

# UNIVERSITY OF BUEA

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**REPUBLIC OF CAMEROON**  
PEACE-WORK-FATHERLAND

## **FACULTY OF ARTS**

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Vice Dean/Admissions & Records: Dr. Roselyne Mai Jua

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4<sup>th</sup> July, 2005

Professor Jacques Fame Ndonga  
Hon. Minister of Higher Education  
Ministry of Higher Education  
Yaounde

Your Excellency,

## **AFTER A MOST DEMONIC RUSE: THE PRICE I AM BEING FORCED TO PAY FOR INITIATING DIALOGUE DURING THE UNIVERSITY OF BUEA UPHEAVALS IN MAY/JUNE, 2005**

I was a member of a group of senior academic staff of the University of Buea, designated, by the four-man delegation led by former Minister of Higher Education, H.E David Abouem a Tchoyi, to inspect and evaluate the situation in the University of Buea students' uprising.

We successfully negotiated the meeting between the leaders of the recently recognized University of Buea Students Union (UBSU), and the Head of State's Commission, for which I received special commendations from the Head of the President Paul Biya's Commission.

In retrospect, Your Excellency, it would appear that the University of Buea hierarchy had not been happy over the resolution of this tragic event in which human lives, and property were lost.

Let me explain:

On Wednesday, the 11<sup>th</sup> of May, 2005, I was honoured with an invitation from Karen R. Watts, Senior Programs Officer, Council for International Exchange of Scholars, in Washington D.C, in which I was encouraged to apply for the position of Fulbright Scholar –in – Residence for academic year, 2005 – 2006. On the strength of my C.V, Elon University, in North Carolina, USA, accepted to be my host institution. The grant dates were fixed for August 2005 to May 2006.

The terms of the fellowship were generous. I was to receive \$23.750.00 dollars as estimated Fulbright funding and an additional \$17.450.00 dollars from Elon University during my tenure as Fulbright Scholar – In – Residence, teaching, Africa Literature.

My interview, then, at the American Embassy in Yaounde, was only going to be “*a formality rather than a competition*” since Faculty at Elon had been highly impressed by my CV.

Ms. Jenny, Cultural Affair Officer, presided, over a highly cordial interview that was attended by Mr. Gerald Chilla and Mrs. Gladys Viban on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2005, in US Embassy, Yaounde grounds.

I was expected to be at Elon University for the orientation before the August 20, 2005 deadline. Prior to all these, I had completed *all* application requirements as stipulated by the Assistant Officer for Cultural Affairs.

Your Excellency, the Minister of Higher Education, I have enclosed the following documents to authenticate the above claims:

**EXHIBIT: I**            The 11<sup>th</sup> May, 2005 invitation from Karen R. Watts, Senior Programs Officer for Council for International Exchange of Scholars, Washington. DC, in the United States of America (USA).

**EXHIBIT: II**            Request from the Assistant Cultural Officer in Cameroon: I had deposited complete medical examination, passport etc for myself and family before the cordial meeting, on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2005

**EXHIBIT: III**            My application for Leave of Absence to the Vice Chancellor, Dr. Dorothy Limunga Njeuma, dated 30<sup>th</sup> May, 2005

**EXHIBIT: IV**            Letters from Professor Brian Digre of Elon University between 13 May – 13 June, 2005, confirming my Fulbright Scholar – In- Residence chair. (Letters 1 – 8 enclosed)

**EXHIBIT: V**

My course syllabus for the Fall Semester Class at Elon University titled “ The African Experience in Literature” which I had been scheduled to teach beginning August 30, 2005

On Monday, the 27<sup>th</sup> June, 2005, Your Excellency, indeed, beyond the pale of all reason, a visibly perturbed, Mr. Jose Santacana, the Public Affairs Officer at the US Embassy, in the presence of the Cultural Affairs Officer, notifies me thus “ *Elon University has decided not to participate in the Fulbright Scholar – In – Residence Program... for the 2005 – 2006 academic year*”!

Your Excellency, evidence below (*Exhibits VI, VII & VIII*), illustrates why the actions of these two US embassy officials, may be translated as an embarrassment to all men of conscience:

**EXHIBIT: VI**

Professor Brian Digre’s letter of Tuesday, 28, June, 2005 in which he promised to carryout an investigation into this wholly demonic conspiracy.

**EXHIBIT: VII**

Handwritten memo from a senior official of the Vice Chancellors staff, requesting, that I supply her “*with a letter from the US Embassy on the Fulbright Offer*” Mr. Santacana’s signed note is dated *June 27, 2005*. The Vice Chancellor associate’s memo is dated *June 30, 2005*. My application for leave of absence was forwarded to Dr. Limunga Njeuma’s office on the *30<sup>th</sup> May, 2005*.

**EXHIBIT: VII**

Mr. Jose Santacana’s paradoxical sham that Elon University decision not to host me for the 2005 – 2006 academic year is “ *a decision difficult for all of us, but it is no reflection on you and your nomination.*” A most hideous ruse, indeed!

Sir, I was neither nominated by the office of the Vice Chancellor of the University of Buea, Dr (Mrs) Dorothy Limunga Njuema, nor by the Public Affiars Officer in the US Embassy, Mr. Jose Santacana for the position which Elon University had, through Karen R. Watts, requested.

I have spent over 6.000.000 Frs. CFA in order to prepare my family and self for the unique honour given to me, and my nation, by Elon University, North Carolina, USA. Justification of such amount spent is adumbrated by *EXHIBITS I, II,A&B* and *EXHIBITS IV (Letters 1-8)*.

I am therefore calling on you the Hon. Minister of Higher Education, Professor Jacques Fame Ndong, to restore the already blemished visage of higher education in our country.

Yours Faithfully,

Bate Besong, Ph.D

Writer and Scholar

Member: African Literature Association of America (ALA)

- Cc: Karen Watts, Senior Programs Officer, Washington D.C, USA
- Cc. Legal Consul, Taku Chambers, Buea, Cameroon.
- Cc. Ambassador Neil Macquardt, US Embassy, Yaounde, Cameroon
- Cc. Professor Brian Digre, Elon University, North Carolina, USA
- Cc. Camilla Jelbart, Amnesty Campaigner, Scholars at Risk Network, Edinburgh Scotland
- Cc. African Literature Association of America, (ALA, Drexel University, USA)
- Cc. Dr. Mrs. Dorothy Limunga Njeuma, Vice Chancellor, University of Buea, Cameroon.