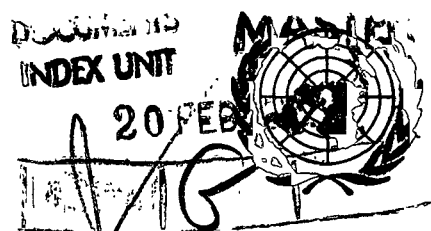


United Nations
**GENERAL
 ASSEMBLY**
 SIXTH SESSION

Official Records



SECOND COMMITTEE 192nd

(CLOSING) MEETING

Thursday, 24 January 1952, at 3.30 p.m.

Palais de Chaillot, Paris

CONTENTS

	Page
Economic and financial provisions in respect of Eritrea arising out of paragraph 19 of Annex XIV of the Treaty of Peace with Italy (A/C.2/L.152) (concluded).	285
Rapporteur's draft report.	287
Completion of the Committee's work.	287

Chairman : Prince WAN WAITHAYAKON (Thailand).

Economic and financial provisions in respect of Eritrea arising out of paragraph 19 of Annex XIV of the Treaty of Peace with Italy (A/C.2/L.152) (concluded)

[Item 62]*

REVISED DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY UNITED KINGDOM (A/C.2/L.152) (CONCLUDED)

1. Mr. FELLER (Secretariat) said that the Secretary-General considered it highly desirable that all the three judges constituting the United Nations Tribunal, referred to in Article XI of the United Kingdom revised draft resolution, should be members of the United Nations Tribunal for Libya provided for in Article X of General Assembly resolution 388 (V). On the other hand, it was somewhat premature for the Secretary-General to reach a final decision in that connexion because of the pressure of work in the Tribunal for Libya. It might therefore be advisable to consider the appointment of one judge, who would concentrate exclusively on the work of the Eritrean Tribunal and ensure continuity, and designate perhaps two members of the Libyan Tribunal. Needless to say, it would be necessary to ask the members of the Libyan Tribunal, who were considered for such appointments, whether they would be available to sit on the Eritrean Tribunal.

2. The Secretary-General's attitude was based on an appreciation of the experience already gained by the members of the Libyan Tribunal and on economic considerations.

3. Mr. SAKSIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled that, at the previous meeting, he had asked the United Kingdom representative and the United Nations

Commissioner in Eritrea whether the proposed economic and financial provisions as contained in the draft resolution (A/C.2/L.152) would effect any change in the former colonial régime in Eritrea. Unfortunately, no clear and positive reply had been given to that cardinal question.

4. The United Kingdom revised draft resolution was designed to safeguard the system of special rights and concessions which had in the past kept Eritrea in a state of bondage. No reference was made in the text to the rights of the actual owners of the soil of Eritrea, the indigenous population. Eritrea was relatively poor in physical resources and assets and, as a representative of the administering Power had observed, most of the agricultural land did not belong to the indigenous inhabitants but to the nationals of foreign States in virtue of contracts and concessions, a system which the United Kingdom draft would perpetuate.

5. The freedom and independence of Eritrea, to which frequent reference had been made, would remain so many idle words unless they were based on a solid economic foundation. But the revised draft resolution contained no safeguard or provision whereby the Eritrean people could express their true aspirations. Moreover, the Committee had no knowledge of the attitude of the Eritrean population to the provisions set forth in the revised draft resolution, since it had not heard their representatives. The Committee was, in fact, about to vote on the document merely because it bore the stamp of the United Nations. The United Kingdom representative had referred to certain editorial changes in his text, but the substance remained the same and, indeed, some of the changes were very unfortunate.

6. In Article XI, for example, the words "United Nations Tribunal" had been substituted for the expression "Arbital Tribunal". The proposed tribunal would thus

* Indicates the item number on the General Assembly agenda.

be a supreme court for the Eritrean people, one which, according to its title, would speak in the name of the sixty States Members of the United Nations including the Soviet Union. The Committee must therefore approach the matter with extreme caution, bearing in mind that it was considering the future life of a formerly enslaved people.

7. The USSR delegation was obliged to vote against the United Kingdom text, because it signified a perpetuation of the colonial régime and did not safeguard the interests of the Eritrean people.

8. Mr. CHYLE (Czechoslovakia) recalled that, when the Eritrean question had been studied by the General Assembly at its fifth session, his delegation had drawn attention to the danger threatening the economic interests of the Eritrean people¹ and to the following warning contained in paragraph 227 of the Report of the United Nations Commission for Eritrea (A/1285)²: "...the more the Eritrean economy suffers, the more probabilities there would be for that (Administering) Power to carry out its political plans".

9. It had been asserted that the United Kingdom revised draft resolution was a happy compromise with which all the interested parties were in agreement, but that was not the case because the party most directly interested, namely the Eritrean people, had not been given the opportunity of expressing their views. In that connexion he had noted with interest the Saudi Arabian representative's expression of doubt whether the provisions of the draft resolution were really in conformity with the economic interests of the Eritrean population (191st meeting) and whether the latter had in fact been consulted on the solution of such an important problem.

10. He was unable to share the Uruguayan representative's admiration for the statement by the United Nations Commissioner in Eritrea who had not given a clear reply to the clear question put to him by the USSR representative, the importance of which he had minimized.

11. The Czechoslovak delegation felt serious doubts about the provisions of Article XI of the United Kingdom text. The resemblance of the proposed United Nations Tribunal to the Lihyan Tribunal did not alter the fact that it was not in keeping with the spirit and letter of the Charter.

12. The United Kingdom draft aimed at preserving the economic interests, rights and concessions of foreigners, but the economic problems of Eritrea could not be solved by safeguarding the vested interests of outsiders instead of the welfare of the indigenous inhabitants. It was essential for the Committee to ascertain the attitude to the problem of the true representatives of the Eritrean people. Since the United Kingdom draft sought to maintain and extend the existing system of privileges and concessions designed to exploit the resources and people of Eritrea, his delegation would vote against it.

13. Mr. INGLES (Philippines) said that, although his country was not directly affected by the proposed arrangements for Eritrea, it shared the interest of all other Member States in the action taken regarding the

future status of Eritrea. His delegation would vote for the United Kingdom revised draft resolution, believing it to be the best possible compromise under the circumstances. The various amendments incorporated in order to meet the views of the parties concerned convinced him that the final draft struck an even balance between the interests of the former Italian administration and those of the Eritrean population. He had been impressed by the spirit of compromise shown by the Italian and Ethiopian delegations in their desire not to hinder final approval of the United Kingdom draft.

14. While he shared the feelings of certain other representatives regarding the possible reaction of the Eritrean people, he had been pleased to note the assurance of the United Nations Commissioner in Eritrea that the interests of the indigenous inhabitants were fully safeguarded (191st meeting). The fact that no representative of the Eritrean people had requested the Committee for a hearing confirmed that view. Moreover, perusal of the economic and financial provisions in the revised draft resolution showed that some of them were more favourable to the people of Eritrea than similar arrangements in respect of Libya.

15. He wished the Eritrean people every success as an autonomous unit federated with Ethiopia under the Ethiopian Crown and appreciated the services of the United Nations Commissioner in his efforts to arrive at an equitable settlement.

16. Mr. ZABLOCKI (Poland) stated that he would vote against the United Kingdom draft resolution, the real object of which was not to safeguard the legitimate interests of the Eritreans but to protect foreign concessions and the privileges of outsiders, as exemplified by the proposed establishment of a United Nations Tribunal which could be used to the detriment of the Eritrean interests.

17. Mr. HALIQ (Saudi Arabia) considered the United Kingdom draft to be mainly a legal document which was to a large extent inappropriate for consideration by the Second Committee. In his comments addressed that morning to the Ethiopian and United Kingdom representatives and the United Nations Commissioner in Eritrea, he had adopted a purely economic approach. He shared the concern expressed by certain representatives about the absence of representatives of the Eritrean people. He possessed a memorandum from the Moslem League, the most important political group in Eritrea, which mentioned a number of criticisms and grievances that would be applicable to the revised draft resolution. Those criticisms should be properly appraised before any final decision was taken.

18. According to paragraph 2, sub-paragraph (f) of article I of the United Kingdom draft, Eritrea was to have no claim to any rights in institutions, companies and associations of a public character which had their *siège social* in Eritrea, in cases where the Italian State or the Italian administration of Eritrea exercised only managerial control over them. That provision was likely to create complications. The Italian State had direct control over the projects which had brought Italian immigrants to Eritrea. Many institutions, companies and associations in that country had formerly been under government control and the Eritrean economy was to a large extent based on them.

19. In the future the economy would be controlled and administered by the Federal Government, with regard

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifth Session, Ad Hoc Political Committee, 50th meeting.*

² *Ibid.*, Supplement No. 8.

to which Ethiopia was in a privileged position. No one could foresee the results of action adopted in Eritrea by the Ethiopian Government with regard to Italian and Eritrean interests. Moreover, paragraphs 4 (b) and 5 of article I of the United Kingdom draft would probably prove harmful in practice to the Eritrean economy.

20. According to paragraph 2 of article VII, Italian citizens in Eritrea who had left or who might in future leave Eritrea to settle elsewhere were to be permitted freely to sell their movable and immovable property, realize and dispose of their assets and transfer their movable property and funds. He felt that the economy of Eritrea would probably be jeopardized if the most prosperous community were left free to transfer their assets abroad.

21. Since the revised draft resolution related to a juridical problem, he considered that it could not be properly dealt with in the Second Committee and he was not in a position to adopt a definite attitude towards it. Further information from the United Nations Commissioner in Eritrea would be welcome. The Commissioner had referred at the preceding meeting to the constitution drafted for Libya, but that document could not be taken as a final standard.

22. The CHAIRMAN put the United Kingdom revised draft resolution (A/C.2/L.152) to the vote.

The revised draft resolution was adopted by 33 votes to 5, with 9 abstentions.

23. The CHAIRMAN thanked the United Kingdom and Ethiopian delegations for responding to his appeal that they should confer in order to submit an agreed text. Thanks were also due to the representative of the Italian Government, to the United Nations Commissioner for Eritrea and to the representatives of the Secretariat.

Rapporteur's draft report

24. He recalled that the Rapporteur had been requested to draft a very simple report on the Eritrean question so that the Committee could finish its work during the current day. The Rapporteur's text would be distributed to all delegations but, as it was intended to place the item on the agenda of the plenary meeting to be held on Saturday, 26 January, he suggested that any delegation wishing to study the text before that date should apply to the Secretariat.

It was so agreed.

Completion of the Committee's work

25. Mr. SANTA CRUZ (Chile) wished to express his appreciation of the able manner in which the Chairman had at all times guided the Committee's discussions. He had himself had the honour of serving as Chairman of the Second Committee in the past, but he believed that the present session of the Committee would prove to be most fruitful in its history. A number of resolutions had been adopted unanimously, in spite of the existing differences of opinion on political issues and a high level of discussion had been maintained throughout the debate.

26. The Chairman had played a very considerable part in creating such a favourable atmosphere. A word of praise was also due for the services rendered to the Committee by the Secretariat, particularly by the Committee's Secretary, Mr. Weintraub, and interpreters and Press services.

27. Mr. LUBIN (United States of America) emphasized that the Chairman had been very largely responsible for bringing about the spirit of co-operation shown by all delegations in the debate, which had resulted in the unanimous adoption of several resolutions.

28. Mr. DE SMET (Belgium) said that the Second Committee had covered a new stage on the path of international co-operation and a great part of the merit therefor was due to the Chairman.

29. U KYIN (Burma) enlarged on the laxity of the rules of procedure which made the Chairman's task harder, and the patience, courage and tact he had displayed.

30. Mr. SAKSIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), in paying tribute to the Chairman, said that it was particularly gratifying to his delegation to note that the Chairman was the representative of an under-developed country in the Far Eastern region, and that the tact he had displayed throughout the session was an illustration of the wisdom of the East which was all too often forgotten in the world today. The representatives of all the under-developed countries in the Far East and in the Middle East had been particularly active in the Committee's work and had voiced their views with dignity.

31. Mr. KHANDAN (Iraq) stressed the immense culture possessed by the Chairman and the shrewdness he had shown in guiding the debates.

32. Mr. BETETA (Mexico), Mr. CHA (China), Mr. MARAMIS (Indonesia), Mr. KHOSROVANI (Iran), Mr. NARIELWALA (India), Mr. KATZ-SUCHY (Poland), Mr. ORMSBY-GORE (United Kingdom), Mr. ZIA-UD-DIN (Pakistan), Mr. MARINO PEREZ (Cuba), Mr. JACOME (Ecuador), ABDEL-RAZEK Bey (Egypt), Mr. LIMA (Brazil), Mr. HACHOEN (Israel), Mr. HALIQ (Saudi Arabia), Mr. COLIACOPOULOS (Greece), Mr. GASTAMBIDE (France), Mr. INGLES (Philippines), Mr. LANG (Yugoslavia), Mr. VAVRICKA (Czechoslovakia), Mr. GORK (Turkey) and Mr. GALVEZ (Guatemala) also associated themselves with the address of thanks to the Chairman for his exemplary guidance of the Committee's work and for the personal qualities of tact and courtesy he had displayed throughout the session, as well as for his skill in applying the rules of procedure. They also supported the expressions of appreciation of the work of the Secretariat, particularly of the Committee Secretary, and of the interpreting, translating and précis-writing services.

33. The CHAIRMAN said that he had been deeply moved by the Committee's expressions of appreciation. He himself was extremely grateful to all representatives, including the representatives of the specialized agencies, for the good will and the conciliatory spirit which they had consistently shown and which had been manifested by the unanimous adoption of a number of resolutions.

34. Noting the development of the Second Committee's activities in past years, he recalled, that during the Committee's proceedings at the General Assembly's second session (39th meeting) he had emphasized the need for keeping the programmes under consideration broad in scope. He had also said that immediate results could not be expected. The Committee had now gone beyond the stage of studies and had reached that of action. It was essential to concentrate on the problem of economic development, for material well-being was necessary to man in the exercise of his

freedom. There was no short cut to the achievement of economic development; it was, however, possible to eliminate the period of experimentation, thanks to the experience of the highly industrialized countries.

35. He stressed the need for both men and money in economic development. The Committee had, in that connexion, adopted useful resolutions both on financing and on technical personnel. The resolution recommending the study of plans for a special fund for grants-in-aid and long-term low-interest loans was of great potential importance. The resolution on land

reform was also particularly valuable since it would not only benefit the agricultural population but would also lead to greater food production. Altogether, the Committee's work at the present session would prove of real value to the under-developed countries.

36. He extended his sincere thanks both to the officers of the Committee and to the Secretariat, and in particular to the interpreters and précis-writers, for their valuable work.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m. .