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VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SIXTEEN HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SEVENTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Wednesday, 23 May 1990, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mrs. GAZEAU-SECRET (France)

- Examination of the annual report of the Administering Authority for the year ended 30 September 1989: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (continued)
- Examination of petitions
- Report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Observe the Plebiscite in Palau, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (continued)
- Offers by member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Trust Territories: report of the Secretary-General (General Assembly resolutions 557 (VI) and 753 (VIII))

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The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

EXAMINATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 1989: TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS (T/1944) (continued)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Members will recall that at our meeting yesterday we decided to take up certain items this morning, the first being agenda item 4 in order to continue the discussion begun yesterday.

I shall now call on those members of the Council who wish to put questions to the representatives of the Administering Authority.

Mr. MENAT (France) (interpretation from French): Since this is the first time my delegation has had the honour of speaking at this session of the Council, I should like to congratulate you, Madam President, on your election to the presidency of the Trusteeship Council. We are very pleased to be working under your guidance. I wish also to congratulate Mr. Thomas Richardson on his election to the vice-presidency.

The French delegation has carefully studied the report of the Administering Authority. We thank the United States delegation in particular for making the report available to us so much earlier than it did last year. We received the report a month earlier than was the case last year, and were thus able to consider it thoroughly, as appropriate.

(Mr. Menat, France)

We have two questions on specific matters in the report. The first deals with Part VIII, Educational Advancement. We have examined the tables on page 68 of the report, and - as the report itself points out - we noted that there has been a drop in the number of persons enrolled in secondary public schools. An explanation is given in the report, which says that a number of students had enrolled in other schools outside of the Territory. My delegation would like to hear the views of the Administering Authority with regard to the causes for that phenomenon. Is there a feeling that this will continue? Are measures being considered to deal with the phenomenon - the fact that students are enrolling in schools outside Palau?

My second question concerns the very complete tables at the end of the report. Table Number 29 on page 137 reflects the number of deaths in the Territory. In 1988 the number of deaths increased, from 96 to 112. That is not an enormous leap numerically, but it is a considerable increase in percentage. Table 24 on page 134 gives deaths by cause, and from it we can see that the increase is due to an increase in one category, "Symptoms, Signs and Ill-defined Conditions", in which the numbers have increased from 8 to 26. I wonder if the phenomenon can be explained and if any reason can be given for this development?

Those are the two questions my delegation wishes to raise in connection with the report of the Administering Authority.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of France for the kind words he addressed to me. I call upon the United States delegation to respond to his questions.

Mr. UHERBELAU (Special Representative): With respect to the students who enroll outside of Palau rather than attending local public schools, I can assure the Council that this is not an exodus of students leaving home. Certain parents would rather send their children to study in Guam or even Saipan or the Northern

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Marianas. That is by choice. Actually, some Palauans themselves have also migrated to Guam and to the Northern Marianas, and naturally their children of high-school age will go with them. The other aspect to the question is that in addition to the Palau public high-schools there are also four additional private schools, and some students drop out from the public high-schools to go to the private schools. One of those private schools is run by the Catholic Mission, two are run by the Protestant Mission and one is run by the Seventh-Day Adventists. I hope that that is an adequate answer to the question of the representative of France.

As to the increase in the death rate, I would refer the French representative to page 53 of the report, where there is a brief explanation of the deaths by age group. As indicated there, 56 per cent of the deaths occurred within the age group 65 years or older. That is death by natural causes and old age. Again, it represents an increase of less than 20 or 30 people, and the Council should not be alarmed that the Republic is plagued with diseases that cannot be controlled.

Mr. SMITH (United Kingdom): I have one question related to some information which appears to have been omitted from this year's report of the Administering Authority. In the Secretariat working paper on conditions in the Trust Territory, T/L.1274, paragraph 91 refers to the United States Department of Defense Civic Action Program in Palau. The information is very interesting, but it appears to have been based on previous reports, and my delegation would like to have an update on the activities of the Civic Action Program.

Mr. UHERBELAU (Special Representative): The Civic Action Team still consists of 13 men. Each member of the Civic Action Team serves a term of one year, and they keep changing; those who finish will go and the new recruits will come in to replace the old ones. The number has never gone up or down from that

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figure of 13. This year, as in previous years, the Civic Action Teams are utilized to support small construction projects in the outlying areas. In the large island, Babelthuap, the Civic Action Team is also requested by religious organizations, such as schools, to do some small improvement projects for them: extending classrooms and renovating roofs and things like that.

Mr. SMITH (United Kingdom): I should just like to ask a brief follow-up question. As I understand it, the members of the Civic Action Program are in fact members of the United States military. Given the interest which the Council in the past has taken in military activities in Palau, I should like to know whether there are any other such activities taking place in Palau at the moment.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Does the United States delegation wish to respond to the question of the representative of the United Kingdom?

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): In connection with continuing speculation outside the Chamber, as well as with the question about United States military activities in Palau, I should like to take the opportunity to assure the Council that we are aware of continuing speculation regarding potential military bases on Palau and wish to state emphatically that we do not - I repeat, we do not - have any so-called fall-back plans involving Palau at the present time.

As was just mentioned, there is a 13-person Navy Civic Action Team performing public projects under local control. This constitutes the full United States military presence in the Territory for now and for the foreseeable future.

We also wish to point out that the United States has never exercised any of the military access rights in Palau granted to us as Administering Authority.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): If no other delegation has any questions to raise, I would suggest that we continue our consideration of this item at a later meeting.

EXAMINATION OF PETITIONS (see T/INF/38)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): We shall now proceed to examine written petitions and communications concerning the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

(The President)

Members of the Council will recall that in 1988 we had decided to request the Secretariat to publish a list of petitions and communications received between sessions of the Trusteeship Council, with a summary of their contents, instead of having all the documents issued in their entirety in the official languages, which obviously would be most costly for the Organization. The list for the period covered at this session is contained in document T/INF/38, which the Secretariat distributed to us about two weeks ago. It appears that this list is issued in order to facilitate our work, but the texts of the petitions and communications are normally distributed to members of the Council as they are received by the Secretariat throughout the year. If some delegations do not have all of the communications and petitions sent to the Secretariat, the originals of these documents are available to them at the Secretariat. In addition, I believe that copies of the documents were distributed to delegations this morning. It seems to me that delegations have had sufficient time to read the documents, either during the year or else this morning, so that we can now begin consideration of the texts.

I would suggest that, as usual, we should consider them in groups. Document T/INF/38 can be quite useful in this respect and help us to see matters more clearly. Thus, if there is no objection, I suggest that we should take up these petitions and communications in five or six groups, and, as we examine them, I would ask for comments from delegations.

Is this procedure acceptable to delegations?

There being no objection, we shall begin our consideration with the first four communications set forth on pages 1 and 2 of document T/INF/38, after which we shall move on to consider the petitions.

Does any member wish to comment on these communications?

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I should like to say a few words not about the contents of the petitions but about the procedure we are to follow as we go through them. It is not quite clear to me how we will consider the petitions. Is it expected that the Administering Authority's reaction to the petitions will be made known to us now, as we consider them, or is it expected that a different approach will be taken? I should appreciate clarification of the procedure.



Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): In response to the question from the representative of the Soviet Union, we, as representatives of the Administering Authority, would propose that we follow the procedures of past years. I can assure the Council that the United States has given serious and thorough consideration to the petitions, both oral and written, that have been submitted, and we propose to make a comprehensive statement with respect to the entire body of petitions at an appropriate juncture, once all petitions have been received. I refer to the expectation that next week we will have oral presentations by one or more petitioners who were not able to be present this week.

In the course of the session I will take note of specific interests that are expressed, as I did yesterday in connection with a point made by our colleague from China, and make sure that we include appropriate comments on the petitions as a whole. I hope that is acceptable.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I am in the Council's hands. Is the proposal of the Administering Authority, which is apparently based on past custom here, acceptable to the other delegations? If I understand correctly, it means that the Administering Authority will make one or two statements early next week, once all the petitioners have addressed the Council, and that the Administering Authority will duly take into consideration the various questions delegations raise today, or tomorrow if they wish, relating to the written petitions. The statement of the Administering Authority will, I presume, be a fairly full and lengthy one. This will not, of course, prevent any delegation from speaking after the Administering Authority has made that statement.

Is that acceptable to all delegations?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Resuming our consideration of document T/INF/38, it does not give the contents of the written communications and petitions, so we must refer to the texts of the petitions submitted to the Secretariat in the course of the year. I believe all delegations received copies of them this morning, so we should be able to proceed with our work today and to know what we are dealing with.

Those delegations that wish to do so may now comment upon communications 1 through 4 in document T/INF/38, pages 1 and 2. The senders of the communications are Mr. Watanabe, Mr. Koshiba, Mr. Watanabe and Mr. Koshiba respectively. The communications were sent to the Secretariat on 16 May, 5 September, 20 September and 13 October 1989. The first deals with general issues, including, in particular, the way in which the United States Government is honouring its obligations and commitments under the Trusteeship Agreement; the second deals with a specific matter, the arrest of Palauans in connection with drug-related offences; the third with technical and financial assistance provided by the United States to remedy certain problems in Palau; and the fourth with the provisions of the referendum law adopted by the Palau Congress on the Compact and how the United States Government intends to take action on the provisions.

I believe that the February plebiscite led to some comments by petitioners, which to some extent might have been overtaken by subsequent events.

Are there any comments on those four communications?

Mr. MENAT (France) (interpretation from French): I refer to communication number 3, on a Senate joint resolution. I would ask the Administering Authority whether any action has been taken or is under consideration in response to the request on page 2 of the resolution relating to a request for

(Mr. Menat, France)

technical and financial assistance for entities responsible for the implementation of Palau laws, particularly in the criminal area.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I take it that the United States delegation has duly noted the comments of the representative of France.

Are there other comments? It appears not. We shall therefore proceed to consider petitions 1 through 10. The titles, senders and dates are given in document T/INF/38, on pages 3 and 4. Are there any comments on petitions 1 through 10?

Mr. SMITH (United Kingdom): Now that we have turned to the petitions, I would like to ask for clarification as to the manner in which the Secretariat normally replies to such petitions following discussion by the Council.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Mr. de Souza, the Council's Secretary, will respond to the representative of the United Kingdom.

Mr. De SOUZA (Secretary of the Council) (interpretation from French): Normally, the Secretariat sends the appropriate verbatim records of the Council to each petitioner after the session.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I would remind delegations that our verbatim records cover all of these statements in full.

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I should like to follow up on the question just raised by the representative of the United Kingdom. I would appreciate information on how the situation stood this year with respect to the adoption of measures regarding petitions. As I understand it, petitions addressed only to the Secretariat and received by it are distributed to members of the Trusteeship Council. If on any particular petition or communication the Administering Authority reacts immediately and does not wait for the session of the Trusteeship Council - which meets just once a year - then probably such actions are reported by the Administering Authority to the Secretariat of the Trusteeship Council, and probably such things must be recorded in some way. It is my understanding that, in principle, the Administering Authority must react or respond immediately to communications it receives direct from the Trust Territory, and other communications. I should like to know whether or not there have been any changes from last year in this respect.

I asked this question because it would seem that the Secretariat of the Trusteeship Council can probably respond before the session of the Council if, in respect of any petition or communication, any measures or action have been taken. I do not know to what extent this agrees with the practice in the Secretariat, and that is why I am requesting clarification.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Perhaps the representative of the Administering Authority would wish to respond to the comments made by the representative of the Soviet Union?

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): That is a general and hypothetical question raised by the representative of the Soviet Union and, if I understand it correctly, I would describe our practice as Administering Authority

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

in the following terms: to the extent that the communications or petitions addressed to the Council are either copies of or parallel to requests or notifications or information brought at the same time or in similar fashion directly to the attention of the Administering Authority, or any entity of the Administering Authority, we would, of course, respond in the direct channel, that is to say, to the extent that an elected representative of the Government of the Republic of Palau would send the communication to a government department in Washington and a copy to the Trusteeship Council. The government department in Washington would respond directly to the person in Palau and would not, in the normal course of events, inform the Trusteeship Council at the same time unless there was particular reason to do so. When the parallel petition or communication is carried forward to be addressed in this context, it would then be responded to as part of our general response, and the communication to the petitioner of records of the Council's action would, as mentioned by the Secretary of the Council, then complete what is a rather long sequence.

To the extent that the petitions addressed to the Trusteeship Council are commenting on our policies or actions, we would normally address them at the earliest time that they appear on the agenda of the Council in session. Obviously, there is a rule of common sense that would apply, to the extent that in the case of any petition involving some sort of immediate action in the interests of the health, welfare or safety of an individual, or something like that, we would not wish to wait until the Council came into session. But, without again reviewing this immediate list from this perspective, I am not aware of a communication or petition of that type which would have been addressed to the Council.

I hope that responds to the question.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I thank the representative of the United States for that clarification.

About the role of the Secretariat, various rules in the rules of procedure of the Council deal with the matter of dissemination of written petitions - rule 85, for instance. That being so, and in the light of what the delegation of the United States has said, I do not think we can go further on this score, unless the representative of the Soviet Union wishes to speak again?

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I am quite satisfied with the reply of the representative of the Administering Authority, and I agree that the main thing is, of course, that measures should be taken on the documents that come in, without waiting for the session of the Trusteeship Council. That was the purport of my original question.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Note is taken of the remarks of the Soviet representative, especially as concerns the preparation of the Trusteeship Council's report.

We shall now proceed to consider the petitions, group by group.

Are there any comments on petitions 1 to 66? I shall give the Council a little time to study these documents.

(The President)

As there are no comments or questions at this stage, I propose that the Council decide to draw the attention of the petitioners to the observations which will be made by the Administering Authority following the examination of oral petitions and to observations made by other members of the Council at the current session, taking special account in our report of the request by the representative of the Soviet Union.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Petitions 64 and 66 refer to requests for hearing from Mr. Roger Clark and Mrs. Cita Morei respectively. As members will recall, the Council heard their oral petitions at its 1675th meeting. At the same meeting it was agreed that Mr. Glenn Alcalay, whose request for hearing appears in petition 65, would be heard at a future meeting - as I understand it, next Tuesday or Wednesday. Only after we have heard Mr. Alcalay and the response of the Administering Authority will we have completed consideration of this agenda item.

REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS VISITING MISSION TO OBSERVE THE PLEBISCITE IN PALAU, TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS (T/1942) (continued)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): Members will recall that the report of the United Nations Visiting Mission was introduced by the Vice-Chairman of the Visiting Mission at the Council's 1674th meeting.

Does any member wish to make comments or ask questions on the report of the Visiting Mission? Members may of course make statements on this item at a later meeting.

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): I do not in fact have a question, so I hope I have not asked to speak under false pretences. But I wanted to take the opportunity to express again my delegation's appreciation to

(Mr. Wilkinson, United States)

participants in the Visiting Mission for their careful attention to their responsibilities, for the prompt provision of a full report and for their continuing interest in Palau and their co-operation throughout.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): As President I should like to echo the remarks made by the representative of the United States. We appreciated the way in which the Visiting Mission was conducted, and we found the report to be very interesting. It is an important document, and members may have some useful comments to make on it in due course.

OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES OF STUDY AND TRAINING FACILITIES FOR INHABITANTS OF TRUST TERRITORIES: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS 557 (VI) AND 753 (VIII)) (T/1948)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I take it that delegations have studied the report of the Secretary-General (T/1948) dated 16 May 1990. Does any member wish to comment on the report of the Secretary-General?



Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): In connection with the report of the Secretary-General, one may conclude that opportunities for study and training offered by Member States to inhabitants of Trust Territories are, to say the least, not fully utilized.

We know the situation in the Trust Territory. Yesterday we spoke of the statistics contained in the Administering Authority's report. We noted the significant prevalence of foreign skilled workers in the Trust Territory, and we said that opportunities for study and training offered to the inhabitants of the Trust Territory should be utilized as widely and as fully as possible. I drew attention to the fact that in the Secretary-General's report on this matter we read that

"Information on scholarships made available under the programme is included in the twenty-sixth edition of Study Abroad ... published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)."  
(T/1948; para. 9)

It is further stated that

"Copies of Study Abroad are sent to the Administering Authority and to United Nations information centres". (*ibid.*)

Unfortunately, in the report on the dissemination of information about the United Nations and the International Trusteeship System as it applies to the Pacific Islands, which is the next report on our agenda that we are going to take up, I did not see any mention of dissemination of that document to the Trust Territory. In this connection, I should like to ask the representative of the Administering Authority how seriously the data at the disposal of the United Nations concerning opportunities to obtain study and training facilities are taken. I ask this question because in the Secretary-General's report we see a rather lengthy list of States offering fellowships to the inhabitants of the Trust

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

Territory. The report contains no indication that students from the Territory are studying in those countries.

Mr. WILKINSON (United States of America): First, I should like to assure the Council, in particular the representative of the Soviet Union, that the United States as the Administering Authority ensures citizens of the Trust Territory the same freedom to accept offers of educational programmes as are available to our own citizens. I also believe that potential students in Palau are made aware of possibilities for various scholarship or study opportunities abroad. The major consideration in the question asked by the representative of the Soviet Union is that, by and large, the students that are potentially interested in studying abroad would look in the first instance to English-language training, that being the common foreign language, and in an entity as small as Palau, obviously the opportunities to use other foreign languages would be limited.

Hence the majority of students travelling abroad for further study would go to places such as the United States, Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): As there are no further speakers on this item, I would suggest that the Council should decide to take note of the report of the Secretary-General in document T/1948.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): We shall not this morning take up the item on dissemination of information on the United Nations and the International Trusteeship System in Trust Territory because the person in charge in the Department of Public Information has informed us that he could speak to us only this afternoon or tomorrow morning.

If there are no other speakers on other items, I shall adjourn this meeting.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.