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COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

Third session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Thursday, 2 October 1952, at 2.30 p.m.

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/PRESENT:

PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. ASAD	Pakistan
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. LOOMES	Australia
	Mr. RYCKMANS	Belgium
	Mr. CALERO RODRIGUES	Brazil
	Mr. BLANCO	Cuba
	Mr. HOLTEN EGGERT )	Denmark
	Mr. SVEISTRUP )	
	Mr. BUSTAMANTE	Ecuador
	Mr. FAHMY	Egypt
	Mr. PIGNON	France
	Mr. SHIVA RAO	India
	Mr. TAJIBNAPIS	Indonesia
	Mr. SPITS	Netherlands
	Mr. DAVIN	New Zealand
	Mr. ROSECHIN	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	Mr. MATHIESON	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. CARGO	United States of America

Representatives of specialized agencies:

Mr. GAVIN	International Labour Organisation (ILO)
Mr. DESTOMBES	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
Dr. STOCK	World Health Organization (WHO)

<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. BENSON	Secretary of the Committee
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FUTURE OF THE COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES  
(A/AC.35/L.83, A/AC.35/L.83/Corr.1, A/AC.35/L.83/Add.1, A/AC.35/L.85)

Mr. CARGO (United States of America) said that, after giving careful consideration to the question of the future of the Committee, his Government was satisfied that the Committee had fulfilled a useful purpose. The United States Government recognized the notable contributions of the Secretariat and the specialized agencies and attached importance to the value of the Committee as a preparatory body for the work of the General Assembly in relation to Non-Self-Governing Territories. Notwithstanding the progress the Committee had made in its work, however, it felt that a further trial period of three years was desirable. That conclusion had been reinforced by the evidence of the wide divergencies of opinion existing among Members of the United Nations regarding the future of the Committee. While it was clear that some would like the Committee to be established on either a permanent or indefinite basis, it was equally clear that others felt that it should be discontinued. The United States, for its part, could not agree that the Committee should be established on a permanent basis but it thought that the Committee should be given a further period in which to continue the work it had begun. In adopting that attitude, the United States Government had borne in mind the desirability of the work of the United Nations proceeding on the basis of the greatest possible degree of harmony and co-operation among its Members. Such harmony and co-operation were practical necessities if the work of the Committee was to be continued effectively. In the light of those considerations, the United States delegation had prepared a draft resolution (Conference Room Paper No. 6) proposing the continuation of the Committee for a further three-year period on the existing basis.

Mr. CALERO RODRIGUES (Brazil) expressed his surprise at the statements made by the representatives of the Administering Powers, who, while adopting varying attitudes, had tried to oppose the continuation of the Committee, without, however, advancing any new arguments. They had carefully refrained from considering the question from the three points of view outlined by the Egyptian representative: namely, the legality of the Committee, its usefulness and the

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possibility of assigning its duties to other organs already in existence.

With regard to its legality, the Brazilian delegation still considered that the idea of machinery to deal with information from the Non-Self-Governing Territories was a natural consequence of Article 73 e of the Charter. The United Kingdom representative, while admitting the principle of the accountability of the Administering Powers, had claimed that, as trustees, they had the right to choose their own auditors and he had questioned whether some Members of the United Nations fulfilled the necessary requirements for that function. He should bear in mind, however, that all decisions of the General Assembly were taken by a majority: surely he did not wish to cast aspersions on its Members. He had said, furthermore, that the obligations arising from Chapter XI of the Charter had been assumed by the Administering Powers only and were therefore nothing to do with the United Nations. Mr. Calero Rodrigues pointed out that since those obligations had been assumed in an international document directly connected with the United Nations, that Organization was obviously an interested party.

As far as the usefulness of the Committee was concerned, the representatives of India, Egypt and Pakistan had given a most able exposition of the case. The Belgian representative, however, whose sincerity he respected, had maintained that the Committee had engaged in sterile debate and should have confined itself to purely technical discussions. Mr. Calero Rodrigues felt bound to draw his attention to the overwhelming majority of the Members of the United Nations who seemed to find the Committee's work useful. The French representative, for his part, had praised the material produced for the Committee by the Secretariat and the specialized agencies. The Committee's work was not, however, confined to obtaining material from the Secretariat and the specialized agencies: it was impossible to eliminate the political element which was introduced by the delegations and which added to the value of the Secretariat's work. The debates enabled the Committee to draw conclusions from the facts contained in the Secretariat reports; hence it would not be wise to limit discussion to technical matters, but would be more useful to study the problems in their relationship to the status of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Committee's discussions did not duplicate the work of the purely technical bodies. The Committee could not, for instance, make as thorough a study of public health problems as could the

World Health Organization but it could make its contribution to the question from the angle of Chapter XI of the Charter. The Administering Powers could facilitate the work of the Committee by allowing the discussion of certain political implications of the economic, social and educational problems. The discussions could thus be of particular assistance to the advancement of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

He had been astonished to hear the United Kingdom representative declare that local politicians in the Non-Self-Governing Territories were showing some impatience towards the United Nations, in the belief that the Organization might tend to retard their advance towards independence. In Mr. Calero Rodrigues' opinion, however, if the non-self-governing peoples were showing impatience, it was because in many cases they considered that their progress towards self-government was too slow.

He did not share the Belgian representative's opinion of the atmosphere prevailing in the Committee's discussions. It was not, as the Belgian representative had alleged, a matter of accused versus accusers. For one thing, it was not always the non-administering members of the Committee who put forward the criticisms: in fact, they themselves had been accused by one of the Administering Powers of not fulfilling their obligations. As the French representative had pointed out, the previous sessions of the Committee had been marked by a spirit of moderation and courtesy. He himself shared that view and did not think that anything had happened during the present session to justify the idea that those traditions of courtesy had been cast aside.

On the question of the future of the Committee, he associated himself with the Chairman and the representatives of India and Egypt, who had so ably advocated its continuation. He had instructions from his Government to support the continuation of the Committee on a permanent basis. It was possible that, in view of the attitude of certain delegations, the Committee might have to reach a compromise and recommend its continuation for a limited period. He himself thought that, so long as there were Non-Self-Governing Territories and so long as

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the United Nations Charter was in existence, the Committee would continue to exist. It was, to a great extent, the responsibility of the Administering Powers to ensure that the Committee was no longer necessary: if, under their guidance, the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories reached the necessary degree of development to enable them to achieve independence, one of the principal objectives of the Charter would have been attained.

Mr. BLANCO (Cuba) also expressed surprise at the statements of the representatives of the Administering Powers. He had hoped that all members of the Committee would have been persuaded by the arguments of the representatives of India, Pakistan and Egypt. The Committee had done useful work, its technical achievements had been on a high level and it should accordingly be continued. The United Nations needed such organs to assist the indigenous peoples in their advance along the path of progress. He did not agree with the United Kingdom representative that the non-administering members had not taken sufficient part in the Committee's work. The delegations of those Powers had done their duty and no one could accuse them of apathy.

As for the duration of the Committee, he drew the attention of members to the observations in document A/AC.35/L.85, paragraph 7, "Future of the Committee". He agreed with the view expressed in that paragraph by the Secretariat, that an expansion of the work cycle from three to four years would more appropriately meet the purpose of General Assembly resolution 332 (IV), as enabling the Committee to take a comprehensive view of information on economic, social and educational conditions. While, therefore, he did not think it advisable at the present juncture that the Committee should be established as a permanent organ, as the USSR delegation proposed, he thought it would be better to extend its term for four years rather than for the three years proposed by the United States delegation.

/Mr. RUSTAMANTE

Mr. BUSTAMANTE (Ecuador) said that his delegation was in favour of the principle of continuing the Committee on a permanent basis and would associate itself on that point with the Brazilian representative's statements. He wished to draw the attention of the delegations of Administering Powers to the fact that their obligations towards the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories were permanent. He accordingly asked them to reconsider their attitude. If the USSR draft resolution were rejected, he would vote for the United States proposal for the continuation of the Committee, but he agreed with the representative of Cuba that the Committee's new term should be for four years and not three.

Mr. RYCKMANS (Belgium) pointed out that the Brazilian representative had thought that the Committee should not make its work too technical: the Committee should primarily consider how far the problems of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, from the very nature of the Territories, differed from those of sovereign States. In that case, it would be necessary to draw comparisons, as to the desirability of which the Belgian delegation would certainly consult the Brazilian delegation when the time came.

Mr. SPITS (Netherlands) supported the United States draft resolution (Conference Room Paper No.6), which provided for the continuation of the Committee for a further three years. That did not, however, mean that the Committee's composition should necessarily remain the same. On the contrary, it should be made up of experts rather than of representatives of Governments.

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The Committee's work would benefit from such a change. The change could not, of course, be made until a revision of the United Nations Charter was undertaken. As that could be done in 1955, which would be in three years' time, He would vote in favour of the continuation of the Committee for a further three years.

Mr. LOOMES (Australia) supported the United States draft resolution, but was unable to support the Cuban oral amendment to the United States proposal to continue the Committee for four years. Three years would suffice for the Committee to study the economic, social and educational situation in the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Mr. TAJIBNAPIS (Indonesia) said that, in spite of the arguments put forward by the representatives of the Administering Powers, the majority appeared to appreciate the usefulness of the Committee, which fulfilled the important task of examining information translated under Article 73 e of the Charter. As everybody knew, his delegation firmly believed that the Committee should not only be maintained but should become a permanent organ of the General Assembly. If the USSR draft resolution (Conference Room Paper No. 7) were defeated, his delegation would support the Cuban proposal.

Mr. SHIVA RAO (India) admitted that he had been surprised at the vehement statements of some of the members of the Committee. The Belgian representative had asserted that the Committee's work was non-productive and useless, while the United Kingdom representative had said that the representatives of non-administering countries contributed little to the Committee's work. On the other hand, the statement of the United States representative, who appreciated the usefulness of the Committee and its sub-committees, was most heartening. It was particularly gratifying to hear the United States representative say that the Committee was preparing the way for action by the General Assembly.

The Belgian representative had thought that the Committee should be composed of experts who would discuss technical problems within their competence, whether in Non-Self-Governing Territories or in independent States

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such as India, and it was true that the problems the Committee dealt with were not peculiar to Non-Self-Governing Territories. He reminded the Belgian representative that when the United Kingdom representative had alluded to such Indian problems as the scheduled castes for which no satisfactory solution had as yet been found -- thus touching on questions within the domestic jurisdiction of a State -- he had raised no objection, unlike the USSR representative, who had protested when the question of illiteracy in the Soviet Union had been mentioned.

The United Kingdom representative's allusion to the participation of representatives of non-administering States in the Committee's work was, to say the least, out of place. Countries such as India and Pakistan which were now independent but had formerly been Non-Self-Governing Territories, had tried to bring to the Committee the fruits of an experience based on the comparisons they had been able to make between two regimes. It should be remembered, however, that the Committee's terms of reference required it to study conditions in Non-Self-Governing Territories only. That was why the USSR representative had been perfectly right to object to the Committee discussing conditions in the Soviet Union.

In regard to the General Assembly's responsibility towards Non-Self-Governing Territories, he had already drawn the Committee's attention at its morning meeting to the resolution which the General Assembly had adopted at its first session and he would therefore not dwell on the subject. That was not, however, the only resolution which reflected the General Assembly's interest in the Non-Self-Governing Territories and which went beyond Article 73 e of the Charter. Other resolutions on Non-Self-Governing Territories invoked Article 1, paragraphs 3 and 4 and Article 55 of the Charter. Furthermore, the Secretary-General should attach the same importance to the Committee's reports as to those of the Councils.

He had been somewhat astonished to hear the United Kingdom representative say that the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories felt some impatience at the results of the Committee's work. That impatience might be explained by the restrictions placed on the Committee's

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activities, but exaggeration should be avoided. As a matter of fact -- and India was in a position to know -- only a very small proportion of the population was interested in the Committee's work. In any event, if the United Nations was to fulfil its task, the Committee must be set up as a body independent of the General Assembly. Chapter XI was as much an integral part of the Charter as the other Chapters and the principles set forth therein should be put into effect in the same way as the other principles of the Charter.

Mr. BOLTEN EGGERT (Denmark) thought that the Committee served a most useful purpose and that it should be continued. It should not, however, be set up on a permanent basis because the dependent status of the Non-Self-Governing Territories was also not permanent. His delegation therefore supported the United States draft resolution providing for the continuation of the Committee for a further three years.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that rule 119 of the rules of procedure, which laid down that as a general rule no proposal should be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the Committee unless copies of it had been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting, was merely a general rule and was not binding. The Committee could therefore decide to put the proposals concerning its fate to the vote at once or defer the vote until the following day. He would like to hear members' views on the matter.

Mr. SHIVA PAO (India) would prefer the proposals on the Committee's fate to be put to the vote at the next meeting so as to enable members to consider them at their leisure and, if necessary, submit amendments.

Mr. FAHMY (Egypt) agreed with the representative of India.

The CHAIRMAN noted that consideration of item 9 would involve discussion of the association of Non-Self-Governing Territories with international organizations. It might be logical to postpone consideration of that aspect of the question until the Committee's future had been determined.

/However

However, as it was already apparent that the majority was in favour of continuing the Committee, there was no objection to the Committee's taking up the question of the association of Non-Self-Governing Territories with international organizations at once.

Mr. SHIVA PAO (India) thought that it would be better to consider the question after the Committee had decided on its own future. His remarks would therefore be only preliminary in nature.

The problem of the participation of Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Committee's work was not easy to solve. It raised a question of principle as well as many practical difficulties. There were some sixty Non-Self-Governing Territories and the question was how many of them were to be represented and on what basis.

India, before partition, had had some experience in the matter. At the end of the First World War, Mr. Lloyd George had urged that India should become a member of the League of Nations. It was true that the Indian delegation had seldom voted differently from that of the United Kingdom and had been obliged to consult the India Office in London before taking a stand. Nevertheless, in spite of those restrictions, India had always attached the greatest importance to its representation in the League of Nations. It had also been represented at the San Francisco Conference, and, although the USSR delegation had challenged its right to be there, the Conference had, as a matter of course, accepted it as an independent member. After the separation of India and Pakistan, the latter had had to apply independently for admission to the United Nations. A similar problem had arisen twenty years earlier in the case of Burma. He was recalling those examples because, at the time when it had still been a Non-Self-Governing Territory, India had attached special importance to its status as an associate member of international organizations.

There were now a certain number of territories which had originally been classified as Non-Self-Governing Territories and on which the Administering Powers transmitted information, but which, even in the opinion of those Powers, were no longer entirely dependent, having achieved self-government in certain fields. That, for example, was the case in Malta; indeed, although its foreign

policy was still entirely controlled by the Administering Power, Malta had attained some measure of self-government in economic, social and cultural matters. Hence, there was good reason for a territory like Malta to become an associate member of a body like the Committee. He was citing Malta as an example only; there were many other territories in a similar position. The presence of a representative of Malta in the Committee would unquestionably be of great advantage during the discussion of the economic, social and educational conditions in the territory. The question of appointment of representatives for Non-Self-Governing Territories of course raised a problem. He recalled that India, as an associate member of the League of Nations, had been able to appoint its own delegation, although the delegation had been obliged to remain in contact with the United Kingdom Government. The question of representation of Non-Self-Governing Territories also raised constitutional difficulties which could not be evaded. It might, however, be possible for a territory's executive authorities to appoint a representative for it subject to the Administering Power's approval. In the case of France the situation might be different because, when a territory dependent on France attained self-government, it was incorporated into the metropolitan country and enjoyed the same status as it. That difficulty was, however, not insurmountable.

In deciding which of the territories which had achieved some self-government and had elected local organs of self-government were to be represented, the principle of geographical representation should be applied, bearing in mind the questions on the Committee's agenda. That procedure did not include the case of territories which were still wholly dependent and whose peoples had as yet no experience in managing their own affairs. The conditions in the territories should therefore be studied with a view to classifying them in one or the other of the two categories.

Such a study would, of course, require the consideration of political information, but there were already some General Assembly resolutions which provided for such a contingency. Moreover, it might perhaps be well to show the Administering Powers that there was some advantage in transmitting to the advanced elements of the indigenous population of truly Non-Self-Governing Territories all General Assembly resolutions concerning those Territories and

learning their opinion -- an action which the Committee was perfectly entitled to take. He hoped that he would be permitted to speak again on that question.

The CHAIRMAN speaking as the representative of Pakistan, agreeing with the views of the Indian representative stated that some Non-Self-Governing Territories such as the Gold Coast, Morocco and Tunisia not only possessed a measure of self-government in economic and social matters, but also had governments of their own recognized as such by the Administering Powers concerned; it would, therefore, be appropriate if they were represented on the Committee. In view of the special stress that had been laid on the need for growing participation of the indigenous peoples in the preparation of plans for the economic, social and cultural development of their territories, he doubted that the principle of their representation in the Committee could give rise to any valid objection. Only the problem of choosing the territories and their representatives might give rise to practical difficulties.

Mr. CALERO RODRIGUES (Brazil) said that his delegation intended to submit a draft resolution on the question, but that it preferred to wait until the members of the Committee, and especially the Administering Powers, had stated their views.

The CHAIRMAN thought that it would be better if the Brazilian delegation submitted its draft resolution after the Committee had decided on its future. Since no other member of the Committee wished to speak, however, the Brazilian representative might make a few general remarks on the draft resolution he wished to submit to the Committee.

Mr. CALERO RODRIGUES (Brazil) recalled that his delegation had voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 566 (VI) inviting the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories to examine the possibility of associating the Non-Self-Governing Territories more closely in its work. The paper prepared by the Secretariat (A/AC.35/L.83) gave a clear picture of the problem of representation of Non-Self-Governing Territories as associate members of such international organizations as the specialized agencies and regional Commissions of the United Nations. The first question arising was how useful  
/the participation

the participation of Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Committee's work would be. The Brazilian delegation recognized the Administering Powers' right to propose to the General Assembly and the Committee that the Non-Self-Governing Territories whose participation in the Committee's work would in their opinion be most useful, should be represented as associate members.

He agreed with the representative of Pakistan that territories such as the Gold Coast, Morocco and Tunisia would be eminently qualified for admission as associate members, subject to the approval of the Administering Powers concerned. It was in that spirit that the Brazilian draft resolution was drawn up. The preamble recognized that the participation of Non-Self-Governing Territories in the work of regional bodies and the specialized agencies had been found useful and that their participation in the Committee's work would also be very useful. Under the draft resolution, the Committee would accept the principle of such participation, invite the Administering Powers to make it possible for the Non-Self-Governing Territories to enjoy the advantages in question, and keep the General Assembly informed of subsequent developments.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.