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Chairman: Mr. Enrique de MARCHENA
(Dominican Republic).

AGENDA ITEM 39

The Togoland unification problem and the future of the Trust Territory of Togoland under British administration: reports of the United Nations Plebiscite Commissioner and of the Trusteeship Council (A/3169 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/C.4/340 and Add.1, A/C.4/341) (*continued*)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Nanamale Gbegbeni, representative of the Union des chefs et des populations du Nord-Togo, Mr. Victor Atakpamey, representative of the Parti togolais du progrès, Mr. Michel Ayassou, representative of the Traditional chiefs of the South, Mr. Sambiani Mateyendou, representative of the Traditional chiefs of the North, Mr. André Akakpo, representative of the Mouvement populaire togolais, Mr. A. I. Santos, representative of the Mouvement de la jeunesse togolaise (Juvento), and Mr. Sylvanus Olympio, representative of the All-Ewe Conference, took places at the Committee table.

HEARING OF PETITIONERS ON THE FUTURE OF TOGOLAND UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION (*concluded*)

1. Mr. LOIZIDES (Greece) asked whether there were any provisions in the Statute which entitled the French Government to appoint members of the Legislative Assembly of Togoland.
2. Mr. ATAKPAMEY (Parti togolais du progrès) said that all members of the Assembly were elected by the people of Togoland by direct universal suffrage.
3. Mr. DEFFERRE (France) confirmed the fact that no members of the Legislative Assembly were appointed by the French Government.

GENERAL DEBATE ON THE FUTURE OF TOGOLAND UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION

4. Mr. APEDO-AMAH (France) said it was painful for a Togolander to see some of his compatriots failing to show the high-mindedness and discretion which should characterize their statements, and indulging instead in regrettable expressions of malice and hatred. The officials and traditional chiefs of Togoland, unlike

certain of their critics, knew the needs and aspirations of the people and had devoted their lives to serving them. They thought only of their country, while Mr. Olympio, for example, represented a party which did not even exist in Togoland under French administration but had its headquarters in the Gold Coast. Moreover, Mr. Olympio had clearly intimated to the Fourth Committee that the goal of his party was the unification of the two Togolands, although he knew that the Committee had already decided on the integration of Togoland under British administration with the Gold Coast. Such a policy was clearly incompatible with genuine Togoland independence.

5. The petitioners who had attacked the traditional chiefs and local deputies had a strange conception of democracy if they wished to deny the people the right to elect the men they trusted. That distorted conception of democracy was also evident in their claim that the Representative Assembly of 1946, which had been presided over by Mr. Olympio and elected by an electorate of 8,000, had been perfectly representative, while the Assemblies elected in 1951 and 1955, by 150,000 and 191,000 electors respectively, had not. The real reason for their attitude was, of course, the simple fact that the enlargement of the electorate had made the weakness of the Comité de l'Unité togolaise (CUT) more obvious at each election. The truth was that the population of Togoland bitterly resented the attitude of the opposition leaders, as expressed by Mr. Olympio when, during a newspaper interview, he had said that one of the points of his programme was to do away with the traditional chiefs and that the South would force its own ideas upon the North. That undemocratic spirit, like the fascist flavour which attached to a private militia, rightly disquieted the people of Togoland. It was understandable that the chiefs and populations of the villages did not wish to hear such views. Nevertheless the Government of Togoland had insisted that freedom of speech and assembly should be respected, in spite of the fact that the opposition parties themselves had no such scruples with regard to their opponents.

6. That the opposition parties saw evidence of corruption in a gesture so natural to a democratic system as the invitation to visit Paris extended to the traditional chiefs of Togoland by the French Government could only be explained by their contempt for the people, and perhaps also by envy. The very man who now made those imputations had himself been prepared to go to Paris in 1952, if he had been elected to the seat in the French Parliament for which he had campaigned. The failure of Mr. Olympio's candidate to retain his parliamentary seat also helped to explain the disapproval they now expressed of the representation of Togoland in the French Assemblies.

7. The main point, however, was that the petitioners of the opposition parties had been unable to offer any serious criticism of either the referendum or the Statute. Mr. Olympio had openly congratulated the French

Government, and one of the founders of Juvento had stated that with the promulgation of the Statute the legitimate aspirations of the people of Togoland had been fully attained.

8. The Prime Minister had, in the interests of harmony, invited Mr. Olympio to enter the Government. Mr. Olympio, after admitting the advantages of the new system, had asked for time for reflection; he had not yet given a final reply and a portfolio had been held open for him. It had, however, never occurred to the Prime Minister that Mr. Olympio's presence in the Government would, as the latter had stated earlier, be a guarantee of democracy in Togoland.

9. Mr. Santos admitted that the application of the Statute could make a valuable contribution to the political evolution of the Territory if entrusted to capable and genuinely representative men. He was glad Mr. Santos had expressed the desire to start afresh and it was to be hoped that he would repeat that statement in Togoland.

10. The Moroccan representative had said in the Fourth Committee that if France had given Morocco its independence in time, that country's relations with France would now be entirely different. It was all to the honour of the French and the Togolandese that an autonomous republic had been established in Togoland by peaceful means. It was that fact which his Government was requesting the Fourth Committee to recognize and approve.

11. Mr. AJAVON (France) said that, having attained political maturity, Togoland had been offered an opportunity to choose between autonomy and the maintenance of international trusteeship. It had chosen autonomy, and in so doing had demonstrated its desire both to govern itself and to maintain permanent ties of friendship and co-operation with France. The qualified representatives of Togoland in the Territorial Assembly had in fact asked for a statute on those lines and the Statute established by the Decree of 24 August 1956 was in full conformity with their wishes.

12. There were two sorts of sovereignty: internal sovereignty, which consisted of the existence within a country of a sovereign legislative assembly and an executive responsible to that assembly; and external sovereignty, whereby a country had control of its own defence, foreign policy and currency. A completely independent country was one which held both kinds of sovereignty, but such a combination was unusual in the contemporary world, for complete economic independence was a prerequisite to it. Today, with so many nations of the world interdependent, complete external sovereignty was no more than an abstraction. In choosing autonomy, Togoland had borne in mind the best interests of its people, for it had realized that the essential element of sovereignty was internal sovereignty and that it could not afford the external and illusory symbols of sovereignty, such as an army, a diplomatic corps and a currency of its own.

13. It was in the light of those considerations that the people of Togoland had chosen the Statute. In its draft form, the Statute had been freely discussed in the Territorial Assembly, which had made several important amendments to it, extending, strengthening and clarifying the powers of the Autonomous Republic, so that the final text wholly satisfied the desires expressed by the Territorial Assembly in its motion of 4 July 1955. The powers granted under the Statute had been further clarified and extended as a result of a meeting held

in Paris on 15 November 1956 between the Minister for Overseas France and representatives of the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Togoland.

14. The Autonomous Republic of Togoland was now an established fact, Togoland citizenship had become a reality and the Togoland people had full, complete and democratic control of their domestic affairs. As a primarily agricultural and still under-developed country, Togoland could not attempt to maintain its own army and diplomatic corps without seriously jeopardizing its economic and social development; hence it had voluntarily agreed to share its external sovereignty with France. Through its deputies to the metropolitan Assemblies, it shared, on a basis of complete equality, in the preparation of legislation regulating the common defence, foreign policy and currency. It was free to organize its police services and its system of primary education as it wished; it had, however, chosen to conform to the French programmes of secondary and higher education, in order to maintain the proper standards.

15. One of the main concerns of the Territorial Assembly in its examination of the draft Statute had been to guarantee the preservation of individual liberty and the rights of minorities; it had accordingly agreed to allow the French Government to control the administration of justice—although it would be noted that article 38 of the Statute left the way open for future changes in that field.

16. In summary, the autonomy granted to Togoland under the Statute fulfilled the goals laid down in Article 76 b of the United Nations Charter, and the people of Togoland had been given genuine organs of self-government. Thus trusteeship had in fact been terminated and the people of Togoland had chosen overwhelmingly to accept its termination. Moreover, a means had been provided for the further development of the Statute in the direction of self-government. The formula adopted for the establishment of the Autonomous Republic might be original, but it was in perfect harmony with the present tendency of nations to group themselves in interdependent communities.

17. At its eighth and tenth sessions the General Assembly had approved other forms of independence, namely, that granted to Puerto Rico and that granted to Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles.¹ In the latter case foreign affairs and defence had been made the responsibility of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. In both cases the peoples concerned had made known the form of government they desired and the United Nations had approved their choice. Now Togoland under French administration had chosen to become an autonomous republic with its own Government and a sovereign legislative assembly, while maintaining links of friendship and co-operation with France. The overwhelming majority of the people of Togoland called upon the General Assembly to approve their choice.

18. Mr. LARAKI (Morocco), speaking on a point of order, said that by quoting the Moroccan representative's statement out of context, the previous speaker had given an entirely false impression of what he had said.

19. Mr. HOUPOUET-BOIGNY (France) felt that, as an elected representative of the African people in the French National Assembly for the past ten years

¹ See General Assembly resolutions 748 (VIII) and 945 (X).

and Chairman of the powerful political movement known as the Rassemblement démocratique africain, he might properly be regarded as the authentic spokesman for millions of Africans. Furthermore, as a native of the Ivory Coast who was not involved in the differences between the two camps in Togoland itself, he considered himself in a position to place the question in its true context, against the background of the evolution of "Black" Africa as a whole.

20. The Atlantic Charter had made the right of self-determination of peoples a universal principle, applying to the peoples of Africa as well as to all others. It should be borne in mind, however, that Africa was emerging into political consciousness at a time when the concept of absolute independence was being modified. In the current century, even great nations were finding that they must subject themselves to ever-increasing restrictions and could no longer afford the luxury of isolation. States were increasingly associating themselves with others in large economic and political groupings.

21. At the close of the Second World War France had conceived a vast design for liberating its colonies while at the same time linking their destiny to its own in a community of nations based on trust and friendship rather than on force. To those who argued that France's intentions were not what they seemed, responsible Africans could only reply that suspicion and rancour must no longer be allowed to retard progress. France's own great tradition of progress belied such an allegation. It was only fair that when the unfavourable aspects of French colonialism had been denounced, the good that it had done should be acknowledged. For example, everywhere in France's Overseas Territories the population, far from being decimated, had increased. France had not sought to impose its own ways upon subject peoples but had respected local customs and traditions. Above all, France had never practised racial segregation, a concept which was totally alien to the French people. Proof of that was to be found in the fact that for ten successive years an African had been elected to the Presidency of the French Senate, another was Vice-President of the National Assembly and a third was Vice-President of the Assembly of the French Union, to say nothing of various Africans who had served or were serving as ministers of the French Government.

22. Having been instructed by the President of the Council of Ministers to collaborate in working out the new political and economic relations between metropolitan France and the Overseas Territories and to draft the revision of that part of the French Constitution relating to the French Union, he was in a position to appreciate the importance of the major reforms now in effect throughout "Black" Africa. Under the *loi-cadre*, France assured to its Overseas Territories further progress in the political and administrative fields. The *loi-cadre* instituted universal suffrage and a single electoral roll. It provided for the establishment of government councils in which Africans elected by the territorial assemblies were in the majority and which were assuming a large measure of responsibility for the administration of the territories concerned. It provided for an increase in the number of *municipalités de plein exercice*, the establishment of *conseils de circonscription*, and the establishment of local rural communities for the political and social advancement of the peasantry. Finally, it provided for the reorganization of the civil service with a view to its rapid Africaniza-

tion. In that connexion it was interesting to note that whereas ten years earlier there had been a total of some twenty Africans pursuing their studies in metropolitan France, they now numbered about 3,500, a considerable percentage of whom were from Togoland. The number had in fact increased to such a degree that the problem was no longer one of finding qualified African personnel but rather of providing posts in which their training and talent could be utilized. It should be noted, however, that in stressing the importance of staffing the administrative machinery with trained African personnel the petitioners had failed to concede sufficient importance to the peasantry, who were the chief source of Africa's strength. The improvement of their standard of living was an equally important problem.

23. Another notable advance was the Labour Code now in force throughout the Overseas Territories, which many an independent nation might envy.

24. There was much, of course, that remained to be done and the active support of France in financial, technological and cultural matters was still needed. The report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Trust Territories of Togoland under British administration and Togoland under French administration, 1955 (T/1211) had strengthened his conviction that, were Togoland to become fully independent and to cease to be associated with a larger Power, it would be unable to continue financing its development at the present rate. That observation applied equally to all the French Territories in "Black" Africa. What was important was to decide whether, at the current stage of the evolution of "Black" Africa, its interests would be better served by absolute independence or by membership of a larger unity. Most of the world today was divided into two camps, with a third, so-called neutral, bloc. The nations which formed those camps took a special interest in certain areas of the world, but "Black" Africa, or at least that part of it that was administered by France, was not one of them, since it was not a strategic zone and produced no oil or atomic materials. The United Nations should pay particular attention to assistance to the under-developed countries, regardless of their strategic importance. In the meantime those countries must count on their own efforts.

25. In West Africa and Central Africa over 60 million Africans had been divided by the development of colonialism in the nineteenth century into two groups with different cultures, one English and one French. That was one of the more important aspects of the problem of Togoland. The French-educated Africans were following with deep interest and sympathy the bold experiment being carried out by the English-speaking Africans of the Gold Coast, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. They wished, however, to make their own experiments in their own terms. The French and the educated Africans were about to assume heavy responsibilities towards Africa. They must not betray their trust.

26. The representatives of the Government and the Legislative Assembly of Togoland under French administration asked the Fourth Committee to come to a decision which would enable them to co-operate in full independence with the French Union. The importance of the fact that, at the request of the Togoland Territorial Assembly, the Statute allowed for the possibility of further development could not be over-

estimated. The Statute was not an end in itself but a stage, and it held great promise for the future if the men who were to guide the destiny of their country responded to the confidence placed in them by their compatriots. The political and economic development of Togoland was for all French-speaking Africans a test of France's will to lead the peoples for which it was responsible towards freedom to manage their own affairs and to create jointly with them a community in which each group would have its proper place.

27. He could understand that the representative of the All-Ewe Conference would like his country, through the unification of the two Togolands, to join the future independent State of Ghana. The French-speaking Africans, on the other hand, while also desiring that Togoland should have the management of its own affairs, wished it to remain within the French-African community. It was, of course, for the Togolandese themselves in the last resort to choose between the status of an Associated State, of a member State of a federation whose form remained to be defined or of an independent State lined with the French Union.

28. The United Nations would not be achieving the purpose for which it had been established if it was satisfied merely to facilitate the birth of new nations. It should help to ensure peace, justice and an improvement in the level of living within nations or groups of nations. The political independence of a country would not suffice to make its inhabitants free and happy; they should enjoy all the political rights and fundamental freedoms, a decent standard of living, health and sufficient education to enable them to benefit by those rights and freedoms. Assistance should therefore be given to those nations which, like France, placed human values first, for the age-old dream of peoples and men was not of technical accomplishments, conquest of space or the splitting of the atom, but of brotherhood. Efforts must be made to overcome hatred, disappointment and suspicion and to create a new world. Above all there should be no clashes or misunderstandings such as had created stresses and strains in other parts of the French Union.

29. Because he believed in brotherhood, he believed in the final triumph of the French-African community—humane, equalitarian and fraternal. That might be called a Utopian vision, but fifty years previously anyone who had predicted the establishment of the United Nations would have been called Utopian. The people of "Black" Africa wanted to forge the first link in the chain of human fraternity the United Nations was trying to create. In the name of that fraternity he appealed to the members of the Fourth Committee to come to a decision on the problem of Togoland.

30. Miss BROOKS (Liberia) expressed regret that her delegation had not been consulted with regard to the drafting of the draft resolutions before the Committee. She did not wish to propose any formal amend-

ments to draft resolutions concerning the future of Togoland under French administration and she therefore hoped that the sponsors of the five-Power draft resolution (A/C.4/L.453) and the French delegation would be willing to accept some suggestions. If they were unable to do so she might feel obliged to submit certain amendments.

31. She suggested first that the third paragraph of the preamble of the draft resolution should be redrafted to read "*Having received* the memorandum contained in document A/C.4/341, dated 29 December 1956, transmitted by the French delegation to the United Nations". That wording, by omitting any mention of the Autonomous Republic of Togoland, would avoid pre-judging the issue and would leave the proposed commission free to study the situation and reach its conclusions with an open mind.

32. She also suggested that the fourth paragraph of the preamble should be redrafted to read: "*Having taken note* of the fact that the population of Togoland under French administration was consulted by a referendum on 28 October 1956 with respect to the new political Statute for Togoland under French administration". The last part of the paragraph, which was superfluous and again tended to pre-judge the question, would be deleted.

33. She would prefer the fifth paragraph of the preamble to read: "*Having heard*, at its eleventh session, the statements by the members of the French delegation"; the representatives of the Autonomous Republic of Togoland had spoken in the Fourth Committee as members of the French delegation, since the Autonomous Republic of Togoland was not a Member of the United Nations.

34. For the same reason she suggested that the word "jointly" and the phrase "and the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Togoland" in the sixth paragraph of the preamble should be deleted.

35. She suggested that paragraph 1 of the operative part of the draft resolution should be amended to read: "*Considers* that the reforms introduced by the new political Statute of the Territory of Togoland under French administration by the Administering Authority represent a step towards the achievement of the aims of Article 76 b of the Charter and of the Trusteeship Agreement".

36. Paragraph 2 should be amended to read: "*Takes note* of the progress thus far achieved by the population of Togoland under French administration in the political, economic, social and cultural fields".

37. With regard to paragraphs 3 and 4, she considered that the commission's terms of reference should be more specific. She had not at the moment anything better to suggest but hoped that some other member of the Committee might be able to improve on the text.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.