



TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL

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OFFICIAL RECORDS

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President: Mr. Miguel Rafael URQUIA (El Salvador).

Present:

The representatives of the following States members of the Trusteeship Council: Australia, Belgium, China, El Salvador, France, Haiti, India, New Zealand, Syria, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

The representative of the following State non-member of the Trusteeship Council: Italy.

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

Request for oral hearing (T/PET.11/L.12)

1. The PRESIDENT drew the attention of the members of the Council to petition T/PET.11/L.12. Its authors, the vice-présidents of the Territorial Council of Somaliland under Italian administration, requested the Trusteeship Council to give them an oral hearing. He suggested that the petitioners should be heard when the special representative for Somaliland had replied to the questions which would be put to him by the members of the Council. The latter would then be acquainted with the problems to which the petitioners would refer.

It was so decided.

General Assembly resolution 789 (VIII): Control and limitation of documentation (T/1120)

[Agenda item 13]

2. The SECRETARY-GENERAL said that the General Assembly wished to effect the greatest possible economy and efficiency in the preparation, production and use of documentation; that was why General Assembly resolution 789 (VIII) on the control and limitation of documentation was before the Council. The resolution in question was the most recent reflection of the General Assembly's desire for progress in the effort made to reduce the volume of documentation and improve its quality. The Secretary-General could certainly take some measures on his own initiative, but there were fields in which the co-operation envisaged by

the General Assembly was essential if the desired results were to be achieved.

3. He had therefore submitted to the Trusteeship Council a report (T/1120) which would no doubt lead it to reconsider some aspects of its procedures through which both economy and improvement of documentation might be effected. He wishes to emphasize that he had found it difficult to find areas where any substantial changes could be made without doing harm to the proper discharge by the Council of its heavy responsibilities under the Charter. He wished to keep within the general framework of the procedure the Council had adopted in the light of its experience, and he therefore suggested revision in two fields only—the procedure for the examination of the annual reports, and the form of the Council's annual report to the General Assembly.

4. In connexion with the examination of the Administering Authorities' annual reports—the Council's function involving the heaviest volume of documentation—he made three specific suggestions. The first was that the Council might consider the adoption of a more flexible method for the questioning of special representatives and the general debate on conditions in each Territory; it would undoubtedly be of advantage if the members of the Council could comment on a given subject at the same time as they asked questions on it. Next, he suggested a means of reducing the voluminous documentation required at present for the drafting committees. Lastly, he suggested a way of reducing the length of the summaries of individual opinions of members of the Council, which at present took up a substantial part of the Council's report to the General Assembly.

5. The Trusteeship Council's reports to the General Assembly were becoming increasingly voluminous. The reason was that the Council wished to satisfy the General Assembly, which, in resolution 433 (V), had recommended that the Trusteeship Council should present all the relevant data concerning each Trust Territory so that each section of the report might provide the General Assembly with a comprehensive account of conditions in all fields. However, in view of resolution 789 (VIII), the General Assembly might be persuaded that it was not essential for it to receive a comprehensive report every year, especially as much basic data remained unchanged from year to year. He therefore suggested two possible solutions: under alternative A, a comprehensive report would be submitted every three years; in the intervening years a shorter report would give an account of developments and progress made during the year under review; under alternative B, a comprehensive report on a particular field would be submitted whenever a major change took place in that field; in other fields, the report would simply summarize any new developments, and would refer to the previous report for background information. Of course, any plan contemplated by the Council must receive the General Assembly's approval; but he was convinced that the Council's recommendation would be favourably received.

6. Mr. RYCKMANS (Belgium) said that his delegation agreed on the whole with the Secretary-General's suggestions. It had to be recognized that it was the General Assembly which was mainly responsible for the excessive length of the Trusteeship Council's report. Generally speaking, the report should simply give the General Assembly information on the Council's work, apprise it of the way in which the Council had dealt with the tasks assigned to it and report any recommendations it had formulated. In requesting a report summarizing the annual reports submitted by the Administering Authorities, the General Assembly seemed to be encroaching on the functions of the Trusteeship Council; the Assembly did not need a full report on conditions in each Territory to enable it to decide whether the Trusteeship Council had properly carried out its functions. In order to meet the General Assembly's wishes, the Council's report had become very lengthy. As a result, the report had become difficult to read and the General Assembly had been led to ask for special reports on questions of particular interest to it. Documentation was thus becoming increasingly voluminous.

7. The Trusteeship Council had certain responsibilities of its own. For example, the Questionnaire had become increasingly important. It was to be hoped that the Sub-Committee appointed to revise the Questionnaire (General Assembly resolution 751 (VIII)) would submit proposals to the Council which would permit a reduction in the volume of the Administering Authorities' annual reports. Annual reports would be shorter and probably more interesting if the Questionnaire was simplified.

8. Turning to the Secretary-General's report (T/1120), he pointed out, in connexion with paragraph 7 (a), that the questions put to the special representatives had strayed from their original purpose; they were now in reality part of the general debate and were asked not so much to obtain information as to arouse controversy. He agreed with the Secretary-General that it would be desirable for the general debate to be opened immediately; all members of the Council had the right, before expressing their views and making their comments, to ask the special representative for any information they needed to make sure that they had rightly understood the situation described in the annual report.

9. With regard to paragraph 7 (b), he wished to say that in his opinion there were too many Council recommendations; many were merely routine comments: for instance, it was unnecessary to repeat each year that medical and educational services should be developed. It was only when progress in a given field was inadequate, in relation to the Territory's possibilities, that the Administering Authority's attention should be drawn to the necessity of altering its policy. Moreover, members of the Council who wished their observations to take the form of concrete recommendations should submit written proposals. Of course, the drafting committee would not limit itself to considering those proposals; it would be able itself to make recommendations and propose amendments to the texts before it, in the light of the results of the general discussion.

10. With regard to paragraph 7 (c), he agreed with the Secretary-General that the comments of members of the Council should not be summarized in great detail, as was at present the case. Members of the General Assembly who wished to know the exact position of

each delegation to the Council could refer to the summary or verbatim records.

11. With regard to the Trusteeship Council's report to the General Assembly, he preferred the Secretary-General's alternative A, under which a comprehensive report would be submitted every three years for each Territory in connexion with the report of the visiting mission to that Territory. Since the visiting mission would give a complete and detailed account of the position in the Territory, together with its conclusions and recommendations, the Council's report to the General Assembly could be relatively brief.

12. Mr. DAYAL (India) said that his delegation had studied the Secretary-General's excellent report with great care; it was glad to note that the measures suggested in the two-fold interest of economy and efficiency would not prejudice the proper discharge by the Trusteeship Council and the General Assembly of their responsibilities in connexion with the operation of the International Trusteeship System.

13. With regard to the examination of annual reports, it was questionable whether it was really advisable to separate the questioning period completely from that devoted to the general discussion of the situation in each Territory, as was done at present. The Council might consider adopting the following procedure: all the members of the Council could ask questions on a given subject and make their comments either then or later, as they saw fit. That would be very easy if the Council agreed to take subjects one by one in the order given in the working paper which the Secretariat prepared on conditions in each Territory; of course, any member of the Council would be able to put questions on subjects which were not mentioned in the Secretariat's working paper. That procedure would be logical and practical; moreover, it would undoubtedly make it possible to shorten the general discussion, since all the details would already have been dealt with.

14. The Indian delegation fully agreed with the Secretary-General's suggestions concerning the Council's conclusions and recommendations and the treatment of the comments of the various members.

15. So far as the Trusteeship Council's report to the General Assembly was concerned, the Secretary-General had proposed two possible alternatives. The Indian delegation would like the two to be combined: the Council would submit a comprehensive report every three years; during the intervening years, it would submit a shorter report giving full particulars of any major changes which had taken place or were about to take place in the given fields. The same procedure might be applied to its report to the Security Council.

16. At the end of his report, the Secretary-General examined the question of the dates of submission of annual reports. The Indian delegation regretted that the Administering Authorities did not observe the time-limits laid down in rule 72 of the Trusteeship Council's rules of procedure; it had been unable to send the reports to its Government in time for the latter to be able to examine them properly and give it instructions. The specialized agencies were meeting similar difficulties, and found it hard to give effect to the Council's resolution 47 (IV).

17. The Indian delegation suggested that the period covered by the reports on Somaliland under Italian administration and on Western Samoa should be changed to enable the reports to be submitted five or six months before the opening of the session at which they were to be considered. That could be done in two

stages: the next annual report could cover the first nine months of 1954, and could be submitted on 31 March 1955; the following report would also cover nine months and would be submitted on 31 December 1955, i.e., at the same time as the other reports to be examined at the 1955 summer session of the Council.

18. Before leaving the question of annual reports, he wished to mention two questions of practical importance. First, the Indian delegation would like to receive four to six copies of the annual reports, instead of two, as that would greatly facilitate its examination of those documents. Secondly, the Secretariat working papers on conditions in each Territory were distributed only one or two days before the examination of the relevant annual reports. It would be well if those papers could be distributed about a month in advance; that would facilitate the examination of the annual reports by the delegations, since those reports were prepared in only one language, either English or French. Moreover, the paragraphs of the working papers should be numbered.

19. Mr. MUNRO (New Zealand) said he would limit himself for the moment to two comments. It was proposed that the members of the Council should make their observations on a given subject immediately after the special representative had replied to their questions. In his opinion, that proposal was unsound. The special representative was often treated like a witness in court, cross-examined by the other side; but in an English court, the person cross-examining a witness was not allowed to make comments immediately. It would be preferable to have an interval for reflexion between the replies to questions and the comments on the replies.

20. With regard to the annual reports of the Administering Authorities, the Indian representative had suggested that certain dates of submission should be changed. But the dates had already been changed at the express request of the Council; the latter would undoubtedly be in an embarrassing situation if it had to ask the Administering Authorities to change them again. In any event, the New Zealand delegation would be obliged to ask its Government for instructions; accordingly, it hoped that the question would not be settled at the present meeting.

21. He recognized that the Council's reports were far too long; he had always said that the comments of some delegations might profitably be greatly shortened, and he thought that view was shared by the great majority of the members of the Council.

22. Mr. SERRANO GARCIA (El Salvador) said that his delegation had examined the report submitted by the Secretary-General with the greatest interest; he would confine himself to a few brief comments, since the previous speakers had already expressed views which he fully shared.

23. The arrangement whereby the members of the Council would submit their comments on a given subject immediately after the special representative had replied to their questions did not seem to be a very practical one. In addition to the quite justified reasons just given by the representative of New Zealand, it might be pointed out that the proposed method would lead to some confusion, since the questions would be mixed up with general comments. In addition, any person interested in details of administration and wishing to analyse all the comments made on a given subject would encounter great difficulties, since he would have an incomplete picture of the situation: certain subjects would be lost among the questions, replies and observations, and certain comments would be found in several

sections of the report and it would be difficult to piece them together. Moreover, the proposed method would undoubtedly cause much repetition, which would obviously defeat the ends pursued; most representatives would be led into submitting their opinions on a particular point after having heard the special representative's explanations, but they would express the same opinions later during the general discussion for fear that the statements they had made following the special representative's replies had passed unnoticed.

24. With respect to the drafting of the Council's conclusions and recommendations, his delegation was in complete agreement with the Secretary-General's suggestion that members of the Council who desired the inclusion of certain recommendations or conclusions in the report should present their proposals in writing.

25. With regard to the Trusteeship Council's report to the General Assembly, he supported the Secretary-General's alternative A. That procedure would enable the Council to act in observance of General Assembly resolution 433 (V) without having to burden its reports with a mass of descriptive and consequently permanent information which could readily be found in all previous reports.

26. As the Indian representative had pointed out, it was desirable that the Administering Authorities should abide by the time-limits laid down for the submission of annual reports. If reports were not distributed by the appointed date, the delegations, the specialized agencies and the Secretariat could not study them as carefully as was necessary to enable the Council to fulfil its task satisfactorily.

27. Mr. LOOMES (Australia) thanked the Secretary-General for his very clear presentation of his report. He hoped that it would be studied closely and that the Secretariat would make all possible economies in documentation.

28. The first suggestion set forth in the report was that the general discussion could in certain cases take place during the questioning period. On that point he agreed with the New Zealand and Salvadorian representatives: a well considered opinion could not be expressed at an early stage of the debate before all the questions involved in a particular problem had been dealt with. Opinions which would be expressed in those circumstances would accordingly be preliminary and subject to change, and that would lead to repetition and even confusion where a delegation had to change its point of view as a result of explanations given during the discussion. As a result, the amount of documentation would tend to increase rather than decrease. In order to attain the desired result, it would be better to take up a suggestion which the Council had considered some time previously, namely, that questions which representatives intended to put to special representatives should be communicated to them in writing. That would enable the special representatives to give complete replies, which would have the effect that members would ask questions only on points on which precise information was really necessary. In that way, the amount of time devoted to oral questionings would be reduced, the Council's debates would be shortened and, consequently, there would be less documentation.

29. The Secretary-General had suggested that draft conclusions or recommendations should be submitted to the drafting committee in writing. That method would undoubtedly have advantages for the committee. However, if the committee was required to limit itself to consideration of draft recommendations submitted in

writing, its report might not entirely reflect the opinions of the majority of members. The committee should therefore have the right to examine the verbatim records of the general debate, in order to ensure that its report did in fact reflect the majority opinion. Instead of submitting draft conclusions and recommendations in writing, moreover, members might indicate during the general debate, in concluding their statements, the recommendations which they would like the committee to consider. That method would have the same advantages and the same results as the one suggested by the Secretary-General.

30. His delegation was in complete agreement with the Secretary-General's suggestions on the treatment of individual observations.

31. With respect to the form which the Council's report to the General Assembly should take, he was in favour of alternative A. However the Council should submit its report to the General Assembly after examining the visiting mission's report, and not at the time the mission submitted its report to the Council, as suggested in document T/1120. The Council could not present a complete report before studying the visiting mission's report. The Indian representative had suggested a combination of alternatives A and B; but alternative A included the suggestion made in alternative B, i.e., that a comprehensive report on each Territory should be submitted every three years and that in the intervening years a shorter report should be drawn up covering developments and progress and major changes in the year under review. If that interpretation was correct, there would be no point in combining the two alternatives: it would be enough to adopt the first, subject as necessary to the explanations he had just given.

32. Lastly, the Australian delegation realized how important it was that annual reports should be submitted by the date fixed. Owing to the work and the time involved in the preparation of a report, however, the time-limit might occasionally be exceeded; and while his government would spare no effort to ensure that the reports on the Territories it administered were submitted in time, he appealed to the indulgence of the Council if that proved impossible.

33. Mr. RYCKMANS (Belgium) said that, in view of the statements made by the New Zealand, Salvadorian and Australian representatives, he would like to make a few explanatory remarks. He recognized the validity of the New Zealand representative's comments on the question whether members should present their observations on a Territory during the questioning period. But was important to stress that the situation to which that representative had drawn attention had arisen as a result of the fact that the Council had more and more adopted a procedure which had not been intended at the time it had entered into operation. The observations and conclusions of members were in fact derived from the examination of the Administering Authority's report. That examination should be initiated immediately on receipt of the report, long before the beginning of the session. Accordingly, when the session opened, delegations should be ready to indicate the conclusions they had drawn from their study of the report and what recommendations they thought the Council should make to the Administering Authority. It was sometimes forgotten that the Administering Authority was in no way bound to designate a special representative; he quoted rule 74 of the rules of procedure in that connexion. If the Administering Au-

thority did not designate a special representative, as was its right, the discussion would have to begin with the conclusions that members had drawn from their examination of the annual report. In practice, Administering Authorities always sent special representatives, who were ready to reply to questions put to them and to provide additional information. There had never been any question of submitting a special representative to any interrogation resembling a cross-examination. The special representative was there only to enable members to obtain supplementary information which the annual report did not provide in detail and which might possibly prompt them to alter their conclusions. But in principle those conclusions should have been reached before the opening of the session.

34. Mr. ASHA (Syria) said he did not think that special representatives had ever been cross-examined; members had simply asked them for explanations in order to avoid reaching erroneous conclusions as a result of the lack of clarity of certain information contained in the reports, and they had always been very grateful for the help given them in that connexion. In appointing a special representative, the Administering Authorities were in no way doing a favour to representatives of countries which were not Administering Authorities; the presence of an expert who had full information about the Territory they administered was just as much in their own interests as it was useful to the other members of the Council. He did not understand why the Belgian representative had raised that question, which was irrelevant to the problem under discussion.

35. He would like some explanation of the suggestion made by the Belgian representative earlier in the meeting to the effect that members of the drafting committees should make amendments to draft proposals submitted by members of the Council.

36. The Syrian delegation was grateful to the Secretary-General for his report and the spirit of economy and efficiency to which it bore witness.

37. Mr. Asha was in full accord with the Indian delegation's views with regard to the date of submission of annual reports. No blame could be attached to the Secretariat in that respect; it had to summarize a bulky report in a very short time, as in the case of the 1953 report on Somaliland under Italian administration. The Indian representative's recommendation would give the Council more time and he was convinced that the Council's work would be eased and documentation reduced if a longer interval were allowed between a report's submission and its discussion by the Council.

38. Furthermore, it seemed unnecessary to repeat various chapters at the beginning of the annual reports each year, those for instance which gave information on the climate, the ethnic composition of the population and other factors which did not change from one year to another. Any information required on those matters could always be obtained by referring to earlier reports. That arrangement would have the advantage of reducing the volume of the report and would benefit both the Administering Authorities and the Council.

39. With regard to the necessity for submitting draft recommendations to the drafting committees in writing, it should be remembered that such recommendations would not necessarily represent the majority opinion if they were framed in the language of the author of a proposal, since it could happen that some members of the Council might not have expressed themselves very clearly or that they had not made a statement on the

particular item dealt with in a draft recommendation submitted by other delegations. It would therefore be desirable for a drafting committee to hear the views of other members of the Council when it received a draft recommendation, so as to be able to decide whether the recommendation represented the majority view or not; thus its work would be considerably facilitated.

40. Finally, the Syrian delegation had some observations to make on a matter which had given rise to controversy in the Council, namely, the question whether members of the Council were permitted to comment on a special representative's final statement. One view was that it was unnecessary and inadvisable for Council members to make further comments when the special representative had answered all the questions. The Syrian delegation held the opposite view. The drafting committee's work would undoubtedly be made easier if the matter were settled once and for all in the Trusteeship Council, since most special representatives attended meetings of the drafting committee and it frequently happened that the discussion was repeated all over again. It followed that if all necessary explanations had been given in the Council itself, the drafting committees would have to meet less often and the documentation would be reduced.

41. Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) thought that the proposals in the Secretary-General's report deserved careful examination and called for a number of critical remarks, since in the final analysis they amounted to a restriction on those members of the Council who did not represent Administering Authorities. To restrict documentation would mean an unjust and even unnecessary restriction of the information at the disposal of members of the Council and the General Assembly on trusteeship matters which particularly interested them.

42. If the arrangement for the formulation of conclusions and recommendations put forward in the report were adopted, the drafting committees would become superfluous, since the consideration of observations and draft recommendations submitted in writing would become the Council's prerogative. Furthermore, there was the much more serious objection that conclusions and recommendations would no longer be prepared on the basis of comments made during the general debate in the Council but solely on the basis of proposals and draft recommendations submitted to the committee. The committee's documents would therefore reflect only the opinions of such members of the Council as had submitted their draft recommendations in writing. It frequently happened, however, that Council members, especially representatives of countries not responsible for administering a Trust Territory, considered it unnecessary to submit a draft recommendation embodying their criticisms or constructive suggestions and the latter would therefore not be reflected in any way in the committee's documents, which would not give a complete and faithful picture of the discussion in the Council. The USSR delegation could not therefore accept such a procedure, as it would endanger the Council's work.

43. Nor could it accept the suggestion that the Secretariat should produce a more concise document than previous reports by amalgamating as far as possible identical opinions expressed by various members of the Council. In practice, that arrangement would apply solely to the remarks of such members of the Council as did not represent Administering Authorities, since only decisions adopted by vote would be mentioned, while

a minority opinion would not appear in the report. It was well known that a single representative of an Administering Authority had only to object to a proposal or conclusion for the five others to support him and for such proposal or conclusion to be rejected, the votes being equally divided. The Secretary-General's proposal would therefore have the effect of presenting the opinions of the non-administering Powers, which had so far appeared only in the Council's report, in extremely condensed form. Such a procedure could not benefit the peoples and Territories under trusteeship and the USSR delegation was therefore opposed to it.

44. With regard to the submission of reports, the USSR delegation could not accept either alternative A, whereby reports would be submitted every three years, or alternative B, whereby they would be submitted only when major changes had taken place, which would mean that a report might not be submitted for, say, ten years. The USSR delegation preferred the existing arrangement, even though it was far from satisfied with the nature of the reports.

45. Finally, the USSR delegation had no objection to the proposal that Council members should be permitted to make their comments on substance during the questioning period.

46. Mr. SEARS (United States of America) said that the report submitted by the Secretary-General was entirely satisfactory and that he would vote for any proposals that would enable the end in view to be achieved.

47. Mr. DORSINVILLE (Haiti) considered that the Secretary-General's report was extremely interesting from the technical point of view but that it did not take sufficiently into account the difficulties which delegations recently elected to the Council might encounter, because they might have a small staff and might not always be able to consult works in libraries. Thus, for example, if alternative A recommended by the Secretary-General were to be adopted, the Haitian delegation, which had a small staff and did not have all the necessary documentation at its disposal, might find itself in rather a difficult position. In its existing form the Council's report was voluminous and might, from certain points of view, seem to contain repetitions; nevertheless, those repetitions, which were unnecessary for delegations which had been members of the Council for a long time, were extremely useful for delegations which had just begun to participate in its work and for those which had a small staff, as they were thus enabled to find the information they needed immediately. Furthermore, he did not think that it would be advisable for members of the Council to make their general statements during the questioning period. Indeed, the delegations which could submit their comments at the end of that period would be in a position to make better considered comments because they would have been able to compare the replies of the special representative or of the representative of the Administering Authority to the questions asked by various delegations. The Haitian delegation had therefore some reservations with regard to the Secretary-General's report.

48. The PRESIDENT observed that the debates had shown the complexity of the problem. He therefore proposed that a committee be set up to study the question of the control and limitation of documentation (agenda item 13), on the basis of the Secretary-General's report on the subject (T/1120), and also the question of the supplementary information for the examination of annual reports, proposed by Syria (agenda item 8 (b)).

49. Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) objected to the establishment of a committee for the limitation of the information which should appear in annual reports and in the report of the Trusteeship Council.

50. Mr. ASHA (Syria) thought it would be better to retain the question on the Council's agenda, in order that it might be considered in greater detail.

51. Mr. RYCKMANS (Belgium) could not see any particular advantage or disadvantage in setting up a committee. Nevertheless, if the Council were to decide to do so, the committee should deal only with the documents submitted to the Trusteeship Council; with regard to the Council's report to the General Assembly, it would be advisable for the Council to recommend the Assembly to take the Secretary-General's proposals into account and for the Assembly itself to set up a committee to study those proposals. If the Council were to make proposals to the Assembly with regard to the report that it would submit, there was a risk that the Assembly might take up the same question and undo the Council's work. By following the method which he proposed, the Council would be conforming with the Assembly's wishes, without examining a part of the Secretary-General's report which it was not competent to discuss.

52. Mr. PIGNON (France) considered that the Secretary-General's report contained only one practical proposal which might reduce the volume of documentation, namely, the proposal relating to the form of the Council's report to the General Assembly. He therefore thought that the Council might well adopt alternative A.

53. The Secretary-General's other proposals were very wise and well thought out, but he doubted whether the Trusteeship Council was capable of imposing the self-discipline which would render them effective.

54. It was therefore doubtful whether it would serve any useful purpose to appoint a committee. As the Belgian representative had pointed out, the only important and weighty question in the document related to the actual form of the Council's report to the General Assembly and that was really a question for the Assembly itself to settle.

55. Mr. DORSINVILLE (Haiti) did not consider that the establishment of a committee would prove to be very useful or that it could cause delegations to change their attitude, since delegation's positions were based not only on principle, but also on facts. He would therefore abstain from voting on the proposal to refer the study of the question to a committee.

56. Mr. LOOMES (Australia) pointed out that the Council had not yet considered agenda item 8 (b) and proposed that, if a committee were set up, only item 13 should be referred to it.

The meeting was suspended at 4.10 p.m. and resumed at 4.40 p.m.

57. The PRESIDENT suggested that the members of the Council who had not yet done so might wish to submit their comments on the Secretary-General's report (T/1120) as well as the Syrian representative's proposal (T/L.446) before the Council took a decision on the question of the establishment of a committee.

58. Sir Alan BURNS (United Kingdom) stated that he fully agreed with the ideas expressed by the Secretary-General in his report on the control and limitation of documentation.

59. Furthermore, he could see no objection to the establishment of a committee.

60. Mr. ASHA (Syria) had no objection to his proposal's being placed on the agenda of the following meeting.

61. With regard to the question of the control and limitation of documentation, he was inclined to think that the Council, before continuing the debate, might well ascertain the Secretary-General's views on the comments that had been made during the current meeting.

62. Mr. S. S. LIU (China) first of all thanked the Secretary-General for his admirable report.

63. Generally speaking, the Chinese delegation had no fixed opinion on procedural questions and was prepared to bow to the wishes of the majority. It therefore did not propose to comment on the Secretary-General's report until the proposed committee had completed its work. Nevertheless, in response to the Syrian representative's appeal, it would indicate very briefly its position with regard to the Secretary-General's proposals for the control and limitation of documentation.

64. In the first place, the Secretary-General proposed no longer to separate completely the parts of the Council's meetings which were devoted to questions and those which were reserved for the general debate. That suggestion could be upheld only if it were decided at the same time to eliminate the general debate. Otherwise, it could lead only to repetitions and thence to an increase of documentation. The Chinese delegation could not therefore accept that proposal.

65. With regard to the comments made by various members, it seemed that the difficulty lay mainly in the wish expressed by the majority of the members that the report should contain not only the majority conclusions or recommendations, but also the individual considerations which had led to those conclusions. The need to avoid repetitions was universally acknowledged, but the only way to achieve that result was for the members of the Council themselves to apply the principles which they had unanimously recognized.

66. With regard to the suggestion that the questions asked by the members of the Council of the special representatives should be grouped under headings, he pointed out that the Council had already tried that method and had abandoned it after a week or two because it had given rise to confusion rather than order in the debates.

67. He agreed with the Syrian representative that a large part of the permanent data contained in the Council's report to the General Assembly might well be eliminated, such as, for example, information about geographical characteristics and climate.

68. In conclusion, he stated that if the Chinese delegation had to choose between the two alternatives proposed by the Secretary-General, it would undoubtedly prefer method B. Nevertheless, it would like the Council to continue the study of the question before taking a final decision, and would therefore vote in favour of the establishment of a committee.

69. The PRESIDENT proposed that the Council should postpone the consideration of the Syrian representative's proposal (agenda item 8 (b)) until the following meeting. He also proposed that agenda item 8 (a) should not be dealt with immediately, because that question would also be referred to the committee if one were set up. If the Council were to decide against

setting up a committee, it would consider item 8 (a) as well as items 13 and 8 (b) and would take a decision on the subject.

It was so decided.

Examination of petitions

[Agenda item 5]

SEVENTY-FIFTH REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS (T/L.463)

70. Mr. ASHA (Syria) affirmed that, in the Standing Committee on Petitions, his delegation had been among those which had urged that the procedure laid down for the examination of petitions should be applied to all the communications enumerated in working paper T/C.2/L.79. The vote having been evenly divided, the Standing Committee had not adopted the proposal. He would like the Trusteeship Council to review that decision, which was recorded in paragraph 4 of the report under consideration (T/L.463).

71. Mr. MASSONET (Belgium), Chairman of the Standing Committee on Petitions, pointed out that there could be no question, in any case, of amending paragraph 4, which merely recounted what had happened in the Standing Committee.

72. After a brief procedural discussion in which the PRESIDENT, Mr. MASSONET (Belgium), Mr. QUIROS (El Salvador), Mr. PIGNON (France) and Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) took part, the PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should take note of paragraph 4 of the Standing Committee's report.

It was so decided.

73. The PRESIDENT asked the Council to take a decision on the Syrian representative's proposal.

74. Mr. PIGNON (France) said that he had two observations to make on the Syrian proposal. The first related to a question of principle: the Council had established a system of classifying the various documents addressed to it in order to enable the Standing Committee to cope with its formidable task. The Syrian representative's proposal would completely alter the practice which the Standing Committee on Petitions had been following successfully for some years. The second observation related to a point of fact: in examining the list of documents submitted to it, the Standing Committee on Petitions had done some very substantial work; and furthermore, as the records showed, the representatives of the Administering Authorities had displayed very great understanding and tolerance. The only documents to which the procedure established under rule 90, paragraph 3, of the rules of procedure had not been applied were documents to which, so to speak, no significance could be attached.

75. Mr. DAYAL (India) warmly supported the Syrian representative's proposal. The Indian delegation would like to support in the Council the point of view it had maintained in the Standing Committee on Petitions, namely, that all petitions and communications should be treated in accordance with the established procedure.

76. The PRESIDENT put the Syrian delegation's proposal to the vote.

There were 6 votes in favour and 6 against.

77. Mr. QUIROS (El Salvador) proposed that the Council should take immediately the second vote provided for in the rules of procedure.

It was so decided.

There were 6 votes in favour and 6 against. The proposal was not adopted.

78. The PRESIDENT then put to the vote the report of the Standing Committee on Petitions (T/L.463), except paragraph 4.

The report was adopted by 9 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions.

79. Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking in explanation of his vote, recalled that throughout its participation in the work of the Trusteeship Council the delegation of the USSR had protested against the classification of petitions and communications into two separate categories. The result of that method was to prevent the Council from examining and taking appropriate action on numerous requests or complaints from the peoples of the Trust Territories. The representatives of the Administering Authorities had just thwarted a further attempt to put an end to that deplorable state of affairs. The USSR delegation had therefore been compelled to vote against the report of the Standing Committee on Petitions in so far as it reflected and, so to speak, sanctioned that unjustifiable procedure.

80. Mr. PIGNON (France) pointed out that the representatives of the Administering Authorities had been guided only by the desire to enable the Council and the Standing Committee to carry out their work. If the USSR representative so desired and the other members had no objection, the speaker would not oppose the Council's reviewing the work of the Standing Committee on Petitions; it would then be easy to show, with reference to each individual case, that the general communications and petitions which the Committee had discarded had been discarded with good reason.

81. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) expressed gratification at the French representative's statement, which confirmed the correctness of the New Zealand delegation's vote.

Arrangements for a periodic visiting mission to Trust Territories in East Africa (T/1112, T/1113)

[Agenda item 6]

82. The PRESIDENT invited the members of the Council to complete the membership of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in East Africa, 1954, and submitted for their approval the nomination of Mr. Mason Sears by the Government of the United States of America (T/1112) and that of Mr. John Stanhope Reid by the Government of New Zealand (T/1113).

Mr. Sears (United States of America) and Mr. Reid (New Zealand) were appointed members of the Visiting Mission by 9 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

83. The PRESIDENT then called upon the Council to appoint the Chairman of the Mission.

84. Mr. ASHA (Syria), supported by Mr. SEARS (United States of America) and Mr. EGUIZABAL (El Salvador), nominated Mr. Reid.

Mr. Reid (New Zealand) was appointed Chairman of the Visiting Mission by 10 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

85. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) thanked the members of the Council for the appointment, which he regarded as an honour for his country.

**General Assembly resolution 752 (VIII) and
Trusteeship Council resolution 866 (XIII):
Attainment by the Trust Territories of the
objective of self-government or independence:
report of the Secretary-General (T/L.464)**

[Agenda item 11]

86. Mr. SINGH (India) congratulated the Secretary-General on the admirable report (T/L.464) he had submitted to the Council. In view of the document's provisional nature, the observations to which it gave rise could only be preliminary. In the light of that observation, the Indian delegation affirmed that the information on the Territories already considered which the Secretary-General had included in the report represented the barest minimum; it did not seem that it could be further condensed without involving the Council and the General Assembly in difficulties in their study and appraisal of conditions in the Trust Territories. Since the report would be the first to be prepared

on the attainment by the Trust Territories of the objective of self-government or independence, it was important that all the relevant information on the various aspects of the question should be available in one and the same document. The Indian delegation would therefore urge that the Secretary-General should give the information relating to the three Territories which remained to be considered the same scale of treatment and the same form.

87. His delegation entirely approved the interpretation placed by the Secretary-General on the expressions "measures taken or contemplated towards self-government" and "consultations with the inhabitants" (T/L.464, para. 4 and 5).

88. In conclusion, he pointed out that the Council would be able to discuss the conclusions and recommendations it should include in its report to the General Assembly only when it had all the material before it.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.