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SOUTHERN RHODESIA

Text of Statement to be made in the Fourth Committee, by the Canadian Representative, Mr. Gerard Pelletier, M.P., Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, on Tuesday, October 10, 1967.

The Canadian delegation has already congratulated you, Sir, on your election. We also wish to extend congratulations on their unanimous election to Mr. Braithwaite whose nomination for Vice-Chairman we had the pleasure of supporting, and to Mr. Dashtseren, our Rapporteur. The Fourth Committee is fortunate in its Bureau. My delegation also welcomes Ambassador Djermakoye our new Under-Secretary.

Mr. Chairman, in the United Nations, as well as in meetings of the Commonwealth, my Government has strongly upheld the position that it is inadmissible that a society should be organized on a system of racial discrimination under which a minority of whites exercise political and economic control over the vast majority of people. For a number of years now the United Nations has considered the difficult problem of how to ensure that Rhodesia will progress to independence on the basis of equality for all its inhabitants. It has been impossible so far to attain this goal because of the intransigent opposition of the white minority which has attempted to shelter behind the barricade of its illegal declaration of independence. The international community has more than once condemned the action of the Salisbury regime in unilaterally declaring independence and no government has recognized that independence. The concern of the United Nations with the situation has been shown by the priority accorded to the item on Rhodesia at sessions of this Assembly, by the numerous resolutions approved by it and by the historic decisions of the Security Council culminating in the determination by the Council that the situation in Rhodesia constitutes a threat to international peace and security.

The Government of Canada recognizes the special responsibility of the United Kingdom for Rhodesia and will continue to support measures which the United Kingdom takes to bring about a return to constitutional government in the territory. In his statement in the General Debate, the Secretary of State for External Affairs re-affirmed the Canadian position that Rhodesia must not be granted independence before majority rule is obtained. We are anxious that visible progress be made soon toward the goal of majority rule.

I have referred earlier to the Security Council's decisions, first to request voluntary sanctions and, last December, to impose mandatory sanctions against key items of trade with Rhodesia. Even before the call for mandatory sanctions, Canada, as the Committee was informed last year, had placed a complete embargo on trade with Rhodesia with very limited exceptions of a humanitarian nature and this embargo has been maintained. My country has been regularly supplying the trade statistics requested by the Secretary-General in his Note of January 13, 1967. We have been impressed with the loyal response of many other countries which have ceased trading in the sanctioned items in response to the decision of the Security Council of December 16, 1966. We are disturbed, however, that this resolution is not being implemented fully. It is our hope that all countries will co-operate in complying with the Security Council's decision in order to achieve the purposes of the United Nations with respect to Rhodesia. While it may be difficult to avoid some evasions, serious and determined efforts towards implementation of the Security Council resolution will increase the impact of sanctions.

My delegation looks forward to seeing the report of the Secretary-General which he intends to submit to the Security Council on the effects of the decisions of the Council. It is evident that the measures which have already been taken have had some effect on the economy of Rhodesia and particularly on the tobacco industry which has been an important source of foreign exchange. I must admit frankly however that so far the effect of sanctions has not been as rapid and far-reaching as we had hoped. But we believe that we must take into consideration the long-term effect of mandatory action against the illegal regime. While we recognize that the regime has been able to cope to some extent with the immediate effects of the measures imposed by the Security Council, the cumulative effect of these sanctions over a longer period should be much greater. Various proposals for strengthening sanctions have been put forward in the Assembly and in other forums. The Security

Council will doubtless consider in the light of the anticipated report from the Secretary-General whether further mandatory measures are advisable. I should like to assure the Committee that the Canadian Government is giving serious study to this question and, as a member of the Security Council, will put forward its views when the question of Rhodesia is again considered by the Council.

Mr. Chairman, the General Assembly in previous resolutions has advocated the use of force in order to put an end to the illegal regime in Rhodesia. The Committee is well aware that my Government has not been able to support recommendations of this nature. The Canadian delegation informed the Committee last year that our misgivings arose because of the human and material cost of such action and the grave political, social and economic repercussions inside and outside Rhodesia of such a course. We continue to believe that the right course is to do all in our power to bring about a peaceful resolution of this grave problem. The Charter of the United Nations provides for means of persuasion short of force to compel respect for United Nations decisions and the Security Council has already taken the important step of deciding for the first time to impose mandatory economic sanctions. By these measures the Council has attested the rejection of the illegal regime by the world community. We believe that the aim of these measures is not only isolation and coercion but also encouragement to change. We continue to hope that eventually the illegal regime will be willing to accept the requirements of today's world and that there will be established in Rhodesia a just multiracial society based on non-discrimination and equality of opportunity. When this happens there is no doubt that the world community will respond and welcome the Rhodesian people, led by their majority, into the ranks of progressive humanity.