The American continent was bound by close ties to the continent of Africa; as Bolivar had once said, America was a mixture of Europe and Africa. It was for that reason that in their efforts to secure a programme guaranteeing their independence and development, the African delegations could count on the sincere and ardent support of all the peoples of America.

4. The reference to independence in the title of the agenda item would appear at first glance to be superficial in view of the fact that most African countries had already attained independence. The entire African continent, however, was not yet independent. Moreover, the General Assembly had adopted, by an overwhelming majority, a declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples (resolution 1514 (XV)) calling for an acceleration of the process of progressive development of all peoples towards self-government and independence to which the United Nations was dedicated, in keeping with the accelerated tempo of life and development throughout the world. The spokesmen for the African States had shown great wisdom and realism when they had rejected the Soviet Union’s demand for the immediate abolition of colonialism and had recognized the necessity for preparing the peoples concerned for independence. The representative of Nigeria, for example, had spoken of a maximum period of five to ten years for the achievement of independence for the whole of the continent of Africa.

5. The problem of the new nations was to preserve their independence and freedom and to withstand the contamination of certain ideological influences in combination with economic influences. While there was nothing wrong with ideology per se—the introduction of ideas was always salutary and enlightening—ideology in the contemporary era had become so belligerent and dogmatic as to constitute a potential threat to freedom. Ideological propaganda was particularly dangerous to young nations whose institutions had not yet been consolidated and who had not yet acquired the experience of free and democratic living. These nations should bear in mind that freedom could not be preserved without a constant struggle; that democracy was an asset to be jealously guarded; and that they must be vigilant in defending their independence and sovereignty.

6. Africa should beware of the danger of ideological conflict, for it would shatter African unity. That unity could be preserved only by a voluntary dedication of the African States to the universal ideals of freedom and justice. Africa should not permit its sovereignty to be adulterated; it should cling to its freedom to determine the forms of government which best suited it; it should open its frontiers to all races and peoples. Its motto should be not merely “Africa for the Africans”, but “Africa for all mankind”.

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Chairman: Mr. Karel KURKA (Czechoslovakia).

AGENDA ITEM 88

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. BELAUNDE (Peru) considered that the illustrative draft resolution (A/4515/Add.1) annexed by the United States delegation to its request for the inclusion of the present item in the agenda of the fifteenth session, although it did not constitute the plan of concrete economic assistance the representative of Nigeria would have wished, contained many valuable ideas which the Committee should take into account both in considering what was meant by the independence of the African countries and in envisaging the technical assistance and economic co-operation which those countries could be given by the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

2. In his view, Africa’s problems represented the acid test for the United Nations. The African nations, newly created and newly admitted, gave the Organization greater universality, and the solution of Africa’s problems offered the United Nations a tremendous challenge and one which, he hoped, it would successfully meet. The sure development of Africa in an atmosphere of peace would go a long way towards ending the cold war. If the countries of East and West, and especially the great Powers, could co-operate in the United Nations to solve the problems of Africa, the world might yet be saved. If the Committee could find a practical and human formula for guaranteeing the independence and the development of the African continent, it would have contributed notably to the strengthening of the United Nations.

3. It was gratifying, therefore, that the present item had been given priority, and the initiative of the United States in the matter was particularly welcome. At the 1137th meeting, the representative of the United States had assured the representative of Nigeria, in response to his demand for deeds and not words, that his Government was prepared to co-operate with the African countries in preparing concrete and comprehensive proposals and in the drafting of an appropriate resolution. That was cause for satisfaction to all the Committee, and in particular the delegations from Latin America.
7. The Peruvian delegation hoped that all the great Powers would reach agreement on a programme for the development of Africa. It was inconceivable that any great Power should refuse to contribute to the economic progress of Africa, which was a prerequisite for the strengthening of its political and moral independence.

The meeting rose at 11.25 a.m.