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Chairman: Mr. Enrique de MARCHENA
 (Dominican Republic).

AGENDA ITEM 13

Report of the Trusteeship Council (A/3170, A/C.4/350, A/C.4/L.472, A/C.4/L.474) (*continued*)

GENERAL DEBATE

1. Mr. MENCER (Czechoslovakia) said that as a result of the great movement of national liberation which had swept the world since the Second World War the transformation of the Trust Territories into independent States was now only a matter of time. The Administering Authorities were not, however, willing to accept the accelerated rate of progress necessitated by the march of history and endeavoured to hinder that progress, as was clear from the report of the Trusteeship Council (A/3170). Some administering Powers had made a sustained and concerted attempt to block progress by inventing new forms of colonial domination. It was, however, impossible to arrest or deceive history by rechristening a Trust or Non-Self-Governing Territory an "Overseas" or "Autonomous" Territory, nor was the nature of the colonial system in a Territory changed by the creation of a so-called Assembly, which in reality had no legislative power, or by changing the name or title of its colonial governor. In drawing up Chapters XII and XIII the authors of the Charter had had in mind not the form but the substance of political advancement and the attainment of independence, which was the ultimate goal of the Trusteeship System.
2. The main concern of the Fourth Committee at the present session was the question of the establishment of dates for the attainment of self-government or independence by the Trust Territories. In resolutions 558 (VI), 752 (VIII), 858 (IX) and 946 (X), the General Assembly had provided that the Administering Authorities should include in their annual reports estimates of the period of time required for the attainment of self-government or independence and information concerning the measures they contemplated in order to lead the Trust Territory, in the shortest possible time, to that ultimate objective. Unfortunately the Administering Authorities had not complied with those resolutions and had refused all co-operation in that direction. His delegation could not let that negative attitude pass in silence, nor could it accept the arguments advanced by the Administering Authorities in support of it.
3. Some Trust Territories, notably Togoland under British administration, Somaliland under Italian administration and Western Samoa, had already made real progress towards self-government. Those questions had already been discussed in the Committee, and he would therefore not dwell on them further. In Tanganyika, however, the Administering Authority had refused to set a date for the attainment of self-government, on the ground that to do so might create political instability and cause many less-developed indigenous authorities to assume they had been abandoned before they were to assume control of their own affairs. His delegation could not agree with that view and was convinced that such fears were groundless. The policy adopted by the Administering Authority could only be regarded as one of deliberate delay and perpetual postponement.
4. In connexion with the Cameroons under British administration, it was to be hoped that the establishment of a date for the attainment of independence would be discussed during the conference of representatives of the Cameroons and Nigeria which was to be held in London during the current year and that the United Kingdom Government would bear in mind the General Assembly's recommendations in that respect.
5. The question of the attainment of independence and the establishment of a date was particularly acute in the Cameroons under French administration, in view of the continual state of unrest among the population and its dissatisfaction with the administration of the Territory. There the situation was that a population with a high degree of political and national consciousness was extremely dissatisfied with the slow political development planned and forcibly imposed by the Administering Authority. The tragic events of April and May 1955 made it urgent that the Committee should give special attention to the development of the Cameroons under French administration. The intensification of the liberation movement among the indigenous inhabitants called for more decisive action on the part of the General Assembly especially with regard to the need for the establishment of a final date for the attainment of independence. His delegation could not agree with the arguments presented by the French delegation in the Trusteeship Council in support of its refusal to establish such a date. The population of the Cameroons had proved that it was prepared not merely to request its liberty but to fight for it. In the circumstances, the establishment of a date for that Territory was of the utmost urgency.
6. In the Territory of Ruanda-Urundi, a ten-year plan of economic and social development had been established, but political objectives had been completely ignored. There was no doubt that the refusal of the Administering Authority to establish a date for the attainment of independence acted as a powerful brake on the development of the Trust Territory. Backwardness in the political field necessarily retarded progress in the economic and social fields. The establishment of a date would stimulate the whole rhythm of public life in that Territory.

7. A similar situation existed in the Territory of New Guinea under Australian administration: there, too, the Administering Authority had refused to comply with the General Assembly's resolutions on the establishment of dates.

8. His delegation was convinced that the establishment of dates was both necessary and possible in all the Territories he had mentioned. The Fourth Committee could not content itself at the present session with a repetition of the appeals it had already made. For that reason his delegation would support the Soviet draft resolution (A/C.4/L.472).

9. One of the primary obligations of the United Nations was to promote and support the right of the indigenous inhabitants to present petitions, and to ensure that petitions were carefully examined. The time factor was important in that connexion. In spite of the great efforts made by the Trusteeship Council and the Standing Committee on Petitions during the past year, the situation was still highly unsatisfactory, since the number of unexamined petitions increased every year. It was necessary for the Trusteeship Council and the Fourth Committee to take quick action to remedy the situation and to work out a better, more practical and faster procedure.

10. Closely linked to the question of petitions was that of the free exercise of the right of petition. Unfortunately fresh complaints had been received during the past year from petitioners who had been persecuted by the Administering Authorities for exercising their right of petition. Complaints had also been received about the difficulties placed in the way of petitioners applying for passports. In both cases, the complaints had concerned the Cameroons under French administration and had come from both parts of the Cameroons. His delegation would therefore support the three-Power draft resolution (A/C.4/L.474).

11. It would also be necessary for the Trusteeship Council to give greater attention in future to the question of administrative unions, in order to avoid the conversion of those unions into political unions, which always involved the danger of an annexation of Trust Territories. The situation called for the establishment of appropriate new legislative and administrative bodies in the Trust Territories—bodies which would in no way be subordinated to the respective organs of the neighbouring colonies and would be able to transform themselves in the future into sovereign and completely independent bodies.

12. Although his delegation had concentrated its attention on questions which were primarily political in character, it by no means underestimated the need for economic, social and cultural action in the Trust Territories. The situation in those fields was far from satisfactory and called for urgent reforms, as the report of the Trusteeship Council made clear.

13. His delegation would support any other draft resolution or amendments calculated to improve the present situation in the Trust Territories.

14. Mr. JAHANBANI (Iran) said that although some steps had been taken by Administering Authorities for the furtherance of economic and social development in the Trust Territories during the eleven years of the Trusteeship System's operation, the inhabitants of those Territories had not been so well served in the political and educational fields. Since the principal role of the Trusteeship System was the attainment of self-

government or independence by the Trust Territories, the political development of their inhabitants was of the utmost importance to the United Nations. Yet no definite date had so far been established for the attainment of independence by any Trust Territories, with the single exception of Somaliland under Italian administration.

15. Some Administering Authorities saw two main difficulties in setting intermediate and final dates for the attainment of self-government. They had said that the two essential requirements for self-government were that the Territory should possess a large enough body of people prepared to assume responsibility and possessing the confidence of the majority of the people, and that the Territory should be well enough developed economically to provide adequate funds for the maintenance of the government and of public services. The first requirement could, however, only be achieved by education, the development of representative bodies and the training and appointment of indigenous inhabitants to fill responsible administrative posts. Unfortunately, the Administering Authorities had not paid enough attention to the accomplishment of those objectives. In the case of Tanganyika, for instance, the report of the Trusteeship Council showed that total educational expenditure in 1954 had been £20 per person for Europeans, £3 per person for Asians and not more than £.3 per person for Africans. In the light of those figures, the great difference between the educational development of Europeans and of Africans was understandable.

16. With regard to the lack of political advancement, Ruanda-Urundi provided a good example of the situation in the Trust Territories. It was stated on page 70 of the report of the Trusteeship Council that legislative power was exercised by the Belgian Parliament and by the Crown, that the Governor-General of the Belgian Congo and the Governor of Ruanda-Urundi had emergency legislative powers and that executive powers were delegated to the Governor of Ruanda-Urundi. African participation in the legislative or executive powers was restricted to the Council of the Vice-Governor-General of Ruanda-Urundi, which included only a few African members with very limited responsibility. It was his delegation's opinion that the Administering Authority was not taking the necessary steps to promote self-government and independence in the Territory. One of the main reasons for that situation was that the Territory had been subordinated to the Belgian administration in the Congo and that its development was not independent.

17. In order to obtain a body of well-educated indigenous inhabitants able to assume the responsibilities of government, the Administering Authorities should increase the number of indigenous inhabitants serving in administrative posts and should further educational development in the Trust Territories.

18. His delegation would also point out that in spite of the fears expressed by the Administering Authorities that the Trust Territories could not provide adequate funds to maintain government services, there were many small nations with fewer inhabitants and less national wealth which nevertheless managed to govern themselves.

19. In connexion with the economic development of the Trust Territories, his delegation noted that labour conditions, housing and agricultural production had improved.

20. In his delegation's view the most important part of the Trusteeship Council's report was the section dealing with the establishment of intermediate target dates and final dates for the attainment of self-government. In that connexion his delegation welcomed the initiative which had been taken by the Government of New Zealand in establishing a time-table for the attainment of self-government by the Territory of Western Samoa. Other Administering Authorities could do no better than follow New Zealand's example. The more advanced countries should not use their superior knowledge to enslave the population of Trust Territories or to exploit the resources of those Territories in the interests of their settlers. His delegation wished to see the rights of the peoples of all the Trust Territories respected and to see those Territories take their place in the not too distant future as free and independent Members of the United Nations.

21. Mr. NEKLESSA (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that he would confine his remarks primarily to the question of the progress made by the Trust Territories towards independence. As that was the final aim of the Trusteeship System, the fundamental task of the Administering Authorities should be to do everything in their power to assist the indigenous inhabitants in attaining it. The question was particularly timely in view of the ever-growing movement for the liberation of dependent peoples in colonial areas. Although millions of people had been freed from the colonial and semi-colonial yoke in the past decade, the colonial system had not yet been abolished and was continuing to sow the seeds of enmity among nations and to engender international conflicts. The United Nations, which had proclaimed in its Charter the principle of equality of all nations and the right of peoples to self-determination, could not be indifferent to the anticolonialist liberation movement, particularly in the Trust Territories. Unfortunately it was clear from the reports of the Trusteeship Council and the Visiting Missions that the situation in those Territories was far from satisfactory. Not only had no measures been taken to promote the attainment of independence but practically nothing had been done to encourage the development of organs of self-government. The Administering Authorities had refused to set target dates for the attainment of either independence or self-government, on the pretext that to do so would be detrimental to the development of the Territories. His delegation, however, was of the opinion that systematic advancement towards independence and the establishment of target dates would have the effect of stimulating the interest of the indigenous masses in the progress of their respective Territories.

22. In Tanganyika, whose people were considered by the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in East Africa, 1954, to be capable of rapid development, the Administering Authority had artificially restricted advancement towards independence and had not taken the necessary measures to guide the masses towards self-government, as the disproportionate figures for European and African representation in the Executive and Legislative Councils showed. The wish of the people of Tanganyika was that all organs of government in the Territory should be elective bodies, but the majority of members of the two Councils

were appointed by the Governor, and those organs could not, therefore, be considered representative. There were likewise very few Africans in administrative posts.

23. In the Cameroons under French administration the events of May 1955, the barring of several political parties and the flood of petitions and requests for hearings were indications of the way in which the Administering Authority was trying to suppress by force the powerful liberation movement among the indigenous inhabitants. The fact that many petitioners who had been granted hearings had been unable to appear because they had not received travel documents should be of particular concern to the General Assembly, and the three-Power draft resolution (A/C.4/L.474) calling for action in the matter should be supported.

24. In Ruanda-Urundi there were no Territory-wide representative legislative or executive organs and many administrative services were handled by the Government of the Belgian Congo. The indigenous inhabitants were not consulted with regard to any aspect of the administration of the Territory or its future advancement towards independence. According to the report on Ruanda-Urundi (T/1141) of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in East Africa, 1954, the Governor-General of the Belgian Congo had himself indicated that the Administering Authority was not thinking in terms of self-government for the people of Ruanda-Urundi for at least three or four generations to come, a position which was at variance with the spirit of the Charter and the principles underlying the Trusteeship System.

25. In the field of economic advancement, which was of primary importance for the attainment of self-government and independence, it was to be noted that in many Territories European monopolies encouraged the development of a single product which was profitable for them, thereby depriving the Territory of the opportunity to attain economic self-sufficiency, an indispensable concomitant of political independence. In its report on Tanganyika (T/1142) the 1954 Visiting Mission had noted that the general economic level of the population was exceedingly low. In the field of education, which was likewise closely related to political advancement, the majority of the populations of the Trust Territories were still illiterate and the number of schools was alarmingly small.

26. It was clear that decisive steps should be taken to remedy the present situation and enable the peoples of those Territories to attain independence within specified periods. His delegation considered that a three-to five-year period should be sufficient to establish the fundamental conditions for the attainment of that goal, provided that the Administering Authorities co-operated. When the Trust Territories had become independent they would naturally be faced with many problems, but that difficulty should not be exaggerated, for the experience of other peoples who had thrown off the colonial yoke had shown that the attainment of independence greatly accelerated the process of political, economic and cultural advancement. His delegation would therefore support the Soviet draft resolution (A/C.4/L.472).

The meeting rose at 12 noon.