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1848th MEETING: 17 OCTOBER 1975

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1848th MEETING

Held in New York on Friday, 17 October 1975, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Olof RYDBECK (Sweden).

Present: The representatives of the following States: Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, China, Costa Rica, France, Guyana, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Mauritania, Sweden, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania and United States of America.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/1848)

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Admission of new Members:
Report of the Committee on the Admission of New Members concerning the application of the Comoros for membership in the United Nations (S/11850)

The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Admission of new Members:

Report of the Committee on the Admission of New Members concerning the application of the Comoros for membership in the United Nations (S/11850)

1. The PRESIDENT: The Security Council will now consider the report of the Committee on the Admission of New Members (S/11850). In paragraph 3 of its report the Committee has recommended that the Council have recourse to the provisions of the last paragraph of rule 60 of the provisional rules of procedure. Given the fact that the thirtieth session of the General Assembly is now in progress, I believe that such a course of action by the Council, in immediately making its recommendation to the General Assembly, will meet the wishes of all members of the Council. If I hear no objection I shall take it that the Council decides to waive the time-limit set out in the penultimate paragraph of rule 60.

It was so decided.

2. The PRESIDENT: In paragraph 4 of its report the Committee has recommended to the Security Council the adoption of a draft resolution con-

cerning the application of the Comoros. The Council will now consider the Committee's report.

3. Mr. LECOMPT (France) (*interpretation from French*): I should like first, Mr. President, to express to you my congratulations on your accession to the presidency of the Council for the month of October. You are, if I may say so, a model of the personal division of labour, since you have succeeded in assuming with considerable mastery, the conducting of various functions, both economic in the Second Committee and political as President of the Security Council.

4. In addition I should like to pay tribute to the authority, competence and fairness with which you have prepared for our consideration the items on our agenda; I should like to say how appreciative my delegation is of the links of friendship which unite our countries and of the disinterested and constructive activities which the Swedish delegation has been making for the benefit of the United Nations.

5. I should like also to congratulate and thank your predecessor, Ambassador El Hassan, who very skilfully and tactfully conducted the work of the Council during the month of September.

6. As Mr. Sauvagnargues, Minister for Foreign Affairs of my country, said in the General Assembly, on 26 September,¹ France recently consulted the people of the Comoros concerning its future. That people, the great majority of which were in favour of independence decided through its deputies, without awaiting the conclusion of the constitutional process, to manage its own affairs. The French Government took note of that and made it known that it was prepared immediately to initiate negotiations on the transfer of authority. The French Government is still hopeful that an agreement among the Comorians will make it possible to establish a framework within which this new State will become responsible for its own destiny. In this case as in others, Mr. Sauvagnargues concluded, France has remained faithful to its constant policy of respecting the right of self-determination.

7. The fact that the Security Council has on its agenda the item entitled "Admission of the Comoros to the United Nations" gives rise to a serious problem for the French delegation, one which cannot for the time being be resolved, inasmuch as the

request submitted by the Comoros presents, in our case, grave difficulties relating to France's institutional order.

8. Since my Government, which has set this new State on the road to independence, would not like to see the first steps of the Comoros in international life give rise to a contradiction which, in our view, it would be inappropriate to bring before this Organization, we do not feel that we can participate in either the discussion or the voting on this item of the agenda.

9. Although we shall not be participating in today's vote, France would voice the hope that the Comoros and the international community will construe that attitude as proof of its desire to assist, as soon as possible, in the adoption of a final solution acceptable to all the parties concerned. Negotiations between the French and the Comorian representatives have just taken place in Paris. For the time being, they have been suspended so as to provide both parties with additional time for reflection.

10. It goes without saying that my country, as it has always proved in the past, has at all times been aware of the particular responsibilities incumbent upon it by virtue of the application of the principle of self-determination. It likewise goes without saying that in this matter France is not seeking any particular advantage.

11. Mr. SALIM (United Republic of Tanzania): Allow me, Mr. President, to join my French colleague in expressing our particular satisfaction in seeing you presiding over the deliberations of this important body. I do so in both my personal and my official capacity. As representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, it has been a rewarding experience to work with you, and for me as a person and an individual, it has also been a fine experience to have known you. I need hardly dwell at length on the excellent relations that prevail between Sweden and the United Republic of Tanzania. Suffice it to say that it is a relationship based on friendship and understanding, and on respect for each other's policies and an identity of views on a number of subjects.

12. Perhaps it is not much of an accident that you are presiding over our deliberations at this particular moment when yet another Non-Self-Governing Territory has acquired its sovereignty and desires to become a Member of our Organization. The position of your Government and people in the struggle against colonialism and racism is well known to us in Tanzania, and indeed is well known in this Organization. We think, therefore, that you will consider the particular application of the Comoros and its subsequent membership in the Organization as, perhaps, one of the rewarding experiences of your Presidency.

13. This Organization has witnessed the emergence of nations whose freedom and independence were attained in different ways. We have witnessed liberation attained through victory of the people in armed struggle against their oppressors. We have witnessed independence attained following sustained political struggles. In the past few weeks we have witnessed the admission to our Organization of nations which have lived through both of these experiences. Thus, in the case of Mozambique, we welcomed a new Member that had to liberate itself through armed struggle; whereas, for example, the political struggle of the people of Papua New Guinea ensured their birth as a sovereign, independent nation. The Comoros belongs to the latter category. The proclamation of independence by the people of the Comoros on 6 July 1975 represented a logical culmination of the long and persistent struggle of the people of those islands for self-determination and independence.

14. In all cases, what comes out clear is that severance of the links imposed by the colonial Power, or, if you will, the metropolitan Power, was achieved as an expression of the desire of the overwhelming majority of the people for their independence. Our Charter recognizes the attainment of these aspirations.

15. Thus the United Nations, consistent with its Charter and faithful to the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, has steadfastly and unequivocally supported the struggle of the people of the Comoros for self-determination and independence. And it was only logical that the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, elated at the news of the proclamation of independence by the Comoros, unanimously considered the declaration of independence as "a logical fulfilment of the clearly expressed wishes of the people of Comoro as manifested in the decisive results of the popular referendum". The Committee also extended its "support to the people of Comoro on their achievement of the goals set forth in the Declaration and the Charter of the United Nations".²

16. The Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, held in Kampala from 28 July to 1 August 1975 as well as the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries held at Lima from 25 to 30 August 1975, similarly welcomed the independence of the Comoros.

17. In supporting the application of the Comoro islands to membership in our Organization, therefore, we are in fact echoing not only the wishes of the people of that new nation, but also the expectations of the international community. At the same time, we are, I submit, giving further reinforcement to the Charter of our Organization. Obviously, it is self-

evident that the Comoros fully qualify for membership in the United Nations.

18. The United Republic of Tanzania has consistently supported the struggle of all peoples to attain their inalienable right to freedom and independence. In the case of the Comoros, Tanzania has spared no effort to render all forms of support to the Comorian people's struggle to eliminate the shackles of colonialism. This position not only has been maintained out of our own convictions, but has been pursued in consonance with the Charter of the Organization of African Unity, as well as with the principles and aims of the Charter of this Organization.

19. The United Republic of Tanzania, moreover, has had the privilege of enjoying close historical and cultural ties with the people of the Comoros. The continual contacts between our two peoples and the fact that our nations are tied by geographical proximity has also been a factor, we are happy to record, enabling us better to understand, to sympathize with, and to express fraternal solidarity with the people of the Comoros in all their efforts to attain what is sacred to all peoples—their freedom. That the Comorian people have now attained that goal opens new possibilities and horizons not only for them, but for the international community as a whole. We look forward, in this new chapter of the Comorian people's history, to yet closer and eventually more beneficial collaboration with the fraternal African people of the Comoros.

20. That should have been the end of my statement, for the case of the Comoros' membership of this Organization does not need too much elucidation. But, for the purpose of clarity in the light of the background of this problem, we need to make a few remarks concerning the status of that new nation and how we in this Organization should view it.

21. It may sound rather rhetorical, but it is perhaps necessary in the present circumstances to assert unequivocally that we are supporting the membership of the Comoros in the clear knowledge that the Comoros comprises four islands—namely, Grande Comoro, Moheli, Anjouan and Mayotte. Those four islands are an inseparable entity of the new Comoro nation, whose membership we are today recommending. It would, of course, be inconceivable for this Organization to accept anything which tends to question the unity and territorial integrity of the Territory. For any such attempt at partial or total disruption of the national unity and territorial integrity of the country would be in contravention of the purposes and principles of the Charter, as clearly asserted by the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

22. Any such attempt would also blatantly violate the wishes of the overwhelming majority of the people of Comoro. This manifestation of the will of the

people was clearly reflected in the referendum held on 22 December 1974, in which 94.56 per cent of the population voted for independence. That referendum was held in a particular context and on the clear understanding that its results would be taken globally and not on an island-to-island, or province-to-province, or for that matter district-to-district, basis. That is an important, indeed crucial, point in evaluating the meaning of the referendum. To the people of the Comoros, as indeed to us here in the United Nations, the message was clear and unambiguous: Comoro was to emerge as a sovereign, independent nation with its territorial integrity intact.

23. In that connexion it is significant to recall that that was also the understanding of the French Government—judging by the many statements made by that Government. Here I should like to recall the statement of the spokesman of the Government of France on 26 August 1974 to the effect that Comoro would retain “the frontiers that it had as a colony” and that for the French Government “a multiplicity of different statuses for the various islands of the archipelago is inconceivable”. That was indeed a positive and responsible position taken by France, a position that was certainly welcomed by the international community.

24. More importantly, I should like to refer to the pertinent remarks made by the President of France, Mr. Giscard d'Estaing, concerning the unity of the Comoros. The President of the Republic of France stated on 24 October 1974 during a press conference:

“The Comorian population is a homogeneous one, in which there does not exist a settlement of French origin—or at least a very limited one. Will it be reasonable to imagine one part of the archipelago becoming independent while one island, no matter what sentiments we may cherish for its inhabitants, retains a different status? I believe we have to accept the contemporary realities. The Comoros are one; they have always been one; it is only natural that they should have a common destiny, even if some of them may have wished for another solution. We have no right, on the occasion of the independence of one Territory, to propose the breaking up of a unity that has always characterized the unique Comorian Archipelago.”

25. In the light of that important statement by the President of the Republic of France and the remarks made this afternoon by our French colleague, it is our hope and we are confident that the institutional problem alluded to by our colleague will soon be surmounted, thus enabling France to join all of us in welcoming the new State of the Comoros.

26. In that respect it is important to stress once again the attachment of the United Nations, like that of the Organization of African Unity, to scrupulous

respect for the national unity, territorial integrity and independence of the Comoros.

27. In conclusion, I would be remiss if I did not avail myself of this auspicious occasion to salute the brotherly people of the Comoros and express our confidence that very soon we shall be working and collaborating with the representatives of that new State in our Organization.

28. Mr. OYONO (United Republic of Cameroon) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, it is a great pleasure for me, following the representatives of France and the United Republic of Tanzania, to extend to you my warmest personal congratulations, as well as those of my delegation, on the important responsibility which is now yours as you assume the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October. I am gratified at this because you are a man of feeling, a talented diplomat with a wealth of experience, who does not shy away from obstacles. We are convinced that under your enlightened direction the reins of the Council will be in steady hands. It is a pleasant task for me to assure you of the entire co-operation of my delegation.

29. I should like to take this opportunity also to pay a brotherly tribute to Ambassador Hassan for the intelligence and wisdom he displayed as President of the Council during the month of September last.

30. The delegation of the United Republic of Cameroon is prepared to vote without any hesitation in favour of the draft resolution recommending the admission of the Comoro Archipelago to the United Nations. That attitude is the specific embodiment both of the brotherly feelings of solidarity that the people of the United Republic of Cameroon have towards the Comorians and of my Government's determination to promote the total liberation of Africa from the colonial yoke.

31. The act by which the delegation of Cameroon will cast its vote in favour of the admission of the Republic of the Comoros to the Organization would have been for us—and I am sure that this is equally true of the great family of nations—an act of unmixed joy if some serious uncertainties had not subsisted to this very day regarding the context in which the young Republic of the Comoros will assume the full responsibility for its destiny.

32. Indeed, the people of the Comoro Archipelago unanimously came out in favour of independence on 22 December 1974—that is, almost 10 months ago. On 6 July 1975 the Comoro Archipelago became independent, but the administering Power—that is, France—has not as yet ratified that event. It follows that the Republic of the Comoros, which has been a member of the Organization of African Unity since 18 July 1975 and whose admission to the United

Nations we are recommending today, is not as yet independent in the eyes of the administering Power.

33. My delegation would like to reiterate its total support for the position taken by the Organization of African Unity and to declare its resolute opposition to any manoeuvre, from whatever quarter, that is designed, through the secession of the island of Mayotte, to dismember the Comoros. Recently, in his statement made on 26 September during the thirtieth session of the General Assembly, the head of the French delegation stated³ clearly that France had taken note of the massively expressed will on the part of the Comorian people to accede to independence. He reaffirmed also that France remained faithful to its constant policy of respect for the right of self-determination.

34. We are very mindful of that statement made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of France which corroborates the statement in which the representative of France affirmed that the Comoros was ready for independence and that France intended to respond faithfully to the aspirations of the Comorian people. That statement is reproduced in General Assembly resolution 3291 (XXIX) of 13 December 1974.

35. For the delegation of the United Republic of Cameroon, the independence of the Republic of the Comoros implies respect for that State's national unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty, pursuant to resolutions adopted by the Organization of African Unity, the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned countries held at Lima, and the United Nations General Assembly.

36. That is why we appeal to France to respect its commitments in the interest of international peace and security in that part of the world. The administering Power cannot validly evoke difficulties which only relate to the organic functioning of its institutions to keep waiting for over 10 months a people desirous of exercising its full sovereignty as soon as possible, and securing respect of its territorial integrity.

37. My delegation considers that, since the application for admission of the Comoros to the United Nations is in accordance with the conditions laid down in Article 4, paragraph 1 of the Charter for a State to become a Member of the United Nations, and since the Government of the Comoros has already agreed to assume all the obligations imposed by the Charter on Member States, it is incumbent upon the Security Council warmly to welcome the independence of that country and recognize its rightful place in the United Nations.

38. We earnestly hope that the French Government, which has won the praise of the international community for its bold work of decolonization accomplished over the last 15 years, will be able

this time again to discharge its responsibilities in the Comoros, with the dignity and disinterestedness which are the most noble and honourable marks of its genius.

39. It is thus with great hope that we invite all the members of the Security Council and more specifically the French delegation, to vote in favour of the draft resolution contained in document S/11850, of 17 October 1975, which recommends the admission of the Comoros to the United Nations.

40. The PRESIDENT: If no other member of the Council wishes to speak at this stage, I shall take it that the Security Council is prepared to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution recommended by the Committee on the Admission of New Members in document S/11850.

41. There seems to be no further requests to speak, at this stage. Accordingly I shall ask members of the Council to vote now on the draft resolution in paragraph 4 of the Committee's report, which relates to the application of the Comoros for admission to membership of the United Nations.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

The draft resolution was adopted by 14 votes to none.⁴

One member, France, did not participate in the vote.

42. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the provisions of rule 60 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, I shall immediately request the Secretary-General to forward this recommendation to the General Assembly.

43. At this stage I want to inform the members of the Security Council that I have received a letter of 17 October, from the representative of Dahomey, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the current discussion in the Security Council on the application of the Comoros for membership in the United Nations.

44. In conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter, that is, Article 31, and in accordance with rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedure, and the usual practice of the Council, I propose to invite the representative of Dahomey to participate in the Council's discussion without the right to vote.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Adjibade (Dahomey), took the place at reserved for him at the side of the Council chamber.

45. The PRESIDENT: A number of members of the Council have asked to speak following the voting.

46. Mr. HUANG (China) (*translation from Chinese*): On 6 July 1975, the Comoro Islands proclaimed its independence. This is an important achievement of the people of the Comoros and the whole of Africa, who have long persisted in the struggle against imperialism and colonialism and for national liberation and independence. The Chinese Government and people warmly greet the independence of the Comoros islands. The Chinese Government already declared its recognition of the Comoros islands on 12 July.

47. On 29 September the Comoros islands formally applied for admission to membership in the United Nations. The Chinese delegation holds that in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations the Comoros islands are qualified for membership in the United Nations. Therefore, we fully support its application and consider it entirely proper for the Security Council to recommend to the General Assembly the admission of the Comoros islands to membership in the United Nations.

48. We sincerely wish the Comorian people continuous new successes in their struggle against imperialism and colonialism and for the defence of national independence and territorial integrity. We believe that upon admission to membership in the United Nations, the Comoros islands will make positive contributions to the realization of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations together with all other justice-upholding Member States.

49. Mr. MOYNIHAN (United States of America): Mr. President, I should like to begin, as have so many of my distinguished colleagues, by congratulating you on your succession to the presidency of the Council in what promises to be an eventful month and which, I know, will be one marked by your own distinctive form of peaceableness and constructive dialogue. And I should like to express, what I know many feel, appreciation for the fine leadership we had under Ambassador El Hassen in the preceding month.

50. The Security Council has met today to consider the application of the Comoros islands for membership in the United Nations. The United States Government has followed closely the evolution of self-determination in the Comoros. And in that connexion, we recognize the important role which has been played in that process by France. We hope that the reasons for France's inability to sponsor Comorian membership will soon be overcome, and that the two will enjoy good relations.

51. The United States was pleased to vote for the admission to the United Nations of the Comoros, beautiful islands whose rich volcanic soil is so productive of the fruits of the earth, and whose

location at a crossroads of the Indian Ocean has brought the islands cultural diversity and richness. We extend the Comoros a warm welcome and all good wishes as they take on the duties and privileges of membership in the United Nations.

52. Mr. THOMAS (United Kingdom): Mr. President, on behalf of my delegation may I say what a pleasure it gives us to serve on this Council under your wise Presidency. May I also say how much my delegation appreciated the skill with which your distinguished predecessor, the Ambassador of Mauritania, guided our work in September.

53. My delegation voted in favour of the resolution in which this Council has recommended the admission of the Comoros to the United Nations. It is always pleasant to welcome a new Member, and I do so today. We have watched with understanding the progress of the Comoros towards independence. The joint declaration of the French and Comorian Governments on June 1973 on the Comoros' accession to independence, the law of November 1974 concerning the organization of a referendum in the islands, and the referendum itself, which took place in December of that year, all marked important steps in the process of peaceful decolonization; and we welcome that process. My delegation has listened with understanding and respect to the admirably clear statement made today by the representative of France.

54. We are glad to welcome to this Organization a new Member which has links not only with Africa but with its sister island Territories in the Indian Ocean. In this connexion, I should like, if I may, to mention that my delegation expects the Comoros to be joined in independence next year by the Seychelles, which has just obtained full internal self-government.

55. The leaders of the Comoros face many important tasks, not the least of which is economic development. I am sure, that in this task, the Comoros will have the support both of the international community and of the specialized agencies of the United Nations.

56. Mr. KANAZAWA (Japan): Mr. President, first of all may I congratulate you on your assumption of the high office of President of the Security Council for the month of October. It is my personal pleasure to present my congratulations to you since I have been sitting in the Second Committee, which has been so ably and successfully presided over by you. We are confident that your distinguished qualities and wealth of experience will enable you to guide the Council to constructive achievements. May I also take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to Ambassador El Hassen of Mauritania for his outstanding service as President last month.

57. My delegation welcomed the expressed desire of the people of the Comoros for independence

as manifested by an overwhelming majority in the referendum held last December. Today my delegation responded to the aspirations of the people of the Comoros by supporting their application for membership in the United Nations.

58. It is a matter of gratification to my delegation that the Security Council approved the resolution and expressed its complete confidence that the applicant is fully qualified for membership under the United Nations Charter. My delegation had wanted to see the Comoros' application approved unanimously, and now my delegation is looking forward to unanimous acceptance by the General Assembly of the Council's recommendation.

59. Mr. OVINNIKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*interpretation from Russian*): First of all, may I congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the responsible post you occupy and wish you success in the activities connected therewith. May I also convey our gratitude to your predecessor in this post, the Permanent Representative of Mauritania, Ambassador El Hassen, under whose guidance the Security Council held a number of important meetings last month.

60. Since the Security Council is today considering the question of the admission of new Members to the United Nations, we can only express regret that last month, for a well-known and artificial reason, the Security Council was unable to take a decision on the question of the admission of the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam and the Republic of South Viet-Nam to membership of the United Nations.

61. The delegation of the Soviet Union is pleased to support the recommendation of the Security Council on the admission of the Comoros to United Nations membership. The admission of a new State Member to our Organization is always a welcome event, since whenever this occurs the United Nations is in effect taking a new step towards the achievement of the principle of universality, which is one of the most important features in the effectiveness of this Organization.

62. The attainment of independence by the people of the Comoro islands is a new and important stage in the process of the final downfall of colonialism. Both in the Security Council and in the General Assembly, we have on many occasions emphasized that one of the principles in the foreign policy of the Soviet Union is its consistent and resolute struggle for the speedy removal of the vestiges of the colonial system and the giving of comprehensive support to those peoples which are struggling for their independence and national liberation.

63. It is noteworthy that this year, at a time when we are celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of the historic United Nations Declaration on the Granting

of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples—of which our country was the initiator—United Nations membership has already been enriched by a fifth State which has emerged in the place of former colonies. Thus, the resolution adopted by the Security Council further goes to prove that the process of the abolition of the colonial system is moving towards a successful culmination.

64. In voting for the admission of the Comoros to membership in the United Nations, the Soviet delegation has taken due note that that country's application fully meets the requirements of the United Nations Charter, and we voice the hope that this new Member of our Organization will make a worthy contribution to this Organization's activities.

65. I should like to take this opportunity, on behalf of my delegation, once again heartily to congratulate the Comoros on achieving independence and to wish the people of that country every success in strengthening their national unity and their territorial integrity, and in raising the standard of their well-being.

66. Mr. SALAZAR (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Mr. President, my delegation would like to place on record its pleasure at seeing you, a worthy representative of a nation with which Costa Rica maintains close links of friendship, presiding over the meetings of the Security Council this month. We hope that the successes promised by your intelligence and fine sense of diplomacy will be achieved. In Costa Rica we admire the political and social system of Sweden, which skilfully combines two great aspirations of contemporary man: respect for his human dignity and his right to enjoy, on an equal footing, the fruits of the work of society as a whole so as to satisfy adequately all his social requirements. In many respects my country has a deep admiration for your country. Our admiration was just recently made clear during the visit to Sweden last month by the President of Costa Rica, Mr. Daniel Oduber, as a guest of Prime Minister Olaf Palme.

67. I should like to take this opportunity to pay a tribute to Ambassador El Hassen of Mauritania for the brilliant way in which he discharged the difficult duties of President of the Council during the past month of September.

68. With regard to the item before us, my delegation would like to express our satisfaction at having contributed, by our vote, to the adoption of the Council resolution recommending the admission of the Comoros, a new nation which has recently emerged to independent life.

69. With the gradual disappearance of all forms of colonial domination, the United Nations has come closer to the ideal of universality. This trend has always met with enthusiastic and militant co-operation on the part of my country because we believe

that as the scope of universality is expanded so is strengthened the commitment of all States, under the Charter of the United Nations, to find forms of international coexistence, safeguarding peace and security in the world under the rules and procedures of the Charter.

70. We should like to reiterate the fact that our concept of universality is as broad as permitted by the Charter. In other words, the basis of our opinion is the principle that every independent and sovereign State has the right to be admitted as a Member whenever it agrees to respect and abide by the obligations flowing from the Charter. We find therefore, that the time has passed when, in considering any request for admission, political or ideological judgements can be allowed to prevent the entry of a given State.

71. Our position has been made clear in the Council and in the General Assembly. We are filled with happiness at the admission of every new State which desires to join the international community in the United Nations. We rejoice again today because the Council has agreed to recommend the admission of the Comoros, a nation to which we extend our good wishes for a successful future.

72. Mr. JACKSON (Guyana): Mr. President, the contribution of Sweden towards the progressive development of an international society based on the principles of freedom, equality, justice and the independence of peoples everywhere have long been applauded. Coming from such a background, Sir, we have a right to expect from you a strict upholding of those principles. In the discharge of your responsibilities as representative of Sweden in this Council, and more recently during this month as our President, Guyana has come to appreciate the personal activism and commitment which you have brought to your task. It is thus with great pleasure that we see you occupying the chair today and we look forward to serving under your presidency for the remainder of this month. May I also take this opportunity, Mr. President, to express on my own and my delegation's behalf our gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador El Hassen of Mauritania, for the very skilful and amiable way in which he guided our deliberations, both formal and informal, during the month of September.

73. This has on the whole been a good year for those who value the provisions of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and earnestly pursue the goal of universality of membership in the United Nations. We have seen Cape Verde, Mozambique, and Sao Tome and Principe take their places as Members of this Organization. We have recently welcomed Papua New Guinea to membership and we have now taken the penultimate step leading to the admission of the Comoros to membership of the United Nations. The one and only blot on the record of the Council

of late in this regard has been its inability to recommend the two States in Viet-Nam for membership. However, the responsibility for this cannot be placed on most of the members of this Council. Indeed it is only one Member, the United States of America, which has adopted an intransigent and illogical position in this matter. The serenity, the dignity, and the feeling for history with which the two Viet-Nams have reacted to the imperious American veto confirms us in our knowledge that right and justice will prevail and that in time the Republic of South Viet-Nam and the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam will take their rightful places in this Organization.

74. It was on 6 July 1975 that, in an act of courage and boldness, the leaders of the Comorian people declared that country's independence from France. One week later the Government of Guyana announced its decision to accord recognition to the Comoros. The Government of Guyana said at that time:

"The decision to accord recognition is in keeping with the Guyana Government's commitment to the struggle against all forms of colonialism as well as with its policy of support for the attendant right of peoples still under colonial domination to govern themselves and to be masters of their own destiny."

75. My delegation, therefore, welcomes the decision of the Comoros Government to apply for membership of the United Nations, and we were indeed happy to vote in favour of the resolution, recommending that membership to the General Assembly, which this Council has just adopted.

76. The road to independence for the people of the Comoros has been a long and tortuous one. In their march along that road, the people of the Comoros have had the support of the United Nations which played an important role in ensuring that their right to self-determination and independence would be recognized by the erstwhile metropolitan Power. It is possible that the United Nations may still have a role to play, however, in ensuring that the exercise of that right by the people of the Comoros is fully respected by all Members of the United Nations for there are noises abroad which give rise to anxieties about the preservation of the unity and territorial integrity of the Comoros.

77. Guyana notes that in the letter of 29 September from the President of the National Executive Council and Head of State of the Comoros, it is pointed out that on 22 December 1974 the population of the Comoros Archipelago, that is the territory as a whole, declared themselves overwhelmingly in favour of independence by 94.56 per cent of the votes cast, and that 93 per cent of those eligible took part in the vote.

78. Guyana also notes that the Chamber of Deputies of the Comoros is concerned lest the French Parliament

introduce further delays and impose new conditions which will compromise their independence. The feeling of the Government of the Comoros clearly is that an attempt might still be made to tamper with the territorial integrity of the Comoros. My delegation has listened with keen interest to the statement made by the representative of France in explaining the decision of his delegation not to participate in the vote recommending the Comoros for membership of the United Nations. We have noted from the statement that the consultations which have been taking place in Paris have temporarily come to a halt, but we have also noted his statement on the constitutional position of France in relation to this question. Guyana wishes to affirm its belief, nevertheless, that the people of the Comoros have resoundingly declared their desire to be an independent and unified State with its territorial integrity preserved intact.

79. It will be recalled that in its resolution 3291 (XXIX) of 13 December 1974 the General Assembly had taken note of the statement by the Government of France that the consultations and the independence of the Comoros archipelago would be organized on an archipelago-wide basis and that France intended to respond faithfully to the aspirations of the Comorian people. My delegation expects that that clear and proper position will be honoured, and would only wish to state at this stage that it should be clearly understood. Any attempt at dismemberment of the State would be totally unacceptable.

80. Mr. VINCI (Italy): Mr. President, I should like, first of all, to express to you the congratulations and best wishes of the Italian delegation on your presidency during the present month of October. We have the fullest confidence in you, Sir, knowing very well, from long association with your constructive work in several bodies of the United Nations, all your outstanding professional and personal qualities. You have shown them again in the first consultation that we had under your enlightened guidance. I wish to assure you of our full co-operation.

81. I should also like to associate myself with the well-deserved thanks and congratulations that have been conveyed to your predecessor, Ambassador El Hassen of Mauritania. Ambassador El Hassen, in fact, brilliantly presided over our meetings during the month of September when this Council met to deal with items which raised some problems. We are sincerely indebted to him for the fairness and objectivity which he demonstrated throughout all those meetings.

82. Having cast the positive vote of Italy on the resolution recommending to the General Assembly the admission of the Comoros to the Organization of the United Nations, I wish to express a cordial and friendly welcome to the people and Government of those islands. The Comoros, by their particular geographic location, have been in the long run of

history at the crossroads of various civilizations. The African soul and the faith of Islam form the core of the nation, creating an original culture which constitutes a very special and valuable heritage of the Comorian people.

83. In recent years we have witnessed the rise of many new young States on the international scene. Their concern for the cause of progress, peace and justice has been most valuable, and we are looking forward with confidence to an equal contribution from the Comoros to our common cause, to the achievement of the goals for which our Organization was founded 30 years ago.

84. My delegation wishes to express at the same time its appreciation for the assistance that France has given to the new Comorian State and for its stated will to respect the right of self-determination of those people. I can understand, as the representative of a democratic society which is guided by the rule of law and its own democratic constitution, some of the legal difficulties with which the French Government is confronted and the scrupulous way in which it is trying to overcome those difficulties. We are confident that France will once again act in accordance with its great democratic tradition, remaining faithful to its vocation and dedication to the ideals of freedom and independence.

85. We trust, therefore, that France and the Comoros will be able to find the best way out of the problems—minor legal problems, as we understand from the statement which was made to us by the representative of France—which are still pending, and that the Comoros will therefore soon be in a position to enjoy its full status as an independent, sovereign and democratic Member of the international community.

86. Mr. AL-SHAikhLY (Iraq): Mr. President, I should like to join the other members of the Council in extending to you our warmest congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Council. We are fully confident that under your guidance the Council will fulfil its duties in the best possible manner. I should also like to convey to my brother, Ambassador Moulaye El Hassen of Mauritania, our deep appreciation for the excellent way in which he presided over the deliberations of the Council during the month of September.

87. The Council has witnessed this year the admission of a number of States. This represents an important step towards the universality of this Organization and enhances peace and security in the world. It is therefore a source of pleasure for us that the Council has recommended the admission of the Comoros to membership of the United Nations.

88. Our joy at this decision stems not only from the fact that Iraq has consistently supported, in the

various forums of the United Nations, the right of the people of the Comoros to self-determination and independence, but is rooted much deeper. Iraq believes that it has special historical links with the people of the Comoros. Our common Islamic heritage is yet another element in the ties between our two peoples.

89. The Iraqi delegation has expressed its unequivocal support for the aspirations of the Comorian people and strongly called for the speedy realization of their right to freedom and independence. The national unity of the people of the Comoros was emphasized during the debates held in the Special Committee and in the Fourth Committee. It was considered as one of the essential responsibilities of the administering Power.

90. My delegation would like to reiterate its support for the Government of the Comoros in its efforts to maintain the territorial integrity and national unity of its country. We have great confidence in its ability to administer the affairs of the new independent State. We believe that in joining the United Nations the Comoros will spare no effort in taking part in the endeavours of Member States in building a new world where justice and equality will form the basis for our co-operation. My delegation is looking forward to co-operating with the Comorian representatives in the United Nations as well as within the sphere of Afro-Arab co-operation.

91. Finally, I should like to convey to the Government and people of the Comoros the best wishes of the people and Government of Iraq, and to wish them progress and prosperity.

92. Mr. TCHERNOUCHTENKO (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) (*interpretation from Russian*): Mr. President, may I, on behalf of the Byelorussian delegation sincerely congratulate you on your assumption of the responsible post of President of the Security Council, and may I also wish you success in discharging the responsible functions thus entrusted to you. We should also like to express our gratitude to the representative of Mauritania, Ambassador El Hassen, for his skilful guidance of the work of the Security Council last month.

93. The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR was pleased to vote in favour of the resolution just adopted by the Council which contains a recommendation to the General Assembly to admit a new independent and sovereign State, the Comoros Islands, to membership of the United Nations. The application of that State for membership of the United Nations meets all the provisions laid down in Article 4 of the Charter. The proclamation of independence of the Comoros was the result, first and foremost, of the stubborn and constant struggle to rid themselves of colonial dependence which has been waged

for many years by the national liberation forces in the Comoros.

94. At the same time there should be pointed out the role which has been played by the United Nations, particularly the Special Committee which made its own useful contribution to the cause of the people of the Comoros islands in achieving the goals set forth in the Declaration on decolonization and in the United Nations Charter.

95. The delegation of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic would like to take this opportunity to convey to the people of the Comoros their genuine and sincere congratulations on this important event and to wish them all success in the building of a new life of social and economic progress.

96. Mr. EL HASSEN (Mauritania) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, my first words will be to express to you our congratulations as you take up the task of President of the Security Council. We know that your talents, your diplomatic ability, courtesy and firmness will make it possible for you to guide our work constructively. I should like also to express my thanks for the very kind words addressed to me. I should like also to thank the other members of the Council for the courtesy and friendship which they extended to me in their statements and for their co-operation and understanding during the month in which I discharged the duties of President of this Council.

97. The delegation of Mauritania was very pleased to give its support to the decision taken by the Security Council recommending the admission of the Comoros to the United Nations. Our satisfaction is the deeper because we have followed with attention the political evolution in the archipelago of the Comoros and we had hoped for this result. The result achieved today by the Comorian people is a source of deep pleasure to us because that people has achieved its independence in peace and, we hope, understanding with the administering Power, France, on the basis of scrupulous respect for the national unity and territorial integrity of the Comoros.

98. Our satisfaction is justified also by the fact that the accession to independence of the Comoros is occurring within the process of decolonization, a process which we hope will be pursued and accelerated daily. The decision just taken by the Security Council, which will I am sure be ratified by the General Assembly, expands the African family and at the same time brings our Organization closer to its ideal of universality.

99. In conclusion I should like to express our heartfelt wishes for success to the Government and people of the Comoros and to assure them of Mauritania's complete support in the achievement of their national independence and territorial integrity.

100. The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Mauritania for the kind words he addressed to me.

101. I should like now to make a brief statement in my capacity as representative of SWEDEN.

102. Today, we once again, have on our agenda an application for membership by a newly independent country, now leaving colonial status. The question of the Comores has now for some two years been on the agenda of the General Assembly. Last year, in a consensus decision, the Assembly reaffirmed the inalienable right of the people of the Comoros to self-determination and independence and the unity and territorial integrity of the Comoros. It is therefore an entirely logical step that the Comoros should this year enter the United Nations as a new Member. My delegation has found the application for membership in full accordance with the requirements of the Charter and has therefore supported with pleasure the resolution containing the recommendation of the Security Council to the General Assembly to admit the Comoros as a Member of the United Nations.

103. The admission of the Comoros will mark another step towards the realization of the desired universality of the United Nations. In that context, my delegation expresses the hope that the problems remaining between the Comoros and France will find a negotiated solution in the near future.

104. Sweden will cordially welcome the delegation of the Comoros to the United Nations. The Swedish delegation looks forward to co-operating closely with it in the future, in the conviction that the Comoros will make an essential contribution to the work of the United Nations.

105. The next speaker is the representative of Dahomey, and in my capacity as PRESIDENT, I now invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

106. Mr. ADJIBADE (Dahomey) (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, I should like to congratulate you as you take up your task as President of the Council for this month. Your personal qualities and your tact in dealing with the problems of our Organization assure us that under your guidance the Security Council will be able to make progress. The decision just taken by the Council is a clear demonstration of that belief.

107. I should like very sincerely to thank you, and through you all members of the Council, for having given me the opportunity to speak at this time in the Council's discussion, as Chairman of the group of African States for the month of October and as the representative of the Revolutionary Military Government of Dahomey.

108. The decision just taken by the Council is of particular importance to Africa and the Group of African States as a whole. The entire group of African States is pleased that the Council has taken such a decision. Following its meeting on 16 October, the group, of which I have the honour of being Chairman, issued the following press release:

"1. In accordance with resolution CM/421 adopted by the Twelfth Conference of Heads of State and Government, the group of African States expresses its full support for the request for admission of the Comoros to the United Nations.

"2. The group states that it will do all within its power to ensure the admission as a Member of the United Nations of the Comoros, with the territorial integrity of the archipelago, including the four islands composing the colony of the Comoros, without delay.

"3. In that context, the group believes that it is imperative for the French Republic, the former administering Power, to abstain from any action, gesture or statement which might compromise the independence and the territorial integrity of the archipelago of the Comoros.

"4. The group has given a mandate to its representatives to the Security Council to follow this question with close attention and to report to it in due course."

109. Having heard the position taken by my group the Council will understand that the important decision it has just taken gives us deep joy, despite the fact that some shadows still exist because of the non-participation of France. By this recommendation the United Nations marks a step further towards achieving that universality which is a prerequisite for true international peace and security.

110. The group finds in the Council's decision a gesture of conciliation by France, whose reputation concerning decolonization is well known. It also demonstrates an attitude consistent with the motto, *Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*.

111. The group would like to believe that the fact that France did not participate in the discussion and the vote on the admission of the Comoros to the United Nations is due to, and can be explained solely by administrative or institutional difficulties, and that those difficulties will soon disappear.

112. The group chooses rather to believe that France, a friend and a champion of decolonization remains convinced of the necessity to move with the trend of history and to respond to the true aspirations of the people of the Comoros.

113. The group would not wish to see, in the position taken by France, an expression of any desire to manoeuvre, in the future, in the Archipelago of the Comoros, where governments could be made and unmade, or indeed, of any encouragement, intentional or unintentional, to any urge for secession. We prefer to regard the non-participation of France as indicating that France is not opposing the independence of the Comoros as an entity, one and indivisible, in accordance with the official statements made by various high authorities of France for the global independence of the archipelago of Comoros.

114. We regret the fact that the Council has recommended the admission of the Comoros without the participation and effective support of France. However, the group none the less regards the French position as positive inasmuch as that country did not feel obliged to use its right of veto and abstained from creating another deadlock that could only be condemned by the international community. By its gesture, France has thus lived up to its traditions and is deserving of congratulations for having responded, in one way or another, to the appeal of the group.

115. The group expresses its appreciation to all members of the Council, without whose co-operation the decision you have just taken would not have been taken. The whole of Africa appreciates the full worth of this action.

116. In conclusion, I should like to congratulate our brothers of the Comoros on their admission and on the co-operation they will very soon be giving to the United Nations in general and to the group of African States in particular.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.

Notes

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Plenary meetings, 2364th meeting.*

² See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 23, vol. II, chap. XII, para. 6 (4).*

³ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Plenary meetings, 2364th meeting.*

⁴ See resolution 376 (1975).

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