



# UNITED NATIONS TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL



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## FIVE PETITIONS CONCERNING LEGAL PROCEEDINGS TAKEN AGAINST CERTAIN CAMEROONIAN STUDENTS RESIDING IN FRANCE

(Circulated in accordance with paragraph 5  
of the annex to resolution 1713 (XX))

1. "We have the honour to express our alarm about the extreme gravity of the situation in Kamerun, with the extension of the repressive measures taken by the legal and police authorities against Kamerunian nationalists residing in France.

"This latter aspect of the repression made its appearance at the beginning of this year, when on 13 January the residence of comrade Pierre Bougha in Paris was searched; the search was followed by the withdrawal of his scholarship and threats that he would be forcibly repatriated and sent to the concentration camps in Sanaga-Maritime. It was only the vigilance of African and French students and French and African progressive organizations which prevented the French colonialists from carrying out those measures to the full.

"On 7 July 1958 it was the turn of our Toulouse comrades, Nzié Félix and Ndoh Michel, to be subjected to the same harassing measures (searching of homes and persecution by the police), just at the time when they were to take their examinations.

"At the present time Paris has again become the scene of these police operations. On 22 August comrades Gabriel Ablolo, Benoit Balla, Joseph Etoundi and Jean Gwodog were searched and taken by force to the police station, without any warrant for their arrest. The house searches themselves were characterized by serious irregularities: removal of personal and family correspondence and of books (which are to be found in all the Paris bookshops) which had nothing to do with the reason for the search, which only concerned their nationalist activities."  
(Petition No. 1)

2. "Since June 1958 there has been an intensification of the repressive measures by the administering authorities in Kamerun. This reappearance of repression did

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not take long to reach Kamerunian student circles in France. For example, comrades Ndoh Michel and Nzié Félix, two students in Toulouse, were searched and interrogated on Monday, 7 July 1958. At the present time these comrades are being indicted on a charge of endangering the internal security of the State and reviving a disbanded league." (Petition No. 2)

3. "On behalf of our Branch I respectfully bring to your attention some of the very grave facts which have just occurred in connexion with two of our comrades - Ndoh Michel and Nzié Félix. On 7 July we learned that the French police had searched their homes and had even taken Nzié Félix by force to police headquarters although they had no warrant for his arrest. My comrades are to be charged with 'reviving a disbanded movement' (meaning the UPC) and 'endangering the internal security of the State'. We protest most strongly against these methods, which prove once again the confusion of the French Government and its Cameroonian officials in face of our national movement. The reasons given are ridiculous, to say the least. While admitting that our comrades have revived a 'disbanded movement', the Decree of 13 July 1955 dissolving the UPC applies only to territories coming under the Ministry of the Colonies; nowhere is it stated that the movement is prohibited on metropolitan territory. As regards the endangering of the 'internal security of the State', we may ask which State this means - the French State or 'the Trust State of the Cameroons'. These measures of which the students are victims are a daily repetition of what thousands of patriots are undergoing in our country, hunted down in their villages or offices and forced to take to the maquis. You realize, sir, that we are more and more losing confidence in the Trusteeship Power, which is proving incapable of improving the political atmosphere in the Cameroons in accordance with the Trusteeship Council's recommendations." (Petition No. 3)

4. "Deciding to go all out, the colonialists are now extending their policy of terror to the Kamerunians residing in France. Yesterday comrades Nzié Félix and Ndoh Michel were indicted for endangering the internal security of the State by their nationalist activities. Their homes were searched by the police and comrade Nzié was dragged off to the police-station by force, without any warrant for his arrest." (Petition No. 4)

5. "The Executive Committee of the Union Nationale des Etudiants Camerounais (UNEC) and the Executive Committee of the Fédération des Etudiants d'Afrique Noire en France cry out urgently to the people of France and all the peoples of the world to draw their attention to the political situation in Kamerun, which is becoming more tragic each day, and to the serious consequences resulting from it, and to the threat which it represents to Kamerunian and African students in France.

"On 7 July 1958 the French police, acting on letters rogatory from the examining magistrate of Eséka (Kamerun),, searched the home of two Kamerunian students in Toulouse, Mr. Nzié Félix (Veterinary school) and Mr. Ndoh Michel (law) and took away all their documents and working material; at the same time they took one of them, Mr. Nzié Félix, away by force, without any warrant for his arrest, and he had to spend more than twelve hours at the police-station.

"The Executive Committees of the UNEC and the FEANF consider this measure particularly grave and dangerous, for it is not the first time that the police have searched the homes of Kamerunian students and everyone knows how far such measures can go. Indeed, on 13 January 1958 our comrade Bougha Pierre was actually apprehended by the police right in the work room at the Paris medical school. He was arrested and taken by force to the police station and a few hours later his room in the Overseas France building at the Cité Universitaire in Paris was systematically ransacked in his presence with the complicity of the bursar. Documents and working material were taken away, including his personal correspondence. This time the police were again acting on letters rogatory of an examining magistrate in Kamerun.

"Given the ever-increasing gravity of these arbitrary measures against Kamerunian students, it is not out of place to point out that this policy of muzzling and stifling freedom of expression among Kamerunian students dates from the massacres of May 1955.

"It is since this time that the Kamerunian students have publicly proclaimed that their place was not beside the French colonialists and their Kamerunian henchmen, who are exploiting their own people, but beside the people forced to take to the maquis after the arbitrary dissolution of the Union des Populations du Cameroun (UPC), the Jeunesse démocratique du Cameroun (JDC) and the Union démocratique des Femmes camerounaises (UDEFEC), by the Decree of 13 July 1955 in

the region under French domination, and of 13 May 1957 in that under British domination.

"Let us remember that the massacres of Kamerunian patriots in May 1955, the victims of which are estimated by the official Press at 5,000, the dissolution of the UPC and the other political organizations mentioned above, the legal proceedings etc. tended to create a political vacuum which was to be filled by the present puppet institutions: 'Trust State', 'Legislative Assembly' and 'Government' of the Kamerun through the electoral masquerade of 23 December 1956. With the almost unanimous support of the Kamerunian people for the vanguard movement of the UPC, the Union Nationale des Etudiants Camerounais and the FEANF reacted vigorously against this act of force and sent a delegate, Mr. Osendé Afana, a law student, to defend their position before the Fourth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly in the autumn of 1956. Since that time there have been withdrawals of scholarships and vacation allowances, refusals to issue passports to Kamerunian students receiving international scholarships, withdrawals of subsidies from the UNEC, threats to close the headquarters of this Association, summonses, a demand by 'Prime Minister' Mbida during the interview of 13 September 1957 that the Executive Committee of UNEC should through the Press publicly repudiate its former position, especially that disputing the validity of the elections, the massacres of 23 December 1956 in the Kamerun and the legality of the institutions arising from those elections." (Petition No. 5)

<u>Petitioner</u>	<u>Date of Petition</u>	<u>Dispatched from</u>
1. Executive Committee of the <u>Union des Populations du Cameroun</u> , French branch	1.9.58	Paris
2. Mr. Ndougo-Diyé, 11 Rue du Languedoc, Toulouse, France	9.7.58	Toulouse
3. <u>Union Nationale des Etudiants Camerounais</u> , Toulouse branch	12.7.58	Toulouse
4. <u>Union des Populations du Cameroun</u> , Toulouse local Committee	8.7.58	Toulouse
5. Executive Committees of the <u>Union Nationale des Etudiants Camerounais</u> and the <u>Fédération des Etudiants d'Afrique Noire en France</u>	12.8.58	Paris