



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



GENERAL

A/1273/Add.1
16 August 1950

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifth session
Item 34 (a) of the provisional agenda

INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES :
SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION TRANSMITTED
UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER. REPORT OF THE
SECRETARY-GENERAL

Summary of information transmitted by the
Government of the Netherlands^{1/}

By letter of 15 August 1950, the permanent representative of the Netherlands to the United Nations forwarded to the Secretary-General information transmitted by the Netherlands Government under Article 73 e of the Charter in respect of Netherlands New Guinea.

As this is the first time that information is transmitted with respect to this area as a separate Non-Self-Governing Territory, a full summary of this information has been prepared by the Secretariat.

Unless otherwise stated, the information relates to the year 1949.

^{1/} This summary is also submitted to the Special Committee on Information transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter.

NETHERLANDS NEW GUINEA

1. The information is preceded by an introduction which states that all Government files in the Territory were lost during the Japanese occupation. In addition, as a result of the transfer of sovereignty, some of the Government archives are still in Djakarta. To obtain detailed information is therefore a difficult task. However, an attempt has been made to survey current conditions and to emphasize certain basic problems which are caused largely by (a) the inaccessibility of the greater part of the country, (b) the social organization of the inhabitants, consisting of a tangle of minute communities, and (c) the low level of their subsistence cultivation, with consequent meagreness of public revenues.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Geography

2. Netherlands New Guinea is the part of the island of New Guinea west of approximately 141 degrees east longitude. The southern coastal plains are one of the largest swamp regions in the world, covering more than half of the total area of the Territory; the remainder consists of steep and inaccessible mountain ranges which obstruct development, particularly since their courses run parallel to the coastline; depressions in the interior have created additional swamp regions. Soils are probably poor, and even under heavy vegetation easily erode. Volcanic soils such as those of Java do not occur in this part of New Guinea.

3. The lowlands and hills have a warm and humid climate. The rainfall is heavy throughout the year, increasing with altitude.

History

4. The island of New Guinea was probably discovered in 1511. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Netherlands East India Company included the western part of the island in its commercial monopoly, but it was not until 1828 that the north and west coasts were declared to be Netherlands territory and that an administrative post was established, which however was abandoned in 1836 owing to malaria and other tropical diseases.

5. Permanent Netherlands administration was established in 1898 at Manokwari on the north coast and at Fak Fak on the west coast, and in 1902 at Merauke on the south coast; thereafter the administration was gradually extended.

/ People

People

6. The indigenous inhabitants, Papuans, are usually classified under the primary ethnic group which includes among others the Melanesians. The Papuan group consists of (a) a short brachycephalic people living in the interior and (b) a tall dolichocephalic people inhabiting the coastal areas.
7. The Papuan languages also form a distinct group; they bear very slight resemblance to each other in vocabulary and in many instances also in grammar. On the north coast Melanesian languages are in use, as in the Territory of New Guinea and in Papua, but in Netherlands New Guinea this influence is narrowly limited to coastal areas, beyond which the languages are entirely Papuan. In the southern part of the Territory there is not even a coastal fringe of Melanesian languages.
8. A long-standing lack of relations between the numerous small tribes and clans that form the population, together with the extremely difficult communications in the Territory, have resulted in the isolation of these small groups and a consequent extreme variety in language.
9. Culturally the inhabitants are among the least advanced in the world; most of them are still living in a stone age. Customs such as head-hunting and cannibalism have contributed largely to the continuation of a state of permanent hostility between the various groups. Only in the more thickly populated areas of the central mountain region, where the population density in places reaches 60 persons per square kilometre, have the inhabitants been less subject to inter-clan conflict.
10. The foregoing explains also the great diversity in religious concepts among the various groups. Magic is the most prominent element in the local religions: the belief that it is the cause of nearly every death leads to revenge. Head-hunting arises from these religious concepts.
11. The organization of communities is usually based on patrilineal clans. There are chiefs only on the north coast; elsewhere the authority of community leaders is small, the greatest influence being exercised by the elders of clans and by the male members as a whole, meeting in men's club-houses.
12. When such an isolated group is exposed to the impact of an outside culture, severe repercussions are often unavoidable. The old values and beliefs, failing both in the outside world and in the relations of the group and its

individuals with that world, consequently lose their meaning. A general cultural disorganization may follow; such disorganization, together with the introduction of new diseases, has elsewhere resulted in an acute decrease in population.

13. As in Netherlands New Guinea cultural re-orientation has taken place slowly and gradually, it has not had this effect except in 1920 in a certain area in the southern part of the Territory, where granuloma venereum was spread rapidly by certain local customs. In spite of successful efforts to check this disease, here as in other Pacific Islands a very slow decrease in population, typified by a shortage of females, continues.

14. The Government's policy, therefore, is to re-orientate as quickly as possible those communities that have been affected. In this work it is aided by missions, which have been established in the Territory since 1855. In the areas where there are schools the great majority of the children receive school education, which contributes greatly to their re-orientation.

15. The main non-indigenous groups are: the Indonesians, 8,000; the Europeans, 5,000 including military personnel; and the Chinese, 2,000. The Chinese are merchants; among the Indonesians are merchants and many schoolteachers and officials of lower grades. As the Papuan communities are beginning to provide suitable personnel for lower posts, there is a growing conflict between Papuans and Indonesians.

Government

16. Until the transfer of sovereignty over Indonesia to the Republic of the United States of Indonesia on 27 December 1949 the Territory of Netherlands New Guinea formed the Residency of New Guinea of Indonesia.

17. The Charter of Transfer of sovereignty provides in article two;

".....that the status quo of the residency of New Guinea shall be maintained with the stipulation that within a year from the date of transfer of sovereignty.....the question of the political status of New Guinea be determined through negotiations between the Republic of the United States of Indonesia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands."

18. The new territorial constitution, contained in the decree Bewindsregeling Nieuw-Guinea (Regulation of Government for New Guinea), provides for the following organs: (1) a Governor; (2) General Government Services; (3) a Council of Heads of Services, consisting of the heads of the above-mentioned services and of the Attorney-General as extraordinary member; (4) one or more advisory councils

/for indigenous

for indigenous affairs; (5) the New Guinea Council as co-legislative body; (6) a Council of Justice as the highest court of law.

19. It provides further that one of the Governor's most important duties is to protect the indigenous peoples against arbitrary actions. He also promotes with all means at his disposal the opening up and economic development of the Territory.

20. At present there are four general Government services: (1) Government and Justice; (2) Finance; (3) Economic and Technical Affairs; (4) Public Health and Social and Cultural Affairs.

21. The Governor is assisted by the Council of Heads of Services, and exercises legislative power jointly with the New Guinea Council.

22. The New Guinea Council consists of 21 members, of whom 10 are indigenous, 2 non-Netherlands aliens, and 9 Netherlands. The 10 indigenous members are elected according to rules established by ordinance; franchise depends on degrees of intellectual development and economic position. If the inhabitants of an electoral district are not yet in a position to be enfranchised, their representatives are to be appointed.

23. For the present only a very small part of the indigenous population is considered capable of sharing, at lower levels, in the administration of the Territory. However, the territorial constitution permits the Governor to establish one or more advisory bodies, consisting of community leaders and other prominent indigenous persons; the population is thus given the feeling of taking part in the administration. Several of these advisory bodies, which form training schools for representation in the New Guinea Council, have already been established.

24. In addition the possibility exists of establishing autonomous districts with representative councils.

25. Finally, there is an important provision under which the Governor prevents any alienation of land from encroaching upon the rights of the indigenous inhabitants.

Human rights

26. The decree Regulation of Government for New Guinea provides for the establishment and protection of human rights, including: prohibition of slavery and forced or obligatory labour within the terms of the Convention of Geneva, 1940; protection of person and property; right of association and assembly;

/prohibition

prohibition of arbitrary arrest or detention; freedom of religion and of the press; inviolability of mail; and prosecution before courts only.

27. All Netherlands subjects, which term includes the indigenous inhabitants, are eligible for election or appointment to any public office. Each person has the right of petition to the competent authority, both in the Netherlands and in New Guinea. Entrance into a compound or house against the will of the resident is permitted only by order of the competent authority.

28. The provision of education is subject to the supervision of the authorities.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Social problems of race and cultural relations

29. In the indigenous Papuan communities each tribe or group lived in a state of potential enmity in regard to all other tribes or groups. Within the group, however, relations between members were fairly democratic, though great tension was frequent.

30. At the present time contacts are increasing between all groups which have been brought under Government administration. Though a clear conception of the unity of the various groups is present in a fairly small circle only, the consciousness that they have affairs in common is gaining ground.

Labour and employment conditions

31. Both the present and the potential sources of labour are small. Those of the inhabitants who live in the inaccessible interior cannot be taken into account as a labour source for the existing projects, which are located near the coast. In the area under administration it may be estimated that one-fifth of the total population, or not more than 50,000 men, form the total potential labour force. The percentage which can be withdrawn from the indigenous society without endangering its structure may be put at 20, i.e. 10,000 men.

32. From this source must be recruited: the unskilled labourers; the rank and file of the police (1,800 are required and 600 are now in service); the teachers (750 are required; 266 Papuans are now in service); hospital attendants; agricultural and other technicians; civil servants (several hundred); clerks; traders; and possibly industrial workers.

/33. It is estimated

33. It is estimated that of the total resident population between 2,500 and 3,000 are wage-earners, of whom 1,500 are employed in the petroleum industry.

34. In view of the scarcity of labour, labour legislation presents no problem.

35. Labour requirements are met by the immigration of persons of Indonesian and European origin. The Netherlands New Guinea Petroleum Company employs 4,000 Indonesians on three-year contracts approved by the Inspectorate of Labour in Djakarta. Many Ambonese are employed as officials, and some Kei Islanders are engaged in trade or as teachers.

36. The economic potentialities of the Territory, and consequently its economic future, are still uncertain. This is only one reason why it seems advisable not to dislodge the Papuans from their agrarian basis. It is a matter of policy therefore not to undermine and weaken the Papuan communities by taking from them a considerable proportion of their manpower, but to strengthen them from within; not to bring the population to the estates, but to bring better agriculture to the population.

Public health and sanitation

37. The most important diseases are malaria, framboesia, filiariasis, pneumonia, bacillary dysentery, hookworm and venereal disease. By far the most widespread of these is malaria, which is prevalent in the low lands and along the coasts. The spleen-index is nearly always above 60 per cent among adult Papuans and above 80 per cent among children.

38. An example of what can be done to combat malaria is given by the drainage carried out by the Netherlands New Guinea Petroleum Company in Sorong and vicinity, where this company started operations in 1946. In 1947, among the Indonesian workers, the average malaria sickness-percentage was 27: by October 1948 it had dropped to 4.

39. It appears that the mountainous areas may be entirely free from malaria.

40. Framboesia is the next most important disease, about half the population of the low lands being infected. Plans are being considered to train medical assistants especially to give neo-salvarsan injections.

41. Though clear cases of avitaminosis are not seen in the Papuan villages, it is possible that the meagreness of the Papuan's diet, consisting of sago and roots with some fish and small animals, lowers their resistance to certain diseases.

/42. The number of

42. The number of hospitals is 10 with a total of 600 beds, to be expanded to 800 beds.

43. There are 22 medical doctors in addition to the Head of the Medical Service and the Chief of the Military Medical Service of New Guinea; 35 European nurses; 15 indigenous graduate nurses; and 189 hospital attendants. Most of the doctors also carry out regular tours of inspection. The number of polyclinics is several times that of the number of doctors' stations: it is intended in the near future to increase the number of stations from 10 to 20, and to allot 5 polyclinics to each doctor, so that a network of 100 polyclinics will be spread over the Territory. Two seaworthy motorboats have been equipped as polyclinics for service among the islands off the western end of New Guinea and in Geelvink Bay.

44. In June 1948 a malaria specialist joined the staff of the Medical Service.

45. A vaccination service has been established for many years: as far as is known, there have been no cases of smallpox in the Territory.

EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS

46. The necessity for adapting education to local social conditions gives rise to an unusual educational policy problem. This problem is caused by the fact that the Papuan, rooted in a social environment that includes his own particular customs, traditions, logic and purposes, tends to take over what he has learnt in full as far as form is concerned, but at the same time to include this new element in his old system of values. Therefore, owing to the great gulf between school and the indigenous environment, what is learnt is not absorbed deeply enough to take root. For this reason practical education, such as agricultural training, is given first. Mathematics, for instance, is taught only when trade and the use of money begin to take a part in local life. In the interior it will be a considerable time before such a situation develops; education in these areas, therefore, rather than forming a preparatory instrument for meeting the requirements of the local society, is continually ahead of them.

47. When a certain area is brought under administration, "civilizing schools" are established as soon as possible. Pupils at such schools are accepted without regard to age. They are first taught gardening, handicraft, some appreciation

/of hygiene,

of hygiene, and simple Malay. In the next stage they learn elementary reading, writing and mathematics. From the "civilizing school" pupils pass on to three years of education at the "people's school", whose pupils are classed according to age and whose curriculum is as far as possible designed to meet the needs of the district in which it is located.

48. The most intelligent pupils may then proceed for a further three years to "continuation schools", each of which, owing to the great distances from the pupils' homes, has a boarding establishment.

49. After the "continuation school" there are the following facilities for further education: training schools for people's school teachers; a two-year course for normal school diploma; an intermediate school; a lower industrial school; a civil servants school; and medical and agricultural courses.

50. Nearly all the education of the indigenous inhabitants is in the hands of missions.

51. In 1948, 16.6 per cent of the territorial budget was allotted to education.

52. The numbers of schools run by missions are as follows:

	Civilizing schools	People's schools	Continuation schools	Training schools for people's school teachers	Normal diploma course	Total
North New Guinea	86	82	3	1	1	173
West New Guinea	99	73	2	-	-	174
South New Guinea	173	8	2	1	-	184
Total	358	163	7	2	1	531

53. The teachers in the mission schools are as follows:

	Unqualified	People's school teachers	Teachers with normal diploma	Total	Ambonese and others	Papuans
North New Guinea	105	153	4	262	81	181
West New Guinea	75	131	4	210	153	57
South New Guinea	84	128	4	216	215	1
Total	264	412	12	688	449	239

/54. Of the 239 Papuan

54. Of the 239 Papuan teachers 139 are qualified.

55. The first school in New Guinea was opened in 1911. At the end of 1949 there were 531 mission schools, subsidized by the Government, in the areas so far brought under administration. The enrolment represents 10 per cent of the population of these areas, which means that nearly all children of school age attend school.

56. Enrolment in 1949 was as follows:

	Boys	Girls	Total
North New Guinea	6,468	3,889	10,357
West New Guinea	3,912	2,099	6,011
South New Guinea	5,350	4,165	9,515
<hr/>			
Total	15,730	10,153	25,883

57. Besides the schools especially designed for the indigenous inhabitants, there are various schools which provide Western education.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

58. As the economy of the Papuans should be reviewed in close relation to the social structure of their communities, and as the cultural levels of these communities differ greatly, it is not possible to combine the various features of the Papuan economy in one formula.

59. Since the cultural level of their environment determines their economic outlook, their economic activity is different from and more limited than that of the outer world. Where the individual's existence depends on and is possible only within the framework of the clan, the individual is not to be expected to strive for wealth. In these circumstances individual wealth has no opportunity to develop. It is clear therefore that economic development among the Papuans cannot be achieved unless social factors are dealt with at the same time.

60. In the Papuan community division of labour is known. General household and agricultural work is usually allotted to women, and hunting and fishing to men; even a division of labour between villages occurs, or between component parts of villages, whereby one group operates coconut plantations, another fishes, and a third is engaged exclusively in hunting or in turtle-catching. A medium of exchange is known, consisting of certain shells. As in all other aspects of Papuan life, magic also plays an important part in the processes of production.

/61. Contact with

61. Contact with the outer world has created new demands for products such as clothing, axes and knives. Such contacts have a superficial effect only, and so not instil a new way of thinking and living, if at the same time the Papuans are not assisted in spiritual and moral development. The teaching of technical skills should therefore be accompanied by such development in order to enable the Papuans to take interest in the varied facets of modern life, and to give a new value to their conception of work. In this way only can the Papuans become a community capable of maintaining itself and governing itself in the modern world.

Agriculture

62. Indigenous agriculture is limited to the planting of roots such as taro and yams. In order to improve local agriculture, an information service has been formed, consisting of 2 agricultural advisers with academic training, 8 other high-grade officers, 1 medium-grade officer, and 30 lower-grade staff. Agricultural instruction is also given by the missions.

63. Before the war several private companies established experimental plantations, which were abandoned during the war. One of the companies is considering resumption of its planting operations. There are 22 small plantations (mostly coconut) owned by local traders and covering an area under production of about 2,000 hectares. On some of them experiments are being carried out in the planting of coffee, kapok, cotton, jute and cacao.

Fisheries

64. The Institute for Sea Fisheries, with a staff of twenty (European and indigenous) is investigating the possibility of developing fisheries in local waters.

Forestry

65. The extensive forests of the Territory have so far been exploited very slightly. Forest products such as gums, resins, rattans and sago are exported. The exploitation of the forests will in future take a steadily increasing part in the local economy. The Forestry Service consists of 10 senior and 50 junior staff.

Livestock

66. Some cattle, small animals and poultry are kept at various administrative centres and other places, and fairly large numbers of pigs are kept in the central mountain areas. A few districts only are suitable for animal husbandry

/on anything

on anything but a very small scale: in general the only possible outlet for the production of livestock will be the supplying of local needs.

Industry

67. The first well organized expedition to explore the economic possibilities of New Guinea was undertaken between 1909 and 1914. Since then several investigations have been made, particularly in the field of mining, by official and private groups.

68. Prospectors have found gold, silver, lead, copper and nickel in the Territory, but it is not known if there are economically exploitable deposits of these metals. Inferior coal has been found in many places, and good coal in one.

69. In 1939 a two-years' air survey revealed three areas likely to contain mineral oil. Drilling at Klamono confirmed in 1941 that oil was present in economically exploitable quantities. Owing to the war, much of the preliminary work was made useless. In 1947 the Klamono wells began to produce; the laying of a road and pipe-line took eighteen months, and at the end of December 1948 the first crude oil was exported from Sorong. Production in 1948 was 20,059 tons. The daily production at the beginning of 1949 was 750 tons. The two other potential oil-bearing areas are now being investigated.

70. In certain areas conditions are suitable for the development of hydro-electric power.

71. The only industries of immediate importance for the indigenous inhabitants are the making of nets and the building of prahus. In the administrative centres numbers of Papuans are settled as artisans, in vocations which until recently were pursued mainly by non-indigenous persons.

Communications

72. Sea: There are several harbours, including Hollandia, Sorong and Merauke. The Transport Service is working to effect better sea communications, which are at present far below requirements.

73. Rivers: The Territory has, especially on the south side, many rivers navigable by ships. Owing to extensive swamps and the small numbers of people who live by their banks, they are at present of little use.

74. Air: There are civil airfields at Hollandia, Sorong, Babo, Tanah Merah, Biak and Merauke. Air communication with the Netherlands is via Singapore and Darwin.

/75. Roads:

75. Roads: Good motor roads exist only in the vicinity of centres of administration. In other areas travel is by footpath or boat. A 45-mile road for heavy trucks has been built by the Netherlands New Guinea Petroleum Company from Sorong to Klamono.

76. Telegraph: There is direct radio-telegraphic and radio-telephonic communication with the Netherlands.

Finance

77. Before the transfer of sovereignty the Netherlands Indies guilder was the currency of Netherlands New Guinea. On 30 March 1950 the New Guinea guilder, which is roughly equivalent to the Netherlands guilder, replaced that of Indonesia.^{1/}

78. During the ten years before the war the total Government expenditure ranged from Fl. 1,000,000 to Fl. 1,800,000 yearly, of which two-thirds was contributed by the central Government and the rest from territorial sources. The yearly revenue varied between Fl. 500,000 and Fl. 800,000, most of which was produced by income tax and an export tax on forest products. The deficit borne by the central Government ranged from Fl. 500,000 to Fl. 1,000,000 yearly.

79. After the war expenditures rose considerably, whereas revenue remained about the same, resulting in a yearly deficit of approximately Fl. 10,000,000 yearly.

Expenditure during 1948 was divided as follows:

	Fl.
Internal administration	5,225,663
Police	2,734,050
Education and worship	2,494,200
Agricultural information	468,878
Public Health	1,284,621
Forestry	525,800
Finance	150,000
Justice	163,478
Transport and water works	954,000
Total	14,000,690
Unforeseen expenditure	1,000,000
	15,000,690

^{1/} The Netherlands guilder equals \$ US. 0.26.1/2 or 1s.10.1/2d. (sterling).

80. The above figures do not include expenditure for the army, navy and navigational aids.

81. The expenditure for 1949 was Fl. 3,000,000 higher than that for 1948.

82. It will not be possible, within the foreseeable future, for revenue to balance expenditure, particularly owing to the intention of the Government to expand its services in many areas in the interests of the indigenous inhabitants. The deficit for the first year after the transfer of sovereignty, excluding military costs, already is likely to be Fl. 23,000,000. This deficit is to be paid by the Netherlands.

83. Owing to the nature of the indigenous economy, income tax produces little revenue. The population under regular administration pays no more than Fl. 1 per head yearly; owing to the limited use of money the tax is often paid in the form of wage-labour.

84. On 1 April 1950 banking facilities were established at Hollandia. A branch office is to be opened shortly at Sorong.

International trade

85. Owing to low production and the few requirements of the indigenous inhabitants international trade is limited. There has not been an export-surplus for many years, since the period when the skins of birds of paradise were an important export. Until the transfer of sovereignty, trade with Netherlands New Guinea was channelled through Makassar: owing to lack of capital, the local Chinese traders were dependent on Chinese wholesalers, mostly in Makassar. After the transfer of sovereignty the links with Makassar disappeared. An organization for import and export trade was therefore formed under the supervision of the Governor of the Territory. Concentration of export products in one or more places now makes direct shipment possible. The harbours of Sorong, Manokwari, Hollandia and Merauke are the projected ports of shipment.

86. Better organization of coastal transport is being considered, including the building of motor prahus and motor and sailing schooners of from 50 to 200 tons.

/87. The main

87. The main exports in the first half of 1949 were:

<u>Product</u>	<u>North New Guinea</u> cubic metres	<u>South New Guinea</u> cubic metres	<u>Total</u> cubic metres	<u>Half of 1947 export</u> cubic metres
Copal	72	106	178	23
Copra	308	1,164	1,472	276
Timber	23	567	590	234
Shell	26	12	38	4
Nutmeg	-	65	65	24
Trasi	-	151	151	46

88. It is estimated that owing to the above-mentioned measures the exports in the first half of 1950 will be at least three times those for the corresponding period in 1949.

Development plans

89. Though the nature of the terrain, the climate, and the sparseness and low degree of development of the population combine to obstruct the opening up of the Territory, further exploration may reveal natural resources that so far are unknown, and the potential labour supply can probably be increased by the settlement of Indo-European colonists. In addition, the intensive education that is being given to the Papuan inhabitants may be expected to show results. Furthermore, as a result of the transfer of sovereignty, Netherlands New Guinea has been changed from a comparatively unimportant part of a large association into an area of primary interest.

90. On the part of other powers also more attention is being given to the Pacific islands, as is reflected by the establishment of the South Pacific Commission. The work of the Commission has already been able to strengthen to a notable degree the feeling of unity among the indigenous peoples of this region, as appeared clearly after the Conference held in April 1950 in Suva.

91. It is clear from pre-war experience that for the present little can be expected from private enterprise. The Government therefore not only has provided in the decree Regulation of Government for New Guinea for the Governor to give full consideration to opening up the Territory, but also has stated in Parliament that a separate body should be formed under expert direction, to be financed by the Government and charged with development of the area. This plan

/is being carried out.

is being carried out. A group consisting of several ethnologists is to be formed, whose leader will be at the same time head of the Indigenous Affairs Office which is being geared to the execution of development plans for certain areas.

92. A first project is already being considered, for which a planning investigation is to be carried out. It is intended that the Indigenous Affairs Office shall be also the advisory office for educational planning, with the aim of promoting as effective a cultural re-orientation as possible.
