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Fifty-third Session

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SIXTEEN HUNDRED AND FIRST MEETING

Held at United Nations Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 12 May 1986, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. MAXEY (United Kingdom)

later: Mr. RAPIN (France)

- Opening of the fifty-third session
- Adoption of the agenda
- Report of the Secretary-General on Credentials
- Election of the President and the Vice-President
- Organization of work
- Examination of the annual report of the administering authority for the year ended 30 September 1985: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

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The meeting was called to order at 11 a.m.

OPENING OF THE FIFTY-THIRD SESSION

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the fifty-third session of the Trusteeship Council.

Before we proceed to the adoption of the agenda, I should like to extend a warm welcome to all those present, particularly our Micronesian friends, who have come so far to be with us today. We are especially honoured this year to have with us Their Excellencies, President Nakayama of the Federated States of Micronesia and President Salii of Palau. Their presence here testifies to the importance they attach to the Council's work and to the high esteem in which they hold the Trusteeship System. I am delighted also to see that both the Honourable Pedro Tenorio, Lieutenant Governor of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Honourable Oscar DeBrum, Chief Secretary of the Marshall Islands, are present once again. Both are active members of the Council and no strangers to this Chamber. It is always a pleasure to have them participating in our work.

It seems only yesterday that I was a new boy in the Council, but I find that I am rapidly becoming one of its older hands. As such, as well as in my capacity as President, let me straightaway greet the new members of the Council. It is particularly gratifying that Ambassador Dubinin of the Soviet Union should be present on this occasion. I welcome, too, Ambassador Kutovoy of the Soviet Union and Ambassador Byrne of the United States. Ambassador Byrne already had her baptism of fire at the special session of the Council in February, but this will be her first substantive session of the Council as head of the United States delegation. A warm welcome, too, goes to Mr. Gilles Richard of the French delegation and Mr. David Gore-Booth of the United Kingdom.

(The President)

Old friends, I am glad to say, still appear - in particular two stalwarts of the United States delegation, Mrs. Janet McCoy, the High Commissioner for the Trust Territory, and, of course, Ambassador Fred Zeder. Both Mr. Levchenko of the Soviet Union and Mr. Hugh Mortimer of the United Kingdom are veterans of this Council, as, to only a slightly lesser extent, is Mr. Rocher of France. It gives me great pleasure to see all here again today. Last, but not least, a particular welcome and a warm word of thanks go to last year's Vice-President, Mr. Rapin of the French delegation, who so ably and at short notice deputized for me at the special session of the Council in February. I am not a betting man, but it is well within the bounds of statistical probability that Mr. Rapin will shortly accede to the high office which I at present hold.

We must not, of course, forget the Secretariat and all the hard work they have put into the efforts of the Trusteeship Council over the past busy year, in particular, their contribution to the success of last summer's regular Visiting Mission to the Territory and to the Observer Mission to Palau in February. I should particularly like to express appreciation of the assistance of Mr. Girma Abebe, the Council's Secretary. As is well known, Mr. Abebe's knowledge of Micronesian affairs is unrivalled and matched only by the respect and affection he has earned from Micronesians. It is a truism, but one worth repeating, that without Mr. Abebe to guide us, the Council would not function with the smoothness which we have come to expect.

We have another busy session ahead of us, which we have agreed informally among ourselves should, in the interests of economy, conclude by Friday, 30 May - a week earlier than the time allotted to us. I hope we can all bear that target in mind and make efficient and productive use of the time available to us. Our task

(The President)

will be made much easier if, in the excellent tradition of the Council - one which is, I think, more or less unique in the United Nations - we follow the precedent established in recent years and start meetings on time. We failed to do so this morning but there was a very good reason for that.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (T/1887)

The PRESIDENT: Members of the Council have before them the provisional agenda (T/1887) drawn up by the Secretary-General in consultation with the President of the Council under rule 8 of our rules of procedure.

Members will note that a new agenda item has been added this year as item 14, entitled, "The future of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands". Today's Journal reflects Council members' agreement in informal consultations that this item should be taken together with item 4, "Examination of the annual report of the Administering Authority for the year ended 30 September 1985: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands". If there are no comments, I shall take it that the agenda for the fifty-third session is adopted.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): First of all, as I am speaking for the first time, allow me, Sir, to thank you for the warm words of welcome which you addressed to the head of the Soviet delegation to the Trusteeship Council, Mr. Yuri Vladimirovich Dubinin, and also to me.

We would like to point out that a number of documents which are to be considered in connection with the agenda of the current session of the Trusteeship Council have not yet been submitted. For instance, on item 5, there is no list of petitions and not all of the petitions are yet available to us; on item 8, we have

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

not got the report of the Secretary-General; on item 9, there is as yet no report of the Secretary-General on the dissemination of information on the United Nations and the International Trusteeship System in Trust Territories; on item 10, there is no report from the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Furthermore, guided by the rules of procedure, we would like to draw the attention of the Council to the fact that there are no documents in the Russian language in connection with certain items in addition to those that I have mentioned. In this connection, we would like clarification as to the possibility of the documents which are to be considered being submitted in Russian, which is important for us. I draw attention to the fact that, in conformity with rule 35 of the Council's rules of procedure, documents of the Trusteeship Council shall, if the Council so decides, be published in any language other than the official languages.

The PRESIDENT: I am informed that the documents to which the representative of the Soviet Union referred are all in the process of production in Russian and should be available within the next two days. I am sorry that they are not available now, but I hope that if they are available within that time that will be acceptable to the Soviet delegation.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Thank you for that clarification, Mr. President. However, we must once again note that a number of documents are not available in either Russian or English. Thank you for drawing attention to the new item on the agenda. In connection with document T/1886, could the representative of the United States throw more light on the proposed inclusion of the new item on the agenda for the fifty-third session?

Miss BYRNE (United States of America): I would ask the representative of the Soviet Union to await our opening statements, to be made later today.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We are in a dilemma here. How can we adopt an agenda item if the reason for its inclusion is to be given only in a statement made later by the representative of the United States? Perhaps she could give her reasons now, and I ask you, Sir, to request the representative of the United States to do so.

The PRESIDENT: I am not at all clear about the point the Soviet representative is making. We have an item that we shall reach in due course in accordance with the provisional agenda that we are about to adopt, and when we reach it all delegations will be able to speak. As the United States representative said, she will explain today her delegation's approach to the item about which the Soviet representative is asking.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Thank you for your explanation, Mr. President, but I still have a number of questions in connection with the fact that we now have to adopt the agenda for our work and it contains a completely new item submitted without any accompanying reasons. If, Sir, you are saying that the United States will give the explanation later, perhaps we should decide later upon the inclusion of that item, after we hear the reasons for its inclusion. Therefore, I ask you once again to request the United States representative to give the reasons for the inclusion of the item.

The PRESIDENT: Has the representative of the United States anything further to say?

Miss BYRNE (United States of America): First, I understood that in informal consultations the inclusion of the new item had been accepted. The representative of the Soviet Union was present at those consultations.

Secondly, as I understand it, the item is a customary one for the Trusteeship Council. It has appeared on the Council's agenda with regard to the consideration of the other Trust Territories, and it seemed time for it to appear on the Council's agenda for the fifty-third session.

The PRESIDENT: It is certainly true that the item was considered in informal consultations, and I thought there was agreement in the Council that the item should figure on the agenda.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Our delegation has listened attentively to the explanation given by the representative of the United States, but it does not solve our problem, because we are now faced with the adoption of the provisional agenda and we do not have the corresponding documentation and the necessary explanation for the item's inclusion. The reasoning was not explained in the informal consultations, which

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

were held two and a half weeks ago. We had expected that the reasons would be given during our consideration of the adoption of the provisional agenda.

Therefore, we still request the United States delegation to explain, before we consider the substance of this specific issue, the reasons for the inclusion of the item, so that we may determine now the basis for its inclusion.

The PRESIDENT: With regard to the Soviet representative's suggestion that there should be documentation with regard to the new agenda item, I do not think there is any requirement that any agenda item should be accompanied by documentation. To the extent that he is questioning inclusion of the item at all, I can only repeat that it was discussed in informal consultations and we had no reason then to suppose that there was any objection by the Soviet delegation to its inclusion. Its significance, I think, is fairly easy to discern. Am I to take it that the Soviet Union is objecting to the adoption of the agenda with this item included?

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): It is a very curious interpretation of our justified request for the documentation corresponding to an agenda item and the reasons behind a delegation's seeking its inclusion on the agenda to imply that we are objecting to its inclusion.

The PRESIDENT: Is there anything the representative of the United States would like to add to the discussion?

Miss BYRNE (United States of America): I have said all I wish to say on the matter at this time.

Mr. GORE-BOOTH (United Kingdom): I am sorry that we find ourselves in this difficulty at such an early stage in our proceedings. I hope it does not constitute an omen for our subsequent discussions.

(Mr. Gore-Booth, United Kingdom)

I have in front of me the Council's rules of procedure, rule 9 of which reads:

"The provisional agenda shall include consideration of:

...

(e) All items proposed by any Member of the United Nations".

(Mr. Gore-Booth, United Kingdom)

I imagine that the Soviet Union accepts that the United States falls under that category.

Rule 10 states:

"The first item on the provisional agenda of any meeting of the Trusteeship Council shall be the adoption of the agenda."

That is the item we are now considering. It does not say that any Member State has to explain why it has asked for the inclusion of an item.

I therefore propose that we proceed to the adoption of the agenda.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We have carefully listened to the statements made by the representative of the United Kingdom and wish to draw his attention to the fact that in our statements we have emphasized the right of each delegation, each country, to introduce items on the agenda and that we are not questioning its legality or illegality. But, in trying to find out what the United States delegation is being guided by in its request to include a new item on the agenda, we wish once again to renew our request. In this connection, we fully agree with the relevant rules of procedure to which the representative of the United Kingdom drew our attention.

The PRESIDENT: I find myself in a difficult situation. Whatever the representative of the Soviet Union may say, he is in fact objecting to the adoption of the agenda at this point and I am faced with the need - if he maintains his position - to suspend the session and engage in informal consultations.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Mr. President, I want once again to draw attention to the fact that you have not quite correctly interpreted the position of the Soviet delegation. In none of our statements have we said that we object to the inclusion of the new item on the agenda. But in order to determine our approach to the question you have just put to us - that is, the adoption of the provisional agenda which has been distributed to all members of the Trusteeship Council - we want to know and request the United States delegation, in a spirit of goodwill, to explain the reasons that have guided it to include this new - I emphasize "new" - item on the agenda of the Council's present session.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Soviet Union but must, I am afraid, maintain my position. I am inviting the Council to adopt the agenda for this session. If I am prevented from doing so, that would mean that the Soviet Union is objecting to the agenda and I would therefore have to suspend the session.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I wish once again to stress that the Soviet delegation is not objecting to the adoption of the agenda that has been submitted for our consideration.

We note with great regret that our delegation - and perhaps this is true of delegations of other countries - was not able to acquaint itself beforehand with the reasons that have guided the delegation of the United States of America to include a completely new item on the agenda of the current session of the Trusteeship Council. In this connection, since you have now raised the question, Mr. President, as we see it, this specific question must be considered from the standpoint of observance by the Administering Authority of the provisions of the United Nations Charter with regard to the Trusteeship Council and the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

The United States is striving to determine the future in a round-about way, in violation of the basic documents. The fact is it is trying to place the United Nations before a de facto annexation. Those "agreements" between the United States of America and Micronesia were worked out behind the back of the United Nations. The Administering Power thus completely deprived the United Nations of any opportunity to protect the interests of the people of Micronesia.

The PRESIDENT: I welcome the statement with which the Soviet representative opened those remarks to the effect that the Soviet delegation does not object to the adoption of the agenda. Any further comments by the Soviet delegation, like those of other delegations, can be made when we reach agenda item 14.

I should like therefore to proceed now to the adoption of the agenda of the fifty-third session.

The agenda was adopted.

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON CREDENTIALS

The PRESIDENT: I should now like to inform members of the Council that the Secretary-General has not received the credentials of all members of the Council. As members are aware, each delegation should submit its credentials at the earliest possible moment. That being the case, I suggest that this agenda item be left for consideration at a future date. If there is no objection, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT AND THE VICE-PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT: I now invite members of the Council to elect a President for the fifty-third session. This election will be carried out by secret ballot, pursuant to rule 41 of the rules of procedure of the Trusteeship Council.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Mr. Rapin (France) was elected President unanimously.

The PRESIDENT: Before I relinquish the Chair, may I congratulate Mr. Rapin on assuming the office of President. He brings a wealth of experience to his task and will, I am confident, prove to be a most distinguished as well as successful President. I know he can be assured of the full co-operation of all delegations in the fulfilment of his duties.

I invite Mr. Rapin to take the Chair.

Mr. Rapin (France) took the Chair.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): First of all I wish to express my gratitude to the members of the Council for the honour they have done me. This is the second time I have been called upon to fulfil this function, therefore I realize that the activities of the Council and the harmonious and constructive conduct of its work are of great importance to the future and well-being of the peoples of the Territory of Micronesia. I shall strive to promote these.

During the course of the past year we have all been able to appreciate the work of my predecessor, Ambassador Peter Maxey of the United Kingdom, who has guided our work with benevolent firmness and efficiency. I thank him for the kind words he has addressed to me and I extend to him on behalf of the Council our warmest gratitude.

I also welcome the presence of Mr. Rafeeuddin Ahmed, the Under-Secretary-General, and cannot fail to recall Mr. Girma Abebe's legendary experience and his readiness to assist at all times. Our gratitude goes also to his team, with whose dedication and competence we are all familiar.

(The President)

Finally, I wish to associate myself with the words of welcome which the outgoing President, Mr. Maxey, addressed to the heads and members of delegations to the Council.

It is hardly necessary to stress the special importance of the fifty-third session of the Trusteeship Council. It will be recalled that immediately following the closure of our work last year a Visiting Mission went to the Territory of Micronesia and, as is customary, subsequently issued a report. There had not been such a mission for three years, thus it was time for the Council to re-establish direct contact with the peoples of Micronesia.

Moreover, in February of this year a new referendum was held in Palau and an Observer Mission was sent there by the Council; it too issued a report.

The results of that referendum have of course lent greater topicality to the question of the termination of the trusteeship, of which many of us in this chamber have very much in mind. Our work, which sometimes appears to be, if not routine, at least ritualistic, can only benefit from this.

In this context, I am delighted to note the presence among us of senior officials of the Trusteeship Territory. The long journey that they have undertaken to be present during our work reminds us that it is above all the interest of the Micronesians that must guide and inspire us.

We shall now proceed to the election of the Vice-President of the Council.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

Mr. Maxey (United Kingdom) was elected Vice-President unanimously.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): On my own behalf and on behalf of the members of the Council I congratulate Mr. Maxey most warmly on his election.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): A tentative timetable for the fifty-third session of the Trusteeship Council has been prepared and circulated to members of the Council. It has been drawn up in order to give members an idea of the work to be accomplished and the time that will be needed to complete it. It also takes into account the financial difficulties of the Organization this year and our responsibilities in this regard as members of the Trusteeship Council. Those responsibilities were recalled on Friday evening in the statement of the President of the General Assembly on the basis of recent notes by the Secretary-General. Of course, the Council is quite free to change this programme of work in accordance with circumstances or the wishes of members, bearing in mind General Assembly resolutions and decisions establishing guidelines and directives on the allocation and utilization of conference resources.

If there are no comments, I shall take it that the Council finds this acceptable.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): At the outset the Soviet delegation would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the high post of President of this session of the Trusteeship Council. I should also like to congratulate the Vice-President, Ambassador Maxey. I assure you that, as always, the Soviet delegation is ready to co-operate closely with you.

The Soviet delegation wishes to make certain observations on the organization of our work and our timetable, and in connection also with your reference to the statement by the President of the General Assembly (A/40/PV.132) at the resumed fortieth session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Kutovoy, USSR)

First, precisely in the light of the discussions held during the General Assembly special session as well as the informal consultations in connection with the preparation of the General Assembly decision, it should not be forgotten that the Trusteeship Council has particular responsibilities under the Charter. The General Assembly decision of 9 May takes that fact into account, and the Soviet Union in principle does not object - I stress: does not object - to some streamlining of the work of this session of the Council, if of course that is also the opinion of other delegations here. But, at the same time, it seems to us that the changes proposed do not in fact result in any saving of money. On the other hand, they appear to place some additional burden on our work, at least in terms of tension.

In those conditions, it would seem to me that the most reasonable course would be for the Trusteeship Council to show some flexibility with regard to the timetable for the session. Obviously, the desire to shorten the session should not lead to changes in the quality of our work.

I wish next to make some observations on the documentation for the session; indeed, we already referred to this in our opening remarks. It should be established from the very first day of the session that all documents necessary for our work, including petitions and the records of our meetings, should reach members without any delay. In this connection, we should like, through you, Mr. President, to request representatives of the secretariat to take the necessary measures to ensure that this is done.

Furthermore, we stress that the verbatim records should be issued by the appropriate services no later than 24 hours after the end of each meeting. That is in the interest of all delegations in the Trusteeship Council, and we therefore hope that this proposal will be accepted and supported by everyone here.

Mr. MAXEY (United Kingdom): I accept the suggestion of the Soviet representative regarding our programme of work: the Council is master of its own procedures and of its own timetable, and we must be flexible. At the same time, I think it does behove us to take full account in our work, in connection with the speed with which we tackle it, of the fact that the United Nations is in a financial crisis. We have received proposals from the Secretary-General that are directed to resolving that crisis, and one of those proposals is that the Trusteeship Council should shorten this session. I think that every effort should be made by all delegations to adhere to the programme which, in informal consultations, we have agreed we should follow.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): If there are no further comments, I shall take it that the Council agrees to follow as closely as possible the timetable submitted by the secretariat, on the basis of consultations held among members of the Council.

It was so agreed.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I have noted the desire expressed by the representative of the Soviet Union in regard to the issuance of Council documents. I shall discuss with the members of the secretariat how that desire can be implemented, and if it raises problems I shall consult him about the way to solve them.

Before the Council proceeds to the substantive part of its work, I once again make the traditional appeal to members to do their best to be on time for meetings so that the Council will be in a position to implement, so far as possible, the General Assembly's resolutions and decisions and the Secretary-General's recommendations, and so that the maximum use may be made of the resources available to us.

(The President)

The representatives of Fiji and Papua New Guinea have approached me with a request to be authorized to take places at the Council table during this session. Members of the Council will recall that representatives of Fiji and Papua New Guinea participated in the recent United Nations Visiting Mission to Observe the Plebiscite in Palau. With the consent of the Council and in accordance with rule 12 of the Council's rules of procedure, I propose to invite representatives of those two countries to take places at the Council table in order to participate, without the right to vote, in our deliberations.

If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to that proposal.

It was so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Singh (Fiji) and Mr. Anggo (Papua New Guinea) took places at the Council table.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Before the Council begins its consideration of conditions in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, I call on Ambassador Byrne, the head of the United States delegation, who wishes to introduce the members of her delegation.

Miss BYRNE (United States of America): Thank you, Mr. President, for this opportunity to introduce the other senior members of my delegation.

Seated to my right is Ambassador Fred Zeder, Personal Representative of President Reagan for Micronesian Status Negotiations. Next to him is Mrs. Janet McCoy, High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

The other members of the delegation whom I wish to introduce are: the Honourable Tosiwo Nakayama, President of the Federated States of Micronesia; the Honourable Lazarus E. Salii, President of the Republic of Palau; the Honourable,

(Miss Byrne, United States)

Pedro A. Tenorio, Lieutenant-Governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; and the Honourable Oscar De Brum, Chief Secretary of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

All those representatives will add their wisdom and experience to our proceedings.

At the invitation of the President, Mrs. McCoy, Mr. Nakayama, Mr. Salii, Mr. Tenorio and Mr. DeBrum, Representatives, took places at the Council table.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I am pleased to associate myself with the welcome extended to the members of the United States delegation by the outgoing President, Ambassador Maxey.

EXAMINATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 1985: TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The Council will begin its consideration of conditions in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands with the introduction of the reports of the two missions that visited the Territory in the past year. Of course, those reports will be discussed later, during the Council's consideration of agenda items 6 and 7.

(The President)

I call now on the representative of France, who was a member of the periodic Visiting Mission to the Territory in the Pacific Islands and who, in the absence of the Chairman of that Mission, will introduce the Mission's report.

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): First of all, Sir, I should like to congratulate you on your election to the post of President of the Trusteeship Council. My delegation is particularly happy to see you guiding our work, even though at the same time we regret the fact that it will no longer be guided by the firm and courteous hand of Ambassador Maxey. Nevertheless, I am very happy that he is still here among us, and I am sure that we shall benefit from his experience and wise counsel.

My delegation would also like to welcome the presence in the United States delegation of the representatives of various entities in the Territory. I have had the honour to meet most of them during my stay in Micronesia. On behalf of my delegation, I am happy to see them taking part in this important session of the Council.

In presenting the report of the Visiting Mission to Micronesia in the month of July 1985, I should like to pay particular tribute to its leader, Sir Richard Stratton, who could not himself present the report. His knowledge, experience and human qualities made it possible for the Mission to carry out its task for the benefit of the people of Micronesia in a harmonious and efficient way.

Sir Richard Stratton possesses one additional quality that is close to my heart: he speaks French as well as you and I, Mr. President.

The primary interest of the Mission was clear: to compare with the reality and the facts the reports and statements made by delegations and petitioners during the work of the fifty-first and fifty-second sessions of our Council.

(Mr. Rocher, France)

In conformity with the terms of Trusteeship Council resolution 2179 (LII), the Mission comprised the members that wished to participate in it. The United Kingdom had designated Sir Richard Stratton, and I represented France. One delegation, that of the Soviet Union, did not participate in the visit, a fact that was deplored by many representatives as well as other persons we met during the Mission.

The Mission's report has been published in document T/1878. Page vi indicates that it is subscribed to by both members of the Visiting Mission.

It left New York on 14 July and returned on 5 August. Annex I gives its full itinerary, illustrated by a map.

The previous Visiting Mission, in 1982, stated in its report in document T/1850 that it had not been able to visit all the islands, although its stay had lasted a month. The duration of the Mission in which I participated was only three weeks. Paragraph 22 of Chapter II of the report contains the comments of the Mission on this point. While the suggestions made are certainly not along the lines of the present concerns of Member States with respect to the financial situation of the Organization, the points made, in the view of the members of the Mission, are in keeping with the interests of the Territory's population.

In any case, the time at our disposal allowed us to visit other islands, thanks to the assistance and understanding of the local Governments and the Administering Authority, which spared neither time nor means to enable us to carry out in all impartiality the task entrusted to us by the Council.

The Mission's mandate is well known. It was, moreover, recalled under the heading A of Chapter I, and I need therefore not dwell on it.

Everywhere we went, whether by air, sea or land, we spoke with elected or designated officials. Public meetings allowed us to have contacts with the population. We visited, sometimes without giving advance notice of our arrival,

(Mr. Rocher, France)

hospitals, clinics, schools, factories and farms. We also had contact with representatives of the Administering Authority, in particular with the High Commissioner and his colleagues. On behalf of the Mission, I should like to thank them for their invaluable assistance, co-operation and warm hospitality.

In all the areas we visited, many came to see us to relate their hopes and their fears, and to ask us questions, to which we tried to respond. It was possible for us to do so in most cases, but not in all. Indeed, we were often asked about the positions and intentions of the members of the Council not participating in the Mission, to whom the people would have liked to address their questions directly.

Readers of the report may well have been surprised to note that the conclusions and recommendations are contained at the beginning of Chapter II. The members of the Mission decided to place them in the report in order that they may receive the greatest possible attention.

We did not, however, overlook what our mandate required of us, namely, to observe and report on the political, economic and social progress of the inhabitants of the Trust Territory.

We were throughout guided by the concern to take into account the statements made by delegations and petitioners at the fifty-first and fifty-second sessions of our Council. Bearing these in mind, we always sought to supplement our information and make it as complete as possible. We were always available to any person or group of persons wishing to meet us, and I must add that to our great surprise we did not meet as many petitioners as the Council heard during its last regular session.

The Mission would not have been able to accomplish its task without the constant support, co-operation and ready availability of members of the

(Mr. Rocher, France)

Secretariat. I should like in particular to mention Mr. Girma Abebe, whose experience and profound knowledge of the Territory are irreplaceable. I thank also the Secretariat for having assigned to the Mission valuable staff members, two of whom, in addition to their competence, were possessed of feminine charm.

The authors of the report, like their predecessors, made an effort to render an account of the reality and the facts they were able to observe over three weeks.

The Mission takes on a precise significance when compared with that carried out in 1982. Indeed, it made it possible to note substantial real progress in all areas. The actions of the Administering Authority can thus be favourably judged, even though economic development has not evolved as speedily as political and social achievements.

Finally, I should like in conclusion to stress that the local inhabitants and elected officials very often expressed before members of the Mission, always emphatically and at times vehemently, their wish to see the Trusteeship Agreement concluded quickly.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): We have listened attentively to the information brought to our attention in connection with the report of the United Nations Visiting Mission. Annex II, containing written information that was received by the Visiting Mission, refers to a number of documents. We should like to consider the possibility of those petitions and other documents being distributed as official documents of the Trusteeship Council in the Russian language as well.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Following this meeting I shall ascertain from the Secretariat the financial implications of the request of the representative of the Soviet Union. In consultations with members of the Council I shall inform them of those financial implications and shall act in accordance with members' wishes.

Mr. KUTOVOY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): Despite the financial implications, it is very important, particularly in connection with the current work of the Trusteeship Council on the items before it, that due account be taken of substantive matters. We have made our request with the substantive aspect in mind and in accordance with the Council's rules of procedure.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The comments of the representative of the Soviet Union seem to me to go without saying. As is known by members of his delegation who have participated in previous sessions of the Trusteeship Council, the President makes every effort to arrive at only unanimous decisions on all procedural questions.

I call next on the Chairman of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Observe the Plebiscite in Palau.

Mr. GORE-BOOTH (United Kingdom): Convention and courtesy dictate that I begin, Sir, by congratulating you most warmly on your election for the second time to the high office of President of the Trusteeship Council. I know from personal experience of your contribution to another main organ of the United Nations that we shall all benefit greatly from the knowledge, sense of humour, energy and high intelligence you bring to our work. We look forward to a productive, even historic, session of the Council and are confident that under your skilful guidance the session will prove to be just that.

(Mr. Gore-Booth, United Kingdom)

To the outgoing President, Ambassador Maxey, let me extend - and not merely because we are colleagues - warmest appreciation for the skill and diligence with which he conducted the affairs of the Council last year. His tact and wisdom, of which I have daily experience, contributed in large measure to the successful outcome of the Council's deliberations at its fifty-second session.

I have the honour, as Chairman of the United Nations Visiting Mission to observe the plebiscite on the Compact of Free Association in Palau in February this year, to introduce the report of the Mission. Members will recall that following an invitation from the United States Government to the Trusteeship Council to send such a mission the Council met in special session from 4 to 6 February 1986 and adopted resolution 2180 (S-XVI). That resolution authorized the dispatch of a mission to observe not only the plebiscite but also the campaign and polling arrangements, the casting of votes, the closure of voting, the counting of ballots and the declaration of results. It also mandated the Mission to submit to the Trusteeship Council a report on its observations containing such conclusions and recommendations as it might wish to make. Document T/1885 is the result of our efforts, and I commend it to the Council.

I have already attended to this in my letter transmitting our report to the Secretary-General, but it would be remiss of me if I did not repeat here the Mission's deep appreciation of the full co-operation it received at all times from the Government of Palau and from the Administering Authority.

Speaking for myself, this visit - my first to the Pacific, let alone to Palau - was at the same time one of the most pleasurable and one of the most challenging experiences of my diplomatic career. I shall always remember the friendly welcome given to us by all the Palauans we met, including those I am happy to see amongst us today. I hope to be able one day to return to Palau, perhaps as a tourist, with my wife and family.

(Mr. Gore-Booth, United Kingdom)

We shall have ample opportunity to discuss the report in detail under item 7 of our agenda. Naturally, I shall be ready, as I am sure will my Mission colleagues, to answer any questions that delegations may have at that stage. But it may be useful at this stage if I briefly run through the report and highlight its main points.

In the first place, it is subscribed to unanimously by all members of the Mission, namely: my Vice-Chairman, Mr. André Rocher of France; Mr. Raj Singh of Fiji; Mr. David Anggo of Papua New Guinea; and my British colleague Mr. Hugh Mortimer. I should say here how much the Council members of the Mission appreciated the participation of two non-member States and, since their representatives have joined us at the table today, add directly to them how much we all - especially myself as Chairman - valued the personal and professional contribution they made to the Mission. The regional insights that they brought with them were authentic and invaluable.

We spent almost 10 days in Palau, arriving five days before the plebiscite itself. In the time available I think we managed to cover the Territory exhaustively, visiting all the major villages and hamlets not only on the two main islands but on the outer islands as well. These visits enabled us to hold public meetings at which we asked questions about the Compact and the forthcoming plebiscite and sought to ascertain the views of ordinary Palauans on their political future: their hopes as well as their anxieties. It is not meant to be in any way patronizing or condescending to say that we found the political awareness of Palauans extremely high - higher, if I may add on a personal basis, than in many industrialized societies where political sophistication tends to be taken for granted.

(Mr. Gore-Booth, United Kingdom)

As we make clear in our report, we did not encounter many who were thoroughly immersed in all the details of the Compact of Free Association. But equally we met very few who were totally ignorant of what the Compact contained. Our general impression was that most voters had by the date of the plebiscite a pretty good idea of the pros and cons of what they were being asked to vote on.

Judged by that yardstick, the Government's political education programme served its purpose adequately. Whether it could ever have achieved the more ambitious objective of educating the voters to the point where the majority had a detailed grasp of the finer points of the Compact was in our view doubtful, but I would underline the point we make in our report, that the political education teams made the best of a difficult job and did so with conviction and sincerity. There was no question of the programme being "all beer and skittles", as I regret to say a number of the written petitions before us so disparagingly describe it - without the petitioners, I dare say, having gone to Palau to see it for themselves.

The conduct of the poll was, as we remark in our conclusions, a model of its kind, extremely well organized and totally free and fair. We visited almost all the polling places and made a point of satisfying ourselves that no undue pressure was being put on voters to vote a particular way, or indeed to vote at all if they did not want to. Apart from the occasional clerical error by polling officers, we found nothing to suggest anything untoward and absolutely no evidence of ballot-rigging of any kind.

The counting and tabulating of votes was likewise very well done. At least one member of the Mission was present throughout the counting of the vote, which began on the evening of plebiscite day and continued for the next 48 hours. Palauans know their business when it comes to polls; they have, after all, had a lot of experience of them. The experience showed: I doubt if the performance of the counting team could have been better.

(Mr. Gore-Booth, United Kingdom)

Finally, as will be clear from the conclusions in our report, we took the view that the plebiscite was a free and fair act of self-determination by the voters of Palau. The turnout was high and the majority in favour of the Compact convincing.

(Mr. Gore-Booth, United Kingdom)

As I have already said, I am ready to answer any questions delegations might have, at the appropriate time. I would only note at this point that our report is relatively short. Leaving aside the annexes and tables of results, it runs to less than 8 pages. In the best - or should I say worst? - traditions of the United Nations, it would have been somewhat easier to produce a wordier, more voluminous, account, but our intention was to encourage as many people as possible here in New York to read it, rather than simply groaning and putting it away on their shelves or in even less-flattering receptacles.

I would also state for the record that observer missions are not, as even our own diplomatic colleagues tend enviously to describe them, "all sun, sea and sand." They involve a lot of hard work and are physically, as well as mentally, taxing. The compensation, of course, is the pleasure derived from seeing a democratic society in action exercising its right to self-determination in pursuance of the objectives of the Trusteeship System as set out in the United Nations Charter.

Miss BYRNE (United States of America): I am delighted to see you, Mr. President, guiding the work of the Trusteeship Council. I believe that this may be a historic session of the Council, and your experience and skills make us confident that you will preside expertly and with great finesse. It is my first regular session as head of my country's delegation, and I look forward to the benefit of your guidance. I should also like to thank Ambassador Peter Maxey most warmly for his presiding over the Council this past year in exemplary fashion.

(Miss Byrne, United States)

Micronesia has been under a United Nations Trusteeship for 39 years. When the Trusteeship was created, the colonial era was still at its high-water mark. The purpose of the Trusteeship System was to ensure that peoples under colonial administration at that time were not subjected to the whims or neglect of administering Powers. Article 76 of the United Nations Charter clearly lays out the goals of the Trusteeship System, among which are:

"(a) to further international peace and security;

"(b) to promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the trust territories and their progressive development towards self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of each territory and its peoples and the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned...and

"(c) to encourage respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion".

At the time of the creation of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands there were doubtless some who considered these to be fine ideals but unlikely to be realized. After all, a devastating war had just been fought throughout the islands of the Territory. As for the possibilities of self-government, the Territory presented unique difficulties among the trusteeships: a small population numbering less than 100,000 people scattered among 2,000 islands amidst 3 million square miles of ocean, a mélange of cultures and languages and a Territory linked by the most rudimentary of transportation and communication networks and whose economy was based principally on the needs of the preceding colonial Powers without concern for the indigenous inhabitants.

I believe that, despite those difficulties, the essential purposes of the Trusteeship set out in the Charter have been fulfilled. Let us look at each of the Article 76 objectives in turn.

(Miss Byrne, United States)

The first is the furtherance of international peace and security. Micronesia was the scene of some of the bloodiest fighting of the Pacific war, from 1941 to 1945. Kwajalein, Enewetak, Truk, Saipan, Pelleliu, Palau - those are names veterans of that war remember, along with Omaha Beach, Okinawa, Dunkirk and Stalingrad. Since 1945, there has not been one battle, not one international conflict, fought out in the islands of Micronesia. For a people whose lagoons are still dotted with the wreckage of the Second World War, this fact is no small blessing. Peace has been achieved not - as is sometimes recklessly charged - through militarization of the islands. Since the Second World War, the United States has dismantled the bases which used to be scattered throughout the Territory. The only remaining military facility in the Trust Territories is the missile testing range at Kwajalein in the Marshall Islands operated by a civilian contractor.

The second objective is the promotion of political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants and progress towards self-government. From 1978 to 1981 the peoples of Micronesia created constitutional Governments based on principles of democracy, representative government, respect for fundamental freedoms of speech, press, religion and assembly and pluralism. It had once been hoped that the peoples of Micronesia might be able to live in a single, unitary State, but that proved not to be the desire of the Territory's peoples. The differences among the peoples of the Territory, the vast distances between island groupings and the tenuousness of the links connecting peoples over 3 million square miles of the Pacific prevented the creation of a single national consciousness. United Nations-observed plebiscites confirmed the desire of the Micronesians to create four distinct constitutional Governments: the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Palau and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas.

(Miss Byrne, United States)

In the realm of economic, social and educational advancement, while much remains to be done, a foundation has been laid on which future growth can be based. Major elements of the infrastructure are in place. For example, the Marshall Islands now have 28 airstrips servicing virtually all the inhabited atolls. The Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Northern Marianas and Marshalls all have international airports serviced by scheduled commercial jets. Modern hospitals have been built on the major islands. Educational institutions have been developed from the primary through the post-secondary levels. Currently there are about 40,000 Micronesians enrolled in schools. Life expectancy has risen to over 60 years. Infant-mortality rates are among the lowest in the Pacific islands. Power plants have been installed on all major islands. Where there were no roads before, or where they were destroyed by war, a system has been put in place.

While much of the infrastructure is in place and the basic social, educational and medical requirements have been met, much remains to be done to develop the Micronesian economy. The United States has provided considerable financial assistance and has obligated itself to continue to do so in the future. In the past few years there has been a notable change in the form of the provision of that assistance. Whereas in the past it was largely programme specific, lately the Micronesians have taken the lead in designating the sectors to which they wish to channel United States assistance funds. While absolute economic self-sufficiency is probably an unrealistic goal in the modern world, self-management is not, and it is attainable in Micronesia. Self-management should lead towards greater self-sufficiency and to less reliance on the public sector for economic advancement. We are already seeing a substantial increase in private-sector foreign investment in many areas of the islands.

(Miss Byrne, United States)

The third objective is respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all.

Respect for human rights is not something that Micronesians had to be taught by outsiders. Like other peoples of the Pacific, Micronesians have long practised a system of government involving thorough discussion leading to decision by consensus. Notwithstanding this quest for consensus, the freedom of Micronesians to state their views and their willingness to organize for political goals has been demonstrated time and again to the Trusteeship Council. United Nations visiting missions have heard and reported sharp statements of views on political issues in the four Micronesian States. This Council has heard petitioners critical of the Administering Authority or the constitutional Governments on a variety of issues, including compensation for nuclear testing, the Kwajalein Land Use Agreement, development of Ebeye, war claims, and interpretation of the Palau Constitution. These criticisms, whether valid or not in each instance, collectively testify to the respect for freedom of speech in Micronesia and the protections built into its system of government.

Thus, the fundamental objectives of the trusteeship in Micronesia have been achieved. But what of the future, beyond the trusteeship? As my delegation has reported to this Council, each of the Micronesian States has chosen its future status in acts of self-determination observed by missions sent by the Trusteeship Council. The Northern Marianas chose commonwealth status within the United States in 1975 by a 78.8 per cent affirmative majority. The Federated States of Micronesia chose free association with the United States in 1983 by a vote of 79 per cent to 21 per cent. The Marshall Islands similarly chose free association with the United States in 1983 by a vote of 58 per cent to 42 per cent. Each of these plebiscites offered the peoples of the Territory the choice of a range of

(Miss Byrne, United States)

status options, including independence. Each plebiscite was judged to be a free and fair act of self-determination by the Trusteeship Council.

There have been developments since the last regular session of the Trusteeship Council that I should like to report to the Council. As Council members know, in 1983 Palau's voters approved the Compact by a vote of 62 per cent to 38 per cent in a United Nations-observed plebiscite. Palau's voters subsequently approved a slightly revised Compact in a 1984 referendum by a vote of 66 per cent to 34 per cent. Before 1986, however, the Compact could not be implemented because of perceived inconsistencies between its terms and the Palau Constitution. On 21 February 1986, the Government of Palau conducted another plebiscite on the Compact of Free Association. The terms of the Compact were essentially the same as those of the Compact approved in 1983, except for revisions to make it conform to changes made by the United States Congress in the Compact for the Federated States of Micronesia and Marshall Islands and a change in the defence section of the Compact to make it conform to Palau's Constitution. Palau's voters approved the revised Compact overwhelmingly by a vote of 72 per cent to 28 per cent in a plebiscite observed by a Mission sent by the Trusteeship Council which has just been described to this session of the Council. My delegation is looking forward to hearing in greater detail the report of the Mission which observed the said plebiscite.

The other significant development in the last few months in terms of the status issue has been the approval of the Compact of Free Association for the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands both by the United States Congress and by the Governments of the Federated States and the Marshalls. The United States Congress approved the Compact and sent it to President Reagan, who signed it on 14 January 1986. The Marshall Islands Government approved the Compact

(Miss Byrne, United States)

on 20 February 1986, and the legislature of the Federated States did so on 26 March 1986. It is particularly noteworthy that the relationship of free association was approved not only by the national legislature of the Federated States but by each of the State legislatures: Pohnpei, Truk, Kosrae, and Yap.

In talking about developments of the past year, I cannot fail to mention the unanimous decision by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) to admit the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau and the Northern Marianas as associate members. This is a welcome sign that the international community recognizes that the Micronesian States are ready to emerge from their former tutelage and assume their rightful places in the world and its international organizations.

That concludes my opening statement. I expect to address the Council again on a number of items on our agenda later in the session. My delegation is particularly pleased at the addition of a new agenda item on the future of the Trust Territory and looks forward to speaking on that subject. The other senior members of my delegation, Ambassador Zeder, High Commissioner McCoy, President Nakayama, President Salii, Lieutenant Governor Tenorio and Chief Secretary DeBrum, are prepared at this time to make their statements to the Council.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I call on Ambassador Fred Zeder, personal representative of the President of the United States for Micronesian Status Negotiations and senior adviser to the American delegation.

Mr. ZEDER (Senior Adviser): It is a distinct honour to appear before this Council on behalf of President Reagan and the United States Administration to assist the Council in its deliberations this year. I should also like to add my congratulations to those already officially expressed by Ambassador Byrne to you, Mr. President, on the occasion of your election. We are more than confident that under your wise leadership the Council will discharge its responsibilities this year with the thoroughness and care that have become its hallmarks.

This is the year which those of us in the United States Government charged with laying the groundwork for termination of the Trusteeship Agreement have laboured towards and long anticipated. Our efforts at the negotiating table with the elected Governments of Palau, the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia, and several years ago with the Northern Mariana Islands, have indeed borne fruit. The Council has heard from Ambassador Byrne, and it will hear from the official representatives of the peoples of these four areas, that the results of our negotiations have been approved in most cases by truly overwhelming majorities in sovereign acts of self-determination. The Council has heard from its own members of the legitimacy and fairness of those acts. And the Council knows that the work of the United States Congress in accepting and ratifying the results of our negotiations is in the final stage with respect to Palau and has been fully and formally completed with regard to the Northern Mariana Islands, the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia.

(Mr. Zeder, Senior Adviser)

This is the year, Mr. President, when you will hear something new - a call to which we hope you and the other Council members will respond. On the basis of the work behind us, the patient negotiations and the first steps of actual self-government in the Trust Territory, you will hear ringing through the Chamber this year a call from all the people of the Trust Territory, the very call for which the framers of the United Nations Charter created the Trusteeship Council. It is the call to freedom, political destiny and national identity. It is the call to terminate the Trusteeship Agreement.

The peoples of Palau, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Northern Mariana Islands have forged, during their years of trusteeship, democratic institutions that have already proved their durability and shown their promise under very difficult circumstances. Those same peoples have adapted democratic institutions of government to their own particular needs and aspirations. On islands comparatively poor in resources, they are now fashioning economies fully reflective of the strength and ingenuity of the citizenry. Those free market economies provide opportunities to the islanders as well as to responsive and responsible entrepreneurs with the vision and will to share in the rewards and excitement of new and challenging venture capital opportunities in the fastest-growing, most dynamic part of the world today - the Pacific basin.

My Government is committed to do its part to assist in that process of sound growth and strong economic independence. For we firmly believe that in free, self-governing democracies free trade in open markets brings the dignity, prosperity and happiness that people throughout the world long for and deserve.

This is the year to terminate the last remaining Trusteeship Agreement and end an honourable chapter in the history of the United Nations. The work ahead of the Council in the next few days will be difficult. My Government joins the peoples of Palau, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Northern

(Mr. Zeder, Senior Adviser)

Mariana Islands in recognizing that this is the year, this is the time, for all to support the will of thousands of Micronesians scattered across millions of square miles of the vast Pacific Ocean. We are confident, Mr. President, that the call to freedom that you hear resounding in this Chamber will not be denied. And I believe that we are all grateful to be here as that call for sovereignty, national identity and political freedom is answered.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I now call on the Honourable Janet McCoy, Special Representative of the Administering Authority.

Mrs. McCOY (Special Representative): Congratulations are in order, Mr. President, on your election. We look forward to achieving some very important goals under your guidance during this session.

I also thank the outgoing President, the representative of the United Kingdom, for his outstanding contribution during the past year. That during the past year he has had to organize a regular visiting mission and a special one, and that both came off very smoothly, is a tribute to his skills and diplomacy.

We on the Trust Territory delegation look forward to co-operating with the Council and moving ahead substantially in the weeks to come.

I wish to greet all of the old friends here in the Council, who have become a bit like family.

Once again it is my great pleasure to introduce the members of my delegation. They are Mr. Sam McPhetres, Inter-Agency and International Organizations Co-ordinator and head of my Archives Department; Mr. Kent Harvey, my Attorney-General; Mr. Charles Jordan, director of all our capital improvement programmes; and Mr. Eloy Inos, Director of Finance and Administration of Federal Grants.

Not among us this year is the first President of the Republic of Palau, the late Haruo I. Remeliik. He will be long remembered and missed by all who knew him.

(Mrs. McCoy, Special Representative)

I wish next to say a few words about this year's annual report. It will be noted that it is already 29 pages longer than last year's and contains a great deal more information. Editing was kept to a minimum in order to allow the Governments to enter as much information as they wanted to or were able to gather. We hope that it will serve its purpose. We regret that it arrived in the Council's hands a little late this year. That was unfortunate, but unavoidable, owing to our intention to make this report, probably the last, as comprehensive as possible.

I should also like to note that with the regular Visiting Mission's report there is additional information available to those who wish it. It is my pleasure to congratulate the Mission on an excellent report and to say how delighted we were to host its visit last year.

We are also grateful for the speed and efficiency of the Council in organizing and dispatching another mission to Palau to observe the conduct of the plebescite on the Compact of Free Association earlier this year. We are appreciative of its co-operation and assistance.

As the Council has been told by earlier speakers for the Administering Authority, this is not merely a regular session of the Trusteeship Council. We are not gathered here to discuss isolated events of the past year, be they accomplishments or problems. This is a unique and historic session with a unique and historic objective, that of certifying to the Security Council that the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands is, in compliance with the United Nations Charter and the Trusteeship Agreement, fully qualified for dissolution, and that its peoples are poised to assume self-government.

It is my hope that our delegations during the next week or so will concentrate on this matter. I know for a fact that each of the representatives of the constitutional Governments of the Territory is extremely anxious to get on with the process of self-government and will himself describe his feelings on the matter.

(Mrs. McCoy, Special Representative)

For the Administering Authority, I wish simply to review a few of the underpinnings of our position.

First, no one who has dealt with the Trust Territory can come away without a strong admiration for the political maturity of its people. The democratic process is deeply rooted in the Trust Territory, begun in the early years of the Trusteeship with the formation of the village magistrate governments and continued through the district legislatures, the Congress of Micronesia, constitutional conventions, plebiscites and referendums and, finally, the establishment and maintenance of constitutional Governments. These crucial events cannot be ignored. We are convinced that the people of the Trust Territory and their freely chosen leadership are ready now for termination of the Trusteeship Agreement.

(Mrs. McCoy, Special Representative)

The Council has observed the peoples of the Territory undertake a series of acts of self-determination over the past 10 years or so, beginning with the 17 June 1975 plebiscite in the Northern Marianas. This was followed by the constitutional referendum of 1978 for the rest of the Territory, resulting in the formation of the present Governments of the Territory. And then in 1983 plebiscites on the Compact of Free Association were held in the Marshalls, the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau. All those votes took place under the watchful eye of this Council. In no case was anything observed to suggest that the people were doing anything but exercise their own informed free will.

It has taken a long time, it is true, but the complexity of the issues, the vast distances to be covered and the relatively small populations make such a process extremely difficult.

Precisely because the process was long, the people had a better idea of their options. I think it is significant that we have four constitutional Governments in place and operating, one of them for over 10 years. There have been differences of administration, party differences and hard-fought campaigns; but, as a representative of the Administering Authority, I am proud to call the attention of the Council to the fact - I repeat "fact" - that all those elections were carried out peacefully and without incident.

One rather unfortunate example, which epitomizes this political maturity, was the smooth transfer of responsibility and authority which took place in Palau following the sad death of President Remelik.

I submit that from a purely political perspective, the islands are ready for trusteeship termination.

Of course, as we all know, self-government without the basic infrastructure in place is meaningless. As missions of this Council have witnessed, in the past

(Mrs. McCoy, Special Representative)

several years modern airports have been constructed and are now in service. A programme to build terminal facilities has been launched. Water and sewer systems have been upgraded in populous islands. New hospitals have been built or are in the process of construction. Communications, so essential in this vast area, have been brought up to the state of the art with direct satellite links to the outside world. Solar panels charge batteries to run radios in outer islands. In all the capitals roads have been paved and new roads have been constructed to open previously inaccessible areas.

The biggest weakness in the system remains the maintenance and repair of the power-generation systems. New generators will soon be installed in the places with the most problems, namely, Ponape and Truk.

None the less, the basic infrastructure is in place. Some way wish for more, and more will be achieved by the Micronesians themselves in the years to come, but, as I say, we are convinced that the basic infrastructure is in place.

All the infrastructure would be useless without the people to maintain and operate it. We repeat one of the oft-stated facts of the Trust Territory: Micronesians are among some of the most educated people in the world. A few years ago we were proud to note that many Micronesians were getting their Bachelor's degree. Now we are seeing the beginning of a flow of PhDs back into the the islands. College and universities are providing post-secondary education programmes within the islands themselves. My point is that the pool of skilled, trained people is getting larger each year.

After years of economic stagnation, we are witnessing a substantial increase in private commercial activity throughout the area. Not only is tourism expanding, but small industry is getting a foothold in various places. For the first time we can show that employment in the private sector exceeds that in the public in some areas.

(Mrs. McCoy, Special Representative)

As a footnote, I might add that 40 per cent of the funds allocated under the Compact of Free Association has been earmarked for economic development. This is also an area in which I shall defer to my colleagues for further information in detail.

New hospitals are nearly completed in Majuro and Saipan. The existing hospital in Koror has been renovated, and construction documents for the new hospital have been completed and work will commence in the very near future. The College of Micronesia Nursing School, now located in Saipan, will shortly move to facilities in Majuro, giving the college a branch in each of the freely associated States.

Cholera remains under control, with no new cases reported. A programme of leprosy control has been instituted with the assistance of the World Health Organization and American health agencies. The distribution of health care professionals remains uneven throughout the islands, but with the institution of the University of Hawaii MEDEX programme we should see alleviation of the shortage of practitioners in the years to come. In the meantime, help is received from the United States Public Health Service, the United Nations Volunteers and contract hire personnel.

One of the desirable prerequisites of self-government is the ability and skill to function within a wider world. All these constitutional Governments have joined a variety of international and regional organizations, have engaged in bilateral talks concerning subjects of common interest and, in general, have begun to establish their international personality.

Most recently - in fact, just a few short weeks ago - the Administering Authority sponsored and supported separate membership for each of those Governments in the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), with the

(Mrs. McCoy, Special Representative)

overwhelming support of the membership. They will soon be able to participate directly in this extremely valuable regional United Nations agency, and we consider that a great step forward in the process of self-government.

So I repeat that it is our overwhelming conviction that more than the minimum conditions exist for a satisfactory termination of the trusteeship. I would add that continued close and mutually beneficial relations between the Micronesian Governments and peoples and the United States are guaranteed in the Compact and related agreements. They provide variously for continued budgetary aid, the continuation of certain Federal programmes, the availability of some United States agencies to provide needed services and assistance, and the establishment of representative offices in Washington, D.C. and the Micronesian capitals. Copies of the Compact of Free Association and the Covenant for the Northern Marianas have been made available. I refer representatives to those documents for further details. The important thing is that as we approach the end of the trusteeship relationship we shall not be severing a long and deep relationship established during the 40 or so years of involvement and association. We expect that in some ways our ties will be even closer in that they will be voluntary and not imposed.

The time has come. All the basic building blocks are in place. We hope that this session of the Council will take historic steps towards termination of the Trusteeship Agreement. To that end, I and my staff stand ready to co-operate fully in the days ahead to ensure that the Council is fully informed in any area in which we can be of assistance.

Personally, I look forward to renewing old acquaintance and, I hope, saying a fond farewell to this institution that has served Micronesia so well over the past 39 years.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.