the way in the Middle East resulted in the political isolation of Israel through a majority of Member States of the Organization of African Unity breaking off diplomatic relations with that country one after the other. Items concerning the restitution of their lawful rights at the United Nations to the Representatives of Cambodia, and the reunification of Korea won active support this year from several African States despite the divisive manoeuvres orchestrated by the enemies of the developing countries. This intense activity reached its climax with the adoption by the General Assembly of 12 resolutions on decolonization, 7 resolutions on Apartheid, and a certain number of resolutions in the economic and social fields, as well as an important resolution on disarmament. Finally, in contrast with previous years, the African Group succeeded in settling within its own ranks, without serious impediment, the thorny problem of candidatures. As a result of this spirit of fraternal understanding, the Group was able to ensure the election, in brilliant fashion, of all the African candidates to the posts they had sought in the various United Nations bodies. Thus, for example, Cameroon and Mauritania, candidates for the Security Council, obtained more favourable votes than all the candidates elected from the other Groups (120 out of 125 voters).

1. PROBLEM OF DECOLONIZATION

A. GUINEA-BISSAU

As soon as the proclamation of the Independence of Guinea-Bissau was announced, the African Group, in accordance with its strategy, managed to withdraw this item from the agenda of the Fourth Committee and remove this territory from the list of non-autonomous territories. In the second phase of the action decided upon by the Group, the African delegates likewise succeeded, as a result of well-concerted action, in getting the Committee of the General Assembly, despite opposition from a certain number of Western countries, including the U.S., Great-Britain and Canada, to place on the Plenary's agenda the item entitled: "Illegal occupation by the Portuguese military forces of some parts of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau and acts of aggression committed by it against the people of the Republic".

This new item on the agenda at the General Assembly gave rise to an important debate in which over 40 Representatives of States from all continents intervened to defend the territorial integrity of Guinea-Bissau against the illegal occupation of certain parts of that territory by the Portuguese forces, and denounce the aggression perpetrated by the Lisbon regime against the people of the new Republic. This important debate was crowned by the adoption, by 93 votes in favour, 7 against and 30 abstentions, of the resolution sponsored by all the African countries and a great number of friendly countries. Among the countries who voted against this resolution were the U.S., Great-Britain, Spain, Brazil and, of course, Israel and its two friends, Portugal and South Africa.

In the resolution, after having expressed its satisfaction at the recent accession to independence of the people of Guinea-Bissau, who had created the Sovereign State known as the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, the General Assembly energetically condemned the policy being waged by the Portuguese Government in order to perpetrate its illegal occupation of some sectors of the Republic, as well as for the repeated acts of aggression committed by the armed forces against the people of Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands. The resolution further demanded that the Government of Portugal immediately abstain from any further violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Guinea-Bissau by at once withdrawing its armed forces

from that territory, drew the attention of the Security Council to the urgent need to accord priority to all measures likely to re-establish the territorial integrity of the Republic, and called upon all Member States, Specialized Agencies and other bodies of the United Nations to provide all necessary assistance to the Government of Guinea-Bissau for its programme of national reconstruction and development.

The adoption of this resolution, despite the opposition of the enemies of the African peoples, who indulged in legal quibbling to explain their opposition to the birth of new State, was a brilliant victory which was only made possible by coordinated and coherent action on the part of the African Group working closely with States traditionally friendly to Africa.

This victory was an encouraging sign for Guinea-Bissau's request for admission to the United Nations. FAO had already admitted the new State as a full Member State. However, political discussions should be begun with the U.S. and Great-Britain, who were Permanent Members of the Security Council, to avoid a possible veto by one or other of these countries when measures were initiated with a view to such admission.

B. OTHER TERRITORIES UNDER PORTUGUESE DOMINATION

The direct examination, by the General Assembly, of the question of Guinea-Bissau had not prevented the 4th Committee from devoting a great deal of attention to the remaining territories under Portuguese domination. The situation in Angola and Mozambique was, once again, considered with concern. The General Assembly adopted a proposal of the 4th Committee, of which the African Group remained the motivating force - an important resolution in which it reaffirmed that the National Liberation Movements in those territories were the authentic Representatives of the peoples of the said territories, and recommended that all Governments, Specialized Agencies and other bodies of the United Nations should ensure, when dealing with matters relating to those territories, that the latter were represented by Liberation Movements in an appropriate manner and in consultation with the Organization of African Unity. The resolution furthermore called on all Member States to immediately undertake all possible measures to put an end to all activities contributing to the exploitation of the

territories under Portuguese domination and their people; discourage their nationals and juridical persons under their jurisdiction from becoming a party to any transactions and arrangements which could contribute to Portugal's domination of the territories and, finally, to prevent Portugal, in the name of Angola, from concluding bilateral or multilateral treaties or agreements, particularly those concerning foreign trade in the products of that territory. Once again voting against that resolution were France, the United Kingdom and the U.S., while the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Italy, Belgium and Austria abstained. In another resolution, the General Assembly specifically expressed its concern at the Portuguese massacres in Wyriamu, in Mozambique by setting up 5-Member a Commission of Enquiry. Finally, by a large majority, the General Assembly voted to reject the credentials of the Representatives of Portugal at the Twenty-Eighth Session of the General Assembly and decided that the Representatives of Portugal no longer represented the peoples of Angola, Mozambique or Guinea-Bissau, which had become an independent State.

C. APARTHEID AND SOUTH AFRICA

The most important document adopted by the General Assembly on the question of the Apartheid policy of the South African Government during the Twenty-Eighth Session was, besides the 7 resolutions adopted on that question, the International Convention on the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. The Convention would come into force as soon as a majority of Member States of the Organization had deposited their instruments of ratification with the Secretary General of the United Nations. In that regard, it would be desirable for the OAU General Secretariat to undertake, by approaching all Member States, all effective measures likely to expedite such ratification. As had been demonstrated on other occasions, with the 41 Member States of the Organization of African Unity and the support of the Asian and Socialist friends of Africa, it should not be difficult to obtain the requisite majority. The Current Chairman of OAU could, for example, appeal to all OAU Member States and also approach friendly countries.

One of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly congratulated the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions for its activities against Apartheid, while another empowered the

Special Committee on Apartheid to hold a special session in Europe during 1974 with the evident purpose of making European opinion increasingly responsive to the misdeeds of that odious policy. It was common knowledge that European countries like France, Germany and Italy, were precisely the countries who entertained excellent relations at all levels with the Pretoria regime.

It should be pointed out that France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States/ ^{either} voted against the entire body of those resolutions on the Apartheid policy of the South-African Government, or once again abstained.

D. SOUTHERN RHODESIA

During this Twenty-Eighth Session, the General Assembly adopted two resolutions on the question of Southern Rhodesia. In the first of these resolutions, it calls upon the Government of the United Kingdom, in the discharge of its responsibility as the administering Power, to take all effective measures to terminate the illegal racist minority regime and not under any circumstances to accord to the legal regime any of the powers or attributes of sovereignty. It requests that Government to ensure the country's attainment of independence by a democratic system of government in accordance with the true aspirations of the majority of the population.

This resolution further calls upon the Government of the United Kingdom to bring about the conditions necessary to enable the people of Zimbabwe to exercise freely and fully their right to self-determination and independence including the immediate expulsion of all South African forces from the Territory, the unconditional release of all political prisoners, detainees and restrictees, the repeal of all repressive discriminatory legislation, the removal of all restrictions on political activity and the establishment of full democratic freedom and equality of political rights, the convening, as soon as possible, of a national constitutional conference where the genuine political representatives of the people of Zimbabwe, including the national liberation movements, would be able to work out a settlement relating to the future of the Territory for subsequent endorsement by the people through free and democratic processes.

In the second resolution which deals mainly with the question of sanctions against Southern Rhodesia, the General Assembly condemned the violations and the failure of certain Member States to enforce the sanctions imposed by the Security Council. A fresh appeal was made to the Members of the Security Council whose negative votes on various proposals relating to the question had continued to obstruct the effective application of the decisions of the Security Council. The United Kingdom and the United States of Africa voted against these two resolutions while France abstained on the second and a large number of western countries abstained on both.

The negative vote by the United Kingdom and its American or French allies should be viewed within the context of the policy of the Conservative Government which has now given way to Mr. Wilson's Labour Government. Considering that the Labour Government has always adopted a different stand from the Conservative Government on the question of Rhodesia, it would be desirable that every effort be made to obtain that Mr. Wilson honour the previous commitments undertaken by his party. Naturally, things will not be easy since the Labour Government does not have a majority within the present government. Nevertheless, concerted action by all the African States and in particular by the current Chairman and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity in making representations to Mr. Wilson could help establish the conditions capable of contributing towards a solution of the Rhodesian problem.

E. NAMIBIA

The most outstanding event of the Twenty-Eighth Session was the appointment of the Commissioner for Namibia. This is an age-old problem which had been postponed from session to session. But the solution to the problem was made possible during the Twenty-Eighth Session only because of the cohesion and the hard work of the African Group. After a number of meetings, the Group which was initially seriously divided on the SWAPO candidate, succeeded in transcending its differences in a genuine spirit of African solidarity and proposed to the Secretary-General, Mr. McBride who was appointed by the General Assembly without any opposition. Mr. McBride officially took up his post on 1 February 1974 and has already been able to establish contact with a number of African Heads of State and the OAU Secretary-General. He works in close co-operation with the United Nations Council for Namibia and has also expressed the desire to work closely with the

Organization of African Unity. Any support that may be forthcoming from the OAU will certainly strengthen his action for the cause of Namibia.

During the same session, the Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution terminating all contacts between the United Nations Secretary-General and the South African Government. Furthermore, in a resolution adopted on the same subject, the General Assembly recognized SWAPO as the authentic representative of the people of Namibia and decided to celebrate 26 August as Namibia Day.

It should be mentioned that the Security Council's decision to terminate all contact between the UN Secretary-General and the Pretoria regime was not welcomed by the United Nations General Secretariat. In fact, many delegations are now wondering what the Organization of African Unity and the African States intend to take as future action to obtain the withdrawal of the South African government from the national territory.

The Organization of African Unity should consider this matter and draw up a programme of concrete action to be taken at the level of the International Community.

F. OTHER COLONIAL TERRITORIES

a) SPANISH SAHARA

Once again this year, the Group met with difficulties similar to those encountered during the Twenty-Seventh Session. The representative of Mauritania made a statement before the Fourth Committee in which he let it be understood that the situation was developing normally and that fruitful contacts had been established between Spain and the Government of the three countries concerned. He concluded his statement on the matter, pointing out that there was no need to adopt a resolution. It is obvious that such a statement was not likely to meet the approval of the other two countries concerned who, indeed, reacted promptly. Morocco denounced Mauritania's attitude as a diversionary tactic which was contrary to the spirit of the OAU resolution of June 1973 and which would benefit Spain alone.

After a great deal of lobbying, Morocco, Mauritania and Algeria agreed on a draft resolution which was finally adopted by the General Assembly. In this resolution the General Assembly reiterates its

appeal to the administering Power to work out, in consultation with the Governments of Morocco and Mauritania and any other party concerned, ways and means of organizing a referendum under the auspices of the United Nations Organization to enable the indigenous people of the Sahara to exercise freely their right to self-determination. To this end, it calls on the Spanish Government to establish a favourable political atmosphere so that the referendum can be held on entirely free, democratic and impartial basis by ensuring, in particular, the return of political exiles to the territory; to take all necessary measures to ensure that only the indigenous inhabitants exercise, with the decolonization of the Territory in view, their right to self-determination and independence; to accept a mission from the United Nations Organization and grant it all the necessary facilities to enable it participate actively in the implementation of measures designed to put an end to the colonial situation in the territory. It reaffirms the United Nations' responsibility in consultations to obtain the free expression of the desire of the peoples and earnestly requests the administering Power to observe and apply scrupulously under the aegis and guarantee of the United Nations Organization, the provisions of the relevant resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on the decolonization of the so-called Spanish Sahara.

b) COMORO ISLANDS

Under the pretext that there had been some change, described as positive, and the fact that the French Government had stated its desire to grant independence at any moment to the Comoro Islands, the French delegation was opposed a priori to the adoption of any resolution on the matter. To this end, it got in touch with a number of delegations to which it sold the idea of consensus. However, on being informed of the matter, the African Group felt that if there had been any development, it was precisely because the question of the Comoro Islands was now on the agenda of the Committee of Twenty-Four and that there was need to maintain and increase the pressure which had led France, during the past year, to take a clear decision on the principle of independence. The resolution which was finally adopted by the General Assembly without France's participation in the vote; requests the French Government, as the Administering Power to take such action as would ensure that the unity and territorial integrity of the Comoro Islands are respected; it further-calls on the French Government to take all appropriate measures for

the people to accede fully and rapidly to freedom and independence, on the basis of their freely expressed desires in conformity with the objectives set forth in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to colonial countries and peoples as stated above. France did not take part in the vote "simply because it considered such a resolution quite unacceptable". The French representative indicated that his Government had respected the right of the Comoro Islands to self-determination and that the French Government was complying with the principles of the Charter.

The French Government had initiated a series of actions and was waiting for the General Assembly to recognize the appropriateness of such actions.

Although it is true that since the Paris meeting between the representatives of the Autonomous Government of the Comoro Islands and the French Government, there has been positive development in the question of the Comoro Islands, accession to independence, there is nonetheless the need to remain vigilant. To anyone who is acquainted with the true nature of French colonialism, it is obvious that, left on its own, without constant pressure from the International Community, the French Government will do nothing to speed up the independence process of the Comoro Islands.

The Organization of African Unity should therefore use every means to continue to bring pressure to bear on the French Government in order to complete as soon as possible, the process which has already been initiated with regard to the accession of the Comoro Islands to full national sovereignty.

G. SEYCHELLES

Within the framework of its consideration of the situation in other territories under colonial domination, the General Assembly adopted an important resolution on the Seychelles in which it reaffirms the inalienable right of the people of the Seychelles to self-determination and independence, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 1514(XV) and calls on the Government of the United Kingdom, as the administering Power, to take the necessary measures to enable it exercise this right without further delay.

In the same resolution, after reaffirming that the Seychelles should accede to independence without prejudice to its territorial integrity and deploring that it had not yet been possible to send a special United Nations mission to the territory, the General Assembly requests the administering Power, in compliance with the provisions of the relevant General Assembly resolutions to accept the special United Nations mission envisaged in resolution 2866(XXVI) and to take the requisite measures in consultation with the special mission, to organize, as soon as possible, a referendum on the future status of that territory.

Of course, as expected, the United Kingdom and its traditional allies, France, Portugal, South Africa and the United States of America voted against that resolution. This attitude by Great Britain merely denoted that that Government was not in favour of this Territory's accession to independence. Great Britain's ideas on the matter are well known and the timid representations by the present Prime Minister of Seychelles who first considered the possibility of his country acceding to independence in 1973, notwithstanding, the Organization of African Unity should pursue its efforts for independence and continue to support the SPUP which decided unambiguously on the territory's accession to national sovereignty as soon as possible.

This is the best way to exert maximum pressure on the Prime Minister and consequently on the British Government. In fact, there is every reason to hope that the attitude of the new British Government will bring about further positive elements in this respect.

Among the resolutions adopted on the problems of decolonization, there was a very important one relating to the activities of foreign and other interests which hinder the implementation of Resolution 1514(XV) in Southern Rhodesia, Namibia and in the other territories under foreign domination. In that resolution, the General Assembly once again, affirmed that foreign economic, financial, and other interests currently operating in the colonial territories in Southern Rhodesia and Namibia as well as in territories under Portuguese domination were a major obstacle to political independence and prevented the local populations from enjoying their natural resources. The General Assembly condemned the Policy of the colonial powers and other States which continued to support foreign economic and other interests and exploited the natural and human resources of territories,

thus violating the political, economic and social rights of the local populations to the detriment of their interest and preventing the prompt and complete implementation of the Declaration on these territories. Furthermore, it invited member States to break all economic, financial and trade relations with South Africa because of Namibia and to refrain from establishing economic, financial and other relations with South Africa-on behalf of Namibia - that are likely to encourage it to continue to occupy that territory.

Curiously, the United States of America voted against such a resolution while France, Federal Germany, the Scandinavian countries and the United Kingdom abstained.

This attitude of the Western countries is not surprising especially when it is known that the comportment of their nationals has helped a great deal in giving the South African regime clear conscience because of their economic relations with it. The United Nations General Assembly will continue to adopt these resolutions but they will remain a dead letter for as long as the Western powers have no intention of implementing the decision of this international Organization. However, these countries are striving to buy the tranquility of their conscience by contributing meagre sums of money to the United Nations Programme for Southern Africa or to other training programmes for nationals under colonialist and racist domination. This indubitably, is a vicious circle which OAU should continue to denounce unequivocally and constantly.

As appears throughout this Report, during the votes at the General Assembly, the Western powers which hold the Key to the solution of problems affecting Southern Africa either abstained or cast negative votes. It is obvious that as long as they do not change their attitude, the resolutions will never be effectively implemented. What is more, for some years now, it has been noted that the "Super-Powers" absorbed in the contradictions of the game of democracy, are increasingly showing signs of impatience, nervousness, irritation and even intolerance towards the African countries which they accuse together with their friends of subjecting the United Nations Organization to the law of their mechanical majority. Thus, they cannot prevent independent Africa, supported by its Asian and socialist friends from imposing its views on the international organization. These western powers have decided purely and simply not to carry out or implement resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. It is

this new situation that the Organization of African Unity should deal with and if need be, take steps through bilateral diplomacy, with these countries to get them to cooperate a little more with the United Nations Organization and the Organization of African Unity.

2. COOPERATION BETWEEN UNO AND OAU

As in previous years, on the basis of the Secretary-General's Report on cooperation between UNO and OAU, the General Assembly adopted a resolution at its 28th Session in which it reaffirmed the strong intention of the United Nations organization, acting in cooperation with the OAU, to intensify its efforts to find a solution to the situation prevailing in Southern Africa. In the same resolution the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to take any other measures necessary for strengthening cooperation between the United Nations Organization and the OAU in accordance with the pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly and in particular, offer assistance to victims of colonialism and apartheid in Southern Africa and in this regard, draw attention to the Assistance Fund for the Struggle against Colonialism and apartheid established by the Organization of African Unity. Furthermore it drew the security council's attention to the necessity for taking effective measures in order to associate the OAU regularly with all its work relating to Africa including the activities of its Sanction Committee.

As regards the point relating to closer cooperation between the Organization and the Security Council and more particularly, its Sanctions Committee, it was explained to the Sanctions committee of the security Council that as far as OAU was concerned, this was a question of associating the Executive Secretariat effectively with the work of the Committee by enabling it to follow its deliberation as an Observer and by communicating regularly, all information documents received by the committee instead of the annual report transmitted at the end of every year. The communication of such information would enable OAU to take measures either through its Current Chairman or through its Secretary-General against African or non-African countries guilty of violating sanctions.

Lastly, within the framework of this cooperation between the two organisations, the General Assembly took note of the Secretary-General's Report on the International Conference of Experts for assistance to victims of Colonialism and racism organized in Oslo in

1973 and recommended the results of this Conference to member States of the United Nations, non governmental organizations as well as international public opinion.

In addition to this resolution in which the UN's desire for cooperation was expressed, it should be mentioned that within the context of relations between the Secretary-General, the African Group and the Executive Secretary, this desire has been shown more concretely day after day. Now, more than ever before, the UN Secretariat does not deal with African problems without first consulting the African Group or the Executive Secretary. This desire should be encouraged and maintained. Besides, that the Secretary General visited West Africa and more particularly, the countries of the Sudano-Sahelian zones affected by drought at a time when the idea of a special session of the UN was put forth and when it was felt that he should remain in New York is further proof of his desire to cooperate. The same desire is also expressed in the General Assembly resolution on the situation in the Sudano-Sahelian region in which the General Assembly requested Member States, the United Nations Secretary-General as well as UNDP to give priority to the search for medium and long term solutions to the problems of the spread of the desert in the riparian countries of the Sahara and to take all the necessary measures to assist the countries concerned to implement their programmes of action.

3. MIDDLE EAST

Because of the outbreak of war in the Middle East on 6 October 1973, consideration of which war by the Security Council led to the establishment of a cease fire, the General Assembly could not discuss this important question during its 28th Session. However, it was agreed, that in view of the serious nature of the problem, the General Assembly could be convened at any time if circumstances should so demand. For this reason, the 28th Session of the General Assembly was merely adjourned.

With regard to the Security Council, it devoted several meetings to consideration of the question and more particularly, the search of ways and means of establishing a cease fire which took effect on 25 October 1973 and the sending of a United Nations Peace Force. Throughout the consideration of this question, the Peoples Republic of China abstained from voting, thus denouncing the hegemonic attitude

of the super-powers, namely the USSR and the United States of America. Moreover, the attitude of these two countries was noted by the other members of the Security Council and more especially, the small countries of which the African representatives did not hesitate, through their spokesman, the delegation from Kenya, to denounce the reticence of the two super powers. Besides, it was for the purpose of attenuating this feeling of frustration that the proposal was accepted for the Emergency Force to be composed of representatives of various geographical regions of the United Nations Organization with Ghana and Senegal as Africa's representatives.

4. ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

The decisions of the Algiers Non-Aligned Conference served as substance during consideration of economic problems by the General Assembly. During the 28th Session, the General Assembly adopted several resolutions and took a certain number of decisions relating to economic problems. It decided, among other things, to convene a World Food Conference to be held in Rome in 1974. The object of this conference will be to ensure the availability of food in the world and to assist the countries facing problems of supply. The General Assembly also decided to meet in extraordinary session at a high political level just before its 30th session in 1975 to consider the political implications of the development of international co-operation.

In another resolution, the General Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable right of States to the permanent sovereignty over their environmental natural resources including their sub-jacent waters and decided to establish a United Nations Working Fund for the exploitation of natural resources under the care of the Secretary-General.

Lastly, a text was adopted on the reform of the world monetary system for the period 1974-1975. The sum of 440 million dollars was fixed as target for voluntary contributions to the World Food programme.

If we have had to deplore the negative votes or abstentions of the developed countries and more especially, the Western countries, on most of the African problems at the political level, it is worthwhile mentioning that their stand on economic questions was somewhat better. There was no objection to any of the decisions or resolutions of economic nature. Similarly, the idea of permanent sovereignty of

States over their natural resources which was the object of many objections by the developed countries during the 27th Session was, this time, approved without difficulties.

It is necessary to analyse this attitude of the developed countries within the context of the energy crisis and especially, the oil embargo placed by the Arab countries on the United States of America and on a certain number of European countries whose effects were really felt towards the end of 1973 and more especially, at the beginning of 1974 in the United States of America.

It is therefore, clear that the developed countries, Europeans and Americans alike, could not run the risk of further alienating the sympathy of the developing countries particularly, the sympathy of countries which have the raw materials they badly need. It will be necessary to maintain and strengthen the cohesion first of the African Group and then of the non-aligned countries in pursuing the present economic war between the developing countries and the developed countries. The embargo of the Arab countries is an unquestionable truth that united, the raw material producing countries can impose their will on the developed countries.

It is hoped that the extraordinary session of the General Assembly convened to discuss the question of raw materials will work out clear principles and precise concepts which will become the new credo of the national community in the field of economic cooperation.

5. CONCLUSION

In view of the increasing and decisive role it now plays in the life of the United Nations Organization, the African Group in New York has become the most dynamic regional Group whose views are sought and heard on all problems affecting the international Organization. On African as well as international problems at the United Nations, there is the tendency to consult OAU Member States through the Group. This happy development is due mainly to the fact that now, more than in the past, the African Group has become remarkable as a result of its cohesion and the seriousness with which it deals with problems. Such a cohesion enabled it, more than once, during the 28th Session, to thwart the manoeuvres and attempts at division by the enemies of the African countries.

In this positive work being done by the Group, the Executive Secretariat plays a primary role. As a co-ordinating body between the General Secretariat and the African Group whose action falls within the policies of the United Nations, the Executive Secretariat has become a veritable meeting ground between the OAU General Secretariat and the United Nations Organization and its Specialized Agencies. By preparing meetings of the Group and summary records of its meetings, the Executive Secretariat has been described by many as the motor of the African Group. Last year, over thirty meetings were held and the summary records were regularly communicated to the Permanent Missions as well as the OAU General Secretariat. Furthermore, at the request of the African Group, the Executive Secretary drew the United Nations Secretary-General's attention to a certain number of problems of interest to Africa and these were favourably considered.

The Executive Secretary also had discussions with all the Specialized Agencies represented in New York for the purpose of exploring the best ways and means of assisting liberation movements and African refugees.

The Executive Secretariat actively participated, during the inter-session, in meetings of various committees - the Committee of 24, the Special Committee on Apartheid, the Sanctions Committee - at which OAU's view points were recalled and specified.

Concomitantly with these activities at the United Nations, the Executive Secretariat has continued to play its role of OAU information office in America. It established contacts with organizations of black Americans seeking their identity.



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