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Thirty-First Ordinary Session
Khartoum, Sudan
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PROGRESS REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON
THE COMORIAN ISLAND OF MAYOTTE



CM/879

MIGROFICHE

The situation in the Republic of Comoro, caused by the continued and illegal occupation of Mayotte by France, has worsened during the period under review. This situation of grave concern has, to a large extent, been augmented by France's outright rejection and refusal to heed to the international opinion as well as by the defiant attitude of France to the decisions and resolutions of the United Nations and the OAU.

2. It is to be recalled that France granted the Comorian Island of Mayotte a special status within the French Republic in December 1976. Notwithstanding the world wide condemnation of this act the colonial status persists to-date and there has so far been no indication from the part of France to decolonise Mayotte through peaceful means or otherwise. In this regard it should further be recalled that the endless peaceful efforts made by the Government of the Comoro and OAU Member States to terminate the illegal occupation of Mayotte as soon as possible.

3. The OAU on its part and the Committee of Seven on the Comorian Island of Mayotte in particular have exerted all possible pressure in all forums held by international, governmental and non-governmental organizations. Indeed all these forums have expressed their utmost indignation and grave concern on the question of Mayotte. Their condemnation and total disapproval of the French occupation of Mayotte has however been to no avail.

The grave economic situation, which was the result of the colonisation in the field of economic infrastructures and development during the colonial period, still persists. This alarming economic situation has indeed been testified by the last U.N. mission which visited the territory to assess its needs and economic requirements. Consequently the Council

should examine the question of Mayotte not only from the political point of view arising from the occupation of the Comorian Island by France but also from the economic aspects of the entire problem borne by the defiant attitude of the colonial power.

5. Against this background and in accordance with the mandate given him by the Fourteenth OAU Summit held in Libreville, H.E. El Hadj Omar Bongo, President of the Republic of Gabon and Current Chairman of the OAU paid a visit to the French President to discuss the question of Mayotte on 27-28 July, 1977. From the communication received from the Current Chairman, which was circulated to Member States, it was learnt that he had a fruitful discussion with his French counterpart. In this connection the Current Chairman was informed that France was willing to re-examine the question of Mayotte with a positive view of re-integrating the island to the Comoro.

6. Meanwhile the Committee of Seven on the Comorian Island of Mayotte composed of Algeria, Cameroon, Comoro, Gabon, Madagascar, Mozambique and Senegal appointed by resolution CM/496(XXVII) met at ministerial level in Moroni from 5 to 6 September 1977. The Committee, having heard the solemn declaration made by the Comorian authorities in particular the desire of Comoro to a peaceful and negotiated settlement of the problem of Mayotte and having taken note on the political and economic situation prevailing in Comoro and bearing in mind the pertinent resolutions adopted by the OAU, the UN, the Non-Aligned Conference, the Arab League and the Islamic Conference adopted a pertinent programme of Action. (The Programme of Action is attached herewith an annex I).

7. In implementation of Paragraph 6 of the Programme of Action, the African Group at the UN mobilised effectively public and international opinion on the question of Mayotte.

As a result of this effort the General Assembly, meeting at its 32nd Session, adopted a resolution tabled by 41 African Member States of the OAU. The resolution called, among other things, on the Comoro and France to work out a just and fair settlement of their differences over the Island of Mayotte which respects the Comoros' political unity and territorial integrity.

8. France has however defied the resolution adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations and continues to entrench herself deeper in the affairs and occupation of Mayotte. Recently France has been conducting provocative naval movements around the island of Anjouan and within the territorial waters of the Republic of Comoro: It was learnt that during these exercises the French naval units have been taking Comorians, against their will, to the island of Mayotte.

9. Though in most cases the Comorians have been forced to board the French naval boats the few who did so willingly were later on transferred to France as refugees and defenders of French interests in the Comorian archipelago. This outright interference on the part of the French authorities in the internal affairs of the Comoro has but one principal aim that of promoting destabilizing factors to the Comorian Government in the vain attempt to dissuade it from its course of struggle for the reunification of Mayotte.

10. It would be desirable to apply the recommendation of Paragraph 3 of the Programme of Action of the Committee of 7 held in Moroni from 5 - 7 September, which states that "the Ambassadors of Seven Member States, Members of the Committee of Seven, resident in Paris should follow closely the development of this issue while undertaking collective moves with the appropriate French authorities each time this proves to be necessary.

INTRODUCTION

The OAU Committee of Seven on the Comoro Island of Mayotte consisting of the following Member States: Algeria, Cameroon, Comoro, Gabon, Madagascar, Mozambique and Senegal, meeting in conformity with resolution CM/496(XXVII) on 5th and 6th September 1977 in Moroni in compliance with resolution 555(XXIX),

Having taken note of the solemn declaration made by the Head of State of Comoro at the opening session wherein the Committee has noted with appreciation the will and the disposition of the Government of Comoros to opt for a negotiation and peaceful solution for the question of the return of Mayotte to the Republic of Comoros;

Having heard the comprehensive expose of the Foreign Minister of Comoros on the political and economic situation prevailing in Comoros;

Having taken note of the report of the Secretary-General in the development of this issue;

Bearing in mind the pertinent resolutions adopted by the OAU, the UN, the Non-Aligned, the Arab League and the Islamic Conference and whilst deploring the obstinately negative attitude of the French Government recommends the following programme of action:

Programme of Action

1. The Committee having noted with great appreciation the diligence and determination with which the Current Chairman, His Excellency, El Hadj Omar Bongo accomplished his mission with the French President and urged him in the name of the whole of Africa to exert all necessary efforts with a view to bringing about the unconditional evacuation of France from the Island of Mayotte in the shortest possible time thereby making possible its reintegration in the Republic of Comoros, and requests him to continue his efforts.
2. That a mission consisting of Foreign Ministers of the Committee of Seven on the issue of Comorian Island of Mayotte should meet the French Foreign Minister in order to ascertain France's designs and real intentions in connection with the fate that she reserves for Mayotte. In their discussion with their French counterpart they should demand that France removes once and for all the restrictions imposed on the movement of persons and goods between Comorian Island of Mayotte and the rest of the Comoro Archipelago.
3. That the Ambassadors of Seven Member States, Members of the Committee of Seven, resident in Paris should follow closely the development of this issue while undertaking collective moves with the appropriate French authorities each time this proves to be necessary.
4. The Committee recommends that the next meeting of the OAU Liberation Committee implement Res.CM/555(XXIX) para 12 on the Comorian Island of Mayotte which calls upon the Liberation Committee to work out with the collaboration of Comorian Government an appropriate strategy for the French withdrawal from Mayotte and reintegration of the Mayotte Island in the Republic of Comoro.

5. The Committee appeals to all Member States of the OAU to undertake individual and collective efforts with a view to bringing the French Government to bring just and urgent solution in collaboration with the Government of the Republic of Comoro, to this problem which preoccupies the whole of Africa.
6. That the Foreign Ministers of the Committee of Seven meet in New York during the coming Session of the UN General Assembly to mobilize public and international opinion on the Mayotte issue. The African Group in New York should further adopt a collective stand on the Mayotte issue during the coming session of the UN General Assembly. It should demand that a UN Sponsored Mission be undertaken to France and the Republic of Comoro to discuss the question of evacuation of France from Mayotte Island and its reintegration in the Republic of Comoro. The Committee recommends that contacts should be made with the EEC countries, and the Scandinavian countries and other regional groups to enlist their support in the struggle undertaken by the OAU for the return of Mayotte to the Republic of Comoro.
7. Requests the African Group to see to it that the UN General Assembly adopts a resolution authorizing the ECA to undertake a joint mission with OAU to Moroni with a view to ascertaining with the collaboration of the Government of the Republic of Comoro the economic priorities of the Archipelago for the purpose of mobilizing and securing international assistance for the Comorian State.
8. The Committee recommends that the Resolution 555 which calls upon the Secretary-General to undertake consultations with



the OAU Committee of 12 and the Secretary General of the Arab League with a view to granting economic, financial and urgent assistance to the Comoro within the framework of the Afro-Arab Cooperation should be implemented.

9. The Committee decided that there should be another meeting before the next ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers to assess the results of the programme of action.

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