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COUNCIL



GENERAL

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PETITION FROM CHIEF N. D. FONGUM

CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS UNDER BRITISH ADMINISTRATION

Note by the Secretary-General: In accordance with rule 85 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 Chief N. D. Fongum concerning the Trust Territory of the Cameroons under British administration.

COPY

The U.N.O.
Lake Success,
New York.

Chief N. D. Fongum,
The Fon of Widikum,
Mamfe Division
Br. Cameroons,
W.C.A.

Dear Sir,

I am the Chief of Widikum in Mamfe and my people have asked me to place this petition before you.

We, the Widikum people were at first paying tax to Bamenda District office. But when the government found that there was a very great difference in population between Mamfe and Bamenda districts, we, the mother village in Ngamba tribe, were cut off from Bamenda and put under Mamfe administration. We did not like this separation but because we were afraid to argue out the government and because we hoped that in the very near future when the population of Mamfe shall be great then we will safely be restored to our tribe. We have and are still having great difficulties in managing with the strange tribes into which the government has thrown us:- We must study their language in order to get our cases decided in the Native courts since the majority of the chiefs who preside the cases are Bayangi. We have to adopt certain native laws and customs from them in order to make ourselves understood by the majority. Consequently we have and are still losing many of our native laws and customs in the course of trying to understand and suit ourselves to the strange surrounding tribes in Mamfe District.

But now Mamfe has a dense population already, and to prove this fact, recent proposals had been made of cutting off part of Mamfe Division including us, Widikum and making this part a separate Division - "Overside Division", under which our administration would then be. It follows that Mamfe Division does no longer need us, Widikum to increase the number of tax payers in the district. And therefore we could safely be restored to Bamenda, where we will treat situations with our own tribe and reserve our Native laws and customs. We are the mother village in Ngamba tribe and the rest of the tribe is looking forward for the day when they will get us back. So we cry, that the

government should put us back under the same district administration with our tribe, i.e. in Bamenda.

We had place this petition before the Resident once but he said that unless the whole tribe makes a formal meeting and mutually agree that he should restore us, Widikua, to Bamenda, he won't do it. The consent of the rest of the tribe should not be asked because the government did not get their consent before cutting our Village away. In the same way the government can safely restore us without the consent of the tribe. And it so happens that there is no objection to it in the tribe. So, dear, Sir hear our cry and tell the government to re-unite us to our tribe under the same District.

Yrs. Sincerely

(Signed) Chief N. D. Fongum of WIDIKUM