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Chairman: Mr. Frederick H. BOLAND (Ireland).

AGENDA ITEM 13

The future of the Trust Territories of the Cameroons under French administration and the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration: special report of the Trusteeship Council* (A/4092, A/4093/Rev.1, A/4094, A/C.4/395, T/SR.953-963) (continued)

QUESTIONS ADDRESSED TO THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITIES (concluded)

1. Mr. ABIKUSNO (Indonesia) recalled that Mr. Kemajou, the President of the Legislative Assembly of the Cameroons under French administration, had stated at the 846th meeting that the desire of the Cameroonian people for independence and reunification was not the monopoly of any political group. In paragraph 138 of its report on the Cameroons under French administration (T/1427 and T/1434^{1/}), the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in West Africa, 1958, referred to the request of certain groups for the dissolution of the existing Legislative Assembly and the holding of further elections for a new Legislative Assembly or for a constituent assembly. He would like to know the names of the groups in question; whether they were represented in the existing Legislative Assembly; whether they had taken part in the elections of 23 December 1956; and whether they continued to possess some political strength. Since independence seemed to be the universal desire in the country, he wished to know for what reason those groups were asking for new elections.

2. He also asked what had been the issues in the electoral campaign of December 1956 and how the legislative powers of the Legislative Assembly which had emerged from them compared with those of the Territorial Assembly which it had replaced.

3. If it were known before 1 January 1960 that the Southern Cameroons or the whole of the Cameroons

*In accordance with General Assembly resolution 1281 (XIII).

^{1/} Transmitted to Members of the General Assembly by a note of the Secretary-General (A/4092).

under British administration desired unification, did the existing Government in the Cameroons under French administration contemplate the holding of a referendum to decide on the form which reunification should take? What were that Government's own views on the subject? Did it propose to hold new elections to set up proper legislative organs?

4. Mr. Foncha, the Premier of the Southern Cameroons, had said at the 846th meeting that if the Southern Cameroons remained under trusteeship it would welcome union with the Northern Cameroons. He would ask Mr. Foncha how he envisaged that union; did he consider it to be feasible only after the Southern Cameroons had separated from Nigeria or did he think that it could be brought about before that separation? Again, did Mr. Foncha conceive of unification with the French-administered Territory after, or before, the union of the Northern and Southern Cameroons? Would he agree to unification once the Southern Cameroons had seceded from Nigeria but before its union with the Northern Cameroons?

5. Mr. Foncha had also said that he did not wish reunification to be one of the questions put at a plebiscite. He would ask him how in that case the electorate was to express its views on that matter and whether it would form the subject of a second plebiscite; if so, would such a plebiscite deal also with the prospective issues between the Northern and the Southern Cameroons? Did Mr. Foncha contemplate that reunification would take place before, or after, the independence of the Cameroons under French administration, and would the wishes of the Southern Cameroons be known before 1 January 1960?

6. In paragraph 167 of its report on the Cameroons under British administration (T/1426 and Add.12^{1/}) the Visiting Mission said that one of the two parties in the Southern Cameroons—presumably the one led by Mr. Foncha—still clung to the hope that unity between the Northern and Southern Cameroons could be achieved. He wished to know whether he would be correct in assuming that the Northern Cameroons would be ready to unite with the Southern Cameroons if the latter remained within the Nigerian Federation. He also asked whether, in the event of the United Nations finding that a plebiscite in the Northern Cameroons was necessary, the inhabitants of that zone would be prepared to accept such a plebiscite and on what grounds.

7. Mr. JHA (India) said that, as he understood it, the new State of the Cameroons would be a fully sovereign nation like any other State Member of the United Nations, and association with France or any other nation would not inhibit its independence. That being so, he would ask whether France intended to sponsor the new State's membership of the United Nations.

^{2/} Transmitted to Members of the General Assembly by a note of the Secretary-General (A/4093/Rev.1).

8. Mr. Foncha had said that the Southern Cameroons should secede from Nigeria and form a separate entity which would continue for a short time to be under trusteeship and United Kingdom administration. He would like to know what situation Mr. Foncha would envisage if an acceptable basis for reunification were not found at the end of that further period of trusteeship. If the United Nations decided to hold another plebiscite to determine whether the people of the Southern Cameroons wished to join the new State of the Cameroons and the response were to be in the negative, did Mr. Foncha contemplate a free and independent Southern Cameroons, or had he in mind a further indefinite period of trusteeship? If an independent State of the Southern Cameroons was envisaged, it would be interesting to know what was the existing revenue and what would be the anticipated revenue of such an independent State; in short, whether Mr. Foncha considered that the Southern Cameroons would be a viable State.

9. Mr. KENNEDY (Ireland) asked the United Kingdom delegation to give its views on the feasibility of maintaining the trusteeship in the Southern Cameroons during the period mentioned by Mr. Foncha, in the new circumstances which would follow the independence of Nigeria.

10. He would be glad if Mr. Foncha would state the terms on which the Southern Cameroons would seek unification with what was now the Cameroons under French administration. Mr. Foncha had said that such a union should take the form of a federation; was a federal basis a *sine qua non*? If not, would Mr. Foncha agree to a unitary basis?

11. With regard to the question to be put to the people of the Southern Cameroons in the event of a plebiscite, Mr. Foncha had said that the alternatives should be separation from Nigeria or integration with that country. Did he not think that the question should more precisely reflect all the possibilities open to the inhabitants, which were integration with Nigeria, unification with the new State of the Cameroons, continuation of the trusteeship or an independent State of the Southern Cameroons? The reply might be that that was a question which depended on the outcome of negotiations with the Cameroons under French administration. In that case, did Mr. Foncha agree that such negotiations should take place as a necessary preliminary to the questions to be put before the electorate? If so, when would they begin?

12. Mr. PACHACHI (Iraq) recalled that, as he had said at the previous meeting, the United Kingdom delegation had frequently informed the Trusteeship Council in the past that the union between Nigeria and the Cameroons under British administration was for administrative convenience only and that to administer the Cameroons as a separate entity would create difficulties with which the Administering Authority was not prepared to cope. He would therefore like to know whether the United Kingdom would now or in the future find it easier to administer the Cameroons separately from Nigeria and whether the present Southern Cameroons would be a viable entity.

13. In his statement at the 846th meeting Mr. Endeley, the Leader of the Opposition in the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly, had said that his party was suspicious of what he called the eleventh-hour interest shown by some of the political parties in the Cameroons

under French administration. He assumed that that referred to those parties represented in the Legislative Assembly of the Cameroons under French administration which had not existed before 1957. He asked what grounds Mr. Endeley had for his suspicions, since the parties in question obviously did not subscribe to what he had called the revolutionary tendencies of the Union des populations du Cameroun (UPC).

14. In the seventh point of his programme Mr. Endeley had said that the vote must show a substantial majority in order to determine a change from the present status to a new and untried one. He wondered what he meant by a substantial majority and whether, if there were to be a majority that was not substantial, Mr. Endeley would refuse to agree to a change of status, thus allowing the minority opinion to prevail.

15. Mr. Foncha and Mr. Endeley agreed that one of the alternatives in a plebiscite should relate to continued association with Nigeria, but they disagreed concerning the other questions to be asked. In view of that difference of opinion he asked whether they would agree that the three alternatives to be offered should be: first, association with Nigeria; secondly, unification with the Cameroons under French administration; thirdly, continuation of the trusteeship.

16. With regard to the Cameroons under French administration, he drew attention to the statement in paragraph 58 of the Visiting Mission's report concerning the activities of the UPC and asked Mr. Ahidjo, the Prime Minister of that Territory, to what regions of the Cameroons the UPC had confined its activities.

17. He also wished to know whether Mr. Ahidjo agreed with the Visiting Mission that the organizations referred to in paragraph 128 of the Mission's report were among the most important political parties and groups in the Territory and represented a large segment of public opinion.

18. Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon) wished to know whether there were any laws or regulations in the Cameroons under French administration which authorized the Government to arrest and detain persons for political offences without framing any charges or bringing them to trial. He would also like to know whether there were any such detainees at present and, if so, whether the rights set forth in the amnesty law would apply to them.

19. Secondly, he asked whether, if the Cameroons under French administration decided after the attainment of independence to accede to the French Community, the Territory would suffer no diminution of its sovereignty and independence.

20. Thirdly, he would like to hear from Mr. Ahidjo whether the Government of the Cameroons under French administration intended to hold an election soon after the attainment of independence, provided no elections had been held before, and, if so, whether the Government would reserve until after the election any question of entering into a relationship with any other Government.

21. Mr. ZULOAGA (Venezuela) asked whether Mr. Foncha could give the Committee some further information concerning the economic situation in the Cameroons under British administration.

22. It appeared from annex I, part C, section 1, of the Visiting Mission's report (T/1426 and Add.1), relating

to the Victoria Division, that the most important commercial enterprises with the exception of the Cameroons Development Corporation were Elders and Fyffes Ltd. and Pamol Ltd. He would like to know how far those enterprises were integrated in the regional economy, who were the owners of the plantations, and who organized transports and sales. He also wished to know whether the Southern Cameroons Government was involved in those commercial transactions.

23. He would ask Mr. Ahidjo to comment on the statement in the memorandum signed by Mr. Endeley and Mr. Mbile, quoted in annex II, section (a), of the Visiting Mission's report on the Cameroons under British administration to the effect that France had refused consistently to encourage the growth of true political parties, a proceeding which had resulted in the ridiculous situation whereby parliamentary government was run by tribal blocs instead of by real political parties. It was difficult to understand that statement in view of the considerable political activity in the Cameroons under French administration.

24. Mr. VIDIC (Yugoslavia), referring to the statement made by Mr. Kemajou at the 846th meeting, asked Mr. Ahidjo to give his views on the question of reconciliation in the Cameroons under French administration. He would also like to hear Mr. Ahidjo's views with regard to the possibility of holding elections at the present time and the extent to which such elections might contribute to full political expression of reconciliation before the attainment of independence.

25. He would like to hear Mr. Ahidjo's views concerning the possibility of the unification of all parts of the Cameroons in one independent unit. Moreover, he would like him to elaborate his Government's position on the question of the unification of the Cameroons under French administration and the Southern Cameroons under British administration—the platform, the timing and the means of achieving such unification. Did Mr. Ahidjo consider it useful and necessary that the future of the Southern Cameroons should be settled before 1 January 1960?

26. He would also like to hear Mr. Foncha's views on that question. It would appear from Mr. Foncha's statement that, unlike the Visiting Mission, he did not exclude the possibility of the separation of the Northern Cameroons from the Federation of Nigeria and its union with the Southern Cameroons. He would like to hear Mr. Foncha's arguments concerning the necessity of holding a plebiscite in the Northern Cameroons and the questions which in his opinion should be put.

27. Mr. MUFTI (United Arab Republic), referring to article 1 of the amnesty law (A/C.4/395), asked what authority would determine whether acts committed before 1 January 1959 were of a political nature or directly connected with incidents of political origin.

28. Secondly, referring to article 2, he would like some information concerning the proposed composition of the committee referred to, when the decree establishing it would be passed and whether the text of the decree could be communicated to the General Assembly during the present session.

29. With regard to article 9, he would like to know whether the request of the victims of an offence or their heirs and assigns could lead to a suspension of the amnesty law and especially of the provisions re-

lating to penalties for offences against private liberties.

30. He further asked whether any amendments to the amnesty law had been deposited when it had been debated in the Legislative Assembly and, if so, what had been their nature, who had proposed them and what the outcome had been.

31. He would like to be informed by the United Kingdom delegation what approximately was the population of the part of the Northern Cameroons situated south of the Benue River, namely in Verre, Chamba, Toundou, Gashaka, Mambila, Ndoro, Tigon and Kentu.

32. Mr. ESPINOSA Y PRIETO (Mexico) would like to hear the views of Mr. Ahidjo and Mr. Foncha concerning the possibilities of unification. Although the Committee had no detailed information about the constitutional structure of the independent State of the Cameroons, it would apparently be a unitary system. The Southern Cameroons under British administration formed part of a federal system. He asked whether Mr. Ahidjo felt it would be possible for four fifths of the independent State of the Cameroons to function under a unitary system and one fifth under a federal system.

33. He also wished to know whether Mr. Foncha considered that, if the Southern Cameroons were to be united with the independent Cameroonian State, it would agree to be divided in such a way that each of its present six divisions would become an administrative unit in a unitary centralized State.

34. Mr. CARPIO (Philippines) observed that for years the General Assembly's resolutions calling upon the Administering Authorities of Trust Territories to set target dates for the attainment of the objectives of the International Trusteeship System had been countered with the argument that the complexity of the problem made it impossible to comply with that request. Now, however, the Assembly was confronted with the prospect that several Trust Territories would have attained those objectives before the end of 1960. He would like to ask either the United Kingdom representative or the French representative if those developments were such that the Administering Authorities could not have foreseen them two or three years before the present session and given advance notice to the General Assembly, thereby complying with its numerous resolutions on the subject.

35. Secondly, the Assembly had been told that through integration with an independent Nigeria the Cameroons under British administration would attain the objectives of the Trusteeship System. He asked the United Kingdom representative whether the attainment of those objectives was contingent upon Nigeria's accession to independence and, if so, just what were the objectives of the Trusteeship System which the Territory could then be said to have attained, inasmuch as the United Nations Charter included self-government or independence among those objectives but not integration with or annexation to another Territory. He noted in that connexion that although the Administering Authorities had repeatedly assured the Assembly that administrative unions in no way affected the special status of Trust Territories, it would appear from what had happened in the former Trust Territory of Togoland under British administration and from what was now happening in the Cameroons under British administra-

tion that administrative unions led inevitably to annexation.

36. With regard to the Cameroons under French administration, he noted that the Statute set forth in annex II to the Visiting Mission's report on that Territory made no provision for the transfer to the Cameroonian Government before 1 January 1960 of the powers exercised by the French Republic under article 23. Yet the Assembly had been told that the promulgation of the Statute brought the Territory to the final stage of constitutional development before the attainment of independence. The Committee was thus placed in the position of not knowing what would be the actual degree of independence attained by the date on which the Assembly was being asked to terminate the Trusteeship Agreement. As the Committee could scarcely draft a resolution until that point was clarified, he would like to know whether further agreements were contemplated which would provide for the transfer of the powers in question.

37. Mr. SOPIEE (Federation of Malaya) recalled that in his statement at the 846th meeting Mr. Foncha had said that the majority of the population of the Southern Cameroons favoured secession from Nigeria before the latter attained independence, continuation of the trusteeship in a modified form for a short period during which the Southern Cameroons would work towards complete independence, and federation as the form which unification with the Cameroons under French administration should take if unification proved to be feasible. Similarly, he had stated in his broadcast on 16 January 1959 (T/1426 and Add.1, annex VI (b)) that the question of unification should be decided by independent entities rather than by dependent territories under United Kingdom or French administration. Those statements gave the impression that what was envisaged was perhaps the emergence of an independent Southern Cameroons; if Mr. Foncha could say at precisely what stage his Government contemplated holding consultations with the Government of the Cameroons under French administration, that might clear up the

existing confusion with regard to its programme. In particular, he asked whether Mr. Foncha's Government envisaged the holding of consultations on the unification question with the present Government of the Cameroons under French administration or thought that new elections should be held in either or both Territories.

38. He asked Mr. Ahidjo if it was his Government's intention that the Cameroons should be in any way associated with France once independence had been attained and in what way it planned to ascertain the wishes of the people concerning the form which unification with the Southern Cameroons might take.

39. Mr. YANG (China) asked what were the opinions of Mr. Foncha, of Mr. Endeley and of Malam Abdullahi, the Minister for Northern Cameroons Affairs in the Government of the Northern Region of Nigeria, with regard to the possible redrawing of the boundaries, referred to in paragraph 165 of the report of the Visiting Mission on the Cameroons under British administration, in order to include within the Southern Cameroons certain areas which were at present part of the Northern Cameroons.

Requests for hearings (A/C.4/394/Add.3) (continued)

REQUESTS CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 13 (A/C.4/394/Add.3) (continued)

40. The CHAIRMAN said that the Secretary-General had received a telegram dated 22 February 1959 from Mrs. Gertrude Omog requesting a hearing on behalf of the Jeunesse démocratique du Cameroun to discuss the political situation in the Cameroons under French administration. If there were no objections he would take it that the Committee was in favour of granting the request.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.