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THREE PETITIONS FROM THE GREAT SOMALIA LEAGUE, BRANCH OF BAIDOA
CONCERNING SOMALILAND UNDER ITALIAN ADMINISTRATION

(Circulated in accordance with rule 85, paragraph 2 of the rules
of procedure of the Trusteeship Council)

I

6 May 1959

To: The United Nations

This petition is submitted by the Great Somalia League and is presented for the following main reasons:

1. To express our most heartfelt thanks for all the assistance which the United Nations has rendered, for its part in the settlement of international disputes and for the help it has given to small nations by applying the principle of equality among peoples. We may add that we were very gratified when the United Nations did not accept the political elections held in the Cameroons and refused to recognize them on the grounds that they were not free. We are confident that you uphold truth and justice and hope that God will help you.
2. You are aware of what has happened to our party, the Great Somalia League. It has been dispersed and its members robbed, imprisoned, murdered, persecuted and deprived of their freedom of speech, and some political leaders have attacked it. We have in the past submitted a complaint on behalf of our party, its representatives and its Chairman, Hajj Mohamed. All the foregoing has been explained to the United Nations delegations, to the Italian Government and to the Advisory Council.
3. We wish to recall that our party, the Great Somalia League, did not participate in the recent political elections of 5 March 1959 in Somaliland. The only reason for this abstention was that we did not enjoy full freedom and were subjected to pressure by the Italian

Administration and the Somali Government. Accordingly, only one party, the Somali Youth League, participated in the above-mentioned elections. All the other political parties refused to participate because they had been subjected to the same treatment as our party.

The Italian Government, which is the Administering Authority of the Trust Territory of Somaliland, is responsible for the existing dissension in the Territory; it is the prime mover in everything that has occurred in Somaliland. Italy has assumed vis-à-vis the United Nations the obligation to hand over the affairs of the Territory to the Somalis themselves in 1960; for five years, however, Italy has merely given internal autonomy to the Somali Government. This action by the Italian Government has been motivated by personal reasons, a fact which is fully understood by us. Italy claims that as the internal affairs of the country are in the hands of the Somalis themselves, Italy is no longer responsible for them.

We urge the United Nations to assume responsibility for Somaliland and to satisfy the needs of our country within the framework of the Organization itself without the intervention of any other State. The United Nations has decided that Somaliland is to become independent in 1960 and that Italy is to hand over the reins of government to the Somalis on that date. The Italian Government, however, is not acting in the interests of Somaliland as a whole. As a result, national unity has not been achieved and the country has instead become divided into many factions and groups.

We have on previous occasions submitted to you other petitions but have not received any answer.^{1/} This long silence is detrimental to our interests and we hope that you will heed our present request; we ask for equity and justice, principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations. We thank you.

(Signed) (Illegible)

Scerif Abucar (Secretary)
GREAT SOMALIA LEAGUE
Baidoa

II

11 May 1959

To: The United Nations, the President of the Italian Republic, the Advisory Council, the Administrator of Somaliland and the Prime Minister.

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To the President of the Italian Republic:

The Great Somalia League party is submitting this protest in order to acquaint you with the oppression to which we are being subjected at the hands of the Administration. As you are aware, our party is in constant danger since it is confronted with a variety of threats, with murder and with restrictions on freedom. All these things take place with the full knowledge of the Administration, which would have us believe that internal autonomy is in the hands of the Somali Government and that all the things which are going on in Somaliland do not come within its jurisdiction.

We, the members of the GSL, assure you that the Administration bears the sole responsibility for what is happening to our party and to our personal rights.

The Italian Government gave a pledge to the United Nations that it would do everything which was for the benefit of Somaliland, put an end to the disputes between Somalis, give protection to the Somalis until the termination of the Mandate and turn the territory over to the Somali people in 1960 without giving preference to one particular group or political party. However, we can assure you that the above-mentioned pledge has not been honoured.

The Somali people in general and the members of our party in particular will not participate in the elections to be held on 5 May 1959, because there is no freedom of speech in this country and, above all, because we are suffering from the threats being made by the Government. We assure you that the responsibility for what is happening to us lies with Italy and we draw your attention to the fact that we have submitted a number of protests on this subject to the United Nations.

Loyalty is one of the human rights and every Governor is responsible for his subjects and, in our particular case, Italy is responsible for what happens in Somaliland.

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The Administrator of Somaliland and his officials are not interested in the cause of the Somali people and their future. We are curious to know whether or not your attitude is the same. The Territory of Somaliland has become the scene of a raging conflagration and the Administration constantly tries to sow discord in the ranks of the Somali Government, instead of conciliating and uniting them. We are astonished at the discrepancy between the pledge given and the present activities of the Administration. We beg you to give serious consideration to what we have set out above and thank you in advance.

(Signed) Sheikh Icar Aues and Sherif Abuker,
Secretaries, Baidoa branch of the GSL.

III

To the United Nations Advisory Council

We, the Secretaries and members of the Baidoa branch of the Great Somali League take the liberty of bringing the following matters to the attention of the Councils:

First, we were subjected to oppression during the recent political elections, which were devoid of any sharia or democratic foundation. It is not only we who refuse to participate in these elections: nearly ninety-seven per cent of the entire population are of the same opinion.

We beg you, in your capacity of members of the United Nations Advisory Council, to put an end to this state of disorder. We assure you that the responsibility for the present disturbed situation lies exclusively with the six Somali Ministers and with the United States of America and Italy.

It is Italy which acts as the broker and the United States as the purchaser. The victim will doubtless be Somaliland. Italy has no other desire than to sell us to the United States as so much cattle. We, the people of Somaliland, recognize the religion of Islam as our religion and our domestic issues, instead of being settled in accordance with the Islamic religion, are being resolved in accordance with the Christian religion. Abroad, they say that we are a free people, but how can we be that if freedom of speech is prohibited and if many patriots have emigrated across the frontiers of Ethiopia and French Somaliland for no other reason than that they are members of the GSL. Moreover, the

branches of our party have been closed down. When we asked the District Commission the reason for this action, he replied that it was by order of the Government.

Under an agreement between the United Nations and Italy, the latter undertook to dig wells for water at 40-km. intervals. However, the present authorities, resorting to threats, have restricted watering and use of the water to persons who are members of the Government party, known as the Somali Youth League. As a result of this action, many shepherds and farmers addressed themselves to our party with their protests. We wish to inform you that, up to the present time, water from the wells has been denied all who are not members of the Somali Youth League.

We assure you that the GSL will not participate in the political elections and that it will endure the various threats of the Government and the police. It is aware that these elections are devoid of any democratic foundation, since the police have made it possible for those belonging to the Somali Youth League to vote more than once in their own name and thus to obtain a majority. This is what happened during the administrative elections in October 1958, but nevertheless the majority was on our side.

We raise our voices to request assistance from the United Nations Advisory Council, which was entrusted with the task of protecting Somaliland. According to Article 5 of the Trusteeship Agreement, "The Government may not issue laws, even in exceptional cases, without consulting the Advisory Council, and we are certain that the Advisory Council, if it had been consulted, would not have agreed to these laws, which are contrary to the Trusteeship Agreement and to the Charter of the United Nations." Article 8 of the same Agreement contains the following passage: "The Administering Authority of Somaliland shall guarantee to all inhabitants of the Territory human rights and fundamental freedoms and full equality before the law without discrimination of any kind." As we see, none of these undertakings has been honoured.

We ask the Administrator of Somaliland, the Advisory Council, the United Nations and the entire free world to come to our assistance, in order to put an end to this distressing state of affairs which is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and to the institutions of the Islamic religion. The present

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Government has no respect either for law or human rights, as it has repeatedly and unjustly arrested our leader, Hajji Mohamed Hussen, the President of the GSL, Although he has done no wrong.

We assure the Advisory Council that we refuse to participate in the political elections and we ask you to help us against the danger which we face at the hands of the present Government.

In conclusion, we declare that the existence of the present Government is incompatible with Human Rights, the Charter of the United Nations and the Trusteeship Agreement and that the Government issues laws which suppress fundamental freedoms.

(Signed) Sheikh Abuker Aues, Abdulkadir Ali Mohamed,
Elmi Gisma, Hassan Hussen Mohamed,
Directorate of the Baidoa Branch
of the GSL
