

TRUSTEESHIP
COUNCIL

CONSEIL
DE TUTELLE

T/334
17 May 1949

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Fifth session

Item 11 of the provisional agenda

EDUCATIONAL ADVANCEMENT IN TRUST TERRITORIES

Joint memorandum of the Governments of Belgium, France and the United Kingdom on the proposal for a Trust Territory university in Africa

Note by the Secretary-General: The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the Trusteeship Council the following memorandum on the proposal for a Trust Territory university in Africa. The permanent delegations of Belgium, France and the United Kingdom in a note of transmittal dated 13 May 1949 referred to resolution 84 (IV) adopted by the Trusteeship Council on 1 March 1949 and informed the Secretary-General that the memorandum was being transmitted for the information of the Council and of the Committee on Higher Education in Trust Territories set up under that resolution.

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Memorandum on the proposal for a Trust Territory university in Africa

1. The Governments of Belgium, France and the United Kingdom have discussed together the resolution on the subject of the higher educational needs of the inhabitants of the Trust Territories in Africa which was adopted by the Trusteeship Council on 1 March 1949.
2. The three Governments entirely share the Trusteeship Council's anxiety that adequate facilities for higher education should be available to the inhabitants of the Trust Territories, and they welcome this evidence of the Council's active interest in the question. For the reasons set out below, however, they cannot accept the view that it would be possible to establish a university for the Trust Territories in Africa by 1952, or even that it would be in the interests of the peoples of the territories that their efforts and resources should be concentrated on the establishment of a university for such diverse territories.

Concept of a university

3. The three Governments deem it advisable to place on record a brief statement of their conception of a university, in order that their position in the matter may not be misunderstood through any ambiguity in the use of the word. By the term university, the three Governments understand a group of students, teachers and research workers who are engaged in advanced study with the objects of advancing human knowledge and of equipping students for responsible citizenship. In their philosophy of university education, this type of institution is only one of several types needed to provide the further general, technical and vocational education which follows secondary education. Only a minority of secondary school children are of the temperament that is suited to a university, as distinct from other types of post secondary studies. The close association of teaching and research, to their mutual benefit, is an essential feature of university life as they understand it.
4. It follows from this that to establish a university it is necessary to be assured of a teaching and research staff adequate in numbers and in quality, adequate buildings and equipment, and an adequate flow of suitably qualified students, with enough common background and common educational experience to profit by studying together in one university institution.
5. The Trust Territories in Africa are Ruanda-Urundi, French Togoland and French Cameroons, in which the language of education is French, and Tanganyika, British Togoland and British Cameroons, in which the language of education is English. These Territories are widely separated geographically; their economic and political conditions differ greatly; the inhabitants have no common language or common educational system;

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the grouping together of these territories is arbitrary except as a category in constitutional law. There is therefore no basic unity from which a living institution like a university could grow, and to which it could give vitality and expression. In the view of the three Governments it would not be possible by 1952 - or indeed for many more years - to overcome the technical difficulties that some students learn in French, others in English; that some have passed French examinations and are studying for French diplomas, others for British; that the French, Belgian and British educational systems in Africa are powerfully influenced by the cultures and traditions of the three metropolitan countries, and therefore differ (in many respects) from each other. Whatever efforts may be made to bring about an alignment of educational authorities in the territories of different Administering Authorities which are adjacent - and the Trusteeship Council will be aware of the efforts that are being made by France and the United Kingdom in regard to French and British Togoland - it remains broadly true, that no educational authority in Africa can divest itself at will of its own centuries-old educational and cultural traditions. The process of evolving an educational philosophy or system of general application to all African territories, as opposed to purely local adjustments affecting peoples of more or less identical origin, language and culture, must therefore be reckoned in terms of decades. It seems therefore indisputable to the three Governments that for these technical reasons alone it would be impracticable to establish and maintain a single university in Africa for all the Trust Territories. But in addition there are other reasons, notably difficulties of staffing and of the supply of students, which are elaborated in the following paragraphs.

Staffing

6. Staffing is one of the main difficulties confronting existing higher educational institutions. All over the world there is a serious shortage of academic staff for university teaching and research, and great difficulty is being met in staffing university institutions with teachers of sufficiently high standard. The three Governments cannot sufficiently emphasize their determination that, to quote the words of Dr. Aggrey, himself an African educationist who was familiar with the highest achievements of education in the United States, "nothing but the best is good enough for Africa". In the furtherance of this determination the three Governments have a fixed policy of appointing to the staffs of the African university colleges under their control none but teachers who have actually held, or whose qualifications and experience would enable

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them to hold, academic posts in the metropolitan universities. In their view it would be a betrayal of the interests of the African peoples to staff African colleges with teachers whose qualifications were inadequate to secure their equivalent posts at home.

7. French Africa has a long established tradition that its students go for their higher education to France, and French Togoland and French Cameroons are allocating $6\frac{1}{2}$ million and $14\frac{1}{2}$ million francs respectively to the provision of scholarships for this purpose. In recent years, however, there has been a considerable development of facilities for higher education in French Africa itself, not merely in North Africa but also in Africa south of the Sahara. In addition to the long established Medical College at Dakar, and the Institut Francais d'Afrique Noire, there is already in existence the newly established College of Science, which, together with the Law School, which is planned for October, 1950, will form part of the new University of Dakar. In Madagascar also there are Colleges of Science, Law and Medicine, and a University of Madagascar is in process of being established. The French authorities, like the British, are taking the greatest care to ensure that the academic standard of these African university colleges shall be equal to those of Europe.

8. Similar developments are taking place in Belgian territories. A University college has already been opened at Kisantu in the Congo, and will be working at full pitch by 1955. Another university college is planned for the very near future at Leopoldville.

9. In Ruanda-Urundi itself there is already in existence the Astrida Institute, which provides a six-year medical course and four-year veterinary, agricultural, and administrative courses for students coming from the middle school. It is planned to establish a university college in Ruanda-Urundi, and the first steps are already being taken in the opening of two new secondary schools designed to prepare pupils for entry to the university college. One of these two schools will be in Ruanda, the other in Urundi; each will have a classical and a modern side. It is hoped that the new university college will be at work by 1955.

10. The staffing shortage referred to in paragraph 6 above is acute in the United Kingdom which is not only desirous of doubling its own university accommodation, but which in addition has assumed the responsibility for establishing and maintaining six new Universities outside its own island: the University Colleges in the West Indies, the Gold Coast, Nigeria, the Sudan, East Africa and Malaya. In addition the existing University at Hong Kong is being reconstituted after the destruction of war. It will be observed that four of these establishments are in Africa. The development of the universities in British Colonial

Territories and in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan is supervised not by the British Government, but by the Inter-University Council, which is an entirely non-governmental body composed of representatives of every university in the United Kingdom and in the Colonies. It is the Council's responsibility to guide the young colleges towards full university status, to see that their academic freedom is maintained, to assist in recruiting their staff, and in short to see that they do not fall in any way below what is expected of a university. In addition to the funds that are being provided by Colonial Governments, the British Government has provided for the establishment of these overseas Universities, a capital fund of $6\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds sterling. Grants from the fund are made on the advice of another similarly non-governmental expert committee, the Colonial University Grants Advisory Committee.

11. It will be appreciated that it is at present a matter of the acutest difficulty to staff all these new establishments satisfactorily. Had we been dealing not with human beings but with machines, it would indeed have been more effective to establish one college at a time and to staff and equip it adequately. But in practice this is impossible; we cannot tell the people of one Territory or region that they must wait another five or ten years until their neighbours have been satisfied before any attempt can be made to provide them with facilities for higher education. If for example it is suggested that the Inter-University Council should be willing to appoint non-British staff, the answer is that the Council is willing to do so, and such appointments have already been made. Nevertheless, the staffing difficulty remains, and to add another college in 1952 would intensify it. It is in fact the considered opinion of the three Governments that any new college established in 1952 could not possibly attain to genuine university status for a very long time; it might carry the name of a university, but it would be deluding its African students with an empty name.

12. The three Governments do not wish to over-emphasize the difficulty of finance. Universities are indeed expensive; for example the new Nigerian University is costing $1\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds in initial buildings and equipment, plus a free site, and its recurrent costs will be at least £120,000 a year in the first five years. Expenditure on this scale is not lightly to be undertaken: as large grants from the Governments responsible for the administration of the territory are involved, careful preliminary study is essential to ensure that the needs of higher education are harmoniously reconciled with the pressing demands on the financial resources of the territory which the Administering Authority has to face.

Students

13. But financial difficulties great as they are, could perhaps be more easily overcome than that of finding students, which is the biggest difficulty of all. It is unfortunately the case that in many African territories secondary education has so far made insufficient progress to supply an adequate number of university students. It will be borne in mind that according to the Belgian, French and British conception of the university, not all who complete the course in a secondary school can profit by a university course. According to the best information available, the approximate figures are:

	Local University college	Total completing secondary course each year	Studying locally	Studying in metropolitan country
British Togoland	Gold Coast	20	1	5
French Togoland		17		21
British Cameroons	Nigeria	18	3	2
French Cameroons		45		6
Ruanda-Urundi		40	62	
Tanganyika	East Africa	60	21	46

14. These figures show that the present capacity of the Trust Territories to profit by university education is being adequately met by colleges already existing or already planned. The needs of French Togoland and French Cameroons are being supplied by the University at Dakar and its associated colleges, and those of Ruanda-Urundi by the university college which is being planned for that territory. In the present process of active development of university colleges in British African territories, special attention is being paid to the requirements of the Trust Territories which they are being designed to serve. There is, for example, representation of Tanganyika on the governing body of Makerere University College in Uganda and places for Tanganyikan students in this College are assured; at Ibadan all students from the British Cameroons who are fit and wish to enter this College are admitted, though this may mean the exclusion of Nigerian applicants and scholarships are made available to all students from the Cameroons who prove fit for admission. And of course all the African University Colleges are supplemented by the Universities of the metropolitan countries.

15. This does not imply that the Administering Authorities are satisfied with the existing state of secondary and higher education in their African

Trust Territories. No educationist can possibly rest content with an educational system which does not provide primary education, if not indeed also secondary education, for all, and higher education of different types for all able to profit thereby. The most strenuous efforts are needed to overcome the financial and technical difficulties which are at present limiting the development of education. But in the opinion of the three Governments these efforts must first be directed towards the improvement of secondary and technical education, which still provides the essential foundation for university development. The facilities for higher education already existing and already planned in Africa will not be adequate for very long, and it is to be hoped that the time will soon come when additional university colleges will be needed. But in the opinion of the three Governments that time will not have arrived by 1952. In their opinion also, when that time does arrive, the aspirations of the peoples of the Trust Territories for higher education can be more effectively met than by providing one University for the service of all Trust Territories in Africa; and they consider that it would be doing a great disservice to the peoples of the Trust Territories to seek to provide them in 1952 with an additional university college of which they could not make effective use and which in the present world shortage of qualified academic staff could not possibly have a genuine claim to be of university standing.

16. The three Governments therefore propose to concentrate for the present on maintaining and increasing the academic standing, efficiency and capacity of the colleges already existing and planned. They intend to make strenuous efforts to improve and extend the facilities in the Trust Territories for secondary and technical education in order that the day may be hastened when true university development may be possible. The three Governments are fully conscious that no educational system can be fully effective unless it is a balanced whole, with primary, secondary, technical and university education all contributing to the general efficiency. They look forward with the members of the Trusteeship Council to the day when education in all the Trust Territories will have attained this completeness.
