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LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Communicated to the Council
and Members of the League.

C.152.M.90.1936.VII.

Geneva, April 10th, 1936.

DISPUTE BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND ITALY.

Communication from the Ethiopian Government.

(Translation)

To the Secretary-General.

Sir,

I beg you to be good enough to communicate urgently to the Committee of Thirteen, to the Council, to the Committee of Eighteen and to all Members of the League of Nations the following note.

I. The Ethiopian delegation learnt this morning, through the Press, of the decision taken on April 9th, 1936, by the Committee of Thirteen to make an urgent appeal to the two belligerents to take all necessary steps to prevent any breach of international conventions as to the conduct of warfare and of the principles of international law. The Committee adds that it hopes to receive from the Powers to which it addresses this appeal assurances that will tend to allay the emotion that is being felt by public opinion and to which it has given expression.

II. The Ethiopian delegation hastens to respond to this appeal as it has always done hitherto. It must, however, express its pained surprise at the fact that the Committee of Thirteen felt able to place on the same footing Ethiopia, the victim of an unjustified aggression, and Italy, aggressor unanimously condemned by the League of Nations. Is it a correct interpretation of world public opinion to make no distinction between aggressor and victim and merely to make one more platonic appeal to both belligerents, as though this were a conflict in which the League of Nations was not itself concerned? Only a few months ago the Council of the League of Nations vigorously asserted that there was a dispute between Italy and Ethiopia and another dispute between Italy and the League of Nations. Has this situation now changed? Has the aggressor's violence succeeded in settling the latter conflict.

III. In response to the appeal of the Committee of Thirteen, the Ethiopian delegation would mention that, about a week ago, there was referred to that Committee copy of a report which the Ethiopian Government transmitted, on March 2nd, 1936, to the International Red Cross at Geneva. In this report, the Ethiopian Government has enumerated in precise terms, and with particulars of place and date, the violations of the laws of war of which the Italian Government has been guilty. The Committee of Thirteen makes no reference to this document. Does the Committee consider it negligible, or does it consider that it ought not to discuss it, just as the League of Nations has not considered that it should accede to the numerous requests for an enquiry submitted by the Ethiopian Government?

P.T.O.

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