

Committee: Trusteeship Council

Agenda Item: Ruanda-Urundi

Student Officer: Nazlı Emre - President Chair

Introduction

Ruanda-Urundi was one of the most important and complex cases handled by the international mandate and trusteeship system, revealing the challenges of transitioning a colonized territory into a stable and independent government. Ruanda-Urundi is located in East Central Africa and was originally a part of German East Africa until World War I. During the First World War, it fell under the Belgian military occupation. In 1919, it was categorized as a League of Nations Class-B Mandate. Following the League's dissolution, the territory was designated a United Nations Trust Territory in 1946 and placed under Belgian administration. Henceforth, the United Nations' Trusteeship Council took it as one of their responsibilities to monitor the Belgian administration and make sure that Ruanda-Urundi was ready for independence in all aspects - political, social and economic.

The trusteeship system was set up as a tool for decolonization and international accountability. The objective was to get territories ready for self-government by assisting them in many areas like democratic institutions, educational reform, economic development, social stability, and so on. The Ruanda-Urundi case, on the other hand, became more and more contentious. Despite the expectation of Belgium to promote political participation, its rule through local elites mainly strengthened the indirect power of the local people. The Belgian administration chose the Tutsi minority over the Hutu majority causing the ethnic division that would lead to the political situation in both Rwanda and Burundi. The naming of people by their ethnic groups took place in the 1930s. The introduction of ethnic groups through identity cards created

social divisions which were formerly unrecognizable thus giving rise to social division and creating conflict and instability later on.

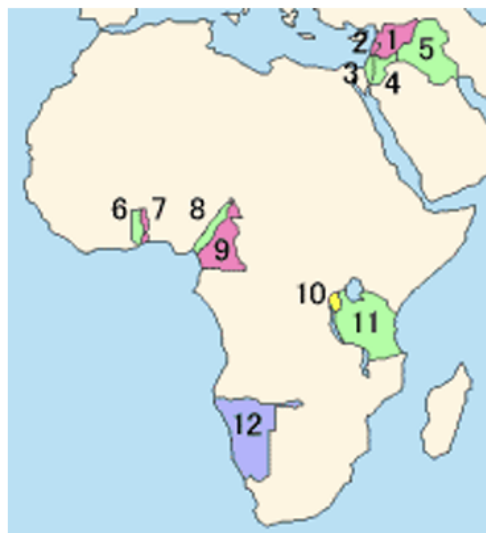
The end of colonialism was felt more strongly in Africa during the 1950s and 1960s, which was a decisive factor in the increasing pressure that the Trusteeship Council exerted on Belgium to speed up reforms and prepare the area for sovereignty. The concern of the UN visiting missions and reports regarding the very limited political freedom and the very little administrative training that Belgium was providing to locals finally resulted in the Trusteeship Council's demand for elections and constitutional planning. However, the time was already passed for such measures. They were mostly reactive rather than proactive. Ultimately, Ruanda-Urundi ceased to be a trust territory and became two independent countries on July 1, 1962: Rwanda and Burundi. The Trusteeship Council gave up its mandate even if the area was still plagued by political instability, ethnic conflicts, and governance problems. Then the question was raised whether the trusteeship process was unproductive or too early to be terminated. The case of Ruanda-Urundi is still very important, providing the last major UN trusteeship case in Africa as a source of valuable insights. This case is a historical lesson for the present and the future regarding the UN's involvement in post-conflict transitions and nation-building efforts.

Definition of Key Terms

Trusteeship System: “The basic objectives of the International Trusteeship System in accordance with the purposes of the United Nations included: to promote the political, economic, social and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the Trust Territories and their progressive development towards self-government and independence; and to encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all and recognition of the interdependence of the peoples of the world” (United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs).

Trust Territory: Trust territories were subject to the trusteeship system of the UN. Ruanda-Urundi was one of the 11 trust territories, located in Africa and administered by Belgium starting from 1946 until gaining independence in 1962.

League of Nations Mandate (Class-B Mandate): “A League of Nations mandate was a legal status for certain territories transferred from the control of one country to another following World War I, or the legal instruments that contained the internationally agreed-upon terms for administering the territory on behalf of the League. These were of the nature of both a treaty and constitution which contained minority rights clauses that provided for the right of petition and adjudication by the International Court. The second group of mandates, or Class B mandates, were all former Schutzgebiete (German territories) in West and Central Africa which were deemed to require a greater level of control by the mandatory power: “...the Mandatory must be responsible for the administration of the territory under conditions which will guarantee freedom of conscience and religion.” The mandatory power was forbidden to construct military or naval bases within the mandates” (Saylor Academy).



Mandates in the Middle East and Africa, which included: 1. Syria, 2. Lebanon, 3. Palestine, 4. Transjordan, 5. Mesopotamia, 6. British Togoland, 7. French Togoland, 8. British Cameroons, 9. French Cameroun, 10. Ruanda-Urundi, 11. Tanganyika and 12. South-West Africa

Map 1: League of Nations mandates in the Middle East and Africa

Indirect Rule: Indirect ruling is a colonial administrative system that governs through existing local structures or elites rather than direct control. Belgium ruled indirectly and focused on the Tutsi dynamics to create ethnic difference.

Tutsis: One of the two large ethnic groups in Ruanda-Urundi. They were historically favored by colonial administrators and considered to be a ruling class.

Hutus: Hutus were the demographic majority but economically and politically disadvantaged during the trusteeship period. The colonial institutionalization of this division laid the foundations for future tensions and conflict.

Decolonization: Decolonization is “the process in which a country that was previously a colony (= controlled by another country) becomes politically independent; the process of getting rid of colonies” (Cambridge Dictionary).

United Nations Visiting Missions: The UN visiting missions consisted of teams from the United Nations Trusteeship Council to review and assess trust territories in areas such as administrative justice, political advancement and readiness for self-government. In the 1950s, various missions were established in Ruanda-Urundi.

Identity Cards: Identity cards were introduced during Belgian rule. These papers formally classified people as Hutu, Tutsi and Twa. This ethnic categorization system exacerbated societal fractures and added to a permanent culture of instability.

Major Actors Involved

Belgium

Belgium was the administering power of Ruanda-Urundi for over four decades, first under a League of Nations Mandate throughout 1922-1945 and then under a United Nations Trust Territory throughout 1946-1962. Belgium's policies shaped the structure of the territory politically, socially and ethnically and continue to influence Rwanda and Burundi today. In 1916, Belgian forces occupied the territory on behalf of the Allied Forces in World War I. In 1922, Belgium was officially mandated as a Class B Mandate by the League of Nations. It ruled Ruanda and Urundi separately but treated them as a joint administrative unit for efficiency. It practiced indirect rule, governing through existing local monarchies mostly dominated by Tutsi elites. In the 1930s, it issued the ethnic identity cards classifying individuals as Hutu, Tutsi or Twa. Thus, strengthened the Tutsi superiority and increased the ethnic separation in the region. Belgium's indirect rule deepened the ethnic polarization and turned social divisions into political conflict which later on created problems in the region.

Under Belgian administration, the region's education was controlled by the Catholic Church which influenced societal hierarchy. During this time, a major famine called the Ruzagayura Famine took place from 1943 and 1944 which resulted in over 200,000 deaths and showed the weaknesses in Belgian administration. UN visiting missions frequently criticized Belgium for its slow political reform and lack of democratic participation. In response, Belgium began delayed political reforms but they were ineffective. After the Republic of Rwanda and the Kingdom of Burundi gained independence in 1962, Belgium's role officially ended but its legacy remained embedded in both political structures and ethnic relations in the region.

United Nations Trusteeship Council

The United Nations Trusteeship Council became involved in Ruanda-Urundi after World War 2, after the League of Nations collapsed and the mandate system had to be reorganised. In 1946, Ruanda-Urundi officially turned into a UN Trust Territory and Belgium had to administer it under the United Nations' supervision. The Trusteeship Council's main job was to make sure Belgium was preparing the territory for self-rule and not simply keeping it as a colony under a different name. However, the Council's influence was kind of mixed. On one hand, it demanded annual reports, sent visiting missions and asked Belgium to create more local political institutions. On the other hand, some critics say the Council didn't act fast enough or strongly enough when major problems appeared – especially ethnic inequality and lack of political representation for the Hutu majority.

Belgium had to submit reports about education, administration, economy and political progress. But many of these reports were seen as too optimistic or not reflecting the problems on the ground. The Trusteeship Council sometimes accepted them “as is” without fully investigating. Several visiting missions were sent to Ruanda-Urundi to review Belgium's actions. They met local leaders, churches, and sometimes ordinary citizens. The reports often warned about slow political reforms, limited local participation and growing tension between Hutu and Tutsi. These missions helped raise international awareness, but changes were not immediate or effective enough. The Trusteeship Council demanded that Belgium allow political parties, elections, and constitutional planning. Only in the late 1950s did Belgium actually begin these steps, mostly because pressure was growing not just from the UN, but from African independence movements too.

Finally, the Trusteeship Council recommended that the territory was ready (or at least had to be allowed) for self-determination. Ruanda-Urundi gained independence on 1 July 1962, splitting into two separate states: Rwanda and Burundi. This was the end of trusteeship, but many UN officials later admitted that the region wasn't fully prepared and that tensions remained

“baked into” society. Some historians argue that the Trusteeship Council didn’t act strongly enough when Belgium used ethnic divisions as a tool for ruling. The UN’s involvement was often too diplomatic and not interventionist enough. Others say the Council was limited by its own structure — it had no army or legal power to enforce change, only recommendations.

League of Nations

Before the United Nations existed, the League of Nations was responsible for dealing with territories that used to belong to the defeated countries in World War I. Ruanda-Urundi was one of these. It used to be part of German East Africa, but when Germany lost the war, Belgian forces took over the region in 1916. In 1919, during the Paris Peace Conference, the Allies decided that the territory would not become fully independent and would not be returned to Germany either. Instead, in 1922, the League of Nations placed Ruanda-Urundi under a “Class B Mandate”, which basically meant that the territory was “not advanced enough” to govern itself and had to be managed by another country — which became Belgium.

Honestly, the League was supposed to supervise Belgium, but in reality, it had very limited power. The League’s idea was that colonial powers should guide the territories, not exploit them. Mandates were meant to prepare territories for self-rule, but the rules were kinda vague and easy to bend. The League classified Ruanda-Urundi as a Class B Mandate. This category implied that the territory was less developed and needed long-term administration. Belgium was supposed to improve education, economy, health care, and politics — but progress was very slow and mostly controlled by elites. Belgium only had to send basic yearly reports, which were often very optimistic and did not reflect the situation accurately. The League did not send regular inspections or enforce any strict reforms. Critics say it trusted too much but checked too little.

After World War II, the League of Nations collapsed. Its mandate system was transferred to the United Nations, which then created a stricter and more modern system called the Trusteeship System. Ruanda-Urundi officially became a UN Trust Territory in 1946, and the League's role ended — but many of the problems that emerged under the League continued into the trusteeship era as well. The League of Nations created the legal framework for international control over Ruanda-Urundi — but it didn't prevent the structural and ethnic tensions that later emerged. It is often seen as too idealistic but not practical, well-intentioned but weak in action and a warning example of how international supervision can fail without proper enforcement.

Rwanda and Burundi

Even though they were treated as one territory under Belgium, Rwanda and Burundi actually had different histories, identities and political paths. Both places had their own monarchy, their own traditions and slightly different cultures. But during the mandate and trusteeship periods, Belgium ruled them together as “Ruanda-Urundi,” which sometimes ignored their unique needs and increased tensions rather than solving them. Belgium practised indirect rule, meaning they kept traditional kings and chiefs in power, most of them Tutsi, which meant political inequality. Thus, Hutu communities became more frustrated over time. By the 1950s, both Rwanda and Burundi had political parties and local leaders demanding reforms and eventually independence. Many people believe Belgium's sudden change of policy, shifting from Tutsi-support to Hutu-support near the end, made tensions even worse and more confusing.

The UN Trusteeship eventually ended, and Rwanda and Burundi became two independent countries on 1 July 1962. However, the transition was rushed and both countries were not very prepared for self-rule. Rwanda became a republic with a Hutu-led leadership. Burundi remained a monarchy but internal struggles soon began. Both countries had weak administrative systems and little

experience governing themselves. After trusteeship ended, Rwanda and Burundi had to face ethnic tensions inherited from colonial policies, limited economic development, weak institutions and government training, high population density and poverty, lack of political stability and many more. The trusteeship period did not solve these problems, which is why many experts say independence came too quickly and reforms came too late. Rwanda and Burundi are not just the result of Ruanda-Urundi. They are direct evidence of how international management, colonial systems and rushed decolonisation can create long-term issues.

Colonial Germany

Before Belgium and the UN got involved, Germany was the first modern colonial power in the region when it controlled the area as part of German East Africa (1885–1916). Germany didn't invest much in local development. Instead, it focused on collecting taxes and forcing labor for cash crops like coffee and cotton. There was very little education, healthcare or infrastructure for the local people. The Germans ruled mostly through local kings and chiefs, which helped keep power in the hands of Tutsi elites. This didn't create the ethnic divide, but it strengthened it and made it more political. The colonial system treated Tutsis as "more capable of ruling," which later Belgium continued and expanded even more. Germany lost control of the territory in World War I, when Belgian forces invaded in 1916. After that, Germany never returned, and the League of Nations gave Belgium official control in 1922. Even though German rule was shorter, many historians say it laid the early foundations for unequal power systems and colonial extraction, which never got fully solved — even after independence.

General Overview of the Issue

Historical Background

Rwanda and Burundi weren't just empty spaces waiting for colonizers. They already had their own kingdoms, traditions, and social systems. They were mostly ruled by Tutsi monarchs. The majority of the population were Hutu farmers. There was a hierarchy between them, but it wasn't completely rigid. People sometimes moved between the social groups. Ethnicity didn't define someone's whole life the way it did later under colonial rule. During the Scramble for Africa, Germany took over and made the region part of German East Africa. However, Germany did not rule directly and instead relied heavily on local leaders who were supposed to handle most things. Their interests were mainly in taxes and agricultural produce, especially coffee and cotton. They were less concerned with education, health, or any form of development and were not particularly eager for most people to have political representation. What they did do was reinforce, unintentionally, the power of Tutsi elites. They leaned on them to maintain order, which made the existing hierarchy stronger — but they didn't do much long-term planning.

Then came World War I, and Germany lost control of the territory to Belgium in 1916. The League of Nations officially handed the region to Belgium as a Class B mandate after the First World War. This meant that Belgium was supposed to help it develop, not exploit it. However, Belgium mostly continued indirect rule and governed through Tutsi chiefs, increasing the inequality between Tutsis and Hutus. In the 1930s, Belgium introduced ethnic identity cards officially labeling people as Hutu, Tutsi or Twa. This was the first time ethnicity became something permanent and written-and it changed the region's social dynamics forever.

There were also grave economic difficulties: one major famine, the Ruzagayura famine of 1943–1944 which killed hundreds of thousands of people. It showed how fragile the system was — and it also pushed more people to question the colonial administration. Around this time, missionary schools

started educating small groups of local youth. Some of them began thinking differently — about identity, politics, and independence. They were the first generation to start asking: Why are we being ruled by outsiders? This shift mattered a lot later. The League of Nations disappeared when World War II ended and Ruanda-Urundi became a United Nations Trust Territory in 1946. The idea was that Belgium would prepare the region for independence. In reality, Belgium retained much of the old system, and change was slow. The Trusteeship Era dawned with hope-but also tension. Some people wanted reform, some wanted independence, and others feared what change might bring.



Map 2: Colonial regions land occupation by country after the Scramble of Africa (1945)

Social, Economic and Educational Conditions

In Ruanda-Urundi, social structure, ethnicity, economy, and education were all connected. The colonial policies formed how the people lived, worked, and even how they identified themselves. With time, these divisions grew much stronger and permanent. Before colonial rule, Hutu and Tutsi identities were not fixed races but social categories. On occasion, these could be transcended on the basis of wealth, land, or cattle. Ethnic differences became socially evident under German and especially Belgian rule when ethnic identity cards were introduced in the 1930s, officially labeling people as Hutu, Tutsi, or Twa. This turned social differences into legal categories. In this way, from that day forward, ethnicity was no longer purely cultural, it became political. It affected education, job opportunities, and access to power. Belgium primarily governed through Tutsi chiefs and aristocrats. Throughout, they consolidated and solidified their political advantage. Self-evidently, Tutsis were “naturally fit to lead,” while Hutu masses were farmers and laborers. Systemic inequality thus came with a self-fulfilling dimension. More Tutsis got education and administrative roles, whereas Hutus were seldom given such chances for leadership roles. Social resentment arose gradually but surely. The rarely expected about-face in support by Belgium in the late 1950s of the Hutu political movements made tensions even worse. The shift felt unpredictable and sowed distrust between communities.

The economy of Ruanda-Urundi was highly agricultural and based on cash crops, such as coffee and cotton. Most farmers were Hutu. They worked small plots with little support from the administration. Belgium focused on exports rather than local development. In turn, infrastructure was scant. Few people had access to health care. Economic growth varied greatly between regions. One major disaster was the Ruzagayura famine of 1943-1944, claiming hundreds of thousands of lives. It showed how precarious the economy was and how little support was around for ordinary people.

The guiding role of education, mainly by the Catholic Church, meant that only a few people from every locality had access to education. These later became political activists and party founders; thus, education facilitated the rise of independence movements. However, this also entailed that most of those who received an education came from privileged backgrounds. Access to education was extended to Hutus later compared to Tutsis. Instead of solving the inequality, the system reproduced it. Education gave rise to opportunity but also created some competition between social groups. Not everyone had the same chance to speak up. In Ruanda-Urundi, it wasn't just about government stuff. It was about who people were, where they lived, what work they did, and if they ever got to go to school. All that stuff was connected. Even after independence in 1962, the problems didn't just disappear. They kept going and still affect people today. So yeah, it's not just old history — it shows how big decisions about things like race and school can stick around for a long time.

Political Developments

When World War II ended, the League of Nations collapsed and Ruanda-Urundi officially became a United Nations Trust Territory. But it was still under Belgian control. On paper, Belgium now had a new mission: prepare the territory for independence. However, not much changed at first. The same colonial structures stayed in place and Belgium continued ruling mostly through Tutsi elites. The United Nations wanted Belgium to improve education and administration, allow more political participation, reduce inequality and eventually build a system that could govern itself. But change didn't happen overnight. For years, Belgium did only the minimum needed to satisfy UN reports. Some visiting mission reports from the 1950s even said Belgium was moving too slowly and not involving enough local people in decision-making.

Politics in Ruanda-Urundi didn't develop slowly and steadily. It kind of exploded all at once. For many years, Belgium had kept tight control and allowed very little local political activity. But by the late 1940s and especially the

1950s, things started changing quickly. Education, global decolonization movements, missionary influence and frustration with colonial rule all began to shape new political ideas. Political awareness started to increase during this time. Missionary schools had created a small educated class and more locals started talking about representation, rights and independence. Across Africa, independence movements were rising and Ruanda-Urundi felt that wave too. Political parties began forming. PARMEHUTU in Rwanda — mostly Hutu-led, demanding equality and political power. UNAR — more Tutsi-based, supporting the monarchy and gradual reform. UPRONA in Burundi — a nationalist party led by Prince Louis Rwagasore. These movements showed that people were no longer willing to accept colonial rule. They wanted a future where they could govern themselves and not just be ruled by distant officials in Brussels. But political awakening also brought tension. Belgium's shift in support from Tutsi elites to Hutu political groups created confusion and anger. Old inequalities turned into political competition. Some historians say that reforms came too quickly and too late at the same time and this mismatch made things worse rather than better.

By the late 1950s, the UN was pushing harder. Belgian officials were pressured to hold elections and write governing frameworks. Meanwhile, the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 1514 (1960), declaring that colonies had a right to independence. That was a huge turning point. Belgium couldn't delay forever. In Burundi, one of the most promising political figures was Prince Louis Rwagasore, leader of UPRONA. He pushed for unity between Hutus and Tutsis and wanted independence without violence. Tragically, he was assassinated in 1961 just before independence. His death left a political vacuum and hurt the chances for a peaceful transition. Finally, on 1 July 1962, the trusteeship officially ended and Ruanda-Urundi separated into Rwanda and Burundi. Independence arrived, but not everything was ready. Institutions were weak. Ethnic tensions were still sharp. And many people wondered: Was the territory truly prepared for self-rule or was independence rushed? That question is still debated today.



Map 3: Ruanda-Urundi's land division to Rwanda and Burundi in 1962

Post-Independence Challenges and Long-Term Impacts

In 1962, did Rwanda and Burundi finally get their independence? Yeah, they got freedom. But look—stability? That just didn't happen. It was too fast, honestly. Independence came rushing in, and so many of the basic structures you need for a government to actually function were weak. Or maybe just missing. You had this already-high level of ethnic tension, and then you had political parties all competing for power, which only made things worse. Everyone was really wondering: did this transition move way, way too quickly for the region to handle it? I mean, right after independence, both countries were hit with a whole list of problems. They just didn't have enough trained administrators or civil servants, you know? They had huge fights over who was going to lead politically, and that strong ethnic polarization was totally dividing everyone. Economically, they were stuck—too dependent on just cash crops and

foreign aid, and access to good education was seriously limited for the vast majority of people. And the sadness of it all: in Burundi, hopes for national unity were totally shattered. Why? Because Prince Louis Rwagasore, who was absolutely key for getting everyone on the same side, was assassinated in 1961. A year before independence! In Rwanda, things escalated even faster; the Hutu and Tutsi groups just had this immediate, terrible explosion of tensions that caused waves and waves of awful violence. So, independence did bring opportunity, yes. But it brought this overwhelming feeling of instability, too.

So, the trusteeship period finally ended in 1962. Great except the effects, which didn't just vanish. Those structures they put in place—the political setup, the deep social divisions, and especially that ridiculously unequal access to education—all of that totally molded the future of both countries for decades. You hear a lot of people saying that independence didn't actually erase the problems, did it? It just took the cover off and exposed them for everyone to see. We're talking about serious, long-term damage. Ethnic divisions that were manageable before got turned into straight-up political conflict. It became a real struggle to build any kind of national identity that everyone could agree on. Access to power and resources was still completely uneven. And their international relationships? Still totally dictated by that colonial history. These massive issues didn't just fade away; they kept influencing policy, who got to be the leader, and foreign relations for a long time after the trusteeship was officially over. It was a lingering shadow. All of these eventually led to the Rwandan Genocide in 1994.

Timeline of Important Events

Date:	Event:
Pre-1880s	Rwanda and Burundi exist as independent kingdoms with their own monarchies and social systems.
1885	The region became part of German East Africa during the Scramble for Africa.
1916	Belgian forces invaded and occupied Ruanda-Urundi during World War I.
1919	The Treaty of Versailles confirms Belgium's control of the region.
1922	Ruanda-Urundi becomes a League of Nations Class B Mandate under Belgian administration.
1930s	Belgium introduces the ethnic identity cards, officially labeling people as Hutu, Tutsi or Twa.
1943-1944	The Ruzagayura Famine causes massive deaths and exposes weaknesses in colonial administration.
1945	The League of Nations dissolved after World War 2.
1946	Ruanda-Urundi becomes a United Nations Trust Territory under Belgian rule.
1950s	UN visiting missions raise concerns about governance, education and ethnic inequality.
1957	The Behutu Manifesto calls for political rights and end of Tutsi dominance in Rwanda.
Late 1950s	Political parties emerge.
1960	The UNGA adopts Resolution 1514 "Declaration of the Granting of

	Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.”
1961	Prince Louis Rwagasore, leader of Burundi’s UPRONA party, is assassinated.
July 1, 1962	Ruanda-Urundi officially ceases to exist and becomes two independent states: the Republic of Rwanda and the Kingdom of Burundi.
August 4, 1993	The Arusha Peace Accords were signed.
April 6, 1994	Rwanda’s president Habyarimana was assassinated, triggering the genocide.
April-July 1994	The Rwandan Genocide took place, killing around 800,000 people in approximately 100 days.

Related Documents

- Resolution 1514, adopted by the General Assembly on 14 December 1960, titled “Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples”:
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/declaration-granting-independence-colonial-countries-and-peoples>
- Resolution 1746, adopted by the Security Council on 1 July 1962, titled “The future of Ruanda-Urundi”:
<https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/document/ip-a-res-1746.php>
- Resolution 955 adopted by the Security Council on 8 November 1994 concerning the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda:
<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/198038?ln=en&v=pdf#files>

- Manifesto of the Bahutu, United Nations Visiting Missions to Trust Territories in East Africa, 1957, Report on Ruanda-Urundi published by the United Nations Trusteeship Committee on 6 December 1957:
https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3828641/files/T_1346-EN.pdf
- Ruanda-Urundi: observations submitted by the Government of Belgium on 1 February 1949: <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3849126?v=pdf>
- Arusha Peace Accords signed on 4 August 1993:
<https://peaceaccords.nd.edu/accord/arusha-accord-4-august-1993>

Past Solution Attempts

There have been many past solution attempts. So, let's take a look at what was tried, who tried it and why it did or didn't work. The German and Belgian strategy was indirect rule through local monarchies – first Germany throughout 1885-1916, then Belgium 1916 and onwards. The goal was to keep stability by ruling through existing Tutsi elites and monarchies. This approach did maintain political order for a while. But eventually reinforced ethnic hierarchies instead of reducing them, reduced local participation and equality and contributed to long-term ethnic resentment. Overall, it failed because it was more about control than development. It did protect colonial interests but did little to build inclusive institutions.

Then, the League of Nations attempted the mandate system from 1922 to 1945. The goal was to guide the territory toward development and eventually self-rule. Belgium submitted annual reports, but was given wide freedom and as a result, it failed. This is because Belgium had weak oversight and not enough pressure to reform. The mandate lacked enforcement power. Even though reports were accepted, realities were usually ignored. After the League of Nations dissolved, the UN Trusteeship Council brought the trust territory system from 1946 to 1962. The goal was to prepare the territory for independence through political development, education and administrative training. They organized visiting missions during the 1950s, encouraged

elections and political reforms and monitored Belgian reports. But, the reforms were slow and late and institutions were still weak after independence. Trusteeship ended quickly once independence became a global trend. The main lesson from this part of history is that oversight without implementation is ineffective.

Additionally, the Arusha Peace Accords were signed in 1993 for Rwanda after its independence. The goal was to share power between the Hutu government and the Rwandan Patriotic Front (PRF). But the accords were never fully implemented and opposed by extremists. Despite aiming for peace, it didn't work and the assassination of President Habyarimana triggered the Rwandan Genocide. So, we can understand that peace agreements without social trust and strong institutions often collapse. The Security Council also established the United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda (UNOMUR) in June 1993 and organized peacekeeping missions during 1993 and 1994. The goal was to prevent violence and oversee the peace process in Rwanda. But these attempts failed to prevent the genocide.

Possible Solutions

Here are a few ideas for delegates. You guys can focus on strengthening institutions and governance. This can be achieved through creating national programs for training local administrators and civil servants, providing constitutional support and legal advisory teams through UN agencies and encouraging power-sharing mechanisms between different ethnic/social groups. The risk of power vacuums and weak governance after independence can be reduced by supporting multi-party democracy rather than single or dominant parties.

Education and civic awareness are equally important. Think about building social unity and reducing fear-based ethnic divisions. Expand inclusive education programs promoting national identity, not ethnic divisions.

Encourage history education that addresses the colonial legacy responsibly. Create youth civic participation programs to involve new generations in policymaking. Promote school exchange programs across communities to reduce stereotypes.

Another approach could be focusing on economic development and equity. Try to create stability through opportunity and reduce competition over scarce resources. Develop regional economic projects such as shared agriculture zones or trade corridors. Reduce dependency on single cash crops by encouraging diversified industries. Promote microfinance, small business support, and youth employment initiatives. Establish fair land distribution programs to reduce rural tensions. There are many other great ideas, but I would suggest post-independence monitoring mechanisms, regional and international cooperation and legal frameworks.

Useful Links

- United Nations Trusteeship Council
<https://www.un.org/en/about-us/trusteeship-council>
- United Nations Ruanda-Urundi Trusteeship Documents
<https://research.un.org/en/docs/tc/ruanda-urundi>
- United Nations Digital Library Ruanda-Urundi
<https://digitallibrary.un.org/search?ln=en&p=ruanda-urundi&f=&c=Resource%20Type&c=UN%20Bodies&sf=&so=d&rg=50&fti=0>
- United Nations International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals – Legacy website of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
<https://unictr.irmct.org/>
- Outreach Programme on the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda and the United Nations
<https://www.un.org/en/preventgenocide/rwanda/historical-background.shtml>

- UNAMIR International Tribunal for Rwanda – 1999 Independent Inquiry
<https://peacekeeping.un.org/mission/past/unamirS.htm>

Bibliography

Britannica Editors. “Belgian Congo.” *Britannica*, 30 Oct. 2025,

www.britannica.com/place/Belgian-Congo.

Decolonization. 18 Nov. 2025,

dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/decolonization.

HISTORY OF RWANDA | *Historyworld*.

www.historyworld.net/history/Rwanda/769?

International Trusteeship System and Trust Territories | *the United Nations and Decolonization*.

www.un.org/dppa/decolonization/en/history/international-trusteeship-system-and-trust-territories.

Allenellen, Aabha R. “League of Nations mandate.” *Saylor Academy*,

resources.saylor.org/wwwresources/archived/site/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/League-of-Nations-Mandate.pdf.

OLCreate: TESSA_RW Module 2: Investigating Family History: Resource 4: The Ruzagayura Famine – 1943-1944 | *OLCreate*.

www.open.edu/openlearncreate/mod/oucontent/view.php?id=161859&ion=2.7.

“Ruanda and Urundi / 1.0 / Encyclopedic - 1914-1918-Online (WW1)

Encyclopedia.” *1914-1918-Online (WW1) Encyclopedia*, 9 July 2024,

encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/ruanda-and-urundi.

Limited, Alamy. “Rwanda and Burundi.” *Alamy Images*,

www.alamy.com/stock-photo-rwanda-and-burundi-52230252.html.

RWANDA and BURUNDI: Genocide Between Hutu and Tutsi – Geopol-trotters. 19

Dec. 2022,

geopol-trotters.com/rwanda-and-burundi-genocide-between-hutus-and-tutsis.

Kulik, Rebecca M. “Scramble for Africa.” *Britannica*, 21 Nov. 2025,

www.britannica.com/event/Scramble-for-Africa.

The World at War - RUANDA - URUNDI 1914 - 1962.

www.schudak.de/timelines/ruanda-urundi1914-1962.html.

UNAMIR. peacekeeping.un.org/mission/past/unamirS.htm.

Beloff, Jonathan R. “Understanding the Strategic Value of the Assassination of President Juvénal Habyarimana.” *Digital Commons @ University of South Florida*,

digitalcommons.usf.edu/jss/voll8/iss1/9?utm_source=digitalcommons.usf.edu%2Fjss%2Fvoll8%2Fiss1%2F9&utm_medium=PDF&utm_campaign=PDFCoverPages.