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**AGENDA ITEM 9**

*General debate (continued)*

***Speech by Mr. Muna (Cameroon).....463***

**President: Mr. Mongi Slim (Tunisia).**

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**1. Mr. MUNA (Cameroon):** Since this is the first time that my delegation has spoken, I hope that Mr. Slim will allow me to associate myself, on behalf of my delegation, with the very warm sentiments of congratulation already expressed on his election as President of the General Assembly. My delegation feels that the fact that he holds this elevated and well deserved -- although not easy—position stems from the very able part he has played in discharging his duty as the representative of his country. We promise faithfully to give him the fullest support and co-operation, and we also appeal to our fellow representatives to do the same.

**2.** It might interest representatives to know that, in the month of March this year, during the fifteenth session of the General Assembly, **the Prime Minister of Cameroon, Mr. J. N. Foncha, and I** were here as advisers to the United Kingdom delegation. Today I feel greatly honoured and gratified to find myself mounting this rostrum and speaking not as an adviser to a foreign country but as the chairman and on behalf of the delegation of my country, **which is now united and independent.**

**3.** The Cameroon delegation expresses its deepest regret in connection with the untimely and tragic death of Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, the Secretary-General, who died on active service in his selfless and untiring efforts to find a solution for human and world problems. The visit of the Secretary-General to the Cameroon last year, when he had the opportunity to discuss our problems with great sympathy, will long be remembered. Any measure or measures which have been proposed to commemorate the name of this great soul fully meet the support of my delegation. We support also the proposal that only one Secretary-General, with assistants, will be the solution to the deadlock that has been created by this irrecoverable loss. We must be guided by the fact that too many cooks will spoil the broth and that there can be no more than one captain in one ship.

4. It was with the greatest joy and congratulations that my delegation witnessed the hoisting of the Sierra Leone flag amongst those of other Members of the United Nations. We have noted also the march to independence by other States, particularly Tanganyika. **The Cameroon pledges itself to support any dependent State towards the ultimate goal of independence.**

5. **The statement of my delegation will be based, first, on the termination of the Trusteeship Agreement in the Southern Cameroons, now West Cameroons,** and then lastly, on our observations on the general problems now facing the General Assembly,

6. It will be recalled that for many years in the past, the Cameroon problem has been one of the most brain-cracking and vexing questions for solution by the General Assembly. The story or plight of Cameroon as a colony under the Germans, and later as a Trust Territory under the United Kingdom and France as Administering Authorities had been related repeatedly before the Fourth Committee and on many occasions before the General Assembly.

7. Through petitions from individuals, officials and private delegations, the peoples of Cameroon left no stone unturned in pressing persistently 'the problems of their country before the United Nations for solution. Many Cameroon nationalists, in their undaunted pursuit to liberate their country from the grip of the deadly talons of colonialism and imperialism, have faced terrible persecution and loss of life and property.

8. Our historians will have an important job to do when they place on record the terrible tragedies, political upheavals and remarkable changes which have finally brought freedom and unity to a country which was arbitrarily and cruelly torn into pieces. Indeed, it has been said that Cameroon was probably the most manipulated territory in Africa.

9. On 1 January 1960, the section of the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under French administration achieved its Independence as the Republic of Cameroon and, afterwards, was admitted as a Member of this international arena or club to which belong also the smallest and newest nations.

10. With the achievement of independence, the Republic of Cameroon, now known as East Cameroon in the new Federal Republic of Cameroon, fought like a bulldog **in order to attain unification with, and independence for, the Southern and Northern Cameroons.** I believe that the memory of the storm raised during the debates, both in the Fourth Committee and in the General Assembly, on the results of the plebiscite conducted in the Northern and Southern Cameroons early this year is still fresh in the minds of my fellow representatives.

11. In spite of the fact that the results of the plebiscite were absolutely decisive in the Southern Cameroons, much controversy, bitterness and resentment was expressed by a host of petitioners from the opposition party who favoured federation with Nigeria. The incredible and ridiculous statements of the opposition, coupled with threats of riots, gave rise to the great fear in the minds of those who listened that there would be confusion and civil war in the Southern Cameroons and that the unification issue would be lost. Happily, when at last it became abundantly clear through the resolution adopted by the General Assembly endorsing the results of the plebiscite [Resolution 1608(XV)], the opposition party gave in and promised co-operation, which went a long way towards making unification easy.

12. We are fully determined to face our intricate and peculiar problems, both externally and internally, with optimism. We are convinced that, backed by the spirit of hard work, co-

operation, and the vast untapped natural resources of our blessed land, we shall succeed. Those who know Cameroon have confirmed the fact that apart from its natural or physical beauty, which is unique, the whole territory has the greatest potentials in the whole of West Africa.

13. Unfortunately, reports which the world received when Cameroon was struggling to throw off the yoke of colonialism had tended to give a poor picture of the territory. In fact, until recently British newspapers gave very distorted and exaggerated facts about the state of affairs in Cameroon. **My delegation wants to assure the General Assembly that unification and independence have been achieved in a peaceful atmosphere.** As time goes on, the problems arising out of the marriage of British and French cultures in Cameroon through unification will be solved one by one.

14. In this connection, we want to take this opportunity and appeal to those nations which delight in the training of the nationals or radicals of young independent and dependent countries in the terrible art of guerilla warfare or terrorism, to stop doing so. Some of these States support and harbour rebels or refugees from other States to form puppet governments for the main purpose of upsetting the legitimate home Government by acts of terrorism from time to time. World peace cannot be achieved when such subversive and treacherous tactics and intrigues are allowed to go on and are encouraged.

15. **I should like to refresh the minds of representatives by referring to the relevant sections of Resolution 1608 (XV), adopted by the General Assembly at its fifteenth session, on 21 April 1961:**

- "4. Decides that, the plebiscites having been taken separately with differing results, the Trusteeship Agreement of 13 December 1946 concerning the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration **shall be terminated**, in accordance with **Article 76b** of the Charter of the United Nations and in agreement with the Administering Authority, in the following manner:
- -(a) With respect to the Northern Cameroons, on 1 June 1961, upon its joining the Federation of Nigeria as a separate province of the Northern Region of Nigeria;
- "(b) With respect to the Southern Cameroons, on 1 October 1961, upon its joining the Republic of Cameroun;
- "5. Invites the Administering Authority, the Government of the Southern Cameroons and the Republic of Cameroun to initiate urgent discussions with a view to finalizing, before 1 October 1961, the arrangements by which the agreed and declared policies of the parties concerned will be implemented."

16. As the result of this resolution adopted by the General Assembly, the Cameroun as a whole very regrettably and reluctantly lost part of its territory, the Northern Cameroons, on 1 June 1961, when it became a province of Northern Nigeria. After that, Northern Cameroons was baptized by Nigeria, and given the new name of Saradaune Province. A name can be changed overnight, but not a people.

17. **I shall now proceed to outline briefly how this important United Nations decision has been implemented, as far as the Southern Cameroons is concerned. In the first place, the Administering Authority, the Southern Cameroons Government and the Republic of**

**Cameroun initiated urgent discussions based on the arrangement by which the agreed and declared policies used at the plebiscite would be implemented.** In short, we required a Federal Constitution for a new united Cameroon, drawn up by and acceptable to the people. **The leaders of the major political parties, traditional rulers, local Government, councillors and parliamentarians met and held from time to time several meetings and conferences to discuss and draw up a new constitution.**

**18. Finally, we successfully produced a draft Federal Constitution, which, having been adopted by the two legislatures of East and West Cameroon, now binds the two States together as a Federation, which came into being as the Federal Republic of Cameroon on 1 October 1961. We are proud** to report that this Constitution, drawn up by us, is typical and adaptable to our peculiar and existing problems.

**19.** I should now like to read out parts of several articles of the Constitution in order to impress upon representatives that the unification we have achieved is not **a faked or an imaginary one, but a reality.**

**20. Article 1 States, inter alia;**

- ❖ "The Federal Republic of Cameroon is formed, as from 1 October 1961, of the Territory of the Republic of Cameroun, henceforth called East Cameroon, and the Territory of the Southern Cameroons formerly under United Kingdom administration, henceforth called West Cameroon.
- ❖ "The Federal Republic of Cameroon is democratic, secular and social. It shall ensure the equality of all citizens before the law. It affirms its adherence to the fundamental freedoms set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Charter of the United Nations.
- ❖ "The official languages of the Federal Republic of Cameroon shall be French and English.
- ❖ "The national motto shall be: 'Peace-Labour-Fatherland'.
- ❖ "The national flag shall be: green, red and yellow, In three vertical bands of equal size, with two gold stars superimposed on the green band.
- ❖ **Article 2 reads, in part:**  
"National sovereignty shall be vested in the Cameroonian People, which shall exercise such sovereignty either through its deputies in the Federal Assembly or by way of referendum. No section of the People, nor any individual, may assume the exercise thereof. The vote shall be equal and secret; all citizens who have attained the age of twenty-one years shall participate therein..."
- ❖ **Article 8 states:**  
"The President of the Federal Republic of Cameroon, Head of State and Head of the Federal Government, shall uphold the Federal Constitution and shall ensure the unity of the Federation and the conduct of the affairs of the Federal Republic."

- ❖ Article 9 states:  
"The President of the Federal Republic and the Vice-President, who must not be natives of the same Federated State, shall be elected, on a single list, by universal suffrage and direct and secret ballot."
- ❖ Article 39 reads, in part:  
"The President of the Federal Republic shall appoint the Prime Minister of each Federated State, who must be confirmed in office by simple majority vote of the Legislative Assembly of the State concerned."
- ❖ Article 47 states, inter alia:  
"Any proposal for the revision of the present Constitution which impairs the unity and integrity of the Federation shall be inadmissible ...."
- ❖ "Any proposal for revision submitted by the Deputies must be signed by at least one-third of the Members of the Federal Assembly."

These few extracts go a long way to show that the unification achieved by both East and West Cameroon is not an Imaginary unification, but a reality.

21. By achieving unification and independence, the Federal Republic of Cameroon has reached a point which can be compared to throwing wide open the curtains at the beginning of a new scene on the stage of its national drama of progress into the future. The last scene, which we can adequately call the notorious colonial rule, has yielded its place to a new scene, independence.

22. The Federal Republic of Cameroon is tied to the apron strings of neither the French Community nor the British Commonwealth. My country has chosen to be a really free nation with freedom of worship, thought, speech and action within the framework of the United Nations Charter. We have successfully torn ourselves away from colonialism and imperialism, without friction or bitterness towards the Administering Authorities. We shall continue to maintain friendly relations with them and with any other nation, on equal terms.

23. My delegation wishes to seize this timely and historic opportunity to express, on behalf of the Government and the entire people of the United Federal Republic of Cameroon, its very hearty sentiments of gratitude and appreciation for the great and noble work which the United Nations as a whole has done to bring the Cameroons to its present status. The United Nations, through its various visiting missions, -which, in many cases, worked under terrible hardships and in abnormal physical conditions -- took positive steps towards dissolving the Cameroon problem. The magnitude of the problem and the degree of interest shown by the Assembly in the Cameroon question can be adequately gauged by the incredible volume of documents, reports and so forth which has now accumulated in the United Nations.

24. Words, indeed, are inadequate for my delegation to convey from this rostrum its boundless thanks to all the representatives, particularly those in the Fourth Committee of this Assembly, for their great devotion and humanitarian feelings in connection with our problems. When the annals of Cameroon history are written one day, we believe that the names of the fighters for freedom will not be forgotten. It is with gratification and delight that my delegation thinks of the valuable work which the United Nations has done and continues to do for the people of the Cameroon and other countries through its various bodies, especially the United Nations

Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization, The stamping out of smallpox and other diseases, such as yaws, is a great blessing to the people.

**25.** Next, my delegation wants to register our special thanks and appreciation to the Administering Authorities, the United Kingdom and France, for all the great and varied efforts they have made to develop the Cameroons socially, economically and politically. From the annual reports regularly submitted by the Administering Authorities, representatives in the Assembly are familiar with the progress made by the Cameroon people. My delegation does not intend to compare the scale of development rendered possible by the Administering Authorities, but we should like to express special thanks to the United Kingdom for the peace and tranquility and the security measures maintained in West Cameroon, particularly at the time when it separated from Nigeria.

**26.** It is well and good to criticize indiscriminately and condemn without any reservation the colonial Powers for their many and notorious crimes and misdeeds, but It would be sheer blindness or madness for my delegation to fail to appreciate the humanitarian activities of the United Kingdom and France throughout the world from time immemorial. Indeed, these two great Powers, in spite of their terrible crimes and failures in particular cases, have helped many countries towards the rapid achievement of independence, peace and prosperity. These facts are obvious from the strong ties of friendship still existing between these Powers and their ex-colonies, and between them and other countries; and also from the fact that these Powers still spend millions and millions of pounds as free grants and loans for these independent States.

**27.** We feel very strongly that political emancipation without economic freedom is nothing but day-dreaming, which finally may lead a people into misery and revolution. For this reason, it is incumbent on the United Nations to help more vigorously, through its various organizations, the new or young independent nations to achieve Independence, which will bring them peace and prosperity. Like babies these young nations need all the assistance possible to get through the weaning and teething period.

**28.** My delegation will crave your indulgence to express here the gratitude of the Cameroon people to the Germans, who first carved us into a political and national entity. It is true that all African independent and dependent States were carved many years ago by the colonial Powers. So, without the Germans perhaps the Cameroon would have taken quite a different shape on the map, or not existed under the same name as at the moment. Indeed, without the good work of the Germans in the Cameroons, leaving aside their brutality and terror, the Administering Authorities would not have found it so easy to administer the territory from the start.

**29.** The Germans constructed railway lines, built roads, schools, harbours, post offices and administrative stations and headquarters all over the territory. For example, in Buea, in West Cameroon, the Head of State and all the ministers still live in German built houses. Whether the Germans did all these things to exploit the Cameroons or not, the fact remains that these improvements now belong to an independent, united Cameroon.

**30.** After thanking the Administering Authorities, my delegation wishes to express its appreciation to Nigeria, particularly about its past relation with West Cameroon. In spite of the separation, politically and nationally, the relation between Cameroon and Nigeria is growing healthier and healthier. Nigeria, having had a good share of our territory, has demonstrated a great amount of good will In order to ease the complicated problems arising out of unification.



31. We appreciate the **permission for West Cameroon to use Nigerian currency, the repatriation of Cameroon soldiers and police from Nigeria to the Cameroon free, and for the agency services rendered us when we could not get adequate staff.** It is the sincere hope of the Federal Republic of Cameroon that this healthy and strong relation will continue indefinitely for the happiness of all concerned.

32. At this juncture, I want to point out that my delegation strongly believes that the time has come for all the African States to pool their resources and to press forward with a vigorous economic programme for the whole of Africa, Such a programme will destroy the artificial barriers, created by the colonial Powers, which have prevented us for a long time from making full use of our natural and rich potentialities.

33. That one **State has a French or British culture of background should not be an insurmountable barrier to a vigorous economic** programme and development for the whole continent. Unless this is done and done quickly, our people will continue to groan under the yoke of economic slavery and exploitation for many years to come. Why should there not be a Commonwealth of African States and an African Common Market? We cannot substitute economic control for the previous foreign political domination. Ties with colonial Powers only tend to limit the expansion of the new or young nation's trade and investment.

34. Until the different African States, cities, towns, etc., are linked by easy means of communication and transport, progress in all its various aspects will be very slow indeed. Let those who are able to go to the moon or space do so; we congratulate them, provided they do not intend to use their discoveries to destroy the earth.

35. But African leaders have, as their very first obligation to the African masses, the great duty of making them enjoy life fully and abundantly, particularly in Africa and the world in general.

36. May I say here that it is with mixed feelings that my delegation has to make its statement and observations **before the General Assembly. I say mixed feelings because, while my delegation rejoices in Its country's achievement of unification and independence,** It is not unmindful of the existing world tension of which we all are so apprehensive and which I think we must inevitably, by hook or by crook, try to ease during this unique and historic session.

37. The world-wide political tension has been attributed to various causes, some minor and some major, some remote and some immediate, some logical and some sentimental, some ideological and some materialistic, all of which are influenced by the unfortunate social and economic instability now existing in the world.

38. My delegation has listened with the greatest and most profound interest to the many timely, eloquent and able speeches made during the general debate at the present session. My delegation would be failing in its duty if it made no observations on the precarious position of world peace. It is very important to note that, throughout the debate, the very grave situation in which the whole world now finds itself has been more than adequately emphasized. The importance of the United Nations, the greatest organization in the world and the only hope which humanity has for its very existence and for the maintenance of world peace, has also been repeatedly stressed by the representatives who have spoken before me. It is not the Intention of my delegation to labour these points again, since it is our belief that the facts raised are so obvious and fundamental that without them there would have been no United Nations.

**39.** It would be a real sign of irresponsibility if we were to underestimate the grave situation now threatening world peace. There can be no problem without a possible or acceptable solution, provided that there is a spirit of good will and co-operation, a spirit of live and let live, and, above all, provided that the Charter of the United Nations is interpreted and carried out according to the well-accepted principle of what is right, and not who is right. How very much my delegation wishes that we were all disciples of Moral Rearmament.

**40.** As long as humanity exists, there will always be great problems endangering the peace of the world. Indeed, it was in recognition of this hard fact that the United Nations was set up, so that nations might ventilate their feelings and find, by peaceful discussions and negotiations, solutions for any complicated or vexing international or human problems.

**41.** One cannot help wondering what the fate of man-kind in this world would have been without the United Nations. In order to appreciate the great work and usefulness of the Organization, one need only reflect or look around the world and see the results or effects of the resolutions and decisions adopted by this body since its inception. There is no need to bore the Assembly by enumerating these obvious facts.

**42.** Earlier, on behalf of my delegation, I attempted to classify the causes which have contributed to the present tension as far as world peace is concerned. My delegation feels that, in spite of the continued and remarkable achievements of the United Nations so far to promoting world peace, eliminating deadly and epidemic diseases, starvation, and so on, the original propelling force of good will which brought this indispensable world Organization into being is, regrettably, deteriorating. My delegation believes that all representatives know why this is so and why there is uncertainty beclouding the future.

**43.** Is it not true that the great Powers have chosen to play a game of hide-and-seek politics for reasons of pride and self-preservation, rather than catering for the good of all nations, both great and small, irrespective of religion, race or creed?

**44.** Is it not true that these nations are now, more than ever before, increasingly relying on power politics rather than on the time-honoured fact that law and order, as the most important normative element for the maintenance of peace and prosperity for all mankind, could not easily be replaced?

**45.** Is it not true that these political giants are imperceptibly and gradually disintegrating and luring the small and newly independent States into their own camps or blocs, to be used as barbed wire in case of attacks by their opponents?

**46.** Is it not a struggle between the communist East and the democratic West? Is it not true that the United Nations is being used as a forum for selfish political propaganda and political expediency?

**47.** There is no limit to such simple but pertinent questions. The few so far asked demand a "yes" or "no" answer. Whether we say "yes" or "no" will not improve our present precarious and disheartening position.

**48.** My delegation is strongly convinced that at a propitious moment such as this, at a moment of political impasse, all of us in the Assembly, knowing that we each have a sacred duty toward



the preservation of world peace as a matter of top priority, can, with the co-operation of one another, find an acceptable solution on the basis of compromise for the world problems now confronting us.

**49.** Our greatest problem here is not only to reach agreement on possible solutions to our difficulties but to strive to be loyal and to adhere to the circumscribed or airtight policies of our various countries or blocs, while at the same time striving to solve complicated international issues requiring tolerance, peaceful negotiations, the spirit of give and take, and respect for human rights and dignity.

**50.** My delegation believes that the admission of theory without practice is sometimes dangerous, and therefore any major change by the United Nations should not be based on technical majorities alone.

**51.** The various approaches and measures necessary, or contemplated, for settling human problems must be carefully weighed and evaluated before being adopted. Unfortunately, some nations will want to grab everything, and by any means, but will not spare a mite for the sake of goodness or humanity. This, my delegation believes, is the crux of the matter.

**52.** To elucidate this fact, I want to refer to some practical examples. Based on the provision of the United Nations Charter that the wishes and self-determination of the people must be respected, countries which were a simple political unit have sometimes been torn into more than one unit and vice versa. The most recent example is the decision of the United Nations regarding my own country, on which I dwelt a few moments ago. I am sure that if Cameroon had wanted to precipitate another Congo situation by insisting on uniting with Northern Cameroons, which unfortunately, or fortunately, is now a province of Northern Nigeria, it would have been an easy matter. Certainly some nations would have supported us for one reason or another with arms, directly or indirectly, to fight out the case of Northern Cameroons. But common sense taught us to respect United Nations decisions. Apart from that fact, any use of force would have resulted in transforming our peaceful country into a battleground which, of course, would have had very grave repercussions. The problem of Togoland was resolved in a similar way.

**53.** One would have thought that the easiest means of solving the Berlin problem would move them to give the people of Germany the freedom to decide in one way or the other whether they wanted to unify or not. This is the only solution, in the opinion of my delegation. If the great Powers are afraid that by uniting Germany again the Germans would again start the doctrine of the "Herrenvolk" and sing "Deutschland, Deutschland Uber alles", let them say so.

**54.** **My delegation** believes that man has progressed up to this stage through careful planning, experiments and discoveries. We will support any tests or experiments designed to enable mankind to enjoy life more abundantly and peacefully. We condemn very strongly any tests, either nuclear or otherwise, which bring with them disaster and deadly calamities not only to the tester himself but to the whole human race.

**55.** **My delegation** appeals to the great Powers, to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and France, to make categorical statements about their stand on the testing of nuclear weapons. There is no hide and seek in this question. We also hope that the great scientists of the world are working untiringly to find out the means by which the fall-out from nuclear tests can be neutralized and made harmless to human beings.

**56.** At a time like this when feelings and tension are really high, unscrupulous, wild and provocative attacks on one another will only go a long way to worsen the situation. Colonialism and imperialism have been condemned in very strong terms time and time again.

**57.** The Western and Eastern Powers or blocs have attacked, condemned, and defended each other here in no light terms. Say what we may, colonialism and imperialism are not what they were a few decades ago. Our arduous task is to pinpoint the areas where they still exist, and use all the means and forces we can mobilize to stamp out these evils from the society of world communities. For example, my delegation would strongly support any measures of censure, no matter how severe, on Portugal, Belgium and the Government of South Africa for the notorious state of affairs in Angola, Mozambique and South Africa.

**58.** With the passage of time, generations have changed with regard to human relations and thoughts and are still changing rapidly. There is no doubt, as I pointed out earlier, that in many cases there is a great deal of good will and a strong relationship between many States now independent and the colonial Powers which wickedly dominated and exploited them. Bygones must be bygones'. Sores and painful wounds, particularly in the delicate parts of the body, must be allowed to heal without frequent scrubbing.

**59.** For the sake of preserving world peace, and since no useful purpose can be served by unearthing the crimes and evils of colonialism and imperialism committed by our forefathers or States many years or centuries ago, my delegation makes a very strong appeal that any observations or judgements we make here should be based logically, not sentimentally, on our present attitude or that of any State towards the same type of crime or evil being committed in the present century.

**60.** My delegation reserves the right to air its views at the appropriate time and, if necessary, on all other questions raised during the general debate about countries now struggling and their people dying under the yoke of colonialism and imperialism.

**61.** My delegation, hoping that before the sixteenth session of the General Assembly adjourns the dark clouds threatening world peace and humanity will have subsided, wants to remind all delegations of the words of this verse:

"Once to every man and nation  
Comes the moment to decide,  
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood  
For the good or evil side."

This is the moment for us to decide.