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CONSEIL  
DE TUTELLE

T/PTT.4/5/Add.2  
9 December 1949

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SECRETARIAT  
GENERAL

21 DEC 1949

ADDENDUM TO PETITION FROM THE MENGEN COMMUNITY AND  
WEDIKUM COMMUNITY LEAGUE CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS  
UNDER BRITISH ADMINISTRATION

MTD NH

Note of the Secretary-General: In accordance with rule 84 of the rules of procedure for the Trusteeship Council, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith to the members of the Trusteeship Council an undated communication from the South Western Federation of Tadjon (Wedikum Tribe) which forms a supplement to the petition dated 14 February 1949 of the Mengen Community and Wedikum Community League concerning the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under British administration. This communication was transmitted to the Secretary-General by the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in West Africa.

/COPY

C O P Y

The South Western Federation  
Tadkon, Widikum Tribe,  
Bamenda Province - Cameroons,

The Secretary,  
Trusteeship Council  
On Tour Cameroons.

Sir,

We the Native Authority of the Tadkon South Western Federation of the Widikum Tribe are very pleased to have you in this part of the Cameroons as you have come to know us and to hear our complaints.

We submissively beg to underline here our grievances which have lasted long without any solution and we are sure you will take pains to go into them for your final views and decision. The outstanding grievances is Land Dispute: - Ngemba Land Dispute.

- (a) Bafawchu - Bali Land Dispute
- (b) Mengen Mboh-Bali " "
- (c) Babutu-Bali " "
- (d) Babuchum " "
- (e) Nsongwa " "
- (f) Mankon " "
- (g) Baba " "
- (h) Pinyin " "

2. Moghamo Land Dispute:-

- (a) Mengen Muwa-Bali Land Dispute
- (b) Wudzang " " "
- (c) Asong " " "

3. Monemo Land Dispute:-

- (a) Bosa Bali-Tunyang " "
- (b) Kubnyang " "

The Balis ran from Bali Kumbat and came and we the natives harboured them. After that we gave them the present site to build on. They did not obtain that place by any conquest at all. No village was conquered by them neither before or after the event of the Europeans. See Dr. Zintgraf's reports about Bande German war. Bali very small Village by them. The first station of the Germans was built in Bali and the neighbouring villages were captured by the Germans and brought to Bali. So, e villages which were near e.g. Mengen Nboh, Bafawchu, Mengen Muwa, Medum etc were simply and easily forced or annexed to Bali. The present Bali is composed of many of our people who are willing to be out from the bondage since.

/When the

When the British came, one D.O. Mr. W.E. Hunt was a friend of the Bali Chief. He sized all the above lands from the owners and gave to the Balis. All the employees at that time were almost all Balis. Interpreters e.g. Ayaba and Simon Fogham were all Balis, Messengers and clerks etc. In this way we were cheated in many respects. Reports were hardly listened to and if any were by then, they were wrongly interpreted and nearly every thing was decided in the favour of the Balis. As a consequence also wrong boundaries were demarcated e.g. Bali Bafawchu boundary demarcated quite close to the chief of bafawchu's door and the worst of all in the absence of the people which is against Democracy. See copies of petition attached. See Mr. Hunt's Memorandum No, 471/21 of 8/9/22 to the Resident Buea para 4. Bali Megen Mbch land case which is still in dispute up till now.

The Mengen Mbohs who bluntly refused to submit to the Balis according to the British Officer's order were driven out of their land now in dispute by the said Officer Mr. Hunt. They roan about without any fixed settlement and many really die of hunger while the Balis use their land now for farming. See recent inquiry by D.O. Mr. Goodliffe and his unmerciful and very disappointing judgment about the said Mengen land case with the Balis dated 27th December 1948 - January 1949 and copies of which we hope have reached you for your own views and treatment. This is contrary to what Mr. Gregg A.D.O. said to us at Meta when he was making his intelligence report. The D.O. may be referred. We beg the Commission to visit one of the boundaries which is Bamuchum-Bali just on the main road and about 15 minutes inland at Mile 87 Mamfe-Bamenda Road.

One other point is about the Abakpa Strangers' Settlement on Mankon Land. This has recently been taken by District Officers by force and given to one Malam Sule a Hausa man to own the village and be the Land Lord and act as a chief. See petition from the Mankon attached.

#### Summary of the whole Matter

We have the honour to make it clearer that by asking for reversion of our lands from Bali, we do not mean, however, to dispossess the Balis of all lands occupied by them; neither do we mean to drive them back to where they came from at all.

What we mean is that they claim more lands than they should possess or else should be given them by us the real aborigines of these lands. Therefore in view of the fact that the true aborigines of the lands have very much been deprived of their God-given lands by way of uncaredful investigation and judgment by the first District Officers of Bamenda Division. The Commission should kindly order revision of these boundaries

/by the Government

by the Government of Nigeria. If this is done then some of the aborigines who have since been roaming in distress (such as the Mengen Mboh) solely because they feared remaining in Bali lest they be subordinated, will then possess lands where to settle and farm in happiness and peace. Then tribal discrimination and unrest between the Widikum section and the Balis Area which has been going on for long time will cease.

We believe and trust that though the Commission is out for Colonial Affairs as a whole, yet our complaints will find room on the table of the U.N.O. irrespective of our diminutive size.

Wishing you a very safe journey,

We remain,

Sir,

Your Humble objects.

- |    |          |                |         |             |
|----|----------|----------------|---------|-------------|
| 1. | Chief of | (Signed Pinyin | N. Mamy | for Ngemba  |
| 2. | " "      | .....          |         | for Monemo  |
| 3. | " "      | (illegible)    |         | for Ngei    |
| 4. | " "      | Ghuba II       |         | for Moghamo |
| 5. | " "      | Asama          |         | for Ngwaw.  |

Secretary ----- (illegible)

Received at United Nations Headquarters: 22 November 1949.

C O P YBaforchu, Bamenda  
22 November, 1938.

To His Excellency  
The Governor of Nigeria,  
Through The District Officer,  
i/c Bamenda Division.

Your Excellency,

Your humble servant, Moma, Chief of Baforchu humbly solicit Your Excellency indulgence into my complaint concerning land dispute between your humble servant and the Bali people of Bamenda Division.

From Mbeniko to Bali is only approximately seven miles, from Mbenidang to Manbeng is eight miles, from Mbenidang to my town Baforchu is only one mile. During the German Regime the boundary between Bali and Baforchu was at Mbenidang, thus given Baforchu Mbenidang and Mamben. On arrival of the English Rule, this boundary was again made fresh, thus depriving Baforchu of the above places, including 501 raphia bush and 103 Houses, with no just cause. During the settlement of the boundary by Mr. Hawkesworth, The D.O. my people and I were not present and therefore we do not at all agree to the boundary he made.

At present we are just like prisoners having no land to farm, all our land has been taken away and given to Bali people we have no where to get bamboos for house making.

The Resident has reviewed the boundary at Bamenda during his last visit. I am not at all satisfied with the decision he arrived at, Mr. Scolfield even failed to visit all places during his revision of the boundaries.

Your humble servant therefore prays that His Excellency will see his way to restore all the Baforchu land unjustly taken from them back. I have not committed any offence since the arrival of the English Government in this country, moreover I understand that under the British flag every body enjoys liberty. But why is it that the Baforchus are so punished.

With full hopes hopes that this my humble petition will receive the fullest consideration of your Excellency.

I have the honour to be,  
Your Excellency's humble servant,  
Chief Moma, His-Mark  
(Signed): ..... Labah  
Copied Labah Public Letter Writing Co,  
2/2/48

Witness to mark and writer,  
J.S.Sam be  
Free of Charge

Received at United Nations Headquarters: 22 November, 1949.

/ C O P Y

C O P Y

No.B.574/80  
The District Office,  
Bamenda Division,  
Bamenda, 4th January, 1939.

The Village Head of  
Baforchu 1  
Ngemba N.A.Area.

I have to inform you that your petition asking for a review in the land dispute that you have with Bali will be forwarded to His Excellency, The Governor.

2. You must however pay into the Native Treasury the sum of £2. as a cost of the review and making up the record.

(Sgd) H.N.Harcourt  
for District Officer,  
i/c Bamenda Division

(Signed) ----- LABAH  
Abakpa

/C O P Y

C O P Y

No. NA 1254/Vol.2/118  
The District Office  
Bamenda, 6th February, 1943.

Gentlemen,

Bani-Baforchu Land Dispute: Bamenda Division

With reference to your petition of 5th January, 1943, the Ban-Mbu (Baforchu) boundary has been determined by Mr. Scolfield. Mr. Scolfield's decision was upheld by the Resident and finally by the Chief Commissioner acting under powers delegated to him by the Governor. You have therefore already pressed the matter to the highest Authority and no further petitions on the subject are necessary. Your petition is returned accordingly.

Messrs:- A. S. Tebid,  
M. Mofer,  
Timothy Tandjong and four others  
Baforchu Mbu Town Council  
Ngemba Native Authority Area-Bamenda  
F.B.E.

(Sgd) ?

for District Officer  
i/c Bamenda Division.  
Directed By D.O.

Copied by -

(Signed): (illegible)

Letter Writer

/From Mbu Town Council,

C O P Y

From Mbu Town Council,  
Ngember Native Area,  
Bamenda Division  
Cameroons Province,  
5th January, 1945.

His Excellency The Governor,  
Government House,  
Lagos, Nigeria.  
Through The Resident,  
Cameroons Province,  
Buea.

Your Excellency,

May it please your Excellency to read the following Petition from Your Excellency's humble petitioners the members of the Baforchu I Mbu town council, Bamenda Division which reads as follows:-

We have the honour most humbly and respectfully to state that we are not fit as persons before His Excellency's sphere of Administration to petition to His Excellency most excellent power but being aware that His Excellency will listen to his humble servants to promote better understanding between His servants have endeavoured to Place this our humble complaint before him for his most considerate and fatherly assistance.

We have the honour most humbly and respectfully to bring before His Excellency that before the advent of the British Administration in the Cameroons, after the great War of 1914, the land now under dispute was entirely our land. In order to bring the matter in to light to His Excellency, we beg to state that the former chiefs to whom our ancestors were keeping close boundary were:- (1) for the Baforchu I Mbu town, was late Moma (2) for Baguzang, Mbaaku, (3) for Mbunji Fonjengo Mbakurewen, (4) Menjong late Mba, (5) Bome, Take, (6) Bande, Ngwafor, during this period there was no dispute between the surrounding chiefs mentioned of the respective boundaries with such overwhelming difficulties as we are experiencing in this days.

As time went on the Bali people came from the north as strangers seeking for a place for settlement. They were received by the aborigines and allowed to settled in the land together with our Ancestors for some time when after they began to seize the land and other belongings of the Aborigines which tead into several tribal struggles. The invading Bali people had influence of extending their troubles against our Ancestors because our Ancestors were not living in one place separated in distances caused by the variation of the land and were always at the mercy of the

/C O P Y



Balis who lived in large numbers with successful attacks.

When the Germans took up the Administration of the Cameroons they met the overwhelming difficulties involved the disputes usually brought on the subjects and we can still remember that one Officer by name Hauptmant Somefeld and Missionaries one of whom we can still remember to be Leimbacher brought peace by cutting off part of our land and added to the Balis, though we were not satisfied but surrendering on terms that the peace was made by our able Missionaries. We were not satisfied on grounds that our land was cut off and given to Balis which we did not expect could be done. There our minds were agitating from time to time on the puzzling questions and the horrible inconveniences of the population for the small area of land which did not suffice the general needs of the community for farming and even proper place for building.

After the Germans have gone away the in result of the Great War of 1914, the Balis became more and more eager to extend the boundary into our land and began to lay frequent requisitions before the British Government in result of which more land have been given to them from our land making the position of our people more dangerous than what it was in the past days as settled by the Germans. They succeeded in acquiring our lands because we had patience over the settlement made previously which we were not satisfied. In the later area given to them during the advent of the British Administration included one hundred houses and many raphia bushes, being of great value to the people of our land for the purpose of farming and wine from the raphia palms which are now the sole ownership of the people of Bali who have not suffered to palant them.

Your Excellency will note that by the our minds were agitating over the question, and we have all united under one sentiment with the love of peace and law to appeal to His Excellency's most excellent power, with the determination that we shall not give up the question until our land be restored to us and this case will continually exist from generation to generation for solution to justify us. From our town to the town of Bali is about seven miles and from our town to the boundary extended for Balis is just a quarter of a mile from all directions round us a tribe numbering some one thousand and five hundred people into such a small piece of land while the land is ours from time of immemorial.

Your Excellency's most humble petitioners have always been laying frequent complaints to the various District Officers in our Division

/even to the

even to the Resident in charge of the Province but there has not been a definite answer to end this question against our people over their repeated cries before the authorities. In certain intervals some of the Administrative Officers have visited our town to investigate the position which we believe have seen the dangerous position in which we are placed but when they return no reply to us.

Under these circumstances of great doubts against the troubles of our people which we are also referring we have petition to His Excellency, that being father of the fatherless to gracious mercy and power lies to meet our petition favourably may see to our petition and awaiting His Excellency's most excellent and considerate reply at the earliest convenience.

We have the honour to be,  
Sir,

Your Excellency's most humble loyal subjects.

(Sgd) A.S. Tabid

" E. M. Mofor

" Timothy Tandjong

" M. Achu

HESN.

This is to certify that the above petition has been written at the request of the petitioners and they confirm before us that it contains nothing more than their expressions and term dictated to the writer.

S. Ndansi

N. Mukum

Witnessed this 5th day of January, 1943

Written by HJS Ngingi Letter writer

Cameroons Province

Thumbprints of:-

Asongwed

Achdi

Kwoti

Msonikon

Akonji Waafu

Tati Achu

(illegible)

Marcus Fombang

(Signed): ..... Labah

Copied by Labah Public L. Com.

2/2/47

C O P Y

Mbu (Baforchu 1)  
Ngenba N. A. Area  
Bamenda Division  
February 10th, 1948.

Original

The Chief Commissioner,  
Eastern Provinces, Bahr.  
On tour Bamenda Division,  
Thro's The S.D.O.  
i/c Bamenda Division,  
Bamenda.

Mbu-Bali Land Dispute

Your Honour,

I attach herewith copies of petitions and replies from the District Officers in triplicate against the land dispute between Mbu (Baforchu 1) and Bali for your kind consideration.

2. Your Honour is to us as a suckling mother, and if a child is hungry it must cry out till it is suckled. Since we started crying we have not been suckled, and I now humbly beg that you listen to our cry and suckle us sir

3. The only piece of fertile land of Mbu was seized and given to Balis who are more strangers who came and met us there, so that the whole of Mbu people are suffering from hunger since this was done and the population of my people decrease every year as it is quite obvious that things can not bread well without food. The barren land of stone on hills on which we live cannot produce to suffice enough food for the whole town. If you are able to visit this, you will really sympathise with your poor petitioner.

4. Our petitions against this have always been invalidated and as your honour is here in person, I have the confidence that something good will be done to wash away the tears from your servants eyes. If Your Honour goes through the petitions attached, you will see that the Baforchus were deprived of their 103 houses, 501 raphia bushes, thousands of their plantains farms, bananas yams, cocoyams and many other (several crops which were then on the cultivated plots.

5. The British policy is that everybody should enjoy "freedom and the benefits of his labours. Why was Baforchu deprived of her's, by the British Government when she (Br. Government) is known in the whole world as a peace maker". Was this uncompanionate act a punishment to any crime

/committed

committed by the Baforchu 1; if so which is that for I can not remember of any crime committed either by me or any of my people since the British took over this Mandate.

6. I am anxiously waiting for your Honour's favourable reply which I have hopes that it will modify my sorrows. The early Political Officers could only rely on the tricks of the Bali as the different villages would not understand the English language and idea. The Bali then made a bid for land occupation and they succeeded in seizing land from the villages around their village.

7. The Bali-Baforchu boundary was made in the absence of the Baforchu people without evidence from the both parties. The unfortunate men and women of Baforchu were deprived of their properties and the land which is the life of the people.

8. I had a dispute with the Bali people over one raphia bush during the German Rule at a place called Mborankaw and it was settled then the boundary was fix at a place called Mbenadag and we then lived peacefully till the British came and my land and properties were taken and given to Bali in my absence. Bali people were strangers from Chamba north of the Division; came and met me in my land and how can the British Government deprive me from my land and give to strangers without my evidence?

9. I am now putting this my humble petition to Your Honour and if he thinks it beyond his settlement I may be permitted to take this my complaint to any Court of Law where justice will be sought and where my witnesses will prove my case.

10. Since the land and my properties were taken, I applied for a review to the Resident and he came to Bamenda but did not visit the land, he did not call the Bali people together with me or my witnesses but he only told me that he confirmed the judgment of the D.O. I also applied for review to His Excellency The Governor of Nigeria in November 1938 and no answer has been received. See attached petition dated 22/11/38 and the D.O.'s letter No. B. 574/80 dated 4th January 1939. £2 paid for review but not heard. I submissively beg Your Honour to inspect the land in person to see how the people are suffering for which only an eye witness will serve best.

11. My petition of the 5/1/43 was returned on the 6/2/43 on grounds that Mr. Scolfield's decision was final but the D.O.'s letter No. B.574/80 written before then requested me to pay £2 before His Excellency will review the case and which I did pay. Since then nothing was heard. Why my petition of the 5/1/43 was returned I do not know. I still desire

/that the

that the boundary dispute may be reviewed. I had already paid £2 for the fee and if more is required I will be ready to pay.

12. Concerning the said piece of land taken from me and my people I know that there was a case between the Balis and myself concerning Native dwarf cow and this case was tried in the D.O.'s Court and the decision was that the Bali chief should pay me £25 and I should return the cows. The £25 to be paid was due to the feeding of the cows While then during my absence the D.O. came and took my land and the cows and gave to the Bali Chief.

13. According to how land disputes have been settled here, there should be some neighbouring chiefs but this was not the case in mine. It was worth calling some of the neighbouring chiefs to witness this. Failing to do so means there was some injustice somehow, and this was settled entirely in my absence and no witnesses.

14. The sufferings of your most humble petitioner and his people are beyond imagination and it will be a remarking history if Your Honour would suffer to have a view of this land in dispute and settle it to the satisfaction of both parties.

Should this meet your kind consideration, I will be very grateful.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your humble petitioner,

Thomas Atanga for Chief Moma of Mbu  
His Mark.....

(Finger-print  
marked here)

This is to certify that the above has been written at the request of the petitioner and after it has been read and explained to him in his vernacular, he confirms that it contains nothing more than his authorities and expressions dictated to the writer.

Witnessed by

(Signed) G. A. Moma

Signed): ..... Labah

Labah Public Letter writing Company,  
No. 8663.

Fee charged for three copies 15/-  
(fifteen shillings)

/From Atanga V.H. of Mbetu

C O P Y

From Atanga V.H. of Mbetu  
for the Councillors  
Ngemba Area  
Bamenda Div.  
Bamenda.  
11/12/48

The District Officer  
i/c Bamenda Division,  
Bamenda.

BALI - BETU (Babitu Land Dispute)

Sir,

I on behalf of the Mbetu Councillors and villagers have the honour most submissively beg to bring this my humble petition before you for your kind consideration and reads as follows:-

The District Officer, if he reads through the intelligent reports, he will see that the Balis came from the Chamber North and with their tricks they managed with the help of the Germans and made monopoly of the lands of the surrounding villages.

The Mbetu land lies and still bears the name of Mbetu but the Balis interpret it as Babitu which is a sure proof that the land is ours. When the Balis came from the North we were on this land and with their selfish attitude they led the Germans war against us and we escaped to Mankon. While at Mankon class conflicts began and we returned to our mother land. When we returned we settled at the present site. We continued farming and there was no trouble. See even on the map of Nigeria the only mountain noted in Bamenda Division is Babitu Mountain; the great mountain now on our land but occupied by the Balis. Any Administrative Officer interested in your humble petitioner's cry and should like to view this land; will fall in sympathy at seeing our fig trees, rafia bushes, Kolanut trees our places of worshipping etc.

We continued doing farming together and as time went on they found that the Mbetus were in possession of very fertile land especially Nitohn Area alis Ndabu. The Balis now term it Naka. They started quarrelling with certain Mbetu people reaching its climax between Munjike of Mbetu and Kobe an Ex-German soldier of Bali. The Balis set the Mbetu houses on fire. In fact a lot of destruction was done. The D.O. was warranted, escorted by Atangamuwa of Mbetu. Unfortunately for the Mbetu people all the African staff who accompanied the D.O., the interpreter was a Bali and the Police Sergeant viz Nketi was a Bali. The poor Mbetu people were totally oppressed and deprived of their land till now.

/The Mbetu

The Mbetu boundary which the chief said should be at a stream call "Ikindo"; a boundary with the Mungens but not Bali. During the course of the Administrative Officer's discuss, the late chief of Mbetu was still convinced to agree once again for both Bali and Mbetu to continue farming together. The towns people of Mbetu didn't see with their chief and left in annoyance and with different opinions. The few who were still struggling to farm on the disputed land having no supporters were tormented and left in disgust whole and entire.

I am submitting to the able District Officer that no true boundary line was made between the Bali and Mbetus and I solicit on behalf of my people who have been driven and fenced round with hills and stones that the D.O. on behalf of His Majesty's Government may look into this state of affairs if this difficulty could be solved for his most humble petitioner.

Should this meet your kind consideration, and a boundary be fixed, we shall be very grateful.

I have the honour to be Sir,

Your humble petitioner

Atanga V.H. for His Councillor.

His right thumb Print (marked here)

This is to certify that the above has been written at request of the petitioner and that after it has been read and explained to him in the Mbetu language he confirms that it contains nothing more than his authorities and expressions dictated to the writer for the D.O. Bamenda.

Witness: (Signed) M. B. -(illegible)

(Signed) ..... Labah  
By Labah Public Letter  
Writing Company  
Fee received for 3 copies  
12/- (twelve shillings)

C O P Y

M B U (Bafawchu 1)  
Ngenba N.A. Area,  
Bamenda Division,  
13th December, 1948.

Through The District Officer,  
i/c Bamenda Division,  
Thro' The Resident,  
Buea, Cameroons Province,  
Thro' The Chief Commissioner,  
Enugu, Eastern Provinces,  
To His Excellency The Governor,  
Lagos Nigeria.

Your Excellency,

MFU - Bali Land Dispute.

Your Excellency's humble petitioner is Chief Moma of Mbu (Bafawchu 1) and the entire people of Bafawchu, in the Bamenda Division, Cameroons Province. This humble petition craves his Excellency's indulgence in the long standing land dispute between Mbu and Bali.

2. Your Excellency's address recently at Bamenda gives each faithful and loyal subject of Your Excellency the hope, faith and believe that in Your Excellency's hands justice is there.

3. Before the coming of the British into this country Mbu and Bali lived peacefully; there was no question of boundary dispute. But when the British Government came, and the Bali people seizing the opportunity that the then Political Officers in Bamenda had favour in them, brought about false claims of our land.

4. As a result the Bali- Bafawchu boundary was demarcated in the absence of the Bafawchu men, and we had to lose 103 houses, 501 raphia bushes and other food crops. This was no justice.

5. I applied for the Resident's review and on his arrival in Bamenda, declined to visit the land in dispute, and simply confirmed the decision of Mr. Schofield. Not satisfied with this one sided decision, we asked for the Chief Commissioner's intervention and was asked to pay f2 fee, which I paid.

6. Nothing happened and we, Your Excellency's humble petitioner only concluded and believed that the same Political Officers who had favour for the Balis while in Bamenda had the decisions then in their hands at Buea, since their replies were the same.

/7. Now that



7. Now that we are told that the powers of the District Officers and the Resident and also the Chief Commissioner are exhausted, we solicit His Excellency's own intervention in the matter. We are prepared to pay what ever fees which we may be asked to pay and ask most humbly that the boundary question between ourselves and be started afresh.

8. Copies of the following correspondences which will throw light as to our grievances are attached. From the tone of the District Officer and the Resident's letters His Excellency will see that we have not been treated justly at all. In the British Rule every one is proud to have justice, and justice has been denied us, and why? We are, at a loss, we are at sea and not knowing whither we are bound to; but pray for His Excellency's own intervention. I attach herewith:-

- (a) Copy of my petition dated 19/2/48,
- (b) " " " " " 5/1/45,
- (c) " " Resident's letter No. 3483/175 of 30/6/48.

9. The original of this petition is being forwarded direct and copies to through the District Officer, which I hope he will forward through the usual channels.

10. While anxiously waiting to hear from Your Excellency,

I have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's humble servant,  
Chief Moma of Mbu R.T.I.

This is to certify that the above has been written at the request of the petitioner and after it has been read and explained to him in his vernacular, he confirms that it contains nothing more than his authorities and expressions dictated to the writer.

Witnessed by: (Signed) .....Labah

Labah Public letter writing Company,  
No. 3063.

Fee charged for 5 copies  
£1 : (one pound)

C O P Y

From Moma Representing V.H. of  
Bamuchum, Ngemba N Area,  
Bamenda Division,  
Bamenda, 2nd January 1949.

His Honour The Chief Comm,  
Enugu Eastern Provinces,  
Thro' The Resident,  
Buea, Cameroons Province.  
Thro' The District Officer,  
i/c Bamenda Division,  
Bamenda.

Bamuchum - Bali Land Dispute.

Sir,

I have the honour most humble beg to forward this my humble petition before you for your kind consideration and reads as follows.

Your most humble petitioners grievances could not be immergined except one pays a visit to the land we cry for. I am sure that most of the Administrative officers who passed though our village will see the unjust claims of the Bali people on our mother land. We have been surrounded by the Balis and we have no way to go out for farming.

When we left Wedikum we settled on the present site. We were bound on the East by the Babetu people and the Bagangu on the West by the Bafawchu people, on the north by the Mankon and the Bamungen. In fact we were all from the same tribe and farmed generally without any demarcating boundaries.

After sometime the Balis came from the Chamber North with their selfish attitude and settled with the Balikumbat but with this they were driven by the Bali Kumbats by tribal war to Bafreng and from there they were allowed to where they are now by the Bamungens. The clever rogues remained peacefully with us but as they were nomads it appears they came into contact with the very first Europeans who came to the Cameroons and so when Dr. Zingraft came people were afraid to get near him and the only people who understood him were the Bali people. They then led them round the surrounding villages and for no proper cause but lack of understanding and misinterpretation by the Bali people who were then the only leading people. In reality, the Balis waged no direct war against any of the villages except the one they conduct to Bande but returned with Great losses. Four German Officers were killed and a very large number of the Bali people.

This wrong information and misinterpretation continued even up to

/the time the

the time the British took over and I am sure your Honour would agree with me that an stranger who goes to a strange country will find more pleasures with any body who can understand him and this is why the Balis gained the favours of the Germans. The Bali continued with their tricks to the British took over and the leading tribe occupying responsible post were the Balis. They first drove away the Babetus and then the Bamungens and then finally they came to use but there was a riot and one Administrative Officer came and coursed us to be arrested and while we were still under the imprisonment carns were made in our absence. When we returned we forwarded many petitions to the D.O. and the Resident but they were invalided and returned to use.

I am appealing to Your Honour that no proper boundary was made and this could have been admitted and Observed only if our witnesses had appeared and it should have been done in our presence. I agree to pay any sum chargable for the recording and survoing of this boundard.

With the above I have confidence that Your Honour would listen to the cries of his poor petitioner and cause the above boundary to be revised.

I have the honour to be,  
Sir,  
Your Humble Petitioner,  
Moma For V.H. Bamuchun.  
His thumb Print.

(Marked here)

This is to certify that the above has been written at the request of the petitioner and that after it has been read and explained to him in his vernacular he confirms that it contains nothing more than his authorities and expression dictated to the writer for the Chief Commissioner Enugu.

Wit.....

(Signed) Markus Tse

(Signed) ..... Labah  
Labah Public Letter Writing Co.  
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/From Chief

C O P Y

From Chief J. Boji of Mengen  
Muwa, F. Mbakurewan, of Bani,  
and followers, c/o Chief G.H.Mba  
of Batibo Mogamo Area,  
Bamenda Division, Cameroons,  
7th January, 1949.

To His Honour the Chief  
Commissioner, Eastern Provinces,  
Enugu, Through the Resident Buea  
Cameroons.

Your Honour,

May it please His Honour to read this humble petition of your  
most humble petitioners Chief J. Boji, F. Mbakurewan, and followers of  
Bani, who are induced by injustice to seek your timely assistance and  
redress which reads as followings:-

We have the honour to approach His Honour's most considerate and fatherly  
assistance, against the injustice and willfull ill-treatment actuated by  
the Chief of Bali against us. We beg to state in full before His Honour  
that although we are in Bali here ruling our own realy families, we are  
not members amongst the people of Bali who are justice strangers in this  
land. We are the rightful chiefs who had this land which is now called  
Bali Area, before the coming of the Bali people from Chamber. The Bali  
chief and his followers came from Chamber and met us in this land, and  
we received them in as strangers. The correct name given to this land,  
which is now called Bali, is Ntankah and Ntankah chiefs and their people,  
are members of the Widikum tribe, who orriginated from Tadkon in Batibo  
village, in the Mogamo Area. When the Bali people left Chamber and came  
here, we received them in as strangers. Since they came and met us in  
this land, we have not even step of this land, and stay somewhere else,  
but were all the times in our respective villages, ruling our own people,  
who are members of the Widikum tribe, including ourselves. Now, seeing that  
we are not from one family with the Bali people, we have written that the  
Chief Commissioner sees that a boundry be made between us and the Bali  
people, so that we follow our own brothers and our own family at Batibo  
Mogamo Area, where we can understand ourselves, and also stay peacefully  
as we were before, before the coming of the Bali people from Chamber.  
We have consider and see no reason why the government should mixst us  
with the Bali Chief and his people, when we are from a different tribe,  
that is Widikum tribe. We are from the family of the Widikum tribe,  
and it is good that the Government separate us from joining one court wit.

/the people

the people of Bali who are from Chamba tribe, and also are strangers who out to be under our rulings. We have seen that the Bali Chief is ill-treating us very much, by making his fellow men to enter into our own lands and start to occupy our farm lands with palm trees, Cola nuts trees and many other articles of the land which are our own belongings, and the reason of his doing so, we don't know. The Chief of Bali is forcing us to do free labour to him as his slaves, which we the right owners of the land so call Bali don't think or believe that people can forced again to do any free labour as slaves, at this present time of the British flag of freedom. Since our D.O.s have been saying that Bamenda is going to be divided into three divisions or so, so that each tribe have their own part, and also have their own treasury, we beg His Honour most humbly to see that a boundry settlement be made between us and the chief of Bali, and we shall all with our people who are from the Widikum tribe, follow our own family in Mogamo Area, where we can understand ourselves, and also our own native law and customs. We beg to state that most of the people in Bani area, are only members of the Widikum tribe, and we are their chiefs. We ourselves and also our people are not please to remain judging one court with Bali people who are from Chamber tribe, but to joined ourselves with Batibo Mogamo Areas who are our own brothers, and also our own tribe. The following are list of villages in Bani area, who are all family of the Widikum tribe;

(1) Modom, (2) Fong, (3) Mengen II, (4) Bosah, (5) Mbelu, and part of Mengenmbo. If all this are assessed and boundry made, how many Bali people will remain, as or since the Fon of Bali is saying that, all the people there are Balies? Even though, there are more strangers who are Frenchmen at Bali, and we don't think realy Balies can be counted or numbered 200 taxable men. If not because of the bad rulings of the ex-German Government, we would not have been paying our taxes at Bali, or even judging court at Bali, but in Mogamo Area, with our own family. The Bali people at the moment are saying that, they got the land from us through war, which are all false stories they are saying. We the rightful chiefs and also owners of the Ntankah land, don't know where about the Bali people's war with us took place. What we know is that they are strangers to us, and they have not atal wage any war against us since we received them in this land as strangers. We are ever ready to pay whatever sum the Chief Commissioner will charge us or ask us to pay for the survioring of our boundry with the Chamba men or the Bali, so that we follow our family.

/We greatly

We greatly bog the Chief Commissioner being the father to the fatherless, to see that a land boundry settlement be made between us and the Bali, so that we fall in Mogamo Area with our own people, to meet our other chiefs who are our own family and brothers, and we are ever ready to pay whatever sum will be charge for the survioring of the boundry between us, and the Balies. Since the British Government came out and native courts build in all areas and tribes in this Division, the Chiefs of other areas have been enjoying the money paid to court members, but we the owners of the land have not been enjoying the money paid in courts, or even called to sit court, to show that we are the rightful owners of the land, and our Quarter heads are gaining nothing from the native court, and the reason of these, we don't know.

We shall be gratefully, if His Honour will also consider that point, and some solutions given us, to know why we have not been siting court. Quarter heads and chiefs of other areas are receiving court siting fees, and we have not been receiving anything from the Bali native court, or even call to sit court, and gain what others are gaining.

We the chiefs of Ntankah pay tax, and only the chief of Bali is making use of the tax dash, and the reason of these, we can't tell. We therefore want to follow our own family who are the Widikum tribes where we will pay our taxes, and also gain tax dash, and also siting court, and geting court siting fees, as chiefs of other areas are getting, for we are not from one family with the Chamba tribe people, and they are cheating us in all this points because we are not from or in one family with them. We put out minds only to get a land survior, to have our boundry with the Bali Survioered, so that we follow the Widikum tribe being our own family. We are ready to pay the Survior's cost of survioring the land boundry, just after geting your kind reply.

We are waiting His Honour's most valuable reply,

We have the honour to be

Sir,

We are your most obediently and loyal servants,

- (1) Chief gacob Boji of Mengen Mewa, His X mark.
- (2) Chief Fonjengo Mbakurewan (Signed( illegible) for F. Mbakurewan
- (3) Fondam, Mengen Council his X mark
- (4) Ta-Fontham " " " X "
- (5) Bambod " " " X "
- (6) Sakaria Woliwumjiam " X "
- (7) Sukut Mengen Council " X "
- (8) M. Foton " " " X "
- (9) Libad Ndifon " " " X "

/Witnessed

Witnessed this 7th day of January, 1949, by:-

This is to certify that the above petition has been written in the request of petitioners Chief of J. Boji, Chief F. Mbakurewan, and followers of Bani, and after being written it has been read over to them in English, and also explained to them in vernacular, and they confirmed that the above contains nothing more than their authority and expressions dictated to the writer for the Chief Commissioner Eastern Provinces, Enugu, through the Resident Buea Cameroons. Written by N. S. F. M. Ndansi letter writer, Ibenn Mbunjei Village, Mogamo Area, Bamenda Division Cameroons.

(Signed) ... (illegible)

Written free of charge for the family

(Signed) ... (illegible)

C O P Y

From Moko in Guzang Village  
C/o Native Crt. Batibo  
Moghamo Area.  
Bamenda Division  
February, 4: 1949.

Through  
The Resident, C.P.  
The District Officer,  
Bamenda.  
To the Chief Commissioner,  
Eastern Province,  
Enugu.

May it please Your Honour:

Your humble servants, Village Head and Elders of Guzang, unanimously have the honour to repeat their petition sent to His Honour on the 28th of January, 1943, about the seizure of their land by the Balis. And His Honour replied us in his letter No. 19570/10 of 2nd August, 1943.

To the effect of that reply we petitioned to the District Officer, Bamenda, on the 21st November, 1943, as we were advised by His Honour to do. Our petition to the District Officer, Bamenda, became a dead one in his office up this day.

After several letters repeated with no replies, we again sent another one, dated the 25th of November 1943, to Chief Manga Williams for the same topic, and that also received no official attention.

2. Having waited for no replies in all the letters we did, on the 1st of January, 1949, we again sent another one to the District Officer, Bamenda Division, asking him to take up our long-standing case. In our great surprise, he unfavourably replied us in his letter No. 2221/23 of 12th January, 1949, with the saying that, as we were unable to take out an appeal since 1928, when the A.D.O. Mr. J.S. Smith made our boundary with the Balis and then approved by the Resident at the time, he therefore sees no reason why he can resurrect the case now.

3. Before laying the boundary in question, we begged the A.D.O. to come to our village first where we wanted to show him our farm land, the village and other economic trees and so that when making and laying the boundary he must know the distance from the village, he the A.D.O. refused to listen to us, and so too that when the A.D.O. asked us to be present how he was laying the boundary we refused to be present. After he finished his work, we wrote to the District Officer, Bamenda, against the boundary made. We were replied by the D.O. to wait and promised to come and

/inspectin



inspecting the boundary before he can see to our petition. In our believing that our petition will receive the D.O.'s attention, we bothered no more to make any move as the appeal now mentioned in this letter. As we heard nothing for a long time, hence we wrote to His Honour and all the sorts as aforementioned. We therefore feel and take it that our case is within time to be considered by the Authorities concerned.

Hoping that we have not petitioned in vain.

Your humble servants have the honour to be,  
etc. & etc.

(Signed) ----- (illegible)

Writer

Fee 8/- (Five Copies)

(Signed) Paul Mbekam Ndanji Potekal  
Folembo Tekom

/COPY

C O P Y

Mbu - (Bafawchu I),  
Ngemba Area,  
Bamenda Division,  
18th April, 1949.

The Chief Commissioner,  
Eastern Provinces,  
On Tour, Bamenda.

Your Honour,

MEU (Bafawchu I) - Bali Land Dispute.

I have the honour to tell Your Honour that I have written several petitions to you about the above land dispute but all were returned to me by the Administrative Officers for a reason I don't know till today. I believe that none of these petitions has reached your hand as no reply has been received from you about any of them. They have not sent any of them to His Honour because they are tied friends to Bali, and feared His Honour might review the case in my favour.

2. I reviewed this case to the Resident who came up and only reviewed the case in the Court in the Bamenda Station without reaching the land in dispute; when even the Native Court can not give judgment in a land case without inspecting the land in dispute. As he was also a friend to Bali chief and listened to the D.Os. he did not mind reaching the land.

3. As they so treated me so unkindly, I beg that His Honour should inspect the land in dispute; so as to see how I am really suspended on a hill without any farm, and hunger has killed most of my people. The distance from the Bamenda Station to my village where the boundary is is about 11 miles and His Honour can reach there and return same day.

4. The British Government decides cases according to justice but this particular one was decided just to please the other party. This is proved by paragraph 4 of Mr. Hunt's letter of 1921 in which he said "if the Bafawchu Valley is given to Bali Chief, he will be satisfied. Is the British policy to please one man by taking another man's thing by force and give to the other and let the owner of the thing to suffer? If so then there is no justice.

5. I attach herewith a copy of one of my petitions sent to His Honour since the 13th December, 1948, which has not been replied till today.

/6. I send

6. I send this with full hopes that His Honour will take the trouble to reach my village of 5 miles from Bali for the inspection of the land in dispute please.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

His Honour's Obedient Servant  
Chief Moma of Mbu R.T.I.

(Finger print  
marked here)

Witness to Mark \_\_\_\_\_

This is to certify that the above has been written in the request of the petitioner and after it has been read and explained to him in his vernacular, he confirms that it contains nothing more than his authorities and his expressions dictated to the writer and witnessed by Thomas Atanga of Mbu.

(Finger print  
marked here)

(Signed) ..... Labah

H.N. Labah letter Writing  
Company, No. 8663.  
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3/- (three shillings only)

C O P Y

Azzira (Abakpa) Strangers' Settlement on Mankon (Bande)  
Land: Payment of Taxes Through the Chief of Mankon, the  
Landlord to the Government.

PRECIS

The attached petition addressed to His Excellency the Governor of Nigeria by me, Fo Ndefru of Mankon (Bande)- Bamenda British Cameroons expresses my grievances concerning the administration of Abakpa (stranger Settlement) on Mankon land and humble cravance for rectification of the existing deplorable state of affairs. I am lossing a salary of £300 P.A. as a natural ruler of the Ngemba Native Authority Area as a quarter of this area has been made to be responsible not to me but to the District Officer directly through a chief of his own creation. Taxes are therefore paid directly to the D.O. and not through me. The prove of my landlordship over the whole land is borne out by the fact that my people defended it during the first and second Mankon-German Wars under Dr. Zintgraff and also during various intertribal wars.

The Sarkin Hausawa should attend my Village Council as other Quarter Heads do and not set up his own council. He should also sit in the Ngemba N.A. Court as an ordinary member to be consulted on points affecting Hausa and Fulani custom but not as a member of the Ngemba Native Authority.

Other Sarkins of the various Abakpas in the Cameroons particularly in this Division stand in this position: subordinate and pay their taxes through the landlord. D.O. Mr. Aston-Smith's letter No. N.A.1038/41 of 30/1/45 Para 6 refers. It will also satisfy me if names of the establishments in my area are qualified with Mankon and not Abakpa.

Fo Ndefru, His Right Thumb Impression

(marked here)

This is to certify that the above has been written at the request of the petitioner and that after it has been read and explained to him in Mankon, he confirms that it contains nothing more than his authorities dictated to the writer.

Wit.....

(Signed) ..... Labah  
By Labah Public Letter Writing Co.