



**Monday, 26 November 1956,
at 3.20 p.m.**

New York

CONTENTS

Agenda item 39:

The Togoland unification problem and the future of the Trust Territory of Togoland under British administration: reports of the United Nations Plebiscite Commissioner and of the Trusteeship Council (*continued*)

Hearing of petitioners (*continued*) 23

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

AGENDA ITEM 39

The Togoland unification problem and the future of the Trust Territory of Togoland under British administration: reports of the United Nations Plebiscite Commissioner and of the Trusteeship Council (A/3169 and Corr.1, A/3173 and Add.1; A/C.4/332, 334) (*continued*)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. S. W. Kumah and Mr. F. Y. Asare, representatives of the Convention People's Party, Mr. S. G. Antor, Mr. A. K. Odame, Miss R. Asamany and Mr. F. R. Ametowobla, representatives of the Togoland Congress, Mr. S. Olympio, representative of the All-Ewe Conference, Mr. A. Akakpo, representative of the Mouvement populaire togolais, and Mr. A. I. Santos, representative of the Mouvement de la jeunesse togolaise (Juvento), took places at the Committee table.

HEARING OF PETITIONERS (*continued*)

1. Mr. ASARE (Convention People's Party) congratulated the United Nations Plebiscite Commissioner and the Plebiscite Administrator on the impartial manner in which they had organized the plebiscite. Thanks to them, the people of Togoland had been able to make a free decision on the future of their country. It only remained for them to hear the verdict of the United Nations.

2. Under General Assembly resolution 944 (X), a recommendation had been made to the Administering Authority that a plebiscite should be organized in order to ascertain the wishes of the majority of the inhabitants in regard to union with an independent Gold Coast, or separation of Togoland under British administration from the Gold Coast and its continuance under trusteeship pending the ultimate determination of its political future. The parties represented before the Fourth Committee had all accepted the terms of the resolution, which made it possible at last to solve the problem of the future of Togoland. The plebiscite had been held on 9 May 1956. There had been a majority in favour of union with an independent Gold Coast. The Trusteeship Council had then recommended to the General Assembly, in its resolution

1496 (XVIII), that appropriate steps be taken for the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement for the Territory to become effective upon the attainment of independence by the Gold Coast. The date fixed for the attainment of independence by that country was 6 March 1957.

3. The views of the Togoland Congress were those of the unsuccessful party. The people of Togoland would not allow themselves to be guided by the minority. During the election campaign, the Togoland Congress, the opposition party in the Gold Coast, had called for a federation of Togoland under British administration with the Gold Coast, while the Convention People's Party had asked that the two countries should be combined in a single centralized State. So the electorate had had an opportunity to decide on the question, and the result of the plebiscite had been confirmed by the general elections held in July 1956. The constitutional proposals criticized by the Togoland Congress at the 554th meeting of the Fourth Committee, had been adopted, by 70 votes to 25, by the Gold Coast Legislative Assembly on 14 November 1956.

4. Complete order had prevailed during the plebiscite: 58 per cent of the voters had been in favour of union with the Gold Coast. He recalled that in his own district of Buem-Krachi, the Convention People's Party had won in the plebiscite with over 9,000 votes, and in the general elections with over 13,000. The will of the majority must prevail.

5. Mr. KUMAH (Convention People's Party) said that the plebiscite had been remarkably well organized and that the Plebiscite Commissioner and Plebiscite Administrator had fulfilled their duties with complete impartiality. In his official capacity he had had occasion to travel through the country while the plebiscite was being conducted and to establish contact both with the United Nations observers and the Administrator and Commissioner. He had noted that the Togolanders had been able to participate fully in the plebiscite. The proposals of the political parties had been heeded as much as was possible. The freedom of assembly and freedom of speech which had been enjoyed by the population during the election campaign showed genuine respect for the United Nations Charter and human rights. The inhabitants of Togoland under British administration were deeply grateful to the United Nations for having enabled them to determine their own future, and they congratulated the United Kingdom Government on having organized an impartial plebiscite. Now the Committee had only to approve the wishes of the majority of Togolanders. He firmly hoped that the United Nations would not place any part of Togoland under British administration once again under the control of a colonial Power.

6. The telegram which had been sent by the Togoland Congress in July to the Trusteeship Council and the Secretary-General, and in which the party threatened

to oppose forcibly the unification of the territories in the South with the Gold Coast (T/PET.6/L.69), was a manoeuvre to divert attention. The Togoland Congress, which wanted federation with an independent Gold Coast, was trying to influence the voters' decision. It was, however, for the population concerned alone to choose its constitution. In the districts of Kpandu and Ho, where the majority favoured a federation, several districts had nevertheless declared in favour of union with the Gold Coast. If those two districts were detached from the rest of Togoland under British administration and the Gold Coast, they would be placed in a difficult position from the political, economic and social standpoints.

7. Those who had voted for separation actually favoured the federation of Togoland under British administration with the Gold Coast. Moreover, the existence of an opposition party was a good sign in a democracy. Lastly, one-fourth of the Ewes would in any case remain under the Trusteeship System. Of course, the Ewes would not be satisfied until the barriers which had arbitrarily divided them were broken down. But to solve the problem of the Ewes, Togoland under French administration would have to gain its

independence as rapidly as possible and enter into negotiations freely with a sovereign Gold Coast.

8. The Gold Coast or Ghana would become independent on 6 March 1957. The United Kingdom Government had proposed to make Togoland under British administration independent also. The majority of Togolanderns had favoured unification with the Gold Coast. He hoped that no delegation would be opposed to the attainment of independence by a Trust Territory. What the Togoland Congress actually wanted was that the United Nations should establish a constitution which had been rejected by the populations of the Gold Coast and Togoland under British administration at the July elections. Equality of status for the Togolanderns and the Gold Coast inhabitants was guaranteed under the constitutional proposals which the Legislative Assembly had recently approved.

9. On behalf of the population of Togoland under British administration, he thanked the Trusteeship Council, the United Nations Visiting Missions, the Fourth Committee and also the United Kingdom Government, which had guided it on the road to independence.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.