

UNITED NATIONS TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL



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UNSIGNED PETITION FROM THE POPULATION OF BAKOUM CONCERNING THE CAMEROONS UNDER FRENCH ADMINISTRATION

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the rules of procedure for the Trusteeship Council)

Bakoum, 22 November 1954

The Chairman of the Fourth Committee
Ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly
New York

Sir,

We, the people of Bakoum, having found that our misfortunes are the result of the colonialists' manoeuvring to obscure the unassailable principles of the UNITED NATIONS CHARTER in the Territory of the CAMEROONS, throw ourselves at the feet of your august Assembly to beg for relief. Our situation is ominous. North, south, east and west we see attempted murder, intentional assault and battery with fatal results, and mass arrest and imprisonment inflicted by the representatives of France in the Territory of the Cameroons upon the indigenous inhabitants because we are determined to claim our lawful rights. The headquarters of the movement have just been entered and searched; the wife and sister of our comrade Matip are being illegally detained at Police Headquarters by the French authorities which, for lack of grounds, claim to be looking for a lost document that only the leaders of the UPC are suspected of taking.

Our comrade, Kingué Abel, has been the victim of unlawful prosecution; his father's home was unlawfully entered during the night of 26 October 1954 by representatives of the French Government in the CAMEROONS. The purpose of all such brutalities is to intimidate the population, who must opt for the popular referendum. All these unlawful acts were committed in order to put obstacles in the way of Kingué, who is to state our views to the Fourth Committee of the ninth

session of the United Nations General Assembly. Greatly disturbed, the colonialists made an attack with armed troops on the crowd attending a meeting held on private premises at Douala on 7 November 1954. There are many such instances, and they affect so many people that the slightest delay in remedying the situation will lead to the extermination of the Cameroonian people. The situation is further aggravated by the use of force against well-behaved persons.

In the Bamileké Region the few trees which have long sheltered the population from the wind have now been declared classified forest. As a result of this our compatriots are haled before the courts and sentenced to heavy fines, imprisonment and payment of costs consuming the few pence they have, which, in any case, would be quite inadequate to keep their families while the father is in prison. The family, deprived of its land and means of support, is left to starve and soon succumbs. In our considered opinion, based on the facts, it is impossible to establish a forest reserve in the Bamileké Region, not only because the Region is densely populated but also because much of it is grassland.

This is really a system instituted in the Region by the colonialists to reduce the density of population. For when we spoke of the referendum, owing to the fact that the inhabitants of this Region feel some veneration towards their Chiefs, these settlers reposed great hopes in Kamadjou Daniel, the so-called Bazuh Chief, a dogged instrument of colonialist corruption. Since the people rebelled against Kamadjou because he supported the French Union, especially in the April 1954 election, terror has been spread abroad in our Region to intimidate us so that we will not vote for the popular referendum.

This is a small example which we have taken from among many in support of our statements. We have the honour to be, etc.

Bakoum, 22 November 1954

The people of Bakoum in general meeting
on 22 November 1954.
