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~~THE EWE AND TOGOLAND UNIFICATION PROBLEM~~

Statement made by Mr. Iyeml Mhimadong, representative of the joint togolana Congress before the Fourth Committee at its 313th meeting on 19 December 1952

NOTE: In accordance with the decision of the Fourth Committee taken at its 313th meeting on 19 December 1952, the text of the following statement, which was made during the same meeting, is circulated for the information of members.

52-12472

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Members of the Fourth Committee:

I feel it is my bounding duty to express my personal gratitude for the special permission to be in your midst today. I could have been here earlier and could have been able to tell the real feelings of my people of the Northern Togoland under United Kingdom Trusteeship.

I have been sent here by the Traditional rulers and peoples of the North of British Togoland. I am the Regional Secretary of the Togoland Congress, Northern Region.

It is deeply regretted that the circumstances of the delay of issuing passport and the granting of dollars prevented me from addressing you on behalf of my people.

It has always been said that we, - the people of the North of British Togoland do not want unification. Mr. Chairman, members of this Committee, I shall have to tell you today that due to lack of educational facilities in our area and the complete absence of any kind of development - social, economic and political in that area, we the northerners have for a long time been desiring unification of the territory of Togoland. We believe that if Togoland were unified under a single administration as it were during the German regime, the area would have been far more developed than it is now.

We therefore started the demand for unification even before the outspoken and more advanced Southerners have got any real idea of the problem. We still desire the unification. We strongly demand it. But, Mr. Chairman, the odds are against us. We are unduly suppressed. We in the North are not allowed to speak except through our chiefs who are subjected to the District Commissioners or the Government Agents. We have been separated from the South. We are subject to severe punishment if we stay too long with our brothers in the South; for fear that we shall acquire the feeling for the need of those things we lack, the administrations fears our awareness of political advancement developing in the South.

Now, Mr. Chairman, under these circumstances my people have decided to join hands with their brothers both in the South and on the east under French administration. The opposition from the Administration is unfortunately very great. Thus in October after our chiefs and peoples whose petitions to the Mission, we feared would be suppressed by the Administration, decided to send me to state their views before this Committee.

In order to bury our voice, men from the Northern Territories Protectorate of Gold Coast have been brought over to Northern Togoland and are made chiefs, superceding our own chiefs. It is these Administration chiefs that represent the traditional elements in the Nawuri and Nanjuro areas. Petitions to this effect are available in the United Nations.

Mr. Chairman, the Togoland case has already been dealt with and I do not want to tax the Committee with difficulties facing us in the North. I have to thank you Mr. Chairman and members of this Committee on behalf of the traditional rulers and the peoples of the North of British Togoland.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.
