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Chairman: Mr. F. VAN LANGENHOVE (Belgium).

The Tunisian question (A/2405 and Add.1, A/C.1/L.64) (*continued*)
 [Item 56]*

1. Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) recalled that the Tunisian question, which resembled the Moroccan question in several points, had its origin in the establishment of a protectorate over a sovereign territory by force. Several representatives had questioned the validity of the Treaty of Bardo and the La Marsa Convention; however that might be, it was well to note that, according to the actual text of article 2 of the Treaty of Bardo, the Protectorate had been basically a temporary institution, which had not deprived Tunisia of its personality as a State.

2. The fact that the national aspirations of the Tunisian people were becoming more apparent every day and that, despite French obstruction, often of a brutal nature, the desire for self-government was becoming more and more evident, showed that the United Nations should and must study that item of its agenda.

3. Two arguments had been put forward in objection to its discussion: first, it had been claimed that the Assembly had no competence in the matter and that, in consequence of the Treaty of Bardo and the La Marsa Convention which governed relations between France and Tunisia, the Tunisian question was a purely internal French question; secondly, it had been maintained that it was in the interests of both France and Tunisia to leave the two parties in question to reach a satisfactory agreement by negotiation.

4. Those two arguments were without foundation. The question of the Assembly's competence had already been settled by the fact that the Assembly had agreed to deal with the Tunisian question and had even adopted resolution 611 (VII). As for the second argument, that was only a pretext for adjourning the question with a view to maintaining the *status quo*.

5. There was no doubt, however, that the one aim of the French policy towards Tunisia was to transform that territory into a mere colony. Thus, in a population comprising 3,500,000 Arabs and 140,000 French settlers, the latter had appropriated a considerable area of the cultivable land. Official statistics showed that the

average area of arable land per settler was 200 hectares, as against two hectares held by Tunisian farmers. The systematic exploitation of all the country's natural resources was another factor of French policy. In the last twenty-four years, 70,000,000 tons of phosphates had been exported, not to speak of bauxite, iron and manganese, from all of which French and American capital had made tremendous profits. By transforming Tunisia into a reservoir of raw materials for the exclusive benefit of France, the French administration was hindering the development of Tunisian industry.

6. The memorandum of 16 March 1953, addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/2371), and the attached letter, described the anti-democratic policy adopted by France towards Tunisian nationals. The system of courts martial and constant opposition to the most fundamental civil liberties was undoubtedly contrary to the most elementary principles of the Charter. Since the situation which had induced the representatives of fifteen countries of Africa and Asia to bring the matter before the Security Council in January 1952¹ had only grown worse, a fresh appeal had been made to that body in April 1952². Owing to the joint opposition of France, the United Kingdom and the United States, that attempt had failed and the situation had deteriorated. On 20 June 1952, thirteen African and Asian Powers had requested a special session of the General Assembly (A/2137). The request had not been met but finally, at the seventh session of the General Assembly, the Tunisian question had been entered on the agenda. A really constructive draft resolution had been submitted by the same States as had requested the inclusion of the item in the agenda, but it had been rejected and the Assembly had adopted resolution 611 (VII), which had in fact proved inadequate to ensure respect for the legitimate rights of the Tunisian people. The course of events had indeed shown that instead of applying the General Assembly's recommendations, France had ignored them and had merely intensified the repressive nature of its policy.

7. Some representatives had already shown that, far from leading Tunisia towards self-government, such measures were calculated to strengthen the predominant position of the French settlers and to lead to a real annexation of the territory. The explanatory memorandum presented to the General Assembly (A/2405/Add.1) censured that policy, which was repudiated by all Tunisian political organizations and which only aggravated the situation in a dangerous way. Reference must also be made to the attitude of the United States of America, which had already established a network of military bases in the territory. Attention had been

¹ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Seventh Year, Supplement for April, May and June 1952*, document S/2508.

² *Ibid.*, documents S/2574-S/2584 inclusive.

* Indicates the item number on the agenda of the General Assembly.

drawn to that fact again and again, in particular by the newspaper *France actuelle*, which in December 1952 had mentioned Tunisia as one of the strongholds of the defensive system of the United States in North Africa. Thus it could be said that the freedom and independence of a people were being sacrificed to the plans of aggressive American circles. There was no doubt that such activities were directly contrary to the Charter in general, and to Article 1 in particular.

8. In an attempt to remedy the situation, which showed that the French Government had not fulfilled its obligations, some Powers of Africa and Asia had presented a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.64), whose recommendations, modest as they were, should be regarded as a minimum. The draft urged respect for the right of peoples to self-determination and the right of citizens to enjoy the most elementary democratic liberties.

9. The USSR delegation was of the opinion that, if carried out, the draft resolution was calculated to play a positive part in the settlement of the question, in the interests both of the Tunisian people themselves and of all peace-loving peoples. It would therefore vote in favour of the draft resolution.

10. Mr. CHAMANDI (Yemen) said the debates at the seventh and the present sessions of the General Assembly had stressed the legal and human aspects of the Tunisian question and demonstrated the competence of the United Nations in the matter. That being so, it would seem that those who had opposed its discussion, basing themselves on Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter, had not fully understood the gravity of the situation in Tunisia. The absence of France was particularly regrettable, for that country's co-operation would have greatly facilitated the settlement of the problem, but its attitude of opposition did at least show with what severity it intended to act towards Tunisia. It had also exposed the real aims of the imperialist Powers, which were both preaching the maintenance of peace and democratic institutions and criticizing the policy of certain East European States in the Security Council.

11. It was a fact that, in spite of treaties which, although imposed by France, had not deprived Tunisia of its sovereignty and independence, that country, seventy years after their signature, still did not enjoy real sovereignty. The origin of the Franco-Tunisian dispute lay in a fundamental divergence of opinion. While France had accepted the principle of a Tunisian system of government, it demanded the participation of French nationals in the operation of Tunisian political institutions. The measures which France intended to introduce as reforms in connexion with the representation of the Tunisian people in its elected assemblies were nullified by the insistence on retaining French elements from top to bottom of the Tunisian administration.

12. To justify such a demand, which was condemned by many jurists, France claimed that its nationals had acquired certain rights by their technical assistance and their contributions to the budget. It should be pointed out that such budgetary assistance really amounted to no more than a loan repayable with interest. To accept such a view would be a negation of the treaties and agreements by which the two countries were bound and of the principles of international law relating to

mutual assistance among nations. On 9 January 1952, the Tunisian Government had refuted the French contention, in a letter addressed to Mr. Robert Schuman. France had replied to that letter by a number of acts of violence, the forced resignation of the Government of Mohammed Chenik and the deportation and imprisonment of a number of eminent Tunisians.

13. Among those measures and the violent incidents which had followed, he would mention the assassination of Hedi Chaker, an eminent nationalist leader, on 13 September 1953, the assassination of Beshir Ben Mabrouk, Secretary-General of the Agriculturists Union, on 11 August 1953 and the assassination of Mohammed Ben Beshir Ben Fadl, President of the local Néo-Destour organization and Secretary-General of the Agriculturists Union in Menzel-Temine, on 18 August 1953. The last two were shot dead by French soldiers, at their homes in the presence of their wives and children.

14. Those few examples of the incidents which had taken place after the adoption of resolution 611 (VII) expressing confidence that the French Government would do what it could to secure a settlement of the Tunisian question were no different from the events which had been brought to the attention of the General Assembly in the first place.

15. Such incidents were particularly serious. Both respect for right and justice and concern for the maintenance of the prestige of the United Nations made it the duty of the First Committee to face the Tunisian problem courageously in order to discover the correct way of settling it.

16. The delegation of Yemen, which had joined a number of other delegations in submitting draft resolution A/C.1/L.64, earnestly hoped that the draft would obtain the unanimous support of Member States and that the French Government would reconsider its present attitude.

17. Mr. ZEINEDDINE (Syria) pointed out that France had never contested the existence of Tunisian sovereignty. Such rights as it might have in Tunisia resulted from an international treaty governing the relations between the two countries. Despite a number of special features, those relations were nevertheless of an international contractual nature which did certainly not permit of any doubts concerning the competence of the Assembly.

18. It really seemed, therefore, that if the question of competence was raised whenever the Assembly prepared to deal with the Tunisian question, it was not for any legal reason involved but merely as a pretext used by the colonial Powers and their friends to prevent any discussion relating to the liberation of Tunisia. Those Powers had supporters in the Assembly, but although by their influence they might succeed in producing majorities, or at any rate sufficiently large minorities to hinder the adoption of practical resolutions, they certainly did not represent the majority of world opinion. Those same Powers had the right of veto in the Security Council, but that was not enough for them to defend their own interests, for what they actually wanted was to be able to decide unilaterally in the Assembly whether a particular question was a matter of domestic competence or not. If the Assembly accepted such a unilateral decision, it would accept exercise of a right of veto over its actions. It was strange

to see those same Powers which objected to the exercise of the veto in the Security Council trying to introduce and use a disguised veto in the General Assembly. Such a veto would be even more dangerous than the veto practiced in the Security Council, for it could be used to stifle discussion.

19. At both the seventh and the present sessions the General Assembly had decided to study the Tunisian question and had implicitly recognized that it was really a question of the relations between two States: France and Tunisia. While the attitude of the colonial Powers, which were eager to protect their immediate interests was understandable, it was not so easy to understand the support which those Powers managed to obtain from delegations which were very able and quite ready to expound such theories as that of the purely moral responsibility of the General Assembly with regard to the right of peoples to self-determination, a theory for which, incidentally, no justification was to be found.

20. It had been sufficiently demonstrated that the treaties between France and Tunisia had arisen out of an exceptional situation. Furthermore, those treaties, which had been imposed by force, had not been respected by France, which had not fulfilled its obligations. France and Tunisia should therefore resume negotiations on the whole question, and it was there that, if necessary, the two Powers might be assisted by the United Nations. While the General Assembly was not a tribunal and could not therefore consider the problem of the application of a treaty, it was nevertheless an international conference, competent to deal with matters brought to its attention and express its opinion in the form of a resolution.

21. The most significant conclusion to be drawn from the discussion was that no speaker had gone so far as to approve of French policy in North Africa or to maintain that it was in accordance with the Franco-Tunisian treaties or the Charter. The essence of the problem lay in the establishment of a privileged class enjoying many financial, economic and cultural advantages in defiance of the existing treaties and of respect for the fundamental liberties of the Tunisian people. That class had two main methods of exploiting the Tunisian people. First, the method of direct rule was employed without any attempt to secure the tacit consent of the population or the Tunisian authorities. Thus, when the Chenik cabinet tried to open negotiations with France, all the members of that cabinet were imprisoned or exiled. The second method was based on a system, similar to that obtaining in Morocco, under which the real power did not lie with France itself, but was in the hands of the French settlers, assisted by their Tunisian acolytes. In Tunisia, the French settlers, through their organization the *Rassemblement des Français de Tunisie*, prepared programmes which the French Government obediently executed.

22. Thus, in the spring of 1950, when negotiations concerning structural reforms were to have been started between Mr. Schuman and the Tunisian Government, the *Rassemblement des Français de Tunisie* had sent a note to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accompanied by a six-point political programme. The negotiations had been interrupted, severe repressive measures had been instituted and the six points proposed by the settlers had all been put into effect by the French Government, contrary to its own statements.

Lastly, thanks again to the influence of the *Rassemblement des Français de Tunisie*, further reforms had been introduced for the purpose of giving the settlers not only the actual power but the legal power to direct the country's affairs. The fact was that the settlers were no more concerned with the interests of France than with those of Tunisia; their one concern was to protect their privileges.

23. That point deserved emphasis: France, in its Tunisian policy, was tending more and more to strengthen the power of the settlers. It was they whom the French army protected and it was in their interests that the strength of the army had been increased out of fear of the people's opposition. It really seemed as if Tunisian self-government, an objective preached by Mr. Périllier, the former Resident-General, was being forgotten in favour of a policy of interdependence within a purely colonial union.

24. As the representative of Pakistan had said (645th meeting), France had no desire to negotiate in order to reach a compromise. In that respect, its methods were different from those applied earlier by other colonial Powers such as the United Kingdom and the Netherlands. In North Africa, the system was to apply the dictates of the soldiery to a people attempting to achieve liberation. It was claimed that France had to be in Tunisia in order to introduce reforms; then later the pretext was that France had to remain in Tunisia to see that those reforms were carried out. The reforms in question, of course, were not political, economic or cultural reforms, but very limited reforms, often a mere semblance of reform, used by France as a pretext put forward to justify occupation for an indefinite period of time. France had been introducing reforms for seventy-two years, but in spite of an army which was always ready to impress upon the people that those reforms were just, the Tunisian people was not convinced.

25. In studying the Tunisian question, it was important to realize the extent of the national liberation movement. At the seventh session, the French Minister for Foreign Affairs had said in his speech before the General Assembly that discussion of the Tunisian question could only delude the Tunisian masses and provoke disturbances (392nd plenary meeting). He had even tried to link the debates in the Assembly with the Tunisian national liberation movement. In that connexion, it would be well to refer briefly to the history of that movement.

26. There was a highly developed national conscience in Tunisia. The prolonged and unrelenting resistance to French domination for more than seventy years bore witness to that. Up to 1907 or 1908, there had been sporadic resistance movements which had recurred practically every year. In 1911, the Tunisian movement had taken the form of a politically organized movement of the people. Its leader had died in exile in 1911 and the movement had been put down by the Diellaz massacre. In 1918, the Tunisian movement to secure democratic liberties had been reorganized under the name of *Destour*, which meant "constitution". The *Destour* had been dispersed and its leaders imprisoned, and it had had to reorganize under its present name of *Néo-Destour*.

27. The national liberation movement had gradually spread from the intelligentsia to the masses. During the war, it had reached the palace of the Bey thanks to

the sympathy of the Bey, who had been quickly deposed by the French authorities. Since 1946, the Tunisian movement had spread its branches in all areas of the country, either openly or secretly. In August 1946, Tunisian parties of every shade, trade unions and cultural organizations, had drawn up a programme which the representative of Syria read out to the Committee. In that report the watchwords of the Tunisian liberation movement were to be found: the condition of sovereignty which Tunisia had enjoyed in 1881, the signature of the treaties under compulsion, the theoretically provisional and protective nature of those agreements, their degeneration into a pretext for colonial exploitation in disregard of the most elementary interests of the Tunisian people, and the surrender of Tunisia to the Axis Powers during the war. For those reasons, the Tunisian National Congress rejected the Protectorate régime and proclaimed the imprescriptible right of the Tunisian people to independence.

28. Such was the programme upon which the Tunisian people had agreed and which served to direct their efforts. The movement had reached the palace of the Bey and had spread among the masses of the people. It was rather like a change of season: Tunisia had passed from an atmosphere of renunciation and tacit acceptance to the expression of a powerful national liberation movement.

29. The maturity of the Tunisian nation was obvious. It would enable the nation to promote the progress of the liberation movement until it triumphed in Tunisia as similar movements had prevailed in other countries which had already set themselves free. In those circumstances, it would be not only unjust and unreasonable but politically ill-advised to try to ignore the main factors of the situation and to delay a just and proper solution of the problem.

30. It might be asked what the Assembly could do. It was a fact that attempts to secure a settlement by diplomatic means had proved futile. It seemed that, in order to influence certain colonialist circles, there must be a situation like that at present prevailing in Indo-China, or that the United Nations must exercise moral pressure. The matter had been submitted to the United Nations so that the United Nations might bring moral pressure to bear on France and on Tunisia to create the atmosphere of goodwill in which a workable solution might be found.

31. The primary objective of Néo-Destour, as its name implied, was a revision of the constitution. The Bey was prepared to agree to it. That was nothing new, for all who had studied Moslem law knew the distinction it made between *imperium* and *dominium*. Among the Arab peoples, authority had always been regarded as a delegation of powers conferred by the people. That traditional concept triumphed in 1857 in Tunisia, when the constitution granted by the Bey was the modern interpretation of the principle of popular sovereignty. What the Tunisian people really wanted, therefore, was to enjoy once more a régime of which they had, as it were, retained a nostalgic memory.

32. In the past, the accession of a people to freedom had always been accompanied by bloodshed. Since the Charter, it was a matter of conscience for the United Nations for in a world where the Charter existed, the course of development toward liberty must be com-

pletely different and must be brought about by peaceful means.

33. Syria was, of course, directly concerned with the Tunisian problem, but it was also deeply attached to the French people. The General Assembly could today help France to return to the policy of Mr. Robert Schuman, to establish in Tunisia a new order in which friendship would prevail. The Assembly could first exercise moral pressure and use the powers conferred upon it by the Charter to put an end to the policy of dictatorship imposed upon Tunisia and to encourage diplomatic negotiations and agreements. It must then ensure the inception of a new era in which the Tunisian people could enjoy freedom and express it in general elections. Lastly, efforts must be made to abolish the system of domination and replace it by one of international co-operation.

34. That was why the delegation of Syria, together with twelve other Powers, had submitted draft resolution A/C.1/L.64. If the Assembly hesitated to act, the situation would soon become aggravated to such a point that it would scarcely any longer be capable of remedy.

35. The Syrian delegation had associated itself with the preparation of the draft resolution in recognition of a duty imposed by the Charter. It considered that its mission was to help in re-establishing friendship between the Tunisian people and the French people. Whether such a development was desired or not, Tunisia was progressing towards independence and if that progress were not assured in an orderly manner the situation might assume a form which would serve the interests of neither Tunisia nor France and which would not enhance the prestige and authority of the United Nations.

36. The CHAIRMAN called upon those who wished to speak on draft resolution A/C.1/L.64.

37. Mr. HANIFAH (Indonesia) said the time had come to take action to help the Tunisian people whose trials could not be allowed to continue.

38. The answer to resolution 611 (VII) had been a reign of terror. In December 1952 the Bey had been forced to sign so-called reforms. The deterioration of the situation and the failure to provide for negotiation had cruelly belied the hopes that might have been entertained of a change of attitude on the part of France.

39. While the participation of the Tunisians in the elections had been negligible, the French, or at any rate, the settlers, had voted in strength to perpetuate their privileges. It should be observed, however, that, as had been stated in an article in *The New York Times* of 4 May 1953, it was the rightist Rassemblement des Français de Tunisie which had won the election, while the Socialist, like all the progressive elements, had taken no part.

40. The persecution of the Néo-Destour had taken the form of arrests, house arrest, exile and threats of all kinds, so that the organization had been driven underground. The most scandalous outrages, on the other hand, had remained unpunished, particularly the assassination of Farhat Hached. It was moving, therefore, to recall the appeal that victim of terrorism had made a year and a half earlier. Declaring that, in spite of the acts of violence, the Tunisian people would never give

up its rights, Farhat Hached had admitted that there was nothing to be hoped for from colonialism, which was unable to learn by experience, and he had asked the United Nations to intervene to promote a just solution of the Tunisian question. How could the United Nations disappoint the Tunisians, who did not wish to harm anyone but desired only to escape from the intimidation to which they were being subjected?

41. The Tunisian question had many points of similarity with the Moroccan question, both by reason of the objections which its inclusion in the agenda had evoked and by reason of the nature of the problem. In the first place, the procedural argument was no more than a selfish attempt to thwart the principle of the right of peoples to self-determination, a principle which was being sacrificed on the altar of the North Atlantic Treaty. Surely there was no need to wait until blood had been shed before the threat to peace could be perceived.

42. The Indonesian delegation for its part was sorry to have to speak the harsh words which its conscience and the gravity of the situation dictated. It would indeed be a very serious matter if the peoples suffered a total disappointment owing to the failure of the United Nations to take action, and it would be particularly regrettable if, in the name of collective security, a people were refused the right of self-determination. It was in that spirit that Indonesia had joined other Powers in submitting the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.64. As was to be seen, the operative part of the draft was not too ambitious, for it merely recommended that the Tunisian people should be enabled to achieve sovereignty, that all the exceptional measures should be terminated and that genuine negotiations should be undertaken without delay. It was therefore to be hoped that in the case of Tunisia the great Powers would show the foresight they had displayed on more than one occasion in the past.

43. Mr. BARRINGTON (Burma) thought that four approaches to the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.64) were possible. The first was that the mere consideration of the question was illegal, in view of Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter. The second was that, while the General Assembly was competent to consider the question and to make recommendations, the draft resolution went further than the situation warranted. The third was that without being extreme the draft resolution was premature, since one year was not long enough for the resolution adopted at the seventh session (611 (VII)) to have taken effect. The fourth was that the Assembly was competent and that the draft resolution was justified and timely.

44. Among others, the representative of Pakistan had disposed of the argument based on domestic competence (645th meeting). Treaties which even at the time they had been signed had been morally and legally invalid since they were based on force, were still more invalid today, when the French Government had been convicted of violating them. It was not surprising therefore that the French delegation had not even attempted the impossible task of submitting a defence.

45. In the second place, a perusal of the draft would show how moderate it was: the rights which it tried to secure for the Tunisian people, and especially the right to self-determination and to sovereignty and independence, derived from the Charter. France itself was

talking in terms of independence in the cases of Viet-Nam, Laos and Cambodia. Since Tunisia was as advanced politically as those countries, the only explanation of the duality of French policy was the fact that in one of the two cases force had been employed. The case of Tunisia would therefore show whether recourse would have to be had to violence or whether the spirit of co-operation which it had been hoped to put into practice after the Second World War would prevail as the Charter required.

46. In the third place, draft resolution A/C.1/L.64 was not at all premature, since instead of relaxing the measures intended to violate the sovereignty of Tunisia, France had only strengthened them. There could be no hope of achieving anything by giving France more time to implement resolution 611 (VII), since every day that passed increased the domination of the settlers over the majority of the population, to the point where the French Government itself would have some difficulty in changing its policy.

47. The truth was that the adoption of the thirteen-Power draft resolution was a matter of urgency if the demands of the cold war were to be prevented from striking a further and perhaps fatal blow to the Charter of the United Nations by stifling the complaints of the Tunisians.

48. Mr. FRANCO Y FRANCO (Dominican Republic) recalled that in connexion with draft resolution A/C.1/L.63 on the Moroccan question, which it had opposed, his delegation had adduced a number of arguments which applied equally well to the Tunisian question. The fact that the concept of domestic jurisdiction had been strengthened by the substitution of the word "essentially" for the word "exclusively" in Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter. While that wording did not perhaps exclude the possibility of a General Assembly recommendation in a matter governed by international treaties, in such cases the parties must give their consent, instead of disagreeing, as they did in the present case, as to the nature, scope and even the existence of the treaty by which they were bound. The General Assembly could not set itself up as an international court of justice.

49. The delegation of the Dominican Republic had supported resolution 611 (VII) (544th meeting), but in that case there had been no question of intervention by the General Assembly in a matter falling within the domestic jurisdiction of a State, and consequently of the infringement by the Assembly of a State's right of sovereignty. The draft resolution (A/C.1/L.64), on the other hand, provided for measures which represented a real intervention, and the delegation of the Dominican Republic would therefore be unable to vote for it. Always full of admiration for the Arab States as well as for France, and faithful to the principles of the Charter, his delegation adhered to the wishes expressed in resolution 611 (VII). Great efforts still had to be made if the spirit of mutual understanding was to be achieved which would enable the Tunisian people to exercise the right of self-determination in due course. Only a few months, however, had passed since the last session; it would be untimely and inadvisable to take steps likely to lead to results quite contrary to those desired.

50. The primary mission of the United Nations was to establish an atmosphere of harmony. The thirteen-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.64), however, far

from leading to constructive results, would only threaten peace by exacerbating the resentment of the Tunisian people.

51. Mr. NAJAR (Israel) reaffirmed the statements made by his delegation at the seventh session (545th meeting). The juridical aspects of the Tunisian question were similar to those of the Moroccan question and he would not repeat what he had said a few days before on that subject. Apart from the juridical considerations, the question before the Committee was not that of the right of the Tunisian people to self-determination, which was not involved. The real problem was to decide how the General Assembly could contribute to a peaceful and constructive settlement of the Franco-Tunisian dispute. The previous year, when confronted with questions of international law raised by the Tunisian affair and with the complexity of the historical facts and interests involved, his delegation, like many others, had advocated negotiation.

52. The current and not the past situation should be examined. The former Resident, Mr. de Hauteclocque, whose relations with the Bey of Tunis had left something to be desired, had been replaced by Mr. Pierre Voizard. On 10 December 1952, the Syrian representative had remarked (542nd meeting) that the Bey enjoyed the whole-hearted support of the Tunisian people. The current conversations between the Bey and Mr. Voizard should therefore be heeded. At the inaugural audience of 26 September 1953, Mr. Voizard had stated that France intended to continue with the friendly development of Tunisian institutions within the framework of Tunisian sovereignty. The Bey had replied that the uselessness of violence had been recognized and that, as reason had triumphed, mutual understanding and confidence would be restored. The Bey had noted Mr. Voizard's statement and had asserted that by undertaking—by full agreement between both parties—to fulfil legitimate Tunisian aspirations, France would have further reason to deserve the gratitude of his country. Since 26 September no new development had occurred to change those favourable conditions. Hence the propitious atmosphere should be encouraged by adjusting General Assembly action to current circumstances. Draft resolution A/C.1/L.64 did not meet the needs of the times and his delegation could not support it.

53. Mr. WILLIAMS (United Kingdom) observed that, like the question of Morocco, the Tunisian question had been placed on the agenda to enable Members to state their views on the relations between France and the territories of which France was the protecting Power, and to influence the internal policy of the French Government in Morocco and Tunisia. The First Committee, however, had no competence in the matter, since relations between Tunisia and France were governed by the Treaty of Bardo and the Convention of La Marsa, which assigned the conduct of Tunisia's foreign affairs to France.

54. The United Kingdom delegation would accordingly vote against the thirteen-Power draft resolution, as it involved intervention in the domestic affairs of France.

55. Mr. MUNRO (New Zealand) said his delegation would vote against the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.64) because it involved direct interference in Franco-Tunisian relations.

56. The First Committee had the right to discuss the Tunisian question, for the special relations existing between France and Tunisia, together with the facts of the Tunisian problem, constituted a subject of international discussion. The draft resolution, however, represented an act of direct, illegal and unwarranted interference. Taken together, paragraphs 1 (a) and 1 (c) amounted to a demand for the granting of immediate independence to Tunisia, a demand which the United Nations was not competent to make, even in the form of a recommendation.

57. Mr. NINCIC (Yugoslavia) said he would support the thirteen-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.64), the text corresponding to which, on the question of Morocco, had already won his delegation's support. Not only did the General Assembly have competence in the matter, but it would be failing in its duty if it did not take up a matter which had such an important bearing on the Charter.

58. Draft resolution A/C.1/L.64 indicated the correct course and would enable the United Nations to attain its objectives in a realistic spirit by helping the Tunisian people to achieve self-determination in a peaceful manner, and thereby removing the danger to peace which Franco-Tunisian relations constituted.

59. Mr. ABDEL-RAZEK (Egypt) stated that the delegations which, in a spirit of conciliation, had agreed that the Moroccan and Tunisian questions should be placed at the head of the agenda now requested that the vote should be postponed until the following Monday. He therefore moved that the meeting should be adjourned until the following Monday.

60. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that all delegations would certainly have an opportunity of speaking at the plenary meeting and of submitting further draft resolutions.

61. He put the motion for the adjournment to the vote.

A vote was taken by roll call.

Iran, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, Mexico, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Thailand, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Uruguay, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Bolivia, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Greece, Guatemala, India, Indonesia.

Against: New Zealand, Nicaragua, Panama, Union of South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Dominican Republic.

Abstaining: Israel, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Turkey, Venezuela, Argentina, Brazil, Denmark, Ecuador, Haiti, Honduras.

The motion was adopted by 31 votes to 12, with 13 abstentions.

62. Mr. KYROU (Greece) said he had supported the motion for adjournment on the understanding that the vote would be taken at the beginning of the next meeting and that any further draft resolutions would be circulated twenty-four hours in advance.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.