

21. Whatever may have been its grievances against Ethiopia, the Italian Government had not, previously to September 4th last, submitted them to the organs of the League. Had they been laid before it, the Council would certainly have endeavoured to remedy the situation. Moreover, after the entry into force of the Italo-Ethiopian Treaty of August 2nd, 1928, Italy could, if she preferred it, have recourse for all litigious questions to the procedure of conciliation and arbitration provided for in Article 5 of that treaty. At the request of Ethiopia, that procedure was applied for the settlement of the Walwal affair. Italy, declaring at the outset that she was the victim of an aggression, demanded apologies and compensation without any previous enquiry. She agreed later that the procedure of arbitration should follow its course.

22. The appropriate method of helping the Ethiopian Government to make more rapid progress in the matter of internal reforms is to co-operate with it and assist it, so that it may be in a position resolutely to embark upon the constructive action required, not only to improve the lot of the Ethiopian people and to develop the natural resources of the country, but also to enable the Empire to live in harmony with its neighbours. This the Ethiopian Government itself realises. At the plenary meeting of the Assembly on September 11th, 1935, its delegate requested the co-operation of the League with a view to raising the economic, financial and political level of the Empire. As mentioned above, this request was taken into consideration by the Committee of Five in drawing up its scheme of assistance to Ethiopia.

23. The suggestions of the Committee of Five were accepted, in principle, by the Ethiopian Government. If they were rejected by the Italian Government, it was "inasmuch as they did not offer a minimum basis sufficient for conclusive realisation which would finally and effectively take into account the rights and the vital interests of Italy." In his oral observations, the Italian representative complained that the Committee of Five had completely neglected "the Italian reasons based on treaties, historical facts, the defence of the Italian colonies and Italy's mission in Africa." The Committee of Five, he added, should have taken account of "the peculiar situation of Italy in Ethiopia in consequence of the Tripartite Treaty of 1906 and the previous agreements which form an integral part thereof . . . It ought to have considered the territorial rights granted to Italy by Article 4, paragraph (b), of the Tripartite Treaty—i.e., the right to a junction between the Italian colonies of Eritrea and Somaliland to the west of Addis Ababa." Moreover, "the different peoples which are subject to the tyranny of Abyssinia and live on the frontiers of the country under inhuman conditions" should have been rescued therefrom.

The Committee of Five's plan had necessarily to be based upon the principles of the Covenant, of the Pact of Paris and also of the treaties which Italy had concluded with Ethiopia, more particularly the Treaty of Amity of 1928. Any solution of the problem of Italo-Ethiopian relations had to be founded on the respect due to the independence, territorial integrity and security of all the States Members of the League.