



C O N T E N T S

Agenda item 35:

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**Chairman: Mr. Luciano JOUBLANC RIVAS  
(Mexico).**

AGENDA ITEM 35

**The Togoland unification problem and the future of the Trust Territory of Togoland under British administration: report of the Trusteeship Council (A/3046, T/1206 and Add.1, T/1214, T/1215) (continued)**

HEARING OF PETITIONERS (continued)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. S. G. Antor, Mr. A. K. Odame and Mr. A. A. Chamba, representatives of the Togoland Congress, Mr. J. A. Nagba, representative of the Northern People's Party, Mr. J. Mensah, Mr. F. Y. Asare, Mr. S. T. Fleku and Mr. S. K. Kumah, representatives of the Convention People's Party, Akan-Krachi Constituency, Buen Constituency, Ho District, and Kpandou District, respectively, Mr. S. Olympio, representative of the All-Ewe Conference, Mr. Mama Fousseini, representative of the Union des chefs et des populations du Nord-Togo, Mr. R. Ajawon, representative of the Parti togolais du progrès, and Mr. A. I. Santos, representative of Juwento, took places at the Committee table.

1. Mr. FOUSSENI (Union des chefs et des populations du Nord-Togo) said that the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Trust Territories of Togoland under British administration and Togoland under French administration, 1955 had shown the highest degree of objectivity and had given a reliable account of the importance of the various political groupings and of the aspirations which had been freely expressed by the people. He wished to recall, however, that the peoples he represented wished their future to remain linked to that of France.

2. France had just given Togoland under French administration a Government Council, four large towns had been raised to the rank of municipalities (*communes de plein exercice*), and the Africanization of the permanent civil service had given Togoland a special character as compared with the other French African territories. Togoland of good faith realized the tangible efforts that France was continually making to enable the Territory to attain self-government. That was why the Togoland peoples were asking the United Nations to terminate the trusteeship.

Whenever a visiting mission was in the Territory or when the United Nations was discussing Togoland problems, the agitation of the minorities reached its peak. That state of affairs should end. France had deserved no blame with regard to Togoland.

3. The Togoland people wished to be able to discuss with France the kind of status they wanted, one which would guarantee the territorial administrative and financial integrity of their country within a modified French Union. They had always relied on their elected representatives in the local and parliamentary assemblies to express that opinion. Any attempted arrangement which was contrary to their wishes would be doomed to failure.

4. They had always considered the unification of the two Togolands to be an economic necessity, yet they had an equal regard for the freedom of others and thought that the Togoland under British administration should decide their own future. The great majority of the people of Togoland under French administration had already made their decision, as the Visiting Mission had pointed out in its report (T/1206 and Add. 1).

5. Mr. AJAVON (Parti togolais du progrès) recalled that the Ewe unification problem had been one of the main concerns of the Fourth Committee for several years. From the beginning, the petitioners of the Parti togolais du progrès, at the risk of appearing as traitors to their own country, had repeatedly urged that the problem was an unreal one and that there was virtually no way of finding a realistic and satisfactory solution for it. They had needed all the courage that their faith in the future of their country could give them to face the mistrust of some members of the Committee. It could now be seen that the Parti togolais du progrès had been far-sighted, as it had proved impossible to solve the Ewe unification problem and the General Assembly had finally deleted it from its agenda.

6. Realizing its mistake, the Fourth Committee had decided to deal with the question of the unification of the two Togolands, the only course which could rally the enthusiastic support of all Togoland and the one which the Parti togolais du progrès had repeatedly urged the United Nations to adopt. Unfortunately, positions had hardened considerably. The partial Ewe unification brought about by the creation of the Trans-Volta Togoland Region was an impediment to the unification of the two Togolands inasmuch as the latter would *ipso facto* entail a fresh separation of the Ewes under British administration. The northern tribes of Togoland under British administration were demanding integration with the Gold Coast. The Ewes in the South were sharply divided, some wanting integration and others unification. Only the position of the Parti togolais du progrès remained unchanged.

7. Believing as it did that the progress of mankind could not be reconciled with colonialism, the Parti togolais du progrès was grateful to the Committee for supporting its struggle against colonialism. The campaign should, however, be carried on with forethought, with due regard to economic and social facts. The ideals on which the United Nations was founded corresponded perfectly to the aspirations of the dependent peoples, but it would be dangerous to be blind to the development of relations between metropolitan France and its Overseas Territories, which was daily more evident and more satisfying.

8. The various reforms affecting Togoland under French administration, referred to at previous meetings, had been consolidated by the Act of 16 April 1955, which had established a Government Council and given corporate status to the administrative districts. Under article 2, the Government Council, which was legally bound to meet at least once a month but actually held a weekly meeting, consisted of the Commissioner of the Republic, who served as Chairman, five members elected by the Territorial Assembly and four members appointed by the Commissioner of the Republic and chosen outside the Assembly. Article 23 specified the Council's functions and provided that each member should perform individual functions on a permanent basis. The Commissioner of the Republic assigned to each member a sector of activity within the administrative structure of the Territory and, having been assigned such functions, the members of the Council had a general right to information enabling them to follow in all details the conduct of the services falling within the sector assigned to them. Those functions were quite obviously comparable with those devolving on genuine Ministers. Finally, article 60 empowered the Government Council to grant corporate status to administrative districts—*cercles* or subdivisions—whose economic development was adequate to finance budgets of their own.

9. With regard to the Territorial Assembly, article 28 of the Act provided that it might examine any draft or proposal relating to local matters which were not already governed by statutes or regulations. Its decision had binding force unless the Commissioner of the Republic informed the President of the Assembly within three months of his intention to oppose it or to make reservations thereto. Where reservations were made, the Assembly gave the decision a second reading. Where there were objections, the decision was sent to the **Ministry of Overseas France** for submission to Parliament, the Assembly of the French Union or the President of the Council of Ministers, depending on the subject matter. It should be pointed out that the Territorial Assembly had originally had only budgetary powers, but article 29 now empowered it to give its opinion on whether statutes and decrees should be extended to the Territory either as they stood or in some adapted form.

10. Moreover, a recent statute had raised the localities of Lomé, Anécho, Atakpamé and Sokodé to municipalities (*communes de plein exercice*). The people of Togoland would thus have an opportunity to prove their political capabilities by assuming municipal responsibilities.

11. Thus, Togoland had taken a great step forward in the political sense. Some might find the reforms inadequate, but they were perfectly suited to the present

stage of the Territory's development, as the Visiting Mission had been able to determine. Nothing could henceforth be decided in Togoland without the freely given assent of the Togoland people; an essential step had therefore been taken in domestic self-government.

12. Substantial economic and social progress had been made through the financial assistance of France. The local budget of about 2,000 million francs was essentially a working budget, in view of the social obligations that burdened the country's finances. Public works in Togoland under French administration had for many years been financed by FIDES<sup>1</sup>. The appropriations made available to Togoland by FIDES for the 1955-1956 period amounted in all to over 1,000 million francs. Much work remained to be done and France would have to continue to assist Togoland for many years. That was why total and immediate independence was a fantasy that bore no relation either to present-day realities or to the interests of the mass of the Togoland people, who were almost exclusively agriculturists.

13. The Parti togolais du progrès had explained in the preamble to its statute the main lines of its policy and its position with regard to the United Nations and the Administering Authority. He quoted certain passages from the statute, showing that the Ewe unification problem had complicated the problem of the unification of the two Togolands to the point where it had become virtually insoluble. In any case, the unification problem was now out-of-date, as a movement had appeared in Togoland under British administration favouring integration of that Territory with the Gold Coast. Henceforward its people must decide their own future.

14. Realizing the importance of the notion of the interdependence of nations, the Parti togolais du progrès would devote its efforts to the economic, social and political advancement of Togoland under French administration. It would strive to achieve, in successive stages and within the French community, all the reforms indispensable for the democratic and effective conduct of its domestic affairs, rejecting for ever the mirage of an isolated independence.

15. That progress was, however, possible only to the extent that the French Government took the necessary constitutional steps to remove the uncertainty which hung over the Territory as a result of the Trusteeship Council's supervision. Togoland fully appreciated the efforts made by the United Nations for the advancement of the dependent peoples, yet, at the present stage of the Territory's political development, United Nations supervision gave a minority the opportunity to stir up disorders which were harmful to the full development of the institutions just given to the country. That development, which was wanted by the overwhelming majority of the people, could take place only in a calm and peaceful atmosphere. The example of the Gold Coast was often cited when Togoland under French administration was invited to integrate with it, but a free and self-governing Togoland within a modified French Union would be as viable as an independent Gold Coast within the British Commonwealth.

16. The Congress of the Parti togolais du progrès, wishing to carry on its political activities on still more

<sup>1</sup> *Fonds d'investissement pour le développement économique et social des territoires d'outre-mer.*

progressive lines, had in June 1955 unanimously adopted a resolution to serve as a guide to all its members. It had first referred to the desire of the people both to preserve the identity of the Territory, by which they set great store, and not to be cut off from a European and African French community whose moral, cultural, economic and financial support might in the present-day world be the only guarantee that that identity would be maintained. The Congress had then requested the French Government to give careful study to the future status of Togoland within the French system, specifying forthwith that such status should explicitly guarantee the maintenance of the territorial, administrative and financial autonomy of Togoland, to the exclusion of all possibility of its being merged with any neighbouring French territory, and should give the Togolandese full control of their domestic affairs. Finally, the Congress had requested the French Government to do all in its power, once the status had been finally settled, to put an end to the Trusteeship System, if necessary after consulting the population. That resolution had subsequently been adopted by the Territorial Assembly.

17. The tenth session of the General Assembly was of very special importance in view of the fact that it was to decide the future of Togoland under French administration. That was why the Parti togolais du progrès had found it necessary to restate its attitude before the United Nations. It could not, of course, appear hostile to the principle of the unification of the two Togolands, and hoped that the British minority would join the French majority. The decision lay, however, exclusively with the peoples of Togoland under British administration. If they decided for integration with the Gold Coast, the unification problem would cease to exist. If they wished to join Togoland under French administration, the position of the Parti togolais du progrès would remain unchanged. Its main purpose was to help the country to assimilate the reforms already introduced and to secure others. The Parti togolais du progrès was sure that it was on the right road.

18. Mr. SANTOS (Juvento) said that in order that his statement should be correctly understood he would first explain that whatever criticisms might be made of the plebiscite to be held in Togoland under British administration, the population would in effect be offered a choice; they would not, however, be in a position to choose the best course of action the Territory could adopt, which was laid down in the programme worked out by the Mouvement de la jeunesse togolaise (Juvento). That programme aimed at the achievement of the independence of Togoland under French administration and Togoland under British administration so that they might, by their own sovereign act, unite in a single State and decide on their future. He would confine himself to dealing with that aim.

19. At the ninth session he had tried to demonstrate to the Fourth Committee, at its 453rd meeting, the incompatibility between the United Nations Charter and what might be termed the charter of the French Union. He now proposed to prove not only that independence was the sole solution for the problem of Togoland, but also that its adoption was a matter of urgency. He would deal with two main themes: the United Nations as represented to the Togolandese and the future of Togoland as understood by the Administering Authority.

20. While expressing certain reservations as to the conclusions and recommendations contained in the Visiting Mission's report, he paid a tribute to the Mission for the amount of work it had done and for its tact and objectivity.

21. The Mouvement de la jeunesse togolaise had always complained of the paucity of the publicity given to the work of the United Nations in the Trust Territory. However, there had been worse things than paucity of publicity. Since the ninth session of the General Assembly the Administering Authority, placing its own interpretation on General Assembly resolution 860 (IX), had proclaimed, even over Radio Brazzaville, that the Visiting Mission's terms of reference covered only Togoland under British administration. It had even instituted legal proceedings against those who had dared to explain to the people concerned the real nature of the Visiting Mission's terms of reference.

22. In March 1955 the General Secretary of the Comité de l'Unité togolaise (CUT) had sent to the members of his party a circular letter notifying them of General Assembly resolution 860 (IX), explaining its purpose and stressing its importance for the future of all Togoland.

23. In a letter dated 6 April 1955 the Commissioner of the Republic in Togoland had preferred a charge against the General Secretary of the CUT of spreading false information likely to cause a breach of the peace. The Commissioner's letter stated that as far as Togoland under French administration was concerned the 1955 Visiting Mission would be a normal periodic mission and that its only additional instructions would be to study, at the request of the United Kingdom, the wishes of the inhabitants of Togoland under British administration as to their future. It accused the CUT of misrepresenting the aims and possible results of the Visiting Mission's visit to Togoland under French administration and stated that the CUT could not claim to have no knowledge of the proceedings in the United Nations since it received them direct from the United Nations Secretariat. Moreover it stated that the Commissioner's staff had taken the precaution of publishing several times the *communiqués* defining the aims and exact nature of the 1955 Visiting Mission specifically in order to place the public on their guard against the spread of false information on the subject.

24. Strangely enough, however, the French Commissioner had omitted to send the State Counsel the text of the General Assembly resolution in question. Moreover, on the instructions of the examining magistrate, only the records of the Trusteeship Council's discussions on the implementation of the resolution, and not the text of the resolution itself, had been transmitted. Fortunately, however, the accused had been able to produce the actual United Nations document and the examining magistrate, after considering it, had ruled that there was no ground for prosecution.

25. The Administering Authority had refrained from announcing the Visiting Mission's arrival or from publishing its itinerary; it had instructed its henchmen to make the Visiting Mission feel they were not wanted, which in fact they did.

26. The first consequence of that attitude had been the campaign of vilification launched against the United Nations by the Administering Authority

following France's withdrawal from the General Assembly. As an illustration he quoted passages from an editorial entitled "The Decay of the United Nations" published in *Togo français*, the official newspaper, on 14 October 1955, which harshly criticized various Members of the United Nations as well as the Organization itself.

27. From 23 October 1955 onwards, newspapers which had reached Togoland under French administration from the Gold Coast had given long accounts of the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the United Nations. Religious services, lectures in the schools and public celebrations had been held almost everywhere, even in the smallest villages. At Lomé, in Togoland under French administration, the United Nations Association had notified the town authorities that, as in other years, it proposed to hoist the United Nations flag beside the French flag and to hold public lectures at its headquarters. The Police Commissioner had dispatched three policemen for the specific purpose of confiscating the United Nations flag. That had been the only celebration of the tenth anniversary of the United Nations.

28. At the time he had left the Territory no information about the Visiting Mission's report had been issued. In fact, a high-ranking representative of the Administering Authority had informed him that for Togoland under French administration there would be only an ordinary report which would appear in two or three months' time, since the Mission had had no special terms of reference with regard to that Territory.

29. The Mouvement de la jeunesse togolaise had instructed him to ask the United Nations whether it accepted the distorted picture of its ideals and activities which was being given to the people of Togoland under French administration.

30. Referring to paragraph 123 of the Visiting Mission's report, he said that he welcomed the opportunity given him to expose the true facts concerning aid received from the Administering Authority. The entire operation involved about 3,500 million francs CFA<sup>2</sup>, which was roughly equivalent to two years' normal revenue under the Territory's regular budget, and was spread over a period of about ten years. Of that sum, 2,000 million francs were, so to speak, given outright by metropolitan France — 1,500 million francs in the form of contributions to FIDES and 500 million francs in the form of aid to the Territory, most of which went to pay the salaries of certain metropolitan officials. The remaining 1,500 million francs were advanced to the Territory by metropolitan France; about 1,000 million francs of that sum represented the Territory's contribution to FIDES and about 500 million francs represented a loan to enable the Territory to make good any budget deficit. Those 1,500 million francs were repayable at varying rates of interest and according to varying procedures.

31. The Territory had two budgets: the FIDES budget, from which the development programme was financed almost exclusively, and the ordinary budget, which was virtually confined to the financing of the administrative services. The taxpayers of Togoland had no control whatever over the operation of those two budgets. Of the 1954 net revenue of about 1,500 million francs, 750 million had gone into the pockets

of officials and 115 million had been appropriated for the financing of the administrative services. Of those 865 million, representing operational expenditure, 100 million had been allotted to the security services and only 24 million to the Department of Agriculture, in a country that was mainly dependent on agriculture. As for the FIDES budget, out of 2,500 million francs invested since 1947, only 155 million had been allocated to agriculture; out of 445 million devoted to public health, 345 million had been swallowed up by the hospital at Lomé alone, although it had only 394 beds. Nothing had been spent on vocational training, although provision was made for it in the development programme.

32. The truth therefore was that the Administering Authority showed special concern for officials as a class by devoting almost the entire budget revenue to their needs, in order to attach them to the régime; stultified local production by taxation and lack of encouragement so that it could not develop beyond the mercantile stage; and camouflaged the whole operation by spectacular works of restricted social importance and of no immediate advantage to the producers and the people as a whole.

33. He quoted from an article published on 12 May 1954 by the weekly *Afrique nouvelle* under the title "Is there any economic future for the French Union?", which stated that subsidies by metropolitan France to overseas countries would be worth-while if the drop in productive investment in France were offset by at least an equivalent rise in overseas investment, but that a large part of the revenues of the Territories was rendered unproductive by those into whose hands it fell. The article went on to say that in French West Africa the officials, who represented 0.3 per cent of the population, enjoyed 13 per cent of the national revenue as a result of appropriating 62 per cent of the budgetary receipts, that most of the European officials remitted the whole of their savings to the metropolitan country and the same was true *a fortiori* of commercial undertakings. After saying that only 15 per cent of the sums expended in French West Africa for works under the first development plan in 1947 had remained in that Federation, the article concluded that the modern form of colonialism operated to the detriment of the French taxpayer.

34. In fact, therefore, colonialism had not been abolished but simply refurbished and perfected. Under the guise of opening credits, the value of which was systematically nullified by the conditions imposed on their use by the creditor, and which had the effect of mortgaging the debtor's economic future, the resolution adopted by the French African Conference held at Brazzaville in 1944 was being carried into effect in the economic sphere. He reminded the members of the Committee of the terms of that resolution, which he had mentioned at the previous session (*453rd meeting*), and according to which the aims of the work of civilization carried on by France in the colonies excluded any idea of self-government and any possibility of development outside the French Empire, as well as the achievement of self-government in the colonies even in the distant future.

35. In spite of the subsidies which were put forward as a justification for Togoland's dependent state and as a pretext for its continuance, in spite of the rise in the population from 750,000 to 1 million and in spite of steadily increasing consumption, Togoland's

<sup>2</sup> One franc CFA equals two French francs.

production and exports had not yet regained their pre-war level; there was thus more cause for alarm about the future of Togoland under French administration than for rejoicing at its present social development.

36. That situation, moreover, was not peculiar to Togoland; it was the lot of the whole French Union. He quoted a speech made by Mr. Boissier-Palun, President of the Grand Council of French West Africa, to the effect that the value of imports, 80 to 85 per cent of which came from metropolitan France, was one-third greater than that of exports, almost all of which went to France, but that whereas the prices of only a few exports were 10 to 15 per cent higher than the world market prices, all imports had to be bought at prices considerably above world market prices. Mr. Boissier-Palun had concluded that that way of bolstering production in the metropolitan country was reducing French West Africa to a desperate plight. Mr. Santos added that that plight was all the more desperate because the Territory's purchasing power was extremely low.

37. The Juvento did not want to remain in the French Union any longer, because it had nothing to gain from doing so. Fifty years earlier the resources of the soil had been sufficient for the preparation, financing and execution of an equipment and development plan which had placed Togoland ahead of the majority of West African Territories, with only technical assistance from metropolitan Germany. What their fathers had done, the present inhabitants could do; indeed they could do better if they were free to call upon the technical assistance most suited to their needs, which would be possible only if they gained their independence.

38. If France did not believe in the United Nations, why had it agreed, and indeed offered, to apply the terms of the Charter? If it took advantage of the mission entrusted to it by the United Nations to subjugate those whom it was its duty to emancipate, how could the United Nations maintain confidence in France without finally compromising the future of the Trust Territory and failing in its own mission?

39. The Juvento continued to have entire confidence in the United Nations; it was patient because it was aware of the complex problems which demanded the Organization's attention, but he begged the members of the Committee to consider that time pressed. The Territory's ancient institutions were being undermined, while the proposed new policy rested on no foundation. Togoland had been endowed with a Government Council, but had as yet no genuine town councils. The development of the Territory's economy was being systematically frustrated and discouraged and the people's minds were being worked on to turn them against the United Nations. Every passing day made the situation worse, complicated the task of liberation and rendered more difficult the work of rehabilitation which lay ahead. Togoland's liberation could no longer depend on France; it depended upon the United Nations and on the Togolandese themselves. He appealed to the United Nations to have confidence in the people, who were just as ready for independence as the inhabitants of Togoland under British administration, which they had never ceased, and never would cease, to regard and claim as an integral part of Togoland national territory.

40. Mr. SAAB (Lebanon) noted that a number of the petitioners had said that they were tired of having

to come to New York year after year to address the General Assembly. He asked whether the Committee had summoned them or whether it had merely granted them hearings.

41. He also asked whether the Togoland unification problem was on the agenda as well as the future of Togoland under British administration.

42. The CHAIRMAN thought that all delegations were familiar with the action the Fourth Committee had taken in connexion with the requests for hearings.

43. With regard to the second point, the question before the Committee was, as the agenda in the *Journal of the United Nations* showed, the Togoland unification problem and the future of Togoland under British administration.

44. Mr. BOZOVIC (Yugoslavia) felt that Mr. Santos had raised a question of principle with regard to the dissemination of information on the United Nations in Trust Territories. According to Mr. Santos, a request he had made of the Secretariat that his name should be added to the list of those who received United Nations documents had met with the reply that it was for the Administering Authority concerned to decide who should receive such documents. Mr. Bozovic noted that under operative paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 754 (VIII), which Yugoslavia had sponsored, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to initiate a direct flow of information to the general public in the Trust Territories. He wondered whether the reply which had been given to Mr. Santos was that usually given by the Secretariat in that connexion.

45. Mr. COHEN (Under-Secretary for Trusteeship and Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories) said he would reply to the question asked by the representative of Yugoslavia at the following meeting.

46. Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) asked whether the public in the Trust Territories could obtain access to United Nations documents.

47. He also asked for particulars of the newspaper from which Mr. Santos had read an article.

48. Mr. SANTOS. (Juvento) stated that it was because United Nations documents were not obtainable in Togoland under French administration that he had appealed to the Secretariat.

49. With regard to the newspaper from which he had read an extract, he intended to supply the Secretariat with the issue in question so that delegations might examine it. The newspaper was *Togo français*, published at Lomé by the French administration.

50. Mr. RODRIGUEZ FABREGAT (Uruguay) expressed regret that United Nations documents were not disseminated in the Territory. It was essential that the peoples of the Trust Territories should be kept informed of the actions of the United Nations on their behalf.

51. With regard to the newspaper from which Mr. Santos had quoted, he reserved the right to speak when he had obtained the necessary information. While the article which had been quoted obviously could not be taken seriously, he could not overlook the fact that his country had been taken to task.

52. Mr. BARGUES (France) said that the Press was completely free both in France and in Togoland under French administration and the Administration

could not be held responsible for articles published. Such articles expressed only the views of their writers.

53. With regard to the dissemination of information on the United Nations he regretted that he was not in

possession of all the relevant documents but pointed out that the subject was dealt with in the reports of the Trusteeship Council and of the Visiting Mission.

The meeting rose at 10.30 p.m.