



TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL

Twenty-sixth Session

OFFICIAL RECORDS

Monday, 27 June 1960,  
at 10.30 a.m.

NEW YORK

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President: Mr. Girolamo VITELLI (Italy).

Present:

The representatives of the following States: Australia, Belgium, Burma, China, France, India, Italy, New Zealand, Paraguay, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

The representatives of the following specialized agencies: International Labour Organisation; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; World Health Organization.

*In the absence of the President, U Tin Maung (Burma), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*Examination of conditions in the Trust Territory of Ruanda-Urundi (continued):\**

- (i) Annual report of the Administering Authority for the year 1958 (T/1487, T/1495, T/1540, T/L.985);
- (ii) Petitions and communications raising general questions (T/COM.3/L.26, 27, 29-38; T/PET.3/L.10-39);
- (iii) Report of the United Nations Visiting Mission to Trust Territories in East Africa, 1960 (T/1538);

- (iv) Examination of the possibility of sending a group of United Nations observers to supervise the elections to be held in June 1960 in Ruanda-Urundi;
- (v) Plans of political reform for the Trust Territory of Ruanda-Urundi (General Assembly resolution 1419 (XIV))

[Agenda items 3 (a), 4, 5 (a), 12 and 16]

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Reisdorff, special representative of the Administering Authority for the Trust Territory of Ruanda-Urundi, took a place at the Council table.*

GENERAL DEBATE (concluded)

1. Mr. CLAEYS BOUUAERT (Belgium) said that his delegation had been greatly encouraged by the constructive statements that had been made by all delegations, with one exception, and by the evident desire of members of the Council to help the Administering Authority to find the best means of leading the peoples of Ruanda and Urundi towards independence in peace and harmony and by democratic means. He wished also to thank the representatives of specialized agencies, in particular those of WHO and UNESCO, for their suggestions, which would be carefully studied. The advice offered by the members of the Council would also be given objective and careful consideration but the opinions expressed, however well-intentioned, were somewhat diverse and his Government could not abdicate its responsibilities for in the event of failure it would be impossible to hold those whose advice had been followed responsible. There was no fundamental disagreement between the Administering Authority and the vast majority of the members of the Council. Both wanted the same thing: to apply the principles and achieve the purposes of the United Nations Charter.

2. Every speaker who had referred to the disturbances in Ruanda had emphasized the need for reconciliation and the establishment of a climate of agreement. No one had a greater interest in calming passions than the Administering Authority, which would continue to work towards that end with the greatest possible flexibility and imagination.

3. It had rightly been pointed out that the greatest danger which faced the Territory was that the ghosts of November 1959 would continue to haunt people's minds. But it seemed obvious that there must be a reconciliation before anything could be forgotten. Reconciliation, and the laying of bitter memories which it might permit, would be a subject of discussion at all the talks and conferences that were to be held. The first of those talks had recently been held at Brussels, and its main object had been reconciliation in Ruanda. The Belgian Government had been

\* Resumed from the 1126th meeting.

deeply disappointed by the failure of the Union nationale ruandaise (UNAR) to send a representative, which had greatly reduced the value of the talks. From the initial preparatory stages, there had been the danger that the meeting might not take place, owing to the open conflict between the Mwami and the representatives of three large parties of Ruanda, who had accused him of not behaving as a constitutional sovereign above party, of using the influence of the monarchy to support one group and of obstinately maintaining certain symbols and emblems that were repugnant to his subjects. However, the Administering Authority had succeeded in persuading the representatives of the parties to meet it for talks. At Brussels, it had succeeded in getting them to change their original position of open hostility to the Mwami, and that change of attitude might help to calm passions.

4. In the final communiqué published at the end of the talks, the text of which he read out, the participants had declared that it was too early to try to draft a detailed and complete plan for national reconciliation, that the problem had been made harder both by the absence of representatives of one school of thought in Ruanda and by the difference between the Mwami and three of the four large parties in Ruanda, but that it was essential to take certain immediate steps, for the period that remained before the end of the communal elections, to restore peace to the country. Public opinion was divided about the person of the Mwami and even about the institution of monarchy, and Ruanda could freely choose the most suitable form of government only after the setting up of the institutions that would result from the elections. The meeting had therefore recommended that the Mwami and the Provisional Special Council should jointly prepare a solemn proclamation, for which both the Mwami and the Council had already drafted their own texts, and the Administration would be responsible for seeing that the proclamation was respected. The institution of the Kalinga—a drum decorated with the remains of conquered enemies—and the "biru"—keepers of the secret traditions—were, in the eyes of some of the people, symbols of domination which endangered the free expression of democratic feelings. The meeting recommended the Administration to give the people objective information about the whole question, so that public opinion could develop on lines more in keeping with the needs of civilization and democracy. The communiqué clarified the Administering Authority's attitude with regard to the Mwami and the Ruanda monarchy, on which certain delegations had commented.

5. The efforts to promote reconciliation would continue, and at the subsequent meetings further efforts would be made to unite everyone in the pursuit of the common good and an agreement on peaceful means of resolving the conflicts. One point on the agenda of those meetings would be the terms and conditions of a possible amnesty. As several delegations had pointed out, conferences, if they were to succeed, would have to bring together representatives of all tendencies. The Belgian Government would do its best to make them truly representative.

6. Several delegations had suggested that United Nations observers should attend the conferences, as a means of promoting better relations. The Administering Authority would study that question carefully and objectively, bearing in mind all the arguments

put forward. The Belgian Government already expected United Nations observers to attend the general conference with delegates of both States ("pays"), to be held in 1961 to study the means of accession to independence.

7. The words "type of independence" and "means of accession to independence" had been used during the debate. In using those expressions the Administering Authority had referred only to the form of institutions, which would have to be decided upon by those concerned, taking into account their present division into two States and their aspirations. The views of the Administering Authority had nothing to do with the question.

8. The Administering Authority would not fail to keep the United Nations informed of any changes in the situation and of the results of any conferences held with African political leaders.

9. Several delegations had expressed the opinion that the ideology of UNAR, a nationalist party, was not favoured by the Administering Authority. He would point out that the ideology of that party was opposed to that of other Ruanda parties, not to the Administration. The Administering Authority's role was to endeavour to smooth out conflicts of opinion by peaceful and democratic means. It had been necessary to take legal action against certain party leaders, not because of their ideology but because they had committed offences under the ordinary law. Those guilty of such acts, whatever their political loyalties, had been prosecuted and sentenced, and would continue to be, because otherwise the maintenance of order and public tranquillity, for which the Administering Authority was responsible, would be impossible and democracy itself inconceivable.

10. Some misunderstanding apparently still existed in the Council with regard to the communal elections. It had been planned, originally, that the members of those councils would constitute the electorate which would elect the legislative assemblies. But that procedure, which had been envisaged in the ministerial statement of 10 November 1959,<sup>1/</sup> had now been abandoned. The only purpose of the communal elections was, therefore, to elect communal councillors. The legislative assemblies would be elected directly in 1961, in principle by universal adult suffrage, and the Belgian Government had asked the United Nations to send a group of observers for that election.

11. With regard to the voting procedure laid down for the communal elections, he pointed out that it could not, as some feared, lead to the adoption of entire lists and to results which would not reflect the relative strength of the different parties. It was precisely the purpose of the voting procedure laid down to avoid that danger. The number of candidates elected would be proportional to the number of valid votes cast. For example, in a commune where five councillors were to be elected and where, out of a total of a thousand votes cast for two lists, one list received 600 votes and the other 400, three councillors would be elected from the first list and two from the second. Equitable representation of the political tendencies in the commune would thus be ensured.

12. With regard to the question of the stages of the Territory's accession to independence, the Indian

<sup>1/</sup> See T/1502.

representative's statement that democratic institutions must be introduced immediately and that the culmination of that process should be the independence of the Territory was the best possible definition of the principle informing the Administering Authority's plan for the transformation of the Territory's institutions. The corner-stone of those democratic institutions would be the legislative assemblies to be elected in 1961. That step would be followed by the constitution of responsible Governments.

13. His delegation supported the proposal that the question of Ruanda-Urundi should be included as a separate item on the agenda of the fifteenth session of the General Assembly. That would make it possible to consider in good time, by separating it from the examination of the report of the Trusteeship Council, the question of sending a group of observers to Ruanda-Urundi for the legislative elections.

14. Mr. REISDORFF (Special Representative) replying to some delegations' criticisms of the Administering Authority for the policy it had followed during the disturbances in Ruanda and for the present situation in that State, said that nearly all delegations had recognized that the cause of the November incidents had been the tensions existing within the population of Ruanda. As he had several times pointed out, the origin of those tensions lay in the desire for emancipation on the part of the mass of the population and in the reaction provoked by that movement. In 1959, at the Council's twenty-fourth session, the Administering Authority had stated that it had taken a clear position against the abuses still permitted by some local authorities and had decided to punish any extortion severely. It had had reason to hope that the opposition which had arisen between two political tendencies and was represented by two political groups—the Association pour la promotion sociale de la masse and the Association des éleveurs du Ruanda—might be appeased by social reforms, including the abolition of the suzerainty contract for cattle and the liberation of the agricultural land tenure system, and that future indigenous councils would make it possible to associate all classes of the population more closely with the conduct of public affairs. Lastly, in abolishing compulsory agricultural work, in agreement with the High Council of Ruanda, the Administering Authority had relied on the maturity of the inhabitants.

15. The Administration's policy, which was to promote the gradual evolution of indigenous society so as to give satisfaction to the working masses, had been hindered by the reaction of a part of the population, which had opposed the demands of the people, at first by manoeuvres of intimidation and then by violence. The Administration had been reproached, in that connexion, for having been insufficiently farsighted and for not having taken adequate measures to halt the disturbances of 1959 immediately. In fact, the scope and suddenness of the violent demonstrations by the peasant masses had surprised the most attentive observers. But the Administration and the "gendarmérie" had taken immediate action with all the forces available to them, pending the arrival of reinforcements.

16. The Administering Authority had also been reproached for not having used the traditional authority of the Mwami to support the forces of order from the beginning of the disturbances. In fact, the Adminis-

tering Authority had constantly enjoined the Mwami to use his influence to pacify the parties, and had given the greatest possible publicity to the proclamations addressed to the population by the Mwami. In Urundi the Mwami, who had the confidence of the entire population, had re-established harmony, in co-operation with the Administering Authority, by his direct intervention at the threatened points. In Ruanda, where part of the population was opposed to the Mwami, direct intervention by the Mwami would inevitably have produced a general conflict.

17. The Administration had also been reproached for having, on political grounds, dissolved the High Councils of the States and replaced them by interim councils. In fact, the term of office of those Councils would have ended in February 1960. The High Council of Urundi, which had met until the last day, had been replaced, for the conduct of urgent and current business, by its permanent delegation, which had taken the name of Interim Committee and was assisted by three specialized committees, including the Electoral Committee, in which the representatives of the political parties had a majority of the seats. In Ruanda, events had made it necessary to dissolve the Council several weeks before the expiration of its term of office and to replace it by the Provisional Special Council, in which each of the political parties was represented.

18. Lastly, the situation in Ruanda had been described as a military régime. In that connexion, he wished to repeat that the régime of military occupation had been declared in force only during the period of disorders, and had been lifted immediately afterwards. At present, the State was being administered by the civilian services and the only function of the detachments of "gendarmérie" was to maintain order, so as to ensure the freedom of the elections. The special powers granted to the Resident were intended to make action possible if the situation, which still called for special vigilance, deteriorated seriously.

19. The electoral campaign had been in progress in Ruanda since 1 June. Electoral tracts were freely printed and distributed and public meetings were held freely. UNAR had held more of them than any other party, and in some territories its lists of candidates were in the majority.

*Mr. Reisdorff, special representative of the Administering Authority for the Trust Territory of Ruanda-Urundi, withdrew.*

Revision of the Questionnaire relating to Trust Territories: reports of the Sub-Committee on the Questionnaire (T/1506, T/1539) (continued)\*

[Agenda item 9]

#### TENTH PROGRESS REPORT (T/1539)

20. Sir Andrew COHEN (United Kingdom) referred to annex I of the tenth progress report of the Sub-Committee on the Questionnaire (T/1539), which dealt with Tanganyika. He pointed out that some questions in annex I concerned subjects—for example, the abolition of the system of parity representation—which were out of date, and that others were drafted in such a way as to amount almost to a suggestion of the

\* Resumed from the 1112th meeting.

policy to be followed. The Administering Authority had submitted its observations (T/1522) to the Sub-Committee, which had adopted some of them but had not felt able to do so in all cases.

21. He proposed that, in order to save time, the special questionnaire in annex I should be adopted as a whole, rather than discussed paragraph by paragraph.

*It was so decided.*

#### NINTH PROGRESS REPORT (T/1506)

22. The PRESIDENT proposed that, in accordance with the usual practice, the ninth progress report of the Sub-Committee on the Questionnaire (T/1506),

which concerned Ruanda-Urundi, should be transmitted to the Administering Authority for its comments.

*It was so decided.*

#### Periodic visiting missions to Trust Territories (continued)

23. Mr. RIFAI (United Arab Republic) suggested that the Council should, before the end of the current session, appoint the members of the visiting mission which was to visit the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands in 1961.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.