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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF
INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 8th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 11 July 2000, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. TANOH-BOUTCHOUÉ (Côte d'Ivoire)
(Vice-Chairman)

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In the absence of Mr. Donigi (Papua New Guinea), Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoué (Côte d'Ivoire), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1. The agenda was adopted.

QUESTION OF THE FALKLAND ISLANDS (MALVINAS) (A/AC.109/2000/11 and Corr.1; A/AC.109/2000/L.8)

2. The CHAIRMAN said that the delegations of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay had asked to participate in the consideration of the item. If he heard no objection, in accordance with the established practice, he would invite those delegations to take places at the Committee table.

3. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Giavarini (Argentina), Mr. Fonseca (Brazil), Mr. Pappalardo (Paraguay) and Mr. Benitez Saenz (Uruguay) took places at the Committee table.

Hearing of bodies and individuals having an interest in the question

4. The CHAIRMAN recalled that, at its 5th meeting, the Committee had decided to hear a number of bodies and individuals having an interest in the question.

5. At the invitation of the Chairman, Ms. Halford and Mr. Cockwell (Legislative Council of the Falkland Islands) took places at the table.

6. Ms. HALFORD (Legislative Council of the Falkland Islands), referring to article 1 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which stated that all peoples had the right of self-determination, asked how a new democratic Argentina could take it upon itself to decide whether the population of the Falkland Islands could enjoy that right, and how the Special Committee could support Argentina in denying the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands that right.

7. In order to give a clearer picture of the situation prevailing in the Territory, she provided the following information. The talks held between the United Kingdom and Argentina had led to the adoption of a document now known as the 14 July statement, which provided for the re-establishment of air links with South America by means of weekly flights to Chile with a monthly stop in both directions in Argentina. Thus, Argentine citizens could now freely visit the Falkland Islands on the same basis as citizens of other countries. A simple memorial to the Argentine dead was to be built in the Argentine cemetery in the Falklands. Cooperation was being developed in the preservation of fish stocks and there had been considerable success in deterring poachers.

8. It must, however, be noted that the new Government of Argentina had stated publicly that it would not engage with the Government of the Falkland Islands, despite the United Kingdom letter accompanying the 14 July statement, which stipulated that some of the responsibilities and commitments of the United

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Kingdom Government under the joint statement would be discharged by the Government of the Falkland Islands. It would be a mistake to think that the position taken by the Government of Argentina would in any way affect the relationship between the Governments of the United Kingdom and the Falkland Islands.

9. The only way for the Committee to achieve real cooperation and progress was to recognize the right of the Falkland Islands to self-determination. The right to self-determination was enshrined not only in the Constitution, which was modelled on the Westminster system, but also in the White Paper published by the United Kingdom, which defined the modern partnership with the United Kingdom. Within the framework of that relationship, the democratically elected Government of the Falkland Islands was wholly responsible for the internal management of life on the islands. The islands did not receive budgetary or development aid from the United Kingdom and were not dependent on it. The population of the Falkland Islands was culturally, linguistically and historically different from the peoples of the Latin American States, and it was time that the new Government of Argentina accepted that the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands had the same right to self-determination as the other countries that its armed forces helped to protect.

10. Mr. COCKWELL (Legislative Council of the Falkland Islands) said that the dictionary defined colonialism as the policy and practice of a power in exerting control over a weaker people or area. The right to self-determination was enjoyed by peoples who constituted culturally, socially and economically distinct societies and were able to govern themselves independently. In that connection, the lack of a reference to self-determination in the resolutions on the Falkland Islands was cause for concern. The wishes of the islanders should be paramount. That was one of the guiding principles of the United Nations. Moreover, the issue of self-determination should take precedence over any sovereignty issue. The Argentine Government's argument that the United Kingdom and Argentina should discuss the future of the Falkland Islands was simply prolonging the discussion as to which outside power should implement the policy and practice of exerting control over the Falkland Islands. The representatives of Argentina could not in any way demonstrate that they enjoyed the support of the population of the Falkland Islands and that Falkland Islanders did not constitute a culturally, socially and economically distinct society.

11. Like Argentina, the Falkland Islands had been settled by immigrants from various countries. The population of the Falkland Islands had, through hard work and with the support of the United Kingdom Government, created a small, democratic and self-supporting nation, which was self-financing in all areas except defence, was self-governing in all matters except foreign relations and defence, had an education system that was the envy of many countries of the world, and had introduced free medical care for all islanders. In addition, a very strict environmental protection regime had been established. Recognizing that the Falkland Islands occupied a privileged financial position in the world, the Government was trying to contribute, as far as possible, to many disaster-relief programmes. Over the past 12 months, the Government had allocated funds amounting to approximately US\$ 10 per head of the population for

that purpose. If the world's developed countries had spent similar sums, the problem of third world debt would quickly be solved.

12. It must be recognized that such a level of prosperity could not have been achieved without the historical guidance and assistance of the British Government. In that connection, the Falkland Islanders could not find anything appealing in the idea of becoming part of a country that faced so many economic and political problems. All of that showed that the population of the Falkland Islands constituted a culturally, socially and economically distinct society and was capable of, and wished to have, the right to determine its own future in the twenty-first century. It seemed anachronistic that Argentina should wish to deny the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands the right that it so valiantly defended elsewhere. The Falkland Islands must be granted the opportunity for peaceful, democratic and economic development in the interests of its population, its new and traditional partners and all its neighbours.

13. Ms. Halford and Mr. Cockwell withdrew.

14. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Clifton took a place at the table.

15. Mr. CLIFTON said that life had so arranged his family's fate that part of it lived in Patagonia and the other part in the Malvinas Islands. He was a veterinarian, a specialist in animal nutrition and cattle breeding and a researcher. In that connection, he pointed out that Patagonia and the Malvinas were confronted with similar problems in the primary productive sector, such as worn-out natural resources, a decrease in the price of wool and meat products, an increase in production costs, the lack of markets, and remoteness from consumer centres. That showed that life in Patagonia ran parallel to life in the Malvinas.

16. The purpose of the current meeting was the adoption of a draft resolution in which the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom would again be urged to initiate bilateral negotiations with a view to settling the sovereignty dispute. The United Kingdom continued to take an intransigent position, pursuing a self-determination policy. The lack of a solution to the sovereignty problem and the unilateral application of the principle of self-determination as a means of resolving the issue of the Malvinas was certainly prejudicial to Argentina's territorial integrity. Since the seizure of the islands by the United Kingdom in 1833 and the expulsion from them of the Argentine inhabitants, that country had pursued a calculated policy aimed at keeping the Territory under its illegal administration. As a result of that policy, the population of the archipelago consisted not of indigenous inhabitants, but of the descendants of the British colonizers, who did not want the situation to be resolved through bilateral negotiations. Argentina had always kept in mind the illegal occupation of the Malvinas by the United Kingdom, as well as those strategic and economic interests and advantages that it had sought by seizing the Territory. Those advantages and interests were concealed by the British islanders' position on self-determination. An article published in the British newspaper The Times in April 1985 had pointed out that the United Kingdom attached great importance to the Malvinas, which allowed it to play a significant role in Antarctica.

17. With regard to Argentina's rights to the Malvinas, it must be pointed out that they were based on such principles as Argentina's legal succession to the rights and obligations inherited from Spain; the peaceful occupation of the territory of the archipelago by Argentina and the maintenance of control over it from 1820 to 2 January 1833; and the transfer by Spain to Argentina in 1863 of all the provinces mentioned in the Spanish Constitution then in force and all other territories that belonged to Spain at that time or had previously belonged to it. The United Kingdom, on the other hand, could invoke neither the first settler's right, nor the transfer of sovereignty from Spain, nor any other legitimate title recognized by Spain or Argentina. Its claims rested solely on the brief occupation of the Territory in 1766 and the events of 1833, when the pursuit of the policy of British imperialism had been in full swing.

18. In conclusion, he expressed the wish that, thanks to the Special Committee's efforts, Argentina and the United Kingdom would achieve a peaceful and speedy solution to the dispute over sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands.

19. Mr. Clifton withdrew.

20. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Betts took a place at table.

21. Mr. BETTS said that, having been born in the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) and having maintained close ties with the Islands, he had a special interest in seeing the dispute over the Territory settled once and for all. Currently, the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) were being unlawfully administered by the United Kingdom and represented one of the last redoubts of European colonialism on the American continent. De jure, they belonged to Argentina, but, *de facto*, they were governed by the United Kingdom, without any right whatsoever. If Argentina's claim to sovereignty over the islands had been unfounded, as some were attempting to convince the international community, the negotiations and the memorandum of understanding of 1968 and the 1980 agreement would have been pointless.

22. He asked why the United Kingdom had been ready, at that time, to recognize fully Argentina's right to title over the islands, and what had motivated the United Kingdom Government when it had taken steps to implement United Nations General Assembly resolutions 2065 (XX) and 3160 (XXVIII). Those resolutions recognized that there was a territorial dispute, parties to which were Argentina and the United Kingdom. If Argentina's claim was unfounded, then the two aforementioned resolutions were completely meaningless. The provisions of those resolutions reflected the recognition by Argentina and the United Kingdom of their obligation to accelerate and intensify the process aimed at restoring the lawful sovereignty of Argentina over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), and both Governments should be limited in their actions by those legal parameters. Therefore, the attempt to introduce new conditions that were not formerly specified in the aforementioned resolutions and the unilateral suspension of negotiations by the United Kingdom were violations not only of the provisions of the aforementioned resolutions, but also of the very spirit of the obligations assumed by those States before the General Assembly.

23. Today, no one was surprised that the islanders' representatives were making passionate appeals to the international community to recognize them as a

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"people" in the classical sense of that word. That concept was paradoxical since, having accepted the United Kingdom Act on nationalities of 1983, the islanders had defined themselves as part of the British people. It was not possible to suggest that they could be part of the British people and, at the same time, constitute a Falkland people with an entirely separate identity from the administering Power. The United Kingdom's administration of that Territory was illegal, and it had never been legalized under international law. Furthermore, it was clear from General Assembly resolutions 2065 (XX) and 3160 (XXVIII) that the archipelago's inhabitants were not a "people", but a "population".

24. With regard to the recent references to the fact that some powers would be transferred by the United Kingdom Government to the local Falkland Islands (Malvinas) administration, he drew the attention of the members of the Special Committee to document A/54/253, which contained the text of a note dated 14 July 1999 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of Argentina addressed to the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom. That note stated unequivocally that the manner in which the Government of the United Kingdom would fulfil the responsibilities and commitments it had assumed under the joint statement signed in London on 14 July and the exchange of notes of that same date was an internal matter to be decided by its Government, which had no bearing on the nature of the controversy over sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, or on the Argentine position on the matter.

25. Stubbornly arguing that the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) were linguistically, culturally and historically different from the American States was simply an attempt to delay a responsible and final solution of the dispute. In that connection, he drew attention to the fact that, in recent decades, the most diverse ethnic groups had settled in Argentina, including Ukrainians, Slovenes, Indians, Koreans, Nigerians, Japanese and Cape Verdeans. Each community was a centre for the dissemination and preservation of their national traditions and the maintenance of their native languages. Under Argentina's Constitution, all national groups enjoyed broad political rights and guarantees. The linguistic, cultural and historical differences of those peoples were in no way an obstacle to their full integration into Argentine society. He was confident that, after the definitive solution of the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), the islanders' distinctive identity would not come under threat. In confirmation, he cited article 121 of the Argentine Constitution, in accordance with which all powers not delegated to the federal Government were assigned to the provinces to the extent to which they had disposed of them prior to their incorporation into the State. Lastly, he urged the Special Committee and the United Nations as a whole to pursue their efforts to bring about the resumption of the negotiations between Argentina and the United Kingdom with a view to settling the differences between them and achieving a definitive solution to the issue of sovereignty in accordance with the recommendations adopted by the Organization over the past 30 years or more.

26. Mr. Betts withdrew.

27. At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Vernet took a place at the table.

28. Mr. VERNET said that he was the great-great-grandson of the first Governor of the Malvinas Islands, who had been authorized by the Argentine Government to establish a settlement on the islands and to dispose of all the territory, with the exception of 10 square leagues reserved for the Government. Speaking also as Tierra del Fuego's representative in the Parliament, he requested the Special Committee, on behalf of that national territory, to solve the problem of the colonial status of the Malvinas Islands and ensure its reintegration into Argentina.

29. Turning to the historical background to the issue, he recalled that, in 1825, the United Provinces of the Río de la Plata and the United Kingdom had signed a treaty on friendship, navigation and trade. In that treaty, the legitimacy of the Argentine State had been recognized and the United Kingdom had made no objection or reservation in relation to the Malvinas Islands, which, at that time, had been administered by the United Provinces. The Territory, which had been home to about 200 inhabitants, had achieved considerable success in its development. However, in January 1833, a landing force from the British warship Clio had hoisted the British flag in the Territory and forced its inhabitants to abandon the islands. That had marked the beginning of the dispute concerning sovereignty over the Territory, which still continued.

30. The representatives of the Malvinas Islands stated in the Special Committee that they were British and sought to obtain the right to self-determination, despite the fact that they had no legal relationship with the Territory they were occupying. The principle of self-determination could not be applied in such a conflict situation because, since the very beginning of the illegal occupation of the islands, the United Kingdom had controlled the composition of the population so as to ensure that the overwhelming majority of their inhabitants were British, forcibly driving the Argentine inhabitants from the islands. Violence and seizure by force of a Territory that was part of an independent State did not secure for the State seizing the Territory and its people the legal right to title over such a Territory. For that reason, the General Assembly, taking all those factors into account, had adopted resolution 2065 (XX) and subsequent resolutions, in which the occupation of the Malvinas Islands by the United Kingdom had been deemed an act of colonialism and the option of applying to that Territory the principle of self-determination had been rejected. The aforementioned resolution had acknowledged Argentina's right to claim the islands.

31. The inhabitants of the Malvinas Islands need not be concerned about respect for their legal rights since Argentina, its people and representatives were firmly resolved to safeguard democracy, freedom, justice and the rule of law. But they must also bear in mind that for Argentina the problem of the Malvinas Islands was a conflict linked to the issue of sovereignty over a Territory that it had never renounced and would never do so.

32. In conclusion, he said that the question of the Malvinas Islands could undoubtedly be resolved in a spirit of mutual respect for the parties' rights. He asked the Special Committee to urge the United Kingdom to settle its dispute with Argentina concerning sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia

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and the South Sandwich Islands peacefully and equitably, taking into account the recommendations contained in the resolutions of the General Assembly.

33. Mr. Vernet withdrew.

34. Mr. VALDES (Chile) said that his delegation wished to associate itself in advance with the statement that would be made by the representative of Brazil on behalf of the States members of the Common Market of the Southern Cone (MERCOSUR) and Bolivia and Chile in support of the legitimate rights of Argentina in the sovereignty dispute relating to the question of the Malvinas Islands.

35. Introducing the draft resolution contained in document A/AC.109/2000/L.8, he said that it constituted a new contribution to the efforts to achieve a peaceful solution to the prolonged dispute between Argentina and the United Kingdom concerning the right to sovereignty over the Islands. Chile was firmly convinced that the only way to address the problem was through a peaceful and negotiated settlement. For that reason, the text called for the speedy implementation of resolution 2065 (XX) and other resolutions of the General Assembly and of the Special Committee, and for the resumption of negotiations between Argentina and the United Kingdom with a view to solving the dispute. Lastly, he expressed the hope that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

36. Mr. GIAVARINI (Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of Argentina) assured the participants in the meeting that his Government was firmly committed to achieving the peaceful return to Argentina of the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands because they were part of the country's national territory, and that it was fully prepared to resume bilateral negotiations with the United Kingdom, in accordance with the resolutions of the Special Committee, the General Assembly of the United Nations and the General Assembly of the Organization of American States (OAS). At the same time, despite Argentina's desire to seek an agreed solution to that difficult question, the United Kingdom had not indicated any wish to negotiate. The General Assembly recognized the colonial status of the Malvinas Islands and recommended that it should be brought to an end, in compliance with the principle of the territorial integrity of Argentina and taking into account the interests of the inhabitants of the islands. In 1985, the General Assembly had categorically reaffirmed that position, excluding the applicability to that situation of the principle of self-determination. Also, the Special Committee had repeatedly called on the Governments of both countries to intensify their dialogue and cooperation through the resumption of negotiations.

37. Ten years had elapsed since the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Argentina and the United Kingdom. The process of normalizing their relations had begun with the conclusion of a bilateral agreement, on the basis of which both countries maintained their respective positions on the dispute concerning sovereignty over the Territory. The principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes was a fundamental principle of international relations, and both countries had agreed unequivocally to be guided by that principle in their relations, as indicated in paragraph 3 of the joint Argentine-British statement of 19 October 1989, with which the process of re-establishing

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bilateral diplomatic relations had begun. The document stated that both parties reaffirmed their commitment to respect fully the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, particularly the obligation to settle disputes exclusively by peaceful means. Over the past 10 years, Argentina and the United Kingdom had achieved mutual understanding on such issues as the preservation of fish stocks, the establishment of air links and the transit of persons between the islands and the mainland, the conduct of a feasibility study on demining in the Malvinas Islands, and the facilitation of visits by relatives to the graves of those who had fallen in action.

38. At the same time, there had also been negative developments, specifically, unilateral acts by the United Kingdom Government that ran counter to the letter of the bilateral agreements and the spirit of cooperation that had facilitated their conclusion. Any unilateral act was also contrary to the provisions of the resolutions of the United Nations, in particular resolution 31/49 of 1 December 1976, in which the General Assembly had called upon the two sides to refrain from taking decisions that would imply introducing unilateral modifications in the situation while the islands were going through the process recommended in the relevant resolutions.

39. Argentina was convinced that the Special Committee had an important role to play in the development of the new historical processes in the region. In accordance with its mandate from the Argentine people, the Government of President Fernando de la Rúa was committed to ensuring political continuity and the independence of the State within the framework of the rule of law, and at the same time safeguarding its territorial integrity in conditions of peace, on the basis of dialogue with all States. Taking into account those principles and the positive development of relations with the United Kingdom, the Argentine Government believed that there was a favourable basis for the bilateral resolution of the sovereignty dispute and for overcoming differences. Argentina wished to reiterate its readiness to take into account the interests of the inhabitants of the Malvinas Islands with a view to preserving their way of life and well-being and the full exercise of their individual rights. Argentina was convinced that the problem of the Malvinas Islands could be solved with the necessary political will and through the application of approaches based on the principles of equity and fairness.

40. It was to be hoped that the United Kingdom, as a permanent member of the Security Council which respected the norms of international law, would heed the calls of the international community and demonstrate its readiness to conduct negotiations, taking advantage of the favourable international climate that had developed. He expressed the hope that the draft resolution on the question of the Malvinas Islands would receive the broadest possible support in the Special Committee.

41. Mr. FONSECA (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the States members of MERCOSUR and Bolivia and Chile, recalled the statement on the question of the Malvinas Islands adopted at the tenth meeting of the Presidents of the States members of MERCOSUR, in which the Presidents of those States and the Presidents of Bolivia and Chile had reaffirmed their support for the lawful rights of Argentina in the sovereignty dispute relating to the question of the Malvinas Islands and reiterated the interest of the entire hemisphere in the speedy resolution of

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that dispute, in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations and OAS. He also recalled that, at the meeting of the Presidents of the States members of MERCOSUR and the Presidents of Bolivia and Chile, held on 5 June 1999 in Asunción, Paraguay, the Heads of States had noted with satisfaction the positive dialogue between Argentina and the United Kingdom and had reaffirmed their commitment to the policy of maintaining communications and the free transit of persons, without any discrimination whatsoever, in the context of the efforts undertaken to strengthen those principles, without which the problem of air links with the Malvinas Islands could not be resolved.

42. Mr. BENÍTEZ SÁENZ (Uruguay) endorsed the statement made by the representative of Brazil and reminded the members of the Special Committee of certain views expressed by his delegation in various forums, which had been reflected in the document prepared by the Secretariat (A/AC.109/2000/11), in particular in paragraphs 53 and 59. Speaking in the General Assembly in 1986, the current President of Uruguay had said that Argentina and the United Kingdom must proceed without delay to the negotiating table and engage in a frank and open dialogue, considering all issues of substance on which they had differences and all problems that were hindering the normalization of their relations and the complete and definitive settlement of the dispute. With the passage of time, a dialogue could be said to have begun between the parties, and, at the current time, the international community remained hopeful that the strengthening of bilateral relations between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom would facilitate a peaceful and negotiated solution to the prolonged sovereignty dispute, in accordance with the provisions of the resolutions of the General Assembly and OAS.

43. Mr. PAPPALARDO (Paraguay) said that his delegation wished to align itself with the statement made by the representative of Brazil and reiterated Paraguay's firm support for the lawful rights of Argentina in the dispute concerning sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands. Paraguay had repeatedly set out its position on that question in various international forums, most recently at the OAS meeting held in Windsor, Canada, on 6 June 2000. The Government of Paraguay was firmly convinced that the good level of bilateral relations between Argentina and the United Kingdom represented a sound basis for the resumption of negotiations with a view to achieving a just and lasting solution to the question of the Malvinas Islands, bearing in mind the interests of the Islands' inhabitants and in accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly and the Special Committee. Paraguay hoped to see the continuation of that work, which was being conducted in a spirit of mutual understanding, and which would facilitate the attainment of a peaceful and definitive solution to the problem based on the principles of international law.

44. Mr. TEKAYA (Tunisia) said that the international community wished to see Argentina and the United Kingdom resume negotiations with a view to finding as soon as possible a peaceful, just and lasting solution to the problem of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. The positive climate of dialogue and cooperation between those two countries was to be welcomed and they should be supported in their efforts to continue such dialogue and cooperation.

45. Mr. AL-HUMAIMIDI (Iraq) said that the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism was coming to an end and yet there remained in the world Territories which, on various pretexts, were occupied by foreign Powers. Sometimes, the basis for that situation was the fact that such Territories were supposedly too small or isolated, and sometimes that their populations apparently wished to continue to live under foreign rule.

46. With respect to the Malvinas Islands, Iraq's position was firm and unambiguous: those islands belonged to Argentina, but the United Kingdom had occupied and continued to occupy them, invoking without justification the right to self-determination. In fact, the persons concerned were a few hundred Britons, who had been transplanted there artificially and now wished to remain. Their presence in the Malvinas Islands did not change the historical and geographical realities, which confirmed Argentina's right to the return of that portion of its territory. In his delegation's view, Argentina was entitled to demand from the United Kingdom compensation for the damage inflicted during the period of colonial rule.

47. Mr. SIMAMORA (Indonesia) observed that the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) were a special case, unlike the other Non-Self-Governing Territories on the Special Committee's agenda. An important stage had been reached in the negotiations between Argentina and the United Kingdom. At present the two parties were resolved to create a favourable basis for cooperation in such areas as the preservation of marine resources in the South West Atlantic, the licensing of activities in the special cooperation zone and the implementation of joint scientific research projects.

48. Indonesia called on Argentina and the United Kingdom to continue their dialogue and cooperation, paving the way for further negotiations that would facilitate a peaceful and lasting solution to the dispute, in accordance with the norms of international law and the resolutions of the General Assembly.

49. Mr. ARCAYA (Venezuela), noting that his country was a sponsor of draft resolution A/AC.109/2000/L.8 on the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), along with Bolivia, Chile and Cuba, expressed the hope that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus. Venezuela supported the lawful rights of Argentina in the dispute over those Islands. A peaceful and negotiated settlement of the dispute was the only option. The dialogue and cooperation, which had strengthened in recent years, were creating conditions conducive to finding a way out of the prevailing situation.

50. Mr. SHEN GUOFANG (China) recalled that, in 1965, in its resolution 2065 (XX), the General Assembly had called on the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom to proceed without delay with negotiations with a view to finding a peaceful solution to the problem, bearing in mind the provisions and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations. Since then, the Special Committee had repeatedly adopted resolutions calling on Argentina and the United Kingdom to initiate such talks. China considered the principle of the peaceful settlement of territorial disputes to be generally accepted in the international community. It called on Argentina and the United Kingdom to continue a constructive dialogue with a view to achieving a peaceful and just solution to

the dispute between them. His delegation supported the proposal that the draft resolution that had been introduced should be adopted by consensus.

51. Mr. MEKDAD (Syrian Arab Republic) said that his delegation supported the resolutions of the General Assembly calling for the question of sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) to be resolved. It supported a peaceful solution to that question based on dialogue and negotiations between Argentina and the United Kingdom. It also welcomed the progress already achieved within the framework of that process.

52. Mr. DAUSÁ CÉSPEDES (Cuba) said that his delegation's position on the question of sovereignty over the Malvinas Islands was well known, having been enunciated in both the Special Committee and other international forums. Guided by the principle of brotherhood with Latin American countries that underlay its foreign policy, Cuba wished to reiterate its support for the legitimate interests of Argentina. His delegation hoped that a peaceful solution to that question would be found as quickly as possible, taking into account also the interests of the local population. It trusted that draft resolution A/AC.109/2000/L.8, of which it was a sponsor, would facilitate that process.

53. Mr. AHIPEAUD GUEBO (Côte d'Ivoire) said that his delegation attached great importance to the peaceful, just and lasting resolution of the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas). That question had long been on the agenda of the Special Committee, and conditions were currently most conducive to the enhancement of diplomatic relations between Argentina and the United Kingdom, in the interests of solving the South Atlantic problem. His delegation trusted that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

54. Mr. NEGA (Ethiopia) observed that the situation of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) was a colonial situation complicated by a territorial dispute between the United Kingdom and Argentina. The General Assembly and the Special Committee had repeatedly emphasized the need to solve that question in accordance with the principles of the Charter and General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 2065 (XX) and had called for dialogue and negotiations in order to achieve a peaceful, just and lasting solution to the sovereignty dispute, taking into account the interests of the population of the Islands. It should be noted that cooperation and mutual understanding were developing between the Governments of the two aforementioned States, as was demonstrated by the signing of a joint statement on 14 July 1999 and other steps. Those achievements should be built on with a view to securing the resumption of negotiations. His delegation supported the mission of good offices of the Secretary-General and hoped that it would facilitate the resolution of the question. Lastly, he said that his delegation supported the draft resolution introduced.

55. Mr. MANONGI (United Republic of Tanzania), referring to the question posed in the statements of a number of those who had spoken at the current meeting as to how much longer they would have to call for the decolonization of the Territory, said that the answer was to be found in paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/AC.109/2000/L.8, which stated that the only way to put an end to the special and particular colonial situation in the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) was the peaceful and negotiated settlement of the dispute over sovereignty between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom.

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That statement reflected the positions of both the Tanzanian delegation and the Special Committee itself.

56. On the positive side, note should be taken of the efforts made by both countries, to which reference had been made, to establish air links and to preserve fish stocks in the South West Atlantic, for example, as well as the repeated enunciation by the United Kingdom and Argentina of a policy of finding an agreed solution to their dispute. At the same time, it should be noted that the situation had not changed since the previous year, and the dissatisfaction that had been expressed was therefore understandable. The way out consisted in compliance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions and adherence to international legal precedents.

57. Mr. JORDÁN-PANDO (Bolivia) expressed appreciation to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of Argentina for his detailed and interesting statement, in which he had touched on the history of the conflict under consideration and on the problem of colonialism, which had acquired new forms. He noted with concern that, despite the calls by the Special Committee and the General Assembly to both sides to conduct negotiations and find a way out of the impasse in which the process of solving that problem was stalled, no progress whatever had been achieved. In accordance with its mandate, the Special Committee must solve the problems of countries under colonial rule by the year 2000. That deadline would, of course, be extended, but it was necessary to have a clear picture of how to proceed in the absence of any progress.

58. In his view, the United Nations should not only make statements and adopt resolutions, but also take practical steps. It must maintain close contacts with the parties and demand that they explain why some resolutions were implemented while others were not and why they were not engaging in negotiations. They should address such substantive issues as the problem of colonialism, in the same way as they discussed the problems of fisheries and sought other ways of achieving mutual understanding. That might take a long time, but it was better to spend it moving ahead than rooted to the spot. His delegation intended to put forward a proposal at the Special Committee's meetings for the implementation of some practical measures, not only in respect of the question of the Malvinas Islands, but also in respect of other questions before the Committee. As to the draft resolution under consideration, his delegation, as one of the sponsors, called on the members of the Special Committee to adopt it by consensus.

59. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the sponsors of draft resolution A/AC/109/2000/L.8 had expressed the wish that the Committee should adopt it without a vote. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to proceed accordingly.

60. Draft resolution A/AC/109/2000/L.8 was adopted.

61. Mr. STANISLAUS (Grenada) said that consensus through compromise was an essential instrument of bilateral diplomacy, and his delegation therefore urged the parties to the conflict to continue their efforts to achieve the definitive and successful resolution of the dispute, in the interests of the population of

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the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) which were paramount. The conduct of talks in a spirit of good will meant that disagreement could be expressed without that leading to the end of the discussions, so that, in the end, agreement could be reached for the good of all interested parties, in particular the islanders.

62. Today, as the international community marked the end of the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, it would be desirable for the two great Powers, the United Kingdom and Argentina, to cut the Gordian knot that tied the issue of sovereignty to the principle of the self-determination of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas). Time was passing quickly, and it was therefore necessary, as the Latin proverb said festina lente, hasten slowly. On the question of sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), his delegation offered by way of guidance an ancient Swahili saying: "You cannot turn the wind, so turn the sail".

63. The principle of self-determination enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations could be applied to that situation, as in earlier cases, as the basis for ensuring the right to self-determination of the inhabitants of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), who were the only and final arbiters of the Islands' fate.

64. Mr. LEWIS (Antigua and Barbuda) recalled that the question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) had been before the Special Committee for many years without any appreciable progress having been made. In his view, the question was not within the Special Committee's sphere of competence, since it was a question of sovereignty, not self-determination. The Committee's task was not to determine who should govern a particular Territory, unless the inhabitants of that Territory presented convincing evidence that it was they who should do so. Nevertheless, his Government noted with satisfaction that Argentina and the United Kingdom had managed to achieve substantial progress in ensuring the well-being of the Islands' inhabitants. He referred, inter alia, to the joint Argentine-British statement of 14 July 1999, dealing with the re-establishment of air links between the Islands and South America, the strengthening of cooperation in the preservation of fish stocks and the lifting of the ban on visits to the Islands by Argentine citizens. Such cooperation was an example of the right approach to the resolution of the problems facing developing Territories that wished to live in peace with everyone. He proposed that the members of the Special Committee should be prepared to support such efforts, even though that did not fall within its immediate sphere of competence.

65. MR. DURING (Sierra Leone) said that, by affirming the need for Argentina and the United Kingdom to take into account the interests of the population of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas), the Special Committee had emphasized that it attached great importance to satisfying the aspirations of the islanders. Notwithstanding his country's desire to preserve and strengthen friendly relations with Argentina, he believed that the resolution should have referred to the right of the population of the Islands to self-determination. It was well known that there was no alternative to the principle of self-determination.

66. THE CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee had thus concluded its consideration of the item.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.