



Wednesday, 17 November 1954,
at 3 p.m.

New York

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Chairman: Mr. Rafik ASHA (Syria).

AGENDA ITEM 13

**Report of the Trusteeship Council (A/2680, A/C.4/277, A/C.4/L.364, A/C.4/L.365, A/C.4/L.366)
(*continued*)**

GENERAL DEBATE AND CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (*continued*)

1. Mr. CLAREY (Australia) said that his Government felt that in the report of the Trusteeship Council (A/2680) the difficulties with which it had to cope in New Guinea were not fully appreciated. His Government would, however, give the report the most detailed study and would implement such of the recommendations as might be appropriate to the present conditions of the Territory.

2. He read out an extract from a statement recently made in the Australian Parliament by the Honourable Paul Hasluck, Minister for Territories. Mr. Hasluck had pointed out that before the term "trusteeship" had entered into any international documents it had been given practical meaning by the United Kingdom in its colonies and by Australia in Papua and New Guinea. Australia had laid down certain principles of conduct towards the people of the Territory and certain policies in respect to the development of the country and had set itself a higher standard than anyone outside Australia could have done. Mr. Hasluck had also said that while it would be easy, given the means and the money, to transform New Guinea and multiply its production in a short time, something would be destroyed in the process which could not be replaced and trouble would pile up in the future as a result.

3. Mr. Hasluck's statement, which reflected Australia's conception of its trusteeship responsibilities, was a realistic approach to the problem of New Guinea. As Australian representatives had already emphasized on many occasions, there was no parallel in any other Trust Territory to the physical difficulties of New Guinea, the rigours of the climate and the diversity of the people. The work of the Administering Authority had been greatly hampered by the disruption in the lives of the people and the physical destruction caused by enemy occupation during the Second World War. However, the work of rehabilitation had begun even before the end of the war and had been continued so that the Territory was now entering into a developmental stage of its history. He pointed out that the

United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in the Pacific, 1953, had expressed the view that some of the discussions which had taken place on the political advancement of the indigenous people of New Guinea had been premature, that while the pace of political development could and should be accelerated, it would be unrealistic to assume that the existing tribal structure could be greatly modified in the very near future, and that at the present stage a meaningful Territory-wide political organization was difficult to imagine (T/1078, para.11).

4. In the political field the Administration was confident that a firm foundation was being laid for local indigenous institutions and for the eventual direct participation of the indigenous inhabitants in the work of government. The policy of the Administering Authority was gradually to replace the direct rule system of village officials by the formation of properly constituted Native councils and to establish such councils whenever and wherever the indigenous people were ready and able to accept responsibility. Up to the present time six such councils had been established and, although every encouragement and assistance was being given to the people in the more advanced areas, it was unlikely that there could be any spectacular progress for some considerable time. As the Committee was aware, the participation of suitably qualified indigenous inhabitants in the Legislative Council of Papua-New Guinea was being tried out. While at present only two members of the indigenous people were associated with the work of the Legislative Council, indigenous interests were protected by the presence on the Council of official members of the Administration. Until the people had a clear grasp of modern political institutions, the Administration must itself ensure that the interests of the indigenous population were adequately safeguarded by means of official representation on the various organs of government.

5. Considerable progress had been made in building up an adequate body of administrative officials. Improved recruitment procedures had been introduced and the system of cadetships, which had previously applied only to patrol officers, had been greatly expanded. Energetic steps had also been taken to extend the participation of indigenous inhabitants in the Administration. An auxiliary division of the Public Service was to be set up in the near future to assist in the training of indigenous clerks, teachers, medical assistants and others who could qualify for entry into the Public Service. They would have the same rights and privileges as any other members of the service.

6. In the economic field, the Administration's policy was directed at the conservation and development of the national resources, the provision of adequate communications and the improvement of the standard of living in the Territory; here again the Administration's policy was to assist and encourage the indigenous inhabitants to participate to an ever increasing extent

in development and to promote their progressive advancement towards self-government. While bearing in mind the view of the Trusteeship Council that "a co-ordinated long-range programme is basic for the sound economic development of the Territory" (A/2680, p. 253) the Administering Authority felt that for the time being it was more realistic to define economic objectives and to work out detailed plans from time to time, as circumstances permitted, to attain those objectives. While the Territory was still basically dependent upon copra, the Administration was actively encouraging the development of new crops; it was also encouraging the expansion of indigenous industry, mainly through co-operatives and rural progress societies, both in copra production and in the production of cocoa and rice. As a consequence, the people of New Guinea were playing an increasingly larger role in the economy.

7. The acquisition of land from the indigenous inhabitants was carried out in such a way that their interests were fully safeguarded. Future acquisitions would be supervised by the Department of Lands, Surveys and Mines, acting in consultation with the Departments of District Services and Native Affairs, of Health, of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries and of Forests. Land held or acquired by the Administration would be examined by the Lands Department in consultation with the other departments concerned to determine the best use to be made of it. It was felt that with those controls the present and prospective needs of the indigenous inhabitants would be fully safeguarded and land would be allocated only when it could be shown that it would be put to the best possible use.

8. In the social and educational fields his Government was convinced that reasonable progress was being made. The Administration was devoting its energy to the solution of social problems, the extension of medical and health services and the greatest possible expansion of education throughout the Territory. Following a recommendation of the recently established Education Advisory Board, the Administration had instituted a system of scholarships for indigenous students from Papua and New Guinea to attend secondary schools in Australia. It was also endeavouring to accelerate the training of indigenous teachers and to increase their numbers.

9. The advantages of the administrative union between the Australian Territory of Papua and the Trust Territory of New Guinea had been shown by Australian representatives at previous sessions; he would merely say, therefore, that at the present stage of development the union appeared to his Government to be the most efficient method for the proper administration of the Territory.

10. With reference to the Trust Territory of Nauru, the smallest of all the Trust Territories, the people of the island were very adequately provided for, principally by reason of the royalties paid them as a result of the operations of the British Phosphate Commissioners. The 1953 Visiting Mission to the Pacific had stated that the community had services far exceeding those of any other community of similar size (T/1076, para.12).

11. The principal problem with regard to Nauru was that relating to the future of the community when the phosphate deposits would become exhausted. The only fertile areas on the island were small coastal strips; the phosphate-bearing land was not and never would be of any use for agricultural purposes. Since

the grant of the Mandate in 1919 the Administering Authority had taken steps to improve the living standards of the Nauruans, who were now far removed from the primitive conditions in which they had previously lived. As time went on their living standards would become even higher and any suggestion that they should revert to their original mode of life when the phosphate industry closed down was unthinkable. Since the Nauruans wished to retain their identity as a separate community, two alternatives appeared to be open: either to resettle them as an urbanized community in an area where employment was available for both skilled and unskilled workers; or, if a sufficient number were prepared to become farmers, to establish a settlement for them in an area suitable for agriculture which could be developed into a permanent home. The Australian Government was giving the question very careful consideration and its action would be decided upon in the light of the best interests of the Nauruan people.

12. In conclusion, he expressed his Government's appreciation of the work of the Trusteeship Council, to which Australia was happy to give all possible assistance. Australia, relying on the understanding and constructive advice of the Council, was doing and would continue to do its utmost to carry out in good faith its obligations under the Charter and the Trusteeship Agreements.

13. Mr. BOZOVIC (Yugoslavia) wished to comment on a number of points in the report of the Trusteeship Council, while reserving the right to speak at a later date if necessary on conditions in particular Trust Territories.

14. In connexion with the question of petitions, he noted that some members of the Trusteeship Council seemed to fear that their growing number might well lead, or had indeed already led, to abuse of the right of petition. Although it was true that some of the petitions received did not deal with matters which the Trusteeship Council considered to be important, the reason for the increased number should not be sought in the enthusiasm of the peoples of Trust Territories for writing letters to the United Nations. Nor should the importance of a petition be decided upon in accordance with an abstract definition, but in the light of the general situation of the petitioner and of the Territory concerned. He gave examples of petitions which might seem in themselves to be unimportant, but which raised other questions throwing an unfavourable light on the general situation in the Territory referred to. At the sixth session of the General Assembly, the Yugoslav delegation had proposed a draft resolution, later adopted as resolution 552 (VI), on the procedure for the examination of petitions. The meaning of that resolution had been quite clear to the members of the Fourth Committee when it had been adopted, and he was somewhat surprised at the procedure which the Trusteeship Council had adopted in implementation of it. He felt that, in general, insufficient attention was paid to the petitions which were received; many of them raised subsidiary points worthy of detailed consideration. The procedure adopted by the Standing Committee on Petitions at its last session had shown some improvement, but he felt, nevertheless, that the matter should be reconsidered. He suggested, for example, that the Committee on Petitions might sit all the year round and not merely during sessions of the Trusteeship Council or one month before such sessions. In that way, it would have time to examine

each petition fully and make concrete recommendations to the Trusteeship Council.

15. He turned next to the question of administrative unions, their character and their influence on the development of Trust Territories and on the right of the people to express themselves freely, not only in theory but in practice, on the status and future of the Territory which they inhabited. The right of the Administering Authorities to create administrative unions was sanctioned by the trusteeship agreements. However, in some cases the Administering Authorities had set up unions which went much further than was provided for in the agreements, and which were in fact political unions whereby a Trust Territory was made entirely dependent upon a neighbouring Non-Self-Governing Territory. Such dependence upon a Non-Self-Governing Territory could hardly be in the interests of the people of the Trust Territory, or form a secure basis for their future independence. In conditions of such close association, the people's choice of their future status could hardly be free in fact. It would inevitably be restricted, not necessarily by any action of the Administering Authority, but by the weight of the whole situation. By cutting themselves off from the Non-Self-Governing Territory, they might well be faced with a total lack of any organized system of administration or legislation, any stable basis for separate economic existence, or any facilities for higher education. They would therefore be forced either to agree to a situation which they had had no part in deciding on or to accept a separate existence with very poor prospects. Such a choice was not in accordance with the basic objectives of the Trusteeship System.

16. The General Assembly should study the facts very carefully, so that it would not be obliged either to approve situations which were perhaps not in the best interests of the indigenous inhabitants or to sanction action taken without the will of the people. He suggested that the General Assembly should consider the possibility of appointing a new committee to examine the situation in regard to administrative unions, or of requesting the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion on whether the Administering Authorities were authorized to transform admittedly lawful administrative unions into political unions which were not provided for in the Charter or in the trusteeship agreements and did not correspond to the aims of the International Trusteeship System. He regretted that the Standing Committee on Administrative Unions had postponed consideration of the administrative union affecting the Cameroons under British administration to the fifteenth session of the Council, and had also postponed the question of the administrative union affecting Togoland under British administration, in view of the fact that the future of that Trust Territory was likely to be an item on the agenda of the ninth session of the General Assembly. The General Assembly would have benefited greatly from an examination by the Committee on Administrative Unions of the situation in those Territories in its discussion on the future of the Trust Territory of Togoland under British administration.

17. The subject of rural economic development of the Trust Territories had been under consideration for many years and it was time that definite recommendations were made in that connexion. He urged the Committee on Rural Economic Development to co-operate more closely with the Economic and Social Council.

18. In connexion with educational advancement in the Trust Territories and offers by Member States of study and training facilities, he drew attention to the fact that Yugoslavia had received a number of applications for scholarships. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 753 (VIII), the Government of Yugoslavia was awaiting further information from the Administering Authorities before it decided which students should be given an opportunity to study in Yugoslavia.

19. He regretted that the Trusteeship Council had not had time to reach any conclusions or formulate any recommendations on the report of the Secretary-General on the attainment by the Trust Territories of the objective of self-government or independence (T/L.464 and Corr.1 and Add.1). He recognized that the Council had had a very full agenda and suggested that it might perhaps be relieved of its burden to some extent by the appointment of a special committee to deal with that matter. It might also be of interest for the Trusteeship Council to ask the visiting missions to examine the situation in the Trust Territories which they visited in the light of the provisions of General Assembly resolution 752 (VIII) and to report to the Trusteeship Council their conclusions regarding the attainment of self-government or independence and any steps which might have been taken to that end.

20. The Yugoslav delegation would support the four-Power draft resolution in document A/C.4/L.365. However, it should be made clear that the procedure outlined was being adopted merely as an experiment. It should also be made clear that the new form of the Trusteeship Council's report ought not to affect the volume or comprehensive nature of the Administering Authorities' reports to the Trusteeship Council. Also, the Council's reports to the Assembly every third year should give a very full survey of events and conditions in the Territories concerned.

21. The Yugoslav delegation was also in favour of the draft resolution proposed by Canada, (A/C.4/L.364). He hoped that the Trusteeship Council would in future take into account the comments and suggestions made by the Fourth Committee in the course of the discussions on the report of the Council. It might help the Council if the Secretariat were to prepare a document listing those suggestions, or at least giving the appropriate references to the summary records.

22. Mr. CARPIO (Philippines) raised a number of objections to the four-Power draft resolution (A/C.4/L.365). The term "comprehensive report" in the operative paragraph was not at all clear, but it would seem to imply that in the two by-years certain existing sections of the report would be eliminated. It would be most unfortunate if, for instance, the individual comments of members of the Trusteeship Council were to be omitted, thus depriving the Fourth Committee of an important means of assessing the true situation in the Trust Territories. Furthermore, the draft resolution seemed to lay too much stress on the visiting missions, which were, after all, only one of the means available to the Trusteeship Council under Article 87 of the Charter for carrying out its functions. The visiting missions undoubtedly did good work but their reports were vitiated by the fact that, owing to parity of composition, nothing could be included unless it was approved by the two members representing Administering Authorities. The description of conditions in the Trust Territories had to be watered down and very often reflected the conditions only in the form agreed by

the Administering Authorities. He failed to understand the basic objective of the draft resolution or to see what advantage would be derived from eliminating some sections of the report. In that connexion, it would be interesting to hear just which sections would be eliminated. Care must be taken to ensure that the members of the Committee were not deprived of the possibility of evaluating the actual conditions in the Trust Territories.

23. The Australian representative had admitted that New Guinea was the most backward of all the Trust Territories and had mentioned the harsh climate as a contributory factor. Yet New Guinea was well off compared to many other Trust Territories. It had a healthy climate, cultivable land, abundant rainfall and rich natural resources. After years of administration as a mandated and later as a Trust Territory, however, it was still the most backward Trust Territory and the indigenous inhabitants were in practically the same state as thirty years previously. The Australian Government was developing the Territory to some extent, but far too slowly.

24. It was gratifying to hear of the increasing number of scholarships being made available to the indigenous inhabitants of New Guinea for secondary training in Australia. Efforts in that direction should be intensified and extended to university education. The indigenous doctors, lawyers and technicians thus trained could make a valuable contribution to the development of their communities. The training of an indigenous élite was a faster method of promoting advancement than the old way of starting from the bottom up. Indeed, increased use of scholarships could be made in all the Trust Territories.

25. Turning to Nauru, he stressed that the Territory belonged to the indigenous inhabitants. While the Administering Authority had indubitably made some provision out of the phosphate royalties for the future of the inhabitants when the phosphate deposits would become exhausted, it could do much more. It should see that the Nauruans received royalties sufficient to ensure them more than a hand-to-mouth existence and to enable them to educate their children.

26. The Yugoslav representative had made some very pertinent remarks about administrative unions, and he agreed that more serious and urgent consideration should be given to that problem. In the case of Tanganyika, for example, the administrative union with neighbouring Non-Self-Governing Territories might well involve Tanganyika in their well-known racial and economic problems. Even now, it was open to question whether Tanganyika actually enjoyed the status accorded to it under the International Trusteeship System. The integration of Togoland under British administration into the Gold Coast was another vital issue. The Togolese people had been separated for years by the artificial boundary between the two Togolands. In those circumstances, the right of self-determination could hardly be fully exercised. The General Assembly should re-examine the whole question of administrative unions. No effective results had been achieved by the Standing Committee on Administrative Unions during the course of its five or six years' work and a new approach might well be salutary.

27. In conclusion, he asked what exactly was envisaged by operative paragraph 2 of the Canadian draft resolution (A/C.4/L.364). If the Secretary-General was to prepare a new document for the Trusteeship Council, that scarcely seemed in keeping with the

Council's general desire to reduce its documentation. In the Haitian draft resolution (A/C.4/L.366) the word "progress" in the fourth paragraph of the preamble seemed odd in view of the statement in operative paragraph 1 that there had been "no progress".

28. Ato YIFRU (Ethiopia) expressed his concern at a number of comments prejudicial to his Government and people that were to be found in the documents before the Committee and in the statements of previous speakers. The problem of the frontier between Ethiopia and the Trust Territory of Somaliland was extremely important and affected Ethiopia's territorial integrity. He would therefore be obliged to make a further statement on the subject at a later date.

29. Mr. ROBBINS (United States of America) formally introduced the four-Power draft resolution on the annual reports of the Trusteeship Council (A/C.4/L.365). It had its genesis in part I, chapter V, section 11, of the Trusteeship Council's report, dealing with the control and limitation of documentation, and merely expressed the General Assembly's approval of the decisions reached by the Trusteeship Council on the basis of the Secretary-General's suggestions. The four sponsors of the draft resolution were the members of the Committee on Control and Limitation of Documentation established by the Council to study the problem. The Council had adopted the Committee's report (T/L.477). The draft resolution was therefore the result of careful study. In addition, it was in complete conformity with United Nations policies.

30. Mr. HOO (Assistant Secretary-General in charge of the Department of Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories), replying to the Philippine representative, pointed out that part II of the Council's report was "comprehensive"; in fact, it occupied almost 250 of the 300 pages in the report. The Secretary-General's suggestions to the Trusteeship Council had been aimed at limiting the Council's documentation in accordance with two General Assembly resolutions on the subject. The Secretary-General had suggested that the present comprehensive reports on each Territory should be submitted only every third year, coinciding with the visiting missions' reports. Thus each year the Council would be particularly well informed on a third of the Territories, since the information contained in the annual reports of the Administering Authorities would be supplemented by the information in the visiting missions' reports. On the other hand, the Council and the Secretary-General had not wanted any important developments to be overlooked in the intervening two years and had therefore included provision for the shorter reports mentioned in the last part of the operative paragraph of the four-Power draft resolution.

31. Mr. DORSINVILLE (Haiti) said that at the fourteenth session of the Trusteeship Council (528th and 530th meetings) the Colombian representative on the United Nations Advisory Council for the Trust Territory of Somaliland under Italian Administration and two petitioners, the Vice-Presidents of the Territorial Council, had drawn the Trusteeship Council's attention to the alarming situation along the Ethiopian-Somaliland frontier. His delegation had submitted a draft resolution (T/L.474) which had subsequently become, with slight amendments, Trusteeship Council resolution 1000 (XIV) and which formed the basis of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.4/277).

32. It was extremely disappointing that no progress had been made in the negotiations on such an im-

portant problem which was becoming more and more urgent as the date of Somaliland's independence drew near. In the memorandum by the Italian Government reproduced in the Secretary-General's report, that Government related its numerous overtures to the Ethiopian Government. It had apparently encountered a deliberately evasive attitude, since, despite the promise contained in a note from the Ethiopian Minister of Foreign Affairs in June 1953, the Ethiopian Government had not even appointed the official who was to initiate the preliminary discussions. The Italian Government on the other hand had announced the name of its representative. The Ethiopian Government appeared to found its argument that there was no basis for negotiations on the contention that the Administering Authority refused to recognize the frontier accepted by the Trusteeship Council at its sixth session in 1950. He was not concerned, for the moment, with who was in the right. The fact remained that the existing state of affairs was far from satisfactory and constituted a very definite threat for the future.

33. The Secretary-General's report also contained the information transmitted by the Advisory Council on the basis of a report by the Egyptian member of the Council who had visited the frontier zone. His report confirmed the following facts: certain elements were indulging in raids; the inhabitants of the Territory were extremely disquieted; resentment was growing and certain chiefs were referring more and more openly to the possibility of resorting to direct action.

34. The future State of Somaliland should be spared the delicate task—not of its seeking—of solving the

frontier problem with Ethiopia. Frontier situations were potentially explosive.

35. At the previous meeting, the Indian representative had made a number of excellent suggestions which should be borne in mind. She had added that perhaps the time had come for resorting to the mediation provided for in resolution 392 (V). It should be pointed out, however, that it was for one of the parties concerned to ask for a United Nations mediator to be appointed, and then only after direct negotiations had failed. It seemed too early to speak of the failure of such negotiations when they had not even begun. His delegation therefore maintained its original proposal to the Trusteeship Council and resubmitted it to the Fourth Committee in document A/C.4/L.366.

36. The draft resolution left a certain latitude to the parties concerned and should not be offensive to either of them. At the same time it indicated that the United Nations was growing impatient for action in accordance with one or other of the procedures suggested in resolution 392 (V). There was still time to negotiate before the time limit of July 1955. His delegation had been careful to draft the resolution in moderate terms and he hoped that it would meet with the approval of the vast majority of the Committee.

37. Mr. RIVAS (Venezuela) objected to the discussion of draft resolutions before the conclusion of the general debate. If there were no more speakers in the general debate, the meeting should adjourn. He proposed a formal motion to that effect.

The motion for adjournment was adopted by 35 votes to none, with 3 abstentions.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.