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COMMUNICATION FROM THE INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS,  
COMMITTEE FOR RUANDA-URUNDI CONCERNING RUANDA-URUNDI

Note by the Secretary-General: In accordance with rule 24 and supplementary rule F of the rules of procedure for the Trusteeship Council, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the Trusteeship Council and to the Government of Italy as the Administering Authority for the Trust Territory of Somaliland, a communication dated 15 January 1953 from the International League of Human Rights, Committee for Ruanda-Urundi concerning the Trust Territory of Ruanda-Urundi.

International League for the Rights of Man,  
Committee for Ruanda-Urundi,  
Kisenyi, P.O. Box No. 5

Kisenyi, 15 January 1953

The President of the Trusteeship Council,  
United Nations,  
Lake Success, New York, U.S.A.

Sir,

We who support the right of men and peoples to self-determination and the expansion of democratic international law, in accordance with United Nations principles, cannot, as European residents of Africa, ally ourselves with colonial reactionaries who are drifting inevitably into Neo-Fascism. Nor do we wish to be associated with a demagogic campaign of official and unofficial speeches and Press articles. We live here and so we know.

The members of our League, which is not very large, who come from the Congo seem to be against the United Nations, while we from Ruanda-Urundi, a country under international trusteeship, support the United Nations and defend the independence of those two countries.

We therefore decided at our last General Assembly, held on 24 December 1952, to split up into two distinct independent groups, one for the Belgian Congo and the other for Ruanda-Urundi. The Belgian Congo section will probably have its headquarters at Bukavu-ex-Costermansville, in Kivu. We shall be known as "The International League for the Rights of Man - Committee for Ruanda-Urundi, headquarters - Kisenyi P.O. Box No. 5". Doctor René Van Saceghem, former honorary colonel veterinary surgeon, former Director of the Kisenyi Laboratory, will remain Chairman of our section and I shall be Secretary-Treasurer.

We shall thus be able more freely to defend our position as European, Asian or Arab inhabitants by the same right and with the same enthusiasm as we shall defend the indigenous inhabitants of Bania-Ruanda and Barundi, and shall be very grateful if you will pay greater attention than ever to the communications, complaints and petitions which we may submit to you.

Having noted the discussion on the petition regarding the mulatto children<sup>1/</sup> submitted by our Chairman, Dr. Van Saceghem, we were surprised, to say the least, at the way in which the Government representative, Mr. Leroy, referred to it.

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<sup>1/</sup> Note by the Secretariat: See T/PET.3/57.

We strongly protest against the tendency to make light of a petition by suggesting that it is inspired by personal motives, just as we protest against such a method of turning aside the discussion by discrediting a petitioner in a public and slanderous statement regarding his private life. We are much surprised that the members of the Council, some of whom know Dr. Van Saceghem, did not interrupt the Devil's advocate, the advocate of evil, and ask him to keep to facts, that is to say to the substance of the petition, and not to refer to the petitioner's private life, which had nothing to do with the discussion.

We have innumerable complaints, petitions and comments to submit to you about the colonial and anti-democratic system imposed on us. Should we give them more weight, would they be more justified if we described the private life of the persons largely responsible for such a system? That perhaps would be more shocking than to tell you that most of the members of our League and the Association of Mulattos have for years had an indigenous "friend", a fact which links them more closely with the country and the community. But we are upright and free men and we consider such action unworthy.

We should be happy if, when conveying our best wishes for the New Year to the members of the Trusteeship Council, you would bring our protest to their notice.

We also send you our best wishes,

We are etc.

For the Committee: The Secretary:

(Signed) E. RABAUD

Received at United Nations Headquarters on 28 January 1953.

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