

TRUSTEESHIP
COUNCILCONSEIL
DE TUTELLET/197
20 July 1948

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

MASTER FILE

REPORT OF THE DRAFTING COMMITTEE ON THE REPORT ON THE ADMINISTRATION
OF RUANDA-URUNDI FOR 1947Chairman: Mr. Awni Khalidy (Iraq)

The Report on the Administration of Ruanda-Urundi for the year 1947 was received by the Secretary-General on 6 May 1948 and was transmitted to members of the Council on 14 May 1948.

At the second meeting of its third session, the Council decided that the Report, which had been received one day later than required by Rule 72, paragraph 2, of its Rules of Procedure, should nevertheless be examined at the third session.

During the fourth, fifth and sixth meetings, Mr. Maurice Simon, Governor of Ruanda-Urundi, who had been appointed as the special representative of the Administering Authority, answered questions on the Report and on the administration of the Territory.

During the nineteenth and twentieth meetings, the Council held a general discussion with a view to formulating conclusions and recommendations relating to the Report and to the Territory, and appointed a drafting committee consisting of the representatives of France, Iraq, New Zealand and the Philippines, to draft a report, in accordance with Rules 100 and 101 of its Rules of Procedure, for inclusion in the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly.

The Drafting Committee held four meetings and prepared a draft, which was considered by the Council at its ..th meeting on 1948.

/PART I

PART I. REVIEW OF CONDITIONS, BASED ON THE REPORT OF
THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY

(a) General

The Trust Territory of Ruanda-Urundi lies in Central Africa, approximately equidistant from both the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans. Its area of 54,172 square kilometres includes large mountainous areas, and the estimated population of 3,718,545 Africans makes it the most densely populated Territory in Africa.

(b) Political

Previously occupied by Germany, the Territory was entrusted by Mandate of the League of Nations to Belgium in 1924. Under the Belgian law of 21 August 1925, the Territory is united administratively with the Belgian Congo, legislative authority being delegated through the Governor-General of the Congo to the Governor of Ruanda-Urundi, with the Territory maintaining its own separate budget.

Local administration of the indigenous population is carried out by the existing indigenous authorities under the control of the Belgian administrative officials; the division of the Territory into the separate native states of Ruanda and Urundi, each headed by a hereditary Mwami, is maintained. Local administration is carried out by chiefs and sub-chiefs, and both the Bami and the chiefs are assisted by indigenous councils. All appointments of chiefs and sub-chiefs are subject to the approval of the Administering Authority, which maintains a special school for candidates for appointment to the positions of chiefs and sub-chiefs. The indigenous authorities maintain budgets and administer indigenous courts of justice.

All senior administrative posts are held by Europeans, the subordinate positions being filled by Africans, of whom 2,964 were employed in 1947, apart from those in the defence and police forces and temporary workers.

(c) Economic

The economic basis of the Territory is agriculture and stock-raising. Industrial crops for export, such as coffee, cotton, pyrethrum and quinine, palm oil and castor oil, are cultivated as a result of encouragement by the Administering Authority.

In 1947, the indigenous inhabitants occupied about 36,000 square kilometres of land, the Government 470 square kilometres and non-indigenous inhabitants 205 square kilometres. European colonists numbered 101.

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In order to provide against famine, the last outbreak of which occurred in 1943-44, the Administering Authority has imposed measures including the compulsory cultivation of crops, and further measures are being taken for the provision of food reserves.

The chief indigenous industries are pottery, basket-making, dairy farming and production of hides. Among mining and agricultural industries, three out of 331 in 1947 were indigenous, and among manufacturing industries 207 out of 558 were indigenous.

Government revenue is derived principally from income tax, customs duties, fees and poll tax, the latter being the principal tax imposed on the indigenous population, and varying from 35 to 115 francs per head per year.

(d) Social

Approximately 52,000 indigenous inhabitants were employed on a permanent basis in European undertakings in 1947, and in addition there is an outward movement of seasonal labour into the Belgian Congo and the neighbouring British territories. The conditions of employment of indigenous workers are governed by a law setting out the requirements of contract terms, rations, lodging, medical care and other matters.

The Administering Authority maintains a medical service which includes 8 state and 7 rural hospitals, 10 subsidized mission hospitals and 5 others maintained by mining companies. In addition, there are 72 separate dispensaries, maintained partly by the Government, partly by indigenous authorities and partly by the missions. The total number of medical practitioners at the end of 1947 was 35 and the number of indigenous medical workers in the Government service was 530, of whom 63 possessed diplomas.

(e) Educational

Education is undertaken entirely by religious missions, with the exception of one school group maintained by the Administering Authority. In 1947 the Administration subsidized 1,429 mission primary schools serving some 112,000 pupils; in addition there were 2,687 schools, with some 211,000 pupils, which did not attain the standard required to earn a subsidy. There are no mission secondary schools.

The total amount specifically provided for education in the 1947 Budget represented 7.34 per cent of the total budget.

Four libraries were established by the Government in 1947.

PART II. OBSERVATIONS

1. Political Advancement

(a) The Trusteeship Agreement

The Council noted that the legislation approving the Trusteeship Agreement for Ruanda-Urundi had not yet been passed by the Belgian Parliament. At the same time, however, it noted the assurance of the representative of Belgium that the reason for this delay had been the slowness of parliamentary procedure, and that the fact that the Trusteeship Agreement had not yet been ratified in no way implied that it was not fully in effect.

The Council expressed the hope that ratification of the Agreement would take place in the near future.

(b) Administrative Union

The Council observed that the Territory had been united administratively with the Belgian Congo since 1925, but that its separate juridical personality had been preserved.

The hope was expressed that, in view of the fact that Ruanda-Urundi was now a Trust Territory, its separate political entity would continue to be preserved, either by a revision of the Law of 21 August 1925 or by some other suitable measure.

(c) Promotion of Political Advancement

The Council noted that, even making allowances for their primitive nature and their conditions of life, the progress so far made by the indigenous inhabitants in undertaking democratic processes was disappointing, and that they still lived in a state of feudalism.

The Council observed in particular that the way of political progress must be by educational progress, and that an obligation rested with the Administering Authority to provide an educational basis sufficient for political advancement.

The Council was of the opinion that the Administering Authority should give particular attention to devising practical measures aimed at promoting the political advancement of the inhabitants and their progressive development towards self-government or independence. Such measures should include a revision of the constitutions of both the central and local administrative organs, and preliminary steps should be taken towards the ultimate establishment of representative government based on some form of electoral system.

The Council observed further that it would be desirable that the Administering Authority should supply information as to the steps which it

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was prepared to take towards furthering the political advancement of the inhabitants.

(d) General Administration

The Council noted that the newly-constituted Council of the Vice-Government-General was composed exclusively of Europeans and that, although the interests of the indigenous inhabitants were represented therein, they were represented indirectly through European representatives.

The Council further observed that the Governor, the heads of departments and services, the residents, administrators, assistant administrators and agents, were also exclusively European.

The Council was of the opinion that the Administering Authority might wish to consider granting to the indigenous population some form of direct participation in the higher administration of the Territory. In particular, the Council considered, the Administering Authority might find it possible to give them direct representation in the Council of the Vice-Government-General and increased training to enable them to fill positions in the administration, to extend the curriculum in the school for chiefs and sub-chiefs, and to increase the number of persons trained there.

(e) Indigenous Political Structure.

The Council noted that the Administering Authority had preserved the indigenous tribal and political organization of the Territory, particularly the institutions of hereditary chieftainships, sub-chieftainships and their local and regional councils.

The Council expressed doubt as to whether these institutions offered sufficient opportunity for the development of a sense of political responsibility among the indigenous inhabitants as a whole, and observed that it would look forward with great interest to any improvements in the whole system which might be effected in the future.

The Council was of the opinion that the political, social, economic and cultural advancement of the indigenous population could be better furthered through progressive modification of the tribal system by the creation of local organs of self-government.

The Council noted that the indigenous population was governed by two forms of administration: the European administration and the indigenous administration. The Council felt that a basic question was whether it would be advisable and feasible progressively to establish one system of government in which both Europeans and indigenous inhabitants would participate, and in which eventually the indigenous inhabitants would assume the principal functions and responsibilities.

2. Economic Advancement

(a) General

The section of the Report dealing with economic matters occasioned the Council much concern. While some strong views on the unfavourable economic conditions were expressed by some members, and while such criticisms must be read in the light of geographical and economic limitations in the Territory, the Council, as a whole, was of the opinion that economic conditions, including the system of taxation, required improvement, that economic benefits were not sufficiently directed to the interests of the indigenous population and that much remained to be done in this respect.

(b) Public Debt

The Council noted the statement of the special representative of the Administering Authority that the public debt of the Territory, which in 1944 stood at 175.4 million francs, had been reduced to 20.8 million francs, and that the final closing of the accounts might reveal it to have been liquidated entirely.

The Council also noted the explanation of the representative of the Administering Authority that this rapid reduction in the debt had resulted from the unavailability of supplies and the absence of personnel necessary to maintain services at a normal level during the war.

The Council felt, nevertheless, that it might have been advisable not to repay this public debt in such a short period of time. In view of the limited revenues of the Territory, for such essential territorial services as social welfare and education, it might have been desirable had the Administering Authority retained at least a part of the funds, devoted to liquidating the debt, to improve the economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants.

(c) The Problem of Famine

The Council noted that large-scale famines had occurred from time to time in the Territory. The Council observed that, after a serious food shortage in 1928-29 the Administering Authority - then the Mandatory Power - took precautions which led it to believe that, except under extremely abnormal circumstances, all further danger would be averted; nevertheless another severe famine took place in 1943-44.

The Council expressed its concern at the recent recurrence of famine conditions and expressed the opinion that the precautions previously taken had not been adequate, and it was to be desired that every possible measure to prevent such disaster should be taken in the future.

3. Social Advancement

(a) Labour Conditions

The Council noted that although children are employed in the Territory on a casual basis in certain light agricultural work, no legislation existed which relates specifically to conditions of child labour.

The Council was of the opinion that the Administering Authority should pass special legislation to control, and should maintain a careful watch on, the position of child labour to ensure its proper control and protection, especially since the inadequacy of educational facilities might tend to encourage children to take up employment prematurely.

(b) Exaction of Labour in Default of Payment of Taxes

The Council noted the existence of the practice by which labour may be exacted in default of the payment of taxes.

Concern was expressed by some members of the Council at this practice; the Council felt that, although it was necessary to conserve the revenue, every effort should be made to guard against any abuse of such a system.

(c) Medical Services

The Council noted the state of the medical services of the Territory and felt that the number of 35 European medical practitioners to meet the requirements of nearly 4 million inhabitants was insufficient.

The Council expressed the hope that the number of physicians would be increased so far as was practicable, and that the Administering Authority might devise measures for training indigenous inhabitants as physicians and increasing the numbers trained as other medical personnel.

The Council also expressed the hope that more funds might be allocated to provide for the medical needs of the indigenous population.

4. Educational Advancement

The Council noted that the schools in the Territory might be grouped into three categories: namely, Government schools, private schools subsidized by the Government and private schools not subsidized by the Government. There was only one Government primary school, divided into a part for boys and a part for girls, in Astrida. The rest of the primary schools were mission schools. The allocation for education was only 7.34 per cent of the total budget.

The Council took into consideration both the present state of education and achievements of the Administering Authority, having regard to the limitations under which it laboured. It was of the opinion that education
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was of the most vital importance in the advancement of the Territory. While acknowledging that the Administering Authority had done much towards that end and had made progress, the fact remained that much was left to be desired.

The Council noted that the lack of educational enlightenment was not conducive to stability, political, social or economic advancement in general. Illiteracy was prevalent, schools insufficient in number, and advanced education practically unknown, and considerably increased expenditure on education would be essential for many years to come in order to meet this situation.

The fact that education was almost entirely left to the missions revealed the inadequacy of the initiative both of the Administering Authority and the indigenous population - who could hardly be expected to take the lead in that respect. The help of the missions was welcome, but not sufficient alone, and totally non-existent beyond the primary education stage.

There were insufficient public libraries and no government scholarships - either in the Territory or in the Congo or in Belgium itself - whereby the indigenous population might obtain the benefit of higher and professional education, which would ultimately be of immense help to the political, economic and social conditions of the Territory.

PART III. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Trusteeship Council, in presenting to the General Assembly the conclusions and recommendations arising from its examination of the Annual Report on the administration of the Trust Territory of Ruanda-Urundi for the year 1947,

- (a) States its firm opinion that the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the Territory are inter-dependent one on the other,
- (b) Recognizes that in its efforts to promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the Territory the Administering Authority has been confronted with the difficulties inherent in a remote country of irregular climate and largely mountainous terrain, densely populated by a people who have only in comparatively recent years felt the impact of more modern civilization;
- (c) Commends the Administering Authority for the positive achievements it has made in furthering the wellbeing and progress of the inhabitants; and
- (d) Makes the following conclusions and recommendations designed to promote the interests of the inhabitants and their progressive development towards the ultimate objective of self-government or independence, in accordance with Chapters XII and XIII of the Charter and the relevant Trusteeship Agreement.

1. Political Advancement

(a) The Trusteeship Agreement

The Council welcomes the assurance given by the Administering Authority that the Trusteeship Agreement has been put fully into effect, and expresses the hope that it will be formally ratified by the Belgian Parliament at an early date.

(b) Administrative Union

The Council expresses the hope that, in view of the fact that Ruanda-Urundi is now a Trust Territory, its separate political entity will continue to be preserved, either by a revision of the Law of 21 August 1925 or by some other suitable measure.

(c) Promotion of Political Advancement

The Council firmly believes that increased facilities for general and specialized education are an essential prerequisite of any marked progress towards political advancement. The Council is of the opinion that the way of progress in political matters must be by way of education.

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In this connection, the Council draws particular attention to its conclusions and recommendations on educational advancement.

The Council, noting that no real progress has yet been made towards developing in the indigenous population the understanding and practice of democratic processes, recommends that the Administering Authority should review both the central and local administrative organs of government in such a way that the new administrative structure would be in complete accordance with the objective of developing the indigenous inhabitants politically towards eventual independence. In particular, the Council recommends that the Administering Authority should introduce, in at least a preliminary way, some form of electoral system.

The Council invites the Administering Authority to keep it informed on the steps which it takes, and contemplates taking, in this respect.

(d) General Administration

The Council recommends that the Administering Authority, in order to grant the indigenous inhabitants a progressively important share in the conduct of their own affairs and those of the Territory as a whole, should provide increased facilities for training indigenous inhabitants to fill responsible posts in the administration, and should study the possibility of granting them, at the earliest possible moment, direct representation in the higher administrative organs.

(e) Indigenous Political Structure

The Council, noting that the Administering Authority has preserved the indigenous political and tribal structure of the Territory, commends the Administering Authority for not forcibly uprooting the indigenous institutions and customs, but suggests that the present system does not offer sufficient opportunity for the development of a sense of political responsibility among the indigenous inhabitants as a whole, and that their political, social, economic and cultural advancement could better be promoted by the progressive establishment of local organs of self-government. The Council invites the Administering Authority to study the desirability and feasibility of gradually establishing one system of government in which both Europeans and indigenous inhabitants would participate, and in which the indigenous inhabitants would assume eventually the principal functions and responsibilities.

2. Economic Advancement

(a) General

The Council suggests that the Administering Authority should review from time to time the system and incidence of taxation as it applies to the /indigenous

indigenous inhabitants, with a view to eliminating any possible sources of undue hardship.

(b) Famine

The Council, noting the recent recurrence of serious famines in the Territory, and noting the measures which have been adopted so far in order to alleviate this cause of economic and social distress, urges the Administering Authority without delay to put into effect the new programme on a large scale, and suggests that it should avail itself of the assistance in this respect of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

The Council moreover invites the Administering Authority to inform it in the next annual report on the Territory of the measures taken, or contemplated to be taken, in this respect.

(c) European Colonization

The Council, noting the increased number of European colonists in the Territory, requests the Administering Authority to furnish it with more information in the next annual report on the Territory on the European colonization policy pursued there.

3. Social Advancement

(a) Medical Services

The Council recommends that the number of physicians be increased so far as is practicable, and that the Administering Authority devise measures for training indigenous inhabitants as physicians and for increasing the numbers trained as other medical personnel. The Council recommends also that the Administering Authority take all further steps necessary to provide for the medical needs of the indigenous population.

(b) Social Rehabilitation of Prisoners

The Council recommends that the Administering Authority introduce a system of payments for labour performed by long-term prisoners to enable them to start a new life on discharge from prison.

(c) Vital Statistics

The Council recommends that a more adequate system of vital statistics should be introduced in the Territory.

4. Educational Advancement

(a) Educational Facilities

The Council expresses concern at the inadequacy of educational facilities in the Territory. It considers that there is need for increasing the existing educational facilities in order to combat illiteracy, which is still prevalent, and to promote self-government.

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The Council further considers that the number of schools and teachers should be increased so as to provide adequate primary and secondary education.

The Council recommends that a complete programme embodying the construction of school buildings and the provision of adequate equipment, including libraries should be established.

The Council considers that the Administering Authority should assume responsibility for ensuring that adequate facilities for elementary education are made available to children of school age throughout the Territory, and should make every effort to adopt and maintain standards of instruction applicable to all schools of the Territory.

(b) Budgetary Appropriations

The Council considers that the budgetary appropriations allocated to education by the Administering Authority should be progressively increased in order to establish as wide as possible a system of primary and higher education.

(c) Scholarships and Higher Education

The Council recommends that scholarships should be granted to qualified students in the Territory to enable them to proceed to higher institutions of learning, either in Africa or overseas.

(d) General

The Council requests the Administering Authority to include in future annual reports on the Territory an account of the steps taken, or contemplated to be taken, to the foregoing ends, together with statistical data showing the degree of illiteracy among the various age levels of the indigenous inhabitants.

5. Miscellaneous

The Council hopes that future annual reports:

will be in the form of answers to the questionnaire approved by the Council;

will include photographic illustrations of the people of the Territory and their conditions of life, anti-soil-erosion measures, schools, etc., and also a map of the Territory;

will include statistics, especially those concerning financial matters, which cover the entire calendar year for which the report is made.