

## **THE BAKWERI DIASPORA LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR THE BLCC**

October 1, 1999

His Excellency President Paul Biya  
President of the Republic of Cameroon  
Unity Palace, Yaounde

Your Excellency,

### **LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR BAKWERI LAND CLAIMS COMMITTEE.**

We, Fako elements living in all continents of the world, assembled through the revolutionary technology of the Internet, have the honour to state that we have read a copy of the letter of 3rd March 1999 addressed to your Excellency by the Bakweri Land Claim Committee, (BLCC) seeking redress for injustices perpetrated on our people for more than a century. We would like to state that we unreservedly associate ourselves with the sentiments expressed by the BLCC as it seeks to regain the lands of which the Bakweri were dispossessed.

We whole-heartedly support the approach of the BLCC, which we understand is not against privatisation, per se, but against disposing of the land in Fako division, on which the CDC has its agro-industrial facilities, without consulting its Bakweri owners or compensating them for past use. We whole-heartedly support the BLCC position because we believe that it is consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Article 21 of the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights of 1981, which states, inter alia:

1. All peoples shall freely dispose of their wealth and natural resources. This right shall be exercised in the exclusive interest of the people. In no case shall a people be deprived of it.

2. In case of spoliation, the dispossessed people shall have the right to the lawful recovery of its property as well as to an adequate compensation...

We note that the BLCC has opted to resolve this CDC land problem peacefully, in the interest of national unity, peace and progress of all Cameroonians. We would also like to state that in the interests of the generations to come, each and every one of us would like to stand up and be counted as having contributed, in his or her own small way, to the resolution of this thorny issue.

The letter from the BLCC has given an exhaustive survey of the history of how the Bakweri were dispossessed of their land by successive colonial governments, and how these land ended up in the custody of the Republic of Cameroon. We could not have done any better. While we the Bakweri are generally moderates by nature, we would like to put on record that our moderation has limits. History records that the lands in question were the subject of a protracted conflict between the Bakweri and the brutal and inhuman German colonial administration. In effect, the plan of the Germans was to move all the Bakweri into reservations or Bantustans in order to better exploit them and their lands. That move was resisted by force of arms and the Germans renounced the Bakweri Bantustan project.

Your Excellency, we would like to put on record that it is our considered opinion that if the privatization of the CDC goes ahead without input from the Fako indigenes on whose land most of the corporation's agro-industrial activities are based, this would be tantamount to postponing resolution of the land problem. Cameroon under your leadership would have missed an historic opportunity to right a longstanding wrong, and sowed the seeds of socio-economic disharmony for future generations of Cameroonians.

Our fervent prayer is that the BLCC appeals would be heeded in the interest of peace, national unity and the generations of Cameroonians to come.

Please accept, your Excellency, the expression of our highest consideration.

For and on behalf of Fako elements around the world whose names are appended to this letter.

**Signatories**

President of Fako America

*Jack Efase Endeley*

Moderator of Fakonet

*Dibussi Tande*

Ad hoc Secretary

*Lyombe Eko*

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**cc.**

**Chief Philip Mofema Ewusi**

Chairman, Bakweri Land Claim Committee (BLCC).

P.O. Box 124

Buea, Southwest Province BLCC.

**Hon. Peter Mafany Musonge,**

Prime Minister of the Republic of Cameroon

**H.R.H Sam Endeley,**

Paramount Chief of Buea

**H.R.H Bille F. Manga Williams**

Paramount Ruler

Victoria Coastal District Traditional Authority

**All Traditional chiefs of Fako division**

Southwest Province

His Excellency

**The Secretary General**

**United Nations Organization**

New York

**The Managing Director**

**International Monetary Fund,**

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**The President**

**The World Bank Group**

1818 H Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20433

His Excellency,

**Ambassador of France to the United States**

Washington DC

His Excellency

**Ambassador of France to Cameroon**

Her Excellency

**The Secretary of State of the United States**

State Department

Washington DC

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