

UNITED NATIONS

TRUSTEESHIP
COUNCIL



Distr.
GENERAL

T/PET.11/440
24 August 1954
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

PETITION FROM MR. ABOL RIZAH HAGG AND OTHERS CONCERNING
SOMALILAND UNDER ITALIAN ADMINISTRATION

(Circulated in accordance with rule 85 and supplementary rules F and L
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 Advisory Council for the Trust Territory
of Somaliland under Italian Administration.

COMMUNICATION FROM ABOL RIZAH HAGG

To the Advisory Council for Somaliland
Mogadishu

We the workers of Kisimayu submit to you this petition. We had submitted a petition but it did not include all our complaints; and we must tell you that the result of our complaints has only been detrimental to us because we have obtained no advantage therefrom but have suffered oppression and loss of property. The Italian Administration in our country rules over us like a prison governor and its regime is one of violent oppression. This is evidenced by the fact that if we begin to act it uses military forces against us to guard us as if we were imprisoned in jail and acts as though we were unable to demand our rights from the Advisory Council. Every time that we approach the companies that work with the Administration and ask them if they desire good co-operation between us they reply that the Administration may give orders to us as it wishes. If we approach the Administration we are told that the former Administrator, Mr. Fornari, had laid down the laws in 1951 and they cannot be set aside. You have told us that the Government acts fairly towards us but we have found that it desires only to destroy the Somali people and prosper the Italian people.

We have also asked the Administration for our rights and have urged them to treat black and white and Italian and Somali on a footing of equality. They

replied in the negative saying that our rights vis-à-vis the Italian Government were only as laid down by the former Administrator and included a wage rate of 3 somalos daily and a provision that a person who is injured at work should have no right to compensation. Now there are many such injured people among us at the moment. When we pointed this out they replied asking why there were no complaints from other towns and whether the injuries among them were greater than among us. Because of our activity they want to get us completely in their power. We ask you to tell us whether the laws are agreed on between you and the Italian Administration or whether they are imposed only by the latter.

We also inform you that on 2nd May when trouble occurred between the workers and the firm of Gallotti we approached the Administration. The Administrator gave us no answer but told the manager of the firm to do as he liked. The latter stated that he did not want any Somalis and invited Italian sailors from the ship to come and work with him giving them 10 somalos an hour where we were receiving only 40 cents an hour. Such an action is quite inadmissible.

You wanted evidence from us: this is our evidence and more. We say to the Advisory Council that the town of Mogadishu is not the only one to be considered, for the United Nations has sent to all the towns of Somaliland in order to distinguish the oppressor from the oppressed. We ask you to deign to visit the province of Kisimayu and acquaint yourselves with our conditions. If you come among us make inquiries of any of the oppressed people instead of talking with the Administration. We emphasize that the Administration in the Lower Juba is seeking to destroy us before the expiry of the ten years which were fixed for us by the United Nations. So we ask you to come to our country and see whether what we say is true or false.

The Administration in the Lower Juba is determined that the Somalis should have no rights. Famine is rife in the country and the people cannot obtain clothes and cannot rest and are not satisfied.

We stress on you that the strife between the workers and the Italians is violent and we are greatly oppressed. You are the witness between the Italians and the Somalis. We the workers of Kisimayu tell you that we cannot rest by night nor be awake by day because of the violence and the oppression.

We have received all your previous letters.

(Signed) Workers Ccmmitttee in Kisimayu

1. Hasan Muhammad Yusuf
2. Cmar Muhammad Ali *
3. Akmad Omar Ahmad
4. Jami Musa Samantar
5. Jami Ali Abdulsamad
6. Jami Nur Fahiya
7. Muhammad Ahmad Bajun

When you came to our country and saw our conditions we requested you to do everything necessary for us and therefore we think of you as our representatives in all matters and hope that you will act on our behalf day and night.

We would inform you of what has happened since. First, there is no work in the Lower Juba. The biggest works in Kisimayu, namely the Romana has closed down and discharged its workers to the number of more than 300 men and 100 women. All production has ceased. Now, boxes have come from Italy; and this is done in order to prosper the Italian people and destroy the Somali people. We consider this to be unfair that boxes and paper should come from Italy when they are available in Somaliland.

All this is agreed between the Government and the companies particularly the SAK Company. There were 900 people working in those works which represented a vital source of income for the people. It is not just that Italy should live and Somaliland die. Can you say that we did not want good co-operation when wood has come from Italy and you do not take bananas from Somaliland?

Translation's note

* The second name has been erased in pencil and replaced by Abol Rizah "representing 1,200 persons".

T/PET.11/440

English

Page 4

As the works in the Lower Juba need a thousand workers the employment office in Mogadishu is not sufficient and another one should be opened in Kisimayu.

We ask you to submit to the Territorial Council both this question and also the laws enacted in 1931 regarding a daily wage of 3 somalos.

From Abol Rizah Hagg.

Representing 1,200 men.
