

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.14/178/Add.1
11 February 1963

ENGLISH
Original: ENGLISH/FRENCH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
Fifth Session
Leopoldville, February-March 1963
Provisional agenda item 4

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
ON MEASURES TAKEN
IN PURSUANCE OF RESOLUTION 42(IV)
Addendum

Attached herewith is a copy of the reply from the Government of France to the Executive Secretary's communication of 3 January 1963, which followed the earlier communication of 18 April 1962 as reproduced in document E/CN.14/178.

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

N° 006

THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

Paris, 29 January 1963

Sir,

In your letter dated 3 January, you drew my attention to operative paragraph 5 of Resolution 42(IV) in which the Economic Commission for Africa "invites the Executive Secretary once more to approach the Powers responsible for Non-Self-Governing African Territories with a view to the application of resolution 24(III) mentioned above and to make a report on the question to the fifth session of the Commission."

The position of France on this question, which relates to the participation of the Non-Self-Governing Territories in Africa in the work of the Economic Commission for Africa, has been explained to the Commission by the French delegation. It can be summed up as follows: the two resolutions mentioned above, which were adopted by the ECA in implementation of General Assembly Resolution 1466(XIV) do not, strictly speaking, concern France which, although it still has territorial responsibilities in Africa, no longer administers any "non-self-governing" territories there. Of the territories for which it used to be responsible, some have become independent and have been admitted to membership in the United Nations, and the others opted to remain within the French Republic, in accordance with the provision of the Constitution, the people concerned having been called upon in both cases to make their choice freely.

I take this opportunity to recall below two extracts from the statement which was made on this subject by the head of the French delegation during the 4th session of the Commission:

" The policy followed by France with regard to decolonization is clear and well known, and there is doubtless no need to dwell on the point at length. This policy stems from the principle of freedom for all: freedom for every human group to choose its own ways, freedom

of speech for every individual. Thus the countries wishing to enjoy independence were able to do so and they are now members of this Commission. Others, for reasons of which they are the sole judges, preferred to remain within the French Republic, in which they exercise legal rights, participating fully in the public life of the country including the referenda and the election of the representatives of Parliament. Their status is one which they helped to work out and on which they voted... In this way, respecting the principle of self-determination whatever choice might be made, France is continuing on the path which it marked out for itself that of Liberty and also that of equality."

Accept, Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

pp. the Minister
The Director of Political Affairs
(signed)

- - - - -