

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTEENTH SESSION

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CONTENTS

	Page
Requests for hearings (continued)	
Requests concerning agenda item 13 (continued) . . .	549
Agenda item 13:	
The future of the Trust Territories of the Cameroons under French administration and the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration: special report of the Trusteeship Council	
Opening statements	549

Chairman: Mr. Frederick H. BOLAND (Ireland).

Requests for hearings (A/C.4/394/Add.1) (continued)

REQUESTS CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 13 (A/C.4/394/Add.1) (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN read out two requests for hearings, one from Mr. Abraham Onona on behalf of the Association traditionnelle des peuples Eton-Manguissa et Batsenga, and the other from Mr. Gaston Kingue Jong, Federal President of the Mouvement d'action nationale du Cameroun. (A/C.4/394/Add.1). He said that if there were no objections, he would take it that the Committee was in favour of granting those requests.

It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 13

The future of the Trust Territories of the Cameroons under French administration and the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration: special report of the Trusteeship Council (A/4092, A/4093/Rev.1, A/4094, T/SR.953-963)

OPENING STATEMENTS

2. Mr. DORSINVILLE (Haiti), President of the Trusteeship Council, presented the special report of the Council (A/4094). He recalled that in resolution 1282 (XIII) the General Assembly had wisely postponed taking a decision until such time as it should receive the reports of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in West Africa, 1958, which was to provide the Trusteeship Council, and through it the Assembly, with the necessary material for considering the question. The Mission had submitted two reports to the Council (T/1426 and Add.1, ^{1/} T/1427 and T/1434^{2/}) in which it had given a clear and able account of the problems connected with the future of the two Cameroons. The Council had examined the two reports and General Assembly resolution 1282 (XIII); the substance of the discussion in the Council was to be found in the sum-

*In accordance with General Assembly resolution 1281 (XIII).

^{1/} Transmitted to Members of the General Assembly by a note of the Secretary-General (A/4093/Rev.1).

^{2/} Transmitted to Members of the General Assembly by a note of the Secretary-General (A/4092).

mary records of its meetings (T/SR.953-963). At the close of the discussion the Council had adopted a resolution for each of the two Territories; the text of the two resolutions (1925 (XXIII), 1926 (XXIII)) appeared in annexes I and II of the special report (A/4094).

3. In its resolution 1925 (XXIII), regarding the future of the Cameroons under French administration, the Council concluded by recommending that the General Assembly, after considering the report of the Trusteeship Council and any further views that might be expressed before it, should terminate the Trusteeship Agreement upon the Territory's attainment of full national independence with effect from 1 January 1960.

4. In its resolution 1926 (XXIII), regarding the future of the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration, the Council, after taking note of the observations and conclusions of the Visiting Mission in its report, considered that those conclusions would require further examination by the General Assembly, to which it had accordingly transmitted all the relevant documents, so that the General Assembly might take such action as it deemed appropriate.

5. In annexes III and IV of its special report the Council transmitted to the General Assembly the opening statements of the representatives of the two Administering Authorities concerned.

6. The four million people living in the two Territories were impatiently awaiting the decisions which would be the outcome of the Committee's deliberations and which would have a profound effect on their future. By reason of the ties with which Haiti was linked to the peoples of West Africa and of the fact that he himself had visited the two Cameroons as Chairman of the United Nations Visiting Mission to the Trust Territories of the Cameroons under British Administration and the Cameroons under French Administration, 1955, he took a constant interest in the affairs of the two Territories. He wished the peoples and Governments of the two Cameroons a happy and prosperous future.

7. Mr. JACQUINOT (France) recalled that in adopting resolution 1282 (XIII) on 5 December 1958 the General Assembly had decided to adjourn its consideration of the question of the future of the two Cameroons until 20 February 1959 in order to await the reports of the Visiting Mission on those Territories. The General Assembly had at the same time requested the Trusteeship Council to examine those reports and to formulate its observations and recommendations. The Assembly was now in possession of all the relevant information and was in a position to draw final conclusions, at least in so far as the Cameroons under French administration was concerned. In view of the fact that conditions differed in the two territories, the Visiting Mission had provided a separate report and conclusions for each of them. The Cameroons under French administration would be independent on 1 January 1960, and it was for that Territory that the

question of terminating the Trusteeship Agreement was a matter of urgency. That did not in any way prejudice the solution that would have to be found to the joint problem of reunification. Neither independence nor the termination of the trusteeship could await the settlement of that particular problem.

8. In so far as the Cameroons under French administration was concerned, the situation was perfectly clear. The Cameroonians' choice of complete national independence had been pronounced in unequivocal terms by the Cameroonian Legislative Assembly and Government. That choice had at once been fully recognized by France, as was solemnly confirmed in the preamble to the new Statute of the Cameroons which had come into force on 1 January 1959,^{3/} and the date of 1 January 1960 had been jointly agreed upon for the fulfilment of the Cameroonian aspirations. In its memorandum of 12 November 1958 (A/C.4/388) the French Government had informed the United Nations that its negotiations with the Government of the Cameroons had been satisfactorily concluded, thus setting in motion the procedure which was to lead to the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement in accordance with the terms of the United Nations Charter.

9. Since 1 January 1959 all internal powers had been in the hands of the Cameroonian authorities. On 1 January 1960 all external powers would be transferred to the Cameroonian Government and France would no longer be responsible as Administering Authority.

10. Independence for the Territory was inevitable and the General Assembly should give that fact recognition by deciding to terminate the Trusteeship Agreement with effect from the day of independence. The Cameroonians must be given the assurance that on that date there would be nothing left that could stand in the way of their exercise of full national and international powers. Although the General Assembly was fully aware of the urgency of the problem it had hesitated to come to any decision in December 1958, since some delegations had considered that they did not yet possess all the necessary material for a proper consideration of the question. It had been felt that any questions that might still arise could be dealt with by the Visiting Mission, and the French delegation had agreed that the decision should be postponed for a few weeks in order that impartial witnesses might see for themselves the facts of the situation in the Cameroons and verify the extent to which the Territory's democratic institutions were developing.

11. It was clear from the Mission's report (T/1427 and T/1434) that the political, economic and social progress of the Cameroonian people was such that when the trusteeship was brought to an end they would enjoy full and complete independence and would be capable of assuming responsibility for their own future (para. 134). No doubt remained regarding the desires of the people of the Cameroons: the overwhelming majority of them wished independence to be proclaimed on 1 January 1960 (para. 135). The Visiting Mission had also been able to establish that there was no need to consult the population on the subject before the termination of the trusteeship (para. 136), that the Legislative Assembly of the Cameroons was representative in character and reflected public opinion, and that consequently there were insufficient grounds for the holding of new general elections (para. 141).

^{3/} See T/1427, annex II.

12. The Mission had also made a complete study of certain particular problems. It had stated in its report that, after a period of disturbances, calm had been restored in the Cameroons. The head of the Cameroonian Government had furthermore assured the Mission of his desire to achieve the reconciliation of all Cameroonians. That reconciliation, which was to be the work of Cameroonians themselves, was now complete: on 13 February 1959 the Cameroonian Assembly had, by the passing of an amnesty law, put an end to the quarrels of the past and proclaimed its intention of building for the future of the nation. The representatives of the Cameroons were the persons best qualified to speak on that subject, as also on the subject of the by-elections in Sanaga-Maritime. Moreover, those were internal matters which the Administering Authority no longer had the right or the capacity to settle.

13. On the question of the reunification of the two Cameroons, the Mission had expressed its views in paragraphs 165 and 166 of the report. The Government and people of the Cameroons under French administration took an understandable interest in the question but the unanimity of their views on the subject meant that the problem was already settled in so far as they were concerned, that there was no need for a popular consultation in the Cameroons under French administration, that the initiative must now be left to the people of the Cameroons under British administration and that reunification must in no circumstances delay the accession of the Cameroons under French administration to independence. The Trusteeship Council had been unable to make any recommendations regarding unification, since it was only proper to wait until the leaders in the Cameroons under British administration had informed the Assembly of their proposals.

14. The Visiting Mission's conclusions were clear; they were based on facts and they justified the steps taken by France towards the termination of the trusteeship in the Cameroons under French administration. That solution was recommended both by the Visiting Mission and by the Trusteeship Council, which had stated that it considered the Cameroons under French administration ready for independence (resolution 1925 (XXIII)) and that all the conditions required for the termination of the trusteeship had been fulfilled. The French Government therefore solemnly requested the United Nations to decide unanimously that the Trusteeship System had already fulfilled its purpose in the Cameroons under French administration and that the Trusteeship Agreement should accordingly be brought to an end on 1 January 1960. France was conscious of having carried out its trusteeship mission to the full and was proud to have brought the Territory, through a process of rational development, to the final goal of independence. Surely no one would dare to take the responsibility of disappointing the Cameroonians, impatient as they were to assume the responsibilities of an adult people. The General Assembly should therefore adopt forthwith, as recommended by the Visiting Mission and the Trusteeship Council, a resolution providing for the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement at the moment the Territory attained independence on 1 January 1960. The international community would thus be able to welcome in the near future a new free, democratic and independent nation.