

**S. A. SALIM TALKING POINTS ON THE OCCASSION OF THE COMMEMORATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RESOLUTION 1514 (XV) ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES, 13<sup>TH</sup> TO 14TH DECEMBER 2010, ALGIERS, ALGERIA.**

## **Greetings**

### **Background of the Resolution**

- 1/3 of the world was under colonialism.
- Over 80 colonial jurisdictions in the form of colonies, protectorates and mandated territories.
- Comprised more that 700 Million people out of the world population of about 3 billion then.
- Article 1 (2) of UN Charter on the principle of self determination and it ambiguity.
- The debate between the word "Independence" as preferred by USSR and Eastern Block and "Self Government" and "Political Institutions" as preferred by the Western colonial powers.
- Bandung Conference in 1955 final communiqué declaring colonialism as evil which should be speedily brought to an end - The Afro- Asia solidarity.
- The First All African Peoples Conference in Accra, Ghana in 1998.
- The Second Conference of African Independent States in Addis Ababa in June 1960.
- The role of the USSR and specifically the proposal by Chairman Khrushchev.

**NB:** The year 1960 saw Sixteen African States including Nigeria and mostly French colonies got Independence.

### **The Resolution 1514 (XV)**

- Essential Elements of the resolution:
  - Assumption of the responsibility of international community
  - Asserted that all people have right to self determination and defined what constitutes self determination.
  - Affirmed to the speedy and unconditional ending of colonialism in all forms and manifestations regardless of colonial powers pretext of inadequacy of political, economic and educational preparedness of the dependant territories.

- Adoption:
  - Resolution was unopposed – 89 in favor, none against, 9 Abstentions (Australia, Belgium, Dominican Republic, France, Portugal, Spain, South Africa, United Kingdom and United States).

\*\*\*\*The declaration had profound impact in supporting the struggle of countries like Algeria.

### **The Committee of 24**

- Come into existence in 1962 pursuant to the decision of the UNGA Resolution 1654 (XVI) of 27<sup>th</sup> November 1961.
- Special Committee took responsibilities of:
  - Special committee on South West Africa.
  - Special Committee on territories under Portuguese Administration.
  - Committee on Information from Non Self Governing Territories.
- A body of the UN dealing with “The progress of peoples in dependent territories towards independence”
- Begun with 17 nominated members and extended to 24 members by UNGA Resolution 1810 (XVII) of 17<sup>th</sup> December 1962 thus earning the title of the Special Committee of 24.
- The Programme of Action of 12<sup>th</sup> October 1970 under Resolution 2621 (XXV) with 5 against votes. Among its elements were:
  - Member states to render all necessary moral and material assistance to the liberation movements.
  - Take stronger measures against the colonial and racist regimes in Southern Africa including sanctions.

### **Special Committee roles:**

- Seeking most suitable ways for the speedy and total implementation and Propose specific measures of the Declaration
- Submitting to the GA a report with recommendation on each territory.
- Receiving and hearing petitions from non self governing territories.
- Informing the Security Council of any developments in the dependent territories which might threaten international peace and security.
- Mobilizing support by the UN specialized agencies for the liberation movements.
- Legitimization of the struggles of the colonial people – UNGA Resolution 2022 (XX) and 2107 (XX).

U Thant: "There is no doubt that this committee (special committee of 24) by its tireless efforts has played a decisive role in keeping the problem of the declaration in the forefront attention and has brought about a concerted approach to decolonization in the United Nations" (1866<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting, October 14<sup>th</sup> 1970).

**NB:** The committee provided vital support to the freedom and liberation movements.

**Memorable Issues/events:**

- The contrasting positions Colonial Powers (eg United Kingdom, France and Portugal) Vs USSR (Russia), Eastern Powers, China, Scandinavia countries and the newly Independent States:
- The significance of Australia exit in 1970 and its return to the committee in 1973
- 1971, US and UK quit - Afro- Asia preferences not fill the seat as reminder of abandonment of colonial powers of their responsibilities.
- The mission of the committee to Niue from 21<sup>st</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> June 1972 and its recommendations which in effect recognition of territories not to aspire for complete independence.
- The significance of mission of the special committee to the liberated areas in Guinea Bissau under the PAIGC from April 2 to 8 1972 and its impact in demolishing Lisbon's myth that there are no liberated areas.
- South Africa and the twin problems of Colonialism and Apartheid
- Membership of Peoples Republic of China in January 1972 and its impact to the committee.
- The status of liberation movements from petitioners to observers. This was a direct result of the historic visit of the mission of the special committee to the liberated areas of Guinea Bissau – together with the recommendation from Working Group in consultation with the OAU and endorsed by GA Resolution 2908 (XXVII) of 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1972.

**1990's and 2000's First and Second International Decades of Eradication of Colonialism**

- Independence for Namibia and democratic dispensation in South Africa and the end of Cold War
- Currently Committee monitors developments in 16 Non-Self-Governing Territories: American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands,

- Gibraltar, Guam, Montserrat, New Caledonia, Pitcairn, St. Helena, Tokelau, the Turks and Caicos Islands, the United States Virgin Islands and Western Sahara,
- As at 1 January 2010, the Special Committee was composed of the following 28 members: Antigua and Barbuda, Bolivia, Chile, China, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Mali, Papua New Guinea, the Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sierra Leone, the Syrian Arab Republic, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, the United Republic of Tanzania and Venezuela.

### **NB: The Question of Western Sahara**

- Historical Background.
- The visit of the mission of the special committee led by the Late Ambassador Simeon Ake of Cote d'Ivoire and its finding foremost of which found that the majority of people were supportive of POLISARIO and want self-determination.
- The famous green march by the King of Morocco into the Western Sahara and its implications.
- The current situation and the principles involved.

### **Taking the stock of the meaning of Independence after 50 years.**

#### **Achievements:**

- Dignity.
- Space to shape our own destiny.
- Stronger voice in the UN and other International Foras.
- Social and Economic progress.

#### **Challenges:**

- Struggles for sustainable peace and prosperity, democracy, Unity and against poverty and external dependency.

### **Imagining Africa in the next fifty years.**

- Realizing Peaceful, Democratic and Prosperous United Africa taking its position as global power.