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REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION FOR ERITREA

Letter dated 9 August 1950 addressed to the
Secretary-General by the Chairman of the Ethiopian
Delegation to the United Nations

New York, 9 August 1950

With reference to the Official Records of the Fifth Session of the General Assembly, Supplement No. 8 (A/1285) 1950, containing the report of the United Nations Commission for Eritrea, I have the honour to draw Your Excellency's attention to certain errors in reporting statements made by myself at the Commission on 10 and 11 April of this year, as published in Annex 7 of the document under reference.

In order that the records of the Commission and of its consultations with the Ethiopian Government should be correct, I transmit herewith certain corrections with reference to specifically numbered paragraphs of Annex 7, with the request that appropriate treatment and distribution be given to these corrections.

Paragraph 19: The statement to the effect that I had assured the Italian Foreign Minister that, if he listened to the Italians in Ethiopia over the radio he would find that they disagreed with him, is obviously a misstatement. I quite obviously stated that

"If the Italians in Ethiopia listened over the radio to the statements of the Italian Foreign Minister, he would find that they disagreed with him".

Paragraph 20: The three final sentences of this paragraph are incomplete and therefore misleading. I stated, in fact, that

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"The Eritrean population, by an unmistakable majority of the inhabitants of the whole territory, has clearly stated its desire for union without conditions with Ethiopia, which fact would appear to exclude the more complicated and conditional forms of integration suggested. As the Pakistani Foreign Minister had maintained at Lake Success, the essential consideration was the wishes of the population itself, and such would appear to be the wishes of the population. The Ethiopian Government had always declared that it would conform to any clear and unmistakable expression of these wishes. He would submit details to the Commission on that point also".

Paragraph 21: Solely the first and the two final sentences of this paragraph correctly reported my statements. As regards the remaining sentences, I, in fact, stated that

"The United Nations Commission for Eritrea may have possibly reached the conclusion, whether or not it be founded he would not take it upon himself at this time to say, that a possible majority of the inhabitants in that region of Eritrea known as the Western Province, might not be in favour of union with Ethiopia. Although his Government had certain reservations in that connexion, it would not oppose a separate solution for that area if, on the basis of a clear expression of a majority of the inhabitants of that Province, the United Nations decided that that was the best settlement".

Paragraphs 36 and 37 taken together do not correctly represent my statements which were to the effect that

"The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia thanked the Pakistani Representative for the spirit in which he had spoken, a spirit which was in conformity with the promises of objectivity and impartiality made at Lake Success by the Pakistani Foreign Minister in regard to the conduct which would be followed by the Commissioner for Pakistan on the United Nations Commission for Eritrea. His observations were very important and, as he had been left the choice the previous day, he would answer that Representative's request for additional information in writing".

(Signed)

Abte Wold AKILLOU,
Minister for Foreign Affairs and
Chairman of the Ethiopian Delegation
to the United Nations