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Willberg	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Forsyth	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ward	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rider	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hughes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Kemmer	<input type="checkbox"/>
McMurray	<input type="checkbox"/>
Foster	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Rush	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tyne	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dalton	<input type="checkbox"/>
Watson	<input type="checkbox"/>

Subject
SECURITY COUNCIL: RWANDA

Your C24728.

Summary

- France's objective in proposing an intervention force in Rwanda is not to try and stop the fighting but simply to protect those populations under threat. France has no military or political objectives in mind.

- The mandate for the intervention force will be the same as UNAMIR's - to protect the civilian populations under threat. The force will work to reassemble those threatened in safe areas under its protection.

- France will not seek confrontation with the RPF. It will keep well away from RPF-controlled areas.

- France claims widespread support for its initiative in the Council and on the part of African countries (including Ghana, Nigeria and Kenya).

- Amongst Council members only New Zealand and perhaps Brazil are thought by France to hold any reservations about the proposal. New Zealand is asked not to express its reservations publicly.

Action

For information.

Report

2. We called this afternoon on Lapouge (Deputy Head, UN Section) to go over some of the questions you raised in your reftel. He reiterated that France's objective in proposing an intervention force was solely a humanitarian one - to protect those populations threatened by the Hutu militia. France was not going in with the aim of stopping the fighting. It had no political or military agenda. French troops would be no where near the military front. France would not seek confrontation with the RPF but if attacked would of course respond. It did not expect the intervention force would be in Tutsi-controlled areas so the possibility of confrontation with the RPF should be limited. French troops would however be prepared to use force against Hutu militia to prevent further massacres as provided for under the proposed Chapter VII mandate. The intervention force would try to reassemble those threatened into safe areas under its protection.

3. Lapouge confirmed that France had made a big effort to convince the RPF of the sincerity of its intentions. The French Ambassador to Rwanda (Marlaud) was in Kampala to talk the RPF. (Tonight's Le Monde reports that Kagame has refused to meet him.) French representatives had also spoken to the Deputy Prime Minister of the transitional government in Brussels. France had some hope that it would be able to convince the RPF to agree to the deployment of the intervention force. France was not totally pessimistic on this score.

International support

4. Lapouge went on to claim wide-spread international support for the proposed intervention force:

- The UNSG was very positive.
- The US was also very much in favour. Christopher had told Juppé that "not only do I support you but I admire you".
- Russia was not likely to cause a problem because of Georgia. China was also not expected to be difficult.
- There was a "slight reluctance" on the part of the UK but London was after all a very close ally of France and unlikely to stand in the way.
- The only Council members to be at all hesitant were New Zealand - and (perhaps) Brazil. In light of the wide-spread support for initiative, France hoped that New Zealand would not make its views known publicly.

- The NAM was very positive. "All the Africans were very much in favour."

5. We asked Lapouge what would happen if the proposal failed to receive the support of the Council. In view of the above, Lapouge did not consider this scenario very likely but noted that France was nevertheless determined to move ahead - if necessary with the approval of the UNSG and/or by means of an exchange of letters between the UNSG and the UNSC.

6. Lapouge acknowledged that for the moment despite this wide-spread support, only Senegal had offered troops. An agreement in principle (for Senegal to provide 200-300 troops according to Le Monde) was signed during Juppé's visit to Dakar over the weekend. Nigeria, Kenya and Ghana were also very positive as well but it was not yet clear whether they would provide any material support. France still expected Belgium and Spain to provide logistical support, the Netherlands and Denmark were also possibilities and the US could also come up with something.

Planning underway

7. Lapouge said that planning was underway to bring the intervention force in through Zaire. Burundi would have been a possibility but Bujumbura had enough problems and "France did not wish to embarrass the Burundi Government". Assuming that the DR was voted on today or tomorrow, the French troops would be deployed by the end of the week, early next week at the latest. Lapouge gave the impression that the intervention force would remain in the RFG-controlled south-west region. There was no mention of Kigali. (Comment: Juppé has refused to divulge publicly too many details about the force but it is thought that France is considering sending between 1,000-2,000 men. The Elysée and the PM's office announced in a joint communiqué last Saturday that France would send the "necessary means" to save human lives and put an end to the massacres".)

UNAMIR

8. Finally, we asked Lapouge why France had chosen to launch its initiative when it did and why it could not work to strengthen UNAMIR instead. He said that Juppé had decided to act last week in response to public pressure in the wake of the massacres of children and bishops the week before. France could not continue to wait forever for UNAMIR to be strengthened. France would have liked to have acted within UNAMIR but its participation had been vetoed by the RPF.

8. Lapouge stressed however that France had no intention of remaining any longer in Rwanda than was absolutely necessary. This was why Paris had asked its NY mission to amend the text of the DR to make it clear that the intervention force would leave as soon as the extra UNAMIR

troop were in place and, in any event, by mid-August.

Comment

10. Lapouge was not entirely at ease during our meeting. The large discrepancy between what he claimed was support for the French initiative both in and out of the Council and New York's reporting (their C04641) may have explained some of his discomfort. He was clearly trying to sell us a line which he was rather afraid we might not be swallowing.

11. The French initiative also holds very high risks. Our impression is that France will now go ahead - no matter what. All areas of the government machinery have now given it their support. It is more than ever now a matter of national pride. France's African policy would be in complete disarray if it does not intervene. But it is hard to see how France can possibly come out of this without a few scratches. Officials are trying to limit the potential damage - the amount of time the force will be on the ground and the possibility of confrontation with the RPF - but even so the chances of France coming out of this one with international image enhanced cannot be that great.

End Message