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

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Michalowski (Poland), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

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, A/C.4/L.580, A/C.4/L.581, T/SR.953-963) (continued)

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

1. Mr. DANIEL CHAPMAN (Ghana) said that as the representative of a country which had only recently achieved independence, it was with a sense of responsibility and a feeling of sympathy for the people of the Cameroons that he participated in the work of the current session, which had been convened in order to find ways and means of terminating the Trusteeship Agreements for the two Trust Territories of the Cameroons in accordance with the wishes of the inhabitants and with the objectives of the Trusteeship System. He was gratified to note that the political leaders of the two Territories attending the session and also the petitioners had made a valuable contribution to the Committee's discussions. Their presence was symbolic of the importance which the United Nations attached to African problems. The problems now confronting the Cameroons would not appear so pressing and so complex if the United Nations had devoted a little more attention to them in the past. One of the cardinal tenets of the Ghana Government's policy was the need for the rapid achievement of independence by all dependent peoples. His delegation was happy to note the unanimous agreement in the Committee that the question of the Cameroons was important enough to warrant its special attention.

2. Before considering the conclusions of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in West

Africa, 1958, he wished to state that he had no intention whatsoever of criticizing the members of the Mission. They had discharged their duties in their individual capacities and their Governments were not compelled to accept their findings, nor was the United Nations bound under the Charter to endorse them. As the Visiting Mission itself had said in annex I of its report on the Cameroons under French administration (T/1427 and T/1434^{1/}), its findings could not "pretend to be a precise reflection of public opinion from one district of the Territory to another, since on the whole the Mission heard only the views of those people who volunteered to express them". Lastly, it was regrettable that the Mission had not felt able to comply with the Trusteeship Council's request, in its resolution 1924 (S-IX), that the Mission should set forth its views on the procedure for organizing the consultation which would enable the people of the Cameroons under French administration to express their wishes concerning their future.

3. The problem confronting the United Nations with regard to the Cameroons under British administration was to decide on the procedures to be adopted to enable the inhabitants of the Territory to express their wishes concerning their future before Nigeria acceded to independence. The Ghana delegation believed that it was for the people of the Territory themselves, under United Nations supervision, to decide their future. Like most of the other delegations it endorsed the recommendation made by the Visiting Mission in its report on the Cameroons under British administration (T/1426 and Add.1^{2/}) to the effect that the two parts of the Territory should be considered separately. However, it did not share the Mission's view that a plebiscite need not be held in the Northern Cameroons. It believed that there should always be a plebiscite in cases of that nature and noted that neither Malam Abdullahi nor the political parties in the area would object to a plebiscite if one were recommended by the United Nations. However, since it appeared that the vast majority of the people of the Northern Cameroons desired the integration of their territory with Nigeria, the Ghana delegation would defer to the consensus of opinion in the Committee.

4. With regard to the Southern Cameroons, the Visiting Mission had felt that the results of the general elections held there on 24 January 1959 could not be considered conclusive in regard to the determination of the Territory's future, and that it was desirable to carry out a new consultation to ascertain the views of the inhabitants. That opinion was widely shared, and the only remaining questions were the timing of the plebiscite and the choices to be put before the people.

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

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

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

While Mr. Foncha, the Premier of the Southern Cameroons, and Mr. Endeley, the Leader of the Opposition, agreed that the consultation should take place during the next dry season, they differed widely on the second point. Mr. Foncha wanted the people to be consulted on whether they wanted secession from Nigeria or the continuation of the trusteeship. Mr. Endeley wanted the people to be consulted on whether they wanted association with Nigeria or unification with the Cameroons under French administration. Every opportunity should be given to Mr. Foncha and Mr. Endeley to attempt to reach agreement on the choices to be put to the people, and Mr. Foncha should be allowed to carry out preliminary negotiations with the authorities of the Cameroons under French administration regarding the possible basis for an association between the two Territories. His delegation therefore proposed that the General Assembly should recommend a plebiscite in the early part of 1960, say February or March, and that a decision on the nature of the choices to be put to the people should be taken at the fourteenth session of the General Assembly.

5. With regard to the Cameroons under French administration, there was no doubt that the ardent desire of the population was to obtain independence on 1 January 1960. His delegation was therefore in complete agreement with the Visiting Mission's recommendation that there was no need to consult the people on the question of independence. The position was also clear with regard to the question of unification. As the Visiting Mission had noted, if the Southern Cameroons should indicate its desire for reunification, it was the intention of the Government of the Cameroons under French administration that the authorities of the two Territories should immediately begin discussions on the nature of the institutions that would be required for a unified Cameroons.

6. With respect to the question of amnesty in the Cameroons under French administration, the Ghana delegation noted with approval the text of the amnesty law adopted on 14 February 1959 by the Cameroonian Legislative Assembly,^{3/} but felt that the measure was still not broad enough. Only the abrogation of the decree which had outlawed certain political parties would provide a sure guarantee that the adherents of those parties would not be subject to persecution on their return to the Territory. Every Government had the right to protect itself against acts of violence and the position taken in the matter by Mr. Ahidjo's Government was understandable. However, it should be borne in mind that the Union des populations du Cameroun (UPC) had been banned in 1955 primarily because it had stood for independence and unification and that the French Administration was largely responsible for the events which had followed the action taken against the UPC. At the previous meeting, the Indian representative had quite rightly expressed regret at the eruption of violence in the Cameroons and, noting the more or less open threats by some petitioners, had appealed to those concerned to eschew violence. However, mere exhortations were not enough. The United Nations should make every effort to ensure that the accession of the Cameroons to independence would not lead to further disorders.

7. His delegation felt that the best way to put an end to the profound differences of opinion existing in the

Territory was to hold general elections under United Nations supervision before 1 January 1960. The Visiting Mission had stated categorically that there were insufficient grounds for holding such elections before the attainment of independence, a view which was shared by the French delegation. Mr. Ahidjo was of the opinion that elections should be held as soon as possible, but only after independence had been attained. One of the arguments advanced against the holding of elections before 1 January 1960 was that the existing Legislative Assembly had a "representative character" (T/1427, para. 141). Without questioning that, he nevertheless had serious doubts of the legality of transforming the existing Legislative Assembly into a constituent assembly, particularly as it had been elected in 1956 as a Territorial Assembly, for a specific purpose. Hence there were serious legal reasons why the Cameroonian people should pronounce, before 1 January 1960, on the sort of assembly, and perhaps also on the sort of constitution, which they considered their country should have at independence. It was undeniable that the 1956 elections had been held in an atmosphere of political unrest. The source of the unrest had been the Sanaga-Maritime Region, but the disturbances might well have had repercussions on the conduct of the elections in the entire Territory. It would only be common sense, therefore, that the change of status of the Territory should provide the opportunity for new elections held under United Nations supervision. Lastly, one of the largest political parties in the Territory had not been permitted to contest the elections, and as a consequence a large segment of the electorate had been barred from exercising the right to express their wishes.

8. Most of the delegations agreed that normal political conditions in the Territory could hardly be restored without a broad political amnesty. It was true that legislation had already been enacted to permit the grant of amnesty at the earliest possible time, but the grant of amnesty presupposed that very significant new elements would be introduced into the political situation in the Territory and that would change the political picture to such an extent that new elections would seem essential, especially since the question of a change of status for the Territory was involved.

9. The question came down to whether or not it was desirable and necessary to hold elections under United Nations supervision prior to independence. The answer could only be in the affirmative. It would be impossible to question the regularity of such an election, and the Government which emerged would enjoy the greatest authority and prestige. The General Assembly had adopted a similar procedure in 1957 in the case of Togoland under French Administration^{4/} and neither the people nor the Government of Togoland had felt affronted, nor had the Members of the United Nations considered the decision improper.

10. To ask for elections prior to 1 January 1960 was not, as some had suggested, to attempt to prevent or delay independence. The delegations which desired elections prior to independence had not made them a pre-condition but rather a prelude to independence, which would come in any case on 1 January 1960. Their only concern was for the interests of the Cameroonian people. Ghana had been in a similar situation before

^{3/} See A/C.4/395.

^{4/} See General Assembly resolution 1182 (XII).

it had achieved independence; scarcely two years after general elections, new elections had been undertaken so that the Government which would assume power on independence would have the clear mandate of the people. It had since become evident that that course of action had been a wise one. As it was impossible to foretell what pressures and forces might be called into play in the Cameroons after independence, when the responsibility of the United Nations in the Territory had ended, it was important that the new State should be ensured the best possible conditions for a successful start in life.

11. The procedures which the General Assembly would adopt to terminate the Trusteeship Agreement for the Cameroons under French administration might constitute a precedent for other Trust Territories in Africa or elsewhere. The delegations of the African States were very anxious to see that orderly and realistic procedures were established for the termination of Trusteeship Agreements. The world was changing rapidly and the destiny of the African peoples could no longer be determined by alien groups and interests.

12. Mr. SOBOLEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) emphasized that in its long and difficult struggle the Cameroonian people had never separated unification from independence and that its victory would be incomplete if both those objectives were not attained simultaneously. It was quite obvious that it could not be otherwise since the Cameroonian people did not want their future independent existence to be poisoned by an imposed internecine strife.

13. In one of the annexes to the Visiting Mission's report on the Cameroons under British administration one could read that the major defect of the Mandates System instituted by the League of Nations had been its failure to impose on the Mandatory Powers the duty of effecting the eventual reunification of the Cameroons. In fact the arrangements made since that time by the Administering Authorities had been aimed, not at serving the interests of the Territories and of reuniting them, but at absorbing one into the French Community and bringing the other under one of those contrived plans which the United Kingdom devised to divide peoples.

14. Some contemplated postponing the reunification of the two Cameroons until large blocs of African States had been formed. The USSR delegation was not unaware of the advantages which the establishment of such States might have as regards eliminating the vestiges of colonialism and accelerating economic development, but it believed that such a process should be governed by respect for democratic principles and based on the self-determination of peoples. In the case at hand, it appeared wiser to effect the immediate unification of the two Cameroons and consider that a step towards the consolidation of African States. That was not to be taken as a sign of ill-will towards Nigeria, for the termination of the arbitrary ties imposed by imperialists would lead to the voluntary consolidation of economic, cultural and other relations between an independent Nigeria and an independent Cameroons.

15. It could not be disputed that colonialism had created artificial barriers in Africa and that the African peoples would need time to tear them down. The same process had been observed elsewhere; many former United Kingdom colonies had, when they had gained independence, inherited territorial problems

which darkened their subsequent existence and which arose from the policy of division practised by the United Kingdom Government with the aim of stirring up antagonism and warranting intervention. The same approach was now being applied in regard to the Cameroons. It had been said that unification would give rise to conflicts owing to the different development of the two Cameroons under different administrations, added to certain different national traditions. That obstacle was not insurmountable. The reunification of the Trust Territories of the Cameroons within a single independent State did not exclude—on the contrary it assumed—recognition of the autonomy of regions and areas with different national compositions or traditions. Such questions could best be solved in connexion with the constitutional organization of the Cameroons which the constituent assembly that would be elected simultaneously in the two Territories would have to undertake.

16. The representative of the USSR analysed the situation in the various areas concerned. The Northern Cameroons under British administration had no legislative and executive organs elected by the people. Its inhabitants had not been consulted, and the Visiting Mission's comments and suggestions were based mainly on conversations with the traditional chiefs and their advisers. Thus it would be more equitable to allow the people themselves to express their wishes. That was all the more necessary since the population of the Northern Cameroons had already made an effort to separate itself from Nigeria. That attempt had been suppressed and the powers which had been given to the emirs and chiefs still kept the people in a state of fear. In the circumstances only a plebiscite held under United Nations supervision would give an accurate answer to the problem.

17. In the Southern Cameroons under British administration, the elections that had just taken place might indicate that the people wanted unification. The idea, however, that the fate of the Southern Cameroons should be decided upon by Governments, while the inhabitants were kept on the sidelines, was quite unacceptable. A plebiscite should be held in that area, too, so that all doubt might be eliminated.

18. In both parts of the Territory, the questions should be clearly formulated: Did the inhabitants of the Territory under British administration wish to join with Nigeria or to be reunified with their fellow-countrymen from the eastern Cameroons? As to the date of the consultation, it should be determined in such a way that all the parties would be able to explain their position clearly to the people and at the same time the achievement of independence by the Cameroons as a whole would not be postponed.

19. In the Cameroons under French administration, events had emphasized the need to return to normal conditions. The statements of the petitioners had revealed the part played by the Administering Authority in provoking the crisis and how it had done everything possible to suppress the national liberation movement and had declared the UPC, the spokesman of that movement, illegal. The petitioners had revealed the cruel and provocative methods used by the Administering Authority since the massacre of May 1955 to gag the UPC and the repressive steps taken against that party. To their testimony could be added that of a French jurist, Mr. Pierre Kaldor, who had stated that

the French had attempted to picture the anti-colonialist and national movement, which enjoyed wide support among the population, as a terroristic and criminal organization and had used paid killers to murder some of their own people in order to have a reason for destroying the members of the UPC.

20. It might be asked what were the reasons for such cruel persecution of the UPC on the part of the Administering Authority. Those reasons were only that the party expressed the national strivings of the Cameroonian people and that it had bravely and consistently championed the independence and the unification of its country. The French delegation had tried to prove that for ten years all the political parties had been struggling for unification and independence, but it was only necessary to look at the report (T/1231) of the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Trust Territories of the Cameroons under British Administration and the Cameroons under French Administration, 1955, which had included representatives of the United States and Haiti, to see that at that time the UPC and the other dissolved political organizations were the only parties advocating unification and independence. That fact undoubtedly reflected the policy of the Administering Authority, whose only thought had been the annexation of the Cameroons through its inclusion in the French Union. In April 1957, the representative of France on the Trusteeship Council had opposed the fixing of a target date for the termination of the trusteeship and had tried to prove that the Cameroonian people desired to remain under trusteeship. A short time had elapsed and now the 1958 Visiting Mission stated that there was no need to consult the people and that all the inhabitants wanted independence and reunification. The USSR delegation did not doubt the desire of all Cameroonians for independence and reunification but it would like to draw the attention of the Committee to what had happened to those who had originally championed that slogan. The Visiting Mission said that the UPC had disappeared, but the petitioners had shown that it existed and that it had become a movement on a national scale. The vital problems of the Cameroons could not be solved without the participation of the party which had made the greatest sacrifices for Cameroonian independence. The reinstatement of the dissolved parties and the enactment of a full and unqualified amnesty law was therefore the minimum condition necessary for the achievement of complete national appeasement in the Cameroons. The limited amnesty law which had just been passed and the statements of the French delegation left no doubt that the amnesty called for by the Cameroonians had not yet been granted; the measures taken were only palliatives similar to those which had been resorted to earlier without any positive results.

21. The USSR delegation thought it was impossible for the Cameroonian problem to be solved without general elections under United Nations supervision. Everyone knew the way in which the elections of December 1956 for the constitution of the present Assembly had been held. They had taken place in an atmosphere of terror and repression, in a country occupied by French troops. The democratic organizations had announced in advance that they would not participate in the elections if normal conditions had not been first restored in the Territory; in other words, if a general amnesty which would include the reinstatement of the dissolved parties had not been granted. Even the official statistics, which

had been falsified, could not conceal the fact that scarcely half of the registered voters had gone to the polls. In fact, participation had been even less, and in certain areas the whole population had boycotted the elections. There had been many cases of fraud and irregularities. As the election results of several districts had been declared void, six seats were vacant. In addition, seven Frenchmen and one native of the French Sudan had been elected. The present Assembly was therefore not representative. Moreover, it had been set up for the sole purpose of approving the statute based on the *loi-cadre* of 23 June 1956, which was designed to incorporate the Cameroons in the French Union by allegedly granting it limited autonomy.

22. There was reason to ask why the Administering Authority refused so stubbornly to hold new elections under United Nations supervision. The purpose was obvious: to include by force the Trust Territory in the French Community. The Administering Authority feared that democratic elections under United Nations supervision would stand in the way of its plans and that was why it objected to holding such elections. The petitioners had explained that the Cameroons was to be detached forcibly from the Trusteeship System, which inconvenienced France, and obliged to join the French Community. There was no question of granting true independence to the Territory. The independence would only be fictitious, as had been stated by a former Minister of Overseas France. The implementation of the Administering Authority's plans in the Cameroons would mean the substitution of a new colonialism for the old. Such a new form of colonialism was the so-called French Community. The new States included within the framework of the French Community had a government and a parliament, but their foreign relations, their defence, their currency and their economic policy remained, through the Government of the "Community", in the hands of the ruling classes of France. Proof of the fact that the Cameroons was being prepared for the same fate was the new Statute, which included Conventions with France on the questions of currency, foreign trade, judiciary, public order, police services, defence and foreign affairs. There was little point in talking of independence of the Cameroons when, in fact, all those essential functions were retained by France.

23. The new colonialism, like the old, sought to rule the Cameroons by force. But the system of world colonialism based on slavery, racial discrimination and disregard for human dignity and for elementary democratic rights was clearly bound to collapse. The African peoples were beginning to take their rightful place in the community of nations and to play an ever greater part in international affairs. However, the colonial Powers were endeavouring to replace the old forms of colonialism with new ones. An attempt was being made to create "invisible" empires through the device of economic agreements and military bases. Colonialism was changing its face, but it was retaining its colonialist and imperialist substance. Those who at the dawn of the old colonialism had exported millions of African slaves to farm the land stolen from other enslaved peoples now preferred to enslave Africans with the help of foreign capital. It was not by chance that Africa occupied a position of increasing importance in the plans of the United States. Under those plans the Cameroons and other African countries were meant to become suppliers of cheap raw materials and manpower.

24. The colonialists liked to talk of their civilizing mission, and they pointed to the amount of money spent by them for the benefit of the Trust Territories. They might be asked what were the figures for the profits that they had derived and continued to derive from the Cameroons and from other dependent territories, profits that greatly exceeded the subsidies granted to those territories. The resources of the Cameroons were vast; all the conditions needed for independent economic development existed, but those resources and possibilities had deliberately not been exploited and the country remained agricultural. There were two categories of inhabitants in the Cameroons: on the one hand, the colonialists whose profits were immense and, on the other hand, the majority of Cameroonians who were living in poverty. The Administering Authority itself had admitted the backward condition of indigenous agriculture.

25. With regard to education, only 10 per cent of the children received an elementary education and less than 1 per cent a secondary education in the northern part of the Cameroons under French administration. In forty years, the administering Power had not built a single institution of higher education. Vast areas of Africa were still the scene of violence and bloodshed. The whole world looked with indignation upon the very cruel and bloody events in the Congo, in Nyasaland and in other African territories. The United Nations alone remained silent. When violence failed the colonialists tried to provoke dissension within the nationalist movements and to stir up strife among the inhabitants. That stood out with particular clarity in the case of the Cameroons. The USSR delegation hoped that the African peoples would not be deceived by those manoeuvres and would not weaken themselves through fratricidal quarrels.

26. The recommendations of the Trusteeship Council and of the Visiting Mission tended to perpetuate the division of the two Trust Territories and to prevent the accession of the Cameroons to real independence. The colonial Powers had, of course, a majority in the Trusteeship Council; and as to the Visiting Mission, it had exceeded its terms of reference in making recommendations on problems which should be solved by the Cameroonian people themselves. The Visiting Mission had failed to give an objective account of the Cameroonian situation, and its recommendations could not therefore serve as a basis for a solution of the problem.

27. The delegation of the USSR, in defining its position, was prompted by the basic principles of the Soviet Union's policy in regard to the national liberation movement of the colonial and dependent peoples, a policy which included consistent support of the interests of those peoples. That was why it fully supported the Cameroonians' demand for a genuine independence which would guarantee the complete sovereignty of the country. The Soviet delegation also supported the demand that measures should be taken before independence was proclaimed with a view to securing the democratic reunification of both the Trust Territories in a single national State. In the opinion of the Soviet delegation, among the urgent measures aimed at the achievement of that purpose would be the holding of democratic elections under United Nations supervision and the granting of a general, unqualified amnesty which would include re-establishment of the banned

parties. The delegation of the USSR considered that the United Nations would not have performed its duties under the Charter if it allowed the trusteeship to be terminated without the above-mentioned measures having been enacted under its effective supervision. At the same time the delegation of the USSR considered that all those measures designed to ensure the independence and unification of the Cameroons should be completed not later than 1 January 1960.

28. Mr. KOSCZIUSKO-MORIZET (France) said that although he had not interrupted the Soviet Union representative, he wished to protest against the use by that representative of certain terms such as murder, extermination and slavery. He recalled that France had been the first country to abolish slavery. All the petitioners, no matter what their party, had been able to leave the Cameroons in complete freedom in order to be heard by the Committee. It would be a good thing if all the countries in the world gave proof of such liberalism.

29. Mr. VIDIC (Yugoslavia) observed that considerable progress had been made in the Trust Territories and that many of them were on the point of becoming independent. Thus, the Cameroons under French administration would be independent on 1 January 1960, and the termination of the trusteeship of the Northern and Southern Cameroons under British administration could now be foreseen. The appearance of new independent nations could not but strengthen international peace and co-operation. It should be acknowledged that the Administering Authorities had shown a considerable degree of understanding and willingness, and it was to be hoped that the international community would redouble its efforts to settle similar problems still outstanding.

30. It was the General Assembly's task to review all the problems which had arisen, to take a decision which would ensure that the Cameroons under French administration was granted full independence, and to determine the best way of consulting the people of the Cameroons under British administration about their future. It had enough evidence before it to form a clear idea of the situation. The Cameroons under French administration and the Cameroons under British administration would remain Trust Territories until the Trusteeship Agreements were officially revoked, and the United Nations would thus continue to have obligations with respect to those Territories, whatever degree of self-government they might have reached. Independence was not merely a word. The conditions under which it was to be obtained must be determined, and the United Nations had a duty to see that those conditions were as favourable as possible to the people of the Territories concerned.

31. His delegation wished to pay a tribute to the efforts of the Visiting Mission, whose reports contained some very useful information; it could not, however, accept all the conclusions and recommendations of the Mission.

32. In the Cameroons under French administration, public opinion was unanimously in favour of independence. It was evident that the people were capable of making progress as a nation and of looking after their own affairs. The Administering Authority, by agreement with the present Cameroonian Government, had

consented to grant the Territory independence on 1 January 1960. The United Nations would do everything in its power to ensure that the Cameroons was proclaimed independent on that date, but it was also essential for the General Assembly to ensure that the internal situation in the Cameroons returned to normal. That was indispensable if the country was to be able to overcome the difficulties which it would have to face.

33. For several years the country had been the scene of disturbances and internal divisions. Being aware of the need for a return to normal conditions, the Legislative Assembly of the Cameroons had recently passed an amnesty act and had called for the holding of by-elections. The President of the Legislative Assembly and the Prime Minister of the Cameroonian Government had informed the Committee of the urgent need for a reconciliation and had described the measures that were proposed or had already been taken. Most of the petitioners had also declared themselves in favour of a national reconciliation. The question was how to achieve it. The Administering Authority and the Cameroonian Government had confined themselves to passing the amnesty law, to providing for the holding of by-elections and to inviting Cameroonians in exile to return to their country. On the other hand, the petitioners who for a long time had been struggling for the independence of their country were calling for a general and unconditional amnesty and the repeal of the decree by which certain political parties had been dissolved. In the opinion of most of them and of the representatives of the opposition, such measures, together with general elections held under the supervision of the United Nations, would be the best way of achieving national reconciliation before the country became independent. The Prime Minister of the Cameroons had also recognized the need for general elections, but in his view they should be held after 1 January 1960.

34. In view of the responsibilities of the United Nations and the need to bring the internal situation in the Territory back to normal, and in view also of the humanitarian aspect of the problem, his delegation considered that general elections held before 1 January 1960 under United Nations supervision would be the best way of achieving positive results. The 1956 elections had taken place in abnormal conditions. Certain important political parties had not been able to take part, and at that time independence had not seemed

to be as close as in fact it had been. The Assembly which had resulted from those elections had had a limited mandate and authority. It had been a Territorial Assembly, which had later become a Legislative Assembly, and the representatives of many political parties feared that without general elections before 1 January 1960, it might now become a constituent assembly and that the disturbances might continue in the Cameroons even after the Territory achieved independence. At the present time the duty of the United Nations seemed to be to help the people of the Territory to elect an assembly the representative character of which no one would doubt.

35. As for the amnesty, the law passed by the Cameroonian Legislative Assembly represented a notable advance, but it would be logical, wise and human to grant a complete and unconditional amnesty and to revoke the decree by which certain parties had been dissolved.

36. His delegation wanted to make clear that its attitude in no way meant a lack of trust in Mr. Ahidjo himself. It did not doubt the intentions of France, and it was convinced that the Cameroons would play an active part in the international community. In making the foregoing observations, it had been thinking only of the interests of the people concerned.

37. With regard to the future of the Southern Cameroons under British administration, the Committee seemed to be unanimously in favour of a plebiscite in that part of the Territory during the next dry season. It would be a good thing if the problem of the possible unification of the Southern Cameroons with the Cameroons now under French administration could be settled at the same time. It was, in any case, useless to think of prolonging the trusteeship for the Southern Cameroons indefinitely. He also considered that a plebiscite was called for in the Northern Cameroons. That was the only way in which the United Nations could be sure of knowing the wishes of the people, and the greatest attention should be given to the widespread desire for an end to the artificial division of the Cameroons.

38. He appealed to the representatives of the Cameroons under French administration to make a further effort to bring about a general reconciliation which could not but be in the interests of their country.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.