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# DEPENDENT TERRITORIES

## Introduction

Under its Charter, the United Nations has assumed certain obligations and responsibilities in regard to dependent territories. These obligations and responsibilities differ as between trust territories and non-self-governing or colonial territories. The international trusteeship system as set forth in chapter XII of the charter is intended to apply to three types of territories: territories which were held under mandate when the United Nations was established; territories which might have been detached from enemy states as a result of the Second World War; and territories which the states responsible for their administration might voluntarily place under the trusteeship system. The most important objective of the system is the attainment of self-government or independence by the inhabitants of the territories through promotion of their political, economic, social and educational advancement.

In 1946, eleven trust territories were placed under individual trusteeship agreements. These territories were Tanganyika, the Cameroons and Togoland, under United Kingdom administration; the Cameroons and Togoland, under French administration; Ruanda-Urundi, under Belgian administration; Somaliland, under Italian administration; West Samoa, under New Zealand administration; New Guinea and Nauru, under Australian administration (the latter territory is administered by Australia on behalf also of the United Kingdom and New Zealand); and finally, the trust territory of the Pacific Islands, under United States administration. In 1957 Togoland, under United Kingdom administration, became an integral part of the new independent state of Ghana, after a plebiscite under United Nations supervision had shown that this was the desire of the inhabitants of the territory. A similar plebiscite held in French Togoland in April 1958 confirmed that territory's desire to attain its full independence.

The Trusteeship Council established under Chapter XII of the Charter supervises the administration of the trust territories on behalf on the United Nations. It receives and considers annual reports from the administering authorities, examines petitions and hears petitioners from the trust territories, and sends periodic visiting missions to the different territories under its charge. In 1958 a mission visited the three trust territories in East Africa — Somaliland, Tanganyika and Ruandi-Urundi — and during the thirteenth session of the Assembly a second mission visited the two trust territories of the Cameroons.

United Nations responsibilities for non-self-governing territories are, as set forth in Chapter XI of the Charter, of a much lesser degree. Members of the United Nations which are responsible for territories whose peoples are not yet fully self-governing have accepted "as a sacred trust" the obligation to promote to the utmost the well-being of their inhabitants. Under Article 73 (e) of the Charter the administering authorities transmit regularly to the Secretary-General *for information purposes*, and subject to limitations