

# PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

CO 537/774

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PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

# PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

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UNTIL

1968

CO 537/774

EAST AFR. PROT  
19403

19403  
REC'D  
REG'D 16 APR 17

*Secret*

*v*

Colonial Office  
1917  
15 April  
Last previous Paper.

*Italian Aspirations*

*Deaf. to Gov. Rep.*

*To Gov. Rep. secret 15 April 1917  
To F.O. Secret the Sec 1917*

Next subsequent Paper.  
*Sec. 310928*

Co. 49403 / 17

S.A.P.

C. D.  
R. 71  
29

G. D.  
3 APR  
4

82

2 Plans

2

15 April 1917

DRAFT.

S. A. P. Secret

SW<sup>2</sup>

MINUTE.

Mr.

Mr.

Mr.

Mr. Peck 30/E/17

X Sir G. Fiddes. 30

Sir H. Just.

Sir J. Anderson.

Mr. Steel-Maitland.

X Mr. Bonar Law.  
Long 31. iii. 17

Let 20. conference before Dept  
20. comm.  
1. 2. 2  
4/17 for Comm

Pres. = 60454 (Secret)

Sir, I have the honor to  
inf. you that by Art. 13 of  
the Treaty under which Italy  
entered the War it was  
stipulated that, in the  
event of the other Powers  
violating their African  
Colonial possessions at the  
expense of Germany, France  
and Great Britain recognize  
in principle the claim of  
Italy to some equitable  
compensation, notably in  
the settlement to be favored  
by the nations opposing

the boundaries between her  
Colonies of England, Somaliland,  
& Libya & the contiguous  
Fr. & Pr. Colonies

2. On the face of it the  
wording of this article  
does not seem to imply  
more than rectifications of  
frontier, but the words  
"equitable compensations"  
might be taken as  
pointing to some territorial  
cession +, as far as Italian  
Somaliland is concerned, it  
is probable that Italy's  
aspiration here is the  
extension of territorial  
extension to British East  
Africa. There is indeed  
reason to think that  
Italy wishes, at any rate,

FD  
39310 Sent Africa

to acquire Kismayo. 1)  
3. I assume that the  
cession of Kismayo would  
involve the cession of the  
whole of the valley of  
the Jubba river, as, with  
both sides of the mouth  
of the river - the occupation  
of Italy, it would be of  
no value <sup>river</sup> ~~as a waterway~~  
to the East Africa  
<sup>(as a waterway)</sup>  
Protestants & and the  
proper administration of  
the adjoining territories  
would become impossible.  
4. I order that <sup>(H. 17. 5. 1905)</sup> ~~it may~~  
be in a position to deal  
with any claims of this  
kind which may be put  
forward by Italy. I suggest  
that you will furnish me  
with



with a full report as to  
the possibility of ceding  
Kismayo & other territory  
in the neighbourhood of the  
Juba should it be considered  
essential on grounds of  
high policy to endeavour  
to meet the Italian wish.

5. Your report should  
be illustrated by a map  
& it should indicate both  
the maximum & the  
minimum area which,  
in your opinion, might  
be ceded without serious  
prejudice to the interests  
of the Prot<sup>ts</sup>. It should  
also advocate any safeguards  
regarding trade or other  
matters upon which you  
might consider it necessary  
to insist. In any suggestion  
for new frontiers the  
military

military as well as the  
administrative aspect of the  
question must be borne  
in mind & you will no  
doubt take the advice of  
your military advisors  
who should be warned of  
the highly confidential  
nature of the matter.

DRAFT.

MINUTE.

Mr.  
Mr.  
Mr.  
Mr. Grindle.  
Mr. Lambert.  
Mr. Read.  
Sir G. Fiddes.  
Mr. Steel-Maitland.  
Mr. Bonar Law.

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6. 11. 2.

**DRAFT.**

Downing Street.

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

SECRET

April, 1917.

Governor

Sir H. Conway Belfield, K.C.M.G.,  
etc., etc., etc.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that by Article 13 of the Treaty under which Italy entered the War it was stipulated that "in the event of the other Powers increasing their African Colonial possessions at the expense of Germany, France and Great Britain recognise in principle the claim of Italy to some "equitable compensations", notably in the settlement in her favour of questions affecting the boundaries between her Colonies of Erythraea, Somaliland and Libya and the contiguous French and British Colonies.

2. On the face of it the wording of this article does not seem to imply more than rectifications of frontier, but



the words "equitable compensations" might be taken as pointing to some territorial concession and, so far as Italian Somaliland is concerned, it is probable that Italy's aspirations lie in the direction of territorial extension in British East Africa. There is indeed reason to think that Italy wishes, at any rate, to acquire Kismayu.

3. I assume that the cession of Kismayu would involve the cession of the whole of the valley of the Juba river, as, with both sides of its mouth in the occupation of Italy, the river would be <sup>of</sup> no value to the East Africa Protectorate as a waterway and the proper administration of the adjoining territories would become impossible.

4. In order that His Majesty's Government may be in a position to deal with any claims of this kind which may be put forward by Italy, I request that you will furnish me with a full report as to the possibility of ceding Kismayu and other territory in the neighbourhood of the Juba should it be considered essential on grounds

**PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE**

**END**

**TOTAL EXPOSURES →**