

petitions in consultation with the administering authorities of the territories. Although the majority of these petitions have been handled in the past by the Trusteeship Council, which has special machinery to deal with a large number of petitions, there has been an increasing tendency for all petitioners to ask for hearings before the Trusteeship Committee of the Assembly. It has become evident that some sort of criteria should be set to enable the Assembly to decide upon the urgency of the petitioners' request and its importance in relation to other business on the Trusteeship Committee's agenda for a session. At the eighth session of the Assembly the United Kingdom tabled a resolution calling for the setting-up of a sub-committee of eight members charged with making recommendations regarding the procedure to be followed in considering applications for hearings from petitioners. The Canadian and some other delegations spoke in support of this resolution and outlined the criteria which ought to be used in having the Fourth Committee deal with petitions. One of these was that petitioners should normally have appeared first before the Trusteeship Council or its Committee on Petitions. Although the United Kingdom Delegation agreed during the discussions to incorporate a number of modifications the proposal was nevertheless rejected by a narrow vote.

The need for some procedure to be worked out for determining what petitioners should be heard by the Trusteeship Committee was clearly shown at the eighth session, when the Committee heard nine representatives from various groups in trust territories and considered and discussed in all 12 petitions for hearings. The statements took up a great deal of time and some of them seemed to be of doubtful use since they broke little new ground. Some seemed to confirm the view of the Canadian Delegation that the Committee might find itself becoming a quasi-legal tribunal adjudicating all disputes arising in trust territories between inhabitants and administering authorities.

South West Africa

Successive *Ad Hoc* Committees on South West Africa, appointed by the General Assembly, have negotiated with the South African Government with a view to implementing the 1950 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the international status of South West Africa.¹ The *Ad Hoc* Committee's report to the eighth session of the General Assembly indicated that little progress had been made in reaching agreement with the South African Government on the precise supervisory role of the United Nations or on the appropriate parties to conclude a new instrument replacing the League of Nations mandate. The Committee had been unable to examine reports on the administration of South West Africa since none had been submitted by the South African Government.

The eighth session adopted two resolutions, the first establishing a Committee on South West Africa "until such time as agreement is reached between the United Nations and the Union of South Africa", the second reiterating previous resolutions and re-asserting

¹See *Canada and the United Nations 1952-53*, pp. 83-84.