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PETITION FROM MR. SILAS CHARLES BAYIHA YEBGA CONCERNING THE
CAMEROONS UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION

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of procedure of the Trusteeship Council)

Bayiha Yebga Silas Charles,
Planter at Mode-Kumul Village,
Hagbe Canton,
Eséka Subdivision, Sanaga-Maritime Region,
Kamerun.

Mode-Kumul, 23 November 1956

Subject: Petition

Immediate Unification and Independence of Kamerun.

To the Secretary-General of the United Nations, New York.

Sir,

I am writing you to explain the following: our common desire is nothing but the immediate Unity and Independence of Kamerun, which was placed under the international trusteeship of the United Nations on 13 December 1946, the date on which France undertook to administer Kamerun for ten years in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

It is therefore regrettable that Kamerunian blood was shed on 25-27 May 1955 by Roland Pré, the then High Commissioner in Kamerun. A funereal calm reigned in all the villages - even the birds, terrified by rifle shots, no longer sang. Soldiers recruited in Chad on the authority of Roland Pré, who had been armed with special powers by Teitgen, visited the villages, burning the concessions, looting the belongings of the indigenous inhabitants, and arbitrarily seizing and torturing the inhabitants. During this colonialist fury our compatriots were

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arbitrarily arrested, beaten to death or unjustly thrown into prison, where they are suffering to this day. It is for the just cause of loving their country that our comrades are so severely punished. A large part of the population, threatened and hounded, took refuge in the forest, in the hollows of trees, or in the bush, where they live miserably to this day and where it is bitterly cold. What sufferings for the Kamerunians! It was during this reign of terror that I was dismissed from the Water and Forestry Department by the colonialists of Bertoua, which is 500 kilometres from my village, because I upheld the legitimate rights of my dear country; I was beaten almost to death, stripped of my belongings, and sent from prison to prison, accompanied by two armed Kamerunian guards, until I reached Eséka, where I was beaten again and then released on a whole set of conditions. The colonialist persecution is becoming more active day by day; they have manufactured a Decree of 13 July 1955 dissolving the national and progressive Kamerunian movements which the indigenous inhabitants themselves created and supported.

Considering that this decree, and its application to Kamerun, is contrary to the United Nations Charter and is not even applicable to the colonies, we demand its abrogation. We call for the liberation of all the political prisoners, in a word, a full and complete amnesty.

Loi-cadre

The loi-cadre manufactured by the French colonialists in 1955 is only another name for the French Union - which was rejected by the United Nations General Assembly at its seventh session in 1952 - as the French representative himself affirmed when he stated: "After obtaining its independence Kamerun will decide whether or not it wishes to be integrated into the French union."

Yet Kamerun falls under Article 76 b of the United Nations Charter, whose principles the Kamerunian people have translated into the Joint Proclamation of 22 April 1955. It is therefore regrettable to find the French Government refusing to this day to recognize the independence of Kamerun.

The elections which the French colonialists are now attempting to hold in the Territory would lead Kamerun into the colonial empire if the results are favourable for them. We therefore protest vigorously against these elections, in spite of the

fact that the French Government has already firmly resolved to force the indigenous population to participate in them so that it will, as usual, profit from them.

Conclusion

In spite of all our sufferings, we Kamerunian patriots reaffirm the whole of the Joint Proclamation of 22 April 1955. On the basis of this symbolic action, we are confident that the eleventh session of the United Nations General Assembly will recognize the Independence of Kamerun by sending us an honest and competent commission elected from the Assembly to assist in the establishment of a new Kamerunian State.

We are also confident that in spite of the colonialist oppression all Kamerunians will abstain from the coming elections.

The Kamerunian people worthy of that name adopted a "black crab on a red field" as their national emblem, at a public meeting in the town of Yaoundé on 22 May 1955.

On 17 October 1955 the Visiting Mission headed by Dorsinville arrived in the Territory, a Mission in which the entire Kamerunian people had confidence, knowing that it was intended to take the place of a referendum. In accordance with this conviction of the people, the Kamerunian masses turned out to meet the Mission - which was guided through the Territory by Government representatives alone - at every meeting place in order to express their wishes.

On 7 November 1955 the Mission arrived at Eséka, where a large crowd was waiting; in order to express its wishes, in conformity with Article 76 b of the Charter, a banner was unfurled before the United Nations delegates bearing the words: "Immediate Unification and Independence, no integration with the French Union". Petitions submitted to the Mission by Kamerunians worthy of the name were rejected; this dishonest action took place in all the centres. Nevertheless the Kamerunian national emblem had flown that day.

We humbly request the United Nations to grant a hearing to the representatives of the national and progressive Movements of Kamerun at the eleventh session of the Assembly.

I have the honour to be, etc.

(Signed): Bayiha
