



RPM/084/PR.06/E/14

New York, 26 June 2014

Excellency,

I have the honour to inform you that, on 24 June 2014, the Permanent Mission of Rwanda to the United Nations received a "Note by the Chair" S/AC.43/2014/Note.19, in which the Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 concerning the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) transmitted a letter dated the same day, by which Hervé Ladsous, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations (through the Assistant Secretary General Dimitry Titov, who signed p.o.), requested an exemption to the travel ban, in favour of a UN sanctioned individual Gaston Rumuli Iyamuremye (a.k.a. Victor Rumuli Byiringiro), referred to as President ad interim of the *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR)*.

In his letter, Mr Ladsous stated that Gaston Iyamuremye would travel on 25 June 2014 to Rome, Italy, in order to attend, the following day, a one-day meeting organized by the Sant'Egidio Catholic Community. Mr Ladsous went on to add that, in Rome, the FDLR leader would meet the team of Special Envoys and Representatives, led by Mrs Mary Robinson, Special Envoy of the Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region, accompanied by Mr. Frank De Coninck, Special Envoy of Belgium for the Great Lakes, to discuss how to accelerate the "ongoing FDLR disarmament and surrender process" and to consider "the options available to achieve this objective".

Rwanda found this request highly questionable, on both the procedure and on the motivation. Therefore, the Government of Rwanda, through its Permanent Mission to the UN, objected to the request for travel ban exemption. Consequently, the Chairperson of the 1533 Sanctions Committee, through note S/AC.43/2014/Note.19/Add.1, informed that the exemption request was not approved and proceeded accordingly to inform the Department of Peacekeeping Cooperation (DPKO).

Nonetheless, we were informed that MONUSCO did not even wait for the decision of the 1533 Committee before starting the process of airlifting a UN sanctioned individual, as well as other FDLR leaders, including individuals wanted by the Government of Rwanda for their responsibility in the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. Indeed, while the request of the travel ban was

pending, MONUSCO transported, by helicopter, Gaston Iyamuremye from Kanyabayonga to Goma, where he was transported to Kinshasa, though Kisangani, in a MONUSCO aircraft.

On the procedure related to the request for travel ban exemption, the Government of Rwanda wondered how the DPKO could make such request only one day before the actual travel, despite the fact that the meeting in Rome had been in preparation for a long time. This has compelled the Chair of the 1533 Committee to use an emergency non-objection procedure of only 24 hours, instead of the five (5) provided for in the Guidelines of the Committee. Was the DPKO trying to ambush Security Council members, with a hope that all of them would not have enough time to consider this controversial request?

The fact that the DPKO preferred sending this request itself, instead of going through the Permanent Mission to the United Nations of the State of which the listed individual is a national (Rwanda) or resident (DRC) could even undermine the neutrality of the United Nations, as it may suggest that some UN and DPKO senior officials are driving a hidden agenda of sanitizing the FDLR genocidaires.

On the motivation behind the request, Rwanda was of the view that the request constituted in itself a gross violation of relevant resolutions of the Security Council, particularly resolutions 2098 (2013) and 2147 (2014). In those resolutions, the Security Council stressed the importance of addressing the sustained regional threat posed by the FDLR, a group under UN sanctions whose leaders and members include perpetrators of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda and have continued to promote and commit ethnically-based and other killings in Rwanda and the DRC.

The Security Council had therefore mandated MONUSCO, particularly through the Force Intervention Brigade (FIB), to neutralize armed groups in eastern DRC, including the FDLR. In this respect, I also recall that resolution 2150 (2014), adopted on the occasion of the 20th commemoration of the genocide against the Tutsi, called upon UN member states to investigate, arrest, prosecute or extradite, all other fugitives accused of genocide residing on their territories, including those who are FDLR leaders. It should be clear that the FDLR is at the centre of chronic instability in the Great Lakes Region for two decades and that any further delay in eliminating this group and its ideology would only serve to cause further harm and suffering to the region.

The request for travel ban exemption is part of a pattern, over the last two decades, of a series of manoeuvres that attempt to deny and diminish the criminal essence of the FDLR, to find excuses of its acts, to treat this genocidaire group as notable group with legitimate political grievances and ultimately, to cleanse it from the most heinous crimes linked to its ideology,

including through religious communities.

Unfortunately, for twenty years, we have observed manipulations and conspiracies around the FDLR. It is a grave insult to the victims and survivors of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi, as well as to the people of Rwanda as a whole, that the very body that failed our people twenty years ago would be considering today a tacit return to such a shameful past.

It should be clear that Rwanda considers FDLR leaders and members who persist on the path to violence as the single biggest threat to national and regional peace. We here recall our clear policy towards the FDLR, which is to stop violence, disarm, set aside their genocide ideology and repatriate through the established DDR process, which has been most successful over more than a decade, delivering more than 10,000 former combatants, including top military leaders.

While Rwanda has been engaged and remains committed to the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework Agreement for the DRC and the Region, the recent actions by the DPKO threaten the effective implementation of that Framework and undermine the credibility of the Security Council, when its decisions are violated by those who should be the first to implement them. It would not make sense that Rwanda remains the only country to continue participating in the PSC Framework when the latter only advances the interests of others, including countries of the region. Therefore, Rwanda would consider withdrawing its participation from that Framework, should the DPKO, supporting other regional and international actors, continue these attempts to sanitize FDLR genocidaires.

I should be grateful if this letter is brought to the attention of Security Council members and circulated as a document of the Security Council.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Eugène-Richard Gasana
Permanent Representative
to the UN

His Excellency Vitaly Churkin
President of the Security Council
United Nations, New York