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TWO PETITIONS CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION,  
REGARDING THE DENIAL OF A PASSPORT TO A CAMEROONIAN STUDENT HOLDING  
A FELLOWSHIP FOR STUDY IN THE USSR

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

Yédé Samuel Godefroy  
Foyer des Etudiants Camerounais,  
21 Boulevard Montmartre, Paris 2e.

Paris, 10 September 1958

Subject: Request for assistance in obtaining a passport

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

Sir,

In your letter of May 1957 you confirmed that the Soviet Government had granted me a scholarship; indeed, I was to have left for the Soviet Union at the beginning of September.

Although I have tried every possible means, I have not yet been able to obtain a passport with which to go to the Moscow Medical Institute, where I have already been expected for a year.

- (a) I have consulted the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- (b) I have consulted the Head of the Cameroonian Government.
- (c) I have consulted the Minister of Education in the Cameroons on the subject, but I have not yet obtained any satisfaction.

I am now in Paris, where I do not know anyone and have no work; what help can I expect, except from death? No emergency loan and no satisfaction; I am starving...

I hope that out of the well-known kindness of your heart you will take special account of my piteous plight and help me to obtain the passport which will enable me to take advantage of my scholarship.

Hoping for a favourable reply,

I have the honour to be, etc.

(Signed) illegible

Union nationale des Etudaints camerounais, (UNEC)  
21 Boulevard Montmartre, Paris

Tel. Richelieu 63-08, 62-41

Paris, 20 October 1958

Reference No. 5871/ACE/AI

The Executive Committee of the Union Nationale des Etudaints Kamerunais (UNEK)

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

Sir,

We have the honour to approach you with a request concerning the scholarships offered by Member States to under-developed countries under United Nations General Assembly resolutions 557 (VI) and 753 (VIII).

A number of scholarships were made available to students from Trust Territories, under the assistance granted by the United Nations to under-developed countries; Kamerunian students could therefore benefit by them.

But the French Government, which is responsible for administering the Trust Territory of Eastern Kamerun, kept absolutely silent about these offers of scholarships. It was then that our National Union undertook to bring them to the knowledge of our students.

Scholarships were subsequently granted to some of our compatriots. One of them, comrade Efa François, who was in France when his scholarship was granted and whose passport was still valid, was able to go to the Soviet Union and is now studying at Moscow University.

As the others were in Kamerun when the USSR scholarships were offered to them, they were refused passports and visas, for no valid reason.

One of them, Mr. YEDE Samuel Godefroy, managed to escape from Kamerun and has been in France since 15 August 1958. Despite all the representations made by the Soviet Embassy to the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. YEDE's application for a passport is still being met with a categorical refusal.

We give you below a chronological summary of the representations made by Mr. YEDE.

1. 15 May 1957: While still in Kamerun, Mr. Yédé received letter reference TR-154 dated 30 April 1957 from the United Nations. This letter, signed by Mr. P. Cohen, Under-Secretary for Trusteeship, informed him that the USSR Ministry of Higher Education had granted him a scholarship at the Moscow Medical Institute from the beginning of the scholastic year 1957-1958.

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2. 3 July 1957: Mr. Yédé went to the National Security Department of Kamerun, where he applied for a passport.

3. The Kamerun Security Department issued a categorical and unconditional refusal of his application for a passport.

4. 28 February 1958: The Soviet Embassy in Paris informed the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the difficulties experienced by comrade Yédé and asked it to intervene in obtaining him a passport and a French visa.

5. Despite all the representations made by Comrade Yédé and by the Soviet Embassy, the French Government remained inexorable.

6. Then Mr. Yédé secretly left Kamerun and, after a series of adventures, arrived in France on 15 August 1958 and contacted both the Soviet Embassy and our Union Nationale des Etudiants.

During the more than two and a half months that Comrade Yédé has been in Paris, all kinds of representations have been made to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, but all in vain.

We would respectfully draw your attention to this regrettable situation and, in particular, to its effects on the training of personnel for the under-developed country of Kamerun.

We think that this arbitrary action by the French Government is a very dangerous preliminary to the future of the Kamerunian people and we consider it the more surprising in that France itself, with tis age-old culture, sends students to the Soviet Union every year.

We would also draw your attention to the fact that this is not the first time that the Administering Authority for Eastern Kamerun has deliberately flouted the authority of the United Nations.

We therefore beg you to use your high authority to ensure that a passport is issued to Mr. Yédé without delay, in order that he may go to his place of study immediately.

We have the honour to be etc.,

For the Executive Committee,

(Signed) illegible

Joseph A. Sendé  
Vice-Chairman in charge of  
International Affairs

[Seal]

/...

Yédé Samuel Godefroy,  
21 Boulevard Montmartre, Paris 2e

Paris, 25 October 1958

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

Sir,

I am most grateful for the copies of the decision concerning my scholarship which you sent me recently.

But the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which had asked me for the decision concerning my scholarship (or even a copy of it), in order to issue a passport to me, still does not wish to give me satisfaction.

Since 3 July 1958 I have been applying for a passport, both in the Cameroons and in France, but the authorities remain adamant. I even asked for an interview with the Prime Minister of the Cameroonian Government last month when he was here in Paris (with a view to finding out why he refuses me a passport), but his only response was silence, silence and nothing but silence.

But the fact is that I am living here in Paris (where I do not know anybody) without any help:

(a) I have asked for an emergency loan from the French and Cameroonian Governments but nothing has come of it.

(b) The winter is coming on, I have nothing to protect me from the cold and no means of obtaining food.

I am at a loss to know what to do, since I cannot go to the USSR to attend an establishment where I am expected, for lack of a passport.

I beg you, Sir, out of the well-known kindness of your heart, to use your good offices to ensure that a passport is issued to me as soon as possible.

In anticipation of a favourable reply from you and hoping that you will ask the permanent representative of the USSR to renew my scholarship (telling him about the difficulties which have hitherto prevented my departure), I have the honour to be etc.,

(Signed) illegible