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**FOURTH COMMITTEE, 889th  
 MEETING**

Tuesday, 29 September 1959,  
 at 3.10 p.m.

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**CONTENTS**

	Page
<i>Requests for hearings (continued)</i>	
<i>Requests concerning agenda item 13 (Report of the Trusteeship Council) (continued).....</i>	33
<i>Agenda item 41:</i>	
<i>The future of the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration (continued):</i>	
<i>(a) Organization of the plebiscite in the southern part of the Territory: question of the two alternatives to be put to the people and the qualifications for voting (continued)</i>	
<i>Hearing of petitioners (continued) . . . . .</i>	33

**Chairman: Mr. L. N. PALAR (Indonesia).**

**Requests for hearings (A/C.4/409/Add.1) (continued)**

**REQUESTS CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 13 (REPORT OF THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL) (A/C.4/409/ADD.1) (continued)**

1. The CHAIRMAN recalled that Mr. Abel Kingué, Vice-Chairman of the Union des populations du Cameroun, had asked the Committee to grant a hearing to Mr. Moumié and Mr. Ouandié on the subject of the situation in the Cameroons under French administration (A/C.4/409/Add.1).

2. Mr. KOSCZIUSKO-MORIZET (France) stated that the French delegation did not wish to associate itself in any way with the principle of granting a hearing to Mr. Moumié, since he had attempted to frustrate by violence the implementation of the General Assembly's last resolution concerning the Cameroons under French administration.

*The Committee decided to grant the hearing.*

3. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should hear the petitioners when it was considering agenda item 13 (Report of the Trusteeship Council).

*It was so decided.*

**AGENDA ITEM 41**

**The future of the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration (A/C.4/412) (continued):**

**(a) Organization of the plebiscite in the southern part of the Territory: question of the two alternatives to be put to the people and the qualifications for voting (continued)**

**HEARING OF PETITIONERS (continued)**

*At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Ndeh Ntumazah, representative of One Kamerun, took a place at the Committee table.*

4. Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) briefly reviewed the history of the Cameroons since the Berlin Conference of 1885. Unlike other African territories, the Cameroons had not had the good fortune to belong to one colonial Power alone: it had been the object of the designs of several countries and its fate had been decided by the bargains struck between them. The United Kingdom and France had been generous enough to agree to administer the territory under the Trusteeship System; nevertheless, as regards the future of the Cameroons, they had certain ideas which they had succeeded in imposing on the United Nations, against the wishes of the peoples concerned, who had continued to demand their independence. Their plans were that the eastern Cameroons, administered by France, should cease to be a Trust Territory and should be bound, culturally and economically, to France, while the Southern Cameroons, administered by the United Kingdom, should fall to Nigeria or become the permanent property of the United Kingdom, the Northern Cameroons being simply annexed by Northern Nigeria. The Cameroons would then be torn asunder. If the United Nations agreed to those unacceptable plans, it would be abandoning the very principle of trusteeship and sanctioning a return to colonialism. The central idea of the Trusteeship System, as of the Mandate System, was that the international organization was discharging a sacred mission and that the territories for whose administration it was responsible must finally revert to their legitimate owners; hence the absolute obligation to preserve their territorial integrity.

5. If the United Nations considered that the Cameroonians were capable of deciding their own future, all the more were they capable of governing themselves, and there could be no question of annexation, integration or the maintenance of the colonial régime. The Cameroons must recover the independence which it had experienced between 1914 and 1916. That was the only solution which would be in keeping with the provisions of the United Nations Charter, and not a single inhabitant of the Territory was opposed to it. He wondered how Mr. Foncha, the Premier of the Southern Cameroons, who had stated that the Southern Cameroons was finally on the threshold of independence, could now agree that it should be plunged back into slavery. Peace-loving nations had a duty to abolish colonialism, the modern form of slavery, forever.

6. He did not think that the maintenance of trusteeship should be among the possibilities offered to the people of the Southern Cameroons at the plebiscite. The Southern Cameroons could not of itself constitute a viable economic unit, and it should be able to choose forthwith between independence within the framework of the Cameroons Republic and self-government within the Federation of Nigeria. It should be allowed to exercise that choice freely before the eastern Cameroons and Nigeria attained to independence, for it would be much more difficult for it to negotiate advantageously

with its two large neighbours after they had become independent.

7. The Government of the United Kingdom had several times indicated that the Cameroonians must not count on economic assistance from the United Kingdom if they refused to join the Federation of Nigeria. But Mr. Foncha now said that the Southern Cameroons should remain under trusteeship for economic reasons. Did he have any grounds for thinking that the United Kingdom Government had changed its position? Why, moreover, should the United Kingdom not give financial assistance in the form of loans to an independent Cameroons?

8. The United Kingdom Government had formally stated that the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration would by 1960 have fulfilled the conditions laid down in Article 76 b of the Charter, and it was on its recommendation that the General Assembly had adopted its resolution 1350 (XIII). The United Nations could not go back on its decision and maintain the trusteeship régime except by violating the provisions of the Charter.

9. Finally, the Cameroonians could not be asked to opt for a system which the United Nations had begun to apply to them in 1946 for the sole purpose of leading them to self-government or independence. The Organization would be failing in its sacred duty if it were to put the Cameroonian peoples back exactly where they were in 1946, and that simply because certain persons had an interest in preserving ties with the United Kingdom. If it was felt that the Trusteeship System should be maintained in the Cameroons, that implied a judgement on the political maturity of the Territory's inhabitants and it was then impossible, logically, to invite them to decide their future by means of a plebiscite. That applied to the Northern no less than to the Southern Cameroons. The United Nations ought not to sanction colonialism in defiance of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth sessions, and any attempt to withhold from the peoples of the Cameroons the possibility of becoming independent in 1960 would run counter to the principles proclaimed by the Asian-African Conference held at Bandung in 1955 and by the All-African People's Conference held at Accra in 1958. The Committee could not but remember how long it had taken to secure the Administering Authority's agreement to leave the Territory; the task would be even more difficult if that Authority succeeded in persuading the United Nations to prolong its mandate.

10. He then turned to the questions which should be asked in the plebiscite. The Charter provided for only two possibilities—self-government or independence. Any other solution would therefore be contrary to the Charter. The only possible alternatives were whether the Southern Cameroons wished to join, and achieve independence with, the eastern Cameroons, or whether it wished to become a self-governing Region within the Federation of Nigeria. It was in that sense, moreover, that Mr. Foncha had always spoken in the past, as one could see simply by referring to the statements made by the Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP) to the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in West Africa, 1958, which were to be found in paragraph 199 of the Mission's report (T/1426 and Add.1), and also to the statements made by the Premier to the members of the United States trade mission on 5 June 1959. At the 885th meeting, however, Mr. Foncha

had told the Fourth Committee that the various sections of the Cameroons wishing to unite were not yet ready to negotiate on the procedures for their reunification. Yet the Cameroons under French administration was certainly ready, since on 24 October 1958 it had adopted a resolution in favour of reunification (T/1427 and T/1434, para. 82). Moreover, Mr. Foncha himself had promised before the general elections that, if his party won, he would confirm the wish of the people of the Southern Cameroons to unite with the Cameroons under French administration. It was not true that the people were not ready, and the United Nations should not allow itself to be convinced by that false argument.

11. Turning to the organization of the plebiscite, he said that the future of the Territory was a matter for decision by the Cameroonians alone. It would not be right to allow those Nigerians now living in the Cameroons and still retaining their Nigerian citizenship to take part in the plebiscite. On the other hand, One Kamerun did not recognize the arbitrary frontiers which had been imposed on the Cameroons, and considered that all Cameroonians were brothers, whether they had been placed under the authority of France or under that of the United Kingdom. Consequently, Cameroonians from the Territory administered by France who had lived in the Southern Cameroons continuously for one year should be allowed to vote in the plebiscite. All Cameroonians living abroad should likewise be allowed to vote by proxy.

12. All those problems had been examined at the Southern Cameroons Plebiscite Conference and the Premier, in his statement at the 885th meeting, had probably given the Committee the impression that most of the participants in that Conference had supported his party's position. That was no doubt true, since the Premier himself had organized the Conference and selected the participants. The Native Authorities police had even gone so far as to chase certain chiefs back to their homes in order to compel them to sign a document expressing their support of the KNDP's views.

13. The Cameroonians had come a long way since the dark days of foreign domination. Today they stood at the threshold of independence and relied on the United Nations to help them achieve it in 1960. It was true that the Territory had not developed so fast economically as it had politically. But if the peoples of the Cameroons aspired so keenly to political independence, it was precisely because they saw in it, not an end in itself, but the means whereby they could create the best atmosphere for the development of a Cameroonian individuality.

14. In conclusion, he asked the Committee to authorize him to present his party's views once more when it considered the conditions in the Cameroons under French administration.

*The meeting was suspended at 3.45 p.m. and resumed at 4 p.m.*

15. Mr. QUAISON-SACKEY (Ghana) asked the petitioner, firstly, whether his party had taken part in the last elections held in the Southern Cameroons and, if so, how many seats it had won; and secondly, whether he considered that Mr. Foncha and Mr. Endeley, the Leader of the Opposition in the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly, had the support of a majority of the Territory's population.

16. Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun), after replying to the first question in the negative, said that it was difficult to estimate the support enjoyed by the political leaders who had abandoned the positions that had brought them to power, as was the case with Mr. Foncha. Nor should it be forgotten that, under Article 76 b of the Charter, it was the peoples concerned, and not the political leaders, who should be consulted regarding the future of a Trust Territory.
17. Mr. QUAISON-SACKEY (Ghana) asked what would happen to One Kamerun if the population decided in favour of union with Nigeria.
18. Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) replied that his party respected democratic principles and would bow to the will of the majority. What mattered was not the reputation or future of a party, but the future of the Territory.
19. Replying to further questions from Mr. QUAISON-SACKEY (Ghana), Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) said that, if the people decided in favour of reunification, representatives of all the Cameroonian parties should meet to decide on the form which reunification should take. It had so far been a question of a federal constitution, but One Kamerun in no way wished to impose its point of view on the population.
20. Mr. RASGOTRA (India) said that his delegation was carefully studying the statements made by Mr. Ntumazah, Mr. Foncha, Mr. Endeley and the United Kingdom representative, and intended to ask questions concerning them at the next meeting.
21. In reply to questions from Miss BROOKS (Liberia), Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) explained that his party had not taken part in the last elections because at that time the supporters of union with Nigeria had seemed to be gaining ground and his party had therefore considered it advisable to support the KNDP, which had then represented the Opposition. He was certain that in a plebiscite the people would support his party's position with regard to reunification. It was for that reason, moreover, that no party in the Southern Cameroons had completely excluded the possibility of reunification, knowing that if it had done so it would have lost the support which it enjoyed among the population.
22. Mr. SHARIF (Indonesia) asked the petitioner, in view of his statements concerning the existence of a Cameroonian nationality, to give further details about the movements which in all parts of the Cameroons were aiming at the creation of a Cameroonian nation.
23. Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) said that the population in all parts of the Cameroons desired reunification. There was unanimity on that point in the Cameroons under French administration, and One Kamerun had established contact with many political organizations in that Territory which shared its point of view. With regard to the Southern Cameroons, it should be emphasized that the parties advocating union with Nigeria had adopted that position only very recently.
24. Mr. SHARIF (Indonesia), noting the views which Mr. Ntumazah had expressed concerning the questions which should be put at the plebiscite, asked him in what way he thought that the Southern Cameroons should be governed until such time as Nigeria and the Cameroons under French administration attained to independence, and how long a period must elapse thereafter before its population could decide its future by means of a plebiscite.
25. Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) recalled that the General Assembly, in its resolution 1350 (XIII), had decided that the Southern Cameroons should attain to independence in 1960. Its population should be consulted before Nigeria and the Cameroons under French administration became independent—in other words, before the Territory became a mere strip of land wedged between two large independent countries.
26. Mr. RAHNEMA (Iran) recalled Mr. Mbile's view that it would be advisable to postpone the plebiscite because the people had not as yet any specific information regarding the form which reunification with the Cameroons under French administration might take. He asked Mr. Ntumazah to explain further the passage in his statement in which he had said that, after Nigeria and the Cameroons under French administration had become independent, the Southern Cameroons would be in an unfavourable position to negotiate the conditions in which it would be able to associate itself with one or other of those territories.
27. Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) said that it was not true that the people were confused over the question of the attachment of the Southern Cameroons to Nigeria or to the Cameroons under French administration. Those two possibilities had been canvassed for many years. On the other hand, it was only in November 1958, during the General Assembly's thirteenth session, that the possibility of continued trusteeship had been mentioned, for the first time, by the United Kingdom representative in the Fourth Committee. That was therefore a proposition of the Administering Authority, which the KNDP had then adopted as its own. Attention should moreover be drawn to the illogical position taken up by the Administering Authority, which on the one hand claimed that the people of the Southern Cameroons were ripe for independence and, on the other, proposed to keep them under trusteeship.
28. Mr. RAHNEMA (Iran) asked whether, should all the political parties in the Southern Cameroons think it preferable to postpone the determination of the Territory's future to a later date, the petitioner would persist in his views.
29. Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) said that, if the idea of such a possibility had come from the people and not from the Administering Authority, his party's position would certainly have been different. The real question was whether the Southern Cameroons was to remain associated with Nigeria or whether it was to unite with the Cameroons under French administration, and there could be no doubt that the population was sufficiently mature politically to answer that question.
30. Mr. SPACIL (Czechoslovakia) asked Mr. Ntumazah what he thought of the statement in Mr. Mbile's request for a hearing (A/C.4/408, sec.2) that the Cameroons was "an artificial creation of the Berlin Conference of 1885".
31. Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) observed that the same could be said of many other African countries, including Nigeria. If the Cameroons was "an artificial creation", why should it be united with Nigeria, which was in the same position?
32. Mr. KANAKARATNE (Ceylon) asked the petitioner to give a more specific reply to the question put to him by the Iranian representative about what his position

would be if the Government party and the Opposition party in the Southern Cameroons were in agreement to postpone the determination of the Territory's future to a later date. Did Mr. Ntumazah mean that an opinion of the Administering Authority could not be in line with the wishes of the people?

33. Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) explained that he had not intended to cast automatic doubt on the value of the views of the Administering Authority or of the political parties' leaders, but that, since the people were now awaiting the plebiscite, it could not be argued that they wanted it to be postponed. The speakers who had talked about postponing the plebiscite had never been authorized by their electors to do so. In any event, the question of the Territory's future should be examined independently of the political parties since, as the Administering Authority had admitted and as the General Assembly had recognized in a resolution, the population was sufficiently mature politically to decide its own future.

34. Mr. RAHNEMA (Iran) noted that that politically mature population was represented in the Southern Cameroons by a majority party and a minority party. Did Mr. Ntumazah mean to imply that neither party really represented the people?

35. Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) said that if it were possible to rely in the last resort on the views of the political parties' representatives, there would be no need to have recourse to a plebiscite. According to the principles of democracy, it should even be possible to rely on the views of the party in power. The fact was, however, that the people of the Southern Cameroons did not share that standpoint.

36. Mr. CARPIO (Philippines) said that the question of the Cameroonian population's political maturity, which the petitioner did not seem to be calling in question, had never been really discussed by the Committee. The idea that the Southern Cameroons was now capable of deciding its own future was based simply on what the Administering Authority had said—namely that, when Nigeria became independent, the people of the Cameroons would likewise have attained the objectives of trusteeship, it being left unspecified whether those objectives were self-government or independence. Mr. Mbile, for his part, had denied that the Southern Cameroons was politically mature, alleging that the people were not in a position to understand the real significance of the plebiscite and of the issues involved and that, in view of the pressure exerted upon them by the political parties, it was not impossible that they might take a decision contrary to their own interests.

37. There was therefore in fact some doubt about the political maturity of the people of the Southern Cameroons. He felt that it might be better, in those circumstances, to postpone the settlement of the question to a later date, until the Cameroons under French administration and Nigeria had both become independent and the population was in a better position to determine its future.

38. Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) assured the Committee that the Cameroonian population was quite capable of expressing its opinion. If the Northern Cameroons opted for union with Nigeria, why should the Southern Cameroons remain a Trust Territory surrounded by independent countries? He recalled that resolution 1064 (XI) of the General Assembly, dated 26 February 1957, invited the Administering Authorities to estimate the period of time required for the attainment of self-government or independence by all Trust Territories and to submit appropriate information in that connexion. What would happen if the Fourth Committee now decided to ask the Administering Authority, which had already given its views, to continue to administer the Southern Cameroons? In point of fact, the future of the Territory was an eminently simple matter: the only choice was between Nigeria and the Cameroons under French administration.

39. Mr. CARPIO (Philippines), noting that Mr. Ntumazah represented the party One Kamerun, asked whether he spoke for the Southern Cameroons only or for both the Southern and the Northern Cameroons.

40. Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) said that his statements concerned only the Southern Cameroons. However, there was no doubt that the Trusteeship Agreement explicitly placed both parts of the Territory under the authority of the United Kingdom Government.

41. Mr. CARPIO (Philippines) asked the petitioner what he felt the situation would be if the Northern Cameroons were to be integrated with Nigeria and the Trusteeship System prolonged for the Southern Cameroons. If the General Assembly were to reconsider completely the question of the two parts of the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration, did the petitioner not think that it would be better, in the interests of the Cameroonian people, for the question of the Territory's future to be postponed for a specific period, say one or two years, in order that the Cameroonians might be given an opportunity to see where their real interests lay?

42. Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) replied that it was painful for any people to see the time of their accession to independence postponed. In fact, the Administering Authority had had no desire to bring trusteeship to an end, but the question had arisen by accident in connexion with the future of Nigeria. The Cameroonians had then felt that they must seize the opportunity so presented.

43. The CHAIRMAN asked the Committee whether it wished to grant Mr. Ntumazah a further hearing, in accordance with his request, when the question of the future of the Cameroons under French administration was examined.

*The Committee decided to grant the hearing.*

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.