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PETITION FROM MESSRS. HERZI GULED, HAGI ABDULLAHI ISSA AND OTHERS  
CONCERNING SOMALILAND UNDER ITALIAN ADMINISTRATION

(Circulated in accordance with rule 85 and supplementary rules F and L  
of the rules of procedure for the Trusteeship Council)

Note by the Secretariat: This communication  
was transmitted to the Secretary-General by  
the United Nations Advisory Council for the  
Trust Territory of Somaliland under Italian  
Administration.

Mogadiscio, 26th December 1953

To: THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS,  
NEW YORK, U. S. A.

Through: THE ADVISORY COUNCIL OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS FOR SOMALIA  
MOGADISCIO (S O M A L I A)

Your Excellencies:

We, the undersigned Somals respectfully beg to quote hereunder extracts from the text of the inauguration speech delivered by His Excellency, the Administrator, at the opening of the third session of the Territorial Council on December, 14th 1953. We also beg to submit our protests and complaints against the contents of His Excellency's speech and other matters of vital interest for our country's progress:-

After expressing a few words of praise and appreciation His Excellency said "I regret to point out that a representative of a Somali party has directed bitter criticisms against your personal dignities and your noble activities in his declaration before the United Nations that "the overwhelming majority of members in all advisory bodies in our country including the Territorial Council, are made up of Government paid puppets of chiefs and notables. These illiterate elements are so badly biased by the salaries which they receive that they do not pay the least consideration to the interests and welfare of the Somali people."

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His Excellency added further: "Such an attack against your honour is just as serious a matter as the criminal offence committed against the late, respectable member of your Council."

His Excellency's reference to the assassination of the Territorial Council's member was dictated by the colonial motto of "divide and rule". His provocative words were surely meant to sow discord and disunity between the Somals, a policy which is familiar in the political atmosphere of this territory since the return of the Italian Administration.

Due to His Excellency's provocative speech an opposition member of the Council was assaulted the next day within the compound of the council's building. No steps were taken by the police to bring the offender before the justice. Fortunately this time it happened among the enlightened Somals but often tribal wars in which many lives are lost break out as a result of discords created by the wicked activities of the administrative authorities with a view to weakening our unity. Therefore we strongly protest against an undemocratic attitude which is seriously prejudicial to the peace and progress of our country and the unity of our people.

In reference to the sugar production and importation His Excellency said "You all know that the Administration has lowered the rate of exchange of foreign currency as a means of protection for the sugar production of S.A.I.S. This association has spent a sum of 8.000.000 (Somals) on the modern machines and materials which made it possible to produce the essential requirements of sugar supply for the territory". I wish to mention here that some merchants have submitted protests to the effect that concessions of sugar importation are granted to an Italian merchant in order that he may gain the profit alone."

There is no deficiency in the sugar production of our country but despite this the price is still very high. In countries where there are factories for sugar production the cost is comparatively very low. Here, the Administration earns a profit of So.70/- on every sack as a taxation fees with the result that the rate of cost increases accordingly. The public who are the consumers suffer then the consequences. In a rare case of the local production's shortage, concessions for sugar importation are granted to Foreign merchants regardless of the rightful claim of the Somali merchants to obtain such a grant.

With regard to agriculture, we beg to bring to your kind notice that all fertile lands on the banks of the 2 rivers of our country are alienated from the Somals and therefore we depend mainly on rains for the irrigation of our farms. Nevertheless, a considerable efficiency of wheat production is still maintained but unfortunately the Somals are not permitted to export their surplus crops to the outside world. They are forced to sell their production to the authorities at a maximum cost of So. 25/- per sack. These crops are then sold to foreign companies to whom concessions for exportation have been generously given.

Trade with any country other than Italy is considered "a breach of law." We have a wide variety of valuable goods to offer to the world markets in exchange for foreign productions which are not available in our country but we are really shup up behind an iron curtain owing to the restrictive laws imposed on our commercial activities. All profitable concessions are granted to foreign companies together with whom the Administration plans the exploitation of economical resources in every possible way. Thus we are left the victims of severe and unkind poverty.

We extremely regret to inform you that the Somali personnel suffer great injustice which regard to the rights of service. True discrimination is in actual practice in this sphere because all appointments of posts and estimations of salaries are made according to one's colour rather than one's capacity and responsibility.

The Somals are so insufficiently paid that their salaries are not enough for the bare daily bread let alone to afford them the means of a good standard of living.

In conclusion we have the honour to request your Council to express our grateful thanks and indebtedness to the members of the United Nations for the great favour which they have done for us in the name of humanity on their unanimous rejection of ill-omened proposal of the extension of the ten (10) year period of our independence. Indeed this action has greatly strengthened our faith and confidence in the United Nations' Organization. We sincerely trust that your Council will give a sympathetic considerations to the contents of our humble petition.

Thanking you in anticipation,

We have the honour to be  
Your Excellency's  
Obedient servants

Per recapito indirizzare a:  
(Please address reply to)

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Hagi Abdullahi Issa  
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Hussein Omar  
Mohamed Hassan  
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and 29 others

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