

"The Belgian Government, hoping that the individual examination of files may make it possible to reduce the number of cases to which the general amnesty measures can clearly not be applied, is prepared, without prejudice to its sovereign decision in each case and taking into account its own responsibility, to issue pardons to persons sentenced or prosecuted for political offences who are not covered by Legislative ORDINANCE NO. 01/188, after a careful examination of their files by the United Nations Special Commission."

This declaration indicated clearly the wish of the Belgian authorities to cooperate closely with the Commission in order to permit it to discharge as fully as possible the task entrusted to it by the General Assembly. As soon as the Commission arrived in the territory it established contact with the Representative of the Administering Authority in Usumbura and with the Belgian Political Amnesty Commission composed of three magistrates of high repute from Brussels, Ghent and Liege then meeting in Astrida and whose role consisted of referring to the Commission, after due consideration, the cases which would eventually be the subject of recommendations for amnesty.

The Commission also held very fruitful meetings with the members of the United Nations Commission for Ruanda-Urundi to draw up an expeditious method of work. The Commission was not expected to express itself on the bare merits of the cases under consideration. This will explain why the Commission did not attempt to justify its decisions on legal grounds as this might have been interpreted as interference in the internal affairs of a member state. We also had to submit our recommendations to the Administering Authority within a relatively short space of time since according to the Assembly's resolution, amnesty had to be granted two months in