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COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

Fourteenth Session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY-SECOND MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 17 April 1963, at 11.a.m.

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PRESENT:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mr. de PINIES	(Spain)
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Mr. NORRISH	New Zealand
<u>Members:</u>	Mr. WHITE	Australia
	Mr. VALENCIA	Ecuador
	Miss SUNSERI	Honduras
	Mr. EASTMAN	Liberia
	Mr. CARRANCO AVILA	Mexico
	Mr. HAMDANI	Pakistan
	Mr. CALINGASAN	Philippines
	Mr. PEREZ RUIZ	Spain
	Mr. SCOTT	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
	Mrs. TREE	United States of America
<u>Representatives of specialized agencies:</u>		
	Mr. LLOYD	International Labour Organization
	Mr. SALSAMENDI	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
	Mrs. KALM	World Health Organization
<u>Secretariat:</u>	Mr. PROTITCH	Under-Secretary for Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self- Governing Territories
	Mr. KUNST	Secretary of the Committee

ECONOMIC ADVANCEMENT IN NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES (A/AC.35/L.368, L.369, L.370, L.375, L.376; ST/TRI/B.1962/1-4 and addenda) (continued)

- (a) POLICIES AND TRENDS
- (b) DEVELOPMENT PLANNING
- (c) AGRICULTURE
- (d) INDUSTRY
- (e) INTERNAL TRADE

Mr. PEREZ RUIZ (Spain), supplementing the information on the Spanish Territories in Africa transmitted by the Spanish Government and summarized by the Secretariat in document ST/TRI/B.1962/1/Add.1, said that despite their lack of mineral resources, their poor climate, small area and other limitations, Fernando Poo and Rio Muni were rapidly achieving a level of living comparable to that of the Peninsula. The general improvement in living conditions was reflected in the fact that the population of Fernando Poo had increased by 49 per cent and that of Rio Muni by 17 per cent between 1950 and 1960, that per capita productivity in the region was among the highest in Africa and that the value of exports in 1960 had amounted to approximately \$135 per inhabitant. Owing to a liberal economic and financial policy which fostered their development, a trade policy which protected their principal commodities from fluctuations in world demand, the absence of customs duties between them and other Spanish territories and a generous supply of foreign exchange for use in importing necessary machinery, Fernando Poo and Rio Muni were spared the instability characteristic of many under-developed countries.

Since Fernando Poo and Rio Muni were situated in one of the most insalubrious areas of the world, Spain had placed particular emphasis on improving public health and sanitation. A Spanish doctor, Director of the Model Leprosarium at Nicomeseng, was contributing to the efforts of the World Health Organization to eradicate leprosy in Africa. The Spanish Government had not only established health services and centres but had undertaken a campaign of popular education on health matters in order to secure the co-operation of the inhabitants. The success of that campaign was indicated by the fact that sick people in the region now sought medical assistance of their own free will. The women had co-operated actively in improving gynaecological and obstetric services, the number of

(Mr. Perez Ruiz, Spain)

maternity hospitals had multiplied and 90 per cent of all children were born in hospitals. The necessary paediatric and infant-care facilities had been provided and the infant mortality rate in hospitals had been reduced to 20.4 for every 1,000 births. Ten per cent of the budget for Spanish Equatorial Africa was allocated to public health and that sum had been increased for the current financial year by more than 7 million pesetas. Indeed, the amount spent per capita on health exceeded the figure in many of the countries in the area. Fernando Poo and Rio Muni also benefited from the work of the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Madrid.

Spanish Equatorial Africa had attained one of the highest levels of schooling in all Africa. In 1960, one of every eight inhabitants had been attending school and in Fernando Poo illiteracy had been almost eradicated. In the past decade, the number of schools and educational centres had more than doubled. The Spanish Government appropriated a sum of approximately 30.5 million pesetas in the regional budget solely for teaching staff, teaching materials and allowances.

The economy of Spanish Equatorial Africa was based primarily on agriculture, in particular on the production of cocoa in Fernando Poo and on forestry and the coffee crop in Rio Muni. The favourable return from exports from the region was due primarily to the fact that the entire production was absorbed by the provinces of the Peninsula at much higher prices than could be obtained on the world market. At the same time, under its Development Plan Spain had set in motion a programme of diversification of crops, establishment of related industries, development of fishing, improvement of ports and communications, mineral research, expansion of trade and strengthening of medium and long-term credit. It had undertaken a series of measures designed to raise per capita income as rapidly as possible to the level prevailing in the other provinces of Spain. At a later stage, he would provide the Committee with more detailed information on the principal agricultural products of the area.

Fernando Poo had two sources of power, hydraulic and thermal. Its road network was being extended to cover the entire island. Rio Muni already had an extensive network of roads and the largest proportion of the public works budget had been allocated for further improvement. Bata, in Rio Muni, had an international airport, and a new airfield capable of accommodating all types of commercial planes was being completed at Santa Isabel in Fernando Poo. Shipping facilities, however, through Santa Isabel, the principal port, were not commensurate with the needs.

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Most of the trade of Spanish Equatorial Africa is with the Peninsula, with the result that the region had always enjoyed a favourable balance of trade. Government price policy had been aimed at preventing any sudden rise in the cost of living and maintaining price stability. Despite many handicaps, those objectives had been achieved: the average increase in the cost of living had not exceeded 3.88 per cent in the last three years and was less than that in many European countries and most African States; price levels had remained lower than those of neighbouring countries, so that the purchasing power of the inhabitants was among the highest in Africa.

In recent years, the Spanish Government had devoted particular attention to the labour situation in the region. Generally speaking, employment possibilities greatly exceeded available manpower. Consequently, there was a considerable influx of workers from neighbouring territories, for whom the high level of living provided added inducement. The Development Plan sought to provide more opportunities for employment, especially in the industrial sector. On 9 January 1963 a decree had been enacted in the Peninsula establishing a minimum wage of 60 pesetas a day for all Spanish workers. Even before that decree had been enacted, however, the real wages of workers in Spanish Equatorial Africa had been higher than the new minimum. The income of the region had been estimated at about \$25.4 million a year, while the per capita income amounted to \$103. Indeed, the per capita income of Fernando Poo was higher than that of ten provinces in the Peninsula. While the figure for Rio Muni was considerably lower, it should be borne in mind that most of the inhabitants of Rio Muni were self-employed property owners and not wage-earners, and that Rio Muni's economy was based largely on consumption of its own products and on barter.

The continuous and rapid development of Fernando Poo and Rio Muni and the steady rise in their levels of living had been assured by the progressive increase in budgetary appropriations for them from 14 million pesetas in 1939 to 462 million pesetas in 1963. Most of that sum was spent on public works, urban improvement, health, education and assistance to the local administrations. All profits from the development of the region were re-invested there, income taxes were levied according to ability to pay, and taxation in general was lower than in the Peninsula.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.