

HISTORICAL FOURTH COMMITTEE

Study Guide for Zurich Model United Nations

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1. YOUR CHAIRS

Welcome to the Historical Fourth Committee at the ZuMUN Conference 2018!

Your chairs for this Committee will be Astrid Vertneg and Nadia Balla.



Astrid Vertneg

I am currently enrolled in a Master's Degree in Amsterdam, studying Law and Politics of International Security. I did my Bachelor's Degree in Political Science at the University of Zurich, where I was also part of the MUN team that is organizing this conference. Since 2015 I have participated in four international MUN conferences, including Harvard World MUN and Cambridge MUN in 2016. In my freetime I love cycling, sailing and watching US late night shows.



Nadia Balla

While completing my Bachelor in Law in Albania, I was looking for ways to challenge myself and to think more outside the box so that's how I stumbled across international conferences such as MUN. I was fascinated by the way young people from all over the world discussed international topics and put their heart into peaceful solutions. I was then awarded an excellence scholarship at the University of Bern where I am currently completing my Master in International and European Law. I am very passionate about human rights with a focus on women's right and gender equality, international negotiations, and mediation.

Living for about 3 years in Switzerland has made me even more aware of how important it is to be engaged and speak up about important topics that concern our generation. I am thrilled to be part of this year's ZuMUN in the role of a chair and I'm looking forward to meeting all the other chairs and delegates.

This study guide will be the basis for your discussion in the Committee. We have tried to provide you with a good overview of the topic, the different players and the working processes. Studying this guide plus doing research for your position paper should suffice for an interesting debate and a feasible resolution.

2. 4TH COMMITTEE - SPECIAL POLITICAL AND DECOLONIZATION

At the time when the United Nations were founded, a large part of the world populations and major territories were under foreign rule. One objective and task set out in the UN Charter was the establishment of a Trusteeship system and the furtherance of self-government and independence of Trust Territories. Therefore, the fourth of the main seven committees of the General Assembly was responsible for Trusteeship and decolonization related matters. With the independence of the last Trust Territory in the 1990s, the Fourth Committee merged with the Seventh Committee (the Special Political Committee) by the General Assembly Resolution 47/233. It is since then known as the Special Political and Decolonization Committee.

Since our session takes place in the 1950s, the Committee will be set as it was back then.

2.1. The Trusteeship System

The Charter of the United Nations dedicated three Chapters to non-self-governing territories and the establishment of a Trusteeship system (Chapters XI-XIII). These chapters are of great importance for our Committee, to understand the Trusteeship system, its objectives and the responsibilities of administering powers, and to understand the functions and powers of the Committee and its organs.

Chapter XII of the Charter served the creation of an international Trusteeship system. The aim of the trusteeship system was for the international community to have supervision over former mandate territories, to support developments towards self-government and independence, and to make sure the trust territories are governed according to the principles and purposes of the United Nations.¹ Further, the objectives included the political, economic and social development of the territories. A territory becomes a Trust Territory if it is placed thereunder by an individual agreement, the Trusteeship Agreement.²

The terms of administration of a Trust Territory are laid down in the Trusteeship Agreement (Art. 81).

To support the international Trusteeship system, the establishment of a Trusteeship Council, as a principle organ of the UN, was planned. One day after having approved eight Trusteeship Agreements, the General Assembly passed Resolution 64 on 14 December 1946, establishing the Trusteeship Council.³ Chapter XIII of the Charter determines its composition and functions. The Council is composed of the administering powers, the members of the Security Council (if not already represented as administering power) and as many other members elected to match an equal number between administering and non-administering

¹ United Nations Charter, Art. 76.

² Ibid., Art.75.

³ UNGA, 4th Committee Res.64 A/RES/64 (I), 14 Dec. 1946.

powers. The Council is set to operate under the authority of the General Assembly and to assist it in carrying out its functions.⁴

The specific functions are defined under Article 87 and consist of the following: It may consider reports on the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the people of the trust territory that are submitted by an administering authority; Accepting petitions and examining them; providing periodic visits to the trust territories in accordance with the administering authority; and act in accordance with the trusteeship agreements. Besides its auxiliary function to the GA, the Trusteeship Council may formulate questionnaires, which is a function under its own authority.⁵

2.2. Powers of the Committee

The functions and powers of the General Assembly can be found in Chapter IV of the Charter. Generally, the GA ‘... may recommend measures for the peaceful adjustment of any situation..., including situations resulting from a violation of the provisions of the present Charter...’ except for those measures exclusive to the Security Council (like the use of force, binding obligations, ...).⁶

In our case, the ongoing violence in French Cameroon, you as the GA may pass a resolution with recommendations regarding the peaceful settlement of this situation.

Article 16 specifies the GA’s functions with regard to the international Trusteeship system. Approval of the Trusteeship agreements, including its alteration or amendment, lies within the General Assembly.⁷

2.3. Important Decisions of the Committee

With regard to French Cameroon as a Trust Territory, the General Assembly (Fourth Committee) has issued yearly resolutions acknowledging the situation and recommending further steps to the Trusteeship Council. These are the resolutions A/RES/655 (VII) from 21 December 1952, A/RES/758 (VIII) from 9 December 1953, and A/RES/859 (IX) from 14 December 1954.

Further, the Committee passed resolutions concerning the administrative powers of the Trust Territories in general. More specifically the resolutions A/RES/558 (VI) from 18 January 1952, A/RES/752 (VIII) from 9 December 1953, A/RES/858 (IX) from 14 December 1954 and A/RES/946 (X) from 15 December 1955 first invited the administrative powers to include statements of measures taken or planned towards the independence or self-government of

⁴ Charter of the United Nations, Art.85(2)

⁵ Kelsen, H. (1964). *The Law of the United Nations: A Critical Analysis of Its Fundamental Problems*. New York: Praeger, p. 669

⁶ Charter of the United Nations, Art.14

⁷ Charter of the United Nations, Art. 85(1)

the Trust Territory in the annual reports and then reminded them of doing so. This is emphasized in the light of the objective to achieve self-government or independence for the Trust Territories.

3. THE STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE IN FRENCH CAMEROON

3.1. Cameroon History – Understanding the Background

3.1.1. Cameroon General Facts

The territory of French and British Cameroon together measured about 315 238 square kilometres, of which about 80% were French territory. The landscape of the Cameroons is very diverse. In the South-West it borders the Atlantic Ocean, in the North West to Lake Chad. Its terrain changes from rain forests, volcanoes, mountains, plateaus to dry savannahs.

The almost 5 Million people living in French Cameroon in 1956 are ethnically and culturally diverse. The Cameroons are often perceived as a central melting point of the main three peoples of the wider central African region. The Nigritic peoples, Fulani and Arab peoples and the Bantu-speaking people are identified as the main groups. Within those multiple smaller ethno-cultural groupings populate the territory.

3.1.2. Phases of Colonization

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to ‘discover’ the territory of today’s Cameroon in 1472. Their journey took them over the Wouri River, which was rich in Shrimps, letting them call it Rio dos Camaroes (shrimps river), being the origin of Cameroon’s name.⁸ The territory of today’s Cameroon was of great importance for the slave trade. Later, Dutch and German explorers and traders followed in the territory.

From 1845 onwards German settlers and traders became more present in Cameroon. German governmental officials successfully negotiated treaties with Cameroonian local leaders and as of July 14th 1884 the German flag was officially hoisted and a protectorate established (Kamerun Schutzgebiet).⁹ Under German rule agricultural and infrastructural development was instigated. Among others, cocoa, coffee, bananas, rubber and palm oil plantations were established. Further roads, bridges and ports were built to ensure transport of the goods. Natives were subjected to forced labour.

⁸ LeVine, V. (1977). *The Cameroons: From Mandate to Independence*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Inc., pp.16-17.

⁹ Ibid., pp.22-23

3.1.3. French and British Cameroon

During the First World War, German Cameroon was conquered by British and French troops. The official end of the German rule is dated to January 1st 1916. The territory was divided between France (French Cameroun) and Great Britain (British Cameroons), by signing the treaty of London in May 1916.¹⁰ A pressing problem for both powers was to establish a functioning administration system and to break up the existing German one, which was widely accepted among the natives.¹¹ The German presence and the import of their political and bureaucratic systems had an influence on the later upcoming nationalism.

In the 1919 Treaty of Versailles, Germany officially renounced sovereignty over all its African colonies, referring the decision about rulership to the League of Nations.¹² The League recognized the territories already under the rule of Britain and France as mandated territories, according them a mandate 'C' status, which is subject to only minimal supervision by the League.¹³ About four-fifth of the territory fell under French and one-fifth to British mandated ruling. France was very reluctant to transfer its part of Cameroon into the mandate system of the League, and wanted to integrate it into sovereign France because it was won by force of arm and she was not willing to accept the responsibility towards the Council of the League that came along with the mandate.¹⁴ However, France finally agreed and on 20 July 1922 the League officially confirmed the mandates of the British and French Cameroons.

Until the Second World War, the French followed a strategy towards Cameroon called *politique du protectorat*. It was defined more by policies of association than assimilation and was based on the acceptance and considerations of local differences when it came to economic and political cooperation, functional collaboration with native elites and a slow rise of educational standards, and finally economic development.¹⁵ In the years leading to World War II, Hitler Germany tried to reclaim its former colony of Cameroon. French administrative policy changed more towards a policy of assimilation to keep the general sentiment among Cameroonians positive towards French rule.

After the French defeat in 1940 and some years of relative political vacuum, the 1944 Brazzaville Conference and the 1946 French constitutions showed a first shift towards new policies¹⁶.

¹⁰ Ngoh, V. (1979). *The Political Evolution of Cameroon 1884-1961*. Dissertations and Theses, Portland State University, p.28

¹¹ LeVine (1977). *The Cameroons*, p. 33

¹² <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?ParagraphID=pau>

¹³ Ngoh, V. (1979). *The Political Evolution of Cameroon 1884-1961*. p.51

¹⁴ LeVine (1977). *The Cameroons*, pp.34-35

¹⁵ LeVine (1977). *The Cameroons*, pp.89-90

¹⁶ More about the French political and administrative rule can be found below.

After World War II, the Cameroons became part of the trusteeship system of the United Nations and were classified as category 'B'. On December 13th 1946 the General Assembly passed a resolution¹⁷ that approved eight trusteeship agreements, including the one of French Cameroon.¹⁸ Again, France was very reluctant to commit to the Trusteeship Agreement because the aims set out in Chapter XII of the UN Charter were not in accordance with their policy of assimilation and integration.

3.1.4. The French Political and Administrative Rule

The French ruled Cameroon by a strategy of assimilation, having more similarities with colonial ways of ruling than that by mandate.¹⁹ This assimilation policy consisted of teaching French, imposing French legislation and keeping a strong hold on the judiciary and the police. Instead of leading Cameroon towards self-administration, France executed control. Cameroonian natives were divided into *sujets français* (French subjects) and *citoyens français* (French citizen). The Brazzaville Conference 1944 showed first changes in French colonial policy. The idea was now administrative decentralization as a policy and political assimilation as a goal.²⁰ Some of the ideas were incorporated in the more concrete French constitution of 1946. The new political structures foresaw a centralized French Union, with Associated States and Territories somehow integrated into the political institutions. Different regional and territorial assemblies were created and Cameroon was entitled to send three deputies to the French National Assembly. These changes of the political stage enabled local political movements to gain ground and participate in the future formation of Cameroon politics.

The transition of French Cameroon into a trust territory under the Charter of the UN resulted in some changes of the French administrative rule towards compliance with the obligations and responsibilities under the trusteeship system.²¹

3.1.5. Economics

The French pursued the construction of roads and railways to improve the infrastructure and profit from the natural goods cultivated in the territory. But harsh and sometimes inhumane treatment of the native workers led many to flee to British Cameroon and was a source of resistance against the French rule.²²

¹⁷ UNGA 4th Committee Res. 63, A/RES/63 (I), 13 December 1946, available at: [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/63%20\(I\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/63%20(I))

¹⁸ UNGA, 4th Committee Res. 155, A/155/Rev.2, 12 December 1946, available at: http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/155/Rev.2

¹⁹ Ngoh, V. (1979). *The Political Evolution of Cameroon 1884-1961*, p. 30

²⁰ LeVine (1977). *The Cameroons*, p. 134

²¹ Ibid., p. 139

²² Ibid., p. 35-36.

The principally produced goods were cocoa, coffee, bananas and palm oil.

To benefit economically from these productions, France invested into infrastructure, but this happened at the cost of human (native) lives.

3.1.6. A Move towards Independence

On 10 April 1948 the Union of the Peoples of Cameroon (UPC) was found as a nationalist opposition to the French rule. Their objective was to unify French and British Cameroon and to achieve their independence. Their founders were Reuben Um Nyobé, Ernest Ouandie and Abel Kingue.²³

In 1951 elections were held in French Cameroon to elect representatives to the French National Assembly, and in 1952 for the Territorial Assembly.

In December 1952 Um Nyobé held a speech in front of the Fourth Committee in New York to present their demand for independence. In 1953 and 1954 he appeared again as a petitioner in front of the Assembly to demand independence.²⁴

On 22 April 1955 a joint proclamation, *proclamation commune*, was published by the UPC and other Cameroonian nationalists, as a declaration of independence. The proclamation contained three specific requests, namely a request for general elections to be held before 1 December 1955, the establishment of an Executive Board as a form of a Provisional Government, and the establishment of a UN Commission responsible for the supervision of the installations of the organs of a new Cameroonian State.²⁵ The French authorities took the declaration to be a declaration of war. The overall situation became tenser with multiple demonstrations happening throughout the territory. During riots happening in the end of May 1955, 26 people dies, 189 injured and more than 700 arrested, according to official records. Unofficially, the numbers were said to be much higher.²⁶ Both sides, the authorities and the UPC, were accusing themselves of starting the violence.

On 13 July 1955 the French administration officially banned the UPC and some of its auxiliary movements.²⁷ The police, under French authority, conducted arbitrary arrests among UPC members. A wave of arrest warrants and imprisonments swept the country, also forcing people into exile.

²³ Ngoh, V. (1979). *The Political Evolution of Cameroon 1884-1961*, p.55; For more information about the UPC see Chapter 3.2.1

²⁴ Atangana, M. (2010). *The End of French Rule in Cameroon*. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, p.13

²⁵ Terretta, M. (2013). *Petitioning for our Rights, Fighting for our Nation: The History of the Democratic Unions of Cameroonian Women, 1949-1960*. Mankon, Bamenda: Langaa Research & Publishing CIG, p.63

²⁶ Atangana (2010), *The End of French Rule in Cameroon*, p.17

²⁷ Ibid., p.17

The ban of the UPC and its affiliates left a political and ideological vacuum in Cameroon. With the UPC the Cameroonian people did not only lose their major movement for independence, but also their only real political and trade unionist representative.

This vacuum was filled with nationalist sentiments, but without having a central organization to express these feelings. In the 1956 elections for the French National Assembly, a man running on the nationalist sentiments sweeping through Cameroon, was elected first representative without French citizenship. This man, André-Marie Mbida, would later become Cameroons first Prime Minister.

After the elections, Mbida changed his attitudes, and Soppo Priso took over to lead the moderate nationalist movement.²⁸ on 9 June 1956 the *Union Nationale* (national union) was created bringing together important persons from the different left-over parties and movements. Their main program was the rejection of the *Loi Cadre* (outline law)²⁹, which was imposed by the French overseas ministry in 1956, the unification of British and French Cameroon, reconstitution of the Cameroon Assembly with universal suffrage, and granting of general amnesty throughout all of Cameroon.³⁰ The *Union Nationale* first witnessed some success. It managed to bring together different Cameroonian political leaders and formulate common objectives. It achieved a concession made by the government that the *Loi Cadre* was not sufficiently meeting the needs of Cameroon and subsequently determined to dissolve the Cameroonian Assembly and have it re-elected on 23 December 1956 by universal suffrage. Further, a special amnesty law was issued that allowed UPC members to participate in the Assembly elections.

24 June 1956 French authorities and the High Commissioner, Messmer, met with Cameroonian parliamentarian deputies in Paris to discuss the future of the territory.

This was the time when Mbida turned anti-nationalist and presented himself as a co-operator with the French administration.

However, a month before the December elections the *Union* split up due to severe disagreements among its leaders. The UPC was campaigning and acting from the underground, since it was still banned. It organized again acts of sabotage and violence. Um Nyobé managed to incite people to block roads and bridges, cut telegraph lines, burn polling stations and where possible houses of voters. The French military stepped in and the many people were displaced and killed during the violence.

²⁸ Ibid., p.19

²⁹ The *Loi Cadre* was a number of constitutional reforms, including acceptance of consultations with the Territorial Assembly (ATCAM) and that elections to Cameroonian assemblies shall have universal and adult suffrage. At the same time steps were taken by France to prevent the independence of Cameroon. See Ngoh, V. (1979). *The Political Evolution of Cameroon 1884-1961*, p.61-62

³⁰ Ibid., p.20

3.2. Where we take off

On 18th December 1956, the Union of the Peoples of Cameroon (UPC), in French Cameroon, began an armed struggle, in order to gain independence from the French state. The French government sought a compromise with the leader of the UPC, however this approach did not succeed and violence continued to increase.

What happens next will be for you to decide! Given the history of French administrative rule over Cameroon and Cameroonian struggle for independence, our aim as the Fourth Committee is to end the ongoing violence and to find solution that regulates a peaceful relation between the Cameroonian independence movements and the French government.

3.2.1. The Different Players

Administering Power - France

At the end of the Second World War, France was still holding many colonies, respectively territories that would gain independence. Between 1946 and 1954 France was engaged in a war with Indochina, and in 1954 the Algerian revolution started. These political and military challenges at different frontiers impacted France's strategy also in Cameroon and towards independence movements (especially the UPC). Another important factor influencing France's position towards the UPC was that it had ties to communist parties, and was thus also considered a threat to the Western hemisphere of influence.³¹ It can be said that the goal of the French Government was to integrate French Cameroon into the French Union, and not to path their way towards self-government.

In 1954 Roland Pré became the new High Commissioner of France, later (April 1956) replaced by Pierre Messmer.

Union of the Peoples of Cameroon (UPC)

On 10 April 1948 the Union of the Peoples of Cameroon (UPC) was founded. One major figure within the UPC and the independence movement in French Cameroon was Ruben Um Nyobé. He was elected Secretary General of the UPC in 1948.

The major goals of the UPC were to gain independence from France and to achieve reunification with the British Cameroons. The party had some difficulties in the beginning to gain representative positions in the political bodies, but spread its networks through other activities.³² The UPC managed to build up strong organizational structures around. Many associated organizations were founded at different organizational and social levels. The aim of the UPC was to achieve similar international presence as Togo's local movements did. They hoped to increase their chances to independence through this approach.³³

³¹ Atangana (2010), The End of French Rule in Cameroon, pp. 13-14

³² Ibid., p.13-14

³³ LeVine (1977). The Cameroons, pp.147-149

On the national level, however, the UPC attracted some counter-movements. Other parties were running for elections as well, and the UPC did not succeed in promoting their independence program.

Having been politically active since his younger years, Um Nyobé organized protests demanding independence and reunification. He also engaged internationally, appearing and speaking three times at the UN fourth Committee in New York. Nyobé knew the law, and pointed out multiple times that France was not administering Cameroon in a way envisaged by the UN trusteeship system, namely preparing them for independence at some time in future, but slowly integrating them into the French empire.³⁴ Article 87 of the UN Charter allows petitions from trust territories and the UPC took this right and addressed the UN annually between 1952 and 1954.

In 1954 the UPC changed its tactics, inspired by Marxist teachings, leading to a communist-like appearance.³⁵ Despite being the best organized party in Cameroon, the UPC had not achieved their goals. Other political parties have assimilated their policies, and the steady presence at the UN Fourth Committee increased the French administration's dissatisfaction with the UPC.

3.2.2. The Nations Positions

In order for the Committee to decide what to do with regard to the situation in French Cameroon the present nations have to be aware of their positions with regard to the topic of decolonization. In order to determine your position, it is crucial to consider your nation's interest with regard to decolonization. Does your nation have colonies? What is the situation in these colonies? Would your position on the status of French Cameroon have a positive or negative influence on your interests with your own decolonization problems?

3.2.3. Relevant Questions

In order to find a solution to the ongoing violence in Cameroon, you will have to discuss and most likely answer the following questions:

- How to end the violence?
 - o The UPC is banned (see Decree from 1955), but nationalist sentiments are spreading. The French Government has made concessions in summer of 1956, but it is not considered enough by the Cameroonian nationalists. France wants to nudge them into becoming part of the French Union by appeasing the people of Cameroon with some concessions. The elections of December 1956 should have set the future way of Cameroon, however the UPC decided to boycott them and started violence.

³⁴ Atangana (2010), *The End of French Rule in Cameroon*, p.13

³⁵ LeVine (1977). *The Cameroons*, pp.152-153

- What should be done in the conflict between French authority over political and administrative rule and the demand for political and administrative autonomy?
- Is the time ripe for independence?
 - o Shall the Trusteeship agreement from 13 December 1946 cease to be in force in accordance with Art. 76 (b) of the UN Charter? For Cameroon to gain independence, it needs the approval of the French Government and the General Assembly to end the Trusteeship agreement. Are there conditions of independence? Shall there be a schedule following different steps towards independence?
 - o What about reunification with British Cameroon?
- Think about the possibility, that the Committee may alter or amend (additionally to ending), with the consent of France of course, the Trusteeship agreement.

4. POSITION PAPERS

State your country's position!

Since we already provide the general and common information on our Committee's topic in this study guide, we are interested in your country's position and possible solutions to the problem at hands. You can list prior resolutions that may be significant in the context. Also important is to research action plans or task forces that are connected to the issue. You can lean on such, but don't be repetitive, and try to come up with creative and solutions (for example if certain suggestions or solutions schemes did not work out in the past (an indicator that a conflict is still not solved), come up with something new!).

Next to international actions or plans you might also include solutions that stem from your own state (certain policies or projects that have helped deal with similar problems).

A way to give more life to your position can be to include statements of your government or other high officials that underline certain points of your country's position.

Particularly with our topic and Committee, it is crucial to research on your country's position towards (de-)colonization. Do you have colonies (respectively Associate or Trust Territories), and where? What is the situation in these territories? What are your expectations for your own territories regarding possible outcomes with regard to Cameroon? What outcome would you benefit most from?

The position paper also serves you!

The better you prepare it and the more research effort you already put into it before the start of the sessions the better you will do in the committee debates.

Identifying important questions that you (as a representative of your state) would like to see answered, as well as subtopics you single out will guide your way to an acceptable resolution.

Know your allies and possible opponents!

You may also research on your country's historic allies and opponents on issues of this kind. Mentioning prior collaborations or discrepancies with others can help you find the same within our committee and make others aware of possible partnerships. Are there any regional organizations or body your country belongs to? Who else is a member? This might give you information about possible partnerships or even past common strategies.

Never forget:

You know your country best: You can never know every exact position your state has taken or might take, but nobody else will know either

Be creative, but realistic: It will happen that you deviate from your country's past positions, but try not to take positions that are obviously not in the interest of your state. It should be fun, but a little authenticity is highly appreciated ;-)

Please submit your position paper to your Chairs before the 15th of April so that we can have a look at them.

5. FINAL WORDS

We are all here for great debates, exchanging interesting ideas and for having fun. To make the Historical Fourth Committee and ZuMUN an enjoyable and unforgettable experience for everyone we highly encourage you to engage with our topic, bring motivation and a good mood, and be respectful to everyone.

We are very much looking forward to spending some awesome conference days together, within the Committee and the surrounding events organized by the ZuMUN-Team.

Your Chairs,

Astrid and Nadia Balla

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND FURTHER READINGS

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- Terretta, M. (2013). *Petitioning for our Rights, Fighting for our Nation: The History of the Democratic Unions of Cameroonian Women, 1949-1960*. Mankon, Bamenda: Langaa Research & Publishing CIG.

Further Readings:

- United Nations Charter, especially Chapters XI, XII and XIII, available at: <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/>
- Trusteeship Agreement between France and the UN concerning French Cameroon, 12 December 1946, available at: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/828953/files/A_155_REV.2-EN.pdf
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