

ACTION  
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Your file: 115/23/37

Our file: 31/1/1

12:48 (47785)

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\$208.56

FROM:	CANBERRA	C02992/CBA	21-Jun-1994
TO:	WELLINGTON	WGTV UNSC	Priority
CC:	NEW YORK	PARIS	Priority
	WASHINGTON	OTTAWA	Priority
	BRUSSELS	BEIJING	Priority
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	MADRID	LONDON	Priority
	DEFENCE	SANTIAGO	Priority
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MFAT (UNC, MEA, LGL, ISAC, HRU, EUR, DP3, DSP1, EAB)

P/S MFA  
 DEFENCE HQNZDF (DSIA, OPS, DDI)  
 DEFENCE MOD (GENTLES)

Willberg	✓
Forsyth	
Ward	
Rider	
Hughes	✓
Kentler	
McMaster	
Foley	
McDonnell	
Rush	
Type	
Dalton	
Watson	

**Subject**

U04716: SECURITY COUNCIL: RWANDA: AUSTRALIA

**Summary**

French have informed Australia of their proposal, but have not sought their support for it. DFAT is unconvinced by French claims of support for the operation. Proposal may complicate a decision on an Australian contribution to UNAMIR.

**Action**

2 For information.

**Report**

3 DFAT (Armitage, UN Political Section) advises that French called on them yesterday to discuss proposal to mount a French-led operation in Rwanda. Embassy did so at a junior (First Secretary) level, and on a courtesy basis only. They did not request any support, political or material, for the initiative. Embassy's presentation matched that given by French in other capitals and in New York, particularly in terms of the very upbeat assessment they offered of the "widespread" support the proposal enjoyed. DFAT tested them on this, and on possible reaction of RPF to French involvement. They were unconvinced by French responses, and share the concerns you have already identified about the proposal.

4 We asked Armitage about the implications of French involvement for Australia's possible contribution of a medical team. Armitage told us that if Australia went ahead with a contribution (and this is not yet certain - see below), it would probably be deployed in August. From what they understood of French proposal, it would withdraw from Rwanda about that time. So timing was not a problem. The difficulty was in the fact that Australia had no sense of what the conditions on the ground, and the status of UNAMIR, would be by the time of the French withdrawal. This would complicate a decision on an Australian contribution which was to have been taken by the Australian Cabinet next week.

5 Armitage noted that Australia had been irritated by a reference in the UNSG's letter of 19 June to the Council to the effect that Australia has already "indicated an interest" in supplying a medical team. They had not advised the Secretariat along these lines, because it was not yet certain that they would do so. Cabinet's deliberation on a contribution could not be predicted. (Australian Mission had expressed concern about reference in letter with Secretariat which claimed that this information had been included on the basis of "media reports").

6 **Comment:** French initiative, at least in Australia's case, may have opposite effect to that desired. It has created a climate of uncertainty in Canberra about the shape and status of UNAMIR after the French withdrawal. If this scares off potential contributors it will obviously undermine rather than reinforce UNAMIR's long-term chances of success.

End Message