3. President de Gaulle had made it clear more than a year earlier that France's policy towards Algeria was based on the principle of self-determination, and that France would accept the choice of the Algerian people when the time came for its decision to be made. On 4 November 1960 he had said that the course he had decided in the name of France to follow would lead to an Algerian Algeria, an emancipated Algeria, in which the Algerians themselves would decide their destiny. In the same speech he had said that he had never ceased to propose, in good faith, to the leaders of the external organization of the rebellion that they participate without restriction in the talks relating to the organization of the consultation of the electorate, in the campaign which would take place freely before the consultation, and in the supervision of the voting. He had merely asked that beforehand there should be an agreement to stop the killing. Finally President de Gaulle had made it clear that he had already invited the information media from all over the world to observe the conduct of the referendum, so that its genuineness might be widely verified. On 10 December 1960, during his recent tour of Algeria, President de Gaulle had told an audience of 400 French officers that it was vain to pretend that Algeria was a province like Lorraine or Provence: it was an Algerian Algeria which would become, by the force of things, more Algerian every day. It was clear from President de Gaulle's statements that the process of enlarging Algeria's autonomy was to be accelerated. Moreover, the French people were to be asked in less than a month to declare in a referendum their approval of the interim policy and the final act of self-determination.

4. The experience which the United Kingdom had had in helping dependent territories to attain freedom and independence enabled it to appreciate the careful thought which had found expression in President de Gaulle's decisions, and his delegation was convinced that they opened the way to the cessation of hostilities and to the free expression of the will of the Algerian people.

5. In his statement at the opening of the debate (1121st meeting), the Tunisian representative had indicated that he was apprehensive on two grounds. In the first place he felt that there was a danger that Algeria might be partitioned. However, co-operation between all the communities in Algeria was one of the central objectives of President de Gaulle's policy, and nothing was more likely to intensify the danger to which the Tunisian representative had referred than a refusal by the rebel leaders to co-operate with the President of France, or a refusal to explore in good faith the proposals he had set forth. The second fear expressed by the Tunisian representative was that the plan for the development of autonomous institutions might create "one of those pseudo-governmental groups" intended to oppose the nationalists. If the leaders of the rebellion feared that their influence
in the country might be adversely affected by the developments which were planned in the immediate future, their best course would be to participate, as they had been invited to do, in those developments.

6. Turning to the draft resolution before the Committee (A/C.1/L.265 and Add.1-2), he said that the question was whether it would help towards a settlement. In his Government's view, the answer to that question was no. Quite apart from the impropriety of the United Nations seeking to impose a referendum on a sovereign State, it would be imprudent for the Organization to act in the manner proposed in the draft resolution. Algeria was already set upon a course leading towards the aims specified in the draft resolution. Self-determination was already assured. The Algerian people would shortly make a choice as to independence. Guarantees for the validity of the vote had already been given. The adoption of such a draft resolution would not only cast doubts, which no one could justify, on the sincerity of President de Gaulle, but would seriously jeopardize the possibility of his policies reaching a fruitful conclusion.

7. For that reason, and because it was convinced that the course on which France was embarked could lead to peace and justice for all in Algeria, his delegation considered that it would be most ill-advised for the United Nations to attempt to intervene. By refraining from action, the United Nations, far from shirking its responsibilities, would have adopted the wisest course. It was with that belief that his delegation felt it must oppose the draft resolution.

8. The decisions which, in the course of the next few weeks, would guide Algeria into a happier future could not be made in the United Nations. They would be made by the people of Algeria, and by the people of France under the wise and courageous leadership of its President. The United Nations should not make their task more difficult.

9. Mr. FAWZI (United Arab Republic) said that, in six years of warfare against French tyranny, the people of Algeria had sacrificed a million lives on the altar of freedom. Those sacrifices, which had to be laid at the door not only of France but of France's allies, were the most expressive and unchallenged referendum the world had ever known. Yet, to eradicate all lingering and thoroughly unjustifiable doubts, his Government, with many others, supported the holding of a referendum to be organized, controlled and supervised by the United Nations, according to procedures guaranteeing integrity and full freedom. If General de Gaulle and his Government were sincere in conceding the right of the Algerian people to self-determination, they should welcome and encourage the holding of such a referendum.

10. Algeria's territorial integrity and distinct personality entitled it to full independence. During his recent tour of Algeria, General de Gaulle had been able to see for himself the depth of the feelings of the Algerian people, and their unshaken resolve to be free.

11. At the fourteenth session of the General Assembly, the First Committee had approved a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.246 and Add.1), urging the two parties concerned to enter into "pourparlers" to determine the conditions necessary for the implementation of the French unilaterally proposed "cease-fire. That draft had not been put to the vote in the plenary Assembly; instead, a new draft resolution (A/L.276) had been submitted but had not obtained the necessary two-thirds majority.

12. The minority which had opposed that draft resolution had felt that it was preferable that the Assembly stand aside, in view of the circumstances prevailing at the time and notably of General de Gaulle's declaration of 16 September 1959 recognizing the right of the Algerian people to self-determination. Those countries had argued that General de Gaulle should be given time to carry out the policy outlined in his declaration of 16 September. The result of that attitude had not been happy and his delegation trusted that at the current session the Assembly would assume its responsibilities and take decisive steps for putting an end to the tragedy. It was regrettable that the French delegation was again absent and that it maintained the untenable thesis that the Algerian question was exclusively within the competence of France. Articles 10 and 14 of the United Nations Charter were undeniably applicable and, as the precedents proved, the Algerian question was within the competence of the United Nations. No one could properly claim that France's action in Algeria was not likely to impair friendly relations among nations.

13. The Algerian leaders had spared no effort to achieve peace by direct negotiations with France, but they desired peace with honour, a genuine peace and not merely a "peace of the brave". Following the speech made on 14 June 1960 by the President of the French Republic, the Algerian Provisional Government had sent two emissaries to Melun to make preparations for the arrival in France of an Algerian delegation headed by the Prime Minister, Mr. Ferhat Abbas. However, it had quickly become apparent to those emissaries that the French Government conceived the proposed negotiations as outright surrender. The sequence of events had shown that the attitude of French official circles had not changed; there was to be no negotiation so long as there was no cease-fire. France expected the Algerians to lay down their arms, lose the strength that they had acquired in combat and place the country under the control of General de Gaulle. In other words, there was to be no negotiation on the future of Algeria so long as Algeria had not been broken up in advance.

14. In spite of that, on 4 July 1960, the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic had maintained its decision to send to France a delegation headed by Mr. Ferhat Abbas to meet with General de Gaulle, on the understanding that that measure could be constructive only if the procedures and conditions of that meeting were not imposed, but were the result of an agreement between the two parties. Only three days later, however, General de Gaulle had stated that the conditions that he had laid down unilaterally were final.

15. The French Government's official statements clearly showed that although France was speaking of the right of self-determination, its attitude and the practical measures it was taking amounted to a complete denial of that right. The Algerians were supposed to exercise the so-called right of self-determination in the presence of huge French armies, which would be responsible for guaranteeing the "freedom of the vote". Even with all that stage-management, no date had yet been set for the refer-
endum. Further, it was apparent from official French statements that the preparations for a possible referendum would be a long-term task, perhaps even the work of an entire generation. It was therefore not surprising that Mr. Ferhat Abbas had formally requested France to agree to a referendum arranged, supervised and controlled by the United Nations, a referendum which would be no innovation in international practice. He had further stated that, meanwhile, the Algerian people would fight on.

16. The time had come for the United Nations to take the necessary measures to expedite solution of the Algerian problem in conformity with the wishes of world opinion. That was why the delegation of the United Arab Republic, with numerous other delegations, was submitting draft resolution A/C.1/L.285 and Add.1-2.

17. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Poland) said that recent events in Algeria had clearly demonstrated the absolute necessity of settling the Algerian question without delay. For six years the United Nations had been advised to act cautiously and not to take hasty measures. But meanwhile the war had cost the lives of a million Algerians. It was thus hard to understand those who wanted to move more cautiously than ever and who wanted no clear-out solution to be offered.

18. On the General Assembly's agenda there was an item on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples (agenda item 87), and among the problems connected with the abolition of colonialism, the Algerian question was the most important. When seventeen new States, including sixteen African States, had recently been admitted to the United Nations, it was paradoxical that Algeria did not appear among them in view of the fact that the Algerian people's struggle for freedom had contributed in large measure to accelerate the process of liberation in the other countries of Africa. The reason for that situation was that while the United Nations had been acquiring a deeper knowledge of the true nature and implications of the Algerian problem, while the Algerian people had received increasing support, while the influence of the colonial Powers had declined throughout the world, France had even further opposed the independence of Algeria and had received an ever more apparent aid from its allies for that purpose. In reality, without the military and financial support of the NATO countries, France could not have resisted the national liberation movement in Algeria for so long a time. That was why the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic had protested, not only against the forced inclusion of Algeria in the area covered by the North Atlantic Treaty, but against the Treaty itself, as an instrument of colonialism and as a factor of unrest for the Maghrib as a whole. Moreover, in view of the current trend towards decolonization, the resistance to the Algerian people's aspirations to liberty became more and more anachronistic and was, therefore, doomed to failure.

19. The Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic had given ample proof of its readiness to enter into negotiations with France with a view to finding a peaceful solution to the problem, but each time it had met with a categorical refusal. One year after proposing the "peace of the brave", which amounted, in fact, to unconditional surrender, France had realized that it must change its approach, and President de Gaulle had recognized the right of the Algerian people to self-determination. But the declaration of 16 September 1959 had contained so many qualifications and conditions that it was practically meaningless, since it denied the existence of the Algerian people and envisaged the regrouping of the population along racial and religious lines, according to the division of votes in future elections. Secondly, the decision to submit the decision of the Algerian people to the French people for its approval had undermined the very principle of self-determination and democracy. Finally, according to more recent statements, the elections in Algeria were to be organized and controlled by the French Army. It was not surprising, therefore, that the representatives of the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic had asked for safeguards of the Algerian people's freedom of expression. It was for that purpose that Algerian representatives had gone to Melun in the summer of 1960, but, unfortunately, all their proposals had been rejected.

20. The new French proposals did not take into account the essential facts of the Algerian problem, for a plan aimed primarily at safeguarding the interests of the colonizers while ignoring the true aspirations of the Algerian people could not possibly end the war. Conditions must be established which would allow the Algerian people freely to decide its future on the basis of respect for the unity and territorial integrity of Algeria. Those were the reasons why the Polish delegation supported the draft resolution before the Committee (A/C.1/L.285 and Add.1-2).

21. Mr. TARABANOV (Bulgaria) said that his country had always defended the principle of national self-determination, had always expressed its keen sympathy with nations threatened by the imperialist forces of aggression, and had always stated its willingness to give active assistance to those nations in safeguarding their national independence and sovereignty. That policy had guided Bulgaria in its attitude to the Algerian question from the outset of the Algerian people's heroic struggle against colonial oppression. There was no doubt that the Algerian question was a colonial question within the jurisdiction of the United Nations; but the French delegation had always contended that the question was exclusively within the sovereign jurisdiction of France. The French delegation had, nevertheless, at first participated in the debates, and it was regrettable that, having recognized the right of the Algerian people to self-determination, the French Government should have withdrawn from discussions of the problem. However, the President of the French Republic had admitted at Biarritz on 10 December 1960 that it was "understood that Algeria was a province of France; that was encouraging in itself, and should open the way to unambiguous decisions on self-determination for the Algerian people.

22. As the right to self-determination had been forcefully asserted by the great majority of representatives during the debate in the plenary Assembly on agenda item 87 (Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples), it was understandable that the French delegation was unable to refute the abundant arguments in favour of the right of the Algerian people to decide its own future. In the absence of the French delegation, however, the representatives of France's allies con-
trived, by devious although unfortunately effective means, to defend the arguments and interests of the French colonialists during the debate, and especially when the time came to vote. Those countries were the members of NATO, which not only supplied France with the material means of continuing the war of extermination against the Algerian people, but blocked any positive suggestion put forward by the nations which wanted to guarantee conditions necessary for genuine self-determination by the Algerian people. That was a further indication of the imperialist and colonialist nature of the North Atlantic military alliance, which pursued a general policy of preparing for war and of oppressing peoples, especially colonial peoples. It could scarcely be otherwise, since the monopolists of the United States and of certain Western European countries were seeking to share with the French colonialists in the exploitation of Algeria’s wealth, especially the wealth of the Sahara, just as they were sharing in the exploitation of the wealth of the Congo, now under a new form of colonial domination. The war against the Algerian people and the participation of the aggressive NATO alliance in that war were eloquent proof of the perils of the collective colonialism which was beginning to emerge in place of the old forms of colonialism. All the newly liberated countries and all those which defended the right of peoples to self-determination must, therefore, form a united front against the alliance of imperialist circles, so that the General Assembly might take such decisions as would enable the Algerian people to recover its national independence as soon as possible.

23. It was good to note that the principle of self-determination had the solid support of a steadily increasing number of countries which were determined to put an end to colonial domination. It was still necessary, however, to find a means of ensuring its practical application, particularly in the case of Algeria. In that connexion, one might ask what were the real intentions of the French Government. For that Government, while recognizing the right of the Algerian people to self-determination, was seeking to avoid an impartial referendum in Algeria under the auspices of the United Nations, and was proposing instead to organize a referendum under the supervision of the police and the army. There was plenty to say on the subject of elections "b l’algérienne", but the really astonishing point was that the French Government had also decided to organize a referendum in France so that the French people could express its opinion on self-determination for the people of Algeria. The object of that referendum could only be to associate the French people with the policies of the French settlers in Algeria. He asked what would then be left of the United Nations Charter, the resolutions of the General Assembly and the declarations of the present Government of France. Moreover, the question which was to be put to the voters in the referendum referred to self-determination not for "the people" of Algeria but for "the populations" of Algeria. The intention would appear to be to prejudge the issue and decide in advance that Algeria would be divided into various parts, which could be played off one against the other in order to serve the interests of the French colonizers and the other imperialist Powers. In view of the obvious dangers of such a policy, the United Nations should take steps to solve the Algerian question in an absolutely clear manner, in keeping with the interests of the whole Algerian people, and to safeguard the unity and integrity of the country. Consequently, in order to enable the Algerian people to express their wishes in sincere terms, the Bulgarian delegation would vote for the draft resolution before the Committee (A/C.1/1.265 and Add.1-2).

Sir Claude Corea (Ceylon) took the Chair.

24. Mr. PETER (Hungary) said that the disastrous events of recent days showed that President de Gaulle could not prevent further tragedy if he maintained his present policy. Only the United Nations could provide a peaceful solution to the problem. If it failed to act in an effective way, the Algerian people would have to face incalculable new dangers, at great risk to international peace and security.

25. The carefully prepared dramatic spectacle which President de Gaulle’s visit to Algeria had been intended to be, had turned into a tragedy. The real position of the Fifth Republic was highlighted in the speeches of General de Gaulle to the Congress of the French Army. One of those speeches, made on 10 December 1960, had been published in full in The New York Times of 11 December. It would be sufficient simply to read it out to show the catastrophe to which the Algerian question would lead if the Fifth Republic were allowed to implement its plan for an "Algerian Algeria". For example, General de Gaulle had stressed that there was no doubt that the French Army would achieve a military victory in Algeria. One might have supposed that he would seek a peaceful solution to the problem. Yet the French President had added that France was gradually recovering its national greatness and that its military exertions in Algeria constituted without any doubt one of the factors in its reviving prestige. Thus, at the very time when the world Organization was discussing general and complete disarmament, and when peaceful settlement of the Algerian question by negotiation had long been advocated, the French Government was openly expressing its intention of continuing the military operation which, in its view, would enhance its prestige. In fact, France was the only State Member of the United Nations which openly intended to continue military operations regardless of their consequences. After having said that every day Algeria would become more Algerian than the day before, General de Gaulle had added that the question was primarily a matter of reviving the soul and the spirit of France and of giving an example of an army doing its duty. In other words, it was the French Army which was to "remake" the soul of Algeria. If those words had not been uttered in the sad context known to everyone, they might have been thought to herald a renaissance of the French spirit. Unfortunately, against the tragic background of the present situation in Africa, a person hearing that statement could only register astonishment and demand urgent safeguards against a growing danger.

26. It was difficult to find an explanation for France’s stubbornness with regard to the question of Algeria. As one could see, the Algerian policy pursued by General de Gaulle’s friends completely disregarded the facts of the situation and pursued chimeraic dreams. It was true, of course, that General de Gaulle spoke about the new world situation and about the independence movement of the African nations and the changing character of an Algerian Algeria. But his words
lost all value in the light of the following facts. General de Gaulle had gone to Algeria to gain support for his ideas on self-determination. However, instead of addressing himself to the French settlers, he had strolled among the Moslem crowds, which had always favoured self-determination. Had he wished to persuade the Moslems that they would always belong to France and that such had been the meaning of the words "Algerian Algeria"? Or had he wished to convince the settlers that an Algerian Algeria would in fact belong to France? Indeed, he had said that the Algerians had an absolute need of the French settlers and that Algeria would perish without France. On the other hand, no one ever said that France needed Algeria. The official silence on the importance to France of the economic resources of Algeria and the Sahara showed up the falsity of all the statements made in France in favour of self-determination.

27. The present situation was completely new. There was no longer any question of calling for negotiations. The only means of achieving a solution was to consult the Algerian people, as provided for in the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.265 and Add.1-2). France's prestige could only gain if it refrained from sabotaging the deliberations of the United Nations and heeded the opinions of those who were well disposed to the Algerian people.

28. Mr. POLYANICHKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) thought that, at the present stage of mankind's development, when the General Assembly was considering the question of the complete abolition of colonialism, it was wholly intolerable that a small group of imperialists should arbitrarily reduce millions of human beings to slavery. Since the Algerian people had taken up arms to restore freedom to their country, twenty-two countries had put an end to foreign domination and had become sovereign States. If the Algerian people had made even greater sacrifices than others in the fight for freedom, it was because of the heroism of its fighters. The Algerian war had shown that colonialists that it was impossible to maintain the colonial régime by force of arms. Those who had died in Algeria had shed their blood for all of Africa. As the representatives of the African States had said, the freedom of Africa was inseparable from the freedom of Algeria, and all the States on the continent owed it to themselves to help the Algerian Republic to win peace and independence. That duty was indeed shared by all the States of the world.

29. The Algerian war was being waged between freedom and colonialism; between the partisans and the opponents of independence, equal rights for all peoples, peace and friendship. As the head of the Ukrainian delegation had said at the 85th plenary meeting, the only fault of the Algerian people was that they wished to live in freedom and independence. The Ukrainian people, for their part, would help all those who were struggling against colonialism because, true to the very nature of a socialist State, the Ukrainian SSR could not but support any movement for national liberation. For the overwhelming majority of mankind, the principle that a people could not be free if it enslaved others was the very cornerstone of international relations.

30. The Ukrainian people prized highly the love of liberty demonstrated by the Algerians. They had not forgotten that in 1919 the Algerians had refused to serve as mercenaries for France and the other countries of the "Entente" which had attempted to crush the Ukrainian people: two Algerian regiments had then refused to obey the orders of the French command in the Odessa region. Recently a ship had left Odessa for Tunis, carrying medicine and food for the Algerian refugees. Those facts testified to the solidarity of the Algerian people and their desire to live in their own country.

31. Having established themselves in Algeria by fire and sword, the French imperialists were still clinging to the decayed colonial system. The Algerian war was the most cruel and the most despicable of all colonial wars; every crime of colonialism was reflected in it. More than 1.5 million Algerians were shut up in so-called "regroupement centres". Hundreds of thousands of peaceful citizens had been killed in the bombing or the fighting. Three hundred thousand Algerians had fled to neighbouring countries. Moreover, several thousand Algerians were held in prisons and concentration camps in France.

32. The French colonists were not the only persons responsible for the Algerian people's sufferings: their NATO allies, in particular the United States, were supplying France with arms and financing the Algerian adventure. The representatives of Saudi Arabia had, at the 112th plenary meeting, eloquently described the aggressive character of the political and military bloc. The United Nations, the allies of France had to pay the sorry part of advocate for those who were stifling the Algerians' freedom, and they were making every effort to prevent the Organization from helping Algeria to achieve peace and independence. That support was by no means altruistic; it was dictated by the interests of the international monopolies and the oil companies.

33. Under those circumstances, all the peace-loving countries of the world were perfectly entitled to extend assistance to the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic. The futility of the efforts made by the colonialists to solve the Algerian problem by force was obvious to the whole world, including France. It was essential to put an end to the Algerian war, and the United Nations was not entitled to play the part of a passive observer; it must assume its responsibilities.

34. The Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic had consistently maintained its readiness to settle the Algerian question on the basis of a free expression of the Algerian people's will. Unfortunately, it was faced with opposition from France. The Melun talks had shown that the Government of General de Gaulle was rejecting negotiations on a footing of equality and was demanding the surrender of the Algerian fighters.

35. Although the de Gaulle Government had on 16 September 1959 recognized the Algerians' right to self-determination, it had in fact refused to allow them to exercise that right. On 4 November 1960, President de Gaulle had stated that, if an Algerian Republic was eventually established, he intended to protect those Algerians who wished to remain as French citizens. As well as French interests, since he had told a gathering of army officers in the Constantine in March 1960 that France had the right to be in and remain in Algeria, it could be seen that the formula "Algerian Algeria" was merely a new label for the old colonialist position. On 8 December 1960, in the
National Assembly, Mr. Joxe, Minister of State for Algerian Affairs, had stated that the secession of Algeria must be avoided and that France would not renounce its rights; and the Prime Minister, Mr. Debré, had added that the restoration of peace in Algeria would demand sustained efforts which might have to be the work of an entire generation. For the French colonialists, self-determination meant the Algerians’ right to give up self-determination.

36. Another danger had been pointed out by several representatives: the possibility of partition of the country. On 12 April 1960, Mr. Debré had said on the Algerian radio that, if the majority voted in favour of secession, there would be partition; "sacred principles", he had added, would not permit of any other solution. But current international law knew of no principles which justified the partition of a country at the will of a foreign Government. The principle invoked was really that of "divide and rule", so dear to the imperialists. They were currently trying to carry out that policy under cover of a pseudo-independence granted to their puppets and mercenaries. But the peoples now, fortunately, knew how to separate the wheat from the chaff.

37. Further victims had quite recently fallen during a peaceful demonstration in favour of the National Liberation Front (FLN) and of the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic. Those sacrifices would certainly not have been in vain. They unmasked the French leaders and opened the eyes of all who had in any way been misled by the manoeuvres of the Algerians’ oppressors. The latest events had proved that the entire Algerian people supported the FLN and the Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic. In those circumstances, the United Nations must reply to the Algerian people’s question, and tell it whether it could count on the Organization’s support or whether a mechanical vote manipulated by the traders in peoples’ independence would once again operate. For its part, the Ukrainian delegation thought that the draft resolution submitted by a group of African and Asian countries (A/C.1/L.265 and Add.1-2) represented the minimum that the United Nations could do for the Algerian people at the present time.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.