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Your file:

Our file: 186/1/1

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FROM:	LONDON	C04086/LON	05-Jul-1994
TO:	WELLINGTON	WGTTN UNSC	Priority
CC:	NEW YORK		Priority
	WASHINGTON	CANBERRA	Routine
	OTTAWA	BEIJING	Routine
	BRUSSELS	GENEVA	Routine
	HARARE	BONN	Routine
	MADRID	PARIS	Routine
	SANTIAGO	TOKYO	Routine
	DEFENCE	MOSCOW	Routine

MFAT (MEA, UNC, ISAC, HRU, LGL, EUR, DP3, DSP3, EAB)

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

Subject

U05278: SECURITY COUNCIL: RWANDA

Summary

British think UNSCRs do cover French action to create a secure humanitarian zone. While they have misgivings, and think French are sailing close to the wind in terms of their actions cutting across UNAMIR, their vote for UNSCR 929 and the importance of their relationship with France means they will not make trouble. They await the Sec-Gen's report of 7 July on Operation Turquoise, and Hurd has been given some points to raise with Juppe when he sees him today. As to RPF response to establishment of zone, our interlocutor thought they would not shy away from fighting on, but there were some indications that for military reasons, RPF might be willing to negotiate.

Action required

For information.

Report

Your U53223 and U53304.

In company with the Canadians, we spoke today about French proposed secure humanitarian zone with the FCO (Holmes and Hiscock, respectively Assistant Head and Desk Officer in African Dept (Equatorial)).

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2 In response to our question, Hiscock said that it was clear in New York over the weekend that the French wanted the UN to approve the creation of its proposed secure humanitarian zone. But it seemed that the Sec-Gen had "given the murmur" that the zone was acceptable, and the French had therefore moved ahead.

3 British have not been lobbied by the French - presumably the French thought this unnecessary. Our Canadian colleague confirmed there had been a demarche yesterday in Ottawa. Canada had reserved its response, having some concern about how the zone would affect UNAMIR to which, as you know, they plan to commit 350 troops, and wanting to consult others.

4 Hiscock agreed instructions for UKMIS New York at a meeting this morning with UN Dept. FCO believes the French do have cover for their action under UNSCRs 925 and 929 - especially the latter. Unlike NZ, as you know the UK voted for 929. Thus while it has misgivings and questions about the French action, it does not feel it can voice them freely. Hiscock said fundamental British position was that French actions should not cut across UNAMIR or hold up its deployment. He added that he thought this line was getting closer to being crossed.

5 British line at UNSC informals today will be that the zone does fall within the existing mandate, but that the French should make every effort to avoid confrontation. (In response to our question, Hiscock said he thought the British interpretation of the mandate given by UNSCR 929 was shared generally by UNSC members). British will be seeking, however, clarification of what is going on through the report the Sec-Gen is supposed to be presenting on Operation Turquoise on 7 July. Hiscock noted that at the moment, the French are the only source of information on what is happening, making it difficult to challenge them. The S-G's report should give a basis for questions. The Foreign Secretary, who is meeting with P4 plus EU Troika ministers today to discuss Bosnia, has also "been slipped a few points" on Rwanda to put to his French counterpart. Hiscock said there were confusing signals coming from the French themselves. They had told British Embassy in Paris that their operations would only be to protect civilians and they would not fire unless fired upon. But, Hiscock noted, the French commander has taken a much more gung-ho line, opposing "any infiltration of armed elements into areas under our responsibility". Hiscock said that Mitterand's remarks seemed to back the line of the French commander. French argued that it was a sign of their neutrality that Hutus had gone from welcoming their arrival (thinking they would support the RGF) to targeting them. Hiscock speculated that French might want to get Mobutu back in play. He had stuffed up the negotiations early on in the piece. But he was a francophone and in need of support.

6 Holmes and Hiscock said it was "a good question" what

might happen to the zone when the French pulled out. They agreed that UNAMIR had not agreed to take it on - the French had taken a unilateral decision. And Hiscock said UNAMIR would not be able to work in the same way in that its mandate under Ch VI differed from that of the French operation. We noted that, given the RPF was opposed to France's presence in Rwanda, including this action, stepping exactly into France's place would be likely to jeopardise UNAMIR's neutrality.

7 Hiscock's comments about the RPF's likely response to the French action were mixed. He did not think the RPF would have any compunction about taking on the French - they had said they would if necessary and he thought this believable. But there were some indications that they might be prepared to negotiate. The number four in the RPF, Dr Rudasingewe, had been in London yesterday and had met with ODA Minister Baroness Chalker. Hiscock had a few words with him. Hiscock said it seemed that, having taken Butare, the RPF might need to consolidate and so be open to negotiations. Rudasingewe had said the RPF had had to recruit (mostly Hutus) just to hold what it had taken; he had commented that there no more Tutsis left in Rwanda to recruit! But Rudasingewe stressed that the RPF was concerned that the French operation would protect those responsible for mass murder. And the RPF would not negotiate with the main govt party, the MRND, who they regarded as responsible for the major acts of genocide.

8 In response to a question, Hiscock said Chalker's message to Rudasingewe was that the RPF should not confront the French, not allow the French actions to affect their relations with UNAMIR, or permit the fighting to escalate. She stressed that the UK was very willing to provide humanitarian assistance into areas made safe by UNAMIR. Hiscock commented that this message was well received. The RPF seemed to believe that the international community was deliberately providing assistance outside Rwanda, and so was glad to hear that if the area under their control was made safe, humanitarian relief could be made available there.

9 Hiscock also expressed concern about progress with UNAMIR. British, as you know from our earlier reporting, have offered 50 trucks, but no one from the UN has yet been to inspect them. Hiscock said the DPKO person expected was actually a NZer.

Comment

10 While the UK has misgivings over the French action, they will be played very quietly. The overlying factor that caused them to vote for the resolution in the first place of course remains; their relationship with France is of great importance and Rwanda means nothing in terms of the national interest. British might ask questions on the basis of the Sec-Gen's report if others do. If the RPF and French came to confrontation, as Holmes thought the situation favoured, British might have to reassess their position. Officials

here are very cynical about the French actions.

11 As a matter of interest, we have received (and acknowledged) a fax of 2 July from one Hugh Jones of Kent, urging that NZ not support the French initiative as it would protect those responsible for crimes against humanity. He alleged, inter alia, that France had been supplying arms to the Rwanda "government" as recently as early June. He said he was approaching NZ as we were one of the few countries prepared to stand up in the Security Council and to talk sense about the situation in Rwanda. This is the first letter we have received on the subject. The FCO told us they get hundreds of letters on Rwanda, but the French initiative has yet to trickle through to the letter writing campaigners.

End Message