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COMMITTEE ON INFORMATION FROM NON-SELF-GOVERNING TERRITORIES

Eleventh session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York
on Tuesday, 23 February 1960, at 11.20 a.m.

CONTENTS

Opening of the session

Election of the Chairman

Election of the Vice-Chairman

Election of the Rapporteur

Adoption of the agenda (A/AC.35/13)

Organization of the Committee's work (A/AC.35/L.313)

PRESENT:

Chairman:

Mr. QUAISON-SACKEY (Ghana)

Members:

Mr. ORTIZ de ROZAS Argentina

Mr. CURTIS Australia

Mr. GIBSON BARBOZA Brazil

Mr. KANAKARATNE Ceylon

Mr. de MARCHENA Dominican Republic

Mr. de CAMARET France

Mr. RASGOTRA India

Mr. PACHACHI Iraq

Mr. GOEDHART Netherlands

Mr. QUENTIN-BAXTER New Zealand

Mr. CASTON United Kingdom of Great Britain
and Northern Ireland

Mr. BACON }
Mr. SPALDING } United States of America

Representatives of specialized agencies:

Mr. REYMOND }
Mr. KHAN } International Labour
Organisation

Mr. ACHARYA Food and Agriculture
Organization

Mr. AKRAWI United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural
Organization

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

OPENING OF THE SESSION

Mr. PROTITCH (Under-Secretary for Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories) declared the session open, in the absence of Mr. Kelly, of Australia, who had been Chairman at the previous session and had been transferred to other important duties by his Government. As temporary Chairman he invited the Committee to proceed to the first item on its agenda, namely the election of a Chairman.

ELECTION OF THE CHAIRMAN

Mr. RASGOTRA (India) nominated Mr. Quaison-Sackey (Ghana) for the office of Chairman.

Mr. CASTON (United Kingdom) supported the nomination.

Mr. Quaison-Sackey (Ghana) was elected Chairman by acclamation.

The CHAIRMAN thanked the members of the Committee for electing him, in particular the representatives of India and the United Kingdom, who had respectively proposed his name and seconded the nomination. He felt a natural pride in his election since his Government attached so much importance to the activities of the Committee. One of the most significant indications of the headway the Committee had made was that a country such as Ghana, which a few years earlier had been one of the objects of the Committee's deliberations, was now represented by its Chairman.

The session which had just opened would be a particularly important one and would necessarily be long in view of the heavy agenda. Circumstances and the march of events in the colonial world were adding a ceremonial touch to the beginning of the Committee's second decade. Members would not wish to look back at the successes and failures of the past; the Committee had given ample evidence of its usefulness and objectivity, assisted by the co-operation of those members which had supplied information on the Territories under their administration and had furnished valuable observations on the various complex aspects of matters affecting conditions in the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

The Committee was appropriately starting its second decade with the examination of the progress report. Its task would be to look into the diverse developments which the Non-Self-Governing Territories had undergone during those eventful years, with a view to ascertaining what progress had been made to meet

(The Chairman)

the objectives of the Charter and the aspirations of the peoples to control their own affairs. Since Chapter XI of the Charter had first been put into effect there had been changes in the scope of the Committee's activities: in 1946 conditions in seventy-four Territories had been considered; since then approximately twenty Territories had achieved a new status varying from complete independence to different degrees of self-government.

He had noticed that there were frequent references in the progress report to areas which were no longer non-self-governing. Those references, which obviously related only to the period of those Territories' dependence, were a useful addition to the study, since the primary objective in the examination of the progress report would be to learn a lesson from the past with a view to arriving at positive conclusions for future guidance. He was convinced that it was not the Committee's intention to look at the report for the sole purpose of criticism and that, whether in the full Committee or in any sub-committee which might be appointed, the examination of the progress report would consist in the endeavour to appraise and analyse the facts and to conclude how far progress in the Territories had been achieved in the main fields of development. A thorough examination of the progress report would enable the Committee to present to the General Assembly full information on the extent to which the requirements of Chapter XI of the Charter had been met.

ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIRMAN

Mr. CURTIS (Australia) nominated Mr. Goedhart (Netherlands) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

Mr. Goedhart (Netherlands) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

ELECTION OF THE RAPPORTEUR

Mr. QUENTIN-BAXTER (New Zealand) nominated Mr. Bacon (United States of America) for the office of Rapporteur.

Mr. GIBSON (Brazil) seconded the nomination.

Mr. Bacon (United States of America) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (A/AC.35/13)

The CHAIRMAN asked whether any member wished to comment on the provisional agenda (A/AC.35/13).

Mr. ORTIZ de ROZAS (Argentina) said that the transmission of information on the Malvina Islands, the South Sandwich Islands, the South Georgia Islands and the land included in the Antarctic territory of the Argentine Republic by the United Kingdom authorities did not in any way affect Argentina's sovereignty over those territories.

Mr. CASTON (United Kingdom) said that his Government had no doubt concerning its sovereignty over the Falkland Islands and the Falkland Island Dependencies and formally reserved its rights in the matter.

Mr. RASGOTRA (India) said that his Government regarded West Irian as an integral part of the Republic of Indonesia, a sovereign and independent State. Any views which his delegation might express concerning the Territory in the course of the debate would be subject to that reservation.

Mr. PACHACHI (Iraq) said that his Government, too, regarded West Irian as an integral part of the Republic of Indonesia, on which the Netherlands Government was not entitled to transmit information. He also wished to reserve his Government's position with regard to sovereignty over what was described as the Aden Colony and Protectorate. Any views which his delegation might express on conditions in either of the Territories in question would be subject to those reservations.

Mr. KANAKARATNE (Ceylon) recalled that his delegation had made it abundantly clear on numerous occasions that it regarded sovereignty over West Irian as lying with the Republic of Indonesia. It should therefore be understood that any remarks which his delegation might make concerning the Territory would be subject to that reservation.

Mr. GOEDHART (Netherlands) said that his Government regarded its sovereignty over Netherlands New Guinea as being beyond doubt. The Netherlands

(Mr. Goedhart, Netherlands)

administered Netherlands New Guinea and was therefore obliged, under the provisions of Article 73 e of the Charter, to submit information on that Territory.

Mr. CURTIS (Australia) said that the Australian Government had no doubt regarding Netherlands sovereignty over the Territory of Netherlands New Guinea.

Mr. de MARCHENA (Dominican Republic) said that his delegation was concerned over the increasingly frequent expression by certain Governments of reservations with regard to the question of sovereignty over Territories which were not of direct concern to them. That trend might have serious repercussions on international law and United Nations practice.

The CHAIRMAN said that, as in previous sessions, a reference to the reservations expressed would be made in the summary records and in the Committee's reports.

The agenda (A/AC.35/13) was adopted.

ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK (A/AC.35/L.313)

Mr. PROTITCH (Under-Secretary for Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories) drew the Committee's attention to the complete list in the annex to document A/AC.35/L.313 of documents constituting the report on progress achieved by the Non-Self-Governing Territories in pursuance of Chapter XI of the Charter. For its usual triennial consideration of economic conditions the main studies before the Committee relating to item 5 of the agenda were those contained in documents A/AC.35/L.314-318. No separate studies dealing with social and educational conditions had been prepared by the Secretariat for the present session mainly because those subjects were given coverage in the Progress Report itself. The Secretariat had for the same reason considered it unnecessary to prepare a separate document on international collaboration, which was item 8 of the agenda, but it might be able to provide up-to-date information on that subject should it be requested in the course of the discussion.

Mr. RASGOTRA (India) inquired why no reference had been made to Christmas Island in the documents submitted to the Committee. At one time information had been furnished about that island and the Cocos Keeling Islands

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(Mr. Rasgotra, India)

in connexion with Singapore. The administration of those islands had subsequently been transferred to Australia and, following an inquiry by his delegation, Australia had begun to provide information about the Cocos Keeling Islands. A similar request concerning Christmas Island had, however, met with no response. He expressed the hope that the transmission of information on Christmas Island would be resumed without delay.

Mr. CURTIS (Australia) said that the matter was under consideration and his delegation hoped to refer to it again at the appropriate time.

The CHAIRMAN gave his views concerning the order in which the various phases of the Committee's work should be taken up and observed that it was apparent from exchanges of views which had taken place prior to the opening of the session that there was general agreement on the advisability of appointing a sub-committee to examine the progress report.

He invited the members of the Committee to offer whatever suggestions they might have concerning the organization of the Committee's work.

Mr. RASGOTRA (India) felt that, as the Committee was in all probability not ready to proceed with the general debate, the best course would be for it to adjourn until 25 February.

Mr. CASTON (United Kingdom) agreed.

It was so decided.

Mr. CASTON (United Kingdom) thought it would be useful if the Committee could be given a tentative time-table.

Mr. KUNST (Secretary of the Committee) outlined a tentative time-table and said that a written one would be made available at the next meeting.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.