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COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

Fourth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SEVENTY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 18 August 1953, at 11.10 a.m.

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PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. LOOMES	Australia
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mrs. MENON	India
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. FRAZAO	Brazil
	Mr. LIU	China
	Miss MAÑAS	Cuba
	Mr. BRUN	Denmark
	Mr. BENITES-VINUEZA	Ecuador
	Mr. HURE	France
	Miss RUSAD	Indonesia
	Mr. KHALIDY	Iraq
	Mr. SPITS	Netherlands
	Mr. SCOTI	New Zealand
	Mr. HAMDANI	Pakistan
	Mr. MATHIESON	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mr. SEARS	United States of America

Representatives of specialized agencies:

Mr. GAVIN	International Labour Organisation (ILO)
Mr. VOGEL	Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
Mr. AKRAWI	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
Mrs. MEAGHER	World Health Organization (WHO)

<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. HOO	Assistant Secretary-General
	Mr. BENSON	Secretary of the Committee

## OPENING OF THE SESSION

Mr. HOO (Assistant Secretary-General) opened the fourth session of the Committee and welcomed the representatives on behalf of the Secretary-General. He expressed confidence that the Committee's work would contribute to measures of economic, social and educational advancement which would promote the objectives of Chapter XI of the Charter. The Secretary-General had been prevented at the last moment from attending the meeting, but had asked that part of his statement should be conveyed to the Committee.

One of the great trends of modern times was that towards equality of political and economic rights among nations. It had been apparent in the development which had taken place under the Charter and a feature of that development was the importance attached to the declaration on Non-Self-Governing Territories. Since the adoption of the Charter, many countries had gained a full measure of self-government and in others there had been a substantial advance in the evolution of free political institutions. The Committee's task, primarily limited to the general study of information on economic, social and educational conditions, sometimes gave rise to extremely delicate and difficult problems; it had, nevertheless, been able to reach a wide measure of agreement.

The chief item on the agenda of the fourth session related to educational problems. The documentation before the Committee emphasized the importance of progress in that field. The work of the fourth session might be expected to contribute again to a useful exchange of experiences between administering and non-administering members and result in the adoption of generally agreed conclusions acceptable to the Assembly.

## ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. HOO (Assistant Secretary-General) called for nominations for the office of Chairman.

Mr. FRAZAO (Brazil) nominated Mr. Loomes (Australia).

Mr. Loomes (Australia) was elected unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN called for nominations for the office of Vice-Chairman.

Mr. MATHIESON (United Kingdom) nominated Mr. Frazao (Brazil).

Mr. Frazao (Brazil) was elected unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN called for nominations for the office of Rapporteur.

Mr. SPITS (Netherlands) nominated Mrs. Menon (India).

Mrs. Menon (India) was elected unanimously.

#### ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Mr. MATHIESON (United Kingdom) said that at the opening of the first of the three sessions of the Committee authorized by General Assembly resolution 645 (VII), his Government wished to make clear what it considered to be the limits of the proper functions of the Committee.

He recalled the provisions of resolution 332 (IV) which defined terms of reference of the Committee, and that his delegation had frequently expressed its grave doubts as to the constitutional propriety and usefulness of the Committee's work, even within those narrow terms of reference.

The continued participation of his delegation continued to be based on the considerations described by the United Kingdom representative in the Committee on 18 August 1950.

There was nothing in the Committee's terms of reference which could justify any discussion of the political affairs of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, nor discussion calculated to secure a recommendation referring to any particular territory.

Should the Committee embark upon discussion of either kind, or seek to extend its competence in any other way, then his Government would be bound to reconsider its whole attitude towards participating in its work. However, he did not expect that any difficulty would arise, and he offered the full co-operation of his delegation with the Committee in producing a useful report within the fields which it was empowered to study.

Mr. HURE (France) stated that he had been instructed to reiterate the French Government's reservations concerning the legality of the Committee. Information transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter was communicated to the Secretary-General for information only, and there was no provision in the Charter for the establishment of a committee to consider the information received. No provision was made for the manner in which such information was to be considered. Consequently, such consideration could not be accompanied by any kind of responsibility or control.

The French delegation's attitude to such an unconstitutional body might therefore have been purely negative. It had nevertheless agreed to associate itself with the Committee's work as a proof of its spirit of international co-operation, but only on the understanding that the Committee's recommendations were in no way binding on the French Government. In view of the debates during the seventh session of the General Assembly, the French delegation wished to make it clear that it would continue to participate in the Committee only on condition that the terms of reference laid down in resolution 332 (IV) and restated in resolution 646 (VII) remained unchanged. In the event of any modification, the French delegation would be obliged to reconsider its position.

Mr. HOC (Assistant Secretary-General) read a letter\* from the Acting Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, giving the reasons why the Belgian delegation would not take part in the Committee's fourth session.

The CHAIRMAN called for comments on the order of the agenda items.

Mr. MATHIESON (United Kingdom) considered that the order was satisfactory and pointed out that information must be assembled on item 4 (educational conditions), in order to enable a sub-committee to draft a report.

Mr. HURE (France) said that he had no objection to the order of the items, but recalled that his attitude to the substance of the agenda must be viewed in the light of his delegation's general reservations.

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\* Issued as document A/AC.35/L.142.

Mr. SEARS (United States of America) asked whether the place of item 30 might be left open, since the Committee might agree to deal with it earlier.

The CHAIRMAN agreed to meet the United States representative's request.

The agenda was adopted.

Mr. MATHEWSON (United Kingdom) proposed that, in view of the time required to assemble information on the principal topic of education, the Committee should meet only once a day, from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m., for the first week of its session, and should consider at the end of the week the question of holding two meetings a day.

It was so decided.

#### STATEMENT BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF CHINA

Mr. LIU (China) expressed his gratitude that his country had again been elected to serve on the Committee. China was keenly interested in the Non-Self-Governing Territories for, as the population figures submitted by the administering members showed, many millions of Chinese were living in those Territories side by side with other races, and China had a legitimate concern in their protection and welfare.

He approved of the Committee's preference for the term "inhabitants" which was broader than "indigenous population" and had been adopted in the language of the Charter.

Though the Committee was not the place to discuss major political issues, he felt bound to express his concern at the situation prevailing in such Non-Self-Governing Territories as Tunisia, Morocco, Malaya and some East African territories. The world was now so small that events in a Non-Self-Governing Territory might have repercussions elsewhere and possibly even set off a world conflagration.

The composition of the Committee was well balanced in that there were eight administering and eight non-administering members. The General Assembly had not intended the Committee to split into opposing blocks but to deal objectively with the matters before it and the well-being of the inhabitants of the Territories would be the only criterion by which the non-administering members would judge the performance of the administering members. Although Chapter XI of the Charter did not provide for United Nations supervision of the administration of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, the Charter had to be a living instrument if it was to last, and eventually Article 73 would become the instrument for the interchange of experience which might form the basis for the merging of the administering and the administered.

#### SUBMISSION OF INFORMATION ON NETHERLANDS NEW GUINEA

Miss RUSAD (Indonesia) protested against the submission by the Netherlands Government of information on West New Guinea, known in Indonesia as Irian. In the view of the Indonesian Government, Irian was not a Non-Self-Governing Territory but a part of Indonesia.

She added that the discussions in the Committee would be of great advantage to the indigenous population in the Non-Self-Governing Territories because however good the intentions and responsibilities of the administering members are, it would be interesting to hear what the non-administering members thought of their policies. In that respect, as her delegation represented a country which had been a colony, it was very interested in the conditions in Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Mr. SPITS (Netherlands), replying to the Indonesian representative, stated that the Netherlands Government had submitted the information referred to in accordance with the obligation imposed by Article 73 e of the Charter. The Netherlands Government was responsible for Netherlands New Guinea by virtue of the right of sovereignty it exercised there under article 2 of the charter of transfer of sovereignty over Indonesia concluded on 27 December 1949. In any event, political issues of that nature were not within the terms of reference of the Committee.

EDUCATIONAL CONDITIONS IN NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES: REPORTS SUBMITTED BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES: GENERAL DEBATE (A/AC.35/L.122 and Add.1, A/AC.35/L.123, A/AC.35/L.124, A/AC.35/L.127, A/AC.35/L.128, A/AC.35/L.130, A/AC.35/L.131, A/AC.35/L.132, A/AC.35/L.133, A/AC.35/L.136, A/AC.35/L.137, A/AC.35/L.139, A/AC.35/L.140)

Mr. KHALIDY (Iraq) said that although his Government had not been represented on the Committee before, it had followed the Committee's work with the greatest interest. His delegation was proud of its new responsibility. It was heartening, in an era which had seen untold cruelty of man to his fellow-beings, to support the cause of freedom for all who wanted it - not only political freedom, but freedom from want, fear, and ignorance as well. The Iraqi delegation pledged its fullest co-operation in that common endeavour.

Speaking generally on the progress of education in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, he recalled that in 1950 the Committee had adopted a special report on education which had been approved by the General-Assembly. The views expressed in the report had been of a rather general character; they were still valid, however, and would form a solid basis for the Committee's present work, which might lead to more concrete and specific conclusions. While the Committee should not, generally speaking, repeat itself, it might well include in the new report the general views recorded on pages 13 and 14 of the 1950 report (1951/VI.B.1, Vol. 3).

Too little time had elapsed since 1950 for any great changes in educational policy and educational facilities to have taken place, and it was to be regretted that the review could not have been made every four years. It was true that greater importance was being attached to the advancement of education in the Non-Self-Governing Territories and that there appeared to have been considerable material progress. The Secretariat paper on the financing of education in the Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/AC.35/L.122) indicated that in many territories in tropical Africa the sums spent on education had increased threefold during the period in question, and that in Africa and parts of South East Asia, in particular, the number of children enrolled in schools had also risen. Some of those facts should be noted in the Committee's report on education, in recognition of the efforts made. On the other hand, it had to be remembered that the need for education had increased still further, that



the problems of education had become even more complex, and the whole process of aiding the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories to attain self-government was hindered more than ever by the inadequacies in their education.

He drew special attention to the situation in those territories in which there was a substantial immigrant population of a race or creed differing from that of the indigenous population. General Assembly resolution 328 (IV) had invited the administering members to take steps to establish equal treatment in matters relating to education between the inhabitants of the Non-Self-Governing Territories under their administration, whether they were indigenous or not, and the Committee, in its reports on education and on social conditions, had stressed the same principle. The Secretariat paper on equal treatment in matters relating to education (A/AC.35/L.130), however, indicated that the situation had improved very little since 1950. Thus, although formal changes had been made in the Moroccan school system, there had been no fundamental change in structure, and an analysis of the figures given showed that whereas the European population was greatly favoured, only a small proportion of the indigenous population received primary education, while only insignificant numbers received secondary and higher education. By and large, the same was true of Tunisia. In some of the territories under United Kingdom administration and in the Belgian Congo, too, even making every allowance for special circumstances, there was clearly no real equality of educational opportunity.

Paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 644 (VII) stated that the establishment of improved race relations largely depended on the development of educational policies and commended all measures designed to improve among all pupils in all schools understanding of the needs and problems of the community as a whole. The principle might well be kept in mind when the Committee considered item 4 (f) of its agenda; but it could hardly be implemented until steps had been taken to provide equality of educational opportunity for the pupils of all races. The oft-heard argument that many of the problems discussed by the Committee were common to all under-developed countries could surely not apply in the present case; the administering members had assumed a special obligation under Chapter XI of the Charter to provide through education the

intellectual and technical equipment needed for self-government. Consequently, although some progress had been made in recent years in matters relating to education, it was still the duty of the Committee to investigate the weakest point in the educational policy of many Non-Self-Governing Territories - the denial of equal opportunities for intellectual and civic development. The administering members had less to fear from alien philosophies than from their own failure to strengthen local defences by educating the indigenous population.

While the Committee would greatly benefit by the technical advice to be obtained from representatives of UNESCO and from educational experts who were members of delegations, its primary task was to define general principles of educational policy which would further the economic, social, educational and political advancement of the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories.

He recalled that the Committee would be giving special attention to education for the second time. In order to progress beyond its earlier findings, the Committee should be guided by General Assembly resolution 645 (VII), paragraph 1 of which called for an obviously desirable method of international co-operation, while paragraph 2, inviting the Committee to consider the information submitted to it in the light of its own special reports, was a direct instruction to the Committee. In following that instruction, the Committee should of course rely on the delegations of the administering members to explain the information.

Paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 647 (VII) which stated that it was desirable that qualified indigenous representatives from Non-Self-Governing Territories should be associated in the Committee's work, was also directly relevant. Since responsibility for educational administration and policy was usually one of the first to be vested in the hands of the indigenous inhabitants of a territory in the process of evolution, it would be particularly appropriate to give effect to that paragraph while the Committee was considering problems of education.

Lastly, the method of appointing a sub-committee to prepare the special report, having been found useful in the past, might well be used again.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.