



## TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL

Seventeenth Session

OFFICIAL RECORDS

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at 11 a.m.

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**President: Mr. Mason SEARS**  
(United States of America).

*Present:*

The representatives of the following States: Australia, Belgium, Burma, China, France, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Italy, New Zealand, Syria, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

The representatives of the following specialized agencies: International Labour Organization; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; World Health Organization.

**Attainment by the Trust Territories of the objectives of self-government or independence [General Assembly resolution 946 (X)] (T/L.640/Rev.1, T/L.641, T/L.644) (*concluded*)**

[Agenda item 9]

1. Mr. JAIPAL (India) introduced the five-Power amendments (T/L.644) to the USSR draft resolution (T/L.641). Paragraphs 1, 3 and 4 were designed to bring the wording of the draft resolution more into line with the wording of the Charter and the relevant General Assembly resolutions. Paragraph 2 introduced a very slight change in the phraseology used in the draft resolution, and paragraph 5 had been introduced because the five Powers felt that it was necessary to go into a little more detail and specify the relevant General Assembly resolutions.

2. Mr. CLAEYS BOUUAERT (Belgium) deplored the fact that, even before steps had been taken to give effect to Council resolution 1254 (XVI), the Council was being asked to consider draft resolutions which reopened the whole matter, although no new factors had supervened to justify such a course. The General Assembly had admittedly adopted a further

resolution, 946 (X), but it merely reaffirmed the terms of the earlier resolutions on which Council resolution 1254 (XVI) had been based. There was no justification for adopting a new decision to supersede resolution 1254 (XVI), and the United States delegation had been quite right in submitting its original draft resolution (T/L.640), which had followed the normal practice and merely noted General Assembly resolution 946 (X).

3. Various proposals that had been submitted amounted to requesting the Secretary-General to prepare a separate section of the Council's report to the General Assembly containing the information requested in the General Assembly resolutions and the Council's conclusions and recommendations thereon. His delegation had consistently maintained that consideration of the question of the attainment by the Trust Territories of the objective of self-government or independence could not be dissociated from consideration of the advancement made in all spheres in each Territory. It was a mistake to make the attainment of self-government or independence a separate problem to be solved by specific methods. It would be most regrettable and contrary to the spirit and the letter of the Charter and the Trusteeship Agreements if the whole closely-knit pattern of conditions in the Trust Territories were to be reduced to the over-simplified statement that would inevitably appear in a special report. Educational, social, health and economic developments were as important in promoting a people's advancement towards self-government as the establishment of legislative councils and the introduction of universal suffrage, and it would not further self-government to reduce the problems involved in its attainment to formulae to be studied out of their social and economic context. In short, the special section of the report would serve no useful purpose and might well have an unfavourable influence on the development of public opinion and political institutions in the Trust Territories by presenting a distorted picture of certain problems.

4. His delegation's vote on the draft resolutions and amendments before the Council would be determined by the considerations he had just outlined.

5. Mr. WALKER (Australia) said that he would vote against the Soviet Union draft resolution, even if the five-Power amendments were incorporated. The Administering Authorities were required to report to the Council, and they did report regularly, on the measures taken to prepare the Trust Territories for self-government or independence; on occasion they referred to the measures contemplated to that end. It was not always expedient, however, to discuss in advance measures that might be contemplated or developed in the light of current events and it was rather derogating from the Administering Authorities' responsibility if the Council insisted upon a special report along those lines.

6. The same considerations, broadly speaking, applied to the question of indicating the period of time in

which each Territory would attain independence. While it might often be useful, at a certain stage in the political development of a Territory, to have a timetable for certain operations, that was a very different matter from suggesting that there should be a timetable for the attainment of independence, and that the whole subject should be set out in a general report.

7. Mr. GRUBYAKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation's draft resolution was based on the General Assembly resolutions on the attainment by the Trust Territories of the objective of self-government or independence, which had been adopted only after a thorough examination of the question. As the Australian representative had said, the Administering Authorities already reported on the measures taken to promote educational, social, political and economic advancement, which might in turn promote the attainment of self-government or independence. His delegation's draft resolution carefully refrained from mentioning those points and concentrated on a matter to which the annual reports did not refer, namely the period of time in which each Territory was expected to attain self-government or independence. Trusteeship was only a transitional stage on the road to independence and, since the Administering Authorities knew conditions in the Territories better than the Council, they should set the date for independence. The case of Somaliland under Italian administration proved both that such a date could be set and that it would facilitate the Council's work.

8. He had no objection to paragraphs 1, 3 and 4 of the five-Power amendments, which did in fact bring the text more closely into line with the wording of the Charter; nor had he any real objection to paragraph 2, although the USSR text was more specific. By specifically enumerating the relevant General Assembly resolutions, paragraph 5 of the amendments extended the scope of the special section of the Council's report to cover certain aspects of economic, social and political development that were already dealt with in the annual reports, whereas the operative paragraph of the USSR draft resolution deliberately referred only to the setting of a date for independence. Furthermore, it would have the effect of transferring further consideration of the matter from the Council to the General Assembly. The amendments would therefore change the emphasis in the draft resolution. Nevertheless, his delegation was prepared to accept them, since they sought the same broad objective.

9. In conclusion, he pointed out that in resolution 946 (X) the General Assembly had expressed its regret at the omission from the Council's report of the separate section envisaged in its earlier resolutions and drawn the Council's attention to the importance which it continued to attach to the question. The Council should be careful not to give the unfortunate impression that it was disregarding the Assembly's decisions.

10. Mr. JAIPAL (India) said that his delegation had always been in favour of the principle of development on a planned basis according to a time-table. The five-Power amendments supported that general principle. He was glad to hear that the USSR delegation could accept them but he regretted that they were not acceptable to some of the Administering Authorities. The amendments faithfully reflected the General Assembly's wishes on the matter and it was not

desirable that the Trusteeship Council, which operated under the General Assembly's authority, should continue to refuse to comply with them.

*A vote was taken on the USSR draft resolution (T/L.641), as modified by the five-Power amendments (T/L.644).*

*There were 7 votes in favour and 7 against.*

*After a brief recess in accordance with rule 38 of the rules of procedure of the Trusteeship Council, a second vote was taken.*

*There were 7 votes in favour and 7 against. The draft resolution, was not adopted.*

11. Mr. THORP (New Zealand) said that, as the Council was well aware, his Government did not accept the principal contention on which the USSR draft resolution had been based, namely that, without regard to the stage of development of any Trust Territory, it was possible or politic objectively to estimate the period in which self-government or independence might be attained. The remainder of the draft resolution sought to impose on the Administering Authorities an obligation for which there was, at best, doubtful warrant in the individual trusteeship agreements. While the five-Power amendments had brought the wording of the draft resolution into line with the Council's language, they had not changed its purport. His delegation had therefore voted against it.

*The United States draft resolution (T/L.640/Rev.) was adopted by 10 votes to 2, with 2 abstentions.*

12. Mr. GERIG (United States of America) said that his delegation favoured the establishment of target dates for the achievement of intermediate goals in all fields of activity whenever it felt them helpful. Although his government had set a long-range target date for the assumption of independence by the Philippines, it considered that such dates were generally too rigid and achieved little that could not be achieved by short-range intermediate targets. A series of dates for the implementation of successive political, economic and social development plans would give the Governments and peoples of dependent territories a stronger sense of purpose and direction and induce an atmosphere of understanding and confidence in which they could move ahead more rapidly and harmoniously. The Indian delegation's statements on conditions in Ruanda-Urundi, Tanganyika and the Cameroons under British administration indicated that the views of the Indian and United States delegations of the application of a time-table for the achievement of self-government were drawing closer, at least as far as intermediate target dates were concerned. It might be a real contribution to the evolution of the International Trusteeship System if the Administering Authorities would give earnest consideration to the idea of applying intermediate target dates to indicate the type and extent of progress which they hoped to make in the immediate years ahead.

13. Mr. JAIPAL (India) said that, in explaining his vote on the United States resolution, he was speaking also for the Guatemalan delegation.

14. He had voted in favour of the draft resolution in a spirit of compromise because some at any rate of the Administering Authorities had attempted to meet the General Assembly's wishes on the important question of the attainment of self-government or independence. He welcomed their co-operation, and hoped that the Council would be able to comply with all the General Assembly resolutions. Nothing in the

resolution just adopted was contrary to or in conflict with the relevant General Assembly resolutions. The time-table principle of development and the fixing of political targets certainly did not preclude the setting up of short-term intermediate targets. His delegation's future course of action in the General Assembly would depend on the extent to which the Council implemented the resolution it had just adopted.

15. Mr. GRUBYAKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he had abstained from voting on the United States draft resolution because it contained no recommendation to the Administering Authorities, who had clearly indicated their unwillingness to comply with the General Assembly's request for information on the time within which the Trust Territories would attain self-government and independence. The setting of a date for independence would facilitate the Council's work and give renewed hope to the peoples of the Trust Territories, who were becoming increasingly insistent in their demands for self-government and independence. The obstacles standing between them and their objective must be removed, and it was in the interests of the Administering Authorities themselves to win the peoples' co-operation.

16. He had refrained from voting against the draft resolution because it contained certain specific instructions to the drafting committees and would help the Council when it came to consider their recommendations in the near future. He interpreted operative paragraphs 2 and 3 to mean that the question of setting a date for independence was not closed and that the Council would have ample opportunity to consider it further during the discussion of the recommendations and conclusions prepared by the drafting committees and the Secretary-General. Like the Indian delegation, his delegation's future attitude would depend on the way in which the resolution was implemented.

17. Mr. WALKER (Australia) said that his delegation would have been quite content to vote in favour of the United States draft resolution in its original form. Nevertheless it appreciated the desire of some delegations that the Council should do everything it could to meet the General Assembly's wishes, even though in some cases his delegation had found it necessary to oppose certain of the Assembly's decisions.

18. Thanks to the co-operative attitude of the United States delegation and the other delegations concerned, his delegation's amendments (T/L.646) had been incorporated in the final draft resolution (T/L.640/Rev.1) and it was for that reason that he had been able to vote in favour of it. His delegation adhered strongly to the view that the consideration by the Council and by the General Assembly of the attainment of self-government or independence must be associated very intimately with the systematic study of educational, social and political progress undertaken by the Council when it considered each Territory individually. That was why his delegation had felt that the resolution should specify in rather greater detail the procedure by which the Council, its drafting committees and the Secretary-General should implement Council resolution 1254 (XVI).

19. With regard to paragraph 3 of the resolution, in the past his delegation had voted against resolutions or sections of resolutions requiring the Council to prepare a separate section of its report to deal with the particular subject of the attainment of independ-

ence or self-government. Nevertheless, as the Assembly had called for such a special section, his delegation had not asked for a separate vote on paragraph 3. It interpreted that paragraph to mean that the Secretary-General would submit the material he prepared to the Council and that the Council itself would have to consider what conclusions and recommendations could be made. He hoped that any conclusions and recommendations would continue to be based upon the detailed study of the conditions and progress in each individual Territory even if that material was brought together in a special section of the report. He had doubts as to how much progress could be made by the Council in 1956 in preparing a separate section of its report.

20. Sir Alan BURNS (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had abstained from voting on the resolution because operative paragraph 3 called for the inclusion of a separate section in the Trusteeship Council's report, and his delegation was in principle opposed to such a separate section.

21. U THAN HLA (Burma) said that the revised United States draft resolution, which incorporated the amendments in documents T/L.643 and T/L.646, represented an attempt to give effect to General Assembly resolutions 558 (VI), 752 (VIII) and 858 (IX), which had a common objective, namely, the attainment by the Trust Territories of self-government or independence at the earliest possible date. For that reason, and in a spirit of compromise, he had voted in favour of the draft resolution. He reserved his delegation's right to take any steps it considered appropriate in the light of future developments.

22. Mr. THORP (New Zealand) said that his delegation, willing to give a trial to what had been basically a compromise proposal, had voted in favour of Council resolution 1254 (XVI). The main function of the resolution the Council had just adopted was to establish the machinery which would enable the drafting committees more effectively to carry out the instructions given to them in resolution 1254 (XVI). He was not convinced that operative paragraphs 2 (a) and 2 (b) would enable the Council to extract more of the essence of the progress made by the Territories than it had done in the past. Some flexibility would indeed be lost, for the Council's report would be tailored to fit the somewhat rigid form sought by the Assembly. It was, however, a compromise arrangement in which differing views had been reconciled with a great deal of good will. Furthermore the changes in the form of the report would not interfere with the proper perspective achieved when it was read as a rounded statement of progress.

23. It was largely because his delegation saw the Council's reports on individual Territories as carefully integrated statements of conditions in all fields of administration that it had opposed the Assembly resolutions calling for the extraction of information and recommendations on certain limited fields and their presentation in a separate section of the report. Such a separate section would tend to present an incomplete and somewhat distorted picture of the situation. Nevertheless he had not let his reservations about the usefulness of such a section stand in the way of a favourable vote for the resolution as a whole, since the section would presumably contain such information, conclusions and recommendations as would also appear in the regular section of the report under the headings set out in General Assembly resolu-

tion 752 (VIII), paragraph 3, sub-paragraphs (a) to (e). He hoped that the Fourth Committee and the General Assembly would appreciate the efforts which the Council was making to comply with their wishes on the form the Council's report should take.

### Examination of conditions in the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under French administration (continued):

- (i) Annual report of the Administering Authority for 1954 (T/1209, T/1223);
- (ii) Petitions circulated under rule 85, paragraph 2, of the rules of procedure of the Trusteeship Council (T/PET.4 and 5/L.7 to 9, T/PET.5/L.32 to 61, T/PET.5/L.63 to 72);
- (iii) Report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Trust Territories of the Cameroons under British Administration and the Cameroons under French Administration, 1955 (T/1231 and Corr.2)

[Agenda items 3 (d), 4 and 6 (b)]

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Lefèvre, special representative for the Administering Authority of the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under French administration, took a place at the Council table.

### QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE TRUST TERRITORY AND REPLIES OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE

#### Political advancement

24. Mr. GERIG (United States of America) said that the special representative had given the Council much useful additional information in his opening statement (686th meeting). He suggested that it would be an advantage if such statements could in future be circulated to the Council in writing, since they merited close consideration.

25. He noted that the Administering Authority was studying the question of the status of the inhabitants of the Territory; he would like to know whether it had considered creating a Cameroonian citizenship.

26. Mr. LEFEVRE (Special Representative) said that the present international status of the inhabitants of the Territory was necessarily provisional, because the Trusteeship System itself was by definition provisional. Under that status Cameroonians possessed all the rights of citizens of the French Union and were entitled to French passports. The Administering Authority did not feel that it should establish any kind of Cameroonian citizenship, for that would be the prerogative of any future Cameroonian State; to create such a citizenship now would be to prejudice the issue.

27. Mr. GERIG (United States of America) asked for further particulars of the bill now before the French Parliament for the extension of the powers of the Territorial Assembly and the setting up of a government council.

28. Mr. LEFEVRE (Special Representative) said that the bill, as presented, provided for the establishment of a government council consisting of four members elected by the Territorial Assembly and four members from outside the Assembly appointed by the High Commissioner. It was proposed that, in addition to its deliberative powers in budgetary matters, the Territorial Assembly should have such powers with regard to the customary civil status of

the inhabitants, development plans for the Territory, fiscal questions, public works, the granting of rural or forest concessions, and health and educational matters. Furthermore, it would be compulsorily consulted on all matters connected with the Territory with which the French Parliament was concerned. The bill also provided for the setting up of councils, either provincial, regional or local, at the discretion of the High Commissioner.

29. In reply to a further question from Mr. GERIG (United States of America), Mr. BARGUES (France) said that in its general provisions, though not perhaps in detail, the bill concerning the Cameroons was very similar to the law which had been put into effect the year before in Togoland, under French administration especially with regard to the powers of the Territorial Assembly.

30. In reply to a question from Mr. GERIG (United States of America), Mr. LEFEVRE (Special Representative) said that the Parti des radicaux modérés camerounais was still in existence. It had been overlooked in the latest annual report<sup>1</sup> mainly because it played a very minor part in the Territory's political life: at the last legislative elections, the one candidate it had put forward had received only 2,000-odd out of a total of over 158,000 votes cast.

31. Mr. GERIG (United States of America) asked what were the parties which were of importance in the political life of the Territory.

32. Mr. LEFEVRE (Special Representative) said that there were many political parties of varying importance: their programmes were all very much alike; their differences were rather a matter of personalities. The Union des populations du Cameroun had, as the Council knew, been dissolved by the Administering Authority on 13 July 1955. Of the remainder, the foremost was the Union sociale camerounaise, which had been formed in 1953 and was most active in the northern and central parts of the Territory. Next came the Bloc démocratique camerounais (BDC), which was most active in the centre of the Territory, around Yaoundé, and in the east; its chief aim was the immediate establishment of a single electoral college for all elections and the attainment subsequently of a considerable degree of internal autonomy for the Territory. Then there was the Evolution Sociale camerounaise (ESOCAM), which had most influence in the Sanaga Maritime: its main programme was one of opposit to the Union des populations du Cameroun, with which it had come to blows in the disturbances of May 1955. The Coordination des indépendants camerounais (INDECAM) had formerly been of some importance in the southern and central parts of the Territory but its influence had declined since 1954. The Rassemblement du peuple camerounais, founded in 1952, had become very much more active in 1954 in the western part of the Territory and in particular in the Bamiléké region, where it was tending to replace the Kumszé, a traditional Bamiléké association. The Front national camerounais, which was not mentioned in the annual report, had been founded in May 1955 at Douala and was in fact a federation of various parties such as ESOCAM, INDECAM and BDC. It had not been a

<sup>1</sup> Rapport annuel du Gouvernement français à l'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies sur l'administration du Cameroun placé sous la tutelle de la France, année 1954, Paris, Imprimerie Chaix, 1955. (Transmitted to members of the Trusteeship Council by the Secretary-General under cover of document T/1209).

success, for the various parties had retained their separate identities and entire freedom of action. Then there was the Ngondo party, which had a very small following in the town of Douala. Finally, a new party had been set up in the Northern Cameroons in March 1955, under the title of Mediafrancam, its object being to map out a future in which the aspirations of the Cameroonian people could be realized in a union with France. It had appeared to rally considerable support during 1955 but it was as yet impossible to say whether it would have any enduring influence.

33. To sum up, it was mostly in the southern part of the Territory that the political parties were active. Many of them were more in the nature of personal followings rather than groups of individuals united by common ideas; when the Cameroonian voted, it was for a person rather than for a programme. The Territory's political life was built upon its tribal life and consequently reflected tribal loyalties and tribal antagonisms.

34. Mr. GERIG (United States of America) asked what progress had been made in the establishment of a single electoral college for the Territory.

35. Mr. LEFEVRE (Special Representative) said that the problem of the single electoral college had various aspects. At the highest level, that of elections to the French Parliament, there was a bill before the latter for the establishment of a single college for those elections. Unfortunately the bill had not gone through in time for the January 1956 elections, which had therefore been conducted in accordance with the old system, but it would no doubt be adopted very soon. At the next level, that of elections to the Territorial Assembly, bills had been put forward but had not yet been discussed. At the lower level, that of local elections in the municipalities, considerable progress had already been made: the High Commissioner had decided, by various decrees enacted in November 1955, that elections in urban and rural municipalities should be conducted with a single college.

36. Another aspect of the question was that of the distinction to be made between the chiefs and the African people. It was not proposed that representatives of the chiefs should be elected to the Territorial Assembly, but at the municipal level the local structure of the population had to be taken into account. Thus in some regions, as for instance in the central part of the Territory, two thirds of the municipal council seats were reserved for the people and one third for the chiefs; in other parts, as in the west, the chiefs had one fifth of the seats and the people four fifths, while in yet others the municipal council was elected by a single college of people and chiefs.

37. Mr. KESTLER (Guatemala) asked whether any date had been set for the revision of Title VIII of the French Constitution, dealing with the French Union, and what effect such revision was likely to have on the political future of the Trust Territory.

38. Mr. BARGUES (France) said that the matter was at present under study but no date had been fixed for the revision. Any changes that might be

made, however, could not affect the international status of the Trust Territories but only their administration, since, in accordance with the Trusteeship Agreement, they were administered as an integral part of the French Union.

39. In reply to a further question from Mr. KESTLER (Guatemala), Mr. LEFEVRE (Special Representative) said that the elections to the Territorial Assembly in the Wouri and Mungo regions had been cancelled at the request of certain candidates, on grounds of irregularities of form.

40. Mr. KESTLER (Guatemala) said that his last question had been prompted by his delegation's concern for the safeguarding of the political rights of the indigenous inhabitants. He wondered what means were open to them to oppose laws promulgated in the Territory which were incompatible with their fundamental rights.

41. Mr. LEFEVRE (Special Representative) said that in any territory administered by France an individual or a group could appeal to a special administrative court against any measures enacted by the French Government or Administration. In addition, any Cameroonian could lodge an appeal against the French Administration with the Administrative Disputes Board (Conseil de contentieux) and, beyond that, to the Conseil l'Etat, which was a court of appeal for all French territories. He would add, however, that the fundamental freedoms were formally guaranteed in the French Constitution and that consequently no law could be passed which prejudiced them in any way.

42. Mr. KESTLER (Guatemala) asked for some explanation of the legal status of Cameroonians, who were granted French citizenship but did not possess French nationality.

43. Mr. LEFEVRE (Special Representative) explained that the French Union consisted of, on the one hand, the French Republic and, on the other, the Overseas Territories and Associated States: inhabitants of the French Republic were French citizens; inhabitants of the Associated Territories and States were citizens of the French Union. Under the Trusteeship Agreement the Cameroons under French administration was administered as an integral part of French territory; consequently its inhabitants, while remaining Cameroonians, were considered to be citizens of the French Union and they enjoyed all the rights and privileges possessed by the latter.

44. In reply to a further question from Mr. KESTLER (Guatemala) regarding the democratization of the traditional chiefdoms, Mr. LEFEVRE (Special Representative) said that various proposals had been made at various times for a revision of the status of the African chiefs but nothing had been done in the matter. The delay was to a certain extent deliberate, because the continued existence of the chiefdoms was itself in contradiction with the emerging democratic institutions which would, it was hoped, ultimately replace the tribal system entirely.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.