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Text of Statement to be made by the Canadian Representative to the United Nations, Mr.George Ignatieff, at the Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee for South West Africa, Wednesday, March 15, 1967

I should like to set out some of the reasons why the Canadian delegation is joining in tabling this proposal. Up until today the only precise proposal tabled had been that of the African delegation. It is obviously desirable that those who have different approaches should make them clear by similarly formulating precise proposals.

As I stated on February 16 to this Committee proposals before it will have to be examined in depth if the plan which emerges is to have sufficient support for the United Nations action to be successful. Hence we think that any proposal put forward must be considered as subject to modification and improvement as discussion proceeds in the Special Session of the General Assembly, and in the subsequent months. We have presented our proposal to be examined and tested along with the others.

The ideas contained in this text have already been explained by my Italian colleague. It is based on the idea that the United Nations is obliged to consider the most effective means of trying to attain its objective of bringing about self-government and self-determination for the people of South West Africa.

As can be seen from our proposal, we attach importance to ascertaining the wishes of the people of the territory before a final decision is taken on the method of administration. The decision should also be made in the light of an investigation of conditions in the territory. We hold this procedure to be important in choosing the most practical means of administration as required in Resolution 2145.

The exploratory process we are advocating evidently requires contacts with the existing administering authority.

The Canadian delegation also believes that it is our responsibility under the Charter to exhaust all other means of realizing the purposes of Resolution 2145 before considering coercive measures. For these reasons we consider paragraph 3 to be an essential element in the terms of reference for the special representative.

The proposal with which the Canadian delegation is associated is put forward as a positive and we hope stimulating contribution to the Committee's thinking. We do not regard ourselves as committed to every word in this text and are prepared to consider alternative suggestions. In fact, I would like to suggest that we should attempt in drawing up our report to reflect the widest range of possibilities presented in this Committee for consideration by the Special Session of the General Assembly.