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Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

New Caledonia

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

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Note: The information contained in the present working paper has been derived from public sources, including those of the territorial Government, and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the administering Power on 11 December 2018 under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations. Further details are contained in previous working papers, available from www.un.org/en/decolonization/workingpapers.shtml.



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The Territory at a glance

Territory: New Caledonia is a Non-Self-Governing Territory under the Charter of the United Nations, administered by France. New Caledonia has the status of a sui generis overseas territory under the French Constitution and has enhanced autonomy.

Representative of the administering Power: Thierry Lataste, High Commissioner of the Republic (since 21 June 2016).

Geography: New Caledonia is located in the Pacific Ocean, about 1,500 km east of Australia and 1,800 km north of New Zealand. It comprises the Main Island (Grande Terre), the Pine Islands, the Bélep Archipelago, Huon and Surprise, the Chesterfield Islands and the Bellone Reefs, the Loyalty Islands (Maré, Lifou, Tiga, Beautemps-Beaupré and Ouvéa), Walpole Island, the Astrolabe Islands, the Matthew Islands and Fearn or Hunter, as well as islets close to the shore. It also has several uninhabited islets to the north of the Loyalty Islands.

Land area: 18,575 km² (the Territory as a whole); 16,750 km² (Grande Terre).

Exclusive economic zone: 1,422,543 km².

Population: 268,767 (2014 census).

Life expectancy at birth: women: 80.1 years; men: 74.4 years (2015).

Ethnic composition: 39.1 per cent Melanesians, mainly Kanaks; 27.2 per cent persons of European origin, mainly French; 8.2 per cent Wallisians and Futunians; 2.1 per cent Tahitians; 1.4 per cent Indonesians; 0.9 per cent Vietnamese; 0.9 per cent Vanuatians; and 21.2 per cent populations classified by the French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies as “others”.

Languages: The official language is French. About 27 Kanak vernacular languages are spoken in geographically distinct regions. Under the Nouméa Accord, Kanak languages and French are the languages of instruction and culture.

Capital: Nouméa, located in the south of Grande Terre.

Head of the territorial Government: Philippe Germain (since 1 April 2015).

Main political parties: The Congress includes five political groups (six members are required to form a recognized group). The three anti-independence groups are Calédonie ensemble, the Républicains Calédoniens and the Républicains Rassemblement-MPC (Mouvement populaire calédonien). The two pro-independence groups are UC-FLNKS (Union calédonienne-Front de libération nationale kanak et socialiste) et Nationalistes (Union pour construire les Loyautés, Dynamique unitaire Sud and Parti travailliste) and UNI-Palika (Union nationale pour l'indépendance-Parti de libération kanak).

Elections: The most recent national elections were held on 23 April and 7 May 2017 (presidential election) and 11 and 18 June 2017 (legislative elections). The most recent local elections were held on 23 and 30 March 2014 (municipal) and 11 May 2014 (provincial). The referendum on accession to full sovereignty by New Caledonia was held on 4 November 2018.

Legislature: Congress of New Caledonia.

Gross domestic product per capita: 3.53 million Pacific francs (2016), or 29,581 euros.

Unemployment rate: 14.7 per cent (2014).

Economy: Mining industry (notably nickel), construction and tourism.

Monetary unit: Pacific franc or CFP franc (1,000 CFP francs = 8.38 euros (fixed exchange rate).

Brief history: In 1774, the British captain James Cook discovered Grande Terre and named it “New Caledonia”. France annexed New Caledonia on 24 September 1853. In 1942, the United States of America decided to set up one of their military bases for the Pacific in New Caledonia. Some 20,000 New Zealand soldiers were stationed in New Caledonia during the Second World War. In 1946, France made New Caledonia an overseas Territory with limited autonomy. In the 1970s, supporters of independence were highly active, leading to violence during the 1980s known as the “événements” (events). In 1988, the Matignon Accords led to the establishment of three provinces with the aim of restoring the balance of power. Ten years later, in 1998, the Nouméa Accord provided for the gradual autonomy of the Territory and for a referendum on the Territory’s accession to full sovereignty, which took place on 4 November 2018.

I. Constitutional, political and legal issues

1. New Caledonia is a sui generis territory within the French Republic, governed under the provisions of part XIII of the Constitution (“Transitional provisions pertaining to New Caledonia”). The French Minister for Overseas Territories, Annick Girardin, has responsibility for New Caledonia, and in that capacity, oversees the coordination and implementation of the actions of the Government of France in accordance with the Territory’s status and organization. The administering Power is represented in the Territory by a High Commissioner, who exercises the authority of the French Republic in New Caledonia. That position is currently held by Thierry Lataste. Under Organic Act No. 99-209 of 19 March 1999 concerning New Caledonia, the administering Power retains prerogatives in a number of areas, including diplomacy, immigration and alien control, currency, the Treasury, trade, defence, justice and maintenance of law and order. In the area of defence, the High Commissioner performs functions prescribed by the relevant legislation. New Caledonia has an air force base, a navy base and one infantry regiment, with a total of around 1,700 military personnel. The armed forces of New Caledonia conduct the sovereign missions of the administering Power and provide support to the territorial Government in the exercise of its civilian security responsibilities. The administering Power is responsible for the maintenance of law and order, discharged by almost 400 national police officers and around 800 members of the gendarmerie (including mobile gendarmerie squadrons).

2. The Territory is part of the metropolitan judicial system of the administering Power, with some special features, such as the obligation to use customary judges in civilian courts in cases involving disputes between persons with customary civil status. The Court of Appeal is located in the capital, Nouméa. Appeals on points of law can be filed with the French Court of Cassation.

3. The Kanak independence movement was launched in the 1970s in response to the process of decolonization in Africa and Oceania, and as a reaction to the large movements of people from metropolitan France in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1984, the Front de libération nationale kanak socialiste (FLNKS) was founded as an umbrella organization for the pro-independence parties, and later that year, it established a provisional independent Government. Between 1984 and 1988, about 80 people died in violent confrontations between pro- and anti-independence elements. The violence was eventually halted with the conclusion of the Matignon Accords on 26 June 1988 between FLNKS, the anti-independence Rassemblement pour la Calédonie dans la République (RPCR) and the Government of France. Information on the Matignon Accords and the Nouméa Accord, concluded in 1998, is available in previous working papers prepared by the Secretariat (see, for example, [A/AC.109/2016/11](#)).

4. Under the Nouméa Accord, France agreed to transfer certain non-sovereign powers to the Government of New Caledonia between 1998 and 2018. The Accord also provided for the holding of a referendum on accession to full sovereignty by New Caledonia between 2014 and 2018, but the referendum must not be held in the last six months of the 2014–2018 term of the Congress. Pursuant to the Accord, the referendum was to be on the transfer of sovereign powers, achievement of an international status of full responsibility and transformation of citizenship to nationality. The Congress had until the end of May 2018 to request the administering Power, by a three-fifths majority of its members (33 of 54 members), to organize the referendum on accession to full sovereignty. After that deadline, the date would be set by the administering Power.

5. During his visit in December 2017, the Prime Minister of France called upon the Caledonian political actors to engage in dialogue and invited the Congress to set a date for the referendum and to formulate the question in such a way that it was clear and understandable. To that end, the question would have to be simplified considerably and formulated in a binary manner.

6. On 19 March 2018, the Congress of New Caledonia decided that the referendum on accession to full sovereignty by New Caledonia would be held on 4 November 2018. At the meeting of the Committee of Signatories to the Nouméa Accord held on 27 March 2018, the New Caledonian political partners, in agreement with the administering Power, finalized the question to be asked for the referendum, formulated as follows: “Do you want New Caledonia to attain full sovereignty and become independent?”

7. On 7 November 2018, the Commission Overseeing the Organization and Conduct of the Referendum on Accession to Full Sovereignty by New Caledonia announced the results of the referendum, which had been held on 4 November 2018, with a turnout of 81.01 per cent of voters, or 141,099 out of 174,165 voters registered in 284 polling stations. The referendum resulted in the option of full sovereignty and independence being rejected, with 78,734, or 56.67 per cent of votes cast in favour and 60,199, or 43.33 per cent against

8. Pursuant to the Nouméa Accord, should independence be rejected, a second referendum may be held in 2020 at the request of one third of the members of the Congress (19 members). If independence is again rejected, a third referendum may be held in 2022 under the same conditions. If the response is still negative, the parties to the Accord will then have to meet to consider the situation thus created. The full text of the Nouméa Accord is contained in the working paper published in 1998 ([A/AC.109/2114](#), annex).

9. New Caledonia has a 54-member Congress drawn from the elected membership of the three provincial assemblies (15 of the 22 members of the North Province assembly, 32 of the 40 members of the South Province assembly and 7 of the 14 members of the Loyalty Islands Province assembly).

10. In accordance with the Nouméa Accord, a set of institutions has been established to confirm the full recognition of the Kanak identity and culture. There are eight customary councils representing eight customary regions. In addition, a Territory-wide customary Senate with a rotating presidency comprises 16 members, with each customary council selecting 2 members. According to the administering Power, the Senate is consulted by the executive and legislative bodies of New Caledonia on all matters relating to the Kanak identity but has no normative power. The Senate has a budget for its operations (article 147 of Organic Act No. 99-209).

11. Political parties in New Caledonia are divided between those favouring New Caledonia remaining part of the French Republic and those favouring independence, with a number of shades within each stripe. The 2014 election resulted in a Congress of 29 anti-independence and 25 pro-independence members. The structure of the Congress allows elected representatives to form alliances based on their political affiliations. The political groups in the Congress, according to its website, are Calédonie ensemble, with 15 seats; the Républicains Calédoniens, with 7 seats; the Républicains Rassemblement-MPC (Mouvement populaire calédonien), with 6 seats; the Union calédonienne-Front de libération nationale kanak et socialiste (UC-FLNKS) et Nationalistes, with 13 seats; and the Union nationale pour l'indépendance, with 9 seats. There are four unregistered members. Gaël Yanno was elected President of the Congress on 31 July 2018.

12. Following the resignation of Philippe Dunoyer, who elected to fulfil his term as a member of the Congress, the fifteenth Government, elected by the Congress on 31 August 2017 on the basis of a proportional system, comprises 11 members: six members from the anti-independence groups (five of whom are from the intergroup (see [A/AC.109/2018/11](#)) and one from the *Républicains calédoniens*, and five pro-independence members (three from UC-FLNKS et Nationalistes and two from UNI-Palika). Philippe Germain (member of the intergroup) was elected Head of the Government for the first time on 1 April 2015, and was re-elected on 1 December 2017.

13. There are several electorates in New Caledonia: the general electorate, the special electorate for elections to the Congress and the provincial assemblies, and a special electorate called upon to participate in the final status referendums under the Nouméa Accord (see [A/AC.109/2015/15](#)). The administering Power reports that this latter electorate was established for the first time in 2016 and consisted of 174,154 voters, who participated in the referendum held on 4 November 2018. It includes all voters who can demonstrate a strong and enduring connection to the territory, because they participated in the 1998 referendum or hold customary civil status, because of their period of residence (20 years before 31 December 1994 inclusive) or because their property and personal ties are mainly in New Caledonia.

14. Since 1999, the composition of the electorate for provincial elections has been a subject of intense political and legal debate between supporters of independence and advocates of keeping New Caledonia within the French Republic (see [A/AC.109/2014/20/Rev.1](#)). Every year, the special electoral rolls of voters eligible to participate in the election of members of the Congress and the assemblies are updated by special administrative commissions headed by members of the judiciary. Each commission also includes a representative of the Administration appointed by the High Commissioner of the Republic, a representative of the mayor of the municipality and two representatives of voters in the municipality (one pro-independence voter and one anti-independence voter).

15. According to the administering Power, electoral matters are a source of controversy and tension in New Caledonia between the pro- and anti-independence parties. The representatives of the pro-independence political groups believe that there are persons who are unduly included on the special provincial electoral rolls and they file petitions with the Court of First Instance of Nouméa to have them removed from the rolls. At the same time, petitions for the inclusion of persons belonging to the Kanak community are filed.

16. Following the meeting of the Committee of Signatories held on 2 November 2017, and in order to enable the populations concerned to participate in the referendum on accession by New Caledonia to full sovereignty, which took place on 4 November 2018, the French Parliament adopted Organic Act No. 2018-280 of 19 April 2018 concerning the referendum on accession by New Caledonia to full sovereignty, and its implementing decrees were issued by the Government of France in April and May 2018. According to the administering Power, the aims of those exceptional measures adopted in 2018 were to:

(a) *Establish periods for additional revisions of the three electoral rolls in New Caledonia.* As inclusion on the general electoral roll is a prerequisite for inclusion on the special electoral roll for the referendum, a procedure for the automatic inclusion of all persons of adult age residing in New Caledonia on the general electoral roll was established – for the first time in France – in order to facilitate the potential inclusion of voters on the special electoral roll for the referendum. The additional revision of the general electoral roll was completed on 25 June 2018, as a result of which 15,391 voters were automatically included, and

370 voters were included following a voluntary request. Following the additional revision in 2018, the general electorate was stood at 210,105 voters. The additional revision of the electoral roll for the election of members of the Congress and the provincial assemblies was completed on 30 July 2018, following which 4,376 voters were included on the electoral roll, while 12,395 persons were included on the supplementary roll of persons not eligible to vote in elections to the provincial assemblies and the Congress. The special electorate for the provincial assemblies stood at 167,678 voters at the conclusion of that additional revision. The additional revision of the special electoral roll for the referendum was completed on 31 August 2018, following which 11,222 voters were automatically included, and 706 were included upon voluntary request;

(b) *Allow automatic inclusion for a category of voters whose property and personal ties are presumed to be mainly in New Caledonia.* Under article 218-2, paragraph II, of Organic Act No. 99-209 of 19 March 1999 concerning New Caledonia, as amended by Organic Act No. 2015-987 of 5 August 2015 concerning the referendum on accession to full sovereignty by New Caledonia, voters eligible for automatic inclusion on the special electoral roll for the referendum are those included on the special electoral roll for the 1998 referendum, those who have or previously had customary civil status, and those born in New Caledonia and whose property and personal ties are presumed to be mainly in New Caledonia, provided they meet certain conditions (mainly automatic or voluntary inclusion on the special electoral roll for the election of members of Congress and the provincial assemblies). In accordance with the decisions taken by the Committee of Signatories at its meeting of 2 November 2017, the New Caledonian partners agreed that voters born in New Caledonia and whose property and personal ties are presumed to be mainly in New Caledonia and who were eligible for inclusion on the special electoral roll for the referendum under article 218, paragraph (d), of Organic Act No. 99-209, may be automatically included on the roll by the special administrative commissions if they have resided continuously in New Caledonia since 31 August 2015. Proof of such residence was to be confirmed by checking against the case files of the New Caledonian Compensation Fund for Family Benefits, Workers' Compensation and Employee Insurance (information recorded in the case files over 12 quarters);

(c) *Establish offshore polling sites, known as "offshore polling stations", in Nouméa for voters from the municipalities of Bélep, Pine Islands, Lifou, Maré and Ouvéa.* Article 3 of Organic Act No. 2018-280 provides for a system of voter registration upon request, as an exception to the general law, for voters from the municipalities of Bélep, Isle of Pines, Lifou, Maré and Ouvéa, to enable them to vote in Nouméa. Most of these voters, who are registered in their municipality of origin, live and work in Nouméa or in its neighbouring municipalities. Of the 23,979 voters from the five municipalities included on the special electoral roll for the referendum as at 31 August 2018, 3,253 (13 per cent), chose to register in Nouméa. Of that number, 3,018 (92 per cent), had effectively exercised their right to vote on 4 November 2018;

(d) *Establish a special mechanism, as an exception to the general law, for voting by proxy.* Article 4 of the Organic Act No. 2018-280 provides for a special mechanism governing proxy voting in the referendum, as an exception to the general law. Only persons in detention (not ineligible to vote) and persons who can demonstrate that they are unable to travel or to vote in person were authorized to vote by proxy. During the referendum held on 4 November 2018, 7,045 voters, or roughly 5 per cent of the total of 141,099, used this voting method.

17. Article 219 of Organic Act No. 99-209 provided for the establishment of a commission, composed of members of the judiciary, to monitor the organization and conduct of the referendum. The commission was responsible for, inter alia, making

the necessary corrections to the special electoral roll for the referendum in order to ensure that the list was in order. The commission decided to register, between 1 September and 3 November 2018, the eve of the referendum, voters who should have been automatically included on the special electoral roll for the referendum and who had not been included during the 2018 revision periods. Thus, 489 additional voters were registered after the two successive periods of annual revision. Voters were given the exceptional opportunity to have their names included on the special electoral roll for the referendum up until 4 November 2018, when the referendum was held. As a result, 97 voters were registered by the monitoring commission or by the Court of First Instance.

18. The administering Power has provided the following statistics concerning the special electoral roll for the referendum, as at 4 November 2018, the date of the vote. Of the 174,154 voters on the special electoral roll for the referendum:

- 167,809 voters, 85,346 of whom were women and 82,463 of whom were men, were automatically included;
- 6,345 voters, 3,001 women and 3,344 men, were added upon voluntary request.

19. The electorate is composed of 152,453 natives and 21,701 non-natives. Of the voters included on the special electoral roll for the referendum, 80,120, representing 46 per cent of the electorate, either currently have or have previously had customary civil status.

20. Still according to the administering Power, in order to ease potential tensions, a team of 13 United Nations experts was mobilized in 2016, 2017 and again for an exceptionally extended period in 2018 (end of February to September 2018, taking into consideration the successive periods of annual revision of the special electoral rolls). The experts served on the administrative commissions as independent qualified persons to assist with the revision of the special provincial electoral roll and to prepare the special roll for the referendum on self-determination. The experts issued two separate reports in 2016 and a single report in 2017, making recommendations on how to improve the functioning of the special administrative commissions. Three reports were issued in 2018.

21. At the meetings of the Committee of Signatories held on 2 November 2017 and 27 March 2018, the New Caledonian political partners expressed the wish that United Nations experts be present during the referendum. Consequently, at the request of the administering Power, the United Nations Secretariat deployed a group of experts to monitor the referendum. At the request of the Government of New Caledonia and with the consent of the administering Power, the Pacific Islands Forum also dispatched its Ministerial Committee to New Caledonia to monitor the referendum and provide an update on the implementation of the Nouméa Accord.

II. Budget

22. The administering Power reports that the Territory's financial situation has deteriorated since 2012. The business climate indicator reached its lowest level in the first quarter of 2016 and remains low despite a slight improvement in the third quarter of 2017. Sectoral developments are mixed: an increase in tourism and related activities (restaurants, hospitality), but a decline in construction and public works and business services.

23. The administering Power reports that New Caledonia is faced with the challenge of both ensuring its own financial stability, following a decline in revenues, and participating more actively in economic recovery. To that end, in 2017, the

Government cut its overall operating expenses by 34 billion Pacific francs (CFP francs), including 6.5 billion CFP francs from its own budget, when compared with 2016, and boosted the working capital of its public institutions, notably the Post and Telecommunications Office and the Autonomous Port of New Caledonia in Nouméa. Although the objective for 2017 had been to keep investments at 9.5 billion CFP francs (almost \$83 million) to, among other things, finance critical infrastructure (including the new Société Le Nickel-SLN (SLN) power plant and the Ouiné dam), capital expenditure declined by 6.7 billion CFP francs compared with 2016. Also envisaged is a package of economic and tax reforms under a shared agenda involving employers and employees, political groups in the Congress and local government, to transition from a model of growth based on foreign investment to one based on local development.

24. On tax matters, the Congress passed two country laws on 1 September 2016, one establishing a comprehensive consumption tax to replace the existing seven taxes and contributions; the other on competition, competitiveness and prices, which will mainly allow the Government to regulate prices in the event of a breakdown in competition, supply constraints, slippage in the prices of basic commodities, or major crisis. The Territory has also established an emergency plan to support employment (“PULSE”), which includes measures to revive investment, and an export support plan designed to diversify the economy, which for years has been focused on nickel mining. It is also worth noting the unanimous adoption by the Congress, on 11 August 2016, of the New Caledonia land-use planning and development plan known as “NC 2025”.

III. Economic conditions

A. General

25. New Caledonia has one of the richest economies of all the Pacific islands, with per capita gross domestic product (GDP) estimated in 2016 at 3.53 million CFP francs (29,581 euros). This is partly owing to the preponderance of nickel mining and processing in the island’s economy. Nickel production accounts for more than 95 per cent of export earnings. However, there are still significant geographic disparities in income distribution: 90 per cent of total expenditures and resources are concentrated in the South Province, which represents 74.4 per cent of the population of the Territory, while the North Province accounts for 18.8 per cent of the population and the Loyalty Islands Province only 6.8 per cent. The economy is highly dependent on transfer payments from the Government of France, which amounted to more than 142 billion CFP francs in 2017, up 1.97 per cent in one year, representing approximately 15.7 per cent of the GDP of New Caledonia. In comparison, the contribution of the nickel sector to wealth creation is 3 per cent of GDP. Of the financial resources allocated by France, 48 per cent are used to finance sectors falling under the purview of the State, while 52 per cent are redistributed among local authorities, including for development contracts. The Territory runs a significant structural trade deficit, despite a 57 billion CFP francs improvement between 2015 and 2017.

26. According to the administering Power, New Caledonia has enjoyed steady growth over the past decade thanks to the construction of two nickel plants and their positive knock-on effects. The standard of living in the Territory is now comparable to that of the vast majority of regions in France and close to that of New Zealand, which itself is the second highest in the Pacific region, after Australia.

27. According to the administering Power, the main investment drivers used by the Government of France are based on:

(a) *Development contracts.* The new generation of contracts that will cover the period 2017–2021 includes an allocation of 93.596 billion CFP francs, including 50.36 per cent in funding by the administering Power (47.136 billion CFP francs, approximately \$413 million). The youth sector accounts for 70 of the 208 projects under contract and approximately 30 per cent of the funding that partners have planned to mobilize;

(b) *Tax relief.* Unlike development contracts, which specifically finance large-scale public investment projects, the overseas tax assistance targets private sector economic projects. Investment projects that received such relief totalled more than 18.6 billion CFP francs in 2017 (estimate provided by the administering Power). Most of the funded projects (around 70 per cent) were for social housing, even though that sector falls within the exclusive jurisdiction of New Caledonia. While the number of social housing projects submitted remains steady from one year to the next (12 projects on average per year, for a total of 5,000 dwellings over 10 years), the number for “productive” sectors (construction and public works, manufacturing, transport, etc.) has dropped (8 projects in 2016 compared with 40 in 2011). The completion of the metallurgical plants and the holding of referendums have contributed to this decline. The tax relief mechanism was originally scheduled to expire in late 2017, but the French Prime Minister has decided to extend it until 2025, offering project developers greater visibility. Major investments approved include the acquisition by Air Calédonie of two new ATR aircraft and the construction of a hotel in Lifou. Projects that have not yet been approved include the acquisition of four Airbus aircraft by Air Calédonie International (Aircalin); the construction of a resort in Bourail; the acquisition of several dozen buses for the “Néobus” reserved-lane public transport project; and the construction of a gas-fired power station to supply energy for the SNL metallurgical plant.

B. Mineral resources

28. According to the report of the Overseas Issuing Institute for 2017, New Caledonia, with 8 per cent of the world’s nickel reserves, is the fourth largest source of that metal in the world, after Australia (24 per cent), Brazil (15 per cent) and the Russian Federation (9 per cent). Cobalt is also mined commercially, and deposits of iron, copper and gold have been discovered and mined on a small scale in the past. Mining is carried out by about a dozen operators, the largest of which are SLN, the Nickel Mining Company, Vale New Caledonia and Koniambo Nickel SAS (KNS). The other operators are small-scale miners, who may or may not be owners of mining claims and supply the SLN plant with or export crude ore. According to the administering Power, New Caledonia extracted 16.5 million wet tons of ore in 2017, of which 6.2 million tons were exported. New Caledonia produced an estimated 111,822 tons of nickel in 2017, accounting for around 10 per cent of world production. That share is expected to grow as the new Koniambo plant in the North Province and Goro plant in the South Province ramp up their activities. A total of 6,000 people were employed in the mining and metallurgy sectors in 2017 (including those employed in related activities, such as contractors, ore transporters and temporary workers), a slight drop compared with 2016 (6,200).

C. Construction and manufacturing

29. The construction and public works sector would account for an average of 8.3 per cent of the wealth generated and employ some 10.7 per cent of wage earners in the Territory in 2017. According to the administering Power, after several years of sustained growth, this sector is now suffering following the completion of major projects and the slowdown in new housing construction.

30. According to the administering Power, the development of the manufacturing sector is faced with high investment and production costs owing to the small size of the local market and the island status of the Territory, which raises the cost of inputs. To address those handicaps, the local authorities have launched a proactive policy to protect local production and offer tax incentives.

D. Agriculture and fisheries

31. Although the primary sector (excluding mining) represents around 2 per cent of wealth generation and wage employment (with at least 1,670 wage earners each year), it is nonetheless the principal sector of activity of much of the rural population. The census of agriculture conducted in 2012 showed that around 13,000 people were engaged in family farming. According to the administering Power, New Caledonia is not self-sufficient in most agricultural and livestock sectors and thus remains heavily dependent on imports.

E. Transport and communications

32. The Territory has a good road system in and around Nouméa. Road infrastructure in the rest of the Territory is gradually improving. New Caledonia has some 5,400 km of roads, of which about half are surfaced. The transport and telecommunications sector accounts for 6.4 per cent of the value added in the Territory (based on 2016 figures), 6 per cent of wage employment (as at the end of 2016) and 4.4 per cent of registered companies. Port activity in New Caledonia is organized around the infrastructure of the Autonomous Port of New Caledonia, based in Nouméa (the ninth-ranked French port and first-ranked overseas port); some secondary ports operated primarily in connection with nickel mining (in Grande Terre) and inter-island passenger traffic; and marinas, mainly in Greater Nouméa. Overseas cargo shipping (inbound and outbound) is predominantly through Nouméa. The total volume of goods loaded and unloaded, apart from nickel ore, amounted to 3.21 million tons in 2017. The Autonomous Port also handles 8.6 million tons of nickel ore, of which 5.5 million tons are exported, while the rest consists of ore shipped to Doniambo from other mining centres. Container shipping is relatively stable (up 0.3 per cent), with 114,103 containers loaded, unloaded or trans-shipped. With 2,949 trans-shipments, the Autonomous Port serves as a regional hub; around 90 per cent of the goods trans-shipped remain within the Oceania region (primarily Fiji, New Zealand and Vanuatu).

33. Since 1 January 2000, New Caledonia has had authority over international traffic rights and air carrier operational programmes. Powers in policing and security in respect of air traffic were transferred, for domestic traffic only, on 1 January 2013. The New Caledonia Air Services Agency, a public enterprise of New Caledonia, is responsible for ensuring the continuity of air services. To that end, it owns 99.38 per cent of the shares in the airline Air Calédonie International. Five international companies operate regular flights to the Territory. In 2017, 529,450 passengers (arrivals and departures) were registered at Nouméa-La Tontouta International Airport. Frequent international flights link the airport with neighbouring countries

and with Japan, the United States of America and Europe. There are regular services from the Nouméa-Magenta domestic airfield to the other islands and major towns in Grande Terre.

34. Regarding domestic service, New Caledonia has 14 airfields open to public air traffic. Public domestic air transport is provided by three companies, the main one of which is Air Calédonie. Domestic traffic in 2017 totalled 445,000 passengers (arrivals and departures), much the same as in 2016 and 2015. Work is under way to expand and redesign the Nouméa-Magenta airfield to cope with increasing domestic traffic, financed under the State-New Caledonia development contract for the period 2017–2021.

35. The telecommunications sector includes the territorial operator, the Post and Telecommunications Office of New Caledonia, and its partners. In recent years, Internet facilities and usage have grown rapidly. In 2017, mobile Internet services had 56,952 customers. The stated goal is to further reduce the digital divide and facilitate Internet traffic. The Post and Telecommunications Office is currently studying the possibility of connecting with another regional submarine cable to secure the existing network.

F. Tourism and the environment

36. In the view of the administering Power, New Caledonia, with its geographical location and cultural richness, has real strengths and considerable tourism potential that has not yet been fully tapped. Tourism is thus a key to the Territory's economic development. The tourism sector accounts for a little more than 2 per cent of GDP and 5,500 jobs. In 2017, 120,697 tourists visited the Territory, an increase of 4.3 per cent compared with 2016. In 2017, 493,278 cruise ship passengers stopped over in New Caledonia, 16,185 fewer than in 2016. New Caledonia is developing the Chinese tourism market through "destination contracts". Some 1,200 tourists are thus expected to visit the Territory by charter flight in 2020, and 20,000 a year thereafter following the potential opening of a direct air link between China and New Caledonia.

37. The administering Power indicates that New Caledonia has a unique natural heritage characterized by a high rate of endemism, in particular in terms of flora (76 per cent); striking land ecosystems (rainforest, maquis shrubland), some of which are particularly endangered (dry forest); and the second largest coral reef in the world after the Australia Great Barrier Reef. Recognized internationally as a global biodiversity hotspot, the Territory has received two distinctions, with the inclusion, in July 2008, of "Lagoons of New Caledonia: reef diversity and associated ecosystems" in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List and by the inclusion, in February 2014, of the Laes du Grand Sud néo-calédonien site in the list of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat.

38. According to the administering Power, the various threats to this biodiversity have attracted the special attention of non-governmental organizations, such as the Conservation International Foundation, the World Wide Fund for Nature and the Pew Environment Group. According to the World Wide Fund for Nature, the dry tropical forest, the few remaining isolated pockets of which represent less than 2 per cent of the original forest cover, is the most endangered vegetation in New Caledonia. Half of the 117 dry forest plant species (59 species) are endangered.

39. According to the administering Power, biodiversity conservation is now at the heart of government concerns. Various initiatives are being undertaken by the three provinces, which are responsible for environmental matters, and by the Government of New Caledonia in the exclusive economic zone (see [A/AC.109/2018/11](#)).

IV. Social conditions

A. General

40. According to the 2017 report of the Overseas Issuing Institute, the Territory has a high human development index. The adult literacy rate is over 96 per cent and school enrolment (all levels) stands at 89 per cent. Nevertheless, according to the French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies, the Territory suffers from inequalities and imbalances in several areas, including the social and economic spheres. Some 74.4 per cent of the population is concentrated in the South Province. Including the suburbs of Nouméa, the Greater Nouméa metropolitan area is home to 67 per cent of the population. Population density in the South Province is 29 inhabitants per km² (999.7 inhabitants per km² in Nouméa), compared with only 5.3 inhabitants per km² in the North Province and 9.2 inhabitants per km² in the Loyalty Islands Province (2014). Among the population aged 15 years or over, 34 per cent of those living in the North and Loyalty Islands Provinces have no educational qualifications, compared with just 18.31 per cent of those living in the South Province.

41. According to the administering Power, the Government formed in April 2015 established two mechanisms in 2016 to combat the high cost of living. At the same time, the High Commissioner has been conducting negotiations with the banks with a view to reducing fee disparities for individual customers compared with metropolitan France. As a result of those discussions, bank fees for maintaining an account and for Electron cards have been aligned with those in force in metropolitan France. Similarly, since 2016, thanks to these negotiations, the fees for online banking and direct debit authorizations have fallen by 64 per and 55 per cent, respectively. The aim, as set forth in article 742-2 of the Monetary and Financial Code, is to align fees in New Caledonia with those in metropolitan France by 2019.

42. The concept of economic rebalancing is rooted in the 1998 Nouméa Accord and in the aim of achieving a more harmonious distribution of job and wealth creation throughout New Caledonia in preparation for the Territory's potential accession to full sovereignty. This concept led to the development of a formula for budgetary allocations that proactively favours the North (31.3 per cent) and Loyalty Islands (16 per cent) Provinces on account of their demographic weight and the imbalances to be corrected. It has also resulted in the development of the Voh-Koné-Pouembout area and the establishment of a nickel plant (KNS, with the Glencore partnership) in the North Province.

43. Twenty years after the Nouméa Accord, the central component of the rebalancing initiative is the KNS plant in Vavouto, Voh municipality. To assist the plant in overcoming the financial constraints caused by furnace failures and the collapse of the nickel market, the administering Power indicates that in November 2016 it decided to maintain the tax relief system provided for in the overseas programme statute, Act No. 2003-660 of 21 July 2003 (Girardin Act). According to the administering Power, this tax arrangement enabled Glencore, joint shareholder of KNS, to rebuild furnace No. 2, which resumed operations in December 2017. This will help to increase output. The establishment of the plant has resulted in significant, rapid development in the Voh-Koné-Pouembout area, with housing and infrastructure development facilitated by the various institutions (North Province, Government of New Caledonia, Government of France) through their public policies.

44. The administering Power also indicates that it has concluded development contracts with the Territory's three provinces (North, South and Loyalty Islands) and 33 municipalities. These subsidies have helped to support not only the development

of municipalities in the interior and on the islands, but also the four municipalities of the Greater Nouméa area, thereby addressing shortfalls in primary amenities (drinking water, roads, sanitation, miscellaneous public facilities) and other infrastructure (see [A/AC.109/2017/11](#)).

45. In the South Province, the construction of a metallurgical plant has also received support from the administering Power and local authorities. This plant, located in Goro, is operated by the Vale New Caledonia company. Vale Canada owns 95 per cent of the plant and the Société de Participation Minière du Sud Calédonien, a holding company belonging to the three provinces, owns 5 per cent. The Goro plant uses a hydrometallurgical process that makes it possible to exploit low-grade nickel ore (see [A/AC.109/2017/11](#)).

46. According to the administering Power, the mining company Société Minière du Sud-Pacifique, which belongs to the North Province, also owns 51 per cent, in partnership with a steel concern of the Republic of Korea, of a metallurgical facility built in Gwanyang, Republic of Korea, which has a nominal capacity of 30,000 tons per year. A second production line has been added at the facility, bringing that figure to 54,000 tons per year. The plant in the Republic of Korea is supplied with New Caledonian ore produced by the Nickel Mining Company, which is controlled by the Société Minière du Sud-Pacifique, which has on several occasions used the overseas tax assistance to finance the purchase of its equipment.

B. Employment

47. According to employment estimates from the French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies, as at the third quarter of 2018, the number of wage earners in New Caledonia stood at 93,170, a slight increase of 0.2 per cent compared with the previous quarter. The private sector accounted for 65,830 wage earners in the third quarter, 0.1 per cent less than in the previous quarter. This stabilization in the level of private sector employment has come about after successive waves of job cuts since 2015.

48. According to the Institute, as at the third quarter of 2018, the trade sector employed 10,330 wage earners, a decrease of 0.8 per cent compared with the previous quarter, while the agriculture sector employed 1,700 wage earners, a contraction of 1.6 per cent from the previous quarter. The number of wage earners in the services sector was stable. Public sector employment is growing again, accounting for 27,340 wage earners in the third quarter of 2018, an increase of 0.8 per cent compared with the previous quarter. On a yearly basis, the number of wage earners in the sector rose by 320, or 1.2 per cent.

49. According to the administering Power, New Caledonia is emerging from a period of sustained activity. With 14,900 unemployed and 13,100 persons not in the labour force, as defined by the International Labour Office, the unemployment rate, measured for the first time in the Territory based on that definition, stands at 15 per cent of the working-age population. More than half are between the ages of 25 and 49. That rate is much lower than that for the other French overseas territories, but higher than the national average. Unemployment is higher among Kanaks than among the population in general. The unemployment rate for Kanak men in particular is, at 16 per cent, 6 points higher than the overall male unemployment rate. The unemployment rate for Kanaks is among the lowest when compared with that of all the overseas departments. The South Province continues to post the best general employment indicators. That said, when only the male population is taken into consideration, access to jobs appears to be easier in the North Province. The Loyalty Islands Province continues to lag far behind in labour market terms.

50. In December 2016, the Congress adopted a country law to promote the employment of locals in the New Caledonian civil service (see [A/AC.109/2017/11](#)). In addition to the corrective measures taken to ensure rebalancing (see [A/AC.109/2016/11](#)), the administering Power is committed to addressing the issue of the “caledonization of jobs” by promoting the return to New Caledonia of local officials posted to metropolitan France.

51. According to the administering Power, some Kanak representatives have in the past expressed concerns over the influx of immigrant labour in New Caledonia. The Government of the Territory has acknowledged this fact, while noting that the immigrant community includes highly qualified workers as well as technicians and managers not available in the local labour force. Furthermore, the duration of stay is limited to 18 months for the first category of such immigrants and four years for the second. According to the Government of New Caledonia, three quarters of the immigrant workers employed at the nickel plant in the South Province have already left the Territory. The demobilization (dismissal of expatriate staff) in the North Province plant has also accelerated considerably.

C. Education

52. In 2018, enrolment in New Caledonian schools stood at 70,826, with 34,838 students in the 268 public or private primary schools and 30,598 students in public secondary schools and private secondary schools under contract (17,540 in 58 colleges and 13,058 in 21 different types of lycées).

53. On 1 December 2016, the Congress adopted a charter to implement the New Caledonia education policy guidelines. Drafted in the light of the needs expressed by actors in the educational community and institutions of New Caledonia, it includes a three-year action plan for the period 2017–2019 for achieving the four goals set forth in the education plan:

- To promote the identity of New Caledonian schools;
- To take into account population diversity in order to promote schooling for all;
- To ensure that schools are embedded in their communities, thereby fostering a learning environment conducive to student development;
- To raise students’ awareness of the Oceania region and the wider world.

54. According to the administering Power, the charter also includes the memorandum of understanding, signed by the administering Power and New Caledonia on 26 October 2016, on implementing the New Caledonia education policy for the period 2017–2019, resulting in the allocation of 75 additional posts and human and financial resources for teaching facilities, teacher training and educational support. The 2014–2019 legislative term is proving especially innovative in the area of education. In New Caledonia, the baccalaureate is now marked locally, as is the case in all other French territories. After two years of preparation and training for teaching staff, the college reform has now become effective.

55. Under the “Cadres for the Future” framework, 1,648 trainees have been trained and are providing their expertise to various communities, governments and enterprises in New Caledonia. Some 71 per cent of those trainees are of Kanak origin. The success rate is high: 95 per cent of trainees find employment within three months of their return to New Caledonia. Since 2006, the administering Power has maintained its financial commitment at 644 million CFP francs (approximately \$5.63 million), while New Caledonia provides 59 million CFP francs (\$516,000). New initiatives

have been undertaken to identify and train individuals in the fields of excellence listed in the previous working paper ([A/AC.109/2018/11](#)).

56. The adapted military service is a mechanism that fosters the social and vocational integration of young people in difficult circumstances. It is aimed at people aged 18 to 25 in the overseas territories who suffer the most from unemployment and are often marginalized. The adapted military service regiment in New Caledonia is relatively new; it was established in 1986 in Koumac and another base was set up in 1992 in Koné. The regiment is now well respected in the Territory and has an excellent reputation. Its key indicator of the regiment's success is the employment integration rate, which in 2017 stood at 72 per cent. The rate of long-term integration (open-ended employment contracts or fixed-term employment contracts of more than six months' duration) was 38 per cent, while 50 per cent of trainees found transitional employment and 12 per cent continued their training. As part of the current approach adopted by the elected officials of New Caledonia and the State to protect the interests of young people, a new company of the regiment, with room for an additional 80 recruits, is to be established in Bourail. This priority project is a commitment of the administering Power. Through the regiment, the Ministry of Overseas Territories is able to train recruits in various manual occupations (mechanics, construction, public works, animal husbandry, hospitality and catering services) and to help about 500 young New Caledonians find employment each year. The regiment thus fulfils a social mission in a military context aimed at providing a comprehensive response to the exclusion, unemployment, marginalization and illiteracy faced by young people.

57. The University of New Caledonia is a public scientific, cultural and vocational institution that comes under the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation, and serves as an instrument of development, construction and rebalancing in New Caledonia. It derives special institutional legitimacy from the Nouméa Accord, article 4.1.1 of which calls upon the institution to address the specific research and training needs of New Caledonia.

D. Health

58. Since 1990, life expectancy at birth has increased in New Caledonia by seven years. In 2015, it was estimated at 80.1 years for women and 74.4 years for men. Indicative of the overall standard of living, these figures for life expectancy place New Caledonia slightly below France and make it a leader in Oceania. The infant mortality rate, which is indicative of the quality of obstetrical and paediatric care in a country, has been dropping steadily, from 27 per thousand in 1980 to 10.7 per thousand in 1990 and 5.2 per thousand in 2015, despite a slight increase compared with previous years (3.7 per thousand in 2014 and 3.2 per thousand in 2013), when the rates were close to those in metropolitan France (3.5 per thousand in 2015).

59. According to the administering Power, New Caledonia is particularly affected by chronic diseases. In 2016, 48,724 insureds were covered for extended illness, compared with 36,768 insureds in 2011, an increase of 33 per cent in five years. Expenditure allocated to this item stood at 37.1 billion CFP francs, up 23 per cent from 2011. The main illnesses covered under the extended illness insurance scheme in 2016 were diabetes (18 per cent), severe hypertension (16 per cent) and heart failure (10 per cent). The causes of the prevalence of extended illness include poverty, obesity, consumption of alcohol and use of psychotropic substances and tobacco, as well as poor nutrition. The administering Power and local authorities have mobilized to coordinate a strategic health plan ([A/AC.109/2017/11](#)), which New Caledonia adopted in March 2016.

60. The Territory has two public hospitals (with a capacity of 539 beds and 47 spaces for one-day hospital stays in medicine, surgery and obstetrics), two private establishments (with a capacity of 150 beds and 41 spaces for one-day hospital stay) and one specialized psychiatric and geriatrics hospital (with a capacity of 185 beds and 83 spaces for one-day hospital stay).

61. The Koutio Médipôle hospital near Nouméa, which was built at a cost of 50 billion CFP francs, took in its first patient on 5 December 2016 and has been operational since 2017. In Nouméa, the three private clinic locations are being consolidated to create a single-site private hospital in Nouville. Work on this began in 2015 and the site was opened in September 2018. In the North Province, hospital services will be restructured with the construction of a new, 64-bed hospital in Koné, at a cost of 6 billion CFP francs, and the reconfiguration of activities at the Koumac and Poindimié sites to focus on follow-up care and rehabilitation. At the provincial level, integrated public health care is provided through medical and social services centres in almost every town in the Territory.

V. Relations with international organizations and partners

62. Organic Act No. 99-209 establishes the legal framework governing the establishment of external relations by New Caledonia. New Caledonia has been an associate member of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific since 1992. In 2006, it became an associate member of the Pacific Islands Forum, and in September 2016 was accepted as a full member. According to the administering Power, this was an important step in the implementation of the Nouméa Accord towards a greater international role. In 2017, New Caledonia attended the Forum, held in Apia, as a full member for the first time. The administering Power indicates that New Caledonia now wishes to join the Melanesian Spearhead Group, of which only FLNKS is a member.

63. New Caledonia is also a member of the Pacific Community, the oldest regional organization in the Pacific, which has its secretariat in Nouméa. Other regional agreements to which New Caledonia is a party include the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, the Pacific Islands Development Forum, the World Health Organization, the Oceania Customs Organization, the Oceania Regional Anti-Doping Organization, the South Pacific Tourism Organization and the Pacific Power Association. Regional cooperation among universities has gained momentum since 2013. For example, the Pacific Islands Universities Research Network, formally established on 10 July 2013, brings together 11 Pacific Island universities and aims to contribute in a more structured way to the training of young professionals and development in the Pacific. It thus represents a genuine regional platform to support public policies. Since October 2016, New Caledonia has been attending meetings of the World Health Organization Regional Committee for the Western Pacific as an autonomous non-voting member. Finally, New Caledonia, with the support of the Government of France, was granted associate membership in the International Organization of la Francophonie in November 2016 and in UNESCO in October 2017.

64. New Caledonia has continued to strengthen its ties with the European Union, with which it holds the status of associated overseas territory, as conferred by the Treaty of Rome. The European Commission office for the Pacific overseas countries and territories is based in Nouméa. Under the eleventh European Development Fund, New Caledonia will receive 29.8 million euros (3.6 billion CFP francs) between 2017

and 2020. New Caledonia has chosen to direct the funds towards implementing its sectoral strategy on employment and vocational integration for the period 2016–2020.

65. In January 2012, the French Minister for Cooperation, the French Minister for Overseas Territories and the President of the Government of New Caledonia signed an agreement on the hosting of representatives of New Caledonia in French diplomatic and consular missions in the Pacific (Oceania). The first New Caledonian representative was appointed to work out of the French Embassy in Wellington in 2012. According to the administering Power, on 9 March 2017, the Congress of New Caledonia adopted by a majority a country law on New Caledonian representatives which allows the Territory to be represented in States or territories in the Pacific. The conditions for their selection and training were defined in decision No. 84/CP of 16 May 2017. In September 2017, New Caledonia invited applications for the recruitment of four representatives to serve in Australia, Vanuatu, Fiji and Papua New Guinea in 2019, following a training period.

66. According to the administering Power, it should be noted that 2016 was marked by heavy investment by the President of the Government of New Caledonia in the development of relations with neighbouring States (see [A/AC.109/2017/11](#)). In 2017, New Caledonia renewed its cooperation agreements with Vanuatu. The Government of New Caledonia intends to develop its economic diplomacy in that area. A joint cooperation plan was signed with Papua New Guinea in September 2018 and an economic diplomatic mission to the Solomon Islands is planned for the first half of 2019.

VI. Position of the administering Power

67. Speaking before the Fourth Committee on the question of New Caledonia on 12 October 2018, the representative of France said that his country was sparing no effort to ensure the success of the upcoming referendum in New Caledonia. During its second Visiting Mission to New Caledonia in four years, members of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples had personally witnessed the socioeconomic, political and educational measures taken to implement the Nouméa Accord in line with its own recommendations, including the expansion of an educational campaign on the consequences of the referendum and the adoption of measures to guarantee the security of electoral meetings, voting stations and the transportation of voting slips.

68. As part of its preparations for the referendum, France had hosted another United Nations expert mission to observe the preparation of the special electoral rolls for provincial elections and the referendum. It had also requested that the campaign and the vote be monitored by experts, and that a coordination mission be conducted to facilitate the deployment of international observers. Every step had been taken to ensure that all eligible voters were registered, including by making preparations to allow changes to be made to the electoral roll up until the day of the vote itself.

VII. Consideration by the United Nations

A. Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

69. At its 1st meeting, held on 22 February 2018, the Special Committee approved the dispatching of a visiting mission to New Caledonia from 12 to 16 March 2018 a mission for consultations to be held with the administering Power on 19 March in Paris. At the same meeting, the representatives of the following countries made statements on the question of New Caledonia: Papua New Guinea (also on behalf of Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu), Indonesia, Cuba, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste (see [A/AC.109/2018/SR.1](#)). The representative of Timor-Leste also made a statement at the third meeting (see [A/AC.109/2018/SR.3](#)).

70. At the Special Committee's 10th meeting, held on 22 June, the head of the aforementioned mission, Humberto Rivero Rosario (Cuba), presented the report of the mission ([A/AC.109/2018/20](#)). The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela made a statement. The Special Committee having granted the requests for hearing at the 3rd meeting, held on 11 June, Roch Wamytan, of the Congress of New Caledonia, and Mickael Forrest, of the UC-FLNKS (UC), both made statements at the 10th meeting. The Special Committee also adopted, without a vote, a draft resolution on the question of New Caledonia, introduced by the representative of Papua New Guinea, speaking also on behalf of the Melanesian Spearhead Group. The representatives of Fiji, Sierra Leone and Indonesia made statements. Indonesia and Sierra Leone joined the sponsors of the draft resolution (see [A/AC.109/2018/SR.10](#)).

B. Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

71. At the 6th meeting of the Fourth Committee, held on 12 October 2018, the Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea (speaking also on behalf of the Melanesian Spearhead Group) and the representatives of France and Iraq made statements (see [A/C.4/73/SR.6](#)). At the 7th meeting, held on 15 October, the representatives of Pakistan, Indonesia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela made statements (see [A/C.4/73/SR.7](#)). At the 8th meeting, held on 16 October, the representatives of Fiji, Timor-Leste and Solomon Islands made statements (see [A/C.4/73/SR.8](#)).

72. At its 3rd meeting, held on 9 October, the Committee heard a statement from the President of the Government of New Caledonia, Philippe Germain (see [A/C.4/73/SR.3](#)). At the 4th meeting, held on 10 October, the Committee also heard two petitioners (see [A/C.4/73/SR.4](#)).

73. At its 9th meeting, held on 17 October, the Committee adopted, without a vote, a draft resolution on the question of New Caledonia (see [A/C.4/73/SR.9](#)).

C. Action taken by the General Assembly

74. On 7 December 2018, the General Assembly adopted, without a vote, resolution [73/115](#), on the basis of the report of the Special Committee transmitted to the Assembly ([A/73/23](#)) and its subsequent consideration by the Fourth Committee.

Annex

Map of New Caledonia

