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CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED NEW TRUSTEESHIP AGREEMENTS, IF ANY  
(Resolutions 9(I) of 9 February 1946 and 65 (I) of 14 December 1946)

(Item 26 of the Provisional Agenda of the Second Regular Session)

COMMUNICATION FROM THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA  
ON THE FUTURE STATUS OF SOUTH WEST AFRICA

I

By letter of 12 September 1947, the Permanent Delegation of the Union of South Africa to the United Nations informed the Secretary-General of the transmission of copies of the Report by the Government of the Union of South Africa on the Administration of South West Africa for the year 1946.

This communication is stated to be in terms of the Union Government's letter of 23 July 1947, (document A/334) in which it is noted that "the Union Government have already undertaken to submit reports on their administration (of South West Africa) for the information of the United Nations."

II

By letter of 17 September 1947, the Permanent Delegation of the Union of South Africa to the United Nations transmitted to the Secretary-General the following "Summary of steps taken by the Union Government to inform the population of South West Africa of the outcome of the discussions at the last session of the United Nations General Assembly regarding the future of the Territory."

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In the earlier half of 1946 steps were taken by the Union Government and the South West African Administration to consult the wishes of the non-European population regarding the proposal that South West Africa should be incorporated in the Union. The result of the consultation was:  
For incorporation - 208,850;                      against 33,520;  
not consulted - 56790.

The method of consultation was fully explained in memoranda and statements submitted to the last regular session of the Assembly.

At the conclusion of that session, following the decision of the Assembly to recommend against incorporation and in favour of the submission of the Trusteeship Agreement, the South African delegation undertook to report the outcome of the Assembly's deliberations to the peoples of South West Africa.

As on the previous occasion the method adopted in respect of the non-European population was to inform the Natives as tribal units, tribal meetings being the traditional form of political expression among the Natives. Again as on the previous occasion, the Native Commissioners gave the same form of address at the different tribal meetings, which was designed to explain in simple terms the recommendation of the General Assembly.

This address, after recalling the steps which had been taken in the earlier half of 1946 to ascertain the views and opinions of the Native population on the question of incorporation, explained how the Head of the Union Government, General Smuts, then went to the United Nations meeting in October, 1946, asked, on behalf of the peoples of South West Africa, for incorporation and told the United Nations that the great majority of the Europeans and Natives wanted incorporation, but that some Natives, particularly the Hereros, were against it. The United Nations discussed the matter for a long time but did not agree to incorporation. The main reasons why the United Nations did not agree to incorporation were:

- (a) That they considered that all Governments which held territories under the old mandate should now make agreements with the United Nations, whereby such territories are placed under trusteeship, i.e. those Governments must account every year to the United Nations as to the manner in which they had governed the territory.
- (b) That they considered that the Natives of South West Africa had not had enough experience of ruling themselves and were not sufficiently developed to express an opinion as to how they are to be governed.

The United Nations, therefore, asked the Union Government to make a trusteeship agreement with U.N.O. in respect of South West Africa. The Head of the Union Government told the other nations at U.N.O. that he would not be

able to agree to this as it was not what the people of South West Africa had asked for, but that the ~~Union Government~~ would continue to govern South West Africa in the spirit of the mandate received from the old League of Nations. At a large number of meetings held throughout the non-European areas of South West Africa, after the explanation outlined above had been given, the tribes were asked what their attitude was in the light of the United Nations discussions. The results of their deliberations showed that the overwhelming majority were still unanimously in favour of South West Africa being ~~incorporated~~ in the Union. The Hereros who had been opposed to incorporation at the time of the original consultation have, however, ~~maintained~~ their previous attitude. At meetings that were presided over by the Chief Native Commissioner on the 26th and 27th of May, 1947, it was clear that they are still opposed to incorporation, though no vote was taken nor any resolution passed.

In detail, this communication to the Native tribes of the contents of the United Nations resolution of 14th December 1946, brought forth the following reaction (figures given are to the nearest hundred):

(a) Still in favour of incorporation	193,400
(b) Against incorporation and in favour of some form of trusteeship.	31,800
(c) Undecided	33,700
(d) Not contacted	67,600
(e) Angola Natives temporarily working on contract and therefore not consulted.	<u>10,000</u>
South West Africa's total non-European population.	<u>336,500</u>

The above figures represent estimates by the Administration of the total number of persons in all the tribes. The figure of those undecided covers tribes, large numbers of whom are believed to be in favour of incorporation but whose tribal organizations wish to see what additional benefits they might succeed in obtaining from the Administration before committing themselves. The figure of those not contacted consists of Bushmen, farm labourers, and other isolated Natives in respect of whom it was impracticable to arrange tribal or other gatherings. It is known that a large number of these are in favour of incorporation. For instance the figure includes 11,000 inhabitants of the Eastern Caprivi Zipfel (whose administration falls under the Union Department of Native Affairs,) who on the occasion of the original consultation expressed themselves unanimously in favour of incorporation.

As far as the European population was concerned the United Nations

General Assembly resolution was fully discussed at a session of the South West African Legislative Assembly after which the following resolution was unanimously adopted on the 7th May, 1947:

"That this House expresses to the Right Honourable the Prime Minister of the Union its appreciation and thanks for his firm and courageous stand before the United Nations Organization in connection with the incorporation of this Territory with the Union, and trust that the United Nations Organization will grant the wishes of the large majority of inhabitants of this Territory European as well as non-European."

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