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PETITION FROM MESSRS. UBALD KIMONYO, GABRIEL NGOMIRARONKA,
AND JEAN BAPTISTE KIBIBIRO CONCERNING RUANDA-URUNDI

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Kampala, 15 May 1962

Note for the General Assembly of the United Nations

To the Secretary-General of the United Nations,
New York

We take the liberty of addressing this communication to you and ask you to transmit it to the General Assembly at its session of 7 June 1962.

In this note we inform you of our wishes and views on the question of His Majesty Kigeli V, Mwami of Rwanda, and the question of the Rwandese refugees. At the General Assembly session of February 1962 a Commission of conciliation for Rwanda-Burundi was made specially responsible for guaranteeing civil liberties, promoting the political and economic union of Rwanda-Burundi, national reconciliation and the resettlement of refugees and, as a distinct and separate matter for dealing with the question of His Majesty Kigeli V.

The General Assembly approved a motion by the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs to the effect that the question of the Mwami was a matter of the Mwami as a private individual and would be examined from that angle. We venture to assure you that the question of the Mwami is not a personal matter, but a matter of concern to the whole Rwandese nation. We infinitely regret the attitude of our leaders who were petitioners at the last session of the United Nations

concerning the question of the Mwami and also their recent declaration on the Rwanda radio. In that statement the refugees were urged to return to Rwanda under the present Government. There some of them would be given back their property and others would be settled in uninhabited areas. (It is to be noted that the areas mentioned are infested by human and animal sleeping sickness). No one - whether it is our leaders or the United Nations, speaking from Kigali or New York - ventures to assert that civil liberties have been restored, no one can assert that the referendum and the elections took place in normally acceptable conditions; or that the above-mentioned resolutions on the question of the Mwami of Rwanda have been carried out even in part. Our political leaders who are advocating the return of the refugees to Rwanda and co-operation with the present Government dare not travel anywhere in Rwanda as their parliamentary immunity is purely fictitious. Nazi-type massacres are continually being committed, as witness the recent massacres in the District of Biumba which claimed over a thousand victims, including Government officials such as Ndejuru Claver, a medical assistant in that District. Racial discrimination is rife and the children of refugees are excluded from the Rwandese schools. The recent broadcast statement by the Rwandese Minister of National Education, together with that of the Inspector of the Diocese of Nyundo, on 10 and 11 May, only goes to confirm this, and all possible measures are taken to root out and exclude all children who no longer have their parents in Rwanda. In the circumstances, how can the refugees be expected to return to Rwanda while others are constantly being driven out? What can we do about the Belgian soldiers who already dare to come and kill refugees in British territory, as they did with the persons called Ndimbati and Gihayi at Mirama (Ankole in Uganda)? It seems to us, who have followed Belgian colonial policy for at least twenty years, that the Belgians have always aimed at the complete destruction of the Rwandese monarchy in order better to serve their colonialist and imperialist ends.

Any pretext will do for deposing the Mwami. Thus, His Majesty Yuhi Musinga was deposed in 1931 for having failed to be converted to Christianity (cf Monseigneur Classe, Kapgayi 1945). The Mwami Mutara Rudahigwa, who had faithfully served colonialism, disappeared mysteriously at Usumbura on 25 July 1959 because he had realized that he must serve his people first and free his country from the colonialist yoke. Since he had become very popular because of the

suppression of compulsory labour (corvées) under which the masses groaned, the Belgians did not dare to incite a revolution while he was alive and considered it wiser to eliminate him secretly just before he went to the United Nations. The Belgian Government thought it had buried the Rwandese monarchy for good; what was its confusion and surprise to learn of the Mwima coup which acclaimed Prince Ndahindurwa Kigeli V in the presence of the Belgian representative Mr. Paul Harroy, then Governor of Ruanda-Urundi, who was infuriated, amazed and bewildered.

Since then the colonialists have used other diabolical manoeuvres to eradicate the idea of the Mwami among the Rwandese people, resorting to all the means at hand: the official investiture of the Mwami by the Belgian representative was intended to be done in secret, and as an absolute ruler, so as to make him unpopular, but that failed completely, because the Mwami with his Council, insisted on being named a constitutional Mwami. Meanwhile a republican movement had been born in the chambers of Monseigneur Perraudin where the present President, Gregoire Kayibanda, edited the bi-monthly Kinyamateka, then a propaganda organ of the Belgian colonial Administration. The events of November 1959 brought documents to light which clearly show that the first one to be liquidated was to be the Mwami Kigeli V (see Affaire Sindibona R.M.F.17.136). The Mwami's authority was fully taken advantage of by the Belgian colonialists in order to induce the docile and credulous Bakiga to expel the Tutsi from the mountainous regions, and since then there have been unceasing massacres. Subsequently it was considered expedient to move the Mwami to Usumbura, where he was kept under house arrest until the date of his forced exile. The retention of Belgian soldiers in the country is simply a measure of intimidation aimed at preventing any revolt against the Belgian civil authorities and any demand for the unconditional return of the Mwami by the Rwandese people. We declare frankly and in full knowledge of the facts that the refugees will never be able to return to Rwanda without the return of the Mwami, the only guarantee for the restoration of peace and national reconciliation. We have lived in various refugee camps in Burundi, in the Congo, in Tanganyika and in Uganda, and we are still living with refugees; that is a proof of the authenticity of our statement. The recent statement of the esteemed President of TANU concerning

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the refugees who are incessantly streaming into Tanganyika merely confirms what we are saying. The Belgian colonialists are making every effort to leave Rwanda in a worse chaos than the Congo and are impeding any kind of union with neighbouring countries.

That is the whole key to the assassination of Prince Louis Rwagasore of Burundi and the obstinate maintenance of the forced exile of His Majesty Kigeli V, both of whom were co-operating for the future of their countries.

We entirely dissociate ourselves from those who intend and wish to solve the Rwandese question separately from the question of the Mwami, His Majesty Kigeli V, the only legitimate authority; and we venture to hope that the honourable Assembly of the United Nations will take this note into account in its discussions and will be inspired by it in its decisions and resolutions.

For the refugees of the territories bordering on Rwanda

The Rwandese refugees: all former political prisoners, U. Kimonyo, chief of chiefdom, member of the CSP, alternate deputy (Signed)
Gabriel Ngomiraronka, lay priest of Rwanda (Signed)
Jean Baptiste Kibibiro (Signed)
