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PETITION FROM MR. ABDI HAGI MOHAMED HUSSEN AND OTHERS
CONCERNING SOMALILAND UNDER ITALIAN ADMINISTRATION

(Circulated in accordance with rule 85, paragraph 2, 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 Advisory Council for the Trust Territory of Somaliland under Italian Administration.

To the ADVISORY COUNCIL of the UNITED NATIONS

MOGADISCIO

We take the liberty of raising our voice in formal protest to ask the Advisory Council's kind intervention with H.E. the Administrator personally against the chaotic and alarming action that A.F.I.S. has taken to the detriment of Somali people.

Among the items appearing on the agenda of the next session of the puppet Territorial Council, which will begin on 14 inst. as published in the "Corriere della Somalia" No. 292 of 11 inst. first page, is: "draft ordinance for extension of the terms of office of Territorial and Residency Councillors".

We think it extremely important and advisable to raise the following objections and to call the Council's wise attention to the facts:

1. - Territorial Councillors, and the so-called Residence and Municipal Councillors are selected by the Administering Authority with its own interests in mind and for its own ends, to the detriment of and against the will of the people, who do not enjoy the minimum right and freedom accorded by civil laws and Human Rights.
2. - Duration of office of Councillors in question should have been one year, but the present ones have held office for three consecutive years.

3. - In every town, village and hamlet, there are hundreds and hundreds of learned persons, capable of undertaking the heavy responsibility of Councillor, who are prepared to work and cooperate without a salary in the sole interest of their country. Those now in office - almost all drawing salaries as Chiefs, Notables, Holy men and employees - collect, in addition to their monthly salary, a daily allowance of 20 Somalos per meeting. In this connection it would be well to remember the old and well-known Somali proverb "af uah unei niscio" (the mouth that swallows is ashamed to say the truth).

4. - The United Nations Trusteeship Council, in its eleventh session, of 1952, recommended, among other things, that the Administering Authority introduce direct elections and a democratic system of universal suffrage, (for the selection) of Municipal Councillors, Territorial and Residency Councillors and to abolish, once and for all, the system of proportional representation of political parties, with the suggestion that "such free elections will not only be an important step towards full participation of the inhabitants in the political life of the Territory, but will remove most of the difficulties caused by the present system of proportional representation", which system the Administering Authority solemnly affirmed before that international assembly was a temporary measure, which would be replaced as soon as possible by a new law to replace that promulgated by British Military Administration. All these statements were published by the local Authority in its own paper, "Corriere della Somalia" No. 544 on page 5. To date, nothing has been done with respect to either of the recommendations mentioned or many others, because they are beneficial to the Somali people and perhaps not to A.E.I.S.

We ask that Somali people be permitted freely to elect its own representatives on the various Councils for 1954, choosing persons of their own choice, and without interference on the part of A.F.I.S. At the same time we ask that all recommendations and suggestions made by the United Nations Organization be enforced under the Advisory Council's control; otherwise they

will be perfectly useless to the Somali people, who have not yet lost confidence in U.N.O. and its work, intended to protect and defend poor and weak populations like ours.

With best regards, we remain

Mogadiscio, 12 December 1953

Please address reply to:

Somalo Abdi Haji Mohamed Hussen
P.☉. Box 161
Mogadiscio

(Sgd) Abdi Haji Mohamed
and signatures of 59 others
