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**FOURTH COMMITTEE, 937th
 MEETING**

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CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Agenda items 13 and 39:</i>	
<i>Report of the Trusteeship Council (continued)</i>	
<i>Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Trust Territories: report of the Trusteeship Council (continued)</i>	
<i>Hearing of petitioners (continued)</i>	289
<i>General debate.</i>	292

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

AGENDA ITEMS 13 AND 39

Report of the Trusteeship Council (A/4100) (continued)

Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Trust Territories: report of the Trusteeship Council (A/4100, part I, chap. VII, sec. D) (continued)

HEARING OF PETITIONERS (continued)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. John Kale, Mr. Blaise Manga-Bilé, representative of the Groupe parlementaire des Démocrates camerounais, Mr. Théodore Mayi Matip, representative of the former members of the Resistance, maquisards, refugees, exiles and political prisoners, Mr. Ndeh Ntumazah, representative of One Kamerun, Mr. Ernest Ouandié, representative of the Union des populations du Cameroun, Mr. Isaac Tchoumba Ngouankeu, representative of the Conseil national kamerunais de la Conférence des peuples africains, and Mr. Nonga Yomb, representative of members of Parliament elected on the platform of national reconciliation and independence, took places at the Committee table.

1. Mr. ASSAR (Iran) recalled that Mr. Ntumazah had strongly criticized the association of the Cameroons with the European Common Market without consultation of the Territory and had referred to the rebuilding of the port of Douala with financial assistance from the Common Market as an example of twentieth century colonialism. Since on the face of it such expenditure was likely to be beneficial, he asked Mr. Ntumazah to explain what connexion there was between the European Common Market and the new colonialism.

2. Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) replied that the money to be spent on the port could not be in the interests of the Territory since the port was to be French-owned. The fact that the port of Douala, together with an airfield, was to become French property after independence had been debated at length in the Legislative Assembly. The revenue from the port and airfield would not benefit the Cameroonian people. The point he had wished to make was that, once the

Cameroons was independent, certain parts of the country could not remain French property. It was an instance of economic domination.

3. The CHAIRMAN asked Mr. Manga-Bilé whether he was now in a position to answer the question put to him by the representative of Ethiopia at the previous meeting.

4. Mr. MANGA-BILE (Groupe parlementaire des Démocrates camerounais) said that the conventions concluded between the French and Cameroonian Governments provided that French armed forces would remain in the Cameroons for thirty years. Both the French and the Cameroonian Governments had become aware of the general disapproval with which that proposal was viewed and had decided that it should not be made the subject of public debate. Consequently, the Legislative Assembly had never been allowed to discuss the conventions in a plenary meeting; they had been considered by a committee consisting of only a small proportion of the members of the Legislative Assembly. When the committee in question had completed its work, it had returned the conventions direct to the French High Commissioner. The French authorities had noted the repercussions caused by the land laws and had realized that they would be even more serious where the military conventions were concerned.

5. At a meeting of the Legislative Assembly held on 4 June 1959 a draft law on public lands had been discussed and the President of the Legislative Assembly—a Government supporter—had protested against the reference in the law to decrees of the French Government; while expressing his appreciation of what France had done in the Cameroons, the speaker had been unable to understand why France wished to reserve parcels of Cameroonian territory for itself. Another speaker had said that, if land was required for the defence of the Cameroons, it should be handed over to the Cameroonian Government when the French left the Territory. There had also been references in the debate to land concessions made to Europeans in the rural areas. Article 3 of the proposed law would give those European landowners the right to sell the land although they had done nothing to develop it; indeed, one member of the Legislative Assembly had said that such sales were already taking place without official permission, contrary to what had been the practice when the French High Commissioner had been the responsible authority, and had urged the Government to hold an inquiry into what was going on.

6. Mr. BUSNIAK (Czechoslovakia) observed that Mr. Ahidjo, the Prime Minister of the Cameroons, had given an assurance at the thirteenth session of the General Assembly that elections would take place once the Territory had become independent. Since an election presupposed the existence of an electoral law, he asked the petitioners whether such a law did in

fact exist or was under consideration, and, if so, on what principles it was based.

7. Mr. MANGA-BILE (Groupe parlementaire des Démocrates camerounais) replied that a draft electoral law had been introduced in October 1959 by a member of the Opposition but, for that very reason, the French Government and the Cameroonian Government had privately decided that it should not be considered. It was now reported that the Cameroonian Government was studying a draft electoral law for submission to the Legislative Assembly; he did not see, however, how the Legislative Assembly could be expected to consider such a law, since it had been recessed for an indefinite period.

8. Mr. BUSNIAK (Czechoslovakia) said that he would like the other petitioners also to reply to his question.

9. Mr. TCHOUMBA NGOUANKEU (Conseil national kamerounais de la Conférence des peuples africains) said that according to Le Monde of 29 October 1959 Mr. Ahidjo had stated that he intended to present an electoral law and a constitution to the Cameroonian people early in January 1960. Although the provisions of the draft law had not yet been made public, he understood that it would prohibit all who had been sentenced or exiled for political reasons and all members of the dissolved political parties from standing for election. The draft constitution was to have been presented to the Legislative Assembly but since the Government had now obtained full powers the constitution would merely be imposed on the Cameroonian people.

10. As far as elections were concerned, Mr. Ahidjo had stated before the Legislative Assembly on 8 May 1959 that the term of the present Parliament would expire in December 1961. That date had been mentioned only to deceive public opinion; in fact Mr. Ahidjo did not intend to hold elections until he was sure that all the seats would be won by his party. Indeed, in an interview with Le Monde he had said that he could not agree to the dissolved parties taking part in the election.

11. With regard to the special powers granted to the Cameroonian Government, although under the Statute the Government and the Legislative Assembly were not empowered to legislate on external matters, under the full powers the Government could make use of the army, although it was a French and not a Cameroonian army. The terms on which the full powers had been granted therefore violated the Statute, which had itself been adopted in violation of the previous Statute of 1957.

12. Mr. OUANDIE (Union des Populations du Cameroun) said that it was impossible to believe that the Ahidjo Government would be prepared to hold elections in the present circumstances. If they had intended to do so there would have been no purpose in obtaining full powers. According to Mr. Ahidjo himself those powers had been asked for to deal with an exceptional situation and now that they had been granted he would doubtless use them to bring military reinforcements into the Territory. The amnesty that had been granted was not unconditional but was dependent on the opponents of the Government laying down their arms. Mr. Ahidjo refused to legalize the dissolved organizations and had said that his Government would continue to exercise the full powers until political stability had been restored, but as long as

the present policy was continued there would never be political stability.

13. Mr. BUSNIAK (Czechoslovakia) said that one of the questions raised at the thirteenth session of the General Assembly had been whether the Ahidjo Government and the Legislative Assembly were truly representative of the people, or at least of a majority. Since Mr. Manga-Bilé was a member of the Legislative Assembly he would like him to give the Committee some more detailed information, first on the circumstances in which the Legislative Assembly had been elected, secondly on the role it played in the legislative field and thirdly on the role played by its members in the political life of the country.

14. Mr. MANGA-BILE (Groupe parlementaire des Démocrates camerounais) replied that the present Assembly had been elected as a Territorial Assembly in December 1956 for the purpose of adopting a budget and dealing with a few unimportant questions. It had been transformed into a Legislative Assembly in May 1957. After the return of Mr. Ahidjo from New York the situation had begun to deteriorate: the people were increasingly uneasy and angry because they feared that the procedure used in 1957 might be followed again in 1960. The people did not approve of the Government's policy and wished to know when new elections would be held and when the Cameroons would attain real and effective independence.

15. Mr. OUANDIE (Union des populations du Cameroun) said that the present Government and Legislative Assembly were not representative of opinion in the Cameroons. According to a recent article in Le Figaro, Mr. Ahidjo had no serious political party to back him and had to maintain his position by means of lobbying and intrigue. The article further stated that the struggle against terrorism was carried on almost entirely by French troops and metropolitan police.

16. Mr. SHARIF (Indonesia) said that his delegation was interested to know whether or not Mr. Bebey-Eyidi had been arrested. He asked whether any of the petitioners was in possession of letters from Mr. Bebey-Eyidi, Press releases or anything else which might throw light on the subject.

17. Mr. TCHOUMBA NGOUANKEU (Conseil national kamerounais de la Conférence des peuples africains) recalled that at the previous meeting he had read out a telegram on the subject which the International Organization of Journalists had sent to the United Nations and to the Government of the Cameroons. On 4 July 1959 the Agence France-Presse had stated that all members of the Conseil national kamerounais had been arrested with the exception of one who had fled.

18. Mr. KOSCZIUSKO-MORIZET (France) observed that the organization in question was not in the Cameroons and had no first-hand information on the subject.

19. It was true that the dispatch from the Agence France-Presse stated that the Conseil national kamerounais had been disbanded but that was not evidence that Mr. Bebey-Eyidi had been arrested. He confirmed his earlier statement that Mr. Bebey-Eyidi was not under arrest and had not been arrested at any time since the thirteenth session of the General Assembly.

20. Mr. OUANDIE (Union des populations du Cameroun) said that all the petitioners who at the meetings of the Fourth Committee held in February and March

1959, during the thirteenth session of the General Assembly, had opposed the Franco-Cameroonian Government had been the victims of persecution since their return to the Territory. Since he and the other petitioners were not employed by the French Government they had no official documents at their disposal, but they had quoted from La Presse du Cameroun, Le Monde and Le Figaro.

21. Mr. Mbarga Manga, who had requested a hearing by the Fourth Committee, was at present in prison.

22. Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) took issue with the statement that the anti-Government petitioners had been persecuted. He had already informed the Committee that Mr. Bebey-Eyidi had not been arrested. Mr. Mayi Matip was appearing before the Fourth Committee at the current session. It was true that Mr. Mbarga Manga had been indicted because his house had been used as a centre for terrorist activities, but as he suffered from a serious physical handicap he was in the hospital at Yaoundé, where he was undergoing treatment; he had been visited there by a WHO expert, who presumably could be asked for his opinion on Mr. Mbarga Manga's condition and the treatment he was being given. In any event his difficulties had no connexion with the fact that he had been a petitioner. Mr. Tasalla Mekongo, who was a member of the Legislative Assembly, was continuing his normal activities. Others were carrying out trade-union work and holding meetings.

23. While he would not claim that none of the petitioners at the thirteenth session had clashed with the police, he would stress that, if they had, that was not because they had been petitioners. Petitioners, like anyone else, were subject to the law of their country.

24. Mr. TCHOUMBA NGOUANKEU (Conseil national kamerunais de la Conférence des peuples africains) maintained that Mr. Mbarga Manga was in the prison section of the hospital and that it was only owing to his illness that he was not in the ordinary prison.

25. Mr. SHARIF (Indonesia) asked whether Mr. Mayi Matip, who had just come from the Cameroons, could give him any further information.

26. Mr. MAYI MATIP, representing former members of the Resistance, "maquisards", refugees, exiles and political prisoners, said that Mr. Bebey-Eyidi had not been arrested since his return to the Cameroons after the thirteenth session of the General Assembly. Mr. Mbarga Manga had been arrested after the incidents of June 1959 and was in hospital under surveillance. Mr. Ndingué had been arrested and was under detention.

27. Mr. SHARIF (Indonesia) observed that there were conflicting reports concerning the situation in the Cameroons. He wished to know what, to the petitioners' knowledge, had been done by the Government of the Cameroons to inform the public and the political parties of the assurances given by Mr. Ahidjo to the General Assembly at its thirteenth session, which political parties and what percentage of the anti-Government groups had made use of the opportunity to return, how they were being treated and whether they were free to participate in political life.

28. Mr. OUANDIE (Union des populations du Cameroun) recalled that at the thirteenth session Mr. Ahidjo had assured the Fourth Committee that all those who were in exile could return without fear of

reprisals. The representative of the Union des populations du Cameroun (UPC) at that session had undoubtedly entertained reservations regarding that undertaking in view of the open hostility shown by the French and Cameroonian Governments to the three dissolved organizations. The leaders of those parties had suffered arrest and imprisonment because of their patriotism and they knew what their fate would be if they were to return to the Territory. If the Cameroonian Government had been sincere in its desire for conciliation it would have abrogated the law dissolving the parties in question. The leaders of the UPC, the Union démocratique des femmes camerounaises (UDEFEF) and the Jeunesse démocratique du Cameroun (JDC) would have been glad to return to their country immediately after the end of the thirteenth session had an unconditional amnesty been proclaimed.

29. Mr. SHARIF (Indonesia) asked whether in the elections held in Sanaga-Maritime on 12 April all the political parties, including the UPC, had been permitted to vote.

30. Mr. TCHOUMBA NGOUANKEU (Conseil national kamerunais de la Conférence des peuples africains) replied that the UPC and the two organizations affiliated with it had not been able to participate in those elections because any candidate they might have put up would have been arrested.

31. Mr. ADAM (Ghana) said that he would like the petitioners to identify and describe the groups in the Territory which supported them.

32. Mr. OUANDIE (Union des populations du Cameroun) said that the UPC, which he represented, was the most popular party in the Territory, as it could easily prove if given an opportunity to participate in an election. The very fact that it was barred from electoral activity was an indirect tribute to its importance.

33. Mr. TCHOUMBA NGOUANKEU (Conseil national kamerunais de la Conférence des peuples africains) explained that the Conférence des peuples africains, of which the Conseil national kamerunais was an affiliate, was an Africa-wide organization formed as a result of the All-African People's Conference held at Accra in December 1958. He also represented the Association Bamiléké du Kamerun.

34. Mr. MANGA-BILE (Groupe parlementaire des Démocrates camerounais) said that he was a neighbour of Mr. Mbarga Manga's and knew that the latter had been arrested on a charge of having received a delegation of members of the UPC for the purpose of reconstituting that outlawed organization. The police had produced UPC membership cards which they claimed to have found in Mr. Mbarga Manga's house. He went on to describe the case of another Cameroonian who had been arrested upon his return to the Territory from Paris, on a charge of belonging to the French Communist Party and the UPC.

35. Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) asked whether the petitioner was answering the question put by the representative of Ghana or making a new statement.

36. Mr. RASGOTRA (India) said that he thought there could be no objection if in answering a question a petitioner found it necessary to elaborate on his earlier statement.

37. Miss BROOKS (Liberia) expressed the view that petitioners should be allowed, when answering questions, to give any clarifications which might obviate the necessity of putting the same questions to other petitioners.

38. Mr. MANGA-BILE (Groupe parlementaire des Démocrates camerounais) said that the questioning of both himself and the other petitioners had shown that a more detailed explanation of the arrest of Mr. Mbarga Manga was necessary. He had in his possession a file which the latter had sent him through an attendant at the hospital where he was confined. On the back of one of the papers in that file had been written the words "It is impossible for me even to communicate with my lawyer". Upon receiving the file the petitioner had written to the United Nations Secretariat concerning Mr. Mbarga Manga's case and had been informed that the Secretariat had immediately requested the Administering Authority to intervene with the Cameroonian authorities to release Mr. Mbarga Manga so that he could proceed to New York.

39. His own experience in connexion with his passport was illustrative of the way in which the Cameroonian Government was trying to make trouble for those who were opposed to it. Having been granted an exit visa by the Cameroonian authorities and a visa to enter the United States by the United States Consul in Yaoundé, he had been requested by the latter, twenty-four hours before his departure, to give him the passport again so that the visa could be altered. Later the Consul had returned the passport and apologized for having taken it away. The petitioner had replied that if any accident befell him the Consul would be responsible. It was significant that on that same day several executions had taken place and police activity had been intensified. His car had been stoned and he himself had been beaten.

40. Mr. KOSZIUSKO-MORIZET (France) observed that the petitioner, although claiming to have been persecuted, had been able to leave the Territory on an ordinary commercial aircraft, to spend several days in Paris and then to proceed freely to New York.

41. Mr. NTUMAZAH (One Kamerun) said in reply to the question asked by the representative of Ghana that the only way of ascertaining the strength and influence of the parties represented by the petitioners was to allow them to participate in elections. His own party, for example, could prove at the polls that it had a very large measure of support in the Territory.

42. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that Mr. Senghor, President of the Mali Assembly, who was present as a member of the French delegation, would be obliged to leave New York the following day and would like to make a statement now as part of the general debate on the report of the Trusteeship Council (A/4100). If the Committee agreed, the questioning of the petitioners would continue at the next meeting.

Mr. John Kale, Mr. Blaise Manga-Bilé, representative of the Groupe parlementaire des Démocrates camerounais, Mr. Théodore Mayi Matip, representative of the former members of the Resistance, maquisards, refugees, exiles and political prisoners, Mr. Ndeh Ntumazah, representative of One Kamerun, Mr. Ernest Ouandié, representative of the Union des populations du Cameroun, Mr. Isaac Tchoumba Ngouankeu, representative of the Conseil national kamerunais de la Conférence des peuples africains,

and Mr. Nonga Yomb, representative of members of Parliament elected on the platform of national reconciliation and independence, withdrew.

GENERAL DEBATE

43. Mr. SENGHOR (France) said that he had requested an opportunity to speak because he felt that the future of the Cameroons under French administration was a vitally important question in which the principle of democracy was at stake. His party had been calling for the independence of the Cameroons since February 1957 and he had taken part in the discussion of the Statute for the Territory in the French National Assembly during that year.

44. Since 1 January 1959 the Cameroons had enjoyed full internal self-government. The Cameroonian authorities were also associated to a great extent with decisions concerning defence and foreign relations, the only matters which were still within the competence of the Administering Authority.

45. The Cameroonian Government's first task had been to convert purely administrative directorates into ministerial departments with full responsibilities. A series of decrees had accordingly been promulgated reorganizing the Ministries of Labour, Health, Education, the Interior, Economic Affairs, Public Works and Justice. At the same time many important legislative reforms had been adopted, such as those regulating public markets, modernizing the registration of births, marriages and deaths, and simplifying the procedure for establishing ownership of land and obtaining agricultural credit. With the establishment of the Cameroonian Ministry of Justice early in 1959 the Government had been enabled to undertake the reform of judicial procedure and administration as also the recruitment and promotion of Cameroonian magistrates. The most important of the reforms now being introduced were the reorganization of tribal and modern courts, the establishment of a court of first degree in the chief town of each sub-prefecture and the establishment of the Supreme Court at Yaoundé. The magistrature would consist initially of 105 magistrates, seventy of them Cameroonians who were now being recruited from among Cameroonian officials and jurists and thirty-five of them French persons whose services would constitute part of a programme of technical assistance.

46. The territorial administration had been completely changed by the Decree of 8 August 1959. Twenty-two departments and sixty-three sub-prefectures had been established and their administration entrusted to Cameroonian prefects and sub-prefects under the authority of the Minister of the Interior. The new system gave an important place to the communal institutions, which were being extended to cover the entire country. Wherever there was no "commune de plein exercice" rural mixed communes functioned, their status having been newly defined by the Act of 17 June 1959.

47. The wide-scale administrative reforms obviously meant that all positions of responsibility would be placed in the hands of qualified Cameroonian officials. The Decree of 14 August 1959 provided that technical assistance officials could hold the position of directors or chiefs of service only on a temporary basis. Except in the case of six departments in the North and four in the South, the former French chief regional officers had been replaced by Cameroonian

prefects, while in fifty-seven of the sixty-three new sub-prefectures, the French chief subdivisional officers had been replaced by Cameroonian sub-prefects. Cameroonian officials taking courses in French schools of administration had been recalled to take up administrative posts. The Decree of 27 July 1959 had established a Cameroonian school of Administration. Moreover, the Higher Council for the Public Service had just completed the drafting of measures to enable all students to find appropriate positions in the management of the country's affairs upon the completion of their studies.

48. In a recent speech, Mr. Ahidjo, the Prime Minister of the Cameroons, had said: "On the threshold of independence, the country possesses an administrative and technical nucleus well adapted to the tasks to be performed, and that is one of its greatest pieces of good fortune".

49. In the fields of defence and diplomacy, which had hitherto been reserved to the Administering Authority, the Cameroonian Government had rightly considered that it should not wait until 1 January 1960 to set up the necessary government departments and services. In full agreement with the Administering Authority, and with its assistance, the Cameroons was establishing its national army. The first battalion was now being formed, to be followed by another early in 1960. In the field of diplomacy and foreign affairs, a central Cameroonian administration was already functioning at Yaoundé and on 1 January 1960 it would become the core of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The officials who were to fill the new diplomatic posts were completing their training at the Quai d'Orsay or in French missions abroad. In order to make the practical arrangements for the establishment of embassies and so forth, special envoys of the Cameroonian Government were visiting the capitals with which the Cameroons hoped to establish diplomatic relations after 1 January 1960.

50. As the efforts to provide the country with a simple and effective national administration must naturally be based on sound financial and economic conditions, a law relating to the drafting, adoption and execution of the budget had been drawn up and a technical commission had elaborated a fiscal reform designed to introduce a more coherent system. The Government's goal was to provide for all its operating expenditure out of its own national funds. For the financing of investments the Cameroonian Government intended to depend largely on outside assistance, provided it was subject to no political conditions. The Cameroons was grateful to the United Nations for the assistance it had received that year and it was confident that that assistance would be continued, and perhaps increase, in the years to come.

51. Following a survey of primary commodity resources and industrial commodity means, an industrialization programme had been drawn up and was to be submitted to the Legislative Assembly at its present session as part of the comprehensive Cameroonian plan. The plan reviewed all the country's economic problems in the light of its political evolution. It was the plan of an independent country and could no longer be linked with the general planning programme of France. It made provision for the national revenue to be doubled within twenty-five years. The co-operative movement had been given a new status under the Act of 17 June 1959 and was

expected to double its business in 1960. Great national works were to be undertaken shortly with a view to promoting capital development and relieving urban unemployment.

52. With respect to international economic agreements, Mr. Ahidjo, speaking before the Cameroonian Legislative Assembly on 20 October, had said that after the attainment of independence the Government of the Cameroons alone would be competent to decide what new agreements it would enter into and what former agreements it would renounce. Allegations of secret agreements were therefore completely unfounded.

53. In the social field, Cameroonian legislation was quickly being brought into line with international standards. For example, the Act of 11 April 1959 introduced a highly modern system of family allowances.

54. It could be said, therefore, that the trust which France and the United Nations had placed in the leaders and institutions of the Cameroons had been fully justified and that that country could now fearlessly enter the ranks of the independent nations.

55. Contrary to what the petitioners had alleged, Mr. Ahidjo had lost no time in fulfilling the promises he had made at the thirteenth session of the General Assembly, as set out in General Assembly resolution 1349 (XIII). An amnesty law had been passed in February 1959 and the 1,777 persons sentenced to twenty years of imprisonment or less had been officially pardoned. The files of the forty-seven people serving longer terms had been transmitted to the competent commission for commutation of sentence. The return of all Cameroonian who had left the country in recent years had been arranged by the Government and 1,580 inhabitants of the Sanaga-Maritime and the Nyong-et-Kellé departments had returned to their homes. Elections to fill the four Sanaga-Maritime seats and the two seats in the Mbouda subdivision had been held on 12 April 1959. The voting, which had been heavy, had taken place in absolute calm.

56. With respect to Mr. Ahidjo's assurances that all fundamental freedoms existed in the country, it must be said that freedom did not mean freedom to violate the law or to commit murder. Without jeopardizing those fundamental freedoms, the Legislative Assembly had given the Government the means to deal with the disturbances fomented in the interior. Freedom of the Press had been respected; of the seventy-one publications appearing in the Cameroons, only six had been suspended, during the state of alert ("état d'alerte") declared at Douala and Yaoundé, for instigation to murder. Freedom of assembly and of political association were unimpaired. Since March, seven new parties had been formed, bringing the number of legally constituted parties to ninety-one. Only three movements had been dissolved because of their participation in terrorist activities.

57. Despite the fact that the Cameroonian Government had endeavoured to carry out all the General Assembly's recommendations, several Cameroonians who had appeared before the United Nations in March 1959 and who had refused to accept the Assembly's decision had tried to create an atmosphere of confusion and insecurity in some areas of the country. Fortunately it had been possible to limit the disturb-

ances essentially to one department of the Cameroons, the Bamiléké area. The country as a whole had not been affected; on the contrary, the unanimity with which it had denounced those acts showed that it was emerging from the ordeal stronger and more unified.

58. With only a short time remaining before independence, it had been necessary to determine the programme under which the Cameroons would receive its final institutions. That was the object of the proposals which Mr. Ahidjo had submitted to the Legislative Assembly on 20 October 1959.

59. Some of the petitioners had spoken of the possibility of holding elections prior to the attainment of independence. That question had been discussed at length during the thirteenth session of the General Assembly and had been definitely settled. As Mr. Ahidjo had said at that time, it was an internal matter, within the exclusive competence of the Cameroonian Government and the Legislative Assembly. Furthermore, it would be impossible to organize elections within the two months remaining before independence. In no protectorate or Territory of the former French Empire had elections been held immediately before the attainment of independence. Lastly, the demand for elections prior to independence had been accompanied by threats of violence and acts of terrorism designed to coerce the democratically elected Legislative Assembly.

60. Faithful to the promises he had made to the General Assembly and to his country, Mr. Ahidjo had set the end of February as the date for general elections. In his speech of 20 October, he had clearly defined the political and legal context of the elections. In the political sphere, he had announced his intention, as head of the principal majority party, to invite the

representatives of all national parties to meet and freely to express their opinions. As the Head of the Government he had announced his plan to extend further the measures of appeasement already taken, if the disturbances ceased. In the legal sphere, he had announced that a strictly democratic electoral law would be drafted by a constitutional committee in preparation for the elections. The committee, composed of jurists and deputies of all political persuasions, would also be instructed to draft a democratic constitution which would be the subject of a popular referendum to be held in the first days of January. On 29 October the Legislative Assembly had supported the Government's proposals by a vote of confidence of 50 votes to 12, with 1 abstention, and on 30 October it had unanimously approved the special amnesty provisions for the Sanaga-Maritime.

61. The Government of the Cameroons, supported by the Administering Authority, had responded to the wishes of the great majority of the Cameroonian people. Working in a democratic and conciliatory spirit, it had paved the way for the Cameroons to achieve true independence. It was the duty of the United Nations to help to bring that independence into being, as it had already done through the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1349 (XIII). He hoped that the Trusteeship Council's report would be approved unanimously. Like Mr. Ahidjo, he was convinced that the United Nations, true to its Charter and to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, would discourage the instigators of disturbances and violence and would enable the young Republic of the Cameroons to enter, as a free and peaceful nation, into the great international family.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.