

gave his agreement in principle to a new reform programme proposed by France, the details of which were to be worked out by a Franco-Tunisian commission.

Arab and Asian nations expressed concern over these developments. On January 30, 1952, the representatives of 15 of these states had requested the President of the Security Council to draw the attention of Council members to the grave consequences likely to follow from a prolongation of the disturbances then taking place. On April 2, 11 African and Asian states, noting the arrests which had occurred since January, and contending that the situation was continuing to deteriorate, requested the summoning of an immediate session of the Security Council on the ground that international peace and security were endangered. Two days later, the Council proceeded to debate the inclusion of the Tunisian problem on its agenda.

The French Representative, who spoke against inclusion, contended that the 11 states had failed to take account of the new agreement in principle between the French Government and the Bey of Tunis which eliminated any "situation" or "dispute" even if the broadest construction were placed on these terms. The United Kingdom Representative, supporting the French position, argued that a debate would almost inevitably increase tension at a time when peaceful negotiations were proceeding. He suggested, moreover, that the matter was one of French domestic jurisdiction and therefore outside the scope of the Charter. The Representatives of Greece, the Netherlands, Turkey and the United States, who indicated their intention to abstain on the issue, took the general view that, while United Nations organs should be available for the examination of any problem causing serious friction in international relations, the main function of the Security Council remained that of fostering agreement through direct negotiations between contending parties. They noted that a programme of reforms had been put forward by the French Government, and intimated that, before other action was contemplated, an opportunity should be given to the parties concerned to reach agreement. The Netherlands, Turkey and the United States wished, furthermore, to reserve their position regarding the Security Council's competence to intervene in the Tunisian question.

The other states on the Council (Brazil, Chile, China, Pakistan, and the U.S.S.R.) wished to have the Tunisian problem examined. The Pakistani Representative suggested that the Bey of Tunis had acted under duress when he sanctioned the appointment of a new prime minister to continue negotiations with France and that these negotiations were not likely to be fruitful because the true representatives of the Tunisian people were in jail.

The Representatives of Brazil, Chile, China, and Pakistan pointed to the liberal tradition of the Security Council in showing willingness to examine questions brought before it. They argued that outright rejection of the request of 11 states which represented about one quarter of the population of the world would harm the United Nations by making it appear that the organization was incapable of protecting the interests of weak nations when these ran counter to the interests of powerful nations.