

UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.109/SR.44
25 June 1962
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF
INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FORTY-FOURTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 7 May 1962, at 3.30 p.m.

CONTENTS

Dissemination of information concerning the work of the
Special Committee (Conference Room Paper No.4)

Southern Rhodesia: report of the Sub-Committee on Southern Rhodesia
(A/AC.109/L.9) (continued)

Fifth report of the Sub-Committee on Petitions (A/AC.109/L.10)

PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. JHA	(India)
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. RIFAI	Syria
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. PLIMSOLL	Australia
	Mr. CAIMEROM MEASKETH	Cambodia
	Mr. GEBRE-EGZY)	Ethiopia
	Mr. WODAJO)	
	Mr. RASGOTRA	India
	Mr. IVELLA	Italy
	Mr. ANDRIAMAHARO	Madagascar
	Mr. SOW	Mali
	Mr. SOLTYSIAK	Poland
	Mr. NGAIZA	Tanganyika
	Mr. Taieb SLIM	Tunisia
	Mr. OBEREMKO	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
	Mr. CROWE	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. BINGHAM	United States of America
	Mr. SILVA SUCRE	Venezuela
	Mr. ILIC	Yugoslavia
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. PROTITCH	Under-Secretary for Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories
	Mr. OBHRAI	Director, External Relations Division, Office of Public Information
	Mr. CHACKO	Secretary of the Committee

DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION CONCERNING THE WORK OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE
(Conference Room Paper No. 4)

The CHAIRMAN recalled that there had been a preliminary discussion on the matter and that the Committee had felt that the maximum dissemination of information concerning its work should be undertaken, particularly in the countries and areas principally affected. A draft paper on the Committee's activities had been prepared by the Secretariat (Conference Room Paper No. 4).

Mr. SOLTYSIAK (Poland) said that he had been under the impression that the idea was to prepare a brochure which would give information on the creation of the Committee, its composition, its programme and its work. The first five paragraphs of the paper were good, but the others should be presented in abridged form. As it stood, the draft looked rather like a report of the Committee. The time-table given in paragraph 6 was not up to date, because the time assigned to the consideration of Northern Rhodesia had already expired. The text would therefore have to be amended.

Mr. OBHRAI (Director, External Relations Division, OPI) said that, since the formation of the Committee, the Press, Publications and Public Services Division of the Office of Public Information had provided, through press releases, detailed coverage of all Committee meetings. Those very comprehensive press releases had created considerable interest among the correspondents accredited to the United Nations. One news agency had reported that it had transmitted a total of 3,000 words on the Committee's deliberations in a single week and other agencies had reported a similar volume of coverage. The United Nations Review had devoted two and a half pages to the Committee's activities in its March issue, and the Sub-Committee's stay in London and the activities of the Committee as a whole would be the subject of a five-page article in the forthcoming issue. That coverage by the Press, Publications and Public Services Division had stimulated considerable redissemation of information not only in newspapers and journals in various parts of the world but also on national radio news broadcasts in the United States and elsewhere.

The United Nations Radio and Visual Services Division itself had disseminated information in its weekly and daily programmes in twenty-nine languages. At the time of the establishment of the Committee, a special programme had been broadcast and another programme would shortly review its current work. An interview with the Rapporteur of the Committee, recorded in Arabic, during the previous week,

(Mr. Obhrai, Director, External Relations Division, OPI)

was to be broadcast in the original and other languages, and interviews with other members of the Committee were being planned by the regional sections of the Radio and Visual Services Division.

The Office of Public Information, which had planned to prepare a pamphlet for the public, had been provided by the Secretary of the Committee with a copy of the draft, issued as Conference Room Paper No. 4, which would be of considerable help to it in publishing its own pamphlet without delay. It would be made available to correspondents, non-governmental organizations and would be transmitted in bulk to the United Nations Information Centres for distribution on the widest possible scale.

Mr. GEBRE-EGZY (Ethiopia) said that he had taken Conference Room Paper No. 4 to be a working paper addressed to people who knew the problem. As it was addressed to the public, it did not give a sufficiently comprehensive and clear idea of the issue. The public should be able to understand it and the document should not be over its head. Despite Mr. Obhrai's assurances, his delegation was not satisfied with what the Office of Public Information was doing. He did not believe that there had been daily dissemination of information concerning the Committee's important work.

Mr. OBHRAI (Director, External Relations Division, OPI) explained that the Office of Public Information gave coverage to the Committee's work after each meeting. In the same way, the work of every Committee meeting was included in the United Nations news broadcasts. He agreed that a pamphlet intended for public dissemination should be couched in simple and clear terms. The Office of Public Information had the necessary experience to prepare a pamphlet that would meet the Committee's wishes.

Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) whole-heartedly endorsed the Ethiopian representative's remarks. The USSR delegation was also dissatisfied with the lack of publicity currently given to the Committee's work and considered that a special effort should be made in that connexion. The Committee had held meetings at which important matters had been discussed and the press releases had not given them the emphasis which they had deserved. Apparently there had been broadcasts, but the Secretariat should make a special effort to publicize the Committee's work and to inform the inhabitants of territories not yet independent of the progress made and of the prospects for the future.

(Mr. Oberenko, USSR)

His delegation therefore thought that a pamphlet should be prepared as quickly as possible and given the widest possible distribution. Some amendments should be made in the draft which had been circulated. For example, the Declaration by the General Assembly, or at least its main provisions, should be included, because that Declaration was the basis of the Committee's work. On the other hand, some of the theoretical passages could be eliminated, for instance, the description of the Committee's procedure.

Some readers of the pamphlet would be mainly interested in the way in which they could get in touch with the Committee. It was important to let such persons know that they could send written petitions or be authorized to appear before it. That was an essential point which must not be overlooked. The USSR delegation also thought that the document should mention the Committee's work programme which was of great importance to the people who wanted to get in touch with it. Lastly, the theoretical aspects of the matter should be left aside and more stress laid on the problems which the Committee was studying.

It ought to be possible to draft the pamphlet within a few days; it would constitute one method of disseminating information concerning the Committee's work on a wide scale.

He requested that delegations should be provided with copies of the text of broadcasts already made concerning the Committee's work. Committee members could thus have a clear idea of the extent to which the information had been disseminated and suggest whatever improvements they considered necessary.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the matter should be left in the hands of the Director of the External Relations Division, Office of Public Information (OPI).

Mr. OBHRAI (Director, External Relations Division, OPI) said that the Office of Public Information would not fail to take into account all the points of view that had been expressed.

SOUTHERN RHODESIA: REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON SOUTHERN RHODESIA (A/AC.109/L.9)
(continued)

Mr. Taieb SLIM (Tunisia) noted that the Sub-Committee's report, which had been drafted by the Rapporteur, was the result of the co-operation of all

/...

(Mr. Taieb Slim, Tunisia)

the delegations which had gone to London. He proposed that it should be adopted as a report of the Committee.

Mr. RASGOTRA (India) paid a tribute to the work performed by the Sub-Committee through its consultations with the United Kingdom Government. At the current stage it was difficult to say what the outcome of those consultations would be, and the nature of the situation with which the Sub-Committee had had to deal with was such that it might perhaps be better not to expect any immediate decisions or actions. The Indian delegation hoped, however, that the United Kingdom Government would take action in the direction suggested to it by the Chairman and his Sub-Committee colleagues.

His delegation whole-heartedly approved of the report of the Sub-Committee and supported the Tunisian representative's proposal that the Committee should endorse the Sub-Committee's report which represented the consensus of opinion in the Committee.

His delegation thought that it would be desirable to take one further step by calling the General Assembly's attention to the urgency and gravity of the situation in Southern Rhodesia. It would be appropriate to recommend that the General Assembly should consider the problem at the earliest possible opportunity, for instance at its resumed session in June. While it was true that the General Assembly had decided to consider at that time only the situation in Ruanda-Urundi, he thought that, if the General Assembly shared the Committee's opinion concerning the urgency and gravity of the situation in Southern Rhodesia, it would be in a position to amend its earlier decision.

Mr. GEBRE-EGZY (Ethiopia) agreed with the Tunisian representative that the Sub-Committee's report could be adopted as a report of the Committee itself. He shared the Indian representative's view that the Committee should recommend that that report should be included as a new item on the agenda of the resumed sixteenth session of the General Assembly. His delegation thought, however, that the Committee should go even further and propose to the General Assembly a draft resolution embodying the five points in the Chairman's summary. His delegation was of the opinion that the Committee could prepare such a draft resolution in which it would present its own conclusions together with suggestions on the steps to be taken in order to remedy the situation. The General Assembly's work would thus be made easier.

Mr. CROWE (United Kingdom) said that he would like to hear the views of the other representatives before making his own observations on the Sub-Committee's report. He would be in a position to make a statement on the following day.

Mr. Taieb SLIM (Tunisia) stressed the importance of paragraph 45 of the report of the Sub-Committee to the effect that, in the absence of favourable developments, the situation in Southern Rhodesia should be considered by the General Assembly at its resumed sixteenth session or at a special session, as a matter of urgency.

The Committee could annex to the report of the Sub-Committee on Southern Rhodesia a draft resolution which, as the Ethiopian representative had suggested, would also be submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration. As the Indian representative had suggested, it could also recommend that the situation in Southern Rhodesia should be considered by the General Assembly at the resumed sixteenth session rather than at a special session. The question was urgent and it was desirable that the General Assembly should consider it either at its resumed sixteenth session or at a special session convened for that purpose in the very near future.

His delegation would discuss with the Malian delegation whether the draft resolution submitted by Mali and Tunisia (A/AC.109/L.4/Rev.2), should be embodied in the report of the Committee or dealt with in a different manner. By adopting the report of the Sub-Committee, the Committee would not have concluded its consideration of the situation in Southern Rhodesia.

Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he also thought that the report of the Sub-Committee constituted only part of the Committee's work with regard to the question of Southern Rhodesia. His delegation approved of the Sub-Committee's conclusions to the effect that the question of Southern Rhodesia was urgent and that the Committee and the General Assembly should act without delay. It agreed with the Sub-Committee that the question should be considered by the General Assembly at its resumed session in June or at a special session.

(Mr. Oberenko, USSR)

The USSR delegation also thought that the Committee should submit to the General Assembly a draft resolution together with its conclusions and recommendations. The Committee had spent much time studying the problem; it had heard petitioners and studied the information available. It should therefore facilitate the consideration of the matter by the General Assembly so that the latter should not have to start from scratch. The Committee had already adopted a summary of the consensus of opinion and its members already had data available on which they could base their recommendations. They also had before them the conclusions of the Sub-Committee concerning the urgent need for the question to be considered by the General Assembly. Lastly, they had the Tunisian and Malian draft resolution containing several provisions which the Committee should discuss with a view to embodying them in its decisions. The USSR delegation had its own ideas concerning what the contents of the Committee's draft resolution should be.

Hence the USSR delegation regarded the Ethiopian representative's proposal as perfectly logical and justified. The Committee should consider and adopt a draft resolution for submission to the General Assembly together with its conclusions and recommendations. That draft resolution could be prepared following official consultations between delegations or perhaps the Chairman might suggest some other way of arriving at a decision.

Mr. RIFAI (Syria) supported the views expressed by the Tunisian representative. Since paragraph 45 of the Sub-Committee's report already embodied certain recommendations, it would be somewhat difficult for the Committee - if it decided to adopt that report - to adopt a draft resolution at the same time. It did not seem possible, for instance, both to say that the Committee was of the opinion that the situation in Southern Rhodesia was very grave and that, in the absence of favourable developments, the question should be considered by the General Assembly, and, at the same time to adopt a draft resolution urging that the problem should be considered at the resumed session of the General Assembly. If the Committee decided to endorse the report of the Sub-Committee, the best solution would be to adopt the report and to consider that the discussion on Southern Rhodesia was not yet closed.

Mr. BINGHAM (United States of America) said that his delegation was favourably impressed by the constructive character of the report of the Sub-Committee. Although it did not approve of every detail, it agreed with much of the contents. With regard to the possible consideration of the matter at the resumed session or at a special session of the General Assembly, he was in accord with the Rapporteur that the Sub-Committee contemplated requesting that the item should be included in the agenda only in the absence of favourable developments. Too little time had elapsed for final judgement to be passed on the situation and, moreover, there were certain new developments such as Mr. Butler's forthcoming visit to Rhodesia the outcome of which was not yet known.

Mr. PLIMSOLL (Australia) said that he fully appreciated the valuable work of the Sub-Committee, which had been possible partly because of the co-operative attitude of the United Kingdom. His delegation, while unable to endorse the report in every detail, recognized that it clarified many aspects of the problem and, in particular, bore witness to the spirit of good will animating the United Kingdom Government and many members of the Committee. To a great extent, the value of the report lay precisely in the fact that it had been prepared by a sub-committee which had proceeded to London and had had direct conversations with one of the parties concerned. If the Committee, which had not gone to London, endorsed the report, it would not thereby add to the latter's value. It was for the United Kingdom to decide on the action to be taken, with due regard, where appropriate, to the Sub-Committee's report and the views expressed in the Committee.

His delegation could not support any recommendations for specific action by the United Kingdom and it followed from that that his delegation also could not assume any responsibility for the action of the United Kingdom or vouch for the outcome of such action.

It must be borne in mind, as the report appeared not to do, that the transfer of power in Southern Rhodesia by a group which had long been entrenched in its present position created difficulties of all sorts. It would be unrealistic to expect the Southern Rhodesian authorities to hand over power abruptly without some resistance or some preparation. The Committee was in general agreement on the need for a society in which there would be equal opportunity for everyone regardless of race, colour or religion to play a full part in the economic, social

/...

(Mr. Plimsoll, Australia)

and political life of the Territory. But there were differences of opinion in the Committee on the powers of the United Kingdom and on methods. The limitations on the legal powers of the United Kingdom vis-à-vis the Federation and vis-à-vis Southern Rhodesia had not been given sufficient weight by the Sub-Committee. Faced with constitutional limitations, it was for the United Kingdom to use its powers of persuasion on the authorities in Southern Rhodesia to prepare for a period of transition. The United Kingdom Government was aware that the present situation could not persist and intended to bear in mind the views expressed in the Committee. Evidence of that was the journey which Mr. Butler, a senior minister in the United Kingdom Government, was planning to make to Rhodesia.

In view of what he had said, his delegation not only was unwilling to urge specific measures upon the United Kingdom but also felt that immediate consideration of the question by the General Assembly would not make for progress. In conclusion, his delegation was willing to commend the report to all concerned, including the United Kingdom. However, it was unwilling to endorse any particular course of action laid down in the report or to recommend consideration of an item on Southern Rhodesia by the General Assembly at its resumed session or at a special session.

Mr. NGAIZA (Tanganyika) noted the care with which the Sub-Committee's report had been prepared and associated himself with Tunisia in recommending its adoption by the Committee.

He agreed with the Ethiopian representative that the Committee could prepare a draft resolution for presentation to the General Assembly; that could be done after hearing the observations of the United Kingdom representative on the Sub-Committee's report.

Mr. SOLTYSIAK (Poland) congratulated the Sub-Committee on the work it had done and said that the failure to arrive at any specific solution was essentially due to the unco-operative attitude of the Administering Authority. Paragraph 24 of the report, for example, showed that the United Kingdom Government, which pleaded lack of authority when it was asked to take specific steps, nevertheless claimed exclusive responsibility for the affairs of Southern Rhodesia when it was a question of preventing the Committee from acting. The United Kingdom

/...

(Mr. Soltysiak, Poland)

refused to liberalize the franchise qualifications and implement the anti-colonial Declaration. The enforcement of the Constitution of 6 December 1961 upon the territory constituted a danger of conflict and upheaval. The Committee was therefore entitled to call for action before the point of no return was reached.

His delegation supported the conclusions contained in the Sub-Committee's report, particularly the proposal that, in the absence of favourable development, the situation in Southern Rhodesia should be considered by the General Assembly at its resumed sixteenth session or at a special session. The Committee should prepare for the General Assembly a recommendation along the lines of the conclusion contained in the report taking also into account the draft resolution submitted by Mali and Tunisia (A/AC.109/L.4/Rev.2) and the Polish amendments (A/AC.109/L.5).

Mr. SILVA SUCRE (Venezuela) said that he supported the Sub-Committee's report and conclusions and urged their endorsement by the Committee. He could not, however, support the Ethiopian representative's proposal. The Sub-Committee's recommendation that the General Assembly should consider the problem at its June session was based on the assumption that there would be no favourable developments in the meantime. However, there was some evidence, such as Mr. Butler's projected visit to Rhodesia, to suggest that the situation was in fact changing. The Committee should therefore await the further course of events before adopting a resolution.

Mr. ANDRIAMAHARO (Madagascar) congratulated the Sub-Committee on its report which he urged the Committee to adopt.

Mr. IVELLA (Italy) considered the Sub-Committee's report to be useful and endorsed both its underlying spirit and aims. His delegation could not, however, support all the conclusions. The evolutionary process now under way throughout Africa raised legal problems which both the United Kingdom and the Committee must take into account. The best way to bring about a change in the situation in Southern Rhodesia was to adopt the course of co-operation instead of making abrupt decisions. The United Kingdom was attempting to bring about just such a change and could be trusted to resolve the present difficult situation.

His delegation would therefore refrain, for the present, from supporting the conclusions contained in the report.

/...

Mr. CAIMEROM MEASKETH (Cambodia) said that he endorsed the Sub-Committee's report, including the recommendation contained in paragraph 45. The General Assembly should take up the question of Southern Rhodesia as soon as possible.

Mr. ILIC (Yugoslavia) said that the Sub-Committee's work had been useful and had clarified the situation. He urged adoption of the report by the Committee and endorsed, in particular, the recommendation in paragraph 45.

The Ethiopian representative's proposal was also deserving of consideration, since it would be helpful for the Committee to attach to the report a draft resolution for consideration by the General Assembly.

Mr. SCW (Mali) was in favour of the Sub-Committee's report and urged its endorsement by the Committee. Like the Tunisian representative, he reserved the right to resubmit the joint draft resolution if the Southern Rhodesian question came up for further discussion.

His delegation felt that the General Assembly should include the question of Southern Rhodesia in its agenda at the June session or at a special session.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee could take a decision on the Sub-Committee's report after hearing the observations of the United Kingdom representative at the following day's meeting.

FIFTH REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS (A/AC.109/L.10)

The CHAIRMAN presented for consideration by the Committee the recommendation, in paragraph 3 of the report of the Sub-Committee on Petitions (A/AC.109/L.10), that the Committee should grant four requests for a hearing.

The recommendation was adopted.

Mr. CROWE (United Kingdom) repeated the reservation which his delegation had previously made with regard to the hearing of petitioners.

The CHAIRMAN said that the United Kingdom representative's reservation would be duly noted.

He drew attention to the fact that, according to paragraph 4 of the report, the Sub-Committee had decided that four of the communications which had been received should be circulated.

The Committee took note of paragraph 4.

Mr. PLIMSOLL (Australia) said, in connexion with paragraph 5, that it was unfortunate that the Sub-Committee had decided not to have the communication from Mr. Nkunbula circulated. Although he did not endorse its content or wording, the communication came from a large organization whose views differed from those of Mr. Kaunda. The Committee must not confine itself to hearing only one of the groups concerned or refuse to publish any views which were expressed, even if it felt that they were going against the tide of history. Mr. Kaunda himself would surely take the same view. A matter of principle was involved. Whatever might be the content or wording of a communication, it was arbitrary not to circulate it if it came from a substantial body.

Mr. Taieb SLIM (Tunisia), recalling that his delegation was a member of the Sub-Committee on Petitions, pointed out that the latter's mandate called for it to screen the communications and petitions. His delegation had no objection to the circulation of the cable in question but felt it should be circulated in its original form rather than as an official United Nations document. The members of the Sub-Committee, including the Australian delegation, had agreed that the communication had no direct relation with the work of the Committee. The Sub-Committee's decision was therefore a proper one and should be upheld.

Mr. BINGHAM (United States of America) said that in principle he shared the view of the Australian representative. All petitions should be circulated unless there were special reasons for not doing so.

Mr. SOLTYSIAK (Poland) said it had been his impression that all communications were circulated to the members of the Committee for their information, before being sent to the Sub-Committee. He would like to know whether the communication in question had in fact been circulated.

The CHAIRMAN said that according to the procedure adopted, only requests for hearings were circulated to members of the Committee at the same time as to members of the Sub-Committee. He proposed, therefore, that in the future, if the Sub-Committee made any recommendation relating to a document which had been sent to it direct, it should circulate the text to the Committee.

Mr. PLIMSOLL (Australia) said that the question was one of principle. Although the petition in question was very critical of Mr. Kaunda, it was in the latter's own interest that it should not be suppressed. If the Committee gave any impression that it was taking sides in the matter, that could be used against Mr. Kaunda and against the Committee itself.

Mr. WCDAJO (Ethiopia) said that if the question under consideration were one of principle, his delegation would be in full agreement with what the Australian representative had said; but in its view no question of principle arose. The petitioner had not requested to be heard. In the first part of his communication he questioned the wisdom of the Committee in giving Mr. Kaunda the right of petition. Secondly, he made references to Mr. Kaunda which cast some doubt on the character of a petitioner who had been very helpful in furthering the work of the Committee. Lastly, his communication contained no new information which could assist the Committee further. Thus the communication was a very negative one. The Sub-Committee had therefore been right to decide that it should not be given consideration. In doing so, it had in no way questioned the right of petitioners to communicate their views. The very purpose of the Sub-Committee was to turn away petitions or communications which were inconsequential. The Sub-Committee had acted in precisely the same way in a previous case, and no one had raised any objection.

Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) pointed out that Australia was a member of the Sub-Committee on Petitions; yet there was nothing in the Sub-Committee's report, or even in the record of the Sub-Committee's meeting, to suggest that the Australian representative had raised the slightest objection with regard to the decision referred to in paragraph 5 of the report.

The colonial Powers should show better logic. When the Committee had been discussing the procedure to be followed with regard to petitions, the Soviet delegation had expressed the view that all petitions should be circulated to members of the Committee. The colonial Powers had objected, on the ground that some screening was necessary. It would almost seem that the colonial countries were now themselves setting up as champions of the rights of petitioners.

Mr. SOLTYSIAK (Poland) said he was sorry that the Australian representative had changed his attitude with regard to the communication under

(Mr. Soltysiak, Poland)

consideration. In the Sub-Committee on Petitions, the Australian representative had expressed the opinion that Mr. Nkumbula's petition should be circulated, but had bowed to the view of the majority that it would not assist the Committee in its work. The Sub-Committee could not be accused of partiality, since, as could be seen from paragraph 6 of its report, it had also decided not to circulate another petition.

Mr. BINGHAM (United States of America) said he was in doubt whether the Committee was required to approve or reject a decision by the Sub-Committee. However, he agreed with the representative of Australia that the document in question had a bearing on the substance of the matter before the Committee. The charges it contained, if they were true, would be serious. If the Committee could reopen a decision of the Sub-Committee, he felt that it should do so.

The CHAIRMAN said that the Sub-Committee was a body set up by the Committee, and that its decisions were consequently open to review by the Committee. The Committee had decided that the requests for hearings would be circulated to members of the Committee as well as of the Sub-Committee. In regard to other communications, it had been left to the Sub-Committee to consider the matter of procedure and to make recommendations to the Committee. Since that had not yet been done, there were as yet no actual rules, and the question could therefore still be discussed.

Mr. Taieb SLIM (Tunisia) said that his delegation would have raised no objection to the circulation of Mr. Nkumbula's communication if it had felt that the Sub-Committee's decision involved any issue of principle. It still believed that it did not. As, however, some representatives considered that the petition should be circulated, the Tunisian delegation was prepared to submit the matter to a vote of the Committee.

Mr. PLIMSOLL (Australia) said that that would be the right procedure. The Australian representative in the Sub-Committee had, in point of fact, expressed the view that the petition should be circulated. There was therefore no inconsistency in Australia's attitude.

/...

Mr. RASGOTRA (India) agreed that when a Sub-Committee made a recommendation, the main Committee was perfectly entitled to reverse it. He himself saw no reason why the document should not be circulated to members of the Committee in whatever form would be the most economical. As, however, the Sub-Committee's decision, as the record showed (A/AC.109/SC.1/SR.6), had been a majority one, he did not feel that the Committee should simply reverse it outright. He suggested that the Committee should adopt the report of the Sub-Committee without amendment.

Mr. Taieb SLIM (Tunisia) said that if the Committee reversed the Sub-Committee's decision his delegation would be obliged to present immediately a formal proposal that all communications should be circulated as documents to all members of the Committee. The Sub-Committee on Petitions would then no longer be needed.

Mr. ANDRIAMAHARO (Madagascar) said that in the Sub-Committee his delegation had expressed the desire to have the document circulated to members of the Committee. However, it wished to say that it accepted full responsibility for the Sub-Committee's decision to the contrary.

Mr. PLIMSOLL (Australia) said that he would not press for a Committee vote on paragraph 5, since the majority was clearly against his proposal. He had wished to explain his position because in his view there was a matter of principle at stake. It was partly because of the criticisms which had been levelled at the Committee that the latter should be scrupulous in seeing that various points of view were put forward.

Mr. RASGOTRA (India) said it could not be alleged that the Committee had lent itself to partisan propaganda. Mr. Nkunbula's petition put forward no political thesis. If Mr. Nkunbula had asked to be heard, his request would have been granted. But that was not the case.

Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that it was not a matter of principle that interested the Australian representative, since if it were he would have pressed his proposal to the vote. The Australian representative merely wished to discredit Mr. Kaunda.

/...

Mr. SILVA SUCRE (Venezuela) said that no member of the Sub-Committee had found in Mr. Nkumbula's petition any elements which might help the Committee in its work. The Sub-Committee's good faith could therefore not be called into question.

The CHAIRMAN said he took it that the Committee wished to take note of paragraph 5 of the report of the Sub-Committee on Petitions, it being understood that all reservations made would be reported in the record of the meeting. The Committee could also take note of paragraph 6.

It was so decided.

Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he wished to raise the question of the information to be communicated to the Committee by the Administering Powers. So far, no information had been received in reply to the questionnaire adopted by the Committee. All that the Committee had was the very limited information which the United Kingdom Government had communicated to the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories. That information was not of the type the Committee needed. The information furnished by the United Kingdom with regard to Northern Rhodesia, for example, took only three pages, whereas the questionnaire adopted covered at least five pages.

He would like to know in addition, which Administering Powers had already received the questionnaire, and when the latter would be sent to all the remaining Powers. It might be well to set a time-limit for the receipt of information relating to Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia. Moreover, the Committee had not yet received any information on Nyasaland, which it was shortly to discuss, or on Bechuanaland and Swaziland. That state of affairs could not be tolerated.

The CHAIRMAN asked the Secretariat to draft a brief note on the position with regard to the questionnaire and the replies received. The matter could be taken up at one of the Committee's next meetings.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.

Mr. RASGOTRA (India) agreed that when a Sub-Committee made a recommendation, the main Committee was perfectly entitled to reverse it. He himself saw no reason why the document should not be circulated to members of the Committee in whatever form would be the most economical. As, however, the Sub-Committee's decision, as the record showed (A/AC.109/SC.1/SR.6), had been a majority one, he did not feel that the Committee should simply reverse it outright. He suggested that the Committee should adopt the report of the Sub-Committee without amendment.

Mr. Taieb SLIM (Tunisia) said that if the Committee reversed the Sub-Committee's decision his delegation would be obliged to present immediately a formal proposal that all communications should be circulated as documents to all members of the Committee. The Sub-Committee on Petitions would then no longer be needed.

Mr. ANDRIAMAHARO (Madagascar) said that in the Sub-Committee his delegation had expressed the desire to have the document circulated to members of the Committee. However, it wished to say that it accepted full responsibility for the Sub-Committee's decision to the contrary.

Mr. PLIMSOLL (Australia) said that he would not press for a Committee vote on paragraph 5, since the majority was clearly against his proposal. He had wished to explain his position because in his view there was a matter of principle at stake. It was partly because of the criticisms which had been levelled at the Committee that the latter should be scrupulous in seeing that various points of view were put forward.

Mr. RASGOTRA (India) said it could not be alleged that the Committee had lent itself to partisan propaganda. Mr. Nkunbula's petition put forward no political thesis. If Mr. Nkunbula had asked to be heard, his request would have been granted. But that was not the case.

Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) felt that it was not a matter of principle that interested the Australian representative, since if it were he would have pressed his proposal to the vote. The Australian representative merely wished to discredit Mr. Kaunda.

/...

Mr. SILVA SUCRE (Venezuela) said that no member of the Sub-Committee had found in Mr. Mkunbula's petition any elements which might help the Committee in its work. The Sub-Committee's good faith could therefore not be called into question.

The CHAIRMAN said he took it that the Committee wished to take note of paragraph 5 of the report of the Sub-Committee on Petitions, it being understood that all reservations made would be reported in the record of the meeting. The Committee could also take note of paragraph 6.

It was so decided.

Mr. OBEREMKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said he wished to raise the question of the information to be communicated to the Committee by the Administering Powers. So far, no information had been received in reply to the questionnaire adopted by the Committee. All that the Committee had was the very limited information which the United Kingdom Government had communicated to the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories. That information was not of the type the Committee needed. The information furnished by the United Kingdom with regard to Northern Rhodesia, for example, took only three pages, whereas the questionnaire adopted covered at least five pages.

He would like to know in addition, which Administering Powers had already received the questionnaire, and when the latter would be sent to all the remaining Powers. It might be well to set a time-limit for the receipt of information relating to Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia. Moreover, the Committee had not yet received any information on Nyasaland, which it was shortly to discuss, or on Bechuanaland and Swaziland. That state of affairs could not be tolerated.

The CHAIRMAN asked the Secretariat to draft a brief note on the position with regard to the questionnaire and the replies received. The matter could be taken up at one of the Committee's next meetings.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.