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**Subject**  
SECURITY COUNCIL: RWANDA

Your C24728/WN1

1. Belgian MFA (Fontaine, West/Central Africa) advise they are meeting their Minister (Claes) this evening to discuss the approach Belgium should adopt in a meeting of Western European Union (WEU) members Tuesday on the French proposal. Our contact was careful to avoid predicting his Minister's decision on this issue (which is highly political for the Belgians - see below) Fontaine advised, in confidence, that the main points of MFA advice to Claes are as follows:

- Belgium should indicate a favourable stance in principle to the French initiative.
- Any French-led intervention in Rwanda should have the endorsement of the United Nations, and should have a clear objective, mandate and time frame.
- the action must remain humanitarian in nature

2 Fontaine considered Belgium's approach in tomorrow's WEU meeting might well be to seek further details from France on how it would propose to ensure that the above requirements might be met.

3 Fontaine did not foresee any Belgian military contribution as at all likely. Belgium is however considering the

possibility of offering logistical support. Belgium has left considerable equipment in and bordering Rwanda following its recent withdrawal from that country. The intention to date has been that this might be offered to UNAMIR. However "on a case by case basis" it may be that any French-led force could be given access to such equipment.

**Comment**

4 The deaths of Belgian troops earlier this year in Rwanda would make any decision to commit new Belgian troops there unpalatable.. That said, Rwanda (as a former Belgian colony) retains considerable interest for the Belgian government and media. This factor, and Belgium's close bilateral links with France (just days before Belgium will be looking for continued French support for Belgium PM Dehaene's candidacy for the EU Commission Presidency at the Corfu EU Summit) will make any decision on the French initiative highly political for the Belgians. We would not be surprised to see them offer both moral and logistical support, if the conditions outlined above can be seen to be satisfied.

End Message