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ASSISTANCE MISSION FOR RWANDA

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PAGE 1 OF 6

TO: DR. ABDUL KABIA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UNAMIR	FROM: PIERRE MEHU OIC/OSRSG UNAMIR - KIGALI
ATTN: INFO: <i>THEU HE Aman offe.</i>	DATE: 27 JUNE 1994
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ORIGINATOR	SECTION: SRSG'S OFFICE
SUBJECT: SEE ATTACHMENTS	

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THE ATTACHED NOTES WAS PREPARED FOR THE ACTING CHIEF OF MISSION BY MR. BUG AND COPIED TO YOU

YOU MAY FIND IT AS INFORMATIVE AS WE DID.

WARM REGARDS

Pierre

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2/6

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NOTE TO THE ACTING CHIEF OF MISSION

1. With the launching, on 23 June 1994, of "Operation Turquoise" following the adoption, on 22 June, of Security Council resolution 929 (1994) authorizing the French-led multinational humanitarian operation in Rwanda, the Rwandese situation has entered an uncertain, yet potentially critical phase.

2. If it meets its objective of "contributing, in an impartial way, to the security and protection of displaced persons, refugees and civilians at risk in Rwanda", and especially if it does so within the time-frame set by the Security Council and with minimal or, better, without armed confrontations, the operation could impact positively, even decisively, on broader efforts to end the war and to re-launch the peace process. If, on the other hand, the operation gets sidetracked, bogged down or slips into a deepening and widening quagmire in the already complex Rwandese conflict, the result could be a situation a great deal more vexatious and perhaps even more dangerous.

3. That the multinational operation is controversial has been evident from the moment the idea was first broached by France publicly nearly two weeks ago. Among some of the arguments advanced by the operation's critics is the concern that the mission could, by default or by design, assist or be seen as assisting one of the belligerent forces in the ongoing civil war, specifically the RGF which is widely believed to be losing in the fighting. This concern has led the other belligerent force, the RPF, to oppose the French initiative ardently from the very beginning. The fear has also been expressed, especially by Africans, that the Security Council's approval of the operation could be interpreted as legitimizing or presaging increased external interference in, or neo-colonial domination of, African countries.

4. Like other members of the international community, African countries have genuinely been horrified by the magnitude of the violence in Rwanda and would like to see the damage brought to an immediate end. The fact that they have generally reacted coolly to an operation which France maintains is purely humanitarian and is aimed at saving lives might be a reflection of the depth of feeling and concern over foreign military intervention in the region outside of a United Nations peacekeeping context.

RESTRICTED

2

5. The failure by France to consult adequately with African countries and the OAU prior to launching its initiative might partly be responsible for the reserved African response. Taken by surprise when the proposal was first announced, African countries were left largely unsure of the details of the initiative, including its specific objectives. As France has lately increased and intensified consultations with various African countries, more of them, especially francophone states, are now reported to be supporting the multinational operation. This experience would thus seem to underscore the importance of proper consultations with the parties or countries in a position to influence developments on a particular issue. This is certainly the case with the OAU and various member states in particular Rwanda's neighbours whose support and cooperation, as recognized in pertinent Security Council resolutions, is essential for the realization of genuine and lasting peace in Rwanda. With the bulk of UNAMIR's expanded force expected to come from African countries, and with regional states continuing to host hundreds of thousands of Rwandese refugees, Africa has indubitably attained a prominent place in international efforts to find a workable solution to the Rwandese problem. Close cooperation and consultation between the United Nations and African countries, including the OAU, could therefore help advance these efforts and is thus deemed vital, indeed essential, if progress is to be made.

6. It is also important to bear in mind that Africa's ability to exert or impose its position even on African issues such as the Rwandese question is not only subject to but is frequently constrained by geo-political and economic realities. Thus, despite the harsh opposition of the RPF and the generally unenthusiastic reaction of most African countries, France has not only proceeded to deploy "Operation Turquoise", but obtained Security Council approval for the mission with the support of two (Djibouti and Rwanda) of the three African members of the Council (Nigeria abstained). The reality is that France is a global economic and military power with a proven record of using its power to defend its vast interests in Africa. As defiance or confrontation in the face of such a powerful reality is generally viewed as unproductive and doomed to fail, many African states have frequently opted for the more pragmatic path of accommodation. The RPF's recent decision to soften its initial opposition to the French-led multinational operation can be seen in this light. The RPF may have concluded that continued opposition to a project France is committed to carrying out would not only be gratuitous, but could in the long term prove costly

RESTRICTED

3

4/6

for the Front in France, a great power and a permanent member of the Security Council, were to decide to become an active foe of the RPF.

7. The launching of the multinational operation carries risks even for the United Nations. If it succeeds, i.e. avoids major public relations disasters and withdraws on schedule, most of the credit would likely go to France for having initiated it. If, on the other hand, the operation stalls or gets bogged down in controversy and/or combat, the United Nations would probably be criticized for having authorized it in the first place. And, while a successful operation is likely to facilitate efforts to constitute and deploy the expanded UNAMIR force, difficulties with the operation could discourage potential contributors to the UNAMIR force. Moreover, whether the operation succeeds or fails, the perception is likely to persist, even grow, especially among small developing countries, that the United Nations, in the current post cold war era, is increasingly being used by its major powers at the expense of weaker or poorer countries. Nevertheless, and on balance, it would appear to be clearly in the Organization's interest for the multinational operation to succeed. If it is conducted in the impartial and neutral manner, and for the humanitarian objectives outlined in Security Council resolution 929, "Operation Turquoise" could be judged a success.

8. Beyond the immediate humanitarian concerns at the heart of its present mandate in Rwanda, the long-term objective of the United Nations in the country, as stated in Security Council resolution 929, is "to contribute to the resumption of the process of political settlement under the Arusha Peace Agreement". In fact, the humanitarian and political objectives are, especially in the Rwandese context, closely, if not inextricably, inter-linked. As the Security Council, by the same resolution, has determined, "the magnitude of the humanitarian crisis in Rwanda constitutes a threat to peace and security", not only in Rwanda, but in the region as a whole. In this connection, as was observed earlier above, the success of a major humanitarian mission, such as the ongoing French-led multinational operation, could facilitate or contribute to broader efforts to bring peace to Rwanda.

9. It would seem to me, especially against the background of the above considerations, that emphasis needs to be placed, particularly at this somewhat uncertain and transitional phase, on vigilance and caution so that such opportunities as are presented can creatively be exploited to try to end the war and

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4

5/6

the killings, to build confidence among the Rwandese parties with a view to advancing peace prospects and to consolidate international support for Rwanda. In this connection, I would like to recommend the following specific measures for your consideration:

- a. Appropriate mechanisms of consultation and coordination between the United Nations and the command of the French-led multinational humanitarian operation should be set up both at UN Headquarters in New York and in the operational area. In this connection, UNAMIR, with its knowledge of the Rwandese situation and experience on the ground, could play a particularly useful role. The primary goal of such consultations and coordination should be to contribute to the successful accomplishment of the humanitarian objectives outlined in the Security Council's resolution and to facilitate the smooth transfer of the humanitarian operation from the multinational force to the expanded UNAMIR force.
- b. Efforts should be intensified, both at UN Headquarters in New York and in Africa, with a view to having the expanded UNAMIR force brought up to full strength and deployed at the earliest possible opportunity.
- c. The SRSG should convene a special meeting at UNAMIR Headquarters in Kigali of heads of major humanitarian agencies, both within and outside the United Nations system, to examine the effective coordination and delivery of relief assistance. Such a meeting could serve also to dramatize the international community's profound preoccupation over the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Rwanda and to demonstrate its firm determination to continue to provide assistance to Rwandese in need.
- d. The SRSG should enter into discreet, broad-based exploratory talks with each of the parties to the Arusha Peace Agreement (the Government of Rwanda and the RPF) with a view to determining elements that could serve as a basis and as an agenda for direct high-level talks between the parties on such issues as: agreement, observance and monitoring of a cease-fire; the refugee and overall humanitarian situation; the security and protection of civilians; the resumption of the peace process, etc.
- e. The Secretary-General and the SRSG should intensify

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5

6/6

consultations on Rwanda with regional leaders, including inter alia, the current OAU Chairman, President Ben Ali of Tunisia, the Facilitator of the Rwandese peace process, President Mwinyi of Tanzania, the Mediator, President Mubutu of Zaire, the Presidents of the other neighbouring or nearby states (Burundi, Kenya and Uganda), President Mandela of South Africa, the Presidents of Djibouti and Nigeria, two of the three African states currently in the Security Council (the other is Rwanda), and the Secretary-General of the OAU, Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim. The primary objective should, in general, be to mobilize and engage these leaders actively in support of efforts to bring peace to Rwanda. Concretely, the leaders could use their influence to persuade or, as appropriate, to put pressure on the Rwandese parties to renounce war as an option and to pursue a political settlement.

f. In view of the notoriety Rwanda has earned world-wide as a result of recent tragic events, UNAMIR should set up a dynamic public communication and information programme to promote greater awareness of United Nations efforts to contribute to stability, security and peace in the country. Elements of such a programme might include: the establishment of a United Nations radio station in Rwanda, regular contact with UNAMIR troop contributing countries, including periodic reports to the respective governments and invitations to those governments to visit UNAMIR, strengthening of the resources - personnel, material and financial - of UNAMIR's press and information office, etc.

10. In addition to the measures proposed in para. 9 above, you may wish to consider reminding all staff members - military as well as civilian - that as we are in a particularly sensitive security environment, our actions, movements and words are constantly and carefully monitored and scrutinized and therefore that we should, at all times, avoid any actions or statements that could bring discredit to the United Nations or call into question the Organization's strict impartiality and neutrality in the situation at hand.


Sammy Kum Buo
Senior Political Adviser
26 June 1994

cc: ~~Sammy Kum Buo~~
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