of the existing frontiers; if old political entities had had to be reconstituted, independence would not have been achieved in the conditions of peace and harmony which everybody had noted with gratification.

3. At a time when the whole continent of Africa was confronted with complex problems, it would be the part of wisdom to avoid reopening the question of the existing frontiers. From a purely historical point of view, Senegal also could lay claim to a part of Mauritanian territory inhabited by black races, but it refrained from making any such claim because it considered that in Africa the interests of political stability should prevail over any other consideration. The Mauritian controversy might set up a dangerous precedent and draw the countries of Africa into a vicious circle of territorial claims which would sow discord and provoke disturbances at a time when the countries concerned needed to devote all their energies to the tasks of national development. The problem of Mauritanian independence had unfortunately been presented in a context which was historically obsolete. In the present era, the only principle on which the destinies of a people could be decided was that of self-determination; it was for the Mauritanians, and them alone, to determine their future.

4. To satisfy Morocco's present claims the United Nations would have to declare itself against the independence of Mauritanian or refuse to admit that country to membership. At a time when a draft resolution proclaiming the independence of all countries under colonial administration was being prepared, under item 87 of the General Assembly's agenda, public opinion would be unable to understand such contradictory behaviour on the part of the United Nations. True, it had been asserted that the present Government of Mauritania did not represent the Mauritanian people and was controlled by foreign Powers. But even if that were true, the designs of those foreign Powers could certainly not be thwarted by standing in the way of Mauritania's independence and maintaining the colonial system in that country. Moreover, if the Mauritanian people wanted to become part of the Moroccan nation, it would have greater freedom to do so when it was independent. It had also been argued that Mauritania's budget was too small and that independent Mauritania would be forced to call upon other States for subsidies, but of all the former territories of French West Africa only two, Senegal and the Ivory Coast, were not receiving subsidies in order to balance their budgets; that had not prevented the others from becoming independent States and from being present in the United Nations today as Members of the Organization. Furthermore, the very fact that the United Nations was organizing a system of assistance to under-developed countries testified to the fact that those countries were acknowledged not to possess sufficient means to cope with all the obligations of their newly-won independence.

* Resumed from the 1109th meeting.

5. There appeared at present to be two trends in Mauritanian. Some wanted to be merged with Morocco, and spoke of "reunification". On the other hand, the present Government of Mauritanian, supported by its National Assembly, wished to maintain the independ-
ence of the territory. The Senegalese delegation believed that was an internal problem which it
was not the business of the United Nations to solve. If at some future time, as a result of the freely ex-
pressed will of the Mauritanian people, the inte-
grationists succeeded in achieving unification with Morocco, that would certainly meet with no opposi-
tion from the United Nations. Only the future could
tell which path Mauritanian and its people would
choose; until that choice was made, the Senegalese
diplomacy could not take any position which might be
regarded as standing in the way of the independence
of Mauritanian.

6. Mr. SHUKAIRY (Saudi Arabia) said that the prob-
lem of Mauritanian was the sequel to the question of Morocco, which had finally been settled by the access-
ion of the latter country to independence and its ad-
smission to membership in the United Nations. 
Mauritanian was an integral part of Morocco, which
France had severed from Moroccan territory in
the nineteenth century and on which it now wished to
impose independence by its military presence. Thus,
the complaint before the Committee was directed not
against Mauritanian or its people, but against France,
which wished to give Mauritania an independence
fashioned to suit French interests rather than the
aspirations of the Mauritanian people.

7. Mauritanian had always been part of Morocco,
embracing the southern provinces of that country and
extending up to the Senegal River. Those provinces
had been named after tribes of the area, and the term
"Mauritanian" had for the first time been used by France to
designate those provinces in 1904; that explained why
Mauritanian as such did not appear in the annals of
international history. The Romans had applied the
name "Mauritanian" to the whole area of Morocco,
Algeria and Tunisia, but the Mauritania of today had
never been a nation or a sovereign State. Morocco
and Mauritanian formed a spiritual, cultural and
physical unity. The people were the same, as was
shown by the fact that in many tribes some members
lived in Morocco while others lived in Mauritania.
Moreover, the inhabitants of Morocco and of Mauri-
tania had one and the same past. Contrary to the
French representative's assertion, Mauritania had
always been under the spiritual and temporal au-
thority of the Sultan of Morocco. It was sufficient to
recall that in the eleventh century the throne of Mor-
occo had been occupied by the Almoravide dynasty,
which had actually originated in the environs of the
present capital of Mauritania. Moreover, in the Fran-
co-Spanish Convention of June 1900,2 the Gen-
eral Act of the International Conference of Algeciras of
1906 and the Franco-German Convention respect-
ing Morocco of 4 November 1911, Mauritania was
recognized, explicitly or implicitly, to be part of Mor-
occo.

8. When France had first invaded Mauritania, the
provinces of the territory had been ruled by emirs

2/ Convention between France and Spain for the delimitation of the
French and Spanish possessions in West Africa, along the coast of the
Sahara and the coast of the Gulf of Guinea, signed at Paris on 27 June
1900.

responsible to a higher authority, the Sultan of Mor-
occo, to whom they paid homage, whose envoys they
received and in whose name they offered prayers.
The annals of French history were full of documents
attesting that the emirs of Mauritania paid allegiance
to the Sultan. A French Government publication on
Moroccan affairs, the Yellow Paper, contained a
series of letters and reports from French officials
in West Africa emphasizing that the occupation of
Mauritania could never be dissociated from Moroccan
affairs and that the conquest of Mauritania was only
one aspect of the general plan for the domination of
all of Morocco. Various documents dated 1906 and
1907, reproduced in that publication, made it clear
that the Sultan of Morocco was the supreme authority
in Mauritania.

9. In April 1855, when France had embarked on its
military adventure, the Sultan of Morocco had sup-
plied the Emir of Trarza with military equipment
and had given him full authority to repel the French
aggression. In 1857, under the command of the Emir,
the Moroccan forces, including those of Mauritania,
had taken the offensive and crossed the Senegal River.
After that victory, an agreement had been concluded
between the Emir and France under which France
had been required, inter alia, to pay a duty of 5 per
cent of the cost of rubber shipped down the Senegal
River. That agreement had come to an end in 1902,
which year had marked the beginning of large-scale
operations by France to annex Mauritania. The tribes
in all the provinces, under the command of their
emirs, had bravely resisted the French invasions;
but the struggle had been one between Morocco as a
whole and France. Only after having proclaimed its
protectorate over Morocco, in 1912, had France been
able to conquer Mauritania. The French administra-
tion of the south had then become separate from that
of the north, but Mauritania had still not on that
account become detached from the history of Mor-
occo.

10. To conquer Morocco, the French had had to dis-
member it, according to the strategy of imperialism.
Thus, Morocco had been shared between Spain and
France. But the liberation movement had continued
throughout the country, regardless of artificial bound-
aries. That struggle for unity and freedom would bear eternal witness to the will of the Mauritanian
people to remain united with Morocco. There could
have been no further doubt on that score after the
battle fought against the French at Casablanca in 1911
by tribes which had crossed over from Mauritania
under the command of the great leader Sheikh Ma-
el-Ainai. After the Second World War, the Mauri-
tanians had again been in the forefront of the move-
ment for Morocco's unity and independence; they had
joined the Moroccan liberation army and had shed
their blood until Morocco had gained its freedom,
then the survivors had transferred from the libera-
tion army into the Royal Army of Morocco. Thus,
hundreds of Mauritanians were now serving under the
Moroccan flag, which was their own flag.

11. The movement for unity had not come to an end
in March 1956 when Morocco's independence had been
proclaimed. Mauritania, for instance, had still re-
mained under foreign domination. The struggle had
then entered a new phase, and the Moroccan Govern-
ment had taken every opportunity to press France
for the return of Mauritania. In a note to the French
Government dated 28 August 1956, it had expressed the most explicit reservations concerning the integration of parts of its territory into the Organisation commune des régions sahariennes, under the name "Saharan zones of the French Republic". On 11 November 1956, it had strongly protested against the proclamation of the so-called "Islamic Republic of Mauritania". Thus, the Moroccan Government had tried all peaceful means of settling the dispute before bringing the matter to the United Nations.

12. The self-determination of which the representative of Senegal had just spoken could be exercised only in freedom, and not under the shadow of military bases and armed forces. The referendum of 28 September 1958 to which the representative of France had referred (1109th meeting) had put the question of independence alone; there had been no mention of unity, for France continued to oppose unity by keeping its troops in Mauritania. Only recently, the French army had initiated a campaign of repression against the people of Mauritania. The political parties had been dissolved and no less than fifty leaders had been imprisoned, so as to pave the way for secession under the guise of independence. If the present attempt at dismemberment succeeded, the peoples of Africa and Asia would be exposed to the danger of a new imperialism operating through separation and partition.

13. France had launched a campaign to demonstrate that pan-Arabism was an expansionist movement, of which the Mauritanian problem was one manifestation. Nothing could be more false. Arab nationalism was a natural reaction against the imperialism under which the Arabs had always suffered, and harboured aggressive designs against no one. The Arab world represented one people, one language, one past, and one civilization. It merely wished to be reunited. Morocco had no plans for domination; it wanted only the restoration of Moroccan unity. France's policy, on the other hand, was motivated by a desire to exploit Mauritania's resources. The Société des mines de fer de Mauritanie, for instance, had nothing Mauritanian about it except the ore and the name. Its capital was exclusively French, British, Italian and German.

14. Morocco was not seeking any profit. After reunification all Moroccans, whether from the north or from the south, would have the same rights. There was already a Minister of State from Mauritania in the Moroccan Cabinet, and the Moroccan Ambassador to Libya was a former Mauritanian deputy to the French Assembly. To support Morocco in the present case was thus to support the cause of freedom and unity based on justice.

15. Mr. N'GOUA (Gabon) said that his country would stand by Mauritania and defend it against the annexationist designs of Morocco, which appeared to be justified neither by history nor by the nature of things. It was idle to discuss religious, linguistic, historical, ethnical, geographical, economic, juridical and other ties existing between Mauritania and Morocco, for those ties, undeniable as they might be in some cases, were not sufficient to justify the Moroccan claims. Similar arguments could be invoked in nearly every part of the world. All the South American States, for example, could justify the annexation of all or part of their neighbours; they had much in common, but differed on one essential point, namely, the firm desire to be their own masters, while living on good terms with neighbouring countries. The political argument of the right to self-determination seemed to prevail over all others. To show that the people of Mauritania really wished to merge within a greater Moroccan entity, more would be needed than a few statements by refugees.

16. If there was really a unanimous and clearly expressed wish on the part of the Mauritanian people, the problem would easily be solved, for Mauritania would soon be a Member of the United Nations and would be able to express its views freely. Mauritanian self-government had reached so advanced a stage that it had proved possible to proclaim the Islamic Republic in November 1958, and the independence of Mauritania was no more illusory or disputable than that of the young African countries which had just been admitted to the United Nations.

17. The present frontiers of the African countries which had recently attained independence had been drawn more or less arbitrarily by the colonial Powers in the wake of conquests and treaties; they were often artificial and did not always coincide with ethnic and linguistic groupings. Nevertheless, in the course of time new nationalisms had arisen which in nearly all cases embodied quite disparate groups of people who had now chosen a common destiny. What would become of the young African countries, which were still trying to establish their identity, if they embarked on the foolish course of revising frontiers? The pan-African ideal would no doubt be achieved eventually, but for the moment, wisdom required the retention of the status quo.

18. The independence recently attained by Mauritania was perfectly valid, and the Mauritanian people, who had had an opportunity to make their views heard freely, would always be able to do so. It was for them to state their wishes. If there was genuine feeling in Mauritania for some form of union or federation with Morocco, the truth could not be suppressed. The Government of Gabon hoped that reason and moderation would prevail and would impose their own solution.

19. Mr. BOUCELLA (Morocco), exercising his right of reply, said that France bore a heavy responsibility in the Mauritanian question. It had created a completely artificial State and had confronted the world with a "fait accompli". Now it was trying to have that decision ratified by the United Nations. That sort of behaviour was inadmissible.

20. The French representative, in his statement at the 1109th meeting, had expressed surprise at Morocco's claims, which, he had said, not only were unexpected but were of recent origin. Since the proclamation of Morocco's independence in 1956, however, the Moroccan Government had sent many notes to the French Government, and had made every effort to settle the matter peacefully. It had not done so earlier because it had been barred from the exercise of its sovereignty. Before the establishment of the Protectorate, Morocco had exercised sovereignty over the entire area extending to the Senegal River and thus over Mauritania.

21. France would have the Committee believe that Morocco was trying to prevent Mauritania from exercising the independence which had been gener-
ously granted it. Surely, however, it would be more correct to say that an attempt had been made to prevent Morocco from exercising sovereignty over part of its territory. It might be true that Mauritania did not constitute a single geographical entity with Morocco, but that did not detract from the political unity of the two parts of the territory. Climatic and geographical contrasts were displayed by India, the USSR and the United States, and indeed by France. Ibo Khalil Alm Lighting the French representative had paid, had never referred to the Jebel Daran as a political frontier but as a dividing line between geographical areas with different climatic conditions.

22. The French representative had pointed out that the Almoravide dynasty had been of Mauritanian origin. Surely that proved that Morocco and Mauritania were one and the same. It was not a question of reunifying them, for they constituted a single entity. At the beginning of the century treaties had been concluded between France and Spain providing for the dismemberment of Morocco—a plan which had remained secret until the establishment of the protectorate. The treaties of 1767 and 1799, to which the French representative had referred, were obsolete.

23. The statement had been made that Morocco's natural frontier was the Oued Noun. But there were 700 kilometres of coastline between the Oued Noun and the frontier of the territory over which Morocco exercised sovereignty at the present time; thus, the existing situation belied the assertion that the Oued Noun was the natural frontier of Morocco. Moreover, the French representative had failed to mention the Anglo-Moroccan treaty of 1895, according to which Tarfaya province, i.e., the area between the Oued Dra and Cape Bojador, was undeniably a part of Morocco.

24. The town of Tindouf, to the east of the Rio de Oro, had been under the jurisdiction of Rabat until 1952, as was attested by a decree of 11 January 1935.

25. Fort Trinquet, which was even further south than Tindouf and was at present included within the "Islamic Republic of Mauritania", had been part of the Agadir command until fairly recently, and Moroccan currency alone had circulated there. Indeed, it was in order to blur the historical line of development of Moroccan sovereignty that France had constantly altered the boundaries of the Sahara and tampered with geographical nomenclature. The frontier problem could be solved only by a return to the realities which had preceded the establishment of the protectorate.

26. The French representative had asserted that Sheikh Ma el-Alin had become a bitter enemy of the Sultan. In all official French correspondence, however, Ma el-Alin was referred to as a loyal subject of the King of Morocco, who had given him the mission of defending the country's territorial integrity and resisting the occupying Power.

27. The French representative had referred to a handful of Mauritanian refugees in Morocco who had followed in the wake of certain political leaders embittered by electoral set-backs. Such allegations were frequently made about men who refused to yield. The Moroccans, the Tunisians and the heads of the Algerian National Liberation Front had received similar treatment. For his part, during the Second World War he would not have regarded General de Gaulle and his fellow members of the Government-in-exile as embittered men or as a negligible handful of individuals. Mentioning the most prominent of the Mauritanian refugees in Morocco, he said that those persons were in reality the most representative elements in the Mauritanian population. The so-called "Mauritanian Government" was made up entirely of puppets, and many of its members—such as Ahmed Dyaye and Sidi Moktar N'Diaye, who came from Senegal, Mr. Maurice Compagnet, who controlled the transport system, Mr. Henri Bruno, who controlled the fishing industry, and Mr. Franz Bourgarel, who was acting as Minister of the Interior—were not Mauritanians.

28. A reference had been made to elections. A week before those elections, however, the courts had handed down a series of harsh sentences, condemning various individuals to death, to exile, and to forced labour for life or for ten or twenty years. Under those conditions, the people could scarcely have been able to express its will.

29. He wondered why Algeria was not being given the independence which had so generously been accorded to Mauritania. The fact was that new techniques were being used in an attempt to install a new form of colonialism which would make it unnecessary to send an expatriation force. The precedent of Mauritania could prove a dangerous one. The very same problem would arise if, in the near future, States should be asked to recognize the independence of Katanga. Morocco did not wish to lose the goodwill of its friends, particularly its African friends, but it would never be guided by anything but the true desires of the people.

30. The question of time was of extreme importance, for if France's position was upheld, Mauritania would become a Member of the United Nations and reluctance to intervene in the domestic affairs of a Member State would be used as a pretext for not discussing the problem further. That was why his delegation had requested that the debate should take place before 28 November 1960, the date set by France for proclaiming the independence of the so-called Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

31. Mr. THIAM (Senegal) said that he was unfortunately obliged to correct certain inaccurate statements made by the Moroccan representative. The latter had said that the Mauritanian Government included two Senegalese, Sidi Moktar N'Diaye and Ahmed Dyaye. In actual fact, those two individuals were Mauritanians, who lived not in Senegal but in Mauritania and had always lived there.

32. Mr. PAZHWA (Afghanistan) requested that in view of the importance of the time factor the list of speakers on the problem of Mauritania should be closed on the following day.

33. The CHAIRMAN said that there appeared to be few representatives wishing to speak in the near future on the problem of Mauritania. He would propose to the Committee on the following day that a date should be fixed for closing the list, if the number of speakers listed warranted it at that time.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.