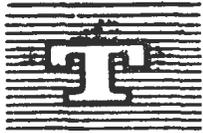


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Fifty-third Session

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE SIXTEEN HUNDRED AND FOURTEENTH MEETING

Held at United Nations Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 23 May 1986, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. RAPIN (France)

- Examination of the annual report of the Administering Authority for the year ended 30 September 1985: Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (continued)
- The future of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (continued)
- Organization of work

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Any corrections to the records of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

EXAMINATION OF THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 1985: TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS (T/1888 and T/L.1249)
(continued)

THE FUTURE OF THE TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS (T/1886) (continued)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The representatives of the Trust Territory who, as in previous years, have come to participate in our work for two weeks must leave New York this weekend because of their responsibilities in their home Territory. As we agreed when we adopted our provisional schedule at the beginning of our work, they will make their closing statements this morning.

I call first on Mr. Epel Ilon, who will speak on behalf of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Mr. ILON (Special Adviser): I wish first to express the sorrow of my people and Government over the devastation and human suffering in the Solomon Islands caused by a cyclone. The news came at a time when the Federated States of Micronesia itself is having to deal with the devastation caused by a typhoon in Pohnpei State. We wish the Solomon Islands - and, of course, Pohnpei State - a speedy recovery.

The delegation from the Federated States of Micronesia has listened attentively to the proceedings of the Council during the past two weeks, but this year we have witnessed the examination of specific conditions in the Trust Territory with a sense of impatience, wishing to reach the real task before us. As always, we appreciate the sincere interest and concern demonstrated so clearly by Council members. But after 39 years of its concern for our needs we are at a point where our Government can independently address those concerns.

(Mr. Iton, Special Adviser)

There is really only one task left for the Council. That task, as we stated in our opening remarks, is to engage the mechanisms of the United Nations to take official notice that the trusteeship has been rendered obsolete through valid exercises of self-determination by the inhabitants of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

For our part, we in the Federated States of Micronesia have chosen for our immediate future a political status based on a concept broadly termed "free association". Unlike other examples of free association, the guidelines established by our Government mandated a status with emphasis on the word "free", so much so that we regard the customary term, "free association", as misleading. In our case, it would be more accurate to speak of "independence in free association", for what we have achieved demonstrates that the concepts of independence and free association are not mutually exclusive.

(Mr. Ilon, Special Adviser)

The terms of the Compact, as approved by our people after some 16 years of careful study and deliberations, are not before the Council for approval. We make this point because at times it seemed to us that some petitioners, and perhaps even some members, thought that the appropriateness of the Compact and its terms were subjects for examination here. We mean no disrespect by stating that such is not the case, but we feel very strongly that nothing that is extraneous to the task before the Council must be allowed to delay the action the Council is poised to take.

The Council has witnessed, and so can share our great pride in, the fact that our Pacific neighbours have already accepted us into their community. Just this week we heard their reiteration of support for terminating the trusteeship. We shall always be especially grateful to our Pacific brothers for stepping forward at this important moment to associate themselves with the efforts to end our long colonial period. The history of our nation will have a place for those friends, for their amplification of the wishes of the Micronesian people.

I should add that at various times throughout the past year President Nakayama and other officials of our Government have met with all members of the Council available to receive us, members of the Security Council and representatives of a broad spectrum of other countries to discuss termination of the trusteeship. The meetings have given those countries a constructive understanding of our situation and have left us with a sense of broad support for our chosen goal.

Thus, after so many years, we stand at last at the very threshold of our future as a member of the world community. The Council also stands at the threshold of bringing to final completion a historic task that has brought freedom and fulfilment to the peoples of all former trusteeships. We thank you, Sir, and each member of the Council for your faithful dedication to this task.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I now call on Mr. John Ngiraked, who will speak for Palau.

Mr. NGIRAKED (Special Adviser): Allow me to add my delegation's sympathy and condolences to the people and the Government of the Solomon Islands over the tragic national disaster caused by the recent cyclone. We, too, hope - and are confident - that donor countries, both within and outside the South Pacific region, will come to their aid in their time of need.

It is a distinct privilege for me as Minister of State of Palau to make a closing statement on behalf of the people of Palau. I do so in the sincere hope that today will be the last time we have to make a closing statement to the Council.

Micronesia means "tiny islands". Palau is a small component of that which is now the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. Its being small, however, does not detract from the fact that, as a people, we Palauans share the same aspirations as the people of any other nation on earth and share a common birthright and the same self-respect.

The history of Micronesia, in a nutshell, is a succession of one foreign rule after another. Historians have written that we were discovered by the Spaniards and colonized by them. At the end of the Spanish-American War our islands were sold to Germany for a few million marks. After the First World War we were mandated to Japanese stewardship under the League of Nations. In 1947, as a consequence of yet another world war, we were entrusted as wards under the auspices of the United Nations trusteeship system to the United States, as our Administering Authority.

Foreign dominion over our lands and our people have changed hands four times in less than a century, and each time we were handled as if we were spoils of war. Needless to say, these changes were not of our choosing, nor did we have anything to say about them.

(Mr. Ngiraked, Special Adviser)

For the first time, at long last, the Micronesian people have had the opportunity fairly and freely to express their wishes, and they have chosen the course for their own destiny and the future of generations to come. Is it too unreasonable to seek home rule? Are we to be denied our unanimous request for termination of the trusteeship, a request that the Council on past occasions readily granted to the other 10 Trust Territories that came before it with similar requests?

Ambassador Walters of the United States, speaking for the Administering Authority, last Friday formally asked the Council to end the trusteeship, echoing the requests of the heads of the Micronesian delegations. Ambassador Byrne in her opening statement outlined the United Nations criteria for trusteeship termination and how they have been fully complied with in the case of the Trusteeship Agreement for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

Last Wednesday we heard the clear, united voice of our South Pacific neighbouring countries urging the Council and the Security Council to adhere to and respect our peoples' wishes. We are indeed grateful to the Governments of Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu for their collective statements of support. We look forward to playing our part in the activities of the Pacific region and the world at large upon attainment of our new status.

Much has been said about Palau, and even more of the Council's time has been spent discussing the 21 February Compact plebiscite and the report of the Observer Mission dispatched by the Council to witness that event. This has been done, in our opinion, at the expense of our brethren from the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, whose political future is also before the Council.

(Mr. Ngiraked, Special Adviser)

It has been agonizing - to put it mildly - at times to listen attentively to condescending and often insensitive allegations, accusations and criticisms made behind our back by non-Palauan petitioners and observers. Though the views they expressed and the ideologies they espoused differ from ours, we respect their right to air them here. However, we ask you, Mr. President, and the other members of the Council, also to respect the wishes of our own people, as expressed by their official, elected representatives and spokesmen. We trust you will not let us down in this regard.

(Mr. Ngiraked, Special Adviser)

Despite what has been said about us, we know ourselves that we are quite ready to assume the responsibilities of self-government. We have instituted a democratic form of government pursuant to a Constitution of our own making in Palau. Our people have clearly demonstrated on three occasions in the polls their preference for self-government in free association with the United States, our current Administering Authority. We have, in fact, exercised our inalienable right to self-determination and have done so in accordance with the norms set forth in both the United Nations Charter and the Trusteeship Agreement. For nearly 40 years now we have been looking forward to a new chapter in our political history and we believe we have done our part. The time has come for the Council to do its part and not to deny our wishes.

To you, Mr. President, and to the members and staff of the Trusteeship Council, we owe our thanks for the watchful eye you have kept over us throughout the process of our political, social and economic advancement up to this point.

To the Administering Authority, we say that while the fifty-third session of the Council may mark - and we hope that it will - the end of the trusteeship era, it also heralds the beginning of a new and equal partnership between your Government and ours that we are confident will be both friendly and enduring.

To our colleagues from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, I say, let us go home and brace ourselves for the tasks and challenges of nation-building and the management of our own internal and foreign affairs.

Finally, to Mrs. Janet McCoy, our beloved and last High Commissioner of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, we extend our deepest gratitude for her time and efforts in assisting us during the past five years. We are particularly

(Mr. Ngiraked, Special Adviser)

appreciative of her tribute to our late President Haruo I. Remeliik in her opening statement before the Council.

Mr. President, thank you very much, farewell and bon voyage.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I now call on Mr. Herman Guerrero who will speak on behalf of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Mr. GUERRERO (Special Adviser): On behalf of the Government and the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, I should like also to express our condolences and sympathy to the Government and the people of the Solomon Islands on the losses they have suffered as a result of the recent cyclone that hit the islands.

Mr. President, I should like at the outset like to thank you and your colleagues on the Trusteeship Council for the very careful and interested attention you have devoted to our affairs, not only over these last two weeks but throughout the years of the trusteeship. We have benefited greatly from that attention. And, even though we have not always agreed with what has been said, I should also like to thank the various petitioners who have taken the trouble to offer their insights and points of view to the Trusteeship Council.

When termination of a trusteeship is sought, the principal concern of the United Nations should be whether a valid act of self-determination has taken place. For the Northern Mariana Islands, that valid act of self-determination has taken place. Eleven years ago, 95 per cent of our voters took part in a plebiscite, observed by a Visiting Mission from the United Nations. More than 78 per cent of the ballots cast favoured adoption of the mutually binding agreement we had negotiated with the United States, the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America. The Visiting Mission that observed the plebiscite concluded that:

(Mr. Guerrero, Special Adviser)

"The people of the Northern Mariana Islands, in a well-organized and well-attended poll, voted by a majority of almost 80 per cent to become a commonwealth of the United States. There was no improper interference by the Administering Authority. The campaign was free and seen to be free."

In the 11 years that have elapsed since we voted in favour of the Covenant, our views have not changed. To the contrary, our efforts have been to hasten the end of the trusteeship, so that we may fully implement the form of self-government we have chosen as a Commonwealth in Political Union with the United States.

Once the United Nations has satisfied itself as to the validity of an act of self-determination, as we believe it must be satisfied in the case of our plebiscite, we are not sure how much further it should properly inquire into the characteristics of the chosen political status. Nonetheless, we believe the Commonwealth status we have chosen will bear whatever level of scrutiny the Council cares to give it.

We ask the Trusteeship Council to consider the question of our future political status from our perspective. In our opening statement to the Trusteeship Council, we noted that the Northern Mariana Islands consisted of 14 small islands in the midst of the largest ocean on earth. We noted that our population was smaller than that of most cities in the world.

With our small size comes vulnerability, the inability to protect ourselves from the harmful actions of nations larger than ourselves. That vulnerability was brought home to us in a most devastating fashion by the Second World War.

Given the small population, size, and resources of the Northern Mariana Islands and our vulnerability to actions by many nations more powerful than ourselves, we believe that for us to seek separate nationhood would be foolhardy.

(Mr. Guerrero, Special Adviser)

Criticism has been levelled at the Administering Authority because we have not chosen to remain with our island neighbours of the Trust Territory in emerging from the trusteeship. But the Trust Territory has never been a single entity, other than for purposes of its administration by foreign Powers. Koror, the capital of the Republic of Palau, lies more than 900 miles from our shores. Kolonia, the capital of the Federated States of Micronesia, is 1,000 miles away. Majuro, the capital of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, is 1,800 miles away. Between these capitals and our islands lies little but water. We are not only separated from our Micronesian neighbours by water: our different languages and cultures also separate us.

The United Nations Charter and the Trusteeship Agreement speak of the rights to self-determination of "the peoples" and not "the people" of the Trust Territory. We note that our brothers and sisters in the Trust Territory and the other peoples of Micronesia have also chosen to establish their own separate political identities. We wish them the very best in their future endeavours and we look forward to continuing the friendly and co-operative relationships with them in the future that we have enjoyed in the past. We believe they agree with us that our separate futures involve no disruption of national unity and no violation of territorial integrity, for there never was a national unity to disrupt, there never was a territorial integrity to violate.

Even though others may disagree with the choices we have made, it is for the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, and us alone, to select the form in which we shall exercise our right to self-determination. We do not believe that the form we select must conform to preconceived, abstract notions of "permissible forms of self-government." We have the right to choose our own form of self-government, a form tailored to our particular circumstances. We have exercised that right by choosing to become a Commonwealth in Political Union with the United States.

(Mr. Guerrero, Special Adviser)

Before I close, I should like to express our gratitude to the Administering Authority. We know that without the dedication of a generation of United States civil servants and without the substantial resources devoted by the United States to achieving the objectives of the trusteeship system, we would not be here now seeking termination of the trusteeship. That dedication and those resources have brought us from our devastated state at the conclusion of the Second World War to our present much improved condition where we stand ready to join the American political family as a Commonwealth in Political Union with the United States of America.

We again ask that the Council now take action to bring the trusteeship to its overdue end.

In conclusion, I should like, on behalf of the Northern Marianas delegation, to express our appreciation for the hospitality that has been extended to us by the Council members and the Secretariat staff. We just wish to say thank you and dangkulo na si yuus maase.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I now call on Mr. Oscar DeBrum, Chief Secretary of the Marshall Islands and Special Representative of the Administering Authority.

Mr. DeBRUM (Special Representative): Again we wish to express to the Council and to the Government of the United States, the Administering Authority, the gratitude of our President, His Excellency Amata Kabua, and the Government and the people of the Marshall Islands for the opportunity to participate in the fifty-third session of the Council and to express the views of the Marshall Islands.

We also wish to express sincere thanks to our neighbours from the South Pacific Islands, who spoke so eloquently and without reservation in support of our

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request for termination of the trusteeship. And, to the people of the Solomon Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia, Pohnpei, go our deepest sympathy for the losses they suffered from the high winds that hit their islands earlier this week. We wish them a speedy recovery.

At this time, I should like to address some of issues which have been raised during this session in respect to the Marshall Islands.

First, certain petitioners alleged that officials of the United States have stated that under the Compact of Free Association the freely associated States, while having sovereignty and full self-government, would not possess the attributes of independence called for in the eligibility criteria of the United Nations Charter. In fact, the Government of the United States has not taken an official position as to whether the freely associated States will be eligible to become Members of the United Nations. This is an issue for the United Nations to address and not necessarily the United States acting alone. Moreover, as recently as 9 May 1986, United States Ambassador Fred Zeder informed representatives of my Government that the Government of the United States would not object to the freely associated States becoming Members of the United Nations. As our colleagues from the Federated States of Micronesia have stated, free association under the Compact differs from other forms of free association in that we will have the capacity to conduct our own foreign affairs. Our relationship can be better described as "independence in free association" with the United States.

Secondly, it has been suggested that the Trusteeship Council "consider establishing a committee, with a life of approximately five years, to maintain oversight jurisdiction to ensure that the United States fulfils its obligation to clean up and resettle Bikini".

(Mr. DeBrum, Special Representative)

The Government of the Marshall Islands sees no need for the creation of such a committee. We fully expect the Government of the United States in good faith to honour its commitment under the Compact to provide us with funds for the people of Bikini to resettle Bikini Atoll when it is safe for them to do so. If disputes arise between the Government of the Marshall Islands and the Government of the United States regarding the discharge of Compact obligations, such disputes can be resolved pursuant to the Compact dispute resolution mechanisms. Failing that, the Government of the Marshall Islands and the Government of the United States can resort to other remedies available under international law.

Thirdly, questions have been raised as to the compensation to be paid by the Government of the United States to the Government and the people of the Marshall Islands under the Compact for claims resulting from loss or damage to persons and property as a result of the United States nuclear-testing programme in the Marshall Islands. Pursuant to the Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of the Marshall Islands for the Implementation of Section 177 of the Compact of Free Association, the Government of the Marshall Islands shall receive \$150 million from the Government of the United States in compensation for all such claims. This sum will be invested and the proceeds therefrom will be distributed to, or used for, the benefit of those affected by the nuclear-testing programme. From these proceeds, the people of Bikini shall receive \$75 million during the first 15 years of the Compact, the people of Enewetak \$48.75 million, the people of Rongelap \$37.5 million, and the people of Utirik \$22.5 million. An additional \$45.75 million will be made available to a Marshall Islands claims tribunal during the first 15 years of the Compact to make awards to the Government and the people of the Marshall Islands to satisfy uncompensated claims. In addition to these sums, funds will be available to provide for the resettlement of Bikini and for

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special health care programmes, medical surveillance and radiological monitoring for the benefit of those affected by the nuclear-testing programme. After the fifteenth year, up to 75 per cent of the investment proceeds will be available to pay uncompensated claims and the remainder will be available to the Government of the Marshall Islands to address the special needs of the people of the Marshall Islands resulting from the nuclear-testing programme. For these reasons, we believe that the compensation provided under the Section 177 Agreement is fair and adequate. As we explained to the Council in our statement last year, the Section 177 compensation package will provide those affected by the nuclear-testing programme with an average income 10 times that of other Micronesian families. We believe that these sums are adequate to meet their needs. These sums are in addition to the \$40 million and the \$100 million that the Government of the United States has already expended on special programmes for the people of Bikini and Enewetak, respectively.

Fourthly, questions have been raised regarding land use arrangements covering the Kwajalein Missile Range (KMR). In this respect, it may be helpful if I provide the Council with a summary of relevant events.

In October 1982 the Government of the Marshall Islands entered into an agreement, the Land Use Agreement (LUA), with the Kwajalein landowners regarding the use of KMR by the United States prior to and during the Compact period.

At the same time, the Government of the Marshall Islands entered into an agreement, the Interim Use Agreement (IUA), with the Government of the United States regarding its use of KMR from 1 October 1981 through September 1985.

(Mr. DeBrum, Special Representative)

In September 1985 the Government of the Marshall Islands, in consultation with the Kwajalein landowners, began discussions with the United States regarding an extension of the Interim Use Agreement.

The Interim Use Agreement was extended on a month-to-month basis until April 1986 when the Government of the Marshall Islands and the Government of the United States entered into an agreement - called the IUA Extension Agreement - under which the Government of the United States would pay Compact level funding for the use of Kwajalein Missile Range as of 1 October 1985 until the Compact was implemented.

Pursuant to the Land Use Agreement the sums received by the Government of the Marshall Islands from the Government of the United States for the use of Kwajalein after 30 September 1985 were at all times made available to the Kwajalein landowners.

Under the IUA Extension Agreement a sum of approximately \$7 million is available to Kwajalein landowners in direct payments and another \$3 million for development projects. The direct payments provide the 5,000 Kwajalein landowners with an average annual family income of \$11,200 - over 10 times that of other Marshallese and Micronesian families. That is in addition to the benefits provided by the development projects. The annual payment of \$10 million provides the people of Kwajalein with benefits far in excess of the income which they could have generated from the 2,000 acres comprising the Kwajalein Missile Range through traditional agricultural activities.

In February 1986 a small number - approximately 1 per cent - of the Kwajalein landowners occupied the dock at the Kwajalein Missile Range in an effort to force the United States to pay more money for its use of Kwajalein. That occupation disrupted the use of the dock, endangered human life and was in violation of local

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law. For those reasons the demonstrators were removed by civilian security personnel at Kwajalein. At all times the rights of the demonstrators were observed.

In April 1986 the Government of the Marshall Islands obtained a court order for the removal of demonstrators from Kwajalein, and it did so without incident. Again, at all times the rights of the demonstrators were observed.

In late April 1986 demonstrators blocked the dock at Ebeye and prevented other Marshallese from going to work on Kwajalein. The Marshallese workers were forced to walk four miles of reef between Ebeye and Kwajalein to get to their jobs. Those workers who walked the reef were also harassed and threatened by the demonstrators. Seeing that the local Government was not able to protect the workers, the President of the Marshall Islands, His Excellency Amata Kabua, went to Ebeye and convinced the demonstrators to clear the dock and permit the workers to do their jobs, and they complied.

Those Kwajalein landowners who are not satisfied with the payment available under the IUA Extension Agreement and the Compact can take their claim to court, as has been done in some cases. There is no need to resort to confrontation tactics, which endanger human life. Fair and open judicial remedies are available. There has not been, nor will there be, any abridgement of constitutional or human rights.

In closing, I should like to make a few additional remarks.

In our opening statement we described how, with the assistance of the United States and the United Nations, the people of the Marshall Islands have progressively developed their political, social and economic institutions to a point where today, for all practical purposes, we are self-governing. Indeed, since May 1979 we have conducted our own internal and foreign affairs under a parliamentary form of government established in accordance with our own Constitution.

(Mr. DeBrum, Special Representative)

The Council is also aware that, after 17 years of negotiation and review, we have concluded with the Government of the United States a Compact of Free Association that the people of the Marshall Islands approved in the 7 September 1983 plebiscite, which was observed by a Visiting Mission from the Council.

From among the variety of political options discussed and examined by the Marshallese people, including independence and commonwealth, the free association relationship was approved by a 58 per cent majority of the voters - a percentage that clearly reflects the will of the people in any democratic society.

The free association relationship set forth in the Compact embodies four fundamental principles that recognize: first, sovereignty over the Marshall Islands resides with the people of the Marshall Islands and their democratically created constitutional Government; secondly, the people of the Marshall Islands possess the right to self-determination and may choose independence or self-government in a free association relationship; thirdly, the people of the Marshall Islands have the right to adopt and amend their own constitution; and, fourthly, the free association relationship can be unilaterally terminated by either party.

The people of the Marshall Islands have spoken clearly and democratically in the exercise of their inherent right to self-determination: they have chosen self-government in free association with the United States. The United Nations recognizes our right to make that choice in its Charter, resolution 1541 (XV) of 1960, and resolution 2625 (XXV) of 1970. It is on that basis that the report of the latest Visiting Mission recommends termination "as soon as possible". We pray that this Council will respect the freely expressed wishes of our people and terminate the trusteeship without delay or condition.

(Mr. DeBrum, Special Representative)

Although we believe that this session of the Trusteeship Council will be the last, we invite the Council and its secretariat to join us later this year or the early part of next year when we shall celebrate the termination of the trusteeship. We express our gratitude for all the assistance and understanding the Council has given us.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): The Council has just heard the statements of the representatives of the authorities of the Territory and special advisers to the Administering Authority. I thank them for coming once again this year for two weeks to participate in our work. Their contribution to this session of the Council has given it a dimension it would not have had without them.

Everybody has reminded us of this session's importance. It is indeed an important one, because the Administering Authority has asked officially that the Council recognize it is time to terminate the trusteeship. The long, contradictory and in-depth debate we have begun on several agenda items - I am thinking in particular of the discussion of the reports of the two Visiting Missions - shows quite clearly, if that was necessary, that within the framework of its authority and competence the Council will be called upon to respond to that request after due reflection and in full knowledge of its significance. I request the special representatives and the special advisers of the Administering Authority on their return to make that known to the Territory's population, to whom, through them, I express best wishes for happiness and prosperity.

Mr. MAXEY (United Kingdom): On behalf of the United Kingdom delegation I should like to add our own very brief thanks to the representatives of the Micronesian Governments for the valuable contribution they have made to our work during the past two weeks and for having sat so patiently through what have sometimes been rather lengthy debates. They have expressed themselves succinctly and eloquently. They have demonstrated again their political maturity and sophistication. Their message regarding the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement has been unambiguous.

The Micronesian representatives can leave New York confident that, as far as my delegation is concerned, that message will not go unheeded. We bid them warm farewell and wish them well in their future endeavours. We hope, indeed we are sure, that we shall have the opportunity to meet them again and to renew old friendships, but not - I should like to think - in this Chamber.

Mr. ROCHER (France) (interpretation from French): My delegation listened with great attention and the keenest interest to the statements made by the constitutional representatives of the Territory. Above all we wish to thank them for having travelled so far to come and participate in the work of this session of the Council. They responded patiently to our questions; they especially expressed their feelings as representatives of the populations of Micronesia. We congratulate them on their spirit of co-operation, and we are responsive to the conviction with which they have expressed their wishes. My delegation would assure them that the realities they have expressed to us will be important factors in its arriving at the positions it will be called upon to take at the fifty-third session of the Trusteeship Council.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from French): I should like now to inform members of the Council of the conclusions I have reached with regard to the organization of our work in the light of the consultations I have had in recent days with all delegations. As I indicated to members at yesterday's meeting, the general debate we traditionally hold during our sessions will take place at our Tuesday meeting on 27 May. We have reached the stage in our work where we have heard preliminary statements, discussed the report of the Administering Authority, listened to and questioned the petitioners, seen the petitions and discussed the communications and the reports of the two Visiting Missions. The time has come for each delegation to make a general statement to contribute to the direction of our work. This work will continue after the general debate - which, as I have just said, will take place Tuesday morning.

At this point I can indicate to members that, in the light of the pending agenda items, I foresee two meetings on Wednesday, 28 May, to take up agenda items or to end discussion on agenda items that are still pending, following which I shall keep open the two meetings for Friday, 30 May. If needed, we can also meet on Thursday, 29 May, but for the time being I shall follow the provisional schedule we have adopted, that is, no meeting planned for those two days.

As members know, Monday, 26 May, is a holiday, so that we shall not meet on that day. Our next meeting will take place on Tuesday morning, 27 May, for the general debate. It will coincide with the start of the special session the General Assembly is convening on the crisis situation in Africa. In order to take into account the wishes expressed by one delegation that is scheduled to speak that morning, I propose that we start at 10.45 a.m. instead of at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.