

United Nations
**GENERAL
 ASSEMBLY**
 FIFTEENTH SESSION

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**FOURTH COMMITTEE, 1127th
 MEETING**

**Monday, 3 April 1961,
 at 3.35 p.m.**

New York

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Chairman: Mr. Adnan M. PACHACHI (Iraq).

*In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Ortiz de Rozas
 (Argentina), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

AGENDA ITEM 45

**Question of the future of Ruanda-Urundi (A/
 4689-A/4692, A/4694, A/4706 and Add.1, A/
 C.4/471, A/C.4/476) (*continued*)**

HEARING OF PETITIONERS (*continued*)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Aloys Munyangaju, representative of the Association pour la promotion sociale de la masse (APROSOMA), Mr. Nelson Rwagasore, representative of the Mouvement pour la réconciliation nationale au Rwanda, Mr. Fidèle Nkundabagenzi, representative of the Parti du mouvement de l'émancipation hutu (PARMEHUTU), Mr. Prosper Bwanakweri, representative of the Rassemblement démocratique ruandais (RADER), Mr. Côme Rebero, Mr. Joseph Rutsindintwarane and Mr. Michel Rwagasana, representatives of the Union nationale ruandaise (UNAR), took places at the Committee table.

1. Mr. CARPIO (Philippines) thanked the petitioners for the replies they had given him at the 1126th meeting. They had confirmed his delegation's concern over the dangers inherent in precipitate action in a problem of the complexity and explosiveness of that of Ruanda-Urundi.

2. Mr. KENNEDY (Ireland) said that at the 1126th meeting the representative of Denmark had very ably raised several crucial points and had elicited some interesting replies from the petitioners. In the circumstances, he would ask but one question, which, however, was fundamental. The Committee had heard the representatives of the main political parties of Ruanda express their disagreements on the major issues facing their country. It was, however, clear to everyone that if those basic cleavages persisted, Ruanda would attain independence divided against itself. He therefore wished to know whether the representatives of the political parties present at United Nations Headquarters would be ready to avail themselves of that opportunity in order to try and take the essential first step towards agreement. He was not suggesting that they should engage in a round-table conference because that would

be too much to expect. They might, however, hold private and unofficial discussions among themselves, possibly under the chairmanship of a neutral chairman, with a view to reaching some kind of working agreement, which was a *sine qua non* for peaceful accession to independence.

3. Mr. MUNYANGAJU (Association pour la promotion sociale de la masse) said that the representative of Ireland had raised a fundamental issue. While in principle there could be agreement on the possibility of holding such a meeting, the climate and conditions remained to be settled. Not all the parties of Ruanda were represented at United Nations Headquarters and there was also the question of equal representation for all the parties. The details had not been sufficiently studied to make a meeting possible there and then. His party therefore had reservations, though it thought that the idea put forward by the Irish representative was very good.

4. Mr. RWAGASANA (Union nationale ruandaise) said that his party was always ready to take part in discussions with a view to achieving compromise solutions if possible.

5. Mr. NKUNDABAGENZI (Parti du mouvement de l'émancipation hutu) said that he was in agreement with the reply given by Mr. Munyangaju. The idea of holding a meeting at which solutions to the problems dividing the people of Ruanda could be sought had emanated from his party. The basis on which the various parties would be represented at such discussions still remained to be decided; UNAR had raised objections on that score. PARMEHUTU remained convinced that common sense must prevail and that a round-table conference would be held.

6. Mr. RWAGASORE (Mouvement pour la réconciliation nationale au Rwanda) thought that a round-table conference must be held and that all the difficulties would be overcome. The petitioners had come before the Committee with certain instructions from their parties and he therefore appreciated the concern expressed by the representatives of APROSOMA and PARMEHUTU. It would first be necessary for each of them to obtain further instructions from his respective party committees concerning the line to be followed in the course of the talks. He was, however, agreeable to participate in a first step towards reconciliation.

7. Mr. KENNEDY (Ireland) said that he had been encouraged by the petitioners' replies to his question and by their replies at the 1126th meeting to the questions concerning an amnesty put to them by the Danish representative. The sole wish of the Irish delegation was to see the people of Ruanda attain independence in conditions of happiness and prosperity, and above all in conditions of peace. He would have great difficulty in voting for early independence for the Territory if he felt that independence might touch off serious civil

disturbances similar to the tragic collapse in another part of Africa. The petitioners who were at present merely co-existing should avail themselves of their presence at the United Nations Headquarters to progress towards co-operation. It was for the representatives of the people of Ruanda to reach agreement and it behoved them to take the first step in that direction. He could envisage no better first step than for them to come together informally and quietly.

8. Mr. WEEKS (Liberia) said that his delegation had been greatly disturbed by the statement made by Mr. Rebero to the effect that people in Ruanda lived under the threat of expulsion or were even obliged to flee their country. He asked Mr. Rebero whether he had been referring to past or to present conditions.

9. Mr. REBERO (Union nationale ruandaise) said that he had had both in mind. People had been compelled to flee their country in order to escape ill-treatment and the destruction of their property; incidents involving arson and murder had occurred as recently as the week of the petitioners' arrival at United Nations Headquarters. Under existing conditions it was useless for the refugees to return, for they would merely find themselves once again in the predicament from which they had fled.

10. Mr. WEEKS (Liberia) recalled that one of the UNAR petitioners had referred in his statement to the recruitment of an army and a police force among PARMEHUTU members and to the distribution of arms to that party's followers. He asked whether weapons had been distributed to individuals.

11. Mr. RUTSINDINTWARANE (Union nationale ruandaise) replied that an army of 1,500 men and a police force of 700-750 men had been recruited among the PARMEHUTU members. The military personnel were armed; the police did not all carry arms, although there was nothing to prevent their being supplied with weapons at a later date. Most burgomasters, all the Ministers and nearly all the members of the Council of Ruanda had received rifles, revolvers and even sub-machine guns. Ordinary councillors and active members of PARMEHUTU had been provided with weapons. That was a potential source of danger for a section of the population of Ruanda.

12. Mr. MUNYANGAJU (Association pour la promotion sociale de la masse) said that he would be willing to have Mr. Rutsindintwarane's allegation that all the Ministers were in possession of arms put to the test. He himself was a Minister and he invited the Committee to request the Belgian representative to ask the authorities in the Territory to search his house for arms while he was in New York.

13. Mr. NKUNDABAGENZI (Parti du mouvement de l'émancipation hutu) said that Mr. Rebero's statement was not correct. There had been no organized or repeated killings in Ruanda since the troubles of November 1959. While he did not expect Mr. Rebero to be objective when speaking of the majority parties, he had been surprised by the reference to arms being issued to PARMEHUTU members: Mr. Rebero must have been the only person to possess that information. The reason the members of the armed forces and the police were mainly Hutu was that the Hutu were more amenable to army discipline, whereas the Tutsi wished

to be administrators and politicians. Nevertheless, there were Tutsi serving in the army too.

14. Mr. WEEKS (Liberia) said that he had asked his question in order to obtain additional information and not a rebuttal. He asked Mr. Munyangaju to clarify the statement he had made at the 1120th meeting to the effect that a menacing situation had existed along the frontier with the Congo and there had been no responsible authorities in Ruanda.

15. Mr. MUNYANGAJU (Association pour la promotion sociale de la masse) replied that before the *coup d'état* at Gitarama Ruanda had had a provisional Government which had not possessed the responsibilities vested in the present authorities. The point he had tried to make was that there was a difference between a provisional Government and authorities in which self-government was vested.

16. Mr. WEEKS (Liberia) said that he would not press his point although he had not received a complete answer to his question.

17. He asked the representatives of APROSOMA and PARMEHUTU whether, in the light of their statements at the 1120th and 1121st meetings, they did not think that a referendum on the basis of universal suffrage was the best way of promoting understanding among the conflicting parties and bringing unity to the Territory.

18. Mr. NKUNDABAGENZI (Parti du mouvement de l'émancipation hutu) replied that there was general agreement on the desirability of elections by direct universal suffrage. So far the only reference made to a referendum had been in connexion with the question of the Mwami. PARMEHUTU had already made it clear that that particular problem had, in a way, been resolved but that, as an earnest of its co-operation, it would consider having the problem of the régime brought up again at a conference at which the other outstanding issues would be settled. Consequently, the question of whether the referendum should be carried out by direct universal suffrage or in some indirect way still remained to be studied.

19. Mr. MUNYANGAJU (Association pour la promotion sociale de la masse) said that he was glad to note that the Liberian representative had understood that the majority parties were in favour of holding elections by universal suffrage even though they might think that Ruanda already had the institutions capable of leading it to independence. The holding of a referendum raised a question of principle. The majority parties did not flinch from the possibility of a referendum. They were merely advocating a common-sense approach and trying to show the difficulties involved.

20. Mr. WEEKS (Liberia) said that his delegation wished to impress upon the petitioners the fact that, quite clearly, no single political party could be right on every point. Consequently, the entire people should be given an opportunity to express their views; a handful of people could not decide the destiny of the nation. The representative of Ireland had suggested that petitioners might try and find some common ground while they were in New York. He would like to point out in that connexion that in December 1960 his delegation had tried to bring that about but had come up against the criticism that it favoured the programme

of one particular party; the same criticism might recur if another effort was made to bring the petitioners together. The Liberian delegation wished to see the people of Ruanda-Urundi united and was opposed to the Balkanization of the Territory.

The petitioners withdrew.

21. Mr. RASGOTRA (India) asked whether the Committee would have an opportunity of putting some questions to the representative of Belgium since it was necessary to have Belgium's views on several matters which had come up in the course of the discussion.

22. The CHAIRMAN replied that he had been informed that the Belgian representative would take the floor after the hearing of the petitioners had been concluded.

Requests for hearings (continued)

REQUESTS CONCERNING AGENDA ITEM 13 (REPORT OF THE TRUSTEESHIP COUNCIL) (*continued*)*

23. The CHAIRMAN said that two telegrams containing requests for hearings concerning the Cameroons under United Kingdom administration had been received. If there were no objections, he would have the telegrams circulated to the Committee.

*It was so decided.*¹

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.

* Resumed from the 1120th meeting.

¹ The telegrams were subsequently circulated in documents A/C.4/469/Add.5 and 6.