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Chairman: Miss Angie BROOKS (Liberia).

*In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Lulo (Albania),
Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

AGENDA ITEM 49

Question of the future of Ruanda-Urundi: report of the United Nations Commission for Ruanda-Urundi (A/4856, A/4865 and Corr.1, A/4970, A/4994 and Add.1 and Corr.1, A/C.4/516, 517 and Corr.1, 518, 519, 521, 522 and Add.1-4, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528) (continued)

HEARING OF PETITIONERS (continued)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Michel Kayihura and Mr. Michel Rwagasana, representatives of the Union nationale rwandaise (UNAR), Mr. Barnabas Bahizi and Mr. Alexandre Rutera, took places at the Committee table.

1. Mr. BAHIZI said that many people found it difficult to believe that Belgians, coming from a supposedly highly civilized country, were capable of committing or inciting such acts of violence as characterized Belgian colonial administration. Having been educated in British colonies, he had noted a great difference between the two types of administration and felt that the Belgian administrators might with profit have learned from the British system.

2. The present moment was a crucial one in the history of his country, and if the Committee could not find a wise solution for its problems greater chaos and more bloodshed might follow. It was of the utmost importance that no hasty decisions should be taken.

3. The salient events of the period since August 1959 had been the mysterious and sudden death of the Mwami Mutara III Rudahigwa; the formation of the Union nationale rwandaise (UNAR), a political party, the first of its kind in Rwanda, recruiting its members from all walks of life; the formation of the Parti du mouvement de l'émancipation hutu (PARMEHUTU), a Government-sponsored purely racial group bent on stifling the nationalist movement; and the general mobilization of Belgian troops, the recruitment on purely racial lines of a native gendarmerie, and a wave of lawlessness and violence which had continued until within a few days of the elections and the pseudo-referendum.

4. The Administering Authority had pleaded bad roads to explain its failure to quell those acts of savagery;

if that were the real reason it would be no credit to the Belgians after forty years' administration. The fact was, however, that it had all been planned. In several cases administrators and missionaries had not only supplied the marauding gangs with petrol and knives to devastate nationalist property, but had also taken a leading part in those acts. There had been wide-spread dismissals of chiefs and other civil servants; no commission of inquiry had been set up to ascertain how it was that officials previously considered worthy had suddenly become unacceptable. The general disorder had caused the Mwami Kigeli V so much anxiety that, having failed to reach an understanding with the local Belgian authorities, he had decided to consult Mr. Hammarskjold, the late Secretary-General of the United Nations, who at that time had been visiting Leopoldville. No sooner had the Mwami left the country than he had been declared a prohibited person. Despite the bloodshed, the state of emergency and the flight of many Rwandese nationalists, the Administering Authority had hastily organized the 1960 communal elections, which had been supposed to be of a purely administrative and not political nature. Since the nationalists had boycotted them, the result had been a one-sided victory for PARMEHUTU. He himself had been among a group which had been herded to a polling station at gunpoint. The General Assembly resolutions of the fifteenth session had been disregarded, and the United Nations Commission for Ruanda-Urundi, upon entering the country, had been faced with the Gitarama coup d'état, as a result of which a republic, set up under the protection of the Kingdom of Belgium, had been imposed upon the people. Belgium had only facilitated the entry of the United Nations Commissioners into Ruanda-Urundi for fear of the steps which the United Nations might have taken if their entry had been barred.

5. With regard to the preparation for the legislative elections and the referendum, he quoted from a report by a British correspondent in the East African newspaper *Spearhead*, giving evidence of intimidation of the nationalists by PARMEHUTU. The report spoke of the violence which had broken out and commented that, despite the vast troop reinforcements and armed police, the administrators on the spot had been "unable" to end the trouble until a convenient few days before the elections and that the lower ranks of the Administration had deliberately allowed intimidation against the nationalists and monarchists to continue in order to make certain of the republican victory they wanted. A similar report in another East African newspaper, the *Reporter*, had stated that the Belgian Administration had supplied supposedly neutral burgomasters with trucks to enable them to tour the countryside issuing republican propaganda, while all facilities had been denied to the monarchists.

6. He described the circumstances of the return of the Mwami—whose secretary he was—to Rwanda a week before the elections. The Mwami had chartered

an East African aircraft and, having given the usual twenty-four hours landing notice, had obtained clearance from Dar es Salaam. On arrival at the Dar es Salaam airport, however, they had found that an ordinance had been hurriedly enacted in Usumbura, six hours before the expiry of the notice, stopping non-scheduled flights to Ruanda-Urundi until after the elections. They had therefore travelled to Kigali by car, a distance of some 1,600 miles. Upon arrival they had asked Mr. Rahnema, a United Nations Commissioner, to arrange for the Mwami to meet the Resident for Rwanda. The Mwami's return had been embarrassing to the Administration for it had given the lie to the various rumours that he had died. Troops had scoured the Kigali area in search of him. Upon finding the house where the Mwami was resting, they had surrounded it; at about 4.30 a.m. two government agents armed with revolvers had forced their way in, followed by two commandos with tommy-guns. All four had pointed their weapons at the Mwami, who had been forced into a jeep and driven to the Resident's office, which was guarded by an armed battalion. There the Mwami had been led into a room; he himself had been prevented from following but had been taken to a cell with a number of other Banyarwanda. Subsequently the others had been released but he had been retained because, to quote the authorities, he had accompanied the Mwami to unfriendly countries such as Morocco, Ghana and the United Arab Republic.

7. With regard to the refugee problem, he quoted from another East African paper, *The Daily Nation*, issued in November 1961. The report put the figure of refugees at about 100,000, stressing that there were three times as many refugees in Burundi as there were Balubas in Elisabethville and nearly as many as there were Angolan refugees in the lower Congo. It also stated that not all the refugees were Batutsi, but that there were numbers of Bahutu and Batwa among them. According to the report, some of those who had returned home had again sought refuge in missions and elsewhere and had again been attacked. He wished to express appreciation to the Governments of Uganda, Burundi, Tanganyika and the Congo, as well as to the various organizations which had assisted the refugees.

8. He would like to make the following suggestions: first, the immediate ending of the Belgian trusteeship; secondly, its replacement by United Nations personnel; thirdly, the disbanding of the racialist Rwandese army and police and their retraining with the inclusion of persons from all sections of the population; fourthly, the reconciliation of all parties—which would be impossible so long as the Belgians remained; fifthly, an attempt at the reconciliation of Rwanda and Burundi with a view to unity; and lastly, general elections before independence. Action by the United Nations in good time might avoid greater difficulties and heavier expenditure later.

9. He paid a profound tribute to the memory of the late Prince Rwagasore, Prime Minister of Burundi, who had given his life not only for Burundi but for Africa as a whole. He had been the greatest nationalist leader in Ruanda-Urundi and his death when on the point of liberating his country from colonial fetters was sincerely lamented. At one time he had suggested a federation with Tanganyika and the other British East African Territories. His memory would live on, and those implicated directly or indirectly in his assassination had done themselves more harm than good.

Miss Brooks (Liberia) took the Chair.

10. Mr. IBE (Nigeria) thanked the petitioners for their statements and assured them that their problems were the problems of all Africans. He asked whether the majority of the refugees were members of the opposition parties.

11. Mr. KAYIHURA (Union nationale rwandaise) replied that all the refugees belonged to the opposition parties.

12. Mr. IBE (Nigeria) said that he had understood from Mr. Rwagasana's statement at the 1268th meeting that his position was flexible concerning the attitude the United Nations should adopt towards the elections. On the other hand, at the 1266th meeting the President of the Legislative Assembly of Rwanda had spoken of overtures made by his party to the Opposition party concerning some form of national government, although the party in power apparently would not compromise concerning the Mwami. He asked whether Mr. Rwagasana could clarify his position regarding the reconciliation of the parties, with particular reference to the question of the Mwami.

13. Mr. RWAGASANA (Union nationale rwandaise) replied that his party was disputing the election results as being based on violence. He was unaware of any such overtures as had been mentioned, apart from attempted contacts within Parliament. With regard to the Mwami, had the referendum been held in normal conditions so that it could really be assumed that the Banyarwanda did not want the Mwami and had decided freely against him, UNAR would have acquiesced. PARMEHUTU should give the necessary guarantees to enable the people either to reject or confirm the institution of the Mwami.

14. Mr. IBE (Nigeria) inquired whether the petitioner had any more general ideas concerning possible moves towards reconciliation between the Government and Opposition parties in Rwanda, short of invalidating the elections.

15. Mr. RWAGASANA (Union nationale rwandaise) replied that there were many matters which would have to be discussed in order to reach agreement on future collaboration. As he had already said, the régime had been imposed in Rwanda without the Opposition having any say in it and the functioning of Parliament had been paralysed. His party would, however, be willing to take part in negotiations for a plan of co-operation, without either party abandoning its own programme.

16. Mr. IBE (Nigeria) said that he had been glad to learn at the 1268th meeting that UNAR believed in the unification of Rwanda and Burundi. He asked what specific differences existed between the leaders in the two States and what might be done to remove the difficulties.

17. Mr. KAYIHURA (Union nationale rwandaise) replied that the first major difficulty in the way of unification was that the Administering Authority had not in the past promoted development towards unity. The second difficulty, which was related to the first, was that the political evolution of the two States had been different and that, while Rwanda was undergoing serious disturbances, Burundi was on the whole developing peacefully. There were two ways in which to deal with those difficulties. The first was to eliminate the obstacle constituted by the Belgian Administration, which was aiming at separation; the second was to produce

the right atmosphere, i.e., an impartial arbiter should preside over a meeting of leaders from both States and guide the negotiations.

18. Mr. RUTERA said that the present Government of Burundi was in a very precarious position and could hardly be expected to agree to unite with Rwanda while the latter was in a state of continual ferment. Only after the threat which hung over the Government of Burundi had been removed could there be any move in the direction of unity.

19. Mr. RWAGASANA (Union nationale rwandaïse) said that as far as he was aware there had never been any unwillingness on the part of the leaders of the country to negotiate on the subject of unity. Naturally there would be difficulties, but some kind of confederation might perhaps be worked out by agreement between the two parties, guaranteed by the parties and possibly by the United Nations. Perhaps some time-limit could be fixed, so as to see whether the parties could come to an understanding. For the time being, however, he did not think that the people of Ruanda-Urundi would wish to undo all they had done in the past two years.

20. Mr. ACHKAR (Guinea) recalled that at the 1269th meeting he had asked whether the Administering Authority could give the Committee some information concerning certain events which had been referred to by Mr. Rwagasana. He asked whether the Belgian delegation was in a position to reply to his question.

21. Mr. CARLIER (Belgium) said that it was true that after an attack on certain Belgian nationals, one of whom had been killed and three others seriously hurt, four deputies who were members of UNAR had been detained by the police for interrogation. They had been released after a few hours.

22. Mr. JUARBE Y JUARBE (Cuba) said that at the 1269th meeting one of the petitioners had stated that UNAR's attempts to make contact with the party in power in Rwanda had been frustrated by the secret police. He asked whether the petitioners could give further information on the subject.

23. Mr. RWAGASANA (Union nationale rwandaïse), referring to the remarks made by the representative of Belgium, said that as far as he knew the four deputies who had been arrested had not been released, although the latest information he had was dated 19 January and they might have been released since then. There were, however, two other members of the Executive Committee of the party who had been arrested and to the best of his belief were still in prison.

24. In reply to the representative of Cuba, he said that it had been impossible for the parties to get in touch owing to the persecution to which UNAR was subjected. He understood that the Administration was considering closing the party's head office.

25. Mr. JUARBE Y JUARBE (Cuba) observed that the arrest of four deputies who were members of the Opposition showed clearly how much respect the so-called Administering Authority had for a legally established régime.

26. He asked whether the Opposition party had attempted to make contact with the Government party and whether the Administering Authority had prevented such contact from being established.

27. Mr. RWAGASANA (Union nationale rwandaïse) said that, as he had stated at the 1269th meeting, the

Administering Authority was trying to intimidate those members of the Government who were endeavouring to get in touch with the Opposition. The local authorities prevented them from doing so by means of intimidation, blackmail and threats.

28. Mr. JUARBE Y JUARBE (Cuba) observed that according to the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs (1259th meeting), the Administering Authority had no direct interest in the question of the future of Ruanda-Urundi. He asked the petitioners whether they would agree that Belgium had no direct interest in the administration of Ruanda-Urundi and in particular of Rwanda. He would be interested to know whether Belgium during its administration of the Territory had been actuated by purely charitable motives, whether the Territory was indeed so poor that it possessed no financial advantages for the Administering Authority and whether it was not at the very least a source of cheap labour.

29. Mr. KAYIHURA (Union nationale rwandaïse) said that it was difficult for him to answer that question since, like all colonized people, the people of Ruanda-Urundi had never played any active part in the management of their country's affairs. Furthermore, owing to the lack of trained personnel and technicians in the Territory, it was difficult to know what the potentialities of Ruanda-Urundi were. It was a highly populated country living on a subsistence economy, like most under-developed countries. There could, however, be no doubt that the stubbornness of the Administering Authority in keeping its hold on the Trust Territory was connected with the question of Katanga, since Ruanda-Urundi was a reservoir of labour. In any event he was sure that it was not for reasons of charity that Belgium wished to maintain its grasp on Ruanda-Urundi.

30. Mr. JUARBE Y JUARBE (Cuba) asked the petitioners whether they considered that reconciliation through negotiation between the political parties would be possible while the Administering Authority remained in Rwanda and to what extent, in their view, the presence of the Administering Authority constituted an obstacle to such negotiations.

31. Mr. RUTERA replied that as long as the Belgian Administration remained in the Territory it would be impossible for negotiations to take place between the parties. The division between them was entirely due to the Administering Authority.

32. Mr. ABDEL WAHAB (United Arab Republic) asked Mr. Bahizi whether he could give the Committee any further information about the circumstances surrounding the assassination of Prince Rwagasore, the Prime Minister of Burundi, to which he had referred in his statement.

33. He drew attention to General Assembly resolution 1627 (XVI), which requested the United Nations Commission for Ruanda-Urundi to investigate the circumstances of the death of the Prime Minister of Burundi. The Chairman of the Commission, in a letter dated 11 November 1961 (A/4970) addressed to the President of the General Assembly, had expressed the hope that the Assembly would appreciate the delicate and exceptional situation in which the Commission found itself and which impelled it to await the end of the preliminary investigation being carried out by the Belgian authorities before submitting its report to the General Assembly. He asked the representative of the Administering Authority whether the preliminary inves-

tigation had been completed so that the Commission could submit its report.

34. Mr. BAHIZI said that he was unable to give the Committee any additional information, since he had been at Dar es Salaam at the time of the assassination.

35. Mr. YOMEKPE (Ghana) observed that in any civilized country no one was arrested without being told the reason. He had been concerned at Mr. Bahizi's statement that the reason for his arrest had been that he had visited certain countries, one of which had been Ghana. He asked whether that had been the formal charge.

36. Mr. BAHIZI said that there had been no warrant in writing but that he had been told by two Belgian officials that that was the charge against him.

37. Mr. YOMEKPE (Ghana) recalled that Mr. Bahizi had suggested that before the Territory attained independence further general elections should be held. He asked whether he had intended to suggest that there should be fresh general elections in both Rwanda and Burundi, since the other petitioners had appeared to feel no qualms about the results of the election in Burundi.

38. Mr. BAHIZI said that he felt sure that the elections in Burundi had been properly conducted, since as far as he knew the results had not been challenged and the United Nations Commission was apparently satisfied. In Rwanda, on the contrary, the elections had been unsatisfactory in many respects and the Opposition was contesting the results. He had intended to suggest that fresh elections should be held in Rwanda only.

39. Mr. ABDO (Yemen) asked Mr. Bahizi whether he expected the results of any new elections which might be held in Rwanda to be different from those of the September 1961 election and, if so, whether the difference in the results might have some constructive effect.

40. Mr. BAHIZI replied that as long as the Belgian Administration remained in Rwanda there could be no change in the election results. If the Belgian Administration were removed and all political parties were allowed to campaign freely, the election results would be different. He himself would follow any Government resulting from such free elections.

41. Mr. ABDO (Yemen) asked Mr. Bahizi whether he thought that the results of any election which might be held after the departure of the Belgian Administration would be conducive to the unity of Ruanda-Urundi or whether there would be further hardening of the separatist tendencies.

42. Mr. BAHIZI replied that he could not forecast whether PARMEHUTU would poll more or less votes than in the September 1961 elections. Indeed, it might win a new election. On the other hand, it would be possible for the majority party and the Opposition to reach understanding once the Belgian authorities left the State.

43. Mr. KIDWAI (India) asked the petitioners whether they could amplify the information given in paragraph 52 of the report of the United Nations Commission for Ruanda-Urundi (A/4994 and Add.1 and Corr.1) concerning the relations between Rwanda and Burundi before the advent of the Europeans.

44. Mr. KAYIHURA (Union nationale rwandaise) replied that the two States had had highly developed bar-

ter trade in honey, butter, iron and bronze and that when a disaster such as famine or an epidemic among cattle had occurred in only one State, its inhabitants had been able to acquire food and livestock in the other State. He had also read that on the death of the Mwami of one State the Mwami of the other would go into mourning. He could not supply any other information since the history of Rwanda and Burundi before the advent of the Europeans was little known and there were no written records.

45. Mr. KOSCZIUSKO-MORIZET (France) drew attention to paragraph 374 of the report of the United Nations Commission for Ruanda-Urundi, in which it was stated that no appeal had been filed against the results of the elections in Rwanda. He asked the petitioners why, if they contested the result of the elections, they had filed no appeal.

46. Mr. RWAGASANA (Union nationale rwandaise) said that a distinction had to be made between appeals against the results in particular communes and the results of the election as a whole. The conditions in which his party had had to work after the elections had prevented it from filing appeals in writing, but it had submitted an oral appeal to the United Nations Commissioners in Geneva before they had signed the report.

47. Mr. KAYIHURA (Union nationale rwandaise) added that it would have been useless for his party to file appeals against the conduct of electoral operations since the appeals boards had consisted exclusively of Belgians. His party felt that the elections had been held in abnormal conditions and it intended to appeal against the results as a whole; it had therefore deemed it inopportune to file separate appeals against electoral operations in individual communes.

48. Mr. KOSCZIUSKO-MORIZET (France) regretted that, unlike what had happened in Burundi, the procedures provided for appeals had not been used in Rwanda. Furthermore, since the elections had been supervised by a United Nations Commission, UNAR could have appealed to that body.

49. He noted that in reply to a question from the Cuban representative Mr. Ruterera had said that members of the Opposition had been experiencing difficulties in meeting members of the majority party who were now in New York. He could not help feeling that Mr. Ruterera had been exaggerating, for it was difficult to see how the representatives of the Administering Authority could prevent meetings among Africans in New York. He was, however, more interested in meetings between members of the majority party and the Opposition in Rwanda itself. He asked Mr. Rwagasana, who had been elected a deputy in the elections whose validity he was now contesting and who was the head of the Opposition group in Parliament, whether there had been contacts between members of Parliament belonging to the Opposition and the Government party and, if so, of what nature.

50. Mr. RWAGASANA (Union nationale rwandaise) replied that brief meetings between Government and Opposition both inside and outside Parliament had taken place during the few weeks when Parliament had been in session. Since then, however, Parliament had suddenly been recessed for an indeterminate period, perhaps because of the contacts to which he had just referred.

51. Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) recalled that Mr. Rugira had told the Committee that the Government of Rwanda was ready to reach understanding with the Opposition, and that the Committee had just heard petitioners representing that Opposition speak of their anxiety for reconciliation. He asked the petitioners who were members of Parliament to explain the points on which they felt that understanding could be reached between Government and Opposition. For instance, he would like to know whether the Opposition parties had abandoned their monarchist platform in the light of the results of the referendum on the question of the Mwami.

52. Mr. RUTERA replied that he could not agree with the premise on which the question from the French representative was based, since the Opposition contested the validity both of the election and of the referendum on the question of the Mwami. That, however, was not the obstacle in the way of talks between Government and Opposition. Even after the September 1961 election, unjust though it had been, the Opposition had been anxious for talks with their fellow-countrymen in the presence of an impartial conciliator. The obstacle to such discussions was the state of emergency in Rwanda and the measures taken against the Opposition, such as the ban on freedom of movement. The Opposition felt that an atmosphere of peace and happiness should be restored in Rwanda.

53. Mr. CERNIK (Czechoslovakia) recalled that the Committee had heard a number of statements, including that by the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs, strongly advocating that Rwanda and Burundi should be separate States. He asked the petitioners whom they and their parties held responsible for the separatist tendencies in the Territory.

54. Mr. KAYIHURA (Union nationale rwandaise) replied that there were two main factors which rendered the unification of Rwanda and Burundi difficult. The first was the presence of the Belgian Administration, which, not content with having adopted a negative attitude towards union in the past, was doing its best to create new obstacles. The second factor was the recent evolution of the two parts of the Territory. The two factors were interrelated since developments in the two States had been provoked and promoted by the Administering Authority.

55. Mr. JUARBE Y JUARBE (Cuba) recalled that the French representative had asked the petitioners why the Opposition parties had not availed themselves of the appeal procedures provided for in the electoral legislation. He asked the petitioners whether they had confidence in the legal order laid down by the Administering Authority and whether the electoral legislation provided sufficient safeguards to make the Opposition feel that it could use the provisions for appeal.

56. Mr. RWAGASANA (Union nationale rwandaise) replied that the Opposition had no confidence in the legislation and the appeal procedures and that it regarded that legislation as a set of useless enactments.

57. Mr. KAYIHURA (Union nationale rwandaise) added that it was characteristic of the colonial system to enact a theoretically faultless legislation, while in practice placing the groups of parties which it did not favour in a position where they could not act.

58. Mr. KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET (France) said that the electoral legislation, and consequently the United Nations supervision of the elections, had not been contested before. That was a new element, of which he took note.

59. Mr. JEAN-LOUIS (Haiti) recalled that the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs had said at the 1259th meeting that his country had no personal interest in the Trust Territory. The Committee was aware of the fact that the former Prime Minister of Burundi had been assassinated by a European and it had just been told that Opposition members of Parliament in Rwanda had been arrested following the murder of a European. In that connexion he asked the petitioners whether there were many Belgians in Rwanda and in what economic activities they were engaged.

60. Mr. RWAGASANA (Union nationale rwandaise) replied that there were fewer than 6,000 Belgians in Ruanda-Urundi. A few of them were landowners, others worked in the Administration or in industries such as fishing, mining and cattle breeding. Belgium's interests in the Territory were too numerous to be disregarded: if they were not financial, they might be military, strategic or others such as the availability of manpower.

61. Mr. ACHKAR (Guinea) asked how long it would take to bring the situation in Rwanda back to normal, with particular reference to the resettlement of the refugees, the calming of passions and a rapprochement between the political parties, assuming there was a United Nations presence in and assistance to Rwanda and assuming further that the Administering Authority adopted a loyal attitude.

62. Mr. RWAGASANA (Union nationale rwandaise) replied that he did not think that the Administering Authority would adopt a positive attitude. Assuming, however, that it did so and that the political party enjoying its support felt the need for sincere co-operation with a view to improving the situation in the State and favoured contacts between all elements that would promote harmonious development towards independence, and assuming further that the refugee problem was solved through the resettlement of most of the refugees, he thought that six to nine months would be required. In that connexion, he wished to point out that his party did not stipulate as a necessary precondition the resettlement of each and every refugee.

63. Mr. ACHKAR (Guinea) asked Mr. Rwagasana whether he thought that by accelerating the necessary measures, it might be possible to bring the situation in Rwanda back to normal by the date which the spokesman for that State and the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs had suggested for Rwanda's accession to independence.

64. Mr. RWAGASANA (Union nationale rwandaise) replied that he had some difficulty in replying to that question. He had always been in favour of immediate unconditional independence but in the light of the events in the Congo he now favoured proper preparation for independence at the earliest possible date. He would be interested to hear from the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the representatives of the Governments of Rwanda and Burundi what arrangements in the way of economic plans or constitutional and other arrangements had been made for the indepen-

dence of the two States. He felt that the Trust Territory should accede to independence as soon as possible, perhaps before the end of 1962.

65. Mr. ACHKAR (Guinea) pointed out that his country favoured independence for all colonial peoples at the earliest possible opportunity, but by that it meant

genuine independence and not a meaningless scrap of paper. His delegation was anxious that the Committee should reach the right decision which would improve the lot of the people of Ruanda-Urundi.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.