



COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

Ninth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-FIRST MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 30 April 1958, at 10.50 a.m.

CONTENTS

Economic conditions in Non-Self-Governing Territories (continued):

- (a) Questions arising out of the 1957 report on economic conditions (A/3647, Part II)
- (b) Information on economic conditions contained in the summaries prepared by the Secretary-General (A/3806-3808, A/3809 and Corr.1, A/3810-3816)

Educational conditions in Non-Self-Governing Territories (continued):

- (a) Questions arising out of the 1956 report on educational conditions (A/AC.35/L.280)
- (b) Information on education contained in the summaries prepared by the Secretary-General (A/3806-3808, A/3809 and Corr.1, A/3810-3816)
- (c) Mass communications

PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. LALL	(India)
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. KELLY	Australia
	Mr. CASTRO ALVES	Brazil
	Mr. DURAISWAMY	Ceylon
	Mr. YANG	China
	Mr. de CAMARET	France
	Mr. URFUTIA APARICIO	Guatemala
	Mr. MITRA	India
	Mr. KITTANI	Iraq
	Mr. VAS NUNES }	Netherlands
	Mr. GRADER }	
	Mr. THORP	New Zealand
	Mr. CASTON }	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. CHINN }	
	Mr. MORE	United States of America
	Mr. ALFONZO -RAVARD	Venezuela

Representatives of Specialized agencies:

Mr. PAYRO	International Labour Organisation
Mr. ORR	Food and Agriculture Organization
Mr. SALSAMENDI	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Dr. SACKS	World Health Organization

<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. COHEN	Under-Secretary for Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self- Governing Territories
	Mr. PEREZ GUERRERO	Director of the Division of Information from Non-Self- Governing Territories
	Mr. KUNST	Secretary of the Committee

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (continued)EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS IN NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (continued)

Mr. YANG (China) expressed appreciation of the information on economic matters in the Secretariat's summary of general trends in the Territories administered by the United Kingdom (A/3806) and the Netherlands (A/3807). His delegation had been pleased to learn from the statement made by the French representative (A/AC.35/SR.179), of the general economic progress being made in most of the Territories under French administration. It would have been more useful, however, if that information could have been reproduced in a document, on the lines of documents A/3806 and A/3807.

The Committee's 1957 report on economic conditions in Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/3647), had included the statement that one of the conditions required for the establishment of well-balanced development programmes was an extensive research programme. His delegation had been glad to note that expenditure on research in the Territories under United Kingdom administration had risen from £1.4 million in 1955-1956 to £1.5 million in 1956-1957 and that a total of 101 research schemes, costing about £2.2 million, had been approved during the year under review. It failed to understand, however, why actual expenditure on development schemes in the Territories under United Kingdom administration had been so much smaller during the year than the amount approved and available for that purpose in the same period.

It had been glad to learn that a number of Netherlands experts had arrived in Netherlands New Guinea to make special studies in agriculture, stock-breeding and regional development projects.

His delegation had also noted with interest the establishment in Kenya of an African Industrial Estates Development Committee and would welcome further information on the work it had accomplished.

In its 1957 report on economic conditions the Committee had recommended that the share of the local population in the export trade should be increased and that the import policies of the Territories should be based on world prices. He would appreciate the inclusion in future reports of information on the extent to which those goals had been achieved.

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Mr. CASTRO ALVES (Brazil) expressed his appreciation of the informative statements presented by the representatives of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom concerning the development of mass communications in the Territories administered by those countries. He noted in particular that remarkable progress appeared to have been made during the past two years in the field of television broadcasting and that figures for the daily circulation of newspapers in certain Territories under United Kingdom administration were quite impressive. Where such statistics had not been shown, as in the case of the Belgian Congo, it was to be hoped that the Administering Powers concerned would make every effort to provide them. It was obvious that in many instances the information services in the Non-Self-Governing Territories had great difficulties to contend with, particularly those arising from the problem of illiteracy, lack of technical training, backward social conditions and topographical factors. His delegation hoped that top priority would be given to the solution of those problems for it considered mass communications to be of the utmost importance as a means of bringing civilization to the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. At the same time it urged that the Administering Powers should as far as possible preserve the best of the indigenous traditions.

Mr. URRUTIA APARICIO (Guatemala) noted that the Secretariat's useful report on mass communications in the Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/AC.35/L.273) dealt with both the social and educational aspects of the subject and provided material on which the Committee would undoubtedly be able to base some recommendations and observations to the Administering Powers.

In his delegation's view, mass communications should be used as a means of education and orientation directed towards the individual and collective advancement of the people of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Full utilization of the media of mass communication in those Territories was hampered by a number of serious, although not insuperable, difficulties, among them the prevalence of illiteracy, the existence of different linguistic groups in individual Territories, the almost complete lack of qualified technical personnel, the general lack of equipment and distribution facilities and the lack of capital with which to overcome those difficulties.

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(Mr. Urrutia Aparicio, Guatemala)

His delegation regretted that some Territories had no periodicals, however modest, of their own, and it would be happy to see a more rapid increase in the growth of communications media owned by indigenous inhabitants of the Territories. It had been glad to learn that a newspaper society had been founded in Hong Kong in 1954 and that other Territories, such as Singapore, had their own unions of journalists. His delegation considered that the Administering Powers should encourage the establishment of such associations and unions in the other dependent Territories. In connexion with Singapore, it would like to know what was meant by "publications printed unlawfully in the Colony", referred to in paragraph 11 of the Secretariat study, and what were the standards used to determine the public interest under the recent amendment to the Undesirable Publications Ordinance. It had been pleased to learn of the courses for newspapermen instituted by Makerere College, in Uganda, which had been attended also by newspapermen from adjoining Territories, and thought that it would be useful for the Administering Powers to explore the possibility of establishing regional training centres for journalists by which neighbouring Territories might also benefit. It would like to know whether the figure of 130,000 given in paragraph 18 represented the monthly or annual circulation of the newspapers published in Uganda.

It seemed to his delegation that the fact that the owner, printer and publisher of any publications in Nigeria were required to sign affidavits and register bonds might constitute a restriction on freedom of expression. It regretted the absence of any publications in the local languages in French West Africa, which undoubtedly retarded the social and political progress of the inhabitants.

It had been happy to note that broadcasting services had been used to stimulate the participation of the population in local elections in a number of Territories and hoped that the practice would be extended to others. Another encouraging development was the use of radio for educational purposes in North Borneo, Malaya and other Territories; his delegation hoped that the number of such programmes would be increased in the future and that fuller information would be provided on the results achieved.

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(Mr. Urrutia Aparicio, Guatemala)

His delegation would like information on the specific criteria applied in censoring films in Hong Kong and Singapore. It was glad to learn that the documentary films on the registration of voters used in Kenya and Uganda had led to an increase in the number of Africans applying for registration and was sure that the same thing would happen in the other Territories which had not yet attained full self-government. It had noted with interest the existence of United Nations Depository Libraries in a number of Territories and hoped that others would be established in the remaining Territories with the co-operation of the Administering Powers and the territorial Governments. It considered that the number of travelling libraries serving rural areas and the services provided for such areas by urban libraries should be increased, and that the section of the Makerere College Library devoted to early literature on East Africa and the neighbouring Territories should be expanded. It would also like clarification of the apparent reference in the Secretariat study to the existence of separate libraries for European and non-European readers in Nyasaland and the Belgian Congo.

The increased study of traditional cultures provided a good opportunity for the strengthening of indigenous cultural values; the dependent Territories might find inspiration and assistance in expanding their activities in that field from institutions like the Special Institute of Traditional Cultures sponsored by Madras University.

His delegation had noted with interest the introduction of television in some of the Territories under British administration during 1957. It was confident that the Administering Powers would take advantage of the great possibilities television offered for the education of the dependent peoples.

His delegation considered that the media of communication in the dependent Territories should be used to inform the people of the general situation in their Territories and to allow different groups to express their points of view on matters of general interest. It was confident that the Administering Powers would make increased use of the media of mass communication to advance the social and political development of the Territories under their administration.

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Mr. MITRA (India) did not propose to say much about economic conditions since the Indian delegation had made a very detailed statement on the subject at the previous session. He would, however, like to know what action had been taken by the Administering Powers in connexion with the report on economic conditions, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 645 (VII).

His delegation welcomed the establishment of the Economic Commission for Africa and hoped that economic collaboration between the free States and the Non-Self-Governing Territories of that continent would lead to benefits for all.

His delegation awaited with interest the Secretary-General's report on the effect of the European Common Market on the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Turning to educational conditions, he said he would once again emphasize the definition of objectives laid down in General Assembly resolution 743 (VIII). His delegation held that those objectives should be kept in mind at all times, including in particular that defined in paragraph 2 (c) relating to the basic cultural values and aspirations of the peoples concerned. A greater effort should be made to render the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories conscious of their own cultural values.

In 1953 the Committee had described the goal of universal and free schooling adequate in length and quality as the basis for a literate population. The question of universal free schooling was of very great importance in all the Non-Self-Governing Territories. General Assembly resolution 1049 (XI) recommended to the Administering Members to consider the formulation of plans, with targets and dates, for various aspects of educational development. The Administering Members often claimed that it was impossible to set target dates in other fields of activity until the people concerned had reached a certain stage of education. It would therefore seem desirable to set target dates for education. The Indian delegation would like to see some statistics, on the lines frequently suggested by UNESCO, concerning the cost of building schools. Such statistics would give the Committee a clearer appreciation of the difficulties encountered in connexion with the provision of free universal education.

(Mr. Mitra, India)

His delegation had always held the view that the complete eradication of illiteracy could be achieved only by universal schooling. He would therefore suggest that the Administering Powers should pay particular attention to the statistics in the UNESCO monograph "World Illiteracy at Mid-Century". It was unfortunate that after fifty years or more of contact with the Western countries illiteracy should be at so high a level in all the Non-Self-Governing Territories. In some Territories, however, an effort was being made to remedy that state of affairs. The Indian delegation was particularly glad to see so much attention being paid by UNESCO to the subject of periodicals for newly literate people. He drew attention to the conclusions of the Twentieth International Conference on Universal Education recently held under UNESCO auspices.

It was regrettable that in some Non-Self-Governing Territories, for example Gambia and Sierra Leone, there were no newspapers of any kind. He noted that in many Territories under French administration, particularly in French West Africa, all publications were in the French language. It was desirable to give an impetus to local languages, however small the number of people who spoke them; otherwise the basic objective of encouraging the culture of the peoples concerned would be lost sight of.

His delegation wondered why there was no African local Press in Kenya, where the level of culture appeared to be relatively high. It was true that there were local news-sheets, but perhaps some encouragement could be given to the setting up of a local Press.

Whatever might be the advantages of television, it was perhaps premature to have a great extension of television services in relatively backward areas; the same amount spent on radio broadcasting would perhaps be a more effective way of educating the masses.

As far as radio was concerned, there appeared to be very wide differences in the number of receiving sets in the various Territories. Radio was an important instrument for mass communication and had been widely used in many of the newly independent countries to assist the population to develop social consciousness and to acquire some knowledge of world affairs. He suggested that the Administering Powers might consider the possibility of distributing dry battery sets, which were comparatively inexpensive to produce and operate.

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(Mr. Mitra, India)

The question of mass communications was inextricably linked with the basic problem of education in the Non-Self-Governing Territories - that of literacy. The eradication of illiteracy was the first step towards educating the populations of the vast areas concerned. Much more attention should be given to the problem and the Committee could perhaps be given statistics every year showing the progress made.

It would be well for the Administering Powers to take much greater advantage than at present of the possibilities of co-operation with UNESCO. The reason for the relatively little assistance given by UNESCO was perhaps the lack of demand from the Administering Powers.

Mr. SALSAMENDI (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) introduced the report prepared for the Committee by UNESCO on the eradication of illiteracy (A/AC.35/L.280).

In reply to the Indian representative's remark about co-operation between UNESCO and the Administering Powers he wished to inform the Committee that his organization was ready at all times to assist those Powers to the best of its ability.

The references to educational advancement and educational policies made by the representatives of Australia, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands in the course of their statements on social conditions and the statement made by the representatives of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom concerning mass communications were of particular interest to his organization.

Mr. DURAISWAMY (Ceylon) expressed the hope that the Administering Powers would give careful attention to the Committee's 1957 report on economic conditions in the Non-Self-Governing Territories and would implement the suggestions set forth in that document. He also wished to reiterate the views his delegation had expressed at the previous session concerning the association of certain Non-Self-Governing Territories with the European Common Market. He would discuss the matter further after he had examined the Secretariat's forthcoming report on the subject.

Mr. CASTON (United Kingdom) assured the representatives of India and Ceylon that this Government had referred the 1957 report on economic conditions to the authorities in the Non-Self-Governing Territories for their information and general guidance.

Mr. COHEN (Under-Secretary) drew attention to the documents listed under items 7 and 8 of the agenda which had been prepared by the Secretariat and the specialized agencies for the Committee's use. No report on international and regional co-operation had been submitted for consideration at the present session, the reason being that the interval between the end of the previous session, held later than usual, and the present session was not long enough to justify the preparation of a comprehensive new report on the subject. The report scheduled to be submitted at the following session would take into account all important developments occurring since the conclusion of the 1957 report.

At a later stage he would make a brief statement concerning applications for and awards of training facilities for inhabitants of the Non-Self-Governing Territories which had been made since the Secretary-General had submitted his last report on that subject.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.