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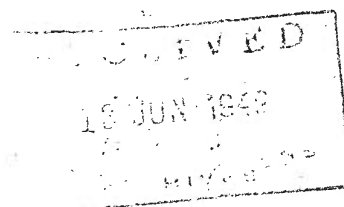
31 May 1949

ENGLISH

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TANGANYIKA UNDER BRITISH ADMINISTRATION AND  
RUANDA-URUNDI UNDER BELGIAN ADMINISTRATION  
PETITION FROM MR. CHRISTOPHER M. BYOYA  
DATED 15 JANUARY 1949

In accordance with Rule 85 of the Rules of Procedure for the Trusteeship Council, the Secretary-General of the United Nations transmits herewith to the members of the Trusteeship Council an unofficial translation of a communication dated 15 January 1949 from Mr. Christopher M. Byoya concerning the Trust Territories of Tanganyika under British administration and Ruanda-Urundi under Belgian administration. The original and the French translation were communicated to the Secretary-General by the Belgian Government with a letter dated 16 May 1949, which also stated that the text had been communicated to the Tanganyika Government.



Ngara District,  
Lake Province  
Tanganyika Territory.  
15 January 1949

To the Presidents of the United Nations.

I should be very glad to hear if what I want to tell you below has reached you and meets with your approval. We are the inhabitants of Buhangaza, Abanyabugufi, Ngara District, Lake Province.

Several of us were surprised to read in many newspapers much false information given by our people on the subject of the rights of the Mwami of Urundi; it is said that Bugufi is part of Urundi.

In fact, and according to our elders, the province of Bugufi belongs to the Mwami of Urundi, for the ruler of Bugufi was a chief invested by the Mwami of Urundi, and from time to time he would send his trusted men with presents to the Mwami of Urundi. Some of the old persons who used to tell us the story are still alive. It is pointless for us young people to argue about something we do not know.

Our elders also tell us that Mwami Ntare of Urundi placed chief Mpehe in command of Bugufi and that he appointed him as he did the other chiefs of Urundi. Mpehe appointed his son Balamba I to succeed him when he died; after some time Balamba revolted and Mwami Ntare sent a man named Sembwa, son of Runyota, to punish all the rebels who killed Balamba. That is the origin of the Bahangaza oath: "Ndakabe Sembwa ya Runyota" (may I be the tyrant Sembwa son of Runyota), a reference to the wickedness of Sembwa who killed their chief Balamba I.

After Balamba's death his sons fled to Gisaka in Ruanda. His son Mpanda later went to beg for pardon and to ask the return of his father's country. The Mwami forgave him and he returned as ruler over his father's country. On that occasion, Mpanda asked the Mwami for a drum to regain his prestige and to rally the inhabitants who had taken flight for fear of Runyota and his cohorts at the time of the death of Balamba.

The Mwami gave him a drum, which he himself called "Muhabura", to calm the people and to establish peace, because the people had taken flight because of the war, lions and other evils.

Mpanda took away the drum, beat it and the people returned one by one. He calmed them and told them that the Mwami wished them to be at peace.

/Mpanda appointed

Mpanda appointed his son Ruvubi to succeed him. After Ruvubi came Rusengo, who revolted during the reign of Mwezi Kisabo, son of Ntare. Mwezi instructed chief Nsangabane and Chyoya son of Ngwiye (the Chyoya's sons are even now not yet married) to seize Rusengo and his herds - called "imigozi", from Mukarehe - Mukibogoye and elsewhere - and it is even said that that is the reason for the present shortage of cattle in Bugufi.

Rusengo was taken to the North, to the Mwami, and there spent a year of hard ordeals.

It is said that while Rusengo was in the North he was rejected by the Mwami's guards and that even when he was allowed to regain his province he was not longer able to procreate; but his wives were younger, had intercourse with their brothers-in-law and had children.

Chief Rusengo did not live for long after his release and his son Kisenga who is still alive, succeeded him as chief. The latter continued to be a subject of the Mwami of Urundi, as his father had been.

Then came the great war of 1914-1918, which resulted in the present boundaries. Bugufi went to England and Kizenga no longer recognized the authority of the Mwami of Urundi.

On Kizenga's resignation, his son Balamba II became the ruler. He was the first to wear the "crown", the insignia of the Bami and to assume the name of "Mwami". In all these matters, I prefer to speak the truth and not lies, for the latter cause much discord in families and amongst brothers, neighbours and friends. The names of the notables sent by the chiefs to the Mwami were as follows:

1. Mukubano, son of Kiziguru
2. Ntambwe, son of Ndarihaze
3. Cabakanga, son of Ruvubi (Umuganwa)
4. Manego
5. Semuhonyi, son of Biraduka.

They took with them presents of cattle. They left at night and even the people of Ruguru (at the Mwami's place) did not see them. I know that it is a matter for the United Nations, but before it is settled, it is best to know the truth; in any case, if the Mwami returns to his country, we the inhabitants will welcome him with open arms.

Even before our customary law courts, our bashingantahe use the surnames of the Bami of Urundi: "Gira Ntare" "Gira Mwezi" "Gira Mutage" "Gira Mwambutsa".

For how can we pay tribute to foreign Bami when we have our own?

Could we hoist the English flag in a German country or the French flag in a Russian country? No. Never.

Christopher M. Byoya  
(signed) M. Byoya.

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