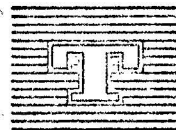


UNITED NATIONS

TRUSTEESHIP  
COUNCIL



Distr.  
GENERAL

T/PET.11/505  
6 January 1955  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

PETITION FROM MR. ABID BEN AWAD EL JABIRI AND OTHERS CONCERNING  
SOMALILAND UNDER ITALIAN ADMINISTRATION

(Circulated in accordance with rule 85 and supplementary rule F of the  
rules of procedure for the Trusteeship Council)

Note by the Secretariat: This communication was  
transmitted to the Secretary-General by the United  
Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in  
East Africa.

SOMALILAND

Communication

from

Abid ben Awad el Jabiri

Dated 30 September 1954

To the Visiting Mission of the United Nations.

I the undersigned am the chief of the share cultivations of Dashiq Shammama. I have spoken previously to the Mission in Margharita about this canal. The Government said to the people: "We wish to make this canal an efficient canal, to bring water into the cultivations and out again into the river. We are asking you to help the Government." The chief agreed to this proposal, and we supported the Government and paid 5,000 somalos to the Resident, Signor Baldeli, and the chief of the farm (Comandatore Berili). When the work on the canal was finished, the Resident showed us a document and said to us "Sign this". We asked, "What is written in it?" He answered, "The taxes for building the canal". The amount was 20,000 somalos. We would not sign it. The canal had been there already; the Government merely added a gate to it. At the time the Mission arrived the stream rose and the water flowed into the canal although the

gate was closed. That is a clear proof that the canal is not in proper order.

We then brought a case before Mr. Beli, who was then commissioner, on the ground that water came through the gate when it was closed. He said that was the business of the chief of the farm, Mr. Cesari. The Commissioner said to us: "I am speaking for the chief of the farm." Then we approached him again, and he said to us, "The chief is busy with the bananas"; for the boat was standing and he was licensing bananas. "But," he added, "here is a paper; show it to one of the Italians and he will shut the gate for you." We went to the Italian, who was working on the canal bank at the village of Nagtaghur and Tarda. He came to us on the other side of the canal and asked "Whose work was this?" We told him, "The previous commissioner and the previous chief." He said to us, "They wanted to destroy your fields. We cannot see to the gate now, as the water is in the canal, and even so it is flowing."

The Italian spoke the truth when he said that Baldeli and the chief Berili wished to ruin our fields. The members of the Mission saw for themselves how the crops were under water and how much food, sesame, cotton and other crops the people lost. The loss was caused by the Government, and especially by the previous commissioner and chief. At the present time the water has come into the fields and ruined our fields, which are submerged, as the Mission saw.

We now ask the United Nations to give us justice against the previous commissioner and chief and make them compensate us for our loss due to the flooding, for they were to blame for all this. The best proof is that in 1952-53 they gave us an order to sell our cotton for 75 centesimi, less than one somalo. After that one of the Italians came and bought cotton from some of the people for one somalo per kilo; and the previous commissioner and chief sentenced the people who had sold cotton to the buyer to pay a fine to the Government for doing so. But the buyer was buying under a licence from the Government in the market.

We also heard that the previous commissioner, Baldeli, is being sent back by the Government to Margharita, because his friends the Italian farmers request his return there as commissioner because he impoverished the inhabitants, and the partners of the Dashiq Shammama fields work for the Italians and receive 1.50 somalos a day for men and 1 somalo for women. This is the whole reason:

it is all due to the former commissioner, because he ruined our canal so that we should have to work for his friends in that way. The partners are numerous and are registered with the Government and the chief of the farm; they are poor and indigent, orphans and women; they number about 200 persons. Most of them work for the Italians, for our fields have become a river, as the members of the Mission saw for themselves.

We ask the United Nations to restore to us some of our money, so that we may work our own fields and that you will take them away from the Government and give us relief, and that the gate of the canal may be official property through your favour. Previously we used to irrigate our fields with the canal, when it had no gate; we used to irrigate as we pleased and everyone had enough. Now the Government has destroyed us and abandoned us, except for your help. Without it we are so much rubbish, to be burnt up. We know that we have nothing except by the grace of the United Nations, but through it we have gained many rights, and this canal is the greatest of all rights, for all the partners are orphans and women and poor folk, and are even now waiting anxiously for your reply. We pray Allah the Generous to grant our request; Amen.

The Government told us that if we would support the canal we should get three crops a year. We were very pleased; and when the river rose we were glad, for the canal had a gate and we could close the gate when we cut our crops. But the water has flooded us and covered all our crops; and all this is due to the Government and we are in a most miserable condition because of this well-known canal, the canal of the share cultivations. We beg the United Nations that this canal may be made to work properly, so that all the people may praise the United Nations and its mission for their enquiry and their care for us. We thank you most earnestly.

(Signed) Abid ben Awad  
Chief of the canal of the  
associated cultivations  
30 September 1954

A list of 48 names follows.

-----