

No. 53/52 THE EWE AND TOGOLAND UNIFICATION PROBLEM
(Special Report of the Trusteeship Council)

Text of a statement made on November 20, 1953, by Mr. A.R. Crepault, of the Canadian Delegation, in the Fourth Committee of the eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly, on agenda item 31.

NOTE: The texts of the three resolutions adopted on this agenda item by the Fourth Committee on November 23 and the results of the voting are included at the end of this statement.

I should like to explain briefly the attitude of my delegation on the three resolutions before us. I should like to say at the outset that my delegation has examined with the greatest care the documentation presented, and has listened with special attention to the statements made by the spokesmen of some of the political parties in the two Togolands. I can assure this committee that the Canadian Delegation understand fully and sympathize with the hopes and aspirations of those representatives from Togoland, who have come to New York to address this Committee. The desire of any person to see his country progress towards a greater autonomy, and better its economic, social and cultural standards is a very legitimate ambition, which my delegation would be the last to question. To that extent, my delegation has always been and is still in favour of any proposal on the present item designed to promote in Togoland the development of elections with a widespread mandate, which would re-establish the Joint Council for Togoland Affairs, and which would help to reduce the frontier difficulties which, we understand, still exist between the two Togolands.

My delegation was pleased to note that the 7-Power draft resolution contained in Document L/308 deals with these points, and formulates recommendations which in our view are very reasonable and appropriate. I would like here to associate my delegation with those other delegations which have congratulated the co-sponsors of this proposal for their initiative and the constructive realism which they have shown. My delegation believes that with the help and co-operation of the two Administering Powers - and we believe in the good faith of these two Administering Powers - this proposal will do much towards eliminating the present difficulties and help those sections of the Togoland population which have a desire for unification of their two territories.

I wish also to associate my delegation with the remarks made yesterday by the distinguished delegate of the United States about the complexity of the problem. From the information, at times conflicting, which we have received from the two Togolands with regard to the exact wishes of their populations at present, it seems in order to suggest that the political mind of the Togoland people is still in

a stage of evolution. It is, of course, the duty of this Committee to take, within the limit of its competence, the measures necessary to accelerate this political evolution in the two territories; but it would be nonetheless regrettable if, in a desire to hasten excessively this evolution, our Committee were to impose on the Togoland people solutions which they themselves are not yet prepared to accept, and which in any case they would wish further opportunity to consider. In the view of my delegation, the 7-Power proposal contained in Document L/308 takes due account of these considerations.

The principle of universal suffrage, ... to which reference is made in the second resolution before us, in Document L/309, is obviously a principle which the great majority of this Commission, including the Canadian Delegation, accepts without question. Universal suffrage constitutes an essential and necessary stage in any rational evolution towards self-government. But this same principle, ... as dealt with in Document L/309 is presented to us under circumstances which must necessarily modify its relevancy and its applicability. The first difficulty which we find is to reconcile the type of electoral consultations contemplated in this resolution with the present trusteeship status of the two territories. In the light of the present conditions prevailing in the two Togolands and of what we have said earlier about the importance of gradual evolution in achieving constitutional progress, my delegation is inclined to consider the present proposal premature. The remarks of the distinguished delegate of France this morning on the possible social impact of the proposal cannot also be ignored. The idea of urgency which we find in a number of places in the proposal would also seem to go against this notion of gradual progress to which I have already made reference.

I now come ... to the resolution dealing with the question of the possible integration of British Togoland into the Gold Coast. As a number of delegations, and particularly those of France and New Zealand, have already outlined some of the considerations which make the acceptance of this proposal difficult, I will limit myself here to stating that the general tone of this proposal seems to us to prejudice the question as a whole. My delegation has indeed had the impression in examining this proposal that its sponsors wish this Committee to assume now the responsibility of advising the population of the two Togolands that the only solution to their problems lies in the unification of their two territories, and to warn them against considering any other solution. This resolution is not, therefore, in the opinion of my delegation, in keeping with previous resolutions passed in the Assembly in which emphasis has been placed on the importance of encouraging the peoples of the two Togolands to progress to the stage where their future can be decided as a result of their freely expressed wishes. This comment would seem particularly applicable to paragraph 3 of the operative part of the draft resolution which states a principle inadmissible to my delegation.

For these reasons, my delegation will not be able to lend its support to the two draft resolutions in Document A/C.4/L/309 and A/C.4/L/310. But as I have already indicated, we shall be pleased to support the revised text of the 7-Power proposal contained in Document A/C.4/L/308.

I should like in conclusion to make a brief comment on the heading itself under which the present resolutions have been tabled. My delegation is not making any specific proposal, but wishes merely to suggest that, in its opinion, the problem dealt with in these resolutions might be more accurately described if the present heading "Ewe and Togoland Unification Problem" were to read "Togoland Unification Problem". It is not my intention, ... to repeat here the statistics which we have heard in the course of the debate concerning the various groups of Ewes in the two Togolands and in the Gold Coast. May I say, however, that my delegation has been led, by these statistics, to believe that the unification of the Ewes would be effected at least as much by the integration of the British Togoland into the Gold Coast as it would be through the unification of the two Togolands. It therefore seems, and I believe that the statement of Mr. Olympio on this matter has confirmed this view, that the question of the unification of the Ewes has now become one quite distinct from that of the unification of the two Togolands. It will be noted, in fact, that in all the proposals before us at the moment, nowhere is there any reference to the question of the unification of the Ewes.

Voting Results - Resolution "A", a 7-Power resolution (UN Doc. A/C.4/L.318) sponsored by Argentina, Egypt, Lebanon, Liberia, Pakistan, the Philippines and Venezuela, was adopted by the Committee on November 23, 1953 with a vote of 44 in favour (including Canada) none against and 8 abstentions (United States and administering powers).

Resolution "B", a 6-Power resolution (Doc. A/C.4/L.318) sponsored by Brazil, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Philippines and Syria, on the question of universal suffrage in the two Togolands, was adopted on November 23, 1953 by 48 in favour, one against (Belgium) and 3 abstentions (United Kingdom, France, and Canada).

Resolution "C", a 6-Power resolution (A/C.4/L.318) dealing with the possible incorporation of British Togoland into the Gold Coast was adopted on November 23, 1953 by a vote of 33 in favour, 8 against (including Canada) and 12 abstentions.

Texts of Resolutions Adopted by 4th Committee

Resolution A

The General Assembly,

Having examined the special report of the Trusteeship Council on the Ewe and Togoland unification problem (A/2424),

Taking into account the conclusion contained in the Special Report of the 1952 United Nations Visiting Mission (T/1034) that "the people of the Trust Territories desire in principle the unification of the two Trust Territories",

Recalling that the General Assembly based its resolution 652 (VII) upon the consideration, inter alia, that the unification of the two parts of Togoland is the manifest aspiration of the majority of the population of the two Trust Territories;

Considering that the best means of achieving a form of unification acceptable to all groups of the population is through direct and continuous interchange of opinions among the representatives of those groups, and that such interchange of opinions could be realized in a reconstituted Joint Council for Togoland Affairs with ample powers to examine all aspects of the problem of unification of both Territories and formulate pertinent recommendations;

Having heard the declarations of the representatives of the All-Ewe Conference, of the Joint Togoland Congress and of the Parti Togolais du Progrès;

Having heard also the declarations of the representatives of the Administering Authorities concerned;

1. Regrets that the Joint Council for Togoland Affairs has not yet been re-established;
2. Reaffirms the principles and aims of its resolutions 555 (VI) and 652 (VII) approved on 18 January and 20 December, 1952 respectively;
3. Recommends that in order to ensure that the Joint Council will faithfully reflect the wishes of all sections of the population of the two Trust Territories, its members should be directly elected by universal adult suffrage and secret ballot;
4. Recommends that the Administering Authorities establish, in consultation with the representatives of the different political parties, the rules concerning the structure which the Joint Council for Togoland Affairs should assume;
5. Recommends that the Administering Authorities assist the representatives of the different political parties to explain freely throughout Togoland their views on the problem of unification and, to this effect that they take all necessary measures to ensure freedom of speech, movement and assembly in all parts of the Territories;
6. Recommends that the Administering Authorities disseminate throughout the two Trust Territories the complete texts of the pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly and the Trusteeship Council in the main vernacular languages as well as in French or English;
7. Recommends to the Administering Authorities the re-establishment of the Joint Council with the power to consider and make recommendations on the question of unification, as well as on all political, economic, social and educational matters affecting the two Trust Territories, and to serve as a means of ascertaining the opinions of the inhabitants of the Territories concerning any proposed changes in the terms of the Trusteeship Agreement for either of the Territories;

8. Re-emphasizes its recommendation that, through the Joint Council and in other ways, the Administering Authorities adopt measures to promote common policies on political, economic and social matters of mutual concern to the two Trust Territories, and expresses the opinion that the implementation of this recommendation requires that the Administering Authorities accord to each Territory simultaneously a large measure of progress towards the objectives of Article 76 of the Charter and harmonize in all major respects the political, economic, social and educational policies and systems applying in the two Trust Territories;

9. Invites the Trusteeship Council to submit to the General Assembly at its ninth session a special report concerning the steps which have been taken towards the implementation of this resolution;

10. Expresses the hope that the different political parties of both Territories will co-operate to achieve a formula acceptable to all which will facilitate the unification of the two Trust Territories.

Resolution B

The General Assembly,

Considering that there is an urgent need to develop fully in the two parts of Togoland a system of universal suffrage and that it is consequently essential to establish effective facilities for electoral registration, with a view to the formation of an electoral body truly representative of the population of each Territory as a whole,

Noting paragraph 4 (b) of the text of the announcement made by the two Administering Authorities on 12 June 1953 concerning the re-establishment of the Joint Council for Togoland Affairs,

Noting further the observations made on this matter by the petitioners heard by the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly, as well as the statements made by the representatives of the Administering Authorities,

1. Urgently invites the Administering Authorities to revise the system of electoral qualifications in force in the Territory and put into effect a method of electoral registration based on personal identification which shall permit all adult persons to qualify for the right to vote and shall ensure that electoral consultations be carried out in accordance with the democratic principles of universal, direct and secret suffrage so as to reflect the opinion of the population as a whole;

2. Recommends that the political parties in the two Territories collaborate closely with the respective Administering Authorities with a view to carrying out the identification of the adult persons for electoral purposes.

8. Re-emphasizes its recommendation that, through the Joint Council and in other ways, the Administering Authorities adopt measures to promote common policies on political, economic and social matters in the Trust Territories, and expresses the opinion that the two

The General Assembly,

Noting that Togoland under British administration is administered as an integral part of the Gold Coast, whose government has published a series of proposals for a large-scale constitutional changes designed to effect a further transfer of executive and legislative powers from the Administering Authority to the Gold Coast Government and to serve as an interim measure leading towards full self-government for the Gold Coast within the British Commonwealth of Nations,

Noting that in the course of these proposals the Government of the Gold Coast expressed confidence that the United Nations Organization will not fail to give satisfaction to the frequently reiterated and unanimous demand of the people of the Northern Section for their area to become part of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast" and stated further that "there is a growing opinion in the Southern Togoland in favour of integration with the Gold Coast",

Noting also that, in anticipation of further constitutional changes in the Gold Coast, the Visiting Mission of 1952, in its report on Togoland under British administration (T/1040), raised with some urgency the question of the compatibility of the provisions of the Trusteeship Agreement with any further appreciable transfer of executive and legislative authority to the Government of the Gold Coast, and expressed the opinion that the prospect of a further constitutional advance in the Gold Coast may require the position of the Trust Territory to be reviewed with particular care within a relatively short period of time,

Recalling further that the Visiting Missions of 1949 and 1952 and the Trusteeship Council at its eleventh session have recognized that the question of the future constitutional association of Togoland with the Gold Coast depends to a large extent upon the settlement of the unification problem,

1. Expresses the opinion that further changes in the Constitution of the Gold Coast, with which Togoland under British administration is administered as an integral part, may, to the extent that they provide for an increased measure of self-government, necessitate revision of the existing Trusteeship Agreement in respect of the Trust Territory in so far as concerns the existing administrative union;

2. Considers that, in view of the manifest aspiration of the majority of the population of both of the Trust Territories of Togoland for the unification of those Territories, any change in the Trusteeship Agreement for Togoland under British administration will necessarily affect the interests of the inhabitants of Togoland under French administration;

3. Considers further that the integration of Togoland under British administration or any part of it, to the Gold Coast before both Territories have attained self-government or independence, would be contrary to the principles and purposes of the International Trusteeship System;

4. Requests the Trusteeship Council at its thirteenth session to re-examine in all its aspects the problem of achieving in the two Trust Territories the basic objectives of the International Trusteeship System as set forth in Article 76 of the Charter, and in particular the progressive development of the inhabitants towards self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Territories and their peoples and their freely expressed wishes, having particular regard to the special circumstances created by the constitutional and political situation in the Gold Coast as it affects both Togoland under British administration and Togoland under French administration;

5. Requests the Trusteeship Council to submit to the General Assembly at its ninth regular session a special report on this problem.

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