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Chairman: Mr. Mario AMADEO (Argentina).

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Ignacio-Pinto (Dahomey), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 80

Question of Algeria (A/4842 and Add.1, A/C.1/L.308 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. LOUTFI (United Arab Republic) said that his country was concerned with the question of Algeria as an Arab country, as an African country and as a Member of the United Nations. A cruel war had been going on in Algeria for over seven years, and it was the duty of the United Nations to end it. The question had been on the agenda of the General Assembly ever since 1955, but while the Assembly made recommendations, the war continued; it was time to take decisive action.

2. There had been previous attempts to reach a settlement. In 1955, contact had been made between Algerian and French representatives, but all chances of agreement had been destroyed by France's illegal arrest, in 1956, of five Algerian leaders. In October 1958, the French Government had offered a "peace of the brave", and the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic, despite the humiliating conditions that had been attached to that offer, had proposed a peaceful and negotiated solution and declared itself ready to appoint representatives for the purpose. In June 1959, the Prime Minister of the Provisional Government, Mr. Ferhat Abbas, had again proposed a meeting in order that a peaceful solution might be found to the problem. On 16 September 1959, the President of the French Republic, General de Gaulle, had pledged himself to allow the Algerian people freely to decide their own future. That had undoubtedly been a step forward—although the fact could not be concealed that it had also been a political manoeuvre, motivated by the imminent opening of the fourteenth session of the General Assembly. Twelve days later, the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic had agreed to a referendum in Algeria. Thus, agreement between the two parties on the principle of self-determination could be said to have been reached. Hopes of an early settlement had been dashed, however, when, in January 1960, an extremist movement had emerged in Algiers. In June 1960, the Provisional Government, responding to another offer by the French Government, had sent two emissaries to Melun to discuss the terms on which negotiations could be held. They

had been treated like prisoners, and it had been made clear that the French Government intended to decide the conditions for negotiations unilaterally; that amounted to a refusal to negotiate. In May 1961, delegations from each side had met at Evian to discuss the conditions for self-determination and related problems; the talks had been suspended unilaterally by the French. In July 1961, talks had been resumed at Lugrin, but had again been suspended, at the request of the Algerian delegation, because the French Government had refused to recognize the territorial integrity of Algeria and the unity of its people.

3. Thus, disregarding the express wishes of the United Nations and the good will of the Algerians, France had constantly evaded coming to an agreement. The United Nations could not remain indifferent while the war continued and threatened the peace of the world. Over the previous seven years, nearly a million Algerians had been killed, 100,000 persons had been imprisoned or interned in camps, 300,000 had sought asylum in Tunisia or Morocco and nearly 2 million had been regrouped in what could only be called concentration camps. Despite those sacrifices and despite the cruel methods and the vast powers of the French Army, which received assistance from certain NATO Powers, the Algerians had not given in. Nor had they wavered in their support for the Provisional Government, which, until the people of Algeria had chosen freely for themselves, was entitled to be regarded as their authentic representative. France had implicitly recognized that when it had agreed to talks with the Provisional Government, and the fact that the majority of the French people shared that view could be seen, for example, from a recent statement by the national committee of the French federation of Christian trade unions. The French President himself had acknowledged that the Algerians would vote for a sovereign and independent State. The gradual evolution which had taken place in the French Government's thinking indicated that the obstacles to peace were disappearing. The United Nations must therefore act to bring about a resumption of negotiations.

4. So far as concerned the problem of the Sahara, which had been the direct cause of the failure of the Lugrin talks, the French President had finally recognized, at a press conference held on 5 September 1961, that the Algerian State, whatever form it took, would have a claim to sovereignty over the Sahara. That being so, the French leaders would show great realism if they acknowledged explicitly that the Sahara was an integral part of Algerian territory. The Algerians, for their part, had declared their willingness to use its resources for the benefit of other African countries. As far as the problem of the European minority was concerned, the FLN had always made it clear that in an independent Algeria all legitimate rights would be respected and there would be no racial or religious discrimination. That had been confirmed

recently by the Prime Minister of the Provisional Government, Mr. Ben Khedda. In response to those efforts of the Provisional Government to ensure fruitful coexistence between the two communities in an independent Algeria, the Secret Army Organization had unleashed a wave of racist terror, to which hundreds of Algerians had fallen victim, in order to prevent any chance of an understanding between France and Algeria. The only way to end the war was to ensure that negotiations were resumed and that they succeeded; but if they were to succeed, France must recognize the independence and territorial integrity of Algeria. The United Nations must therefore do everything possible to promote negotiations on that basis.

5. Mr. KIZIA (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the war in Algeria was arousing justified concern throughout the world. On the one side were ranged the people of Algeria, who were conducting a just and selfless struggle for freedom and independence; and on the other, France, which was waging an unjust imperialist war. Since November 1954, when the war had begun, two-thirds of Africa had been freed from colonial domination. But the freedom of Africa was inseparable from the freedom of Algeria; it was the duty of all African States, and of all other States too, to help the Algerian people to achieve peace and independence. The people of the Ukraine supported the Algerians who were fighting for freedom; the Ukraine, indeed, had always supported national liberation movements directed against colonialism, a policy which followed directly from the socialist nature of the Ukrainian State. Despite the 600,000-strong army and the police force of 200,000 men which France had put into the field, it was clear even now that the Algerians would win. In the course of their struggle they had forged national unity and created their own army, State and Government. It was recognized even in France that the FLN represented the whole of the Moslem population and that independence was inevitable. More than 600,000 civilians had been killed; one and a half million were detained in concentration camps; 300,000 had fled to neighbouring countries; all the resources of modern military technology were being used to terrorize and even to exterminate the people of Algeria. But nothing could suppress a fighting nation.

6. The consequences of the war were equally serious for France itself: the lives and wealth of the French people were being squandered and their liberty placed in jeopardy. The great majority of Frenchmen, including workers, intellectuals and all honest men, were against the continuance of the war and opposed the extremist colonialists and the reactionary officer class. The Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic, for its part, had constantly shown itself ready to settle the question by peaceful means on the basis of the principle of self-determination. At the end of October 1961, the head of the Provisional Government had once more proposed negotiations; but the French Government, although it had been obliged by public opinion to make contact with the Algerians, was adopting delaying tactics. France's attitude to negotiations was the main reason for the continuance of the war. Although it theoretically recognized the Algerians' right to self-determination, it refused to make that right a reality. Twice, talks had been broken off because France had put forward demands which were clearly unacceptable. The French imperialists were constantly calling for the partition of Algeria,

and sought on various pretexts to retain their colonial privileges. At the same time, fascist extremists were carrying out terrorist activities with impunity against the Moslem population of Algeria and France. The reason why they were treated so tolerantly had been suggested by the weekly newspaper *L'Express*: in any negotiations which might take place, the French Government would be able to use its alleged difficulties with the supporters of French Algeria to obtain concessions from the Provisional Government, particularly with regard to the privileges of the European population. The Algerian people had not been consulted when their country had been taken over by the colonialists; nevertheless, they were prepared to give the European minority a choice between becoming Algerian citizens or living in Algeria as aliens. The French colonialists, however, were refusing to surrender their special privileges. They were supported by France's NATO allies, particularly the United States, without whose assistance the war could not continue.

7. The danger that the Algerian war would lead to an international conflict was growing. The war was particularly dangerous for the peoples of Africa, who would not be safe as long as it continued. In the face of that situation the United Nations could not remain indifferent; it must do everything possible to find a solution based on the right of the Algerian people to self-determination, freedom and national independence. The Ukrainian delegation would support any measures to that end.

8. Mr. GUIRMA (Upper Volta) recalled that at the fifteenth session his delegation, with certain other African delegations, had proposed that the Assembly should appeal directly to the parties to negotiate.^{1/} That proposal had been rejected; but negotiations had in fact been undertaken, and although they had been suspended his country noted with satisfaction that both parties were anxious to resume them. The position that had been taken by President de Gaulle on the question of the Sahara was encouraging, and showed that the confidence reposed in that statesman by many delegations was not misplaced. In the circumstances, the General Assembly should encourage both parties to show good will and call for further negotiations; for obviously, a problem as a complex as the Algerian question could not be resolved overnight. For those reasons, his delegation had joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, which, whatever its minor imperfections, indicated the road that should be followed. His delegation, and all men of good will, would support President de Gaulle's efforts to ensure the self-determination of an Algerian Algeria.

9. Mr. NONG KIMNY (Cambodia) said that his Government fully supported the Algerian people's struggle for independence, and had therefore given *de jure* recognition to the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic. That recognition implied no hostility to France; Cambodia was the friend of the nations involved. The Cambodian Government's decision had not been taken hastily; for some years it had withheld its recognition of the Provisional Government, despite the appeals of Cambodia's Arab brothers, in the hope that it might be able to serve as an intermediary between the two parties if ever the occasion arose. But in recent years the situation had changed radically. When the Cambodian Head of State had first suggested, in an interview given to Agence France-

^{1/} See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifteenth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 71, document A/L.334.

Presse in September 1959, that the United Nations should supervise a referendum on self-determination in Algeria, it had been claimed by France that the question was a domestic one; but France now seemed to have given the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic de facto recognition by negotiating with it at Evian and Lugrin. President de Gaulle had made a courageous effort to reach a peaceful settlement, and the Committee should do everything possible to encourage further negotiations. It was only too clear that the time had come for France to make a gesture worthy of its traditions and grant Algeria independence. Fortunately, that was not a pious hope: despite difficulties which would have defeated other Governments, France, under the leadership of President de Gaulle, had embarked resolutely on the path of peaceful negotiations. His delegation had therefore joined in sponsoring draft resolution A/C.1/L.308 and Add.1, and it appealed to France to grant Algeria full independence.

10. Mr. HAKIM (Lebanon) said that Algerian independence was the logical conclusion of France's policy of decolonization. General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1573 (XV) made it clear that the partition of Algeria was incompatible with the principle of self-determination, and it was obvious that self-determination would lead to independence. The desires of the Algerian people had already been clearly expressed; but if the French Government insisted on a formal consultation of the people the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic was always ready to negotiate on the details of a free vote to determine the people's choice. It would be wiser, however, as the Prime Minister of the Provisional Government had suggested in his statement of 24 October 1961, to negotiate first on the conditions for the proclamation of Algerian independence, and then on the new relationship between Algeria and France and the guarantees for the French population. So far as concerned the question of the European minority, the Provisional Government had offered French residents Algerian citizenship, but had made it clear that the rights of those who wished to remain in Algeria as French citizens would be fully guaranteed. In a democratic Algeria, peaceful co-operation between all elements of the population could develop. Lebanon provided an example of a country where all citizens enjoyed equal rights, irrespective of racial origin or religion, and lived together in tolerance, harmony and mutual respect.

11. The French tradition of justice and freedom would prevail over the attempt of a small group of fanatics to maintain a "French Algeria" by terrorism. The Assembly should call upon the parties to resume negotiations without delay, with a view to the implementation of the Algerian people's right to self-determination, independence and territorial integrity.

12. Mr. VAKIL (Iran) said that the debate on the Algerian question at the current session assumed particular importance in the light of recent developments which raised the hope of an early end of the Algerian war. He regretted the continued absence of the French delegation; it was hardly consistent with the new policy now being pursued by the French Government under President de Gaulle. The Iranian Government's aim had always been to promote a constructive solution of the Algerian question which would enable the Algerian people to realize their legitimate aspirations. Their right to self-determination was undisputed, and had been further strengthened by the adoption of the Declaration on the granting of inde-

pendence to colonial countries and peoples (General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV)). The heroic struggle which they had been waging for the past seven years offered the clearest possible proof that they were motivated by a common ideal—the essential attribute of a nation. It was because that struggle still continued that Iran had joined with thirty other delegations in proposing the inclusion of the Algerian question in the agenda of the sixteenth session (A/4842 and Add.1).

13. The war in Algeria was still resulting in the waste of vast sums of money which could more profitably be spent to improve the economic and social conditions of the Algerian people and thus lay the basis for fruitful co-operation between Algeria and France. The continuance of the war had had an adverse effect on France's relations with other States, in particular with the African States which had long been bound to it by culture and history. However, the advent to power of General de Gaulle had marked a turning-point in Algerian-French relations: it had meant France's abandonment of an unrealistic policy based on an anachronistic view of history, and its recognition that the Algerians were a sovereign people. President de Gaulle's efforts towards that end had been seriously impeded by the intransigence of the French "ultras" in Algeria, and his difficulties were increased by the failure of French policy in the past with respect to the Algerian problem. Nevertheless, major advances had been made in recent years towards a solution: after recognizing the right of the Algerians to self-determination, President de Gaulle had finally, in his speech of 12 July 1961, expressed France's unqualified acceptance of the fact that the Algerian peoples constituted a wholly independent State.

14. But by far the most important advance towards a solution of the Algerian question had been the initiation of talks between the parties. Those talks had twice broken down because of a deadlock on two basic issues—the question of sovereignty over the Sahara and the guarantees to be offered to the French minority. Those disagreements now appeared to have been resolved: President de Gaulle had recognized at his press conference of 5 September 1961 that the Sahara was an integral part of Algeria, and the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic had declared its readiness to provide the French minority with all guarantees compatible with Algerian sovereignty.

15. With the initiation of talks, the Algerian question had entered a decisive phase. Iran was particularly gratified at that fact because, while it did not doubt the competence of the United Nations in the matter, it had always believed that direct negotiations between the parties offered the most effective means of reaching a solution. It hoped that the negotiations would be resumed at an early date, and would bring about full agreement between France and Algeria.

Mr. Amadeo (Argentina) took the Chair.

16. Mr. JHA (India) said that the only possible solution of the Algerian question was one founded on recognition of the right of the Algerian people to self-determination and independence and on respect for the unity and territorial integrity of Algeria. In May 1956, the Prime Minister of India had put forward a five-point proposal for a negotiated settlement based on those principles. Unfortunately, those counsels of moderation had not prevailed and as a result the Algerian war had dragged on.

17. India was well aware of the magnitude of the difficulties with France faced in its efforts for a settlement. The French "ultras" and the French Army in Algeria presented a powerful combination of extremist and reactionary forces determined to perpetuate the French stranglehold over the Algerian people. Fortunately, however, those forces were a minority, and he believed that liberal opinion in France, and President de Gaulle, could be trusted to deal with them. He wished to pay sincere tribute to President de Gaulle for his steadfast adherence, despite the successive failures of talks with the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic, to the principle of Algerian self-determination and independence. What was now needed was a determined effort by both parties to resolve the differences which had wrecked the negotiations earlier in 1961. France should accept Algerian sovereignty over the part of the Sahara included in Algerian territory. The fragmentation of Algeria on any pretext would be wrong in principle and contrary to United Nations resolutions—in particular, to General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV). In addition, it would in reality mean the curtailment of independence and the perpetuation of neo-colonialism. Once France had recognized Algerian sovereignty over the Algerian Sahara, co-operative arrangements could be worked out with interested States, including France, for exploiting the resources and wealth of the region. The Algerian nationalists would not be averse to such arrangements. At the same time, the rights and freedoms of the French minority in Algeria would have to be safeguarded on a basis of equality with other citizens of Algeria; their opportunities to participate in the political, social and economic life of the community should not be restricted. But the minority must remain numerically a minority; and it could not be treated as a privileged class. What was essential was good will on both sides; but it had to be emphasized that any partition of Algeria in the face of the bitter opposition of the Algerians would raise a permanent threat to peace in the area.

18. All those problems could be settled only by direct negotiation between the parties; it was fortunate, therefore, that there happened to be on the one side a statesman of the calibre of President de Gaulle, and on the other, the enlightened leadership of the Provisional Government. With good will and understanding, the remaining differences between the two sides could be resolved; it was essential, however, that negotiations should be resumed without further delay.

19. U ON SEIN (Burma) said that the Algerians' heroic struggle for self-determination and independence had won the admiration of the world. Algeria possessed all the attributes of sovereignty, and its

Provisional Government had been officially recognized by several States. The two attempts at direct negotiation between the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic and the French Government had not achieved the desired goal, but the talks had enabled each of the two parties to understand the other's point of view. Difficulties remained, but his delegation was confident that the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic and the French Government, given time, patience, good will and statesmanship, would be able to overcome them. For that reason, Burma had joined in sponsoring draft resolution A/C.1/L.308 and Add.1 with a view to promoting a just and rapid solution of the problem, on the basis of the territorial integrity of Algeria.

20. Mr. CORNER (New Zealand) said that his Government had observed with admiration how the enlightened policies of President de Gaulle had brought about the peaceful progress of many French territories in Africa towards self-determination and independence. Although the problem of Algeria was fraught with special complexities which had drawn out a settlement, it was encouraging to note that President de Gaulle and the leaders of the Algerian Provisional Government had the same objectives and had made great strides towards achieving a final solution. As Mr. Ben Khedda had said in his statement of 24 October 1961, the conditions for a peaceful solution had matured.

21. Despite serious set-backs, significant gains had been made in improving French-Algerian relations. The peoples of Algeria and France had been consulted in a referendum, and official French delegations had held negotiations with representatives of the FLN. Those steps justified New Zealand's continuing confidence in France's integrity and intentions. On behalf of New Zealand, he paid tribute to the statesmanship of President de Gaulle, who had had the foresight to conceive a truly balanced solution taking into account the interests in Algeria of Moslem and European alike, and to pursue his plan despite violence and intimidation from extremists. A solution of the Algerian question appeared to be in sight, and it was the responsibility of the Assembly not to disturb the balance being sought, but to have faith in the future destinies of France and Algeria.

22. Mr. AHMED (United Arab Republic) moved the adjournment of the meeting under rule 17 of the rules of procedure.

The motion was adopted by 52 votes to none, with 7 abstentions.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.