

status of New Guinea be determined through negotiations between the Republic of the United States of Indonesia and the Kingdom of the Netherlands." The negotiations envisaged in this Charter extended well beyond the specified one year period, and were eventually broken off without agreement. Subsequently the Indonesian Government requested that the question of West New Guinea be placed on the provisional agenda of the ninth session of the General Assembly.

The basic positions of the two Governments were fully explained in the debate in the First (Political and Security) Committee. The Indonesian Government contended that West New Guinea was an integral part of the former Netherlands Indies, over which complete and unconditional sovereignty had been transferred to Indonesia; in over 100 years of rule the Dutch had not advanced the educational standards or the political development of the inhabitants of West New Guinea, who were sociologically closer to the Indonesians than the Dutch; the tension which existed between the two parties to the dispute constituted a latent threat to the peace and security of the area.

The Netherlands case included the point that New Guinea was a backward area and that the interests of the native population demanded the continuation of Dutch control. In any event, the Netherlands Government considered itself bound by Article 73 of the Charter to protect the right of self-determination of the native population. The words "*status quo*" in Article 2 of the Charter of the Transfer of Sovereignty were to be interpreted as meaning "continuing under the Government of the Netherlands", and the bilateral negotiations under this Article had failed because Indonesia had insisted that sovereignty over West New Guinea had already been transferred by Article 1. The natives of West New Guinea were culturally and racially distinct from the Indonesians.

On the last day of the very sharp debate in the First Committee, by which time it appeared that a draft resolution submitted by Indonesia would fail to obtain a two-thirds majority, India and seven other countries co-sponsored a resolution expressing the hope that the Governments of Indonesia and the Netherlands would continue their efforts to find a solution to the dispute in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter, and requesting them to report progress to the tenth session. This resolution obtained the required two-thirds majority in the voting in the First Committee, but failed to do so in plenary session. Canada did not take part in the debate in the Committee and was forced to abstain in the voting because of lack of time to study the eight-power resolution. In plenary session Canada voted against the resolution because it seemed to call for negotiations between the Netherlands and Indonesia about the sovereignty over West New Guinea before the fundamental legal questions had been resolved and without reference to the wishes of the inhabitants.

This question was again inscribed on the agenda of the tenth session of the General Assembly in 1955. During the session, however, representatives of Indonesia and the Netherlands conferred informally, and on December 7 they announced that their Governments had agreed to hold discussions on a number of outstanding issues between them. In the improved atmosphere which was created by this announcement, a mild resolution expressing the hope that the proposed negotiations would be fruitful was adopted without discussion or vote in both the First Committee and in plenary session.