

The year 1958 was a memorable one in the annals of the Trusteeship Council, since it foreshadowed the early abrogation of five trusteeship agreements and the attainment of self-government or independence for the five territories in question. The two trust territories of the Cameroons, Somaliland under Italian administration and Togoland under French administration are all expected to attain their independence in 1960; Western Samoa under New Zealand administration is also considered by the administering authorities to be ready for early self-government or autonomy. By the end of 1960 six of the eleven original trust territories will therefore have progressed from dependence to full nationhood, leaving only two African territories (Tanganyika and Ruanda Urundi) and three Pacific territories still under United Nations trusteeship. France, one of the principal administering authorities, will then relinquish its responsibilities and will sit on the Trusteeship Council only in its capacity as a permanent member of the Security Council.

The announcement to the General Assembly of this considerable achievement in a most important branch of United Nations activities was the occasion of well-merited congratulations both to the Council and to the United Kingdom, France and New Zealand on the felicitous manner in which they had discharged their duties and the happy result which had been achieved.

The membership of the Council for 1958 was Australia, Belgium, France, Italy, New Zealand, United Kingdom and United States (administering members); China, USSR (permanent members of the Security Council); and Burma, Guatemala, Haiti, India and the United Arab Republic.

Trust Territories of the Cameroons

During the thirteenth session of the General Assembly the Fourth Committee, under the general item of the report of the Trusteeship Council (agenda item 13), made a separate and detailed examination of the situation in the two trust territories of the Cameroons under United Kingdom and French administration. At the twelfth session in 1957 there had been deep concern regarding alleged unrest and political agitation in certain areas of the French Cameroons and in resolution 1211 (XII) the hope was expressed that it would be possible to achieve conditions conducive to the early restoration of a normal situation in the territory and to the furtherance of democratic progress and political activities.

Early in the thirteenth session the Representative of France announced that his Government and the Government of the French Cameroons had agreed that that territory should attain its full independence on January 1, 1960. The Legislative Assembly of the Cameroons had also adopted a resolution reaffirming the will of the people of the French Cameroons to achieve full national independence and their desire to be unified with the people in the adjoining trust territory of the British Cameroons.

The situation in the British Cameroons was more complicated, since, under the trusteeship agreement for that territory, it is administered by the United Kingdom as an integral part of Nigeria. Nigeria is expected to attain full independence on October 1, 1960 and at that time the trusteeship agreement for the British Cameroons will have to be abrogated. The peoples of the southern area of the British Cameroons are faced with two alternatives—either unification with the French Cameroons, or integration, with full regional status, with the independent state of Nigeria. The people of the northern area of the Cameroons are, to all intents and purposes, already