



**Monday, 10 April 1961,
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Chairman: Mr. Adnan M. PACHACHI (Iraq).

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, A/C.4/477) (*continued*)

REPLIES BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY TO QUESTIONS ASKED BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE (*concluded*)

1. Mr. CLAEYS BOUUAERT (Belgium), replying to a question put to him by the Tunisian representative at the previous meeting, said that out of rather less than 2,000 people arrested in connexion with the November 1959 disturbances in Ruanda, 552 had still been detained at the end of February 1961; that figure had since been reduced to 482. About another seventy persons were to be released in the very near future, leaving approximately 410 still in detention.

2. He was not in a position to say whether any leaders of political parties were involved. Party membership was not taken into account by the judges and it was for the parties to say whether any of their members or leaders were still detained.

GENERAL DEBATE

3. Mr. EL SANOUSI (Sudan) said that the present issue was of vital importance because the future of the whole Trusteeship System depended upon it; the question also took on a special significance because it involved an Administering Authority which had been responsible for inflicting a cancerous wound on the heart of Africa.

4. His delegation recognized all the petitioners as ardent patriots and hoped that they would prove able to settle their differences in the interests of their country; the price of liberty was eternal vigilance and they must work in solidarity with each other and with their African brothers for the liberation of Africa.

5. The Sudanese delegation had been shocked to learn the number of refugees who had been forced to leave their country in the face of a tyrannical Administration and who were living in deplorable conditions. He felt sure that the leaders of Ruanda-Urundi would wish to give all their citizens the opportunity to participate in the national struggle, especially that against neo-

colonialism, and to share the fruits of independence; his delegation therefore called for the immediate return of all refugees, irrespective of their political views, race or tribe, and their rehabilitation and just compensation for the sacrifices they had undergone for the sake of their country.

6. With regard to the amnesty question, his delegation regretted the continued incarceration of the citizens in question and demanded the immediate, full and unconditional implementation of operative paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 1579 (XV); that was a *sine qua non* for the attainment of the free and neutral atmosphere which was essential for the exercise of self-determination. The Sudanese delegation held the Belgian Administration responsible for the life of every citizen of Ruanda-Urundi until such time as all Belgian military or para-military personnel and political advisers had left the country. In that connexion, he drew attention to the last sentence of paragraph 103 of the interim report of the United Nations Commission for Ruanda-Urundi (A/4706 and Add.1), which stated that the Belgian Government continued to assume its responsibilities as Administering Authority. In his delegation's view, the safety of citizens was one of the first of those responsibilities.

7. Another very grave issue was the use of Ruanda-Urundi as a base for aggression against the Congolese State and direct interference in its affairs; such actions were contrary to resolution 1474 (ES-IV), paragraphs 5 (a) and 6, adopted unanimously by the General Assembly, and a violation of the international status of the Trust Territory. Belgium's defence against the charges in question was unconvincing; such interference should be halted immediately and Belgian forces should begin to leave the Territory at once and hand over their responsibilities to the people of Ruanda-Urundi. Belgium should dismiss any ideas of neo-colonialism in Ruanda-Urundi; he appealed to the leaders of that Territory to profit from the hard lesson which their brothers in the Congo had had to learn.

8. His delegation would view any draft resolution submitted to the Committee in the light of the considerations he had outlined and would demand the full implementation of all the General Assembly's resolutions on the present subject.

9. Mr. LAPIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the situation in Ruanda-Urundi had greatly deteriorated as a result of Belgium's failure to implement General Assembly resolutions 1579 (XV) and 1580 (XV) and of its disregard of the provisions of the Trusteeship Agreement. It was clear from the interim report of the United Nations Commission for Ruanda-Urundi and from the statements of the petitioners that Belgium's aim was to retain its hold on the Territory and to crush the movement for national liberation. The Belgian Government strove to utilize Ruanda-Urundi as a bridgehead for the pursuit of its

military and political plans in Central Africa. The petitioners' reports concerning the talks held at the beginning of 1961 between Belgian representatives from Urundi and Belgian agents at Elisabethville and Leopoldville were particularly significant in that respect. The Belgian colonialists clearly wished to split Ruanda-Urundi and to unite it with Katanga with the help of Tshombé's armed gangs.

10. On its statement dated 11 January 1961,¹ the USSR Government had charged that Belgium had been the organizer of and a direct participant in the armed attack launched on the Republic of the Congo from Ruanda-Urundi, an attack which had led to clashes in the Bukavu area and constituted a threat to international peace and security. At that time the USSR Government had requested the urgent convocation of the Security Council. Although the colonialist Powers had prevented the Council from adopting concrete decisions, no one could deny that Belgium's failure to abide by its international commitments provided sufficient grounds for depriving it of all its rights and powers in Ruanda-Urundi, as the USSR Government had asked the Security Council to do.

11. In gross violation of the provisions of the Trusteeship Agreement and of General Assembly resolutions, the Belgian authorities had proclaimed a régime of military occupation in the Trust Territory, where they were persecuting the patriotic parties, imprisoning or exiling the leaders of the national liberation movement and fanning inter-tribal enmity and inter-party rivalry.

12. The protracted discussions on the question of Ruanda-Urundi in the Fourth Committee had shown that the Belgian Government stubbornly refused to implement the General Assembly resolutions calling for an amnesty, the return of the refugees and the convocation of a political conference. The Ostend Conference, to which frequent references had been made in the Committee, had been convened in an effort to discredit the General Assembly's decisions; it was characteristic that the representatives of the patriotic parties in Ruanda-Urundi had not been allowed to take part in it.

13. The documents quoted by the United Nations Commission for Ruanda-Urundi and the statements by the petitioners made it quite clear that the setting up of the so-called Governments in Ruanda and in Urundi and all the other events at Gitarama had been stage-managed by Belgium. The Belgian representatives in the United Nations had tried to evade having to account for their Government's failure to implement the General Assembly's decisions by bringing their paid nominees, the members of the so-called provisional Governments, to the United Nations and making them account for decrees compiled in Brussels and applied by the Belgian authorities in the Territory. It was with indignation that the members of the Fourth Committee had watched the representatives of the colonial Powers openly give instructions to those people and even thank them for having undertaken the thankless task of saving the colonialists. At the same time, it had become obvious to every delegation that the true intention behind the manoeuvres at Gitarama and in Urundi had been not only to allow the Belgian authorities to retain their powers in the Territory but also to save them from having to render an account to the United Nations.

14. The petitioners representing the national parties had rejected the Belgian manoeuvres and the institutions set up by the Belgian authorities and had described to the Committee how the Belgian authorities had been crushing the patriotic movement and setting up their own agents by means of corruption and intimidation. The nature of the régime of violence and terror imposed by Belgium on Ruanda-Urundi was clearly illustrated in part II, chapter II, paragraph 225, of the report of the Trusteeship Council (A/4404), from which it was obvious that the Belgian colonialists would be ready to abolish the penalty of whipping only when the necessary conditions had been created for starving the indigenous inhabitants in solitary confinement. The indifference with which the Trusteeship Council had reported that fact was yet another indication that the Council had become an obedient tool in the hands of the colonialist Powers and that the colonialist majority in the Council was glossing over and justifying the crimes committed by the colonialists.

15. While paying lip-service to co-operation with the United Nations, Belgium had failed to carry out the General Assembly's decisions. It was not granting independence to the people of Ruanda-Urundi and did not intend to leave Ruanda-Urundi of its own accord, just as it would not leave Katanga and other parts of the Congo.

16. At the 1133rd meeting the Belgian representative had told the Fourth Committee that his Government was willing that the General Assembly, at its sixteenth session, should set the date for Ruanda-Urundi's independence in agreement with the Administering Authority. In addressing the Ostend Conference the Belgian Minister for African Affairs had been more explicit on that point: he had said that the Belgian Government had already suggested the first half of 1962 as a tentative date for independence, provided law and order was restored in the Territory and agreement on the date was reached between the Administering Authority and the Governments of the two States. The part assigned to the United Nations in the Belgian Government's plans was the least important: that of waiting until the Belgian authorities saw fit to enter into agreement concerning the date of independence for Ruanda-Urundi. Since, in the light of what had happened and was still happening in the Territory no one could entertain any illusions about the intentions of the Belgian colonialists, the United Nations should immediately deprive Belgium of all its powers in the Trust Territory as a first step towards genuine independence for Ruanda-Urundi.

17. The United Nations attached great importance to the holding of general elections in Ruanda-Urundi so that the people could express their will and form a Government capable of leading the country along the road of independent development. The Belgian authorities had not, admittedly, raised any formal objections; nevertheless, by entrusting all the preparations to the Resident-General and his agents, by depriving women of the vote, by setting high educational qualifications for eligibility, by barring the leaders and members of the parties persecuted by the Belgian Administration from taking part in the elections, and by the use of their emergency powers, they were planning to ensure that their position in the country, far from being weakened, would be consolidated as a result of the elections. For that reason the United Nations should take all the necessary steps to guarantee genuinely free elections.

¹ See *Official Records of the Security Council, Sixteenth Year, Supplement for January, February and March 1961*, document S/4622.

It was necessary, first and foremost, to remove the Belgian Residents and their military and police forces from the country. Political detainees must be released and the refugees brought back into the Territory. All the political parties should participate in the elections, which should be supervised by the United Nations.

18. Turning to the question of the future of the Mwami, he observed that the curious situation in which royalist Belgian officials in Ruanda-Urundi had apparently become zealous champions of republicanism had been explained by the petitioners, who had pointed out that the Mwami had lost the support of the Belgian authorities when, under pressure from the movement for national liberation, he had begun to advocate independence for his country. It had been revealed, for instance, that the Mwami had rejected a Belgian proposal that he should agree to union between Ruanda and Katanga. As a number of delegations had rightly pointed out, the question of the future political régime in Ruanda-Urundi should be decided by the people of the country, who could very well do without advice from the Belgian colonialists.

19. The Committee was in possession of a mass of information indicating the complete bankruptcy of the Belgian policy in Ruanda-Urundi, which had been driven to the brink of civil war and economic and financial crisis. For more than forty years the Belgian monopolies had been robbing the country of its natural wealth and exploiting its people. Ruanda-Urundi had become a source of cheap labour for Belgian and British monopolies. The Belgian monopolies did not wish to relinquish their hold on the rich deposits of zinc, tin,

gold, oil and uranium in Ruanda-Urundi or on its agricultural output. In violation of the Trusteeship Agreement the Administering Authority had been depriving the already impoverished indigenous inhabitants of their land and giving large estates to the Europeans. The illiteracy rate remained very high.

20. The United Nations could not fail to give effective support to the people of Ruanda-Urundi. The petitioners had stated that the people of the Territory had lost all confidence in the Belgian authorities and were demanding that Belgium should be deprived of the trusteeship. That was a *sine qua non* for the implementation of the General Assembly resolutions, the holding of free democratic elections and the setting up of a single independent State.

21. The USSR delegation considered that the General Assembly should immediately deprive Belgium of all rights and powers in the Trust Territory and should set up a commission consisting of African States to exercise all the administrative functions in the Territory so that elections could be organized and held and all the necessary measures to ensure Ruanda-Urundi's accession to independence in 1961 could be enacted.

22. The USSR delegation was convinced that such a decision by the General Assembly would correspond to the wishes of the people of Ruanda-Urundi and to the letter and the spirit of the Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV).

The meeting rose at 12 noon.