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Chairman: Mr. Mario AMADEO (Argentina).

AGENDA ITEM 80

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

1. Mr. GEBRE-EGZY (Ethiopia) said that his Government's position on the question of Algeria was based on the following principles. First, the Ethiopian Government believed that Algeria should become independent and join the growing African international community as of right; it was gratified therefore that France had now accepted Algeria's right to independence. Secondly, it considered that Algeria, like the Congo, should become independent as one entity, and that its territorial integrity should be respected; in that connexion, he hoped that once Algeria attained independence atomic tests in the Sahara would be ended. Thirdly, it believed that like European settlers elsewhere in Africa, Europeans in Algeria should live in the country in which they had settled with all the rights, privileges and duties of its citizens; the fraternity in equality offered to them by the Algerian leaders was the only realistic solution to the problem, and one which had been brought nearer by the healthy attitude assumed by the President of the French Republic, General de Gaulle, in abandoning the Algeria of the nineteenth century. Fourthly, the Ethiopian Government held that as Algerian independence was inevitable, it was in the interests of France and of the world community to bring the Algerian war to an end by proclaiming the independence of Algeria in agreement with the Algerian leaders. Once the war was ended, the Algerian people's sufferings would become the foundation of its life and a source of strong, friendly ties between France and Algeria.

2. Only the details of an agreement on Algerian independence remained to be settled, and the Committee's task was simply to encourage the parties to fulfil the basic agreements with speed. Draft resolution A/C.1/L.308 and Add.1 was directed to that end; all its contents had been accepted by the parties and by the General Assembly, and he therefore hoped that it would be unanimously adopted.

3. Sir Patrick DEAN (United Kingdom) said that in spite of the continuing violence in Algeria, the civil disorders which had erupted in France and the suspension of talks between the parties, there was now much to give hope that a just, democratic and lasting solution to the problems might not be too far off. As a number of speakers had emphasized, a considerable

amount of common ground existed between the parties. However, the previous negotiations had been broken off, and the FLN had made further talks conditional on French recognition of Algerian sovereignty in the Sahara, while France had stressed that although the principle of self-determination was applicable to the Sahara, the essential thing was to work out a way of exploiting the resources of the Sahara in the interests of all concerned. But whatever might be thought of arguments on that score, it was certain that if rigid pre-conditions could be set aside, that element in the future relations between France and an independent Algeria admitted of negotiation.

4. It was also recognized on all sides that any enduring settlement must respect the interests of the European minority in Algeria, although the means of putting that principles into effect had not yet been settled.

5. The United Nations could only help to bring about a resumption of negotiations by emphasizing the cardinal principle of negotiation as the only satisfactory way of resolving the differences. The prospects of negotiation would only be diminished by the adoption of partisan attitudes on the questions still to be negotiated.

6. His delegation agreed with the sponsors of the draft resolution that it was important to lay stress on the need for a resumption of negotiations. It felt, however, that the draft seemed to prejudice the outcome of the negotiations, since it gave prominence to the views of one party and neglected those of the other: it mentioned unity and territorial integrity twice, but said nothing about the rights of the European minority or of the guarantees which France justifiably expected for them. Moreover, the reference to General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) obscured the fact that Algeria had been united with metropolitan France for over a century, that a million people of European origin lived there and that France and Algeria had close cultural and economic ties. If Algeria had been a colony in the usual sense, France would certainly have given it independence already. The reference in the draft resolution to the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic was also inappropriate—first, because it did not reflect the basis on which talks had been held, and secondly, because many States had not recognized that Government. The resolution on the subject adopted at the fifteenth session (General Assembly resolution 1573 (XV)) had contained no reference to the Provisional Government, and the FLN itself had not insisted on that description of one party to the negotiations.

7. Although his delegation could not approve draft resolution A/C.1/L.308 and Add.1, it noted with satisfaction that the general tenor of the debate and the general purpose of the draft resolution had placed the emphasis where it ought to be. It was the duty of the United Nations to emphasize that a solution could be found only in calm negotiation, and not by fighting.

8. Mr. MENEMENCIOGLU (Turkey) said that Turkish public opinion had been deeply moved by the tragic problem of Algeria, and had always hoped for a prompt, peaceful and negotiated settlement of the issue, in conformity with the legitimate aspirations of the Algerian people. Substantial progress had now been made towards such a settlement which would be in the best interests of all concerned; negotiations had taken place between representatives of the French Government and the Algerian people, and agreement had been reached on the principles of self-determination, of independence and of territorial integrity for Algeria. Tolerance and statesmanship would be needed if the remaining points of discord were to be bridged, but the bravery, patriotism and political wisdom shown by the Algerian people, and the relentless efforts of President de Gaulle, gave grounds for confidence that a peaceful settlement of the question was not distant. The people of Turkey had brotherly ties with the people of Algeria, and Turkey was an ally of France; he hoped therefore that the present debate would help to create an atmosphere favourable to the elimination of any remaining obstacles to the early ending of the Algerian tragedy and to the inauguration of a period of reconstruction and peaceful development.

9. Mr. MALALASEKERA (Ceylon) said that the colonial Power could not win the Algerian war. The geographical fiction that Algeria was part of France had been abandoned, and draft resolution A/C.1/L.308 and Add.1, of which his delegation was a sponsor, had been written by the facts of history. If France continued the war, it would lose its remaining friends in Africa and its opportunities to build a future in that continent.

10. The application of self-determination must lead to independence; Africa and the world wanted a fully independent Algeria. But the most important element of the draft resolution was the stress it laid on the unity and territorial integrity of Algeria. There had been many countries partitioned since the Second World War, and every one of them had become a major threat to world peace and security. It was essential to prevent the separation of the Sahara from Algeria or the ethnic partition of Algeria; the latter would be particularly dangerous, since it would lead to bloody communal wars. There was no vital interest involved which could not be safeguarded in honest negotiations with the Algerian leaders and people.

11. His delegation paid tribute to the gallant Algerian people which had fought with great sacrifice and determination and to its leaders, who had proved both their statesmanship and their generalship. They were fighting not only for Algeria, but for the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples (General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV)).

12. Although the draft resolution mentioned no time limit, the Assembly should regard 1962 as its spiritual deadline, as the year which should see the end of the Algerian war. The draft resolution did not condemn, criticize or take sides. France and Algeria no longer disagreed about the right to independence, and an early end to the war was as much in the interests of France as of Algeria, for a new underground movement, which was carrying on a campaign of terror in France and Algeria, was endangering the Fifth Republic itself and threatening to leave a legacy of hatred in Africa.

13. As President de Gaulle had said, a worth-while policy must be based on realities, not on nostalgia for bygone imperial glories. It must be accepted that Algeria wanted to be free and would be free.

14. Mr. BUDO (Albania) said that despite the efforts of the United Nations and the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic to bring about a peaceful and negotiated settlement of the Algerian question, a proper solution, based on the right of the Algerian people to independence and the territorial integrity of their country, had not yet been reached. The reason was the essentially negative attitude so far adopted by France, where influential circles refused to give up their colonial privileges in Algeria. Meanwhile the war, with its attendant destruction, atrocities and loss of human life, had entered its eighth year, endangering peace not only in North Africa but throughout the world—a danger that had been adequately demonstrated by the recent French attack against Tunisia.

15. At its fifteenth session, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 1573 (XV), in which it had recognized the need to ensure the implementation of the right of self-determination on the basis of respect for the unity and territorial integrity of Algeria. Since then, the Provisional Government had taken every opportunity to enter into negotiations with the French Government in accordance with the terms of that resolution. The French Government had been forced by the liberation movement of the Algerian people, which enjoyed the support of all peoples of the world, including the French people, to enter into negotiations. However, it had tried to achieve through the negotiations the colonialist goals which it had been unable to reach by military means. It had made it clear that it would not agree to Algerian independence unless four-fifths of Algerian territory, including the Sahara, was amputated. That had been confirmed by the leader of the Algerian delegation to the Lugrin talks, in his press conference of 31 July 1961. The Algerians, for their part, had given every indication of good will and had provided all the necessary assurances regarding such questions as the status of the French in Algeria and co-operation between the two countries, questions which could not be finally settled until after independence. But France had stubbornly adhered to its plan to retain control of the wealth of the Sahara, to use Algerian territory for nuclear testing and to maintain its military bases in Algeria so that it could further the aggressive plans of NATO and maintain colonial domination in Africa. As the Prime Minister, Mr. Ben Khedda, had said, however, the Algerian people would never renounce sovereignty over the Sahara. Recent events, including the peaceful demonstrations in Paris and Algeria, which had been savagely suppressed by the French Government, had shown that the Algerian people would fight until all their territory was independent. Even the President of France had recognized that Algeria must become independent, and, implicitly, that the Sahara must be restored to it.

16. The best hope of an early solution to the conflict lay in the resumption of negotiations, as proposed by the Provisional Government, on the conditions and date for independence and on the conclusion of a cease-fire. After that, the two Governments could reach an agreement on the new relations between their countries and on guarantees for the French in Algeria. If, however, the French Government insisted on the old procedure of self-determination, the Provisional Government would be prepared to negotiate on that basis, which it had long ago accepted.

17. Much of the responsibility for the continuing horror of the war fell on the NATO Powers, and particularly on the United States. United States monopolies were directly involved in the exploitation of Algeria's resources, and without United States military and financial aid France would not have been able to carry on the war so long.

18. The Albanian Government always had supported and always would support the Algerian people's struggle for national liberation; its position in that respect had been reaffirmed in the joint statement issued by Albania and Ghana on 12 August 1961. The United Nations must immediately take decisive measures to put an end to the war and to satisfy the unswerving desire of the Algerian people for independence, in accordance with the fundamental principles of the Charter, particularly the principle of self-determination. Since draft resolution A/C.1/L.308 and Add.1 met those requirements, his delegation would give it full support.

19. Mr. TOURE ABDOULAYE (Guinea) said that his delegation's observations would be dictated by its concern for human justice and by the Guinean people's conviction that its own independence and freedom were closely bound up with the independence and freedom of all the peoples of the African continent. The Algerian rebellion marked the liquidation of the French colonial empire in Africa, for the independence of Algeria was already a reality which had been confirmed by the participation of representatives of the Algerian people in a series of African and Asian international conferences, including the recent Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Belgrade in September 1961.

20. Past resolutions of the United Nations had carefully refrained from condemning France and had merely appealed to the parties to seek a peaceful and just solution of the Algerian problem; nevertheless, they had remained without effect. Since the adoption of the last resolution on the question, however, hope of a solution had been revived by the meetings held between representatives of the French Government and representatives of the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic. Unfortunately those negotiations, having reached a deadlock, had been suspended. The mere fact of negotiation, however, implied France's tacit recognition of the Provisional Government and was clear evidence that the spirit of colonialism had become vulnerable and was being broken by the repeated blows of African nationalism. However, negotiations were not the same thing as peace, and there would be no peace as long as the French Government refused to heed the lesson of history: that the Algerian people would not surrender to superior force, pressure or blackmail, and would be satisfied with nothing less than full independence.

21. The conclusion to be drawn from the discussions held at Evian and Lugrin was that the two parties had not been speaking the same language: the Algerians had been negotiating for the complete liberation and decolonization of all Algerian territory, whereas the French, while they were prepared to make concessions, clung to their determination to preserve colonial privileges for France in Algeria. Since those talks, the position of the Provisional Government had been strengthened by its participation in the Belgrade Conference, and the French Government, judging from various statements made by President de Gaulle, appeared to be ready to resume negotiations. If the

latter were to succeed, the French Government would have to show understanding of the French people's higher interests, and to realize that it could not hope to convert Algeria into a private preserve and retain exclusive control of the country's wealth and resources. It would have to appreciate fully that it could not confiscate the Algerian Sahara and use it for military purposes, in order to show the world, by its nuclear tests, that it was a great Power and deserved admission to the atomic club.

22. Since the two main obstacles to fruitful negotiations—the question of the Sahara and the question of the future of the French minority—appeared to have been overcome, the continued refusal of the French authorities to resume negotiations could only be attributed to France's determination to maintain colonial rule and exploitation in Algeria. The Provisional Government, taking into account President de Gaulle's recognition of Algerian sovereignty over the Sahara, had pledged itself to make co-operative arrangements for the exploitation of the resources of the area in the interest of the two countries. It had also satisfactorily defined the future position of the French minority in Algeria, whose rights, interests and dignity as citizens—though not as super-citizens—would be recognized. Yet, at the very moment when tension had appeared to be relaxing and when prospects for a resumption of negotiations had seemed good, at the very moment when the Head of the French State had been expressing his determination to grant Algeria its independence, there had been a wave of fascism and violent repression directed against Algerians, both in France and Algeria, which was hardly compatible with the professed desire of the French Government to achieve a peaceful solution. The Guinean delegation had been particularly disturbed by the growing influence in France and Algeria of a fascist organization known as the Secret Army Organization, and by the impunity with which its members were being permitted to operate.

23. His delegation shared the general desire that negotiations should be resumed between the French Government and the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic without delay; the Assembly should urgently appeal to the parties, and particularly to France, to enter into such negotiations and to stop the killing in Algeria. A peaceful settlement of the problem could be achieved, given good will and respect for the principles of the independence of Algeria, its territorial integrity and the unity of its people—principles which had been repeatedly endorsed by the United Nations. France no longer had any cause for anxiety: the legitimate interests of the European population would be respected by a sovereign Algerian Government. The Provisional Government was fully representative of the Algerian people, and no doubt could any longer be cast upon its status as a negotiating party. Guinea looked forward to the admission of an independent and sovereign Algeria, freed from injustice and colonial rule, to membership in the United Nations. In that spirit, it had joined in sponsoring draft resolution A/C.1/L.308 and Add.1, which it was confident would meet with the Committee's unanimous approval.

24. Mr. Ahmad ZABARAH (Yemen) said that on 1 November 1961, the seventh anniversary of the beginning of the Algerian war, the African-Asian group had issued a declaration calling for direct negotiations between the French Government and the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic based on respect

for the national unity of the Algerian people and the territorial integrity of their country, including the Sahara, and noting that the United Nations had a responsibility to contribute to a peaceful solution. In September 1961, the Belgrade Conference had issued a similar statement. Throughout the world there was increasing support for the legitimate demands of the Algerian people. Every nation, including the French, had come to realize that Algeria must be independent and free. The Provisional Government was recognized by thirty-five States; it had participated in international conferences and it was recognized by France as representing the Algerian people, as was shown by the negotiations at Evian and Lugin. Thus there was no dispute as to the status of the Provisional Government or the need for Algeria to be granted independence without delay.

25. Why, then, did the war continue? The Provisional Government had shown itself ready to discuss all outstanding questions. In particular, it had offered equal treatment to French settlers who wished to remain in Algeria and acquire Algerian nationality. The settlers could not expect a privileged status, but if they were willing to live as loyal citizens, the Provisional Government had offered them adequate guarantees. The main stumbling-block was the question of national unity and territorial integrity. For one hundred years, France had tried to impose the myth of French Algeria. The heroic struggle of the Algerians, however, had forced the French to recognize their right to independence. Now, the French were trying to propagate the equally false myth of the French Sahara and refusing to grant self-determination to that area, which made

up four-fifths of Algerian territory. In addition, as Mr. Belkacem Krim had pointed out on 14 June 1961, after the Evian talks, the French plan would mean that Algeria would not have control of its own resources and that the Europeans would constitute a privileged minority opposed to the Algerians. France had called upon the Algerians to accept that plan or face partition. But French maps and official documents had always included the Sahara within the administrative boundaries of Algeria. The reason for France's change of position had been the discovery of oil and natural gas in the area in 1956. The parallel with the situation in Katanga was clear: in both cases the imperialists wished to continue to exploit new nations by depriving them of permanent sovereignty over their natural resources.

26. If constructive negotiations were to be resumed, the French Government must protect Algerians, particularly prisoners, from ill-treatment and curb the activities of the Secret Army Organization. The goals of that organization did not differ substantially from those of the French statesmen who were blocking the resumption of negotiations, and there was no doubt that the French Army and police in Algeria had connived at its criminal activities. The best way out of the situation which produced such outrages was that proposed in draft resolution A/C.1/L.308 and Add.1, of which his Government was a sponsor. He hoped that all members would vote in favour of it; the sooner all hostilities in Algeria ceased, the better would be the prospects for international peace and security.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.