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PETITION FROM MESSRS. KULANI ABDI RUBELI, GHELLI DAALI GOLID AND OTHERS
CONCERNING SOMALILAND UNDER ITALIAN ADMINISTRATION

(Circulated in accordance with rule 85 and supplementary rules F and L
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SOMALILAND

Communication from 5,000 ex-soldiers, dated 18 November 1954

To the representatives at the United Nations, New York
(Carbon copy of letter addressed to the representative of Egypt):

(After compliments) We are inhabitants of Somaliland under Italian administration and address this communication to you as the representative of the free Government of Egypt because we are in need of your help.

We have done everything possible to obtain our rights from the Italian Administration. We were formerly soldiers under the Italian Government, and have rights which accrued to us in its service. We have addressed many petitions to various authorities: the Trusteeship Authority for Somaliland; the United Nations; the Office of the Italian Administration; the representative of Egypt in Somaliland; the British Consul; the Governor-General in the capital; and others. All they did was to empower our enemy to make claims. Fate decreed that the Administration should refuse to answer, and its last word was that we have no rights.

We all therefore claimed our rights before the Italian offices in Mogadiscio, where they set the troops to fire on us. We petitioners number about 5,000, and our rights date from 1941 to 1945. We have certificates from our former commanders. Some of us have lost our sight through the war, some have had their arms and legs cut off. We have children scattered through the country, suffering cold, hunger and destitution through having lost their fathers in the war. This responsibility is on the shoulders of the Italian Government. We thought, however, that we should

beg you to support our claim, if any human, brotherly or Islamic rights exist where you are, and to submit this appeal to whomever appears to you to be most suitable. We thought it better to write to you than to anyone else.

The Italian Government, through whom those children lost their fathers, would not then be able to look on them without compassion and concern for them. They are innocent in the eyes of this world; they are made the sport of passion, evil, humiliation and slander. To whom are they to complain? What have they done wrong? Answer that!

As for us, our members testify to our rights, and we have tongues with which to complain to you and to anyone else who may be able to help us. Indeed, our bodily members are witness to our rights. All this they have forgotten. Is there any humanity in their refusal and rejection of us, who fought for our Government in the past?

Sir, we will do no more in this plea than ask for our rights and the rights of those innocents. The purpose of this letter is that the things which are called for by humanity and patriotism shall be done. We address you solely because you are our leader and the leader of the Islamic peoples east and west. We lay this responsibility upon your shoulders, for you to proclaim to whomsoever you please. We beg for an answer and for effective help. The master does not forget the servant while he helps his brother, and all Moslems are brothers.

We will say this final word. The Italian Government stated in the Corriere della Somalia for 13 November 1954 that anyone who had rights should claim them, with supporting documents, in the Italian Office at Mogadiscio. That is the reason for our loss of rights due from Italy. The newspaper said "anyone who was formerly in the Army with the Government for fifteen years only". The loss came to us through certain of our countrymen who were induced by fraud to sign statements that our rights had been satisfied by the Government. The persons who thus signed their names are a party associated with the Government; they do not know what our rights are and do not understand anything about us. They were merely misled by fraud.

Finally, we send you our warmest greetings and beg you to attend to our plea.
You are our hope, and we ask your pardon for any faults in this letter.

(Signed)

Kulani Abdi Rubeli

Ghelli Daali Golid

(Ten other names)

In addition to these names there are 5,000 others.

18 November 1954
