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TO:	WELLINGTON	WGTV UNSC	Immediate
CC:	BEIJING	CANBERRA	Priority
	LONDON	WASHINGTON	Priority
	MOSCOW	OTTAWA	Priority
	PARIS	HARARE	Priority
	BRUSSELS		Priority

 MFAT (MEA, EUR, UNC, LGL, DP1, DSP1, EAB)

Subject

SECURITY COUNCIL: RWANDA

Summary

- Genocide reported by Medecines Sans Frontieres
- Council considers what, if any, options it may have to take action in this appalling situation

Action

For information and thoughts on appropriate Council action.

Report

2 Sec Gen of Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) called this afternoon to brief the President on events over the weekend at Butare hospital administered by MSF. Butare is the second largest city in Rwanda and is in the southern part, under the control of the "government forces". MSF noted about 40% of its population was of Tutsi ethnic background.

3 On Friday the government army forces rounded up all the local staff of the hospital and killed them, saying they would return to kill all the patients the next day. On Saturday they came back and killed all 170 patients being treated by MSF. The patients had been injured in earlier conflicts with militia and with the army forces and were being treated for machete wounds. In answer to President's question, MSF confirmed that those doing the killings were wearing regular Rwanda army uniforms and emphasised that this was the most brutal act they had experience of in their 20 year history as an organisation.

4 MSF also reported that 140 people under the protection of the ICRC travelling to Zaire had been killed. According to MSF when the killing started the Presidential Guard began to

systematically kill people on a "list" of about 1500 of those in opposition to the President. This included Hutu members of the opposition. In more recent times the "government forces" had moved to targeting all Tutsis. If the situation did not improve in the south then, according to MSF, there would be no more Tutsis in the south "within a few weeks".

5 Because the MSF now had no staff and no patients in Butare they had withdrawn from their operation. Since then they had visited the Dutch and Belgian Foreign Ministers as well the King of Belgium to draw attention to what they described as a clear policy of genocide on the part of the Rwandan government forces.

6 MSF appealed to the Council to implement "safe areas" around hospitals. They said that there were many people in need of medical assistance who were afraid to get attention especially when they knew it was not safe even in the presence of ex-pat medical staff. (In their experience in the past, this had usually provided some measure of security). If the UN could implement a security perimeter around the hospitals, people would be able to travel from places of hiding in the bush or in their homes. This is "the minimum" MSF was seeking from the international community for immediate assistance. In their opinion this could work. Butare is only 2 1/2 hours drive from the Burundi border and their staff did the journey regularly.

7 In the short term, there would be 2 million people in the south (coming mostly from Kigali) who were in dire need of food, water and other basic necessities. This will require a major aid effort MSF noted.

8 President briefed Council on this call and Secretariat (Gharekhan) provided briefing on weekend events. The situation in Kigali remains very tense. There were no significant changes. The RPF continues to have control of various positions in the hills around Kigali and the north and north-east remain in their control, while the south and south-west are in the control of the "government forces". Elsewhere, the RPF forces were advancing but had slowed under opposition from the "government forces".

9 Over the weekend some 1000 UNAMIR troops had been evacuated from Kigali. Now there are 444 remaining (including 72 military observers). Although the evacuated personnel spent time in Nairobi over the weekend (to see if there was any prospect of progress at the cease-fire talks which had been scheduled for Saturday in Arusha), most had now been repatriated to their own countries. (The secretariat commented privately to us that the repatriation of the Bangladeshi forces had not been entirely unwelcome by the Force Commander).

10 As to the Arusha cease-fire talks, coordinated by Tanzania as the Arusha peace "facilitator", these had not

taken place as scheduled for Saturday. Although the Tanzanian government had asked UNAMIR to airlift the "interim government" party from a border location in Zaire, a short distance from Butare, the "interim government" had not showed up at the appointed time. This meant that they were not even in Arusha for the talks.

11 The RPF had showed up but was not, in any event, prepared to talk with the "interim government". It would however have been acceptable to them to talk with the Rwandan army (not represented at Arusha). The RPF position was that it wanted to present Tanzania and the OAU (represented at Arusha by its Sec Gen) and the UN with a unilateral ceasefire, but subject to certain conditions (previously reported). If the conditions are met, the unilateral cease-fire was due to come into effect at midnight tonight (Mon), local time.

12 The Under Sec Gen for Humanitarian Affairs, Peter Hanson, visited Kigali with a small team of UN agency reps over the weekend. The visit was to assess the urgent needs of the people of Kigali. UNAMIR continues to provide protection for people in the stadium and the Force Commander is trying to arrange "swaps" to get people to safer areas.

13 After a pause, and initiated by Argentina, there followed a long discussion in the Council as to what the appropriate response, if any, there might be. Argentina (supported by Czech, Spain and Pakistan) noted that each time the Council met it received a briefing on the atrocities in Rwanda and that it needed to show that it was not "indifferent" to the situation. Argentina proposed that the President make this clear to the media.

14 The UK disagreed and said that instead there was a need for the Council to support the efforts of the OAU and neighbouring countries in their efforts to get the parties together to talk about a cease-fire. It was readily agreed that the President could call in the ambassadors concerned to convey the Council's view (calls have been set up for tomorrow for this purpose). The UK also noted that the Council was in the "unenviable position" of not wanting to make statements on the one hand which it could not follow up on, or of hand wringing concern without action on the other. Filling time with empty resolutions was also a "sterile" activity Argentina added.

15 Spain then suggested that some thought be given to what if any responses the Council could make. In FRY a tribunal was created together with a special investigating commission, in Liberia an ad hoc commission of enquiry had been established to look into the Hrbel massacre. Could not something similar be done here, at the very least to open a file in which the evidence of the MSF could be deposited so that over the longer term action is taken to have the perpetrators of this genocide held responsible?

16 At this point, the US (Albright) made what she described as a "very difficult proposal", she noted that in any similar situation, the Council would ask the President to call in the Ambassador of the state concerned to ask, on behalf of the Council, for an explanation. In this connection she had in mind asking why did the "interim government" not show in Arusha. After a long pause, Rwanda volunteered the information that a "Minister for the Interior" of the "interim government" had travelled to Arusha from Dar es Salaam to the talks on instructions from the "interim government" and that it was the RPF who refused to enter negotiations with this Minister.

17 In summing up this very difficult and depressing discussion, President noted that it would be very important for the Sec Gen to continue his efforts and that he would call in the ambassadors of the neighbouring countries as requested to convey support for regional efforts, and that it would be important for delegations to reflect on the discussion, recognising there might be a range of options (identified by Spain), while not overestimating the Council's ability to do something about the situation. He agreed to make a statement to the media which would convey this together with the discussion of the MSF information.

End Message