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PETITION FROM MR. E.R. MOKEBA, FEDERAL PRESIDENT OF THE
CAMEROONS LIBERATION VANGUARD CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS
UNDER UNITED KINGDOM ADMINISTRATION

(Circulated in accordance with rule 85, paragraph 2 of the
rules of procedure of the Trusteeship Council)

The Federal President,
Cameroons Liberation Vanguard,
P.O. Box 33,
Victoria,
Southern Cameroons.

16th November, 1960

The Secretary-General,
United Nations Organisation,
New York.

Sir,

You will recall that in October last year, the General Assembly of the United Nations met in New York to decide on the future of the Southern Cameroons. At this meeting, which was attended both by the Premier of the Southern Cameroons, Mr. J.N. Foncha and the Leader of Opposition Dr. E.M.L. Endeley, it was decided that a plebiscite should be held in the territory and that the questions to be put to the people at the plebiscite should be:-

(a) Do you wish to attain independence by joining the independent Federation of Nigeria or

(b) Do you wish to attain independence by joining the independent Republic of Cameroun.

2. The issues before the peoples of the Southern Cameroons at the forthcoming plebiscite are thus clear cut and leave no room for any ambiguity. At the time of taking the resolution it was clear to every one what the position of the Southern Cameroons would be if the people chose to join the independent Federation of

Nigeria but since the position of the territory if it chose to join the Cameroun Republic was not clear, the United Nations decided that Cameroonians should be given a chance of forming an opinion about the government of the Cameroun Republic. Accordingly, the Trusteeship Council asked the administration to take appropriate steps to ensure that the people of the Territory were fully informed before the plebiscite, of the constitutional arrangements that would have to be made at the appropriate time for the decisions at the plebiscite.

3. His Honour the Commissioner of the Cameroons in his address to the House of Assembly during the budget session in March 1960, said amongst other things:-

".... my government has requested here Majesty's government in the United Kingdom to initiate discussions with the government of the Cameroun Republic with a view to determining what the constitutional, fiscal, economic and cultural position of the Southern Cameroons would be if it were to become part of the Cameroun Republic. My Ministers will take part in these discussions, and as the future of the Southern Cameroons is a matter of vital interest to all, my government proposes at the appropriate time to follow the precedents set at the London conferences and to invite representatives of the opposition parties to take part in them too"

None of the opposition parties in the Southern Cameroons is aware that Britain initiated any discussions with the government of the Cameroun Republic so that when the people came to vote at the plebiscite they would know exactly what they would be voting for if they chose to unify with the Cameroun Republic. On the contrary, the British and Southern Cameroons governments have shown considerable indifference to the issue. We are aware that a few Ministers of the K.N.D.P. visited Yaunde without official advisers (although the government appointed at the time an expert constitutional adviser in the person of Sir Sydney Phillipson) and in the end Mr. Foncha produced a document last month which he called "Outline proposals for a draft constitution for a federal united Kamerun Republic", a copy of which is attached. This nebulous document which was produced unilaterally by the KNDP and on the eve of the plebiscite makes it clear to any observer that unification with the Cameroun Republic is now impracticable. The document talks of gradual unification; in our view there can be nothing like gradual unification; after the plebiscite, Britain must hand over her sovereignty in the Territory either to Nigeria or the Kamerun Republic. The lateness in producing the document also makes it impossible for people to study and appreciate its full implications. However, we are convinced that it is a failure because Mr. Foncha himself has disowned it by his public utterances.

4. Mr. Foncha and his party have realised that the course of unification they chose is now impracticable and are now trying to wriggle out of it in a most dishonest and dishonourable manner. To this end he organised a delegation to London. Before leaving for London last week, he made the following statement to Reuters which is published in the Nigerian Daily Times of 8th November, 1960:-

"Mr. Foncha before leaving Buea for London said he would ask the United Kingdom government to transfer sovereignty to the Southern Cameroons immediately after next year's plebiscite (February 11th) if the people vote for independence within the Cameroons Republic. This means that after the plebiscite the Southern Cameroons would attain independence as a separate sovereign state pending the time when she would unify with the Cameroun Republic. This may take up to five years or more".

We are convinced beyond all doubt that this new move by Mr. Foncha is a complete distortion of the United Nations Resolution referred to earlier in this petition. In our view there can be no question of the Southern Cameroons attaining independence as a separate sovereign state; we are convinced that Mr. Foncha is merely going back to his old request for continued and modified trusteeship of this territory which he brought before the United Nations in October, 1959 and which the Assembly rightly rejected. He now tries to clothe his old request under the guise of independence in order to deceive the unwary, but those of us who are familiar with the trend of affairs here know fully well that any independence for the Southern Cameroons as a separate sovereign state would be a mere sham and would merely be entrenching us firmer in the clutches of British imperialism. To achieve his end Mr. Foncha is now leading a delegation to London which is dominated by his stooges and henchmen so that the world could be given the impression that Southern Cameroonians preferred independence rather than unify with Nigeria or the Cameroon Republic. In fact the British press are already making statements to that effect. Mr. Foncha is using his advantage as Premier of this territory, even though he commands no elected majority in the Assembly to confuse this territory and its people and with the subtle co-operation of Britain is endeavouring to make this territory stand as a separate unit so that Britain could achieve her imperialistic aims of establishing military and naval bases here. The Commissioner of the Cameroons and his Deputy have been shamelessly engaged in abortive discussions with responsible people in this territory to get the idea of independence for the Southern Cameroons as a separate sovereign state accepted

and the British soldiers in the territory have been indoctrinated to that effect and are now spreading the vicious propaganda all over. We have no other place to look for succor except to the United Nations and we pray that the United Nations should stand firmly by its resolution of October, 1959.

5. In summing up, we would like to suggest to the United Nations that the plebiscite for the Southern Cameroons should be called off and alternative:-

(a) of the United Nations Resolution i.e. independence within the Federation of Nigeria should be implemented forthwith for the following reasons:-

(a) A critical analysis of the Foncha/Ahidjo constitution shows very clearly that the second alternative to the United Nations Resolution of October 9th, 1959 has proved utterly incapable of implementation by the government of the Cameroun Republic.

Discussions of Government and Opposition Party leaders in the Southern Cameroons held recently have proved that the Government of the Cameroun Republic finds it very difficult if not impossible to:-

- (1) Provide for the defence of the Southern Cameroons.
- (2) Make available funds wherewith to run efficiently and effectively the government of the Southern Cameroons and
- (3) Assume financial responsibility even on an agency basis for the essential services of the Southern Cameroons such as Police, Customs, Labour, Posts and Telegraphs Geological Survey etc. which services are now being carried out by the government of the Federation of Nigeria.

In as much as the protagonists of alternative (b) of the United Nations Resolution of 9th October, 1959, namely, the Kamerun National Democratic Party have themselves admitted this impracticability of its implementation, we consider it not only morally wrong but grossly dishonest to require our people vote for this alternative at the plebiscite.

(b) The progress of the Southern Cameroons has long been deterred by its uncertain future and we feel very strongly that this state of affairs should not be allowed to continue any further than the period of one year allowed by the United Nations in October, 1959. This uncertainty not only scares away potential investors and foreign capital but leaves room for Britain to manoeuvre and to perpetrate her imperialistic policies in the territory.

Under no circumstances must our emancipation be postponed any longer; we must emphasize that the people of the Southern Cameroons want their independence now but such independence if it is to have any meaning should be with one of our big neighbours i.e. Nigeria or the Cameroun Republic which ever would be to our best advantage.

It has been shown beyond all doubt that an independent Southern Cameroons is an impracticable proposition.

I am, Sir,
Yours faithfully,
for and on behalf of C.L.V.,

(Sgd.) (Illegible)

E.R. Mokeba,
Federal President.

Copy to:

Hon. J.A. Wachuku,
Acting Nigerian Representative,
United Nations, New York.

The Secretary,
Afro-Asiatian States,
United Nations, New York.

The Secretary of States for the Colonies,
Colonial Office, London.

Mr. Krishna Menon,
Indian Delegation,
United Nations, New York.

The Editor,
West Africa _____ Orbit House
9 New Fetter Lane, London,

Reuter's Representative, Buea.

News Editor,
N.B.C., Lagos.

SOUTHERN CAMEROONS INFORMATION SERVICE, BUEA

Press Release No. 1025.

17th October, 1960.

REUNIFICATION OF SOUTHERN CAMEROONS WITH REPUBLIC OF CAMEROUN

RESOLUTION

Whereas by a resolution of the 14th Session of the United Nations a plebiscite will be held in February, 1961 to decide whether Northern and Southern British Cameroons will gain independence by joining the Federation of Nigeria or the Cameroun Republic;

And whereas in the event of the vote favouring the joining of the Cameroun Republic, the implementation of reunification on a federal basis adaptable to conditions peculiar to all sections of Cameroon cannot be automatic but gradual;

And whereas the delegations of the Government of Cameroun Republic and the Government Party in the Southern Cameroons reaffirm their peoples' strong desire to reunite as a nation, and the same leaders having held two previous discussions to initiate the constitutional nature of the Union;

Now, at their third meeting holding in Yaounde between the 10th and 14th October, 1960 resolved that the Outline draft proposals for a constitution in the event of unification be adopted.

OUTLINE PROPOSALS FOR A DRAFT CONSTITUTION FOR A
FEDERAL UNITED KAMERUN REPUBLIC

At the third meeting of the Representatives of the Government of the Republic of Cameroun and the Government Party in the Southern Cameroons to continue their discussions on a draft constitution for the Unification of the Republic of Cameroons and Northern and Southern British Cameroons the following declarations were made by Premier Foncha, President Ahidjo Head of the Cameroun Republic, and Mr. C. Assale, Prime Minister of Cameroun Republic:-

1. (a) That they intend to do everything possible (in their power) to implement the country-wide desire for Unification to which they have dedicated themselves.
- (b) Reaffirmed that the territories shall be unified as a federal, sovereign state outside the British Commonwealth and the French Community.

And agreed on the following draft Constitution:-

2. The Federation shall compose of the Republic of Cameroun and the Southern Cameroons. The two parties hope that Northern British Cameroons will join the Federation whether as a separate State or as a unit with the Southern Cameroons.

3. The main features of the constitution of the Federation of Kamerun States:

The Federation of Kamerun states shall be democratic, and freedom of worship, of speech of the press and movement shall be guaranteed in so far as these rights are exercised within the law of the Federation. The Federation shall have a common motto, national anthem and a national flag. All indigenous people in all the states shall have Cameroonian Citizenship.

4. Minimum Federal Subjects:

Citizenship
Civil Rights
National defence
Foreign Affairs
Higher Education
Immigration and Emmigration
Federal Budget
Posts and Telegraphs

The remaining subjects which are likely to fall within the power of the Federal Government will for the time being be legislated upon by the States.

5. The Legislature of the Federation:

There shall be two legislative Houses for the Federation - The National Assembly and the Senate.

The Federal Authority: The Supreme Authority of the Federal State shall be composed of - the Federal Executive with the President who is also the Head of the Federation, and the National Assembly.

Constitutional Safe-Guards: Certain federal Acts shall be enacted in such a way that the majority shall not impose on any state a measure which would be contrary to its interests.

In case of a conflict between a Federal law and a law of one state the Federal law shall supersede -

The states can legislate only on matters which do not fall within the Federal list. A Federal Tribunal shall arbitrate on conflicts arising between the states.

