



November 10, 1967

PORTUGUESE TERRITORIES

Text of statement delivered in Fourth Committee by
the Canadian Representative Mr. Gordon Cox on
November 10, 1967 on question of Portuguese
Territories

Mr. Chairman,

In giving this brief explanation of the position which my Delegation will take on the vote on the resolution on Portuguese territories contained in Document A/C.4/L.872, I should first of all like to refer to the statement made by the Representative of Hungary in this Committee on November 3 in which he referred to reports that 60 F-86 fighter aircraft bought in Canada had been sold by the Federal Republic of Germany to Portugal. This report is inaccurate and I wish to assure the Committee that no such aircraft were sold to Portugal.

I should also like, in connection with operative paragraph 8 of the resolution, to make it clear that Canada has not made any contributions of Canadian military assistance to Portugal since November 1960 and our contributions prior to that time were supplied on the understanding that they were for use only in the North Atlantic area. With respect to the sale of arms and military equipment on a commercial basis, it has been the policy of the Canadian Government since 1960 not to permit the export to Portugal or to territories under Portuguese administration of any arms or equipment which in our judgement would be used for military purposes in Portuguese overseas territories.

However, Mr. Chairman, despite our policy on arms sales to Portugal, we still have serious reservations about the wording of operative paragraph 8 and, if it were put to a separate vote, we would have to abstain on it. We also would vote against paragraphs 6 and 13. Moreover, we also have reservations about the wording of certain other paragraphs in the resolution. For example, paragraphs 9, 10, and 11 contain implicitly or explicitly directions to the Security Council and, as a member of the Council, we do not wish to prejudge our position, particularly as one aspect is being considered by the Council at this very moment.

Despite our reservations about the wording of this resolution, which are similar to the reservations we had about the resolution approved last year and which we voted against, my Delegation intends in the voting today to abstain on the resolution before us. We believe in the basic principles underlying the resolution and we regret very much that up to now the Government of Portugal has not discharged its clear responsibility to cooperate with the United Nations, nor has it given any indication that it intends

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to alter its attitude to its overseas territories by fulfilling its obligations under Chapter XI of the Charter. Canada believes that Portugal should fulfil these obligations and make provision for significant progress to that end. We have stated these views both publicly and privately.

Mr. Chairman, we would have hoped that the resolution on this item would have been so drafted as to permit a clear demonstration by almost unanimous support of the basic truth that the membership of the United Nations is united in its conviction that the path which Portugal has been following is a wrong one and that the population of territories now under Portuguese administration have the right to enjoy a peaceful transition to independence.

In this and other problems we consider that real progress can be made not on a basis of a contest of votes, but rather in the context of a consensus, based on that united conviction. We will therefore abstain from voting on the resolution before us.

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