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COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

Fifth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE HUNDREDTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Thursday, 2 September 1954, at 3.00 p.m.

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PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. KHALIDY	Iraq
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. LOOMES	Australia
	Mr. FRAZAO	Brazil
	Mr. HLA AUNG	Burma
	Mr. YANG	China
	Mr. SVEISTRUP	Denmark
	Mr. APUNTE	Ecuador
	Mr. HURE )	France
	Mr. COLLIN )	
	Mr. ARENALES	Guatemala
	Mr. SINGH	India
	Miss ROESAD	Indonesia
	Mr. AL-JAMALI	Iraq
	Mr. SPITS )	Netherlands
	Mr. GRADER )	
	Mr. SCOTT	New Zealand
	Mr. GIDDEN	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. GERIG	United States of America

Representatives of specialized agencies:

Mr. MATTHEWS	International Labour Organisation
Mr. VOGEL	Food and Agriculture Organization
Mr. ARNALDO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. HOO	Assistant Secretary-General
	Mr. BENSON	Secretary of the Committee

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

(a) INFORMATION ON EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS, CONSIDERED IN THE LIGHT OF THE 1950 AND 1953 REPORTS ON EDUCATION IN NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (A/2465; A/AC.35/L.164, L.173, L.175, L.179); (b) PROGRAMME OF FUTURE STUDIES (A/AC.35/L.175)

Mr. GERIG (United States of America) stated that the Committee's 1953 report on education in Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/2465, part II) had proved a valuable adjunct to the basic 1950 report and had received the serious consideration of various Departments of the United States Government, which had commended it to the attention of the appropriate authorities in the Non-Self-Governing Territories under United States administration. The general views expressed in the report were in harmony with United States educational objectives in those Territories. Any problems which might arise in giving effect to those views would accordingly be ascribable, not to any conflict with United States principles and policies, but to practical difficulties of administration. The information submitted under Article 73e of the Charter would continue to indicate the nature of those problems and the annual discussions in the Committee would provide valuable guidance for their alleviation.

A cursory examination of the Special Study on Educational Conditions in Non-Self-Governing Territories (ST/TR1/SER.A/8/Add.1) showed it to be a most valuable collection of information on the subject, which would be of great assistance to the Committee in future discussions.

The educational statistics in the various summaries showed that there had been a general increase in expenditure on, and facilities provided for, primary and secondary education. Increasing use was being made of educational films, while mass literacy campaigns had been continued in many Territories and had markedly increased in some. In a number of Territories, however, the number of children attending school was low in proportion to the number of school age. In the Belgian Congo less than half the children between six and fourteen years of age were attending school; in French Equatorial Africa about 128,000 of the 860,000 children attended school, while in Madagascar it was 272,000 out of 645,000. He would like to receive further information on the Administering Power's claim

that in Madagascar emphasis had recently been on quality of education rather than on the numbers attending school. In Papua, again, despite the fact that the number of schools, teachers and pupils had increased, it was hard to assess what progress had been made, since no figures were given of the number of children of school age. Similarly, in Netherlands New Guinea expenditure on education had increased, as had also the number of schools, yet there appeared to be fewer non-European teachers than before and a less than satisfactory number of children attending school. The number of primary schools in the Gold Coast had apparently fallen from 3,900 to 2,700.

The peculiar difficulties of educational advancement were appreciable in all countries, and were aggravated when the bulk of the population was illiterate, languages and dialects numerous, and roads and other facilities inadequate. The problem of education should be approached scientifically by every member of the Committee and of the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly, some of whom had valuable experience to impart. The Administering Powers would appreciate advice, encouragement and an objective comparison of the progress achieved in education in their Territories with that in countries of comparable conditions.

The United States Office of Education had suggested that when next the question of educational conditions in the Territories was the major item before the Committee, special attention might be given to teacher training and the financing of education, neither of which had received adequate consideration in 1953. His delegation would welcome the preparation of documents on those topics.

On cursory perusal the joint Burmese and Indian draft resolution (A/AC.35/L.179) appeared to resemble closely a resolution which his delegation had supported in the Trusteeship Council and to merit support. He would not, however, state his final position until he had given the proposal more consideration.

Mr. ARENALES (Guatemala) said that his delegation would vote for the joint draft resolution.

The existing method of presenting statistical data in the summaries side by side with those for previous years was sound. In some instances the 1953 information was not directly comparable with that for previous years, but it was to be hoped that that fact marked the introduction of new data which would be included in future summaries.

The appearance of a reduction in the metropolitan share of educational expenditure in such Territories as French West Africa, French Somaliland and Madagascar bore out the United States contention that the financing of education required further study. Monies allocated in a given year to non-recurring items of expenditure should not be deducted from the next year's budget but should be diverted to other educational items. In that connexion he was glad to note that Belgium's contribution to educational expenditure in its Territories had increased.

In the case of some Territories there was room for improvement in statistics on school attendance. It should be borne in mind that data on the number of children enrolled at schools were no substitute for attendance figures. It was also to be hoped that more detailed information concerning Belize (British Honduras) would be supplied in future summaries.

Fundamental education and mass information media were referred to in the summaries and some use had evidently been made of them, but they called for further attention. Fundamental education, on which UNESCO had prepared useful background studies, should be viewed as a complement to school education and as a means of facilitating economic and social progress by accelerating adult education. Guatemala, as an under-developed country, was in a position to make suggestions on the solution of educational problems which it shared with many Non-Self-Governing Territories and it strongly advocated the use of such mass information media as broadcasting in indigenous languages. Another method successfully applied by UNESCO in that country and Mexico was the use of cultural missions to remote areas. The expenditure involved was comparatively small and the result in terms of progress in agriculture, technical knowledge, civilized living, health and related matters was gratifying. It was satisfactory to learn of the increasing use of fundamental education and mass information techniques in French-administered Territories.

The educational problem, alike in Non-Self-Governing Territories and under-developed sovereign States, resolved itself into a problem of school education, for long-term results, and one of adult education, for short-term results. In adult education less emphasis should be placed on primary instruction and literacy than on programmes which would be of immediate benefit to the learner and to his community, covering such subjects as modern methods of cultivation, soil conservation and co-operation.

The Committee had unanimously adopted its reports on education in 1950 (A/130 /Rev.1, part II) and 1953 (A/2465, part II) and the General Assembly had approved them, respectively, by 49 votes to none, with 4 abstentions, and unanimously. The summaries of educational progress given in those reports were as valid as when they had been written; the application of the lessons they contained would avert tragic conditions in Non-Self-Governing Territories and, under General Assembly resolution 645 (VII), paragraph 1, the Committee should ascertain how far those lessons had in fact been applied. Co-operation between Administering and non-administering Powers, in both the Committee and the General Assembly, was of the utmost importance in the application of generally accepted principles of development. The Committee was not empowered to examine political questions in relation to any one Territory, but it might express general view and should consider stating in its report that the next time education was the main topic of a session consideration would be given to the progress achieved towards the objectives set forth in General Assembly resolution 743 (VIII), paragraph 2.

While responsibility for education in the Non-Self-Governing Territories belonged to the United Nations, UNESCO's welcome co-operation was available for the solution of all technical problems and might take one of the following forms: the establishment in the Territories of members of UNESCO, of bodies analogous to the national commissions of metropolitan States as a means of bringing the Territories into more direct contact with UNESCO; the use of international or national UNESCO training centres; a world conference, to be convened by the United Nations and UNESCO, on educational progress in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, in which territorial Ministers of Education might participate. The Committee would do well to refer to such a conference in its report.

Mr. FRAZAO (Brazil) observed that remarkable progress had been achieved in many Territories in primary and secondary school attendances; the authorities in the Belgian Congo, Malaya, French Equatorial Africa and French West Africa in particular were to be congratulated. The Administering Powers should, however, bear in mind the need, to which the Committee had referred in 1953, for an adequate period of school education. In that connexion the information given in document A/AC.35/L.175, paragraph 18, concerning the decision of a Paris conference to maintain the primary school cycle of six years in French African Territories and Madagascar was very welcome. The question of school attendance had a direct bearing on the problem of providing skilled workers for the Non-Self-Governing Territories: paragraph 42 of the Committee's 1953 report on education (A/2465, part II) was pertinent in that connexion.

The French representative had rightly reminded the Committee that the potential field of employment must be borne in mind in the preparation of any educational programme. Schools and their curricula must be adapted to the state of economic and social progress reached by the Territory and the pupils equipped to make a dynamic and constructive contribution to that progress. He hoped the French representative would be able to give the Committee more information on how that objective was pursued in Territories under French administration.

Mr. LOMES (Australia), reverting to the United States representative's comments, regretted that he had no precise figures on the numbers of children of school age in Papua. The special report on education, however, gave comparative tables of school attendance in the Territory, showing marked increases.

The aim of the Papuan administration was to ensure schooling for every child of school age. In achieving that aim, it was hampered by the indigenous social system, the varying levels of development in different parts of the Territory, and the scarcity of teachers. Progress was therefore necessarily slow.

Recognizing that school attendance was closely related to enforcement of compulsory education, the Administration had adopted the 1952 Education Ordinance, which constituted a code for the improvement of education in Papua and the Trust Territory of New Guinea. Although the Ordinance was not yet fully implemented, it represented the only feasible means of attacking the problem of compulsory education, given the particular circumstances. It provided for free school centres to be established by the Administration, for the establishment by indigenous authorities of schools approved by the Administration, for the recognition of schools conducted by agencies other than the Administration, for grants to be made by educational agencies and for compulsory school attendance in specific areas. In more advanced parts of Papua, compulsory education was immediately enforceable, while in other parts it was clearly impracticable and could only result in a dangerous disruption of existing institutions. The 1953 Ordinance further laid down that there should be an eight-year period of schooling: four years at village primary school, two years at post-primary school and two years at secondary school, and that English should be used exclusively from the third year on. The Ordinance had also created an Education Advisory Board and district education committees. The Advisory Board had proposed a system of scholarships enabling Papuans to attend secondary schools in Australia, all expenses paid by the Papuan Administration. Of the first group of nineteen scholarship students, fourteen had been from the Territory. Another twenty scholarships were to be granted in 1955.

The adequacy of educational standards in Papua was being carefully observed by the Administration. A group of representatives of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia had recently visited the Territory to discuss the inclusion of commercial subjects in school curricula and had concluded that standards of teaching in the commercial field were high enough to prepare indigenous graduates for employment in the bank.

Vigorous action had also been taken with respect to increasing the number of teachers. In addition to the routine teacher-training programme, the Administration had instituted accelerated training of indigenous teachers involving a temporary shortening of the training course by two years. Teacher graduates would later have to take refresher courses to maintain the standards. In addition, a new girls' school had been opened in September 1953 with 30 pupils.

With regard to the draft resolution submitted by Burma and India (A/AC.35/L.179), the first paragraph of the preamble appeared unnecessary, in that it merely repeated the relevant Assembly resolution (743 (VIII)). The second paragraph of the preamble implied that the attainment of self-government was contingent on the solution of education problems - a patent over-simplification and false emphasis. The use of the word "adequate" in the third paragraph of the preamble was ambiguous, inasmuch as facilities might be adequate in the light of the general level of development of a given territory but not on the basis of other criteria. Moreover, the situation would not necessarily be remedied by the provision of scholarships and fellowships; there were other ways to develop the adequacy of education. The operative part of the draft resolution gave no clear explanation of the "simple procedure" referred to in paragraph 5 or of the nature of the information material mentioned in paragraph 7; both points required clarification. The invitation to publicize all offers of study, in paragraph 6, was too categorical. In some territories, such as Papua, where levels of development in some areas were too low to permit indigenous persons to avail themselves of such offers, there would be no point in publicizing scholarship offers. The paragraph should be qualified by the insertion of some such phrase as "where the Administering Authorities consider it appropriate".

Finally, a preliminary examination of the joint draft resolution seemed to indicate that its intention was to bring the procedure for scholarships and fellowships in the Non-Self-Governing Territories into line with the procedure applicable to Trust Territories. The Australian delegation reserved its final opinion on the proposal.

The meeting was suspended at 4.15 p.m. and resumed at 4.45 p.m.

Mr. HURE (France), like the Australian representative, was reserving the final view of his delegation of the joint draft resolution (A/AC.35/L.179). From a first reading he noted, however, several controversial points in the preamble. Thus, the second paragraph implied that self-government was the sole objective of education in the Territories. Education, however, was justified in itself. Besides, Chapter XI of the Charter made no mention of self-government.

That was referred to only in Chapter XII, which was not applicable in the present case. Moreover, the intention of the third paragraph of the preamble was not acceptable to the French delegation. It was naive to believe that the scholarships which might be offered to indigenous inhabitants in application of the draft resolution would be adequate to remedy the deficiencies, if any, in the education of the Territories. Paragraphs 5 and 7 of the operative part of the proposal would unduly extend the Committee's competence, which did not include those questions. Furthermore, they would have the effect of converting the Secretariat into a clearing-house receiving all the requests and offers of scholarships and fellowships, examining them and making the appropriate grants. The Secretariat was not qualified to assume that role. Lastly, the "simple procedure" referred to in paragraph 5 should be clarified. In practice, where France was concerned, the resolution would create discrimination in reverse: French citizens of the metropolitan country would apply to Paris for scholarships, while French citizens of the Territories would apply through the United Nations.

The total effect of the draft resolution was to apply to the Non-Self-Governing Territories, where the Administering States had only pledged themselves to observe certain principles and procedures evolved for the Trust Territories, where the United Nations had direct jurisdiction. That erroneous course was unacceptable.

Mr. COLLIN (France) discussed youth movements and sports as two methods of educational and cultural advancement for the indigenous masses, particularly the youth, in the French African Territories. They were especially effective in counteracting the effects of the isolation of indigenous villages and tribal communities and in supplementing regular schooling and fundamental education. Moreover, they provided an excellent instrument for giving impetus to community development, which was destined, especially in Africa, to create profound social changes.

It had proved especially necessary to select the proper method of promoting youth movements in the French Overseas Territories because the tradition of **scouting** and sports education was less deep-rooted in France than in some other countries. A pragmatic solution whereby various private activities were co-ordinated with Government agencies intervening directly only where private agencies proved inadequate, had finally been adopted.

In Morocco, youth movements were under the supervision of a Youth Council which was composed of representatives elected by the various groups. In particular, the Council was responsible for distributing Government subsidies to finance such activities as camping trips, counsellor training and youth hostels. Some 20,000 young people were active in youth movements and the number was steadily increasing. It should be noted that two thirds of the young people in vacation colonies were Moroccans. Much attention had also been given to cultural activities for young people: schools of dramatics had been established, and 15 Arabic-speaking theatrical groups were operating under subsidies. Another innovation in the programme had been the formation of women's clubs for young Moslem women.

In French Equatorial Africa, French West Africa and Madagascar, special organizations had been created to co-ordinate youth movements and sports activities. The obstacles of vast distances and sparse population had had to be overcome. Primary emphasis had been placed on sports. In Equatorial Africa, some 200 playing fields for school children had been provided and a large sports stadium had been built in Brazzaville. In Madagascar, there were about 700 sports clubs, including 160 school athletic groups. It would be recalled that the World Youth Congress had held its August meeting in Dakar; African representatives of the youth of French tropical Africa had taken an active part in it. Finally, an interesting experiment had recently been undertaken in French Equatorial Africa by the creation of cultural clubs or centres directed by indigenous youth leaders. The activities of the centres ranged from intellectual pursuits to strictly sports activities and two magazines were published under their auspices, one of them written entirely by indigenous members.

Mr. YANG (China) expressed agreement in principle with the Indian representative's view that the Committee's procedure concentrating on one of the three main fields of study each year should not prevent due attention from being given to the other fields; yet it had to be conceded that the limited time at the Committee's disposal made it difficult to deal with the other fields thoroughly.

The Secretariat and UNESCO had produced an interesting set of documents on educational conditions. Document A/AC.35/L.164, though mainly concerned with other agenda items, contained an interesting paragraph on the valuable work done under the Fulbright Agreements. Document A/AC.35/L.173 showed the intelligent way in which UNESCO was dealing with illiteracy. One indigenous inhabitant of a Non-Self-Governing Territory had been awarded a fellowship to join the group training scheme for experts in fundamental education at Mysore. It was hoped that more such fellowships would be available to the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the future. The UNESCO documentation service had been valuable in many Territories, but it was noted that the useful Contact Letter in Fundamental Education went to only fourteen addresses in the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Mr. SIDDEN (United Kingdom) said that educational progress during the past year had been satisfactory. The United States representative had drawn attention to an apparent regression in the Gold Coast, but that must be due to a documentary error, for there had been a special drive in that Territory to achieve the Government's adopted aim of universal primary education. There should now be very few children in the south between the ages of six and ten who were not attending school.

As yet there was no further progress to report on the Central African University, to which the Chairman had referred. After a discussion in the Inaugural Board, it had been decided that there should be a single educational standard. There was some evidence that that decision had been welcomed by African opinion and would act as a stimulus to secondary education.

The Chairman had referred also to the scheme for training Malayan teachers in the United Kingdom. The Federation Government had acquired a teachers' training college in England which was producing 150 Malayan teachers each year, with such success that a second establishment of similar size had recently been set up. A further establishment of the same pattern had been opened in Malaya.

The Guatemalan representative had suggested that an educational conference might be held on a global basis. The United Kingdom Government's experience had been that educational conferences were most successful if limited in scope and geographical area. **Examples of such conferences had been a seminar on public library services held in conjunction with UNESCO in Nigeria, a conference on workers' education at the International Centre at Compiègne, a youth leaders' conference at Tokyo and a conference on social science teaching at Delhi.**

Mr. HLA AUNG (Burma) said that in order to achieve the objective of giving indigenous peoples access to culture, higher education was of first importance. In most Territories there was a lack of time, money and trained staff to maintain the recent development of education at the university level, especially technical education, and it was still necessary to send a large number of students abroad for university training. A comprehensive programme of that sort was very costly and hence a heavy burden on the educational budgets of the Territories. To relieve that burden, much had been done by means of scholarships and fellowships granted by metropolitan Governments, private philanthropy and the United Nations, but much more was needed. For that reason the Burmese and Indian delegations had submitted their joint draft resolution (A/AC.35/L.179), which reflected the interest of the whole world in the progress of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Burmese Government was arranging to offer scholarships to indigenous inhabitants of African Territories and was confident that the Administering Powers concerned would facilitate their acceptance.

Miss ROESAD (Indonesia) referred to her earlier remarks about the need for greater attention to skills, which had also been stressed in the Committee's 1953 Report (A/2465). It was gratifying to note from the Special Study on Educational Conditions in the Non-Self-Governing Territories (ST/TRI/SER.A/8/Add.1) that the Administering Powers had recognized the need, and taken appropriate steps, to improve vocational training. Such training, however, depended on an adequate system of primary education and much remained to be done.

The most important need was to convince the indigenous inhabitants that they were not second-class citizens and that they had a responsibility towards the future development of their own communities. To do that it would be necessary to eliminate features, such as separate schools for different races, that created the contrary impression. The 1953 Report had discussed the problem of separate schools quite thoroughly. The Indonesian delegation recognized the difficulties with which the Administering Powers were faced but thought that they could be overcome by creating appropriate conditions for the co-operation of the indigenous inhabitants.

On achieving independence, Indonesia had had a literacy rate of 7 per cent, but that had been raised to 45 per cent, despite such difficulties as shortage of money, materials and teachers and the existence of diverse communities. Now that the people had appreciated the need to co-operate in their country's educational development, progress had become rapid.

The Indonesian delegation attached great importance to the education of girls and hoped that the recommendations of the 1953 Report would be implemented. The progress of the women's movement in Morocco was encouraging.

The Indonesian delegation supported the joint draft resolution (A/AC.35/L.179) and felt sure that its obvious merits would receive the support of the Administering Powers. There seemed little point in distinguishing between Trust Territories and Non-Self-Governing Territories in that connexion.

The meeting rose at 6.5 p.m.