ACTUAL FOREST MASTERS IN THE EAST OF DR CONGO : PYGMIES OR RWANDAN COMBATANTS « INTERAHAMWE » ?

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The nations taking part to the present pact, make a commitment to take, in agreement with their constitutional procedures and with the dispositions of the present pact, arrangements which must allow the adoption of such legislative decisions or others, just to produce an impact to the rights recognized in the present pact which perhaps have not come into force yet.

Art 2. Idented line 2 : International pact relating to civil and political rights (United Nations) (1966)
ACTUAL FOREST MASTERS IN THE EAST OF DR CONGO : PYGMIES OR RWANDAN COMBATANTS « INTERAHAMWE » ?

Pygmies and the Interahamwe are fighting for the control of forests in the East of D R Congo: two pygmies were killed by the sabre, sword, bayonet etc. and their corpses were abandoned to the wild animals!

On August 9th, 2005, four pygmies of Mubambiro Village, in North-Kivu, got into the forest in habitual search of wild honey. At their return, we are at Wabombo, a place at almost 2 to 3 hours of normal walking from their own village in the deep forest. Suddenly came a group of persons armed with fire arms and sabre, sword and bayonets…

“It is certainly the rwandan Combatants « Interamwe »”, exclaimed one of the pygmies who had heard one of the assailants speaking Kinyarwanda, the language of Rwanda.

The fight began so as to carry off the wild honey and to claim for dollars from the four pygmies. It was the pygmies Sangiza Kilenga, Kimomole Makopo, Kayese and Maombi succeeded to flee. They reached the village and alerted their Kinsmen.

The headman of the pygmy village M. Mubawa and some pygmies succeeded to reach the place of murder and met the corpses abandoned beneath a grotto in stones. In order to make the investigation, the headman of the village went back and made a report to the local authorities and to the MONUC.

Up to now, nobody has dared to go there for fear of the Interahamwe and the Rawandan combatants who have become the masters of the forest.

For your information, Mubambiro is a pygmy village of North Kivu situated at about 24 km from Goma, it embodies 37 Pygmies' families.

But since April 2005, that village is getting full of the displaced pygmies coming from the village of Kimota. The pygmies are fleeing the fight between the trained armed forces of DR Congo (FARDC) and the Interahamwe.

These latter have become more active these days in the East of DR Congo since MONUC has declared the operation « plongeons du Faucon », an operation aiming to dissuade more and more those rwandan combatants and the FDLR.

To our deception, these operations that the FARDC and the Monuc carry against those assailants go on pushing these latter in the forest and it is the villages of the tributary people of the forest which are suffering. We have mentioned « the pygmies people. »

ISIRO/oriental province

More than 2,300 pygmies leave the forest and claim for their rights.

For the first time of the history, the pygmy populations of DR Congo have marched in the town of Isiro in the oriental province in the North-East of the country so as to claim for their rights to exist and to be respected. It was on April 17th, 2005 and the number of these pygmies was at least 2300 among whom, many came from the Equatorial forest for the very first time. The manifestation was great because most of the inhabitants of Isiro had never seen the pygmies before and they were curious to see those men and women of short shape (the average of 1,45 meter).

After the march in the main roads of Isiro, the pygmies met in Nelson Mandela stadium of the town. There, they held a speech in front of the authorities (among whom 3 members of the parliament coming from Kinshasa, the Capital of DR Congo, and the representatives of the mission of the United Nations Organization in Congo-Monuc) and a large crowd of people. And this, in order to claim for their rights to be treated dignantly and to obtain justice.
The main organizer of the manifestation was Father Franco Laudani. This one has been working for 28 years in DR Congo and he is particularly in charge of the pastoral of the pygmies. For this priest, “pygmies are no longer people of the forest who like to stay in the forest. Congolese people should change their idea to state that the pygmies are the people of forest. It is not like that. Pygmies want to get in the society. With their poverty, they have the same dignity as the other Congolese.” A woman of Isiro very emotioned said the same thing as father Franco Laudani in these words: “we are glad to see the pygmies among us. They are our brothers. We do not neglect them. They are human beings like us.”

To some who would like to see through the manifestation a political manipulation for electoralist purposes, father Franco Laudani replies: “we have told the pygmies. If you want to come to Isiro, you should come on foot. I do not give you any thing to eat. Some pygmies have then made 4 days of walking, may be without any food or with their small baskets containing some food. We thank people to have helped them with their food freely on the way. Pygmies have made 200, 150 or 100 km on foot, in 4 days without being supported by anybody.”

The march of pygmies at Isiro was supported by the MONUC. The same MONUC, through its section of human rights, has subsidized the activities of pygmies’ pastoral at Oicha, Niangara and Wamba. That manifestation has also benefited from the support of the provisional governor of the Oriental province, M. Hubert Pierre MOLISHO, and 3 members of the parliament coming from Kinshasa, the Capital of DR Congo.

Thus, the minority pygmies of the East of the DR Congo counts almost 200,000 individuals. It is subject of discrimination and racism by the other tribes, which treat the pygmies with despise, and consider them like slaves. On the other hand, the government does not care enough of them: they do not have identity cards and are not enrolled at the Civilian status, which does not give them any Civic rights.

A report of the Congolese Observatory of the human rights (observation congolaise des droits de l’homme « OCDH ») of 2004 denounces the slavery conditions in which the pygmies live.

These are exploited by the other communities which use them to hunt, to catch fish or to do other works in exchange with ridiculous compensations.

The OCDH has also deplored an alarming level of health community at the pygmies and a weak level of school education because of the local customs and the surrender of the Nation.

OCDH is one of the 5 institutions supporting democracy in DR Congo during this period of political transition. And this, by the side of the Independent Electoral Commission (commission électorale Indépendante « CEI »), Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Commission Vérité et Réconciliation « CVR »), Ethic and fight against Corruption Commission (=Commission d’éthique et de Lutte Contre la Corruption « CELC ») and the High Authority of the Medias (Haute autorité des médias « HAM »).

Let us hope that these indigenous pygmies, the first inhabitants of the country, did not complain loudly in vain, in the desert!

Pacifique MUKUMBA.
The vulgarizing and increasing the value of the wild Yams « Birongo > could make a promising way of fighting efficiently against the poverty of the neighbouring population of Kahuzi-Biega Park (PNKB), among them the indigenous pygmies of South-Kivu province in the East of DR Congo.

The morning of july 15th was consacrated to the exploitation of the sub-theme «role of the actors in the process of vulgarizing and increasing the value of the Birongo as a new practise ». successively Mr. Bisidi Yalolo of the WWF spoke about « partnership multi-actors », Madame agnès Kamwanya of the AFECEF held a speech on « the role of a woman », Mr. Desiré Babuya of the APDMAC stressed « the role of a pygmy », Madame Nono Nabintu of the CRONGD spoke of « the role of the NGODs », Madame Madeleine Bwenge, the chair person of the Provincial Division of Nature Protection and environment protection focused on « the role of the nation ». The afternoon of that day was consacrated to the works in groups and to the sharing of ideas and the official end and the delivery of the participation attestations.
SOUTH KIVU
Vulgarizing and increasing the value of the wild yams « Birongo », a way to fight against pygmies’ poverty.

An initiative of the Congolese Institute for Nature Protection supported by National Park of Kahuzi-Biega/GTZ

The commissioner and head of the National Park of Kahuzi-Biega (PNKB) Mr Bernard Iyomi Iyatshi began his exposé (word) with a remark that the PNKB has been created in 1937 as a forest reserve, in 1970 as a National Park, and in 1980 as a Site of world patrimony. The pygmies, who live in the high altitude and the neighbouring parts of that protected area, have no land nor means of production. Poor, they go on earning their lives by some forest products.

Thus, pygmies are the first consumers of the Birongo which intervene, with 46.8% in their alimentation. They keep the traditional knowledge of that plant that they go to pick up at even more than 20 km.

You will note that more than 90% of the 540 650 persons who live near the park have recourse to natural resources for their survival although the law remains tense in this matter. Therefore, vulgarizing and making worthy the Birongo are an initiative of the congolese Institute for Nature Conservation through its support project, the PNKB/GTZ.

In normal situations, those tubercles contribute to alimantary security of the pygmies around the park. They make up one of the solutions among some others for a sustainable management of natural resources.

As it is a must to develop the alternatives to natural resources order to relieve the population for a substandable development, we should all together fight against poverty by supporting this new initiative of vulgarizing the sub-kind of wild yams, the Discorea muntiflora engl. As it is a must to develop the alternatives to natural resources order to relieve the population for a sustainable development, we should all together fight against poverty by supporting this new initiative of vulgarizing the sub-kind of wild yams, the Discorea muntiflora Zngl., for the well being of our populations. This was the conclusion of the commissioner and head of the National Park of Kahuzi-Biega, Mr Bernard Iyomi Iyatshi.

A WAY TO FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY AND EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES.

For the person in charge of environment Programme and Institutional reinforcement at “Héritiers de la justice” (=inheritors of Justice), Madame Roger Muchuba Bihereko, the human being has the right to enough food which takes into account his culture. The speaker has focused on the rights of the indigenous peoples who are specifically recognized and defined internationally, because of the specificity of their cultural, linguistic, economical and religious conditions and because of their socio-political organisation.

That recognition is also based on the particularly precarious life condition of the indigenous peoples and on the threat which they undergo. He also spoke of the right to a wholesome satisfactory environment relation to a sustainable development. He finally wondered if the Birongo would be a way to fight against poverty, the promotion of the custom of the indigenous peoples and an alternative to the industrial exploitation of Congolese forest threatening its sustainable management.

Pygmies claim for lands!

Speaking in the name of his Congeneric, the pygmy Désiré Bubuya of Action for the Promotion of the rights of the Indigenous Minorities in Centrale Africa (APDMAC) declared that the pygmies are conscious of the value of the Birongo and its domestication. However, they recommend to Horizon Nature to make available a space for this matter, to the other partner organizations to bring their share for this project, and to the Congolese Nation to make available spaces for this matter and the integrated development of the pygmies.

The lawyer Roger Muchuba of the “Héritiers de le Justice” NGO (= the Inheritors of Justice)

The pygmy headman of Chombo Village explains the traditional techniques of the harvesting of wild Yams

The last word.

The Coordinator of Horizon Nature, Madame Chantal Shalukoma thanked, in the last word, the authorities of South Kivu province, her money lender the CN UICN and all the participants. She promised to do more whith the project “Birongo” for the protection and development.


In the first meeting, the executive Director of CAMV held a short speech to denounce injustices such as the marginalization of pygmies in the management of the Congolese forests. In the second, Mr Adrien Sinafasi of APDMAC intervened to show clearly the traditional knowledge of the Indigenous people relating to the forest inheritance to protect for the manking. Here after, the two interventions wholly.

Madame Chairperson,

The Indigenous peoples, the Pygmies of the Democratic Republic of Congo, represented here by the Indigenous associations of the Pygmies present at this assises, would like First of all to present their warm regards and congratulations for your excellent election as chairwoman of the United Nations Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues.

Madame Chairperson,

In the context of the objectives of the Millennium, the situation of the Pygmy people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is deplorable and they are uncertain of their future.

The situation is deplorable because:
- The extreme poverty is exacerbated by the wars in DRC, and the spoliation of Pygmies’ land and the lack of access to natural resources
- The access of Pygmy children to primary education is really non-existent (the statistics say that only two percent of Pygmy children go to school)
- Inadequate access to health care

It is uncertain because even the Strategic Document for the Reduction of Poverty of the government of DRCongo failed to make any specific mention of the Pygmies, who are the poorest group in the DRC. But, further private investment is planned in the forest sector, which will further impoverish the Pygmies and affect their living space, their culture, and their traditional knowledge.

The forest sector of Congo is in the process of being reformed with the help of the World Bank and the FAO. Unfortunately no preliminary studies on the impact of this on the Indigenous people; the Pygmies, who inhabit the forest, have been carried out. The Indigenous Pygmy people have welcomed the initiative of the Government of Congo in improving forestry, which includes zoning for Congolese forests. Unfortunately this zoning is being done in a non-inclusive way. Also, we particularly and vigorously deplore the fact that the World Bank has utterly failed to apply the Operational Directive concerning Indigenous Peoples (OD4.20) to the projects that it finances in the DRC, particularly the Project of Urgent Support of the Social and Economic Reunification (PSURES). By their nature, its activities inevitably have a negative impact on Pygmy populations.

We are concerned by the fact that the WB systematically fails to apply its own conservation policies in its projects that affect DR Congo forests and the people who live in them, especially the Pygmies. The WB has effectively decided not to apply OP7.60 relative to projects in conflict zones and since the forests of the DR Congo are clearly the object of conflicts, as much between rival factions at the national as well as at the local level. The WB recognizes this situation by putting into practice OP8.50, which is applied in emergency situations only. How does the WB justify this? With such a policy, World Bank will make a less contribution to the realization of the MDGs in DRC.

Madame Chairperson,

Taking the above into account, we recommend the following four items to the Permanent Forum:


1. Ask the WB to explain its reasons for not applying OD 4.20 and OP7.60 and for resorting to OP8.50 in the Project of Urgent Support of the Social and Economic Reunification (PSURES).
2. Ask for the suspension of the PSURES until OD 4.20, which relates to Indigenous Populations, as well as OP7.60, which relates to projects in conflict regions, will be applied transparently and in their totality.
3. Ask the Congolese Government and its partners to quickly proceed with an urgent revision of the Strategic Document on the Reduction of Poverty in order to integrate the Indigenous Pygmy Peoples’ issues.
4. Ask the Congolese Government and its partners to urgently implement a study of the environmental impact on the Indigenous Pygmy People before going any further with the implementation of the zoning of Congolese forests.

The Pygmy Indigenous Organizations of the DRC present at the 4th session of UNPFII.

2. Integration and Development Program of the Pygmy People of Kivu (PIDP-KIVU).

WORKING GROUP OF THE UNITED NATIONS ON THE INDIGENOUS POPULATIONS/ 23rd SESSION

Traditional knowledges are an inheritance to protect for the mankind.

The working group of the United Nations on the indigenous peoples has consecrated, in Genève in the helvetic confederation, from July 18th to july 22nd 2005, its 23rd session on the subject “the indigenous peoples and the protection of traditional knowledge pygmies make a trimony to protect for the humanity. Although they are treated as primitive and barbarious, pagan and satanic, these knowledges have contributed much to the protection of the forests of the planet. They deserve to be encouraged by the world funds and a great consideration of the states. That is the content of the following speech.

Mr. the President,

We will never say it enough: the humanity owes much to the traditional knowledges of the indigenous peoples throughout the world. Look at the great forest massives of the world, these lungs of the earth, which regulate the necessary natural phenomena of life on our planet, such as the Amazony and the Congo basin, to name only these latters. Their maintain up to nowadays is it hazardous? We don’t think so. It is rather, for us, an eloquent proof of the effectiveness of the knowledges, the practises and the traditional ways of the management of the indigenous peoples who have inhabited the forests during centuries, and even millenuries.

Consider the natural sites with a great biological diversity throughout the world, the most beautiful natural sites of touristic attraction in all the continents. The best parks, the best natural reserves, the rare animal and vegetable species,... you will note that they exist in their very wholeness on the lands of the indigenous peoples. Mere coincidence? No! It is due to their traditional knowledges and practises that those peoples have succeeded to maintain for the humanity, these pictorial landscapes and these natural and biogical richnesses.

Unfortunately, Mister the President, the traditional knowledges of the indigenous people throughout the world have never enjoyed respect, consideration, recognition and protection that they deserve.

The history of the invasions and colonisations teach us that the traditional knowledges of the indigenous people invaded or colonised have very often been considered as primitive and barbaric, by the invaders or colonisers, and hence, good to be destroyed.

In Africa, for instance, after the colonisations, the national administration did not do anything to promote the traditional knowledges. Budgets are devoted to researches said « scientific » and nothing or almost nothing to researches on the traditional knowledges.
Even some Christian churches did not favour the maintain and protection of traditional knowledges and practices, without hesitating to qualify them of “pagan” and “Satanic” and rather encouraging the believer to get rid of them for their salvation.

Nevertheless, as shown above, traditional knowledges, despite their limits and imperfections, have done greatly good things for our earth and can once more serve the humanity. It is now very necessary to protect them as a common inheritance for the whole mankind.

The last years have known the birth of the begining of interest at the international level on the behalf of the traditional knowledges; which is already a good thing. Yet, that interest lasts to be seen in real facts on the behalf of the promotion of these knowledges by the Nations.

Thus is why, we, the indigenous pygmies of Central Africa, we recommend the United States, through the human rights commission:

1. To create, at this beginning of the 2nd decade of the indigenous peoples, a world funds for the promotion and protection of the traditional knowledges, so as to support the withholders of these knowledges and protection of rights of intellectual ownership in the researches, innovation, inventories, exchanges and certifications.

2. To encourage the Nations members to recognize the characteristic of public usefulness for the planet to the tradition knowledges that have the indigenous peoples in those countries; which would mean that these populations shouldn’t be dispalaced, without their willing, from their traditional lands which make the basis of their knowledges and practises.

3. To help those Nations members, particularly those of Centreal Africa, which have taken international commitments relating to the promotion and protection of knowledges, innovations and tradition practices, mainly in matter of the CDB (articles 8j and 10 c), to respect their international obligations.

4. To encourage those states members, especially those of Central Africa, which haven’t signed and ratified yet the 169 convention of the ILO relating to the rights of the indigenous and tribal peoples in independent countries, to do it, knowing that the maintain and protection of traditional knowledges of the indigenous peoples are undissociatable from the respect of their specific rights, including their rights to their traditional lands.

5. To reinforce, on the basis of the principle of preliminary free and informed oensent, the skills of the withholders of traditional knowledges for improvements and innovations accommodated to their kwokledges in order to serve well the human society.

6. To reinforce the capacities of the indigenous organizations, since they are partners for the best protection and increasing the value of the traditional knowledges of the people that they represent.

It is only in this way, believe us, that the traditional knowledges on the service of humanity, will be promoted and protected.

Thank you, Mr. The president.

Adrien Sinafasi Makelo.

The Bapeli locality, situated in the Bambuti grouping in the territory of Banalia in the Oriental province of the DR Congo, has been, in the scale of 2 to 6 May 2005, the subject of dread spread by a leopard in rage. Nobody could go to the forest nor to the source to get some water. Goats, ducks, chickens and dogs were devoured by the predator.

On May 7th, a counsel of pygmies hunters met in the same locality in order to determine the techniques of killing the leopard. In the night of May 7th to 8th, a heavy hunting apparatus is made and a kid-goat is put in a cage to attract the leaopard. Pre-occupied by the moan of the kid, the predator arrives and wants to catch its prey. A long string of arrows and spears hang down suddenly on it and the predator succombs immediately.

The pygmies organized a ceremony according to their rites so as to celebrate the felling of the leopard. The same day, that is to say, on May 8th in the the afternoon, the news got to M. Lomali, the chairperson of the administrative post of Panga, who decided to send a police expedition in order to torture the pygmies who were in the feast. This latter and his policemen arrived at Bapeli at 8 o’clock pm to arrest all the pygmies. The hunters who had killed the leopard were undressed and submitted to a severe caning in front of everybody. The other pygmies, men and women were soon after arrested.

Among the arrested men, we can name Molung, Simba, Yenga, Mangala, Konguo, Dubume, Andane, Ogane and Mbali-Odo. The arrested and caned women were: Piandro, Ajama, Abundu, Zangidra, Vaingwa, Mona, Abuenra, Liweze, Apolina and Nogeba. Mr Lomali inflicted all the arrested Pygmies a fine in terms of things of 20 dollars us. All that the pygmies had in their village (chickens, ducks, wild fowl...) were deported by M. Lomali and his policeman.

Up to now the Bapeli locality remains unoccupied because in the habit of the region authorities, for the same problem, the camping of pygmies can be grazed in a single space of time. The camping of Bapeli is up to now deserted because of the fear of other new reprisals of Mr Lomali and his police. Should we then sacrify human being or protect the beasts, even if they are rare?

OSAPY

The young Batwa – Bambuti of the African Great lakes have held their 3rd meeting at Bukavu / DR Congo.

The executive committee of the network of the young Indigenous Batwa- Bambuti of the Great Lakes Region (RJB) has held, at “Centre d’Acceuil Protestant de Bukavu” (=the Bukavu Protestant Guest Center) on july 25th,2005, its third meeting. And that , after its constituent meeting in Bujumbura in November 2004 and its ordinary meeting in the Burundian Capital in may 2005, and the next meeting is planned in Kigali in Rwanda. 11 young indigenous – among whom 7 from DR Congo, 2 from Burundi and 2 from Rwanda – have attended the meeting. The coordinator of the “Programme d’Integration du peuples Pygmpees au Kivu” (=Integration and Development Programme of the Pygmy People of Kivu) “PIDP-Kivu”, Mr Stephan Ilundu has held a welcoming speech to the participants who have introduced themselves successively.
The young Batwa – Bambuti of the African Great lakes have held their 3rd meeting at Bukavu / DR Congo.

After the welcoming ceremony, the secretary of RJB, M Callixte. Hategekimana presented the objectives, realization and the outlook of the institution. In order to contribute substantially to the promotion, defense and protection of the right of the indigenous peoples of the great lakes region, the RJB coordinates the activities of the young Batwa – Bambuti stressing on the reinforcement of their capacities and the promotion of their basic, secondary and university education. It fights and prevents the plague HIV/AIDS. It does all to protect the traditional knowledge and intellectual and cultural ownership of the indigenous populations.

The representative of the coordinator of IPAC( Indigenous Peoples of Africa coordinating committee has thanked the participants to have answered positively to the invitation. Note the absence of the Ugandan delegation for non willing reasons of their organizer. The president of RJB, Mr Emmanuel Nengo, Was represented by the coordinator of “Unissons – nous pour la promotion des Batwa (UNIPROBA) (= let’s unite for the promotion of the Batwa), Mr Vital Bambanze.

Il insists to continue working in matters of defense, promotion and protection of the rights of the indigenous peoples Batwa Bambuti who have been for a long time and up to now scoffed.

TOYO WABABUSHO / CAMV DR CONGO

Burundi

Great plan about the Marginalization of the Batwa

The Batwa make a minority and indigenous group of Burundi. They represent almost 1% of the marginal population and are located throughout the whole national territory. They were discriminated and marginalized by both of the two other ethnic groups (Hutu and Tutsi) during the immemorial times. They have always inhabited spaces far from these latters and they have shared much less social, ecnonocal and political activities.

The Batwa have never possessed neither lands nor cattles which would make for the Burundian a principal wealth for his own survival and his offspring. They live in an extreme poverty and their way of living has not improved like the one of the other communities.

After the expulsion from the forests which made their traditional residence where they were living just of hunting and gathering, the Batwa of Burundi have been practising pottery and iroworks which remain up to now their first source of survival. Unfortunately, pottery, their main activity, has lost its value because it is competed by other modern industrial products easier to use and more lasting.

Nowadays, the lack of land for the Batwa make up a serious problem for their survival because they do not have where to establish their houses and where to cultivate. They do not have good houses, they only live in huts and are exposed to illnesses and bad weathers of all kinds; they do not have access to health cares.
Burundi
Great plan about the Marginalization of the Batwa

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Very few of their children go to school because of the lack of school fees and necessary equipment for school. Moreover, serfdom was suppressed in 1976 in Burundi but it goes on pressing hard only on the Batwa mostly in the provinces of Bubanza, Ngozi, rural Bujumbura, Mwaro, Bururi and Muravya, etc. There, the Batwa (father, mother and children) work every day for their bosses in exchange of the daily food. All of this is an obvious violation of the article 2.2 of the United Nations’ declaration about the rights of people belonging to the national or ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities.

Because of non-access to land, many Batwa steal crops in the fields. Arrested and put in jail for that, some of them do not have a judicial dossier and stay definitely in prison. Some others get very heavy penalties: more than 20 years in prison or imprisonment forever. Isn’t it a planned way to exterminate that community? indeed, it is unacceptable that someone spends 10 years in jail for having stolen a bunch of bananas or an umbrella. When they claim or complain at the justice to have been expropriated of their lands, many Batwa do not have the right solution because of corruption, because of marginalization and discrimination established even in some people of the law: a Mutwa can never give more convincing arguments than a member of one of the two other dominating groups.

Another tactful case is that of the Batwa’s houses which were burnt at Kirundo in the North of the country under the commandement of the governor. Cries given by the opinion did not provoke any reaction from the government.

In politics, the agreement of Arusha and the constitution foresees the share of power among all the Burundians at all the levels: 60% for the Hutu, 40% for the Tutsi, 0% for the Batwa and 50%-50% for the first two ethnic groups in the army. However, the same agreement of Arusha in its point 180.2 and the constitution in its article 162 foresee, for the Batwa by co-optation, 3 places in the parliament and 3 in the senate. That was decided without consulting the affected and without taking into account that they also need to be represented at all the levels. Moreover, it is said that the appointment of these representatives will pass through the political parties whereas many Batwa do not care of those formations and that can lead to the appointment of the non-Batwa.

Hence, the Burundian government should decide to abolish the servitude of the Batwa and it should distribute them lands. The education of their children should be free of charge so as to allow the emergence of the literates of that community. It is only after that, that they will participate more at the levels of taking decisions, the government having initiated legislative texts which allow the Batwa to choose their own more efficient and dynamic representatives.

The Justice Court should be fair without any distinction for the Batwa. Those among them who have already undergone one fourth of their penalties should rather benefit from a temporary liberty as it is being given to the other ethnic groups and armed groups which have been guilty of disgraceful penalties during the crisis. Meanwhile, the organizations working, for the promotion and protection of the right of the minorities should be given necessary funds so as to ensure a sustainable development.

At last, the international community should bring the Burundian government to ratify and make in practice the international tools relating to the rights of minorities and indigenous. It is mainly about the convention on the civil and political rights and the convention 196 of the ILO. That international community should also care more about the re-establishment of peace, security, good governorship and democracy in the countries of the great lakes.

Emmanuel Nengo
Uniproba/Burundi
Geneva, May-June 2005
Burundi

“Three places, it’s not enough for us”

Declared the woman member of the parliament Twa Liberata Nicayenzi
Six places, - three to the national assembly and three to the senate are given to he batwa community by the provisory post- transition constitution of Burundi republic approved by the referendum of February 28 th 2005 and promulgated by the president of the nation on march 28 th 2005. Positive discrimination yes but it is not enough, declares the parliament member Twa Liberata Nicayenzi, for a stong community of 60.0000 individuals, that is, 1% of the whole population of the country.
“it’s a good improvement that the constitution thinks of us, but it’s not enough relating to what we represent”, declared madam Liberata Nicayenzi, president of the organization UNIPROBA (= let us unite for the promotion des Batwa) (= let us unite for the promotion of Batwa). Member of the parliament of the transition issued from the agreements of Arusha, Misses liberat a Nicayenzi is a very busy woman. When we met her on Tuesday , April 5 th 2005 at the beginning of the afternoon for an appointment, she was in the meeting of the parliament. She suggested us to see her rather on the next day April 6 th. For us it was really a must to see her the same day. We then decided to go and wait for her at her office at the center of UNIPROBA, situated at the 1st level of the building in the center town of Bujumbura almost opposite to the central market.
After waiting for almost 30 minutes, a woman of dark colour, worn in a green robe, comes to us. It is her the president of the association. With a rather normal shape for a pygmy, she speaks in a good French which shows her level of instruction. “we were not considered” she stressed; keeping her smile on the lips. “we would like our representation to be done in terms of percentage as they had done it for the hutus and tutsis” she added. “ with one place per province, we could be satisfied” she said sighing.
Nicayenzi is even proud to show what she qualified of “improvement” realized by the Batwa concerning the instruction.
In fact, for the promotion, two have completed their university studies and four others are still at university. She thinks it’s enough for her community to claim for more. Nevertheless, there’s nothing to do because the agreements of Arusha did not foresee more for the Twa.
Yet, she foresees the problems for sharing the three places given to the twa, any criterium was fixed by the law in this matter. “the independent national electoral commission can have a compromise with UNIPROBA about the modalitie s of cooptation” she suggests, wanting to show that her association is the most representative of the Twa community. She even shows that the representatives of the association in different provinces of the country should meet immediately in order to discuss about the distribution of those places.
When we asked her if she was not foreseeing to be a candidate to the presidential election, she burst out laughing. Them, thoughtful she came back to the question: “do you think that the Hutus and Tutsis are ready to elect for a Twa without any resources?”

Franck Baku / SGI-IPP.
Rwanda
Health situation of the pygmies-Batwa is precarious: more than 80% know that HIV/AIDS can not be cured!

The community of the Rwandan indigenous (CAURWA) has just published an investigation on socio-economic life conditions of the beneficiary families of these actions. In this edition, we give you the investigation’s extracts relating to health and the knowledge of HIV/AIDS. In our preceding delivery, we have said that more than 75% of these Rwandan indigenous were illiterate.

More than half of the beneficiary population of the CAURWA (52%) got ill during the four weeks before the investigation. According to sex, the women who got sick were more numerous than men. Only 21% of all the patients have done a health examination and 79% have not done it. The main illnesses for men and women are malaria, illnesses of internal medicine, wounds, breathing illnesses, intestinal worms and poisoning.

In 2003, more than half of women aged between 15 to 49 (68%) have received a pre-natal vaccine and 32% did not get it. The significant reasons of the non-vaccination are ignorance of the necessity stated by 28.6% of women, the lack of means stated by 23.8% the high cost by 14.3% and the ignorance of its existence by 9.5% of women. In the whole of the beneficiary population of CAURWA, a great proportion of 90% of children of less than 5 years have received the vaccine.

Thus, the beneficiary members of the CAURWA aged of 21 years and more are not sensitized about the participation to the test of HIV/AIDS because only 8% have done the test. The main reasons given to do the test are marriage, the curiosity to be aware of his serologic status and the fear to have had non-protected sexual intercourse.

Abstinence comes in the first position among the ways of prevention against HIV/AIDS for the men and women with respectively 81.7% and 79.8%. This way is followed for men by the use of condoms (8.2%), the other ways (5.6%), no way (4.2%) and the prevention of transmission infected mother-child (0.3%). As far as women are concerned, the use of condoms represents 7.9%, no way 7.1% and the other ways 5.1%.

Note that 86.4% of the beneficiary members of the CAURWA aged of 21 and more know that there’s no way to cure HIV/AIDS. The remaining 13.6% do not know anything and they pretend to have recourse to modern medicine, to traditional medicine or to prayers. Hence, men (76%) and women (72.6%) speak in their families about the ways to avoid getting the virus of AIDS.

The Rwandan Twa lack lands, adequate houses and access to social services. Photo, report 2004. “forest peoples project”
THE FIRST HALF-YEAR 2005, PAINFUL FOR THE PYGMIES IN EAST OF DRCONGO.

During the first half – year 2005, the indigenous pygmies in the East of DR Congo were victims of many exactions, from requisitions for forced works to murders, passing by land conflict and rapes of their wives and daughters. They were even arrested to have killed a leopard which was threatening them.

**Exactions by soldiers.**

**January 2**<sup>nd</sup>**</sup>

Soldiers of armed forces of the DR Congo (FARDC) got into the pygmies’ houses in Muyange village, Kabare territory. They loot important properties.

**January 7**<sup>th</sup>

Three soldiers of the FARDC rape the pygmy Faida M’Ntole (19 years), mother of a 18 months child and wife of the pygmy chinzali (22 years) of Chombo/Buyungule village.

**January 13**<sup>th</sup>

At about 9 o’clock pm, the rwandan militia Interahamwe and the Soldiers of FARDC got successively in Madam Melania’s house, a pygmy subject of Kashodu village, Kamakombe locality, Bugorhe grouping in the territory of Kabare. They take away a goat, clothes, kitchen supplies and other possessions.

**February 2005.**

**Expulsion from gold-mines**

**February 5**<sup>th</sup>

Some Hutu non identified in any other way killed a pygmy near Opiko in Aza village, Mahaa district, territory of Wamba, Oriental Province.

**Between February 5**<sup>th</sup> **and February 8**<sup>th</sup>. At Kaboneke in the district of Ntambuka on Idjwi Island, 25 pygmies’ houses were destroyed by ten men.

Those houses belonged to pygmies of the following Boroto family: Tiyeni Boroto, Bulota Boroto, Bulasire Boroto, Kambaba Boroto, Yonasi Boroto, Mulumba Boroto, Jivi Boroto, Futi Boroto, Shabiho Boroto, Katera, Bategone, Kolote, Seni, Alegisi, Baraka, Janini, Siria, Kasiko, Mana, Sitwaye, Kasole, Nyababiri, Tumika, Tipeya, Shoda. The destroyers were: Kalyamburho, Mibeza, Guruguru, Tegeka, Hobedi, Zihiga, Bweha, Bagalwa, Wangu, and Mwisikanye. The reason of that destruction was the fact that the King (Mwami) Roger Ntambuka wanted to give the lands of Kaboneke, which belonged to the Pygmy’s Boroto family, to his brothers “Urbain” and Mukunda.

**February 15**<sup>th</sup>

The pygmy Kininga Msafiri of Maeta village in Itombwe forest in the territory of Fizi was stolen his 180 kg of Cassiterite by the customary chiefs Msafiri and Ngenda. According to these laters, a pygmy does not have the right to possess such a quantity of ores.

**March 2005**

**Rapes of girls**

**March 3**<sup>rd</sup>

The pygmy Buholo Masesa of Luindi district in the territory of Mwenga is expelled from his mine of cassiterite by the factory named Mi-Congo. Soldiers of FARDC lead by Colonel Samy raped 3 pygmies girls in Kembe village in the territory of Walikale.

**April 2005**

**Requisition for transport of ammunitions.**

**April 2**<sup>nd</sup>

A truck of FARDC made an accident and bent its Cargo near Boroto village in Walikale territory. with lashings, the Soldiers obliged the pygmies of that village to load again the ammunitions in their truck.

**May 2005.**

**Murder at the work post.**

**May 7**<sup>th</sup>

The chair person of the administrative post of Panga in Banalia territory in the Oriental Province,
Continuation of page 14

M. Lomali, and his policeman arrested, undressed and caned at night and publicly the Pygmies of Bapele village. These had just killed a leopard which was threatening them.

May 30th
The pygmy Soda Nyamushi was stabbed with a poniard by a person in civilian clothes at about 11 o’clock pm in Kitambala’s plantation where he was working on sentry-duty. Aged of 36 years, he was living in Chombo/Buyungule village in the grouping of Miti in the territory of Kabare. He left his pregnant wife Jacqueline M’Nyangirwa with 5 children.

June 2005
Arbitrary arrests.
June 2nd
Two Soldiers of FARDC non identified in another way arrested and obliged the pygmy Bahati Nyamushi of Chombo/Buyungule village in the territory of Kabare to transport a bunch of bananas to their camp of Civanga. The soldiers deployed in that area were used to make the pygmies to transport luggages of possessions that they had looted here and there.

June 9th
The pygmy Leonad Milenga EO, popularizer of forest and mining codes on the way Mwenga-Itombwe, was seriously beaten and arrested during 4 hours by the Soldiers of the 107th brigade of the FARDC. He was suspected to have much money to buy ores. For his liberty he paid a fine of 20 American dollars. They also took away his field pair of shoes and a jacket.

June 10th
Two Soldiers of FARDC non identified in any other way, obliged the pygmy Maroke Kaganda of Chombo/Buyungule village in the territory of Kabare to do some forced works such as washing their clothes. The pygmy refused to obey to that order. The Soldiers obstructed him the way to Kitambala plantation towards Izambyo where he was cultivating.

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