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LETTER DATED 6 JULY 1976 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES, A.I., OF  
THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE IVORY COAST TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of the statement made by His Excellency Mr. Félix Houphouët-Boigny, President of the Republic of the Ivory Coast, following the broadcasting by Radio Conakry of an editorial concerning "aggression by mercenaries" which was allegedly being organized against Guinea from within the borders of Senegal and the Ivory Coast.

I should be most grateful if you would have this statement issued as a Security Council document.

(Signed) Koffi KOUAME  
Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.

Annex

Statement by His Excellency Mr. Houphouet-Boigny, President of  
the Republic of the Ivory Coast

Radio Conakry, in a broadcast heard in Dakar, states in an editorial that an act of aggression by mercenaries is being organized against Guinea from within the borders of Senegal and the Ivory Coast.

We have become accustomed to hearing fanciful accusations of this kind from Guinea, particularly on the eve of summit meetings of OAU.

Senegal, against which similar charges have been made, will unquestionably feel bound to make a reply in order to put an end to accusations which lack all foundation.

As regards the Ivory Coast, it is scarcely necessary to recall that our only concern is the economic and social development of our country and that our entire civilian and military population is mobilized for that purpose. Lacking, as we do, sufficient manpower for the task of national construction, at which we have been working tirelessly since our attainment of independence, how could we be frivolous and foolish enough to divert some of our manpower to goals other than development?

I appeal to all ambassadors accredited to the Ivory Coast, a free country where they can move about during the daytime and at night without obtaining prior authorization, to see for themselves whether or not Mr. Sékou Touré's allegations have any foundation.

I call upon the United Nations and OAU to dispatch missions as soon as possible to verify the accuracy or inaccuracy of the accusations made against the Ivory Coast by Guinea.

Finally, I challenge Mr. Sékou Touré to prove that there are "mercenaries" ready to attack Guinea along our common frontier or being trained somewhere in our national territory. Indeed, I call upon him to send units of his army and police to the Ivory Coast side of our common frontier to determine whether any so-called "mercenaries" are to be found in the Ivory Coast.

Since we are in the middle of the rainy season, these mercenaries would presumably be in camps. It should therefore not be difficult for Mr. Sékou Touré's men to find them there. We state once again that since we are devoting ourselves entirely to the development of our country, we have no policy other than one of living in peace with all the peoples of the world and, in particular, with our neighbours.

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Radio Conakry also mentions a certain Camara who is "in charge of recruiting mercenaries among Guinean officials who have fled their country".

Once again Mr. Sékou Touré shows how frivolous his allegations are. Here is the truth: in 1963, Mr. Camara, the nephew of Lamad Camara, an Ivory Coast Deputy originally from Guinea who has fought beside us for 30 years - I trust that we will be pardoned for pointing out that the Ivory Coast is the only African country which has persons from other African countries in responsible political and administrative posts - joined his uncle in the Ivory Coast after graduating from the Fréjus military academy as an officer. After asking to serve in the Ivory Coast army, he was posted to Bouaké, in Daloa. He served in his various assignments with the same devotion and loyalty as other Ivory Coast officers.

It is absurd to contend that this officer could, under the flag of the Ivory Coast, permit himself to engage in the training of Guinean "mercenaries" with a view to launching an attack on their country.

If the 300,000 Guineans living in the Ivory Coast wished to invade their country, they could certainly present a threat. However, they are taking part on the same basis as our own farmers in the task of national construction. They never have and never will take advantage of the Ivory Coast's hospitality against Guinea, which is a fraternal country - and I emphasize, a fraternal country.

As I have stated on a number of occasions, there are no disputes outstanding between Guinea and the Ivory Coast, and this has been explained many times to our brother, Sékou Touré, particularly at Faranah, where we went to meet him.

The only point at issue between us and Mr. Sékou Touré has been his request for the extradition of four Guineans, one of whom, incidentally, recently died.

We, in a country like the Ivory Coast, where not a drop of blood has ever been shed, cannot deliberately hand over men against whom accusations are being made in the same frivolous manner that they are being made against us.

We reaffirm that we bear no hostility towards Guinea. We have stood together with Sékou Touré in struggling against colonialism and for political independence. Economic independence now requires that Africans maintain a united front.

Although politics may occasionally separate us, all Africans must nevertheless stand shoulder to shoulder with a common, shared faith in the struggle to free our continent from the yoke of under-development.

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