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THE FOURTH (TRUSTEESHIP) COMMITTEE AND COLONIALISM

The United Nations has certain responsibilities for dependent territories, which are set out in Chapter XI of the Charter, concerning non-self-governing territories, and in Chapters XII and XIII, concerning trusteeship territories. In addition, the United Nations has inherited responsibilities from the League of Nations for the mandated territory of South West Africa. The purpose of the United Nations has been to promote the well-being of the inhabitants of these territories and to assist them in the development of self-government.

Countries administering non-self-governing territories have been requested under Article 73(e) to make reports to the Secretary-General on economic, social and educational conditions in these territories, and recently some administering powers have provided information about political developments. Until recent sessions, the administering powers were able to prevent the adoption by the Assembly of any measures concerning dependent territories which implied interference in their administration. However, with the great increase in membership and the desire of newly-independent countries to hasten the independence of the remaining non-self-governing territories, detailed recommendations to administering powers, despite the latter's objections, are often included in resolutions concerning particular dependent territories and are passed by the necessary two-thirds majority.

Most colonial questions are dealt with by the Fourth Committee. The Committee hears reports of various sub-committees on individual territories, set up at previous sessions, as well as those of the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories and of the Trusteeship Council, and also hears petitioners. At the same time, the general question of the ending of colonialism, including the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, has been reserved for direct consideration in plenary sessions. The question of *apartheid* in South Africa has usually been considered in the Special Political Committee.

The main colonial questions considered by the Fourth Committee during the seventeenth session were those concerning Southern Rhodesia, South West Africa and Portuguese territories in Africa.