



Eleventh session
Agenda item 40

QUESTION OF THE FRONTIER BETWEEN THE TRUST TERRITORY OF SOMALILAND
UNDER ITALIAN ADMINISTRATION AND ETHIOPIA

Report of the Fourth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. F.H. SOWARD (Canada)

1. At its 578th plenary meeting held on 15 December 1956, the General Assembly decided to allocate to the Fourth Committee the following item on its agenda:

"Question of the frontier between the Trust Territory of Somaliland under Italian administration and Ethiopia: reports of the Governments of Ethiopia 1/ and Italy 2/".

2. The Committee began its consideration of the item at its 642nd meeting held on 18 February 1957, when statements were made by the representatives of Italy and Ethiopia and by Mr. Aden Abdullah Osman, Chairman of the Legislative Assembly of Somaliland and a member of the Italian delegation.

3. The Committee held a general debate on the item from the 644th to 647th meetings held between 19 and 21 February 1957. At the 645th meeting, it also heard a statement by Mr. Edmundo de Holte-Castello, who attended the discussion as the representative of the United Nations Advisory Council for the Trust Territory of Somaliland under Italian administration.

4. At the 642nd meeting, Burma, Ceylon, Greece, Indonesia, Liberia and the Sudan submitted a draft resolution (A/C.4/L.481) reading as follows:

1/ A/3502 and Corr.1.

2/ A/3463 and Corr.1, French, Russian and Spanish only.

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 392 (V) of 15 December 1950, recommending direct negotiations between Ethiopia and Italy concerning the frontier between Ethiopia and the Trust Territory of Somaliland under Italian administration,

"Recalling further its resolution 947 (X) of 15 December 1955, recommending that the Governments of Ethiopia and Italy expedite and complete their current direct negotiations,

"Taking note of the reports transmitted to the General Assembly by the Governments of Ethiopia and Italy in accordance with the request contained in resolution 947 (X),

"Taking further note of the efforts exerted by both Governments to expedite their current direct negotiations in accordance with the recommendation of resolution 947 (X),

"Noting further that so far only the northern sector of the frontier has been discussed,

"Recommends that the Governments of Ethiopia and Italy continue and complete negotiations on the entire frontier, including those sectors not yet discussed, and report on the progress of their negotiations to the General Assembly at its twelfth session."

5. At the 646th meeting, the Philippines submitted an amendment (A/C.4/L.484) to the draft resolution which would:

(1) Add as the last preambular paragraph the following:

"Convinced that it is in the best interests of all concerned that a satisfactory solution to this question be found as soon as possible,";

(2) Redraft the operative part to read as follows:

"1. Recommends, as a matter of urgency, that the Governments of Ethiopia and Italy, as the Administering Authority, continue and complete their negotiations for a satisfactory settlement of the entire frontier at the soonest possible time;

"2. Requests the Secretary-General that, should the negotiations fail of any satisfactory solution by 30 June 1957, he mediate or appoint a mediator to help the parties to arrive at a satisfactory settlement; and

"3. Invites all parties concerned to report to the General Assembly for its consideration at its twelfth session, the results of such negotiations or mediation."

6. At the same meeting, Argentina, India and Syria submitted an amendment (A/C.4/L.485) to the draft resolution which would:

(1) Replace the first two paragraphs of the preamble by the following:

"Recalling its resolutions 392 (V), 854 (IX) and 947 (X),";

(2) Insert the following three paragraphs after the fifth paragraph of the preamble:

"Recalling that the Trusteeship Agreement shall cease to be in force on 2 December 1960, when the Territory shall become an independent sovereign State,

"Recalling also that in accordance with the Trusteeship Agreement the Administering Authority is required to submit to the Trusteeship Council before 2 June 1959 a plan for the orderly transfer of all functions of government to a duly constituted independent Government of the Territory,

"Considering the increasing importance of achieving a final settlement of the frontier question without delay,";

(3) Add the following paragraph as operative paragraph 2:

"Expresses the opinion that, if the negotiations should fail to achieve substantial results by the twelfth session of the General Assembly, it will be necessary for the Governments of Ethiopia and Italy, in the interests of achieving a final settlement of this question before the independence of Somaliland, to avail themselves of the procedure laid down in General Assembly resolution 392 (V)."

This amendment was accepted by the sponsors of the joint draft resolution.

7. At the 647th meeting, the representative of the Philippines withdrew the second part of the Philippine amendment (A/C.4/L.484, para. 2), and the Committee voted on the revised joint draft resolution and the first part of the Philippine amendment with the following results:

The Philippine amendment to the preamble was rejected by a roll-call vote of 14 to 14, with 36 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Albania, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Egypt, Nepal, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Thailand, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Against: Argentina, Burma, Ceylon, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, Greece, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Liberia, New Zealand, Sudan, Sweden.

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, China, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela, Yemen.

The preamble was adopted by 61 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

Operative paragraph 1 was adopted by 62 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.

Operative paragraph 2 was adopted by 45 votes to none, with 19 abstentions.

The revised draft resolution as a whole was adopted by 60 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.

8. The Fourth Committee therefore recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

QUESTION OF THE FRONTIER BETWEEN THE TRUST TERRITORY OF SOMALILAND
UNDER ITALIAN ADMINISTRATION AND ETHIOPIA

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 392 (V) of 15 December 1950, 854 (IX) of 14 December 1954 and 947 (X) of 15 December 1955,

Taking note of the reports transmitted to the General Assembly by the Governments of Ethiopia^{1/} and Italy^{2/} in accordance with the request contained in resolution 947 (X),

Taking further note of the efforts exerted by both Governments to expedite their current direct negotiations in accordance with the recommendation contained in resolution 947 (X),

Noting further that, so far, only the northern sector of the frontier has been discussed,

Recalling that the Trusteeship Agreement will cease to be in force on 2 December 1960, when the Territory shall become an independent sovereign State,

Recalling also that, in accordance with the Trusteeship Agreement, the Administering Authority is required to submit to the Trusteeship Council, before 2 June 1959, a plan for the orderly transfer of all functions of government to a duly constituted independent Government of the Territory,

1/ A/3502 and Corr.1.

2/ A/3463 and Corr.1, French, Russian and Spanish only.

Considering the increasing importance of achieving a final settlement of the frontier question without delay,

1. Recommends that the Governments of Ethiopia and Italy continue and complete negotiations on the entire frontier, including those sectors not yet discussed, and report on the progress of their negotiations to the General Assembly at its twelfth session;

2. Expresses the opinion that, if the negotiations should fail to achieve substantial results by the twelfth session of the General Assembly, it will be necessary for the Governments of Ethiopia and Italy, in the interests of achieving a final settlement of this question before the independence of Somaliland, to avail themselves of the procedure laid down in General Assembly resolution 392 (V) of 15 December 1950.
