

The Trusteeship Council is established under chapter XII and is composed of those members administering trust territories, the permanent members of the Security Council, and a number of elected non-administering members so that the number of administering and non-administering members is equal. Under chapter XIII the Council is responsible for supervision of the administration of the trust territories. Its functions include the consideration of the reports of the administering authorities, the examination of petitions from inhabitants of the territories, and the sending of periodic visiting missions to the territories. In 1959 missions visited the trust territories of Western Samoa, Nauru, New Guinea and the Pacific Islands. The report of the Trusteeship Council and that of the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories are considered in detail by the Fourth Committee during the regular sessions of the General Assembly.

Trust Territories

Sessions of the Trusteeship Council

In the period under review the Trusteeship Council held two regular sessions, its 23rd from January 30 to March 20 and its 24th from June 2 to August 6, and one special session during November to consider the report of the United Nations Plebiscite Commissioner on the plebiscite in the northern part of the trust territory of the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration. The members of the Council during these sessions were Australia, Belgium, France, Italy, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States (all of which administer trust territories), China, U.S.S.R. (permanent members of the Security Council), Haiti, India, Burma, Paraguay and the United Arab Republic. The Council's standing committees on Petitions, on Administrative Union, on Rural Economic Development and on Classification of Communications also met to consider subjects concerning the trust territories which came under their respective areas of responsibility.

During its regular sessions the Council had before it the annual reports of the administering authorities on all the trust territories. In view of the decision of the General Assembly itself to consider the reports concerning the Cameroons under French and under United Kingdom administration, the reports on these territories were not considered by the Council. Because an independence date for Togoland under French administration had been established, the Council did not consider the annual report of the administering authority but included in its own report as it had done in the case of the Cameroons, an outline of conditions in the territory.

In conjunction with the annual reports, the Council considered the report of the Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in West Africa which had visited both territories of the Cameroons in October and November 1958, and the reports of the two 1959 Visiting Missions to the Pacific. One of these Missions, made up of members from France, India, the United Arab Republic and the United Kingdom, visited the trust territory of Western Samoa during March and April; the other, with members from Belgium, Burma, China and Italy, visited the trust territories of Nauru, New Guinea and the Pacific Islands from February to April.

The Mission to Western Samoa concurred in the New Zealand Government's provisional timetable for constitutional development in the territory, which also met with the approval of the Trusteeship Council. Following the introduction of cabinet government in 1959, a constitutional convention will be held in 1960; in 1961 the inhabitants will be asked, in a plebiscite under the supervision of the United Nations, if they agree to the termination of the