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PETITION FROM MR. J.M. BOKWE ON BEHALF OF THE NGOLO-BOLO MBONGE COMMUNITY
CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS UNDER BRITISH ADMINISTRATION

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Note by the Secretariat: This communication was transmitted
to the Secretary-General by the United Nations Visiting
Mission to Trust Territories in West Africa.

From: J.M. Bokwe,
Ngbandi Town,
c/o Massaka N.A. School,
P.O. Kumba
Southern Cameroons.
14th October, 1958

To: The Chairman,
The 4th United Nations
Visiting Mission to the Trust
Territories of the Cameroons,
Kumba

Sir,

Petition on behalf Ngolo-Bolo Mbonge Community in respect of
Settlement Dispute with Northern Bakundu N.A.

I most humbly elect to submit as hereunder, the aforementioned petition on behalf of the Chief of Ngolo-Bolo, one Marcus Elangwe Bandume and the people of his village community at mile 32 on Kumba-Mamfe Road their residential place. Chief Marcus Elangwe Bangume is the Head of the Ngolo-Bolo village and a member of the Mbonge Clan Native Authority Court since Ngolo-Bolo is purely of Mbonge tribal element.

In this Division of Kumba, the constituent tribal population bears 17 different types of indigenous people who are the rightful occupants and owners of the land constituting Kumba Division and termed tribal land consequently in respect of the distribution of population over this land on basis of tribes or clans and domicile.

I subjoin to this petition a list of these different tribes for your reference which naturally includes the two tribes, namely, Mbonge tribe and Bakundu tribe connected with the landed dispute in which Ngolo-Bolo, naturally a component of the Mbonge Community, is involved. There are two of the 17 tribes comprising, Kumba Division which are exceptionally large and cover a vast area of land to the extent that one of these two exists both in the East and West of the Division. This tribe is the Mbonge Tribe. Reference to a map from the District Office Kumba will provide ample justification for the purpose of understanding.

LAND TENURE: From time immemorial, the ancient tradition, custom and practice by the indigenous people of this Division over the use of land has been purely communal irrespective of difference in blood or stock and discrimination. The land had been owned and used together by our ancestors which aspect is found in the commingled nature of the settlement of our ancestors and their descendants whose villages or communities are interspersed in their disposition not minding their difference in element.

Ngolo Bolo people of Mbonge tribe have since their time of yore lived in the north of Mbonge tribe close to the Bakossi village of Bakolle near at Mile 32 on Kumba-Mamfe Road with the Bafaw villages of Kombone and Dikumi. At that time in the olden days this Ngolo-Bolo village altered their position once by shifting into the interior of their land - leaving a vacant space behind them. Sometime after their movement, Konye, a people of Bakundu tribe from Kitta village of Balue tribe, in the extreme Southern of Kumba Division, immigrating and searching for land came upon the Ngolo-Bolo at their home to ask for land which supplication positively acknowledged by the Ngolo-Bolo to the Konye people from Kitta Balue. From very fraternal and communal motive land which was the old residential spot of the Ngolo-Bolo Community and from where they had shifted into the hinterlands was then shown to these strangers of Konye now part of Northern Bakundu. It must be borne in mind that the Bakundu tribesmen have particularly been nomadic in the past and that their present holdings are settlements of recent occupation ip so facto.

At this juncture, one clearly has a good grip of the matter where the settlement dispute between Ngolo-Bolo and Northern Bakundu emanates. In 1951 Ngolo Bolo owing to disadvantages due to exclusion from a motorable road, decided

to found another settlement which bore proximity to a road and in doing so they resolved to return to their former home at Konye Northern Bakundu contiguous to their former home. There was no trouble and no contract of whatever denunciation was entailed once Konye knew that area virtually belongs to Ngolo-Bolo.

In 1954 by Publication in Eastern Nigeria Regional Gazette No. 200 of January, the 17th tribal areas in Kumba Division were reformed into 13 N.A.s Mbonge and Northern Bakundu being two out of these 13. Each of these N.A.s had its definite composition. The village NgoloBolo was included in the composition of the Mbonge Native Authority as a tribal component of the Mbonge tribal Native Authority Area and population and extraction. Each Native Authority collecting the tax of its areas through its Tax Assessment Board. Since 1951 Ngolo Bolo Mbonge Community had paid its tax through its relevant Tax Collecting Authority, namely, The Mbonge N.A. until recently in 1956 when Northern Bakundu Tax Collecting Authority appeared to be attempting to be collecting Ngolo Bolo tax.

The Ngolo Bolo people raised an objection as members of completely separate and independent body. Owing to local prejudice and instigation the matter went to the Magistrate's Court which ordered a forceful arrest of Chief Marcus Elangwe Bangume without reasonable cause for this action. As a case stemming from prejudice inimical attitude pervade the whole issue and naturally the Chief was panicked into guilty judgment. I have therefore as the exponent of his feelings represented this matter to your worthy Mission for consideration and attach hereto petitions which have been source of correspondence between Ngolo-Bolo and Southern Cameroons Government since this matter began.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) J.M. BOKWE

J. M. BOKWE
Politician and ex Member of
Southern Cameroons House of
Assembly and Local Councillor
on behalf Ngolo-Bolo.

ATTACHMENT TO PETITION

TRIBES OF KUMBA DIVISION.

1. Bafaw.
2. Bakossi.
3. Balong.
4. Bai.
5. Bassossi.
6. Bcmboko.
7. Balondo.
8. Bauma.
9. Ngolo.
10. Batanga.
11. Korup.
12. Barcmbe.
13. Bakundu.
14. Isangele.
15. Mbcnge.
16. Ekcmbe.
17. Elung.
18. Balue.

KUMBA DIVISION NATIVE AUTHORITIES.

1. Mbonge Native Authority.
2. Eastern Area Native Authority.
3. Southern Bakundu Native Authority.
4. Northern Bakundu Native Authority.
5. Kumba Town Native - do -
6. Bai-Dieka - do -
7. Bcmboko - do -
8. Southern Area - do -
9. North Western Area - do -
10. Bafaw-Balong - do -
11. Bassossi - do -
12. Isangele Group - do -
13. Balue - do -
