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**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

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**FOURTH COMMITTEE, 1119th  
MEETING**

Monday, 27 March 1961,  
at 3.30 p.m.

New York

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**Chairman: Mr. Adnan M. PACHACHI (Iraq).**

*In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Ortiz de Rozas (Argentina), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

**AGENDA ITEM 45**

**Question of the future of Ruanda-Urundi (A/4689-A/4692, A/4694, A/4706 and Add.1, A/C.4/471) (*continued*)**

**HEARING OF PETITIONERS (*continued*)**

*At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Apollinaire Siniremera and Mr. Thadée Siryuyumunsi, representatives of Unité et progrès national (UPRONA), Mr. Pierre Ngunzu, representative of the Parti Hutu-Tutsi-Twa (HTT), and Mr. Urbain Bandy, Mr. Joseph Biroli and Mr. Jean Kigoma, representatives of the Front commun, took places at the Committee table.*

1. In reply to a question from Mr. CHATTI (Tunisia), Mr. BIROLI (Front commun) stated that with regard to the important question of the date of the elections the Front commun would accept any proposal of the United Nations Commission for Ruanda-Urundi which was agreed to by the Administering Authority and the representative bodies of Burundi.
2. Mr. CHATTI (Tunisia) asked Mr. Biroli whether in his opinion the special situation at present prevailing in Burundi might not have changed before the month of July and whether it was not possible to hold elections before that date.
3. Mr. BIROLI (Front commun) replied that the situation in Burundi was now stabilized. The Interim Government would agree to the elections being held at the date which appeared most suitable to the United Nations Commission for Ruanda-Urundi.
4. Mr. CHATTI (Tunisia) said that he would like to know the opinion of UPRONA on the question of the union of Ruanda and Burundi.
5. Mr. SIRYUYUMUNSI (Unité et progrès national) replied that the United Nations was concerned about the confused situation prevailing in Ruanda, where a republican régime had been installed, contrary to the General Assembly resolutions, and about the situation in Burundi, where, also contrary to those resolutions, a provisional Government had been established. At present a federation of Ruanda and Urundi was not possible. As the political climate was different in the two States, the United Nations Commission should go and ascertain the situation on the spot and propose the necessary measures.

6. In reply to a question from Mr. CHATTI (Tunisia), Mr. DORSINVILLE (Chairman United Nations Commission for Ruanda-Urundi) said that he was not able to say what was the opinion of the Mwami of Burundi on the question of the union of the two States.
7. Mr. RASGOTRA (India) pointed out that in their statements at the previous meeting Mr. Biroli and Mr. Kigoma had employed terms which denoted a certain misunderstanding of the functions of the General Assembly. The petitioners should realize that the parties to the Trusteeship Agreement for Ruanda-Urundi were the United Nations, on the one hand, and Belgium on the other, and not the United Nations and any particular government of Ruanda or Urundi. The Trusteeship Agreement, like the Charter, laid stress on the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the Trust Territory and declared that accession to independence should be appropriate to their wishes. The indigenous inhabitants, however, had not yet been consulted on that point in elections organized under United Nations supervision. The General Assembly had in fact recommended in resolution 1579 (XV) that the date of the elections should be decided on at the resumed fifteenth session in the light of the recommendations of the Commission for Ruanda-Urundi. It now seemed that the authorities in Ruanda and Urundi had decided to hold the legislative elections on the basis of adult male suffrage only, in spite of the Assembly resolution. He would therefore like to know whether the different parties were considering elections in which women would not have the right to vote.
8. Mr. SIRYUYUMUNSI (Unité et progrès national) recalled that UPRONA had always claimed, as it had at the Kitega talks and the Ostend Conference, that elections should be held on a basis of direct universal suffrage of men and women. The Administering Authority had however replied that women, who were not counted in the census as were men, were not ready to exercise that essential right.
9. Mr. BIROLI (Front commun) recalled that his party too had always advocated universal adult suffrage for men and women but owing to purely material difficulties only men had hitherto exercised the right to vote. It should not be inferred from that that the Front commun was against female suffrage.
10. Mr. RASGOTRA (India) was glad to note that attitude, though he was sorry that Mr. Biroli had tried to evade the issue. It was quite clear from the various documents before the Committee that if elections had taken place women would not have participated in them. He asked Mr. Biroli whether the Front commun was prepared to grant the vote to women.
11. Mr. BIROLI (Front commun) replied that his party fully shared the point of view of the representative of India and was proposing that both men and women should take part in the elections on a basis of complete equality.

12. Mr. RASGOTRA (India) asked what were the material difficulties which prevented women from having the right to vote.

13. Mr. BIROLI (Front commun) said that in his view men and women should enjoy the same political rights. There were, however, certain material difficulties which had so far prevented women in his country from exercising the right to vote: for one thing, their registration was incomplete and, for another, women had not yet acquired a sufficiently strong political sense to wish to exercise the right to vote. In any event no party in Burundi was opposed to their being granted that right.

14. Mr. BANDYA (Front commun) (*translated from French*):<sup>1</sup> On behalf of the truly democratic popular parties, of which we are one, we should like first to ask the United Nations to make a clear distinction, whenever it deals with questions that concern Ruanda-Urundi, between the problems of Ruanda-Urundi as a whole and those of each individual State, Ruanda and Burundi. Each of these two States has its own characteristic customs and outlook, each has its own political structure and each has its own problems, which are sometimes rather different from those of the other. Thus, to take only the more obvious examples, Ruanda is faced with such problems as the return of the refugees, the amnesty, national reconciliation, a disputed monarchy—in short all the consequences of a fratricidal civil war which is still not ended. The same does not apply to Burundi. We therefore urge that in future the problems of Ruanda and those of Burundi should be differentiated, and even studied separately, in order to avoid misunderstanding and confusion which would only produce solutions that would be prejudicial to the future of Burundi.

15. We have no wish to split Ruanda-Urundi, which is an internationally recognized legal entity or to break away from our Banyarwanda brothers, but the facts are there: our situation is quite different.

16. As we have said, ever since the events of November 1959 the political atmosphere in Ruanda has been confused and unstable. There can be no doubt that in such circumstances the holding of free and democratic elections with a view to forming a national government in preparation for independence would be rather difficult. We are, moreover, convinced that General Assembly resolution 1579 (XV) was taken with the uneasy situation in Ruanda in mind.

17. The situation was not and is not the same in our country, Burundi, where the political atmosphere was and still is favourable to elections based on direct universal suffrage.

18. The disappointment and dismay of the people can be imagined, when they learned that these elections, which they had awaited with such impatience, were to be postponed. The situation was very confused. The customary authorities having been abolished, a feeling of insubordination, leading to insecurity, spread more and more among the population. Public order was threatened and disturbances could be foreseen in the near future. This atmosphere had been aggravated by the events in the former Belgian Congo and the troubled situation in Ruanda.

19. In order to make up for the lack of authority, to safeguard the general interests of the country, to save

the people from the possibility of disturbances and to maintain a peaceful atmosphere—an essential condition for progress towards independence—the political parties took the initiative of proposing to the Mwami and the Administering Authority that a provisional independent government should be formed. Those authorities signified their agreement and the Government was set up and appointed by the Administering Authority.

20. All the political parties were invited to participate in the formation of the Government. Only the UPRONA party refused to collaborate in any way. The intervention of the Mwami himself with UPRONA was to no avail. As UPRONA had adopted that rigid attitude, the other parties agreed to participate in the Government without it. A ministerial portfolio was nevertheless reserved for the opposition party and was accepted a little later by one of the founder members of UPRONA.

21. The Government having been set up, on 29 January 1961 we proceeded to the election, by indirect suffrage, of an interim legislative assembly, still in the expectation of elections by direct universal suffrage. The Assembly was opened on 8 February 1961 by the Mwami and a representative of the Administering Authority.

22. Let us now deal in greater detail with the question of legislative elections by direct universal suffrage. By the end of November 1960 the provinces and communes had been established but they could not function normally because there was no government. The whole population was hoping that a government would result from the legislative elections by direct universal suffrage which were anticipated and had even been discreetly announced for January 1961. Although circumstances beyond our control made the formation of a provisional government inevitable, it is nevertheless true that public opinion in Burundi demands legislative elections by direct universal suffrage, so that a permanent government may be set up to lead the country to independence. The timing and procedure could be decided at a round-table conference held by the Burundi in Burundi and attended by representatives of the Administering Authority and of the United Nations. We are convinced that we Burundi, particularly in this question of legislative elections, which are of paramount importance for the future of the country, have the interests of Burundi closer at heart than anyone else, however good his intentions may be.

23. The emergence of a government from these elections will be a step towards independence. The Administering Authority must therefore make more concessions than it has done so far and must give us real powers of self-government, so that we can become more and more experienced in managing the affairs of our country, for we shall soon have to demand that the entire responsibility should pass once and for all into the hands of the indigenous people alone.

24. The Interim Government is giving its careful attention to social reform in all fields, particularly in regard to land tenure, the judicial system and administration, in short, the social structure in general, in order to prepare for immediate and complete independence.

25. It should be noted that the results of the elections by direct universal suffrage will indicate the procedure we must follow for the establishment of a date for the independence of Burundi.

<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the decision taken by the Fourth Committee at its 1117th meeting (see A/C.4/SR.1117, para. 28), the text of this statement is reproduced in full.

26. We can state that the people of Burundi have great confidence in the work of the United Nations. We cannot help regretting, however, that the Commission for Ruanda-Urundi did not make sufficient contact with the people during its recent visit to Burundi. The pretext appears to have been that the Administering Authority did not give the members of the Commission satisfaction. The autonomous Government of Burundi is not in any way responsible for this. It is a matter between the Administering Authority and the United Nations. We therefore ask that this conflict—if such it is—should be settled by the foreigners themselves and should not have harmful repercussions on the future of Burundi.

27. In conclusion, let me say that it is our hope and firm conviction that the United Nations will give this statement favourable consideration and that we do not doubt that Burundi will achieve independence in peace and tranquillity, to everyone's satisfaction.

28. Mr. SINIREMERA (Unité et progrès national) (*translated from French*):<sup>1</sup> After the many fine speeches you have heard here since the opening of the fifteenth session of the General Assembly concerning the political situation and the future of Africa, it would be pedantic, not to say presumptuous, on my part to detain you with a lengthy dissertation on the weighty preoccupations of the day, which have been so eloquently stated by the speakers who have preceded me at this rostrum. I shall therefore confine myself to a brief and rapid statement of certain important facts which the nationalist party, of whose delegation I have the honour to be a member, submits for the consideration of all who are assembled here or are particularly concerned with African problems.

29. In the first place allow me to thank you for inviting me to this rostrum to champion our national cause. Our liberation from colonialism, and the liberation of all our brethren who are still suffering under foreign domination, will depend on the peaceful and diplomatic efforts you exert here. Since it is the duty of Africa, as of any other part of the world, to elude the snares of colonialism and since our professed anti-colonialist and anti-racist faith remains unshaken, we will always stand by the United Nations in its defence of the principle that all countries have the right to freedom and dignity.

30. Moreover, the African solidarity to which I am appealing cannot be confined to the short-term objective of restoring national sovereignty in our country. In order to achieve its true goal, it must go beyond that preliminary stage of national liberation and bring about, in a spirit of unity and mutual understanding, the liberation of all Africa.

31. As you know better than I, the colonialists have practised in the past, and are even now practising, widespread corruption among the inhabitants to further their nefarious policy. As a rule, the individual, enticed by the prospect of gain, scarcely ever realizes the danger to which he exposes his fellowmen and, if he eventually comes to realize it, it is too late. Thus in some parts of Africa, the people have become disunited; for example, in the former Belgian Congo. This is how it is, and it will be even more tragically true in Ruanda-Urundi where the virulent germs of colonialism still find their favourite breeding-ground. Happily, we still have one chance left. The tide of freedom which is sweeping through Africa, which has undermined many strongholds of power and is threatening others, has revived

the spirit of emancipation. The ruling Powers, for all their zeal, will be unable to resist the demands of international common sense and justice.

32. Colonialism does not evolve, it is peoples who evolve, as a wise man has said. But this evolution cannot be healthy or steady if we Africans participate in it in scattered ranks and with half-hearted unity. Moreover, as the same wise man said, only a common front without a split or a breach can stand up to another common front.

33. I would remind my colleagues and compatriots who belong to parties favoured by the Belgian or other colonialists that they should be fired by the same spirit as we are, and should maintain the same ties and the same solidarity in the interest of their country and not be concerned with personal advancement and the favours deceptively held out to them by the Belgians. In their confusion the Belgians, sidetracked by Africa's head-long evolution, seek the support of Africans dazzled by ephemeral promises. When the blind lead the blind nothing can prevent them from falling into the pit. Our compatriots should be inspired by friendship and a common belief in the freedom and rights of man. We constantly reproach them for not wishing to throw off colonialism, or to abandon their active or tacit compliance, with its unfortunate consequences. At all events we can assure them that they will never persuade us to accept the idea that the world can be free so long as there are still enclaves of slavery, domination and injustice.

34. Having made those general remarks, let me say a few words about events in Ruanda-Urundi. The political situation in our country is very dangerous. The policy of the Belgian Government is intolerable. We are forced to bear a heavy yoke, and it is crushing us. It is a heavy burden that the United Nations places upon us; and if it does not find some other means of rescuing us before long, our fate tomorrow will be the same as that of our neighbours in the former Belgian Congo.

35. The country of Burundi is a region that has never known war and whose people, thanks to the foresight of its Head of State, His Majesty King Mwambutsa, live in peace. This monarch is the sole undisputed authority in the country. It can only be noted with regret that, judging from its repeated actions, the Administering Authority no longer recognizes the King's prerogative and regards him as a symbol, without power or authority. On this point I must protest against the policy of the Belgian Government and, in particular, against certain Belgian officials of the local Government. I would even go so far as to condemn the Belgian Government in general, since the local Government receives its instructions from Belgian ministers. As for us, it would be childish to believe that without the consent of the Belgian Government, the Resident-General of Ruanda-Urundi could have taken upon himself such unwarranted powers. I quote in this connexion Legislative Order No. 221/296 of 25 October 1960, concerning the trusteeship powers:

[For the text of the Legislative Order read by Mr. Siniremera, see A/4706/Add.1, annex XXIX.]

36. Having read out this document, I recall with regret the arrest of our Prince Louis Rwagasore, who was placed in controlled residence on 28 October 1960 in application of this unfortunate Order. Need I add that this ignoble act, which covered my country with

shame, was committed in the absence of King Mwambutsa, who was at the time in hospital at Lausanne, Switzerland. You will understand the distress of the Burundi people at finding themselves downtrodden to such a degree that their well-beloved Prince, who had the liberation of his people at heart, could be mistreated by the colonialists merely in order to stifle the liberation movement which he had just managed to set on foot in his beloved country. The Murundi people will never forget or forgive the hard times which the Belgian colonialists forced them to endure in October, November and December 1960.

37. For these reasons, the delegates from the nationalist parties must urge the abolition of the arbitrary measures which serve only to aggravate the situation and indeed to plunge a population of over two and a half million people into the deepest despair.

38. I shall now quote the text of a covering letter from the Resident of Burundi, Mr. I. Reisdorff, transmitting a communication from the Front commun (political parties which have the blessing of the Belgian Administration):

"Territory of Ruanda-Urundi

Office of the Resident of Urundi

"Kitega, 23 July 1960

"No. 3045

"To: All Territorial Administrators

"Copies to:

"The Resident-General at Usumbura

"The Counsellor of the Mwami at Kitega

"Subject: Policy statement by political parties

"Sir,

"I have the honour to transmit, annexed hereto, over a hundred copies of a communication from the democratic parties of Burundi containing a very important policy statement concerning the future political evolution of the country and the course of action they have decided to follow in respect of the national political parties allied with foreign parties.

"This statement has already been broadcast over Radio Usumbura. Pending the publication of the Kirundi text in AMAKURU Y'UBURUNDI (information bulletin to Resident's Office), kindly ensure that it receives the widest possible circulation among the personnel of the Administration, the Missions and other offices in your Territory.

"For the Resident of Urundi

"I. REISDORFF,

(Signed) H. JACQUES,

"Secretary,

"Resident's Office."

39. I quote now an extract from the policy statement:

"Further to the statement made by the Resident, Mr. Reisdorff, on his return from the Trusteeship Council meeting, the Front commun parties would like, first of all, to thank him and to bring to his attention the following points:

"We were surprised to learn of the statement made by Mr. Rwagasana in the Trusteeship Council, recommending the establishment of a single Government for Ruanda-Urundi.

"Mr. Rwagasana apparently claimed to speak on behalf of the parties of Burundi. However, the Front commun parties have never maintained relations with

Mr. Rwagasana, and in such an important matter would never delegate an outsider to speak on their behalf.

"It is well known that UNAR and UPRONA enjoy good relations.

"It is possible that, on the strength of those relations, Mr. Rwagasana may have been authorized by UPRONA to speak for that party. But we categorically reject the presumptuous generalization of Mr. Rwagasana's claim.

"In connexion with the recent events in the Republic of the Congo, note has already been taken of the presence at Mr. Lumumba's side of Mr. Mirerekano, an influential member of UPRONA, and the exploitation of this fact by UPRONA propagandists, Mr. Katarebe, an influential member of UNAR, was also with Mr. Lumumba. The similarity in tone, viewpoint and propaganda between Mr. N. C. Lumumba, UNAR and UPRONA is striking, and the permanent nature of the contacts between these three parties is clear evidence of their alliance. In view of the results obtained by the two foreign parties in their respective countries, we are justifiably concerned over the possible consequences of the dissemination of their ideas in our own country indirectly through UPRONA.

"The Front commun parties heartily welcome the initiative taken by the trusteeship authority, and especially the proposal to place Barundi trainees under the supervision of European officials so as to initiate them into the problems of administration. We hope that such measures for rapid training will be extended and, likewise with a view to active preparation for the tasks which independence will bring to the Barundi, we request the establishment of a provisional government that would provide a link between the trusteeship Administration and the first genuinely indigenous government. The Front commun parties trust that the Belgian Administration will give this request prompt and special consideration, since they regard such a provisional government as the best form of apprenticeship for the exercise of national responsibilities, the best means of stabilizing the country during the transition from trusteeship to independence, and the best means of giving purpose and meaning to the general desire for political activity in the country."

40. The example I have cited will enlighten the Committee as to the attitude taken by the Administering Authority in an attempt to suppress the nationalist parties. It is perfectly plain that the Resident of Urundi is by no means the right person to lead Burundi to independence.

41. In his letter No. 3045 of 23 July 1960, as in the policy statement of the democratic parties—in other words, his favoured Front commun—the Resident of Urundi clearly emerges as the President of these parties. When he goes to great trouble to write covering letters transmitting the documents of his Front commun, requesting his white staff, the missions and other bodies to ensure wide circulation, he reveals the horror in which he holds the national parties. To back up what his colleagues are doing, he assures them that at his end everything has been done since, as he says, Radio Usumbura has already broadcast the item. All that remains for him to do is to try to fool the people by circulating the Kirundi translation published in the official information bulletin of the Resident's office.

42. The oppressive action of the Belgian Government in Africa, its bad policies and its unforgivable persistence in committing inhumane acts—against all of which we protest—have plunged Burundi into a political morass of the Belgian Administration's own making. The danger to which the Belgians have exposed us *vis-à-vis* our African brothers in the Congo by allowing Belgian and Mobutu troops to stage their attack on Bukavu Province from Usumbura, is imminent and undeniable.

43. We ask the United Nations to intervene more effectively than hitherto, by deciding that the Belgian troops in Ruanda-Urundi should withdraw and that Usumbura airport should be under exclusive United Nations supervision; that there should be an end to the Interim Government and to the Legislative Council similarly established in flagrant violation of General Assembly resolution 1579 (XV); that the General Assembly should decide to terminate Belgian trusteeship over the Mandated Territory of Ruanda-Urundi.

44. Mr. SALAMANCA (Bolivia) recalled that in his statement Mr. Biroli had referred to the question of land reform in Burundi. His delegation considered that the settlement of the land tenure problem was essential to the political stability of the Territory and was almost a necessary condition for accession to independence. He asked Mr. Biroli to say why land reform was needed, to describe the system of land tenure at present in force in Burundi and to state whether the political parties were in agreement on a common land policy.

45. Mr. BIROLI (Front commun) said that the question was all the more important in view of the relationship between the economy of a country and its political development. In view of the importance of the subject, however, he would like to be allowed time to prepare a memorandum that he would transmit to the Committee.<sup>2</sup>

46. Mr. SALAMANCA (Bolivia) welcomed that suggestion but said he would like to know the opinion of the other petitioners, too, on that point. Equitable land distribution was in his view essential for the unification of the Territory.

47. Mr. SIRYUYUMUNSI (Unité et progrès national) said that in his opinion land reform was not so urgent a matter as the settlement of the political problem, which should not be overlooked. In Burundi the right to own property was governed by custom but the policy of the Administering Authority had not always enabled the indigenous inhabitants to enjoy that right; the Administering Authority had in fact made many expropriations by virtue of the principle of "*domanialisation*" of the land, thus exceeding the rights granted to it under the Trusteeship Agreement; moreover the right of land registration was unknown. The High Council of Burundi had admittedly drawn up a scheme recognizing the right of any inhabitant of Burundi to individual ownership but the text of the plan was known only to members of the Council. He therefore thought that for the present it was better to maintain the *status quo* and not to take up the question of land reform until the trusteeship had been terminated.

48. Mr. SALAMANCA (Bolivia) pointed out that in his statement at the previous meeting Mr. Biroli had

contemplated the possibility of United Nations technical assistance to solve the land problem. It was therefore important to know what system was in force and particularly the manner in which the land was distributed. It was unfortunate that the representatives of all the political parties in the Territory did not realize the importance of the question, for, as the Trusteeship Council had pointed out, it was abuses of land tenure which had provoked incidents in the past. The land problem was just as important as the date of elections, if not more so, and if the system of land distribution continued to be inequitable the government elected would be at a disadvantage. Ruanda-Urundi would suffer if it attained independence before the system of land distribution had been improved.

49. Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) asked for some particulars about the member of UPRONA who was said to have accepted a ministerial appointment reserved for the opposition party in the Interim Government.

50. Mr. BANDYA (Front commun) confirmed that a ministerial appointment had been reserved from the beginning for an opposition party should it be prepared to collaborate. Subsequently one of the founder members of UPRONA had accepted it.

51. Mr. SIRYUYUMUNSI (Unité et progrès national) said he was glad to be able to provide information on that important point. It was not true that a member of UPRONA had accepted the appointment. At the time when thought had first been given to the establishment of a provisional government, the Administering Authority had placed the means of transport it possessed at the disposal of the mayors and communal councillors in order to instigate them to visit the Mwami and to bear witness to the tension which the postponement of the legislative elections was said to have created in the country. The Administering Authority had managed to persuade the Front commun in Burundi to lend its support, with the result that a provisional government had been set up at Kitega. UPRONA had opposed those manoeuvres because it had wanted to adhere strictly to the recommendations the General Assembly had made in its resolution of December 1960.

52. On 26 January, after the Government had been formed, a representative of the Resident-General had agreed to receive some members of UPRONA, who had handed him a note and had formally requested him to have it broadcast to the people through the radio station at Usumbura, which was already broadcasting all the positions taken up by the Front commun. In the note UPRONA had described the situation on the eve of the elections and had reaffirmed its nationalism and its desire to see the country achieve independence rapidly but in an orderly and efficient manner. The population had acknowledged the undoubted authority of the Mwami, whose powers were not to be re-defined until later, by a constitution. To make changes in those powers at that time would have upset the balance and the tacit agreement reached between all the parties. Furthermore, the Mwami was to take an active part in drawing up the future constitution. It had not been a question of installing a constitutional monarchy slavishly copied from a foreign model, but of retaining wide powers for the Mwami after there had been a broad exchange of ideas among all those who were sincerely attached to the country and who knew it well. Those decisions were not to be taken either by a provisional

<sup>2</sup> In accordance with a decision taken by the Committee at its 1122nd meeting, the memorandum prepared by the delegation of the Front commun was subsequently circulated as document A/C.4/476.

government or by one or other of the parties. UPRONA could not allow the results of elections in which the Administering Authority had exerted pressure to be used as the basis for apportioning political power. Without demanding the annulment of the elections, UPRONA had challenged their character as a political referendum, which had been ascribed to them, and had considered that, instead of a provisional government being formed, the Interim Committee and the existing college of communal councillors should have been retained until such time as a constitution had been promulgated by the Mwami.

53. UPRONA had drawn attention to the growing confusion in the country and had been alarmed to see important decisions being no longer taken by Belgian high officials, whose undoubted sense of responsibility was a guarantee of stability, but by subordinate officials who engaged in party politics and even organized demonstrations on the public highway. UPRONA had asked for sanctions to be taken at once and for any recurrence of such abuses to be prevented.

54. Finally, UPRONA had declared that it was against the formation of a puppet government, which was an unnecessary measure within a few weeks of the elections, that a true political government could only be formed by the Mwami freely, unconditionally, and without any previous pressure, and not as the result of disturbances artificially fomented, and that it was the duty of the Administration to maintain order, for which it possessed the means, so that all might really enjoy freedom of expression and association.

55. The representative of the Resident-General had refused to broadcast the note so long as the Territory remained a Trust Territory, because the situation would thereby be compromised. He had, however, added that a ministerial appointment had been reserved for UPRONA in the Interim Government and he had specified which member of UPRONA had the necessary training for that post. UPRONA had replied that the choice should have been left to it but that in any case it would not allow one of its members to form part of a provisional government and that anybody who agreed to do so would be dismissed from the party immediately. The Administration had then tried to prevail on certain members of the party to accept posts. In dismissing such members from the party, UPRONA had stressed the need to wait until the General Assembly, at its resumed fifteenth session, had decided either to reinforce its decisions of December 1960 or to modify them since they had appeared to be inoperative.

56. It was important that the Fourth Committee should know that Belgium was not seeking by such manoeuvres to comply with the resolutions of the General Assembly or the legitimate aspirations of the people. The Front commun, which was supported by Belgium, alleged that UPRONA was a minority party. That was not so. Despite the imprisonment or commitment to controlled residence of many of its members, UPRONA was a majority party, as would be clearly discernible if the terrorism exercised by the Administering Authority were to cease. Realizing that UPRONA would win 85 per cent of the votes, the Administration had rejected the candidates it had put forward and had replaced the chiefs and sub-chiefs by paid officials. Nevertheless, in the regions in which those officials were members of UPRONA, it had been unable to exercise pressure and UPRONA had gained a majority. In the

other regions, the Administering Authority had been able to carry out its purpose because the population had not understood what was the public interest or the importance of the United Nations in the trusteeship administration and because the officials had all been ardent supporters of the Administering Authority. The inhabitants had been compelled to join political parties against their will and UPRONA had received many complaints. The Fourth Committee should urge that the United Nations Commission for Ruanda-Urundi should go to the Territory in order to make an inquiry on the spot.

57. Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) observed that Mr. Bandy had stated that the population demanded legislative elections by direct universal suffrage. He would like to know if Mr. Bandy agreed that the right to vote should be given to both men and women.

58. Mr. BANDYA (Front commun) said that he shared the ideas expressed by Mr. Biroli in his reply to the representative of India.

59. Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) noted that the petitioner considered that the Administering Authority ought to make more concessions than it was doing at present and should give the autonomous Government of Burundi real powers. He would like to know what those concessions were and what new powers could be transferred to the Interim Government forthwith.

60. Mr. BANDYA (Front commun) said he would like the autonomy of Burundi to be recognized so that the Government of Burundi might be able to say what it thought without having to take refuge behind the Administering Authority, for that would be a very good way of preparing it for independence.

61. Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) said he hoped that the petitioners would have an opportunity later to specify in what fields—public order, economic questions, financial questions etc.—the Interim Government would be able to exercise new responsibilities. The Fourth Committee would then be better able to see to what extent its autonomy could be increased.

62. Mr. CASTAÑEDA (Mexico) asked the representatives of the Front commun of Burundi if their parties, in supporting the establishment of a provisional Government in Burundi, had taken into account the size of the Territory, the number of its inhabitants and its economic situation, and if they knew whether this new State would be more or less viable than Ruanda-Urundi as a whole; if they realized that the setting up of two political entities would create a whole series of new interests which were likely later on to stand in the way of the establishment of a single new entity, as had been the case in the Congo; and, lastly, if, even though two separate States had existed at one time, they realized that forty years of Belgian administration had made of Ruanda-Urundi a political whole which should perhaps also remain a social and economic whole.

63. Mr. BIROLI (Front commun) replied that there was no doubt of the existence of the legal entity of Ruanda-Urundi at the international level, but when the time came for the Territory to achieve independence, it might be considered whether the two parts of the Territory should form a federation, for example, or whether Ruanda-Urundi might enter into the framework of a wider confederation. In no case could there

be any question of Balkanizing Africa or Ruanda-Urundi, and any arrangement acceptable to the two Governments of the Territory would always be welcome.

64. Mr. CASTAÑEDA (Mexico) considered that the Territory had in fact formed one unit, and if the idea of its return to unity were not to be excluded, it would perhaps have been better to avoid the present separation, which by creating many new interests would make unification much more difficult.

65. He asked the representatives of the Front commun whether, having included the future unification of the Territory in their programme, they already knew what particular measures they intended to take to that end.

66. Mr. BIROLI (Front commun) agreed with the conclusions of the Trusteeship Council, which was "convinced that the best future for Ruanda-Urundi lies in the evolution of a single, united and composite State" (A/4404, p. 85). At the same time he could give no undertaking for the various governments of the future, which would have to take into consideration all the relevant factors in the situation of the Territory.

*Mr. Apollinaire Siniremera and Mr. Thadée Siryuyumunsi, representatives of Unité et progrès national (UPRONA), Mr. Pierre Ngunzu, representative of the Parti Hutu-Tutsi-Twa (HTT), and Mr. Urbain Bandy, Mr. Joseph Birolé and Mr. Jean Kigoma, representatives of the Front commun, withdrew.*

*At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Germain Gasingwa, Mr. Aloys Munyangaju and Mr. Théodore Sindikubwabo, representatives of the Association pour la promotion sociale de la masse (APROSOMA), and Mr. Calliope Mulindahabi and Mr. Fidèle Nkundabagenzi, representatives of the Parti du mouvement de l'émancipation hutu (PARMEHUTU), took places at the Committee table.*

67. The CHAIRMAN said that Mr. Mulindahabi would like to make a statement on behalf of both APROSOMA and PARMEHUTU.

68. Mr. MULINDAHABI (Parti du mouvement de l'émancipation hutu) (*translated from French*):<sup>3</sup> The majority parties of Rwanda, the Association pour la promotion sociale de la masse (APROSOMA) and the party of the democratic, republican movement, PARMEHUTU, are represented by Mr. Germain Gasingwa, Mr. Aloys Munyangaju and Mr. Théodore Sindikubwabo, for APROSOMA; and Mr. Fidèle Nkundabagenzi and myself for PARMEHUTU. Considering that there was a very large number of petitioners to be heard and that there were no fundamental differences between our statements, and thinking that it would be useful to lighten the work of this Fourth Committee, these two parties decided to submit a single petition, which I have the honour to lay before you.

69. The members of both these delegations are ready to answer any questions which representatives may wish to ask.

70. The parties wish first to thank the Fourth Committee for agreeing that the discussion on the question of Ruanda-Urundi shall be published, if not *in extenso*, as fully as possible. Anxious as they are that the people they represent should be completely informed, they are happy to express their satisfaction at this decision.

71. In resolution 1514 (XV) of December 1960, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the nec-

essity of bringing to a speedy and unconditional end colonialism in all its forms and manifestations. Although in the past the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination has been hampered by *de facto* situations which explained and justified the placing of certain countries under trusteeship, this right is still intact, because it is deeply engraved on the heart of every people. It was because of their eagerness to see our country freed from the colonial yoke and its domestic problems satisfactorily settled that our popular political parties wished to be heard, so that they might give you their views on the nature of the final national solutions which must be reached in the interest of the country. We thank the Chairman for allowing our delegations to speak in this Fourth Committee. We also thank the representatives for their willingness to hear our proposals for a settlement of this question of the future of Ruanda-Urundi.

72. There is no need for us to speak of the past or to go into the details of the development of the political situation in the Trust Territory, particularly in Rwanda, since the birth of the Trusteeship System. The annual reports of Belgium, of the visiting missions and of the Trusteeship Council, the statements of certain petitioners and the recent report, brief as it is, of the United Nations Commission for Ruanda-Urundi provide enough material for a good knowledge of the problems of the country. It will, however, be useful to give a short account of the situation, tracing the principal stages in the political development of Rwanda.

73. In 1919 the League of Nations entrusted the Mandate for Ruanda-Urundi to Belgium. The Territory was then composed of two kingdoms, each under a Mwami. In Rwanda the Mwami reigned as an absolute monarch; the State was based on a caste structure, in which the Tutsi minority, forming 14 per cent of the population, held a political, economic, social and cultural monopoly, to the great dissatisfaction of the Bahutu, who were denied even subordinate posts in the Administration. This situation led to abuses, which were noted by the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in East Africa, 1957. For a long time Belgium ruled the country through the intermediary of the feudal caste alone. The revolution of November 1959, in which the two main ethnic groups of Rwanda opposed each other, as you know, sounded the knell of this era of social injustice and exploitation of one black man by another.

74. I shall not dwell on the reasons for this *jacquerie* in November. The fact is that the revolution took place and the result was numbers of people killed, houses burned down, property lost, hundreds of homeless people: in short, bitterness on both sides, which will take some time to disappear. Many active members of the popular parties were victims. The sacrifice of their lives was to remain engraved in the memory of the survivors, encouraging them to carry on the struggle for equality and respect for the country's working classes, who until then had been despised.

75. Today, having shaken off the yoke of feudalism, the people are no longer subject to forced labour or any kind of coercion; they are free and independent and are enjoying the benefits of their liberation. As early as November 1959, interim authorities were set up to take over the duties of the customary authorities, which were dying out or had been involved in the tragic events of November. These chiefs calmed passions and restored peace and tranquillity to the people.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 24.

The fear of the phantom of feudalism was finally dispelled by the communal elections of June and July 1960, which, with an overwhelming majority for the democratic parties, gave the people burgomasters, communal chiefs and councillors of their own choice. So, for the first time, truly representative local authorities were set up.

76. The confidence that the voters placed in our democratic parties is for us a proof of the people's impetus towards complete liberation. This means that the desire of the masses to be governed in dignity by their own elected leaders can never again be driven from the heart of any true Rwandese.

77. But that was only a first step. The institutions of the State had yet to be made completely democratic. This is why we asked the Administering Authority to hold legislative elections, as a result of which permanent institutions would be set up.

78. While we hoped that each step taken towards the achievement of the objectives of the Trusteeship System would give us greater control over our own destiny, difficulties arose in December 1960. They grew more and more serious, until they became almost insoluble. Resolutions 1579 (XV) and 1580 (XV), adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations, spread great confusion among the people. Among the Banyarwanda, the great majority of the people saw in those resolutions an attempt by certain groups, which were tools of the foreign UNAR, to bring about the victory of UNAR through United Nations action, because in fact those resolutions were in accordance with all the views of that party. The Administering Authority saw in the resolutions a direct interference by the United Nations in matters which had so far been under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Administering Authority. The United Nations urged that there should be a full and unconditional amnesty, although the Administering Authority thought that that would entail serious consequences. Resolution 1580 (XV) asked it to restore the Mwami Kigeli to power, while the Administering Authority had always held that the people's future should be decided by their elected representatives. In short, the United Nations asked the Administering Authority to enact measures which went against that Authority's own conception of the State's affairs.

79. This division of trusteeship powers between Belgium and the United Nations gave the people the idea of setting up responsible authorities to deal with the new difficulties the State would encounter as a result of what it called its abandonment by Belgium and the United Nations. It was in those circumstances that the people took responsibility into their own hands. The Republic of Rwanda was proclaimed on 28 January 1961 at Gitarama, a Legislative Assembly was elected, a Government was set up and the national flag was raised. For the sake of public order and peace, the country appointed its own leaders, who are now effectively exercising authority. Today Rwanda is a democratic and autonomous republic, with institutions that are ready for independence.

80. Our Government cannot appear as a petitioner before the United Nations General Assembly, for that is not necessary: at the present stage it cannot take its place within the United Nations, because it is still under trusteeship, and under this system the United Nations can deal juridically with the Administering Authority alone, without prejudice, of course, to the right of the people concerned to submit petitions. The

democratic parties, PARMEHUTU and APROSOMA are glad to support the views of the Rwandese Government in its constructive action both for the liberation of the people and for their rapid accession to independence.

81. It is clear that the problem of Rwanda has reached a crucial point. The positions of the political parties concerned seem as irreconcilable as in the past; the talks held earlier for the purpose of seeking valid solutions have not yet led to any satisfactory decisions; and the decisions of the United Nations and the Administering Authority have complicated the situation still further.

82. Some petitions which you have heard from opposition parties continually advocate solutions of authority or force which they think the United Nations should impose on the people and its representatives. This means that we are once again coming dangerously close to a breaking-point, which cannot be reached without exposing the country to the gravest dangers.

83. The fact that the meetings held in the past have not satisfied everyone is no reason for not resuming them. In the present situation, it is even in our country's vital interests that the discussion should be resumed. It is more necessary than ever to re-establish contact between the various groups and to resume the talks. Rwanda expects all its sons, without distinction, to work to avoid its destruction, so that we may all go forward together into a future in which each will enjoy the benefits of freedom, justice, tolerance and democracy. The constructive spirit with which our popular parties have always been animated now impels us to stretch out the hand of friendship to all our Rwandese brothers. Together we hope to find a solution, in national understanding and co-operation. We wish to settle our domestic problems as brothers. The nation needs the energy and co-operation of all its sons, and the destructive action which some are taking is simply useless and ridiculous. The talks must be resumed. We think that this is the only way finally and peacefully to settle the problems dividing us, which in the last resort can be solved only by the Banyarwanda themselves.

84. We hope that our brothers of the opposition will be moved by the same goodwill as we. It is useless to adopt a negative position, to use blackmail or to try to discredit Rwanda and the opposing parties, for such acts can only harm the State. The majority parties have always wanted to co-operate with the United Nations. We share the United Nations concern for greater unity and understanding between citizens of the same State and we agree that this is necessary. We assure it in advance that it is our sincere hope that it will succeed in this mission of peace and security.

85. During the last few months we have seen that there was not always complete agreement between the Administering Authority and the United Nations. We wish to declare that we should not be the victims of disagreements between Belgium and the United Nations. If certain differences arise between the Administering Authority and the United Nations, neither of those authorities should make the people of Rwanda suffer for it. The democratic parties, PARMEHUTU and APROSOMA, consider that there can be no question of transferring Ruanda-Urundi from Belgian trusteeship to the trusteeship of another Member State or of the United Nations itself, or of dividing the trusteeship between those two authorities. The people must be given full sovereignty, without any further equivocation

or intrigues by the opposition. The approach of our independence requires continuity of political life and we hope that, in the few months which are left, the United Nations will only encourage us and help us to achieve independence smoothly.

86. Such is the problem of Rwanda which is again placed before the Fourth Committee and the Administering Authority and which calls for an adequate, immediate and final solution. Our political parties hope that this Assembly will give favourable consideration to the suggestions they have put forward for a better future for the State and will support their efforts to put those suggestions into effect.

87. It is essential that all should be convinced that the authority in Rwanda is the people, and that henceforth nothing can be done there without the people or against the people. To ignore this right would be a subversive and dangerous venture, which the truly nationalist parties solemnly denounce and condemn in advance. We beg this Assembly to see in our words only a grave and solemn appeal for wisdom and a legitimate concern to ensure that the Rwandese people's right to dignity, respect and self-determination will triumph.

88. We stand beside our brothers in Africa and the rest of the world to bring freedom to the Territory which history has entrusted to you. We will no longer tolerate any form of society which is tainted with feudalism or colonialism. We did not fear compromise when we set up the present institutions, nor shall we fear any compromise which will preserve the benefits of peace and freedom for the Rwandese people. Independence is already an accomplished fact in many African countries. Ruanda-Urundi wants to take its own place in the community of independent States. When Rwanda has settled its domestic problems, it hopes to find ways of co-operating and uniting with its brothers in Burundi, so that we may achieve the community which is so necessary for the future of both peoples.

89. In conclusion, we pay a warm and brotherly tribute to those nations which seek to help backward peoples to advance and to recover their freedom. We thank any representatives here who have understood us and who will help the Rwandese people in their efforts to achieve brotherhood in freedom and equality.

90. Mr. RASGOTRA (India) said that some expressions in the petitioner's statement seemed to be admissions to the United Nations: he had spoken of direct interference by the United Nations in matters within the competence of the Administering Authority, and of a subversive and dangerous venture; he had said that the Territory should not be the victim of disagreements between Belgium and the United Nations and that the United Nations could deal juridically with the Administering Authority only. He wished to point out to the petitioner that that last remark seemed to indicate a false conception of the obligations of the United Nations. He asked him whether he had read the text of the Trusteeship Agreement and whether he realized the obligations which it entailed for the United Nations. The United Nations had no other choice than to deal with the Territory "juridically".

91. Mr. MULINDAHABI (Parti du mouvement de l'émancipation hutu) confirmed that he had stated that with regard to the requirements of the Trusteeship System, the United Nations dealt juridically only with the Administering Authority; he considered that the

legitimate aspirations of the people should also be taken into account.

92. Mr. RASGOTRA (India) assured the petitioner that the General Assembly would certainly take into account the legitimate aspirations of the people of the Territory even if the Assembly and the petitioner had not the same conception of those aspirations or of the modalities that should be employed to ascertain them. He again asked the petitioner if he was fully informed of the provisions of the Trusteeship Agreement.

93. Mr. MULINDAHABI (Parti du mouvement de l'émancipation hutu) gave an affirmative reply.

94. Mr. RASGOTRA (India) quoted article 5, paragraph 3 (c), and article 6 of the Trusteeship Agreement, in which the legal obligations of the United Nations and those of the Administering Authority were clearly stated. He asked the petitioner, who advocated the establishment of a democratic régime in the Territory, whether he agreed that differences of opinion could exist in such a régime or whether he thought that the United Nations should necessarily conform to the conception of law held by the petitioner.

95. Mr. MULINDAHABI (Parti du mouvement de l'émancipation hutu) said that he knew that trusteeship agreements were drawn up between the Administering Authority and the United Nations; that was why the people of the Territory were turning to those two authorities to lead them towards democracy and were ready to accept their recommendations. That, too, was the reason they were anxious to express their views to the United Nations by means of petitions which would enable the United Nations to adopt resolutions in conformity with the wishes of the people, when those wishes were not contrary to democratic principles.

96. Mr. RASGOTRA (India) said that he was glad the petitioner recognized the value of the General Assembly resolutions, but he remarked that the petitioner had stated that resolutions 1579 (XV) and 1580 (XV) had created great confusion in the minds of the people, which implied that the provisions of those resolutions were not in conformity with democratic principles. Quoting operative paragraphs 1 and 8 of General Assembly resolution 1579 (XV), he asked the petitioner whether he considered that the United Nations had thereby acted in any way unjuridically.

97. Mr. MULINDAHABI (Parti du mouvement de l'émancipation hutu) explained that the people of the Territory wished to give a favourable reception to the United Nations resolutions provided they were in accordance with its wishes; resolution 1579 (XV) by which the General Assembly had postponed the date of the legislative elections had been adopted on 20 December 1960, when the people of Ruanda-Urundi had been preparing to go to the polls in January 1961. It had therefore been in the interests of public order not to disappoint the people, who, satisfied with the communal elections, had been glad to see those they had elected participating in the legislative elections. Such a tardy recommendation of the General Assembly had been likely to endanger peace in the country.

98. Mr. CARPIO (Philippines), speaking on a point of order, said that he feared the discussion would be lengthy and he therefore asked, in view of the late hour, that the meeting should be adjourned.

*The motion was rejected by 23 votes to 4, with 29 abstentions.*

99. Mr. RASGOTRA (India) noted that the petitioner wanted the legitimate aspirations of the people of the Territory to be taken into account. He pointed out that if the legislative elections had taken place at the date originally fixed, the women, who probably formed half the population, would not have been able to participate. He asked the petitioner how he could explain that contradiction.

100. Mr. MULINDAHABI (Parti du mouvement de l'émancipation hutu) stated that his party had included in its programme the need to grant the vote to women, who had all the more reason to take part in political life in that they were largely responsible for the upbringing of the children. Nevertheless it was extremely difficult from the practical point of view to allow women to take part in elections when many men, and particularly the supporters of the Union Nationale ruandaise (UNAR), did not yet know how to vote. The political ignorance of the women had also to be taken into account, as also the length of the journey they would have had to make, the lack of means of transport and the difficulties of registration, since women had no identity cards.

101. Mr. RASGOTRA (India) considered that those arguments were obsolete and that if a Trust Territory was to become a democracy it was imperative that the right to vote should be granted to women as well as

to men. The insistence of the United Nations in recommending direct universal suffrage could hardly create confusion in the minds of the people.

102. Finally, he asked the petitioner whether he thought that the creation of a government by a *coup d'état* was a juridical act.

103. Mr. MULINDAHABI (Parti du mouvement de l'émancipation hutu) replied that the postponement of the elections which had been recommended at the last minute had done violence to the law but he thought he had sufficiently explained the reason for the elections. He would have liked the whole population to be able to participate, but, failing that, it was elected representatives who had voted.

104. Mr. RASGOTRA (India) observed that the petitioner had not given a direct reply to his last question. The petitioner was accusing the United Nations of having taken a decision at the last minute by adopting resolution 1579 (XV) on 20 December 1960, when the elections had been planned for 15 January 1961 or for a later date. The petitioners present at the first part of the fifteenth session could easily have sent a cable to inform the people of the Territory of the General Assembly's decision and they had certainly not been ready to vote on 20 December.

The meeting rose at 6.30 p.m.