

UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



Distr.  
GENERAL

A/AC.35/SR.199  
10 August 1959

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

Tenth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND NINETY-NINTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Friday, 8 May 1959, at 11 a.m.

CONTENTS

Social conditions in Non-Self-Governing Territories, including questions arising out of the special report on social conditions adopted by the General Assembly in 1958 (A/3637, A/4081 and Add.1 to 4, A/4082 and Add.1 to 5, A/4083 and Add.1 to 3, A/4084 and Add.1 to 4, A/4085 and Add.1 to 4, A/4086 and Add.1 to 10, A/4087 and Add.1 to 5, A/4088 and Add.1 to 14, A/4089 and Add.1 to 5) (continued)

Economic conditions in Non-Self-Governing Territories, including questions arising out of the special report on economic conditions adopted by the General Assembly in 1957 (A/3647, A/4081 and Add.1 to 4, A/4082 and Add.1 to 5, A/4083 and Add.1 to 3, A/4084 and Add.1 to 4, A/4085 and Add.1 to 4, A/4086 and Add.1 to 10, A/4087 and Add.1 to 5, A/4088 and Add.1 to 14, A/4089 and Add.1 to 5) (continued)

Progress achieved by Non-Self-Governing Territories in pursuance of Chapter XI of the Charter:

- (a) The method of examination of the progress report (A/AC.35/L.301)
- (b) Summaries of information transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter since the establishment of the United Nations (A/4081 and Add.1 to 4, A/4082 and Add.1 to 5, A/4083 and Add.1 to 3, A/4084 and Add.1 to 4, A/4085 and Add.1 to 4, A/4086 and Add.1 to 10, A/4087 and Add.1 to 5, A/4088 and Add.1 to 14, A/4089 and Add.1 to 5)

PRESENT:Chairmen:

Mr. KELLY (Australia)

Members:

Mr. ROBERTSON Australia  
 Mr. CASTRO ALVES Brazil  
 Mr. KANAKARATNE Ceylon  
 Mr. CORDERO MICHEL Dominican Republic  
 Mr. de CAMARET France  
 Mr. TURKSON Ghana  
 Mr. KESTLER Guatemala  
 Mr. RASGOTRA India  
 Mr. JABPAR Iraq  
 Mr. GOEDHART )  
 Mr. de BRUYN ) Netherlands  
 Mr. DAVIN New Zealand  
 Mr. CASTON United Kingdom of Great  
 Britain and Northern  
 Ireland  
 Mr. MORE )  
 Mr. SIMMS ) United States of America

Representatives of specialized agencies:

Mr. KAHN International Labour  
 Organisation  
 Dr. SACKS World Health Organization

Secretariat:

Mr. PROTITCH Under-Secretary for  
 Trusteeship and  
 Information from Non-Self-  
 Governing Territories  
 Mr. KUNST Secretary of the Committee

SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES, INCLUDING QUESTIONS ARISING OUT OF THE SPECIAL REPORT ON SOCIAL CONDITIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN 1958 (A/3837, A/4081 and Add.1 to 4, A/4082 and Add.1 to 5, A/4083 and Add.1 to 3, A/4084 and Add.1 to 4, A/4085 and Add.1 to 4, A/4086 and Add.1 to 10, A/4087 and Add.1 to 5, A/4088 and Add.1 to 14, A/4089 and Add.1 to 5) (continued)

Mr. CASTON (United Kingdom) said that in view of the long statement on social conditions and policies in United Kingdom territories which his delegation had made in the Fourth Committee six months previously and the exhaustive discussion of social conditions in the Committee on Information in 1958 his delegation did not feel it necessary to give an account of progress in the last year. He did however wish to reiterate his Government's attitude on the question of race relations to which considerable importance had been attached by previous speakers. It was not true, as the representative of Ghana had suggested at the previous meeting, that the Administering Members were in many cases tacitly accepting discriminatory practices. The United Kingdom's attitude was one neither of silence nor of acceptance. His Government fully subscribed to the remarks on race relations in the Committee's 1958 report (A/3837) and more particularly in paragraphs 167 and 168. In the Territories for which it was responsible, his Government was dedicated to the advancement of all communities without discrimination on the grounds of race, colour or creed and it was its aim to banish such discrimination wherever it might still be found by positive measures to increase inter-racial co-operation. There were sometimes serious practical difficulties but they would be overcome as soon as practicable.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES, INCLUDING QUESTIONS ARISING OUT OF THE SPECIAL REPORT ON ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ADOPTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN 1957 (A/3647, A/4081 and Add.1 to 4, A/4082 and Add.1 to 5, A/4083 and Add.1 to 3, A/4084 and Add.1 to 4, A/4085 and Add.1 to 4, A/4086 and Add.1 to 10, A/4087 and Add.1 to 5, A/4088 and Add.1 to 14, A/4089 and Add.1 to 5) (continued)

Mr. JABBAR (Iraq) said that his delegation, which endorsed the general principles enunciated in the Committee's last report on economic conditions in Non-Self-Governing Territories (A/3647), wished to emphasize the close relationship between economic progress and the advance towards self-government. The basic

(Mr. Jabbar, Iraq)

considerations which the Committee should bear in mind were those contained in Articles 73 and 74 of the Charter.

The reports revealed signs of steady if unspectacular progress; he would mention in particular the new industries which had come into being in French West Africa, the Belgian Congo and Uganda. But the information provided was incomplete and was of an almost purely statistical nature; it did not adequately reflect actual conditions in the Non-Self-Governing Territories. The establishment of the Economic Commission for Africa had been an encouraging development, and his delegation hoped that that body would play an increasingly important part in the economic progress of the African continent.

The major economic problems facing the Non-Self-Governing Territories were, however, still far from being solved. They were not dissimilar to those found in independent under-developed countries. However, in the latter countries the national Governments were in a position to take bold and speedy action, whereas the freedom of action of the administrations in Non-Self-Governing Territories was often restricted by considerations which were not necessarily related to the Territories and their peoples. Among the most pressing of those problems were the great increase in population which in many cases had outstripped the productive capacity of the countries concerned; the chronic imbalance in their foreign trade; their over-dependence on exports which were subject to the fluctuations of the world market; and their inability to achieve the rapid capital accumulation necessary for development. The foreign trade earnings were often of little direct value to the indigenous inhabitants since in most of the Territories, foreign trade was controlled by outside business interests. Plans for development were hampered by the lack of sufficient capital investment and by the inadequate utilization of existing natural resources.

Paragraph 10 (a) of Part Two of the Committee's report for 1957 had referred to the need for removing the obstacles to economic development by modifying where necessary the basic structure of the economy. Those obstacles could be of two kinds. In the first place, there was the lack of economic resources; more

/...

(Mr. Jabbar, Iraq)

attention should be given to the fuller utilization of existing resources and where necessary, technical and financial assistance should be provided. Secondly, there was the fact that the inhabitants of the Territories did not co-operate with the governments in carrying out welfare programmes. The difficulty of obtaining such co-operation would diminish, once the inhabitants realized the effect of the programmes in raising their own standard of living. The observations made in the Committee would achieve no results unless the Administering Powers directed their economic activities in such a way as to promote the welfare and prosperity of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Mr. CASTRO ALVES (Brazil) reminded the Committee of General Assembly resolution 1329 (XIII) inviting the Administering Members to examine the advisability of adopting an investment policy in the Non-Self-Governing Territories which would ensure balanced economic development and a progressive increase of the per capita income of the inhabitants. That resolution had been based on a draft submitted by his delegation. The basic principles that had led it to make the proposal in 1958 were equally valid in 1959.

Mr. KESTLER (Guatemala) said that the fundamental principles which should govern the administration of the Non-Self-Governing Territories were set out in Chapter XI of the Charter and had guided the Committee in 1951 when it had defined the concrete objectives of economic policy (A/2729, Part Two, paragraph 17, sub-paragraphs (a) to (i)), which he quoted. It was important that the information transmitted by the Administering Powers should be such as to enable the Committee to assess the progress made in the light of those objectives. Unfortunately, that was not the case. The statistical data provided often gave an indication of the increase in national production but it did not show the extent to which all the inhabitants of the Territories participated in the formulation of economic policy and the distribution of economic benefits.

Generally speaking, economic advancement had been slow since 1957. That might well be due to the absence of a co-ordinated economic policy based on a thorough survey of the economic potential of the Territories. While there appeared to be numerous plans for the development of specific economic sectors, no special bodies had been set up to promote integrated economic development.

(Mr. Kestler, Guatemala)

Many of the Territories were faced with very real obstacles to economic development: soil, climate, geographic situation, lack of natural resources and under or over-population. It was understandable in such cases that production should be insufficient to meet the people's basic needs and that large-scale assistance from the Administration should be necessary. In the other Territories, however, conditions were favourable to development but the action of the Administering Powers had not been sufficient to modify the basic structure of the economy. Although some services had expanded and national revenue had risen considerably, industrial development in the majority of Territories was not sufficient to satisfy even local needs.

Most of the Territories were dependent on the export of a single agricultural or mineral product and their economies were therefore extremely vulnerable to fluctuations in the price of exports or factors, such as animal or plant disease, affecting production. The clove industry in Zanzibar and the livestock industry in Bechuanaland were cases in point.

The Committee should be concerned to see that the indigenous inhabitants participated firstly in determining economic policy and secondly in productive activities. On the first point, the information transmitted by the Administering Powers did not indicate the level of ability achieved by the indigenous inhabitants in the administration of their own affairs. It would be desirable to have such information. On the second point, the Administering Powers should intensify their efforts so as to give the producers, and particularly the agricultural producers, a sense of stability. The increasing part played by indigenous copra producers in Papua illustrated the productive potential of the indigenous inhabitants.

The level of living of the indigenous inhabitants was a question of vital importance. While sound and educational as well as economic factors were involved in raising that level, his delegation was convinced that an economic policy designed to develop and diversify the economy through the use of modern means of production would yield favourable results. It had been happy to note that agricultural prospects were brighter in some Territories thanks to the efforts of the Administering Powers.

(Mr. Kestler, Guatemala)

Not enough had been done to improve transport and communications. In many Territories road works were the responsibility of the municipalities - a situation which might stimulate a sense of local responsibility but would jeopardize economic advancement since the municipalities had scanty financial resources. A far more energetic policy in respect of transport and communications would do much to bring about a decrease in the cost of living, for many of the non-self-governing peoples were dependent on products from abroad and transport and freight charges were extremely high.

In conclusion his delegation wished to place on record its recognition of the efforts of some Administering Powers to improve economic conditions in certain Territories and to emphasize that its comments had been made in a constructive spirit.

Mr. RASGOTRA (India) observed that in its reports on economic conditions the Committee on Information had laid down certain objectives of economic policy in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, the most important of which in his delegation's view was to remove the obstacles to economic development by modifying where necessary the basic structure of the economy.

The most serious of those obstacles, in his delegation's view, was the dead weight of subsistence agriculture. Only by a shift from subsistence agriculture to the production of cash crops could a cash surplus be obtained which could be used for the formation of capital for investment purposes. An increase in the production of cash crops naturally led to a rise in exports and a consequent rise in foreign currency earnings, which in turn led to a further rise in productivity and increased agricultural activity through improved techniques. Investment in agriculture not only raised farming productivity but rendered possible the domestic production of industrial goods for which the farmers themselves furnished a consumer market.

It would appear from the summaries and analyses of information that no great progress had been made since the Committee had last published a report on economic conditions in Non-Self-Governing Territories. It was true however that in the Territories under French administration the process of transforming a subsistence economy into an export economy had been somewhat more rapid than elsewhere, and particularly in African territories under other administration.

/...

(Mr. Rasgotra, India)

Apart from subsistence agriculture, the main distinguishing feature of the economies of the Non-Self-Governing Territories was their complete dependence on the production of raw materials for export. His delegation had in the past subscribed to the view that the Territories should develop processing industries based on primary and other products.

During the past few years there had been appreciable progress in the matter of trade. Exports had increased; however, imports had increased even more. There could be no objection to a rise in imports because in the early stages of industrialization countries must depend on imports of capital equipment, but unfortunately earnings had not risen proportionately. The Committee had been told that that was due to the general fall in world prices of raw materials. One reason for that fall was that the export market was somewhat arbitrarily controlled; another reason might be that there was overproduction of raw materials. There might be further reasons, but the point he was trying to make was that there should be restriction of imports, at least of materials which could and should be produced in the Territories. If the Territories continued to import primary products the stagnation of their economies was likely to be perpetuated. Thus the development of industries based on the products of the Territories was an important feature of their economy which should be dealt with on a priority basis. Very little progress appeared to have been made in that direction.

As wages in the Non-Self-Governing Territories increased the costs of production could be expected to rise; the cost of the raw materials exported by the Territories would also rise and that might lead to a diminution of demand for their products in the world market. Naturally he did not mean to imply that wages should not rise, but the solution of the problem would be the diversification of the economy of the Territories.

The only marked progress with regard to industrial development appeared to be taking place in Jamaica, where there were plans to construct an oil refinery within the next two years. On the other hand there were some discouraging features; for instance in the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland development expenditure allocated for the period 1957-1961 had apparently been reduced from £137 million to £121 million. The decrease unfortunately affected the allocations



(Mr. Rasgotra, India)

for health, railways, and education. Those were all vital fields of activity, but transport facilities were of particular importance to a developing economy and any cut in expenditure on such facilities could influence adversely the whole process of industrial or economic development of the Territory concerned.

In many of the Territories there were development plans of one kind or another, but his delegation had the impression that they were all isolated projects. As long as that was so it would be impossible to ensure the integrated development of the Territories. That observation applied to the great majority of the Territories. There was need for integrated economic planning taking into account all possible resources, both internal and external.

Another discouraging feature of the development plans in the Territories which had already been referred to by the representative of Guatemala was the insignificant role allotted to the indigenous inhabitants. In the long run no economic development would be possible unless the indigenous inhabitants were in a position to avail themselves of the facilities arising from the expansion of industry. For example, during the debate on educational conditions the Committee had been told that there were agricultural training courses but that indigenous people after completing the training were unable to find suitable employment. He wondered whether the governments of the Territories could not develop special co-operative farms on which they could work.

No headway could be made without scientific data for planning and for the implementation of plans. Research should be carried out in the Territories themselves, and he was glad to note that the Administering Powers and the Territorial Governments were attempting to establish research facilities. The emphasis should be on the development of resources in the Territories, either individually or on a regional basis where the separate Territories were too small.

In his delegation's view the Territories should introduce special tariffs. So far tariffs had been used only to keep down the prices of internal farm products, with the result that farmers became discontented and had no incentive to improve their methods. Happily that trend had recently been reversed; tariff regulations in the Belgian Congo had been modified and further modifications were contemplated to support domestic manufacturing industries. His delegation would like to see a

/...

(Mr. Raagotra, India)

similar policy followed in some of the African Territories under United Kingdom administration. Unfortunately in those Territories the emphasis was on trade rather than industrialization. There should not be too much dependence on external trade; products should be processed on the spot so that the Territories could export manufactured products and not only raw materials.

He understood that a tourist industry had been established in Nigeria from which the Territory was likely to earn considerable sums. That was an industry which did not require large initial investment and perhaps the example of Nigeria might be followed in some of the East African Territories.

The United Kingdom representative had informed the Committee that his Government's policy was to rely on private investment and private loans rather than on State investment. In the Indian delegation's view that policy was not satisfactory. For one reason, private investment came from abroad and was frequently not available as and when it was needed. He would therefore suggest that the Governments of the Territories themselves should take the initiative and offer competition to private investment. That system had worked well in India and conditions in most of the Non-Self-Governing Territories today were not unlike those prevailing in India in 1947.

He drew attention to General Assembly resolution 1327 (XIII), which expressed the hope that all African Territories would apply for associate membership in the Economic Commission for Africa through the Member States responsible for their administration. He did not know what progress had been made in that direction but hoped that it would be possible for the Committee on Information to establish direct contact with the Economic Commission for Africa in examining economic conditions in the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

**PROGRESS ACHIEVED BY NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES IN PURSUANCE OF CHAPTER XI OF THE CHARTER:**

- (a) THE METHOD OF EXAMINATION OF THE PROGRESS REPORT (A/AC.35/L.301)
- (b) SUMMARIES OF INFORMATION TRANSMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 73 e OF THE CHARTER SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS (A/4081 and Add.1 to 4; A/4082 and Add.1 to 5; A/4083 and Add.1 to 3; A/4084 and Add.1 to 4; A/4085 and Add.1 to 4; A/4086 and Add.1 to 10; A/4087 and Add.1 to 5; A/4088 and Add.1 to 14; A/4089 and Add.1 to 5)

Mr. PROFFITCH (Under Secretary for Trusteeship and Information from /... Non-Self-Governing Territories) said that, in document A/AC.35/L.301, the

(Mr. Protitch, Under-Secretary for Trusteeship and  
Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories)

Secretariat had provided a brief survey of the activities and events connected with the preparation of the Progress Report. It brought to the attention of the members of the Committee a number of factors and circumstances which might be of assistance to them in the formulation of any recommendations they might wish to make on the subject to the General Assembly at its fourteenth session in response to the request made by the Fourth Committee.

The interval before the texts of the summaries were printed would give the Secretariat the opportunity of incorporating in the final text any observations and comments made by members of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN observed that, as would be clear from a perusal of paragraphs 19 and 20 of the note by the Secretariat (A/AC.35/L.301), there was a relationship between items 7 (a) and 10 of the agenda. It would accordingly be in order for members to refer to item 10 when dealing with the method of examination of the progress report.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.