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

AGENDA ITEM 37

Question of South West Africa: report of the Committee on South West Africa (A/3151 and Corr.1, A/C.4/338, A/C.4/L.475) (*continued*)*

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (A/C.4/L.475) (*concluded*)

1. Mr. KHOMAN (Thailand) observed that he had found that the Fourth Committee, generally speaking, appreciated the routine work done by the Committee on South West Africa but that the debate had betrayed a certain feeling of frustration and disappointment that that Committee had been unable to produce the concrete results that had been hoped for or to obtain recognition by the South African Government of the supervisory role of the United Nations over the Territory of South West Africa. That being so, he felt that it might be appropriate to introduce some changes in the Committee on South West Africa.

2. For that purpose he introduced his delegation's draft resolution (A/C.4/L.475). Under its provisions the Committee's terms of reference would remain as established by the General Assembly in resolution 749 A (VIII). An increase in the Committee's membership to nine and the introduction of a system of rotation were proposed in order to enable as many as possible of the Members of the United Nations to take part in the Committee's work. If the draft resolution were adopted two new members would be elected at the present session of the General Assembly. At the Committee's next session the other members would draw lots in order to determine which three of them should withdraw. The General Assembly would at its twelfth session appoint three new members to replace the retiring members. After that three members would withdraw and three new ones be elected each year.

3. Several reasons seemed to him to justify the proposal. Firstly, the membership of the United Nations having been increased, it would be appropriate also to increase the membership of some of the organs of the General Assembly. That had already been done in the case of the International Law Commission.

4. Secondly, the Committee would have more work to do in consequence of the draft resolutions already adopted by the Fourth Committee and great efforts would be required if it were to perform its task successfully.

5. He would leave to the Fourth Committee the choice of the new members to be appointed.

6. Mr. CARPIO (Philippines) was in general agreement with the terms of the Thailand draft resolution. He thought, however, that it might be better to elect three members at the present session and for one of the present members to withdraw, the name to be drawn by lot. He emphasized that that was a mere suggestion and not a formal proposal.

7. Mr. JAIPAL (India) said there could be no doubt about the merit of the work performed by the Committee on South West Africa in the past and the infinite pains it had taken in preparing the detailed report to the General Assembly (A/3151 and Corr.1). The Fourth Committee might therefore well be reluctant to alter the Committee's membership, in which it had the fullest confidence. The representative of Thailand, however, advanced very cogent arguments for expanding the membership of the Committee, primarily in order to take into account the increased membership of the United Nations. He would therefore support the draft resolution, while emphasizing that his delegation had complete confidence in the present membership of the Committee and particularly in its Chairman and Rapporteur.

8. Mr. DORSINVILLE (Haiti), too, emphasized his delegation's entire confidence in the present members of the Committee on South West Africa, whose work had been most valuable. As everyone was aware, the Committee's inability to bring its work to a successful conclusion had been due to difficulties for which it was not responsible.

9. Nevertheless, the arguments put forward by the representative of Thailand should be taken into consideration. The principle of rotation would perhaps throw new light on the problem and would in any event enable many Members of the United Nations to contribute to the Committee's work. He would therefore support the draft resolution.

10. He was not entirely convinced by the arguments of the Philippine representative and would like to hear the views of other members before coming to a decision on the point.

11. Mr. NASH (United States of America) entirely agreed with the representative of Thailand that new members should be added to the Committee on South West Africa and that the Committee should be partially renewed each year, some members remaining for the sake of continuity.

12. With reference to the Philippine suggestion, while the United States delegation had no desire to shirk its

* Resumed from the 583rd meeting.

responsibilities, it had served on the Committee on South West Africa for a previous period of three years and again for two years up to the present and would be quite willing to withdraw at once in order to enable the General Assembly to appoint three new members at the present session.

13. Mr. RIFAI (Syria) said that he had always regarded the Committee on South West Africa as a purely temporary body which would cease to exist when the problem with which it was concerned had been solved. He had therefore felt that there was no particular necessity to change its membership or terms of reference. Nevertheless, the representative of Thailand had advanced some excellent reasons for enlarging the Committee and introducing a system of rotation and for that reason the delegation of Syria would support the draft resolution.

14. He hoped the Philippine representative would not press his suggestion, although Syria would be quite willing to relinquish its membership of the Committee. He considered, however, that it would be better to elect two new members at the present session and to follow the suggestions made by the representative of Thailand with regard to future procedure.

15. Mr. MATHUR (Nepal) agreed with the Syrian representative that only two members should be elected at the present session. The details of the election of three members each year could be decided at the next session. He would support the draft resolution.

16. Mr. KHOMAN (Thailand) said that if the Philippine representative intended to press his suggestion it would be Thailand that should withdraw from the Committee, since his delegation had held the Chair for a number of years.

17. He thanked the representatives of India and Haiti for their remarks.

18. Mr. ROLZ BENNETT (Guatemala) expressed his appreciation of the admirable work done by the Committee on South West Africa.

19. He would support the draft resolution, in view of the increase in the membership of the United Nations.

20. He was unable to support the Philippine suggestion.

21. Mr. CARPIO (Philippines) withdrew his suggestion.

The draft resolution (A/C.4/L.475) was adopted by 46 votes to none, with 10 abstentions.

22. Mr. PENNER DA CUNHA (Brazil) said he had abstained in the vote because he had not had time to obtain instructions from his Government.

AGENDA ITEM 13

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

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

23. Mr. GRILLO (Italy) introduced to the Committee Mr. Aden Abdullah Osman, Mr. Hagi Mussa Bogor and Mr. Abdi Nur Mohammed Hussen, three members of the Government of Somaliland under Italian administration, who would take part, as members of his delegation, in the Committee's debate on the

question of the frontier between the Trust Territory of Somaliland under Italian administration and Ethiopia.

24. The CHAIRMAN welcomed Mr. Osman, Mr. Bogor and Mr. Hussen to the Committee.

25. Mr. MERSINI (Albania) said that the national liberation movements of the dependent peoples should be a matter of the greatest concern to the General Assembly and the Trusteeship Council, despite the efforts of some Administering Authorities to minimize the importance of those movements or to present them as the work of common criminals or of people who did not represent the real aspirations of the populations. As was clear from the United Nations Charter, the essential role of the Trusteeship System was to promote recognition of the rights of the dependent peoples to self-determination and independence. The Administering Authorities should bear in mind that the era of colonial domination was drawing to an end and that they were responsible to the United Nations for their actions.

26. It appeared from the report of the Trusteeship Council (A/3170) and other documents relating to the question that, although some progress had been made in the economic and social fields, that progress was minimal considering the long period of time in which the Trust Territories had been under the International Trusteeship System. The fact was that they were still very far from the ultimate goal of the Trusteeship System, which was the attainment of self-government or independence.

27. The General Assembly had in successive resolutions requested the Administering Authorities to include in their annual reports specific information on the measures taken to promote the rapid development of the Territories towards self-government or independence and to set dates for the attainment of that goal. Unfortunately, however, the Administering Authorities attached very little importance to that vital question. Some of them had refused to establish the time-tables requested, while others had claimed in their statements before the Trusteeship Council that the people of the Territories under their administration were still so backward that it would take two or three more generations before they could attain self-government or independence. If that was really the situation in any Territory, the United Nations had the right to ask what the Administering Authorities had been doing in the twenty to forty years that those Territories had been under their administration and whose fault it was if the situation in any Territory was still the same as it had been fifty years earlier.

28. The rate of political progress in most of the Trust Territories was unsatisfactory. The participation of the indigenous population in the political life and administration of the Territories was developing extremely slowly, the Administering Authorities placing innumerable obstacles in its way. Although the Administering Authorities had established some legislative and executive bodies, the indigenous people were not adequately represented on them. In the Cameroons under French administration, for example, the Europeans had the right to elect one representative to the Territorial Assembly for every 700 electors, while the indigenous population elected one representative for every million electors. Moreover, although the elections were called democratic, they were conducted amid pressure, threats

and falsifications, as was attested to by various petitioners.

29. In a number of cases, Administering Authorities had annexed or tried to annex Trust Territories to neighbouring colonies, on one pretext or another. Such action, which was contrary to the Charter and the Trusteeship Agreement, would close the door once and for all to the attainment by those Territories of self-government and independence.

30. The Charter guaranteed the inhabitants of Trust Territories fundamental political rights; unfortunately, the documents before the Committee proved that those rights were not respected by the Administering Authorities. The Cameroons under French administration provided a typical example of the situation in that respect. There the authorities had adopted measures of mass repression, simply because the population were asking for the unification of the two Cameroons and complete independence, which was exactly what the Charter stipulated as the ultimate objective of the Trusteeship System. Worse still, when the people appealed to the United Nations to put an end to their unjust and illegal treatment, the Administering Authority adopted repressive measures against them. The French authorities attempted to justify their action by saying that the indigenous inhabitants in question did not obey the laws or were acting under foreign influence. If, however, the great majority of the population did not obey the Administering Authority's laws, that proved that those laws did not serve their interests. They should accordingly be changed to correspond to the legitimate rights and interests of the population.

31. In the Trust Territory of Ruanda-Urundi, the flagrant discrimination practised by the Administering Authority against the indigenous inhabitants was obvious from legislation such as the Decree of 10 September 1952, which placed certain indigenous inhabitants on the register of so-called civilized persons. It was as a result of such legislation that after forty years of administration, there was still not a single African occupying an important position in the administration of the Territory.

32. His delegation was aware that some progress had been made in economic and social conditions in the Trust Territories and it hoped that progress would continue at a more rapid rate. What was of primary importance, however, was that the progress made should serve the interests of the indigenous population, for his delegation had noted with regret that the economy of the Trust Territories was so directed as to serve only the interests of the privileged European minority, while the requests of the population, however minimal, remained unsatisfied.

33. It was the duty of the United Nations to see that those practices were brought to an end and that the Administering Authorities complied with the spirit and letter of the Trusteeship Agreements, in order to enable the Trust Territories to develop as quickly as possible towards self-government or independence. The Administering Authorities should give up their attempts to annex the Trust Territories and should establish independent legislative and executive bodies in which the indigenous population participated. The economic, cultural and educational fields should be developed rapidly and in the interests of the local population rather than the Administering Authorities. Racial discrimination should cease and the equal rights of the

indigenous population should be recognized. Only thus would the Administering Authorities be able to fulfil the task which had been entrusted to them by the United Nations.

34. After eleven years of the Trusteeship System, the time has come for the United Nations to establish time-tables for the attainment of independence by certain Territories, due account being taken of conditions prevailing in each of them. The Soviet draft resolution (A/C.4/L.472) fully met that need and was in complete harmony with the previous recommendations of the General Assembly, as also with the real goals of the Trusteeship System. His delegation would therefore support it.

35. Mr. GRINBERG (Bulgaria) said that, at the previous meeting, his delegation had voted in favour of the three-Power draft resolution (A/C.4/L.474) concerning travel documents for petitioners from the Trust Territories because it hoped that the Administering Authorities might be persuaded to reconsider their attitude and to realize that the United Nations would no longer tolerate such violations of the indigenous inhabitants' fundamental right to petition the United Nations.

36. With regard to the Cameroons under French administration, the great number of petitions received from that Territory and the space devoted in the report of the Trusteeship Council to the tragic incidents of May 1955 bore witness to the seriousness of the situation prevailing there. As that situation could more appropriately be discussed by the Trusteeship Council itself, he would stress only one aspect of the matter: namely, that as the political awareness of the populations developed, in that as in other Trust Territories, the Administering Authorities tended to hinder rather than to promote their political, economic, social and cultural advancement, thereby creating an explosive situation which might have serious consequences.

37. The information in the Council's report showed how painfully slow the development of the Trust Territories in general had been during the forty years in which the Mandates and Trusteeship Systems had existed. Yet during the same period many peoples which had not had the benefit of the assistance supposedly provided under those Systems had achieved far greater progress than had the Trust Territories, only two of which—Togoland under British administration and Somaliland under Italian administration—were within sight of independence. In Tanganyika, power was concentrated in the hands of the Governor, while the so-called Executive and Legislative Councils, whose members were appointed, had only an advisory status. Those bodies consisted, moreover, of a disproportionately large number of Europeans as compared with Africans. In Ruanda-Urundi, legislation was enacted by the Belgian Parliament and Crown, executive power was vested in the Governor, and the predominantly European Council of the Vice-Government-General, consisting of appointed members, exercised only an advisory function. With regard to the Cameroons under British administration, the Governor-General of Nigeria held veto power over the laws enacted by the Southern Cameroons legislature and appointed half the members of the Southern Cameroons Executive Council, the other half being administrative officials. The Consultative Committee for the Northern Cameroons acted only in an advisory capacity. As far

as the Cameroons under French administration was concerned, legislative power was exercised by the French National Assembly, while executive power was in the hands of the High Commissioner, who was directly responsible to the Minister for Overseas France and was assisted by an advisory Administrative Council composed of appointed members. The Territorial Assembly had limited functions and its membership was weighted heavily in favour of the French inhabitants. The new Statute for Togoland under French administration granted the local Government only limited powers. The reforms planned for Western Samoa were still inadequate. With regard to New Guinea, where the Administrator was assisted by an appointed Executive Council and the Legislative Council, also appointed, had little power, he recalled the Australian representative's observation that because of the unfavourable natural conditions the population of a considerable part of the Territory had not yet been reached by the Administering Authority. In an era when the conquest of the Antarctic was proceeding apace and flights to the moon were seriously contemplated, the argument that there were still undiscovered lands and uncivilized populations in the Trust Territories was not very convincing.

38. From all those observations it would seem that the Administering Authorities were in no hurry to fulfil their obligations under Chapters XII and XIII of the Charter. Although five years had passed since the General Assembly had first adopted resolution 558

(VI) calling for the establishment of time-tables for the attainment of self-government or independence by the Trust Territories, the Administering Authorities had not yet complied with it. Of the many groundless arguments advanced in justification of that failure he would cite in particular the United Kingdom representative's statement, as quoted on page 67 of the Council's report, that it was impossible to tell when the Territory of Tanganyika would possess a large enough body of educated persons and be sufficiently developed economically to enable it to be self-governing. Such a statement was nothing more than an excuse for the continuation of colonial rule. The two requirements were so vaguely worded that it would be impossible to formulate plans for their implementation. In any case, the facts of modern history showed that most peoples had experienced a shortage of trained personnel and had been hard-pressed financially when embarking upon their independent existence. Indeed, only after independence had been attained could such drawbacks be rapidly overcome. From that standpoint it would seem that a number of Trust Territories already possessed the necessary qualifications for self-government or independence and that there were no cases in which time-tables for the attainment of that goal could not be drawn up. The proposals set forth in the Soviet draft resolution (A/C.4/L.472) fully reflected the views of the Bulgarian delegation and would receive its support.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.