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115/23/37

Your file: 115/23/37

Our file: 3/88/1

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FROM: NEW YORK	C04408/NYK	03-May-1994
TO: WELLINGTON	WGTN UNSC	Immediate
CC: BEIJING	BONN	Routine
BRUSSELS	CANBERRA	Routine
GENEVA	HARARE	Routine
LONDON	MADRID	Routine
MOSCOW	OTTAWA	Routine
PARIS	SANTIAGO	Routine
TOKYO	WASHINGTON	Routine
DEFENCE		Routine

MFAT (MEA, UNC, ISAC, HRU, LGL, EUR, DP3, DSP1, EAB)

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

Subject

SECURITY COUNCIL: RWANDA

Your U48618.

Summary

- Fighting in Kigali is intensifying and both sides are seeking to consolidate their positions in the countryside
- No official report available on what if anything happened at Arusha today, but French cite press reports that RPF failed to show
- Sec-Gen has written to African countries seeking indications of readiness to participate in a "regional effort" to restore law and order in Rwanda
- Preliminary exchanges in Council reveal little disposition to contemplate a forceful intervention by an international force
- Nature of UN response likely to be shaped by what comes out of Arusha and the position of the OAU

Action

For information only

Report

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Situation up-date

Discussion at informals today began with briefing by Secretariat (Gharekhan). Fighting between the RPF and "interim government" has intensified in Kigali. Both sides are now shelling each other and the Holy Family Church where a large number of displaced persons are gathered was shelled with 12 dead and 113 wounded. The RPF is now moving southwest of Kigali and is also concentrating troops around Biumba in the north. "Interim government" is concentrating its forces around the airport and in Gitarama. It seems they may also be moving troops to the lake area. Both sides are actively conducting recruiting drives.

2 UNAMIR remains at 452 personnel (all ranks) with 160 at the airport. No more withdrawals are planned and the force is "not in any direct danger so far". The Force Commander is continuing his efforts in liaising with the military leaders trying to arrange humanitarian assistance and to stop the massacres. UNAMIR has been allowed (when shelling permitted) to visit some sites in Kigali where displaced persons are congregated, including the hospital. The ICRC has also been able to distribute some food and medical supplies to displaced persons. Gharekhan also noted that UNAMIR has set up a Board of Enquiry to investigate the killing of the 10 Belgian peacekeepers.

3 Gharekhan said that UNOMUR force on Uganda-Rwanda border has been requested to verify allegations of massive movement of troops crossing the border from Uganda to Rwanda. There is no confirmation of such allegations so far.

4 On the humanitarian side, the UN is putting together a balanced and comprehensive plan for cross border relief activities. Areas under RPF control in the north have already been visited and ways to visit areas under the "interim government" control are being investigated. Some food has been distributed in these areas. A coordinated plan is needed. ICRC is planning to distribute food to some 100,000 people in RPF areas. The UN will be looked at to distribute food to another 100,000 needy.

5 Gharekhan noted that "interim government" now wants international aid to be distributed but security and protection of aid workers remains the major issue. He noted, however, that the Minister of Defence of the "interim government" had given an assurance of security for all those involved in providing humanitarian assistance.

6 As a result of the Council's statement adopted early Saturday morning, the Dept of Humanitarian Affairs has initiated action to cooperate and consult with UNHCR and is pursuing contacts with the "interim government" as regards a number of aid initiatives.

Arusha talks

7 Gharekhan advised that Special Rep Booh-Booh has gone to Arusha to participate in talks convened by Tanzania today (3 May) involving OAU Sec-Gen and both RPF and "interim government" sides. He said he had no report available on the talks. In subsequent discussion, however, France (Merimee) referred to press reports they had heard indicating that RPF has refused to participate on the grounds that they will not meet with representatives of the "interim government" and will only talk to the government's military commanders. (We understand from the Canadians that UNAMIR holds out little hope for success at the talks. Canadian information also suggests that there is little direct communication between the "interim government" and the army command which has lost control of troops in the field.)

Council Discussion of Sec-Gen's Letters

8 A further letter from the Sec-Gen (3 May) was distributed noting that he had been in touch with the OAU and a number of African states which have contributed UN peacekeepers requesting them to consider how they could "assist in the restoration of law and order in Rwanda", and in particular whether they could contribute troops to a "regional effort to this end". Discussion of this and earlier letter of 29 April was, as expected, preliminary and revealed uncertainty about what action, if any, the Council might take.

9 France (Merimee) expressed a desire to act "as swiftly as possible" to support the efforts of regional states to renew the political dialogue between the parties and to stop the massacres. "Intervention" was now essential to do this but it was also "essential" to have the agreement of the parties. Merimee identified the 3 clear options: unilateral intervention by neighbouring states which is "not realistic" and which would be counterproductive; OAU action which France supported but which would not be able to be activated quickly enough (the OAU Central Organ on Conflict Resolution cannot meet till at least after its next meeting scheduled for South Africa next Tuesday); UN action. On ancillary matters, Merimee said France is "not hostile" to the idea of an arms embargo and did not believe UNAMIR should be further reduced.

10 US (Albright) expressed deep distress about the situation and said that senior policy makers in Washington had spent the weekend canvassing options for international action. She noted that senior Administration officials are going to the region to assess the situation. She also noted that the US agreed with the "analysis" in the Sec-Gen's 29 April letter. For their part the US believes the OAU, in cooperation with the UN, should direct its attention to providing security for refugees on both sides of the borders (ie both inside and outside Rwanda); they agreed States should support OAU materially; and were very concerned about the humanitarian situation. The US was putting together elements for a draft resolution (including language on an arms embargo) and will

present the Council with some wording. US also raised possibility of a Council fact-finding mission to Rwanda, an idea we first raised as President last week.

11 UK (Hannay) said the OAU has a key role and they agreed it would need additional resources. He did not think the Council should do anything which could "cut across" what Tanzania and the OAU are presently doing seeking negotiations between the two parties. The UK was "less convinced" than France that countries bordering Rwanda should be ruled out since some of them had the capacity to help and would be able to do so quicker than anyone else. Significantly, Hannay cautioned against using words such as "forceful" or "intervention" in the context of international involvement in Rwanda and noted that the language of the Sec-Gen's 29 April letter had already had unfortunate consequences (ie the RPF statement). Like Merimee, he stressed that the agreement of the parties was crucial.

13 We spoke along the lines of your message, noting that Council would need to go back to first principles when considering prospect of expanded UN presence. Picking up Hannay's remarks, however, we noted that, while we understood reluctance to consider forceful intervention in Rwanda, that was precisely what Sec-Gen is proposing and Council should not, given the way it has been presented, rule it out without considering the issue. We stressed that whatever the form of the UN's involvement, Council would need much more specific recommendations before it could make a proper decision.

14. Russians, Spanish, Chinese all supported the development of specific proposals by the Sec- Gen in cooperation with the OAU, Russians referring specifically to an Article 53 operation (Chapter VIII - regional operation). Nigeria in its national capacity noted that Council needed information on the Arusha talks, the responses the Sec-Gen may have got to his approach to African troop contributing countries for troops and what would be the RPF position "if the reality of an OAU/UN presence was proposed focussing on humanitarian relief and law and order". Nigeria believed that some kind of outside presence was needed and the key was OAU/UN cooperation. A very clear mandate would be required. They also supported an arms embargo and a fact finding team to Rwanda.

15 Oman, Brazil and Pakistan also made brief comments. Oman stressed that force must be a last resort and said the Council must continue to press for a ceasefire. Brazil emphasised the importance of consent. Pakistan said the debate had helped to clarify their thinking on an issue they were finding very difficult to grapple with.

16 In his summary, Gambari noted that it was agreed that there should not be any emphasis on any UN/OAU action being forceful or an intervention. It was agreed that the President would have a substantive discussion with the Sec-

Gen (necessarily by phone as SecGen has left for Europe and then South Africa) reporting the nature of today's consultations and encouraging him to continue his efforts, and to advise Tanzania and the OAU also. Gambari was also encouraged to maintain a regular dialogue with both sides (ie the RPF and Rwanda PR) to maintain balance and to keep both fully informed. It was also agreed President should speak to the press along these lines.

17 Although Rwanda has been included on agenda for tomorrow afternoon's consultations, Nigerians do not expect a substantive discussion. They expect that more time will be needed to assess events in Arusha and responses to the Sec-Gen's latest letter.

Comment

18 The discussion today showed that despite the gravity of the situation in Rwanda and the demands in the press, and by ngos and the public that the Council "do something" to stop the carnage, there is no appetite in the Council for forceful intervention. In that sense, the situation in Rwanda is reaping the rewards of what went wrong in Somalia.

18 The positive side of insisting that any involvement be with the consent of the parties is that this may help to bring the RPF to a more cooperative attitude towards the UN. The down side is that if events continue on as they have for the past few weeks, then short of a military victory by one side or the other, the parties will continue to fight it out, the population will continue to suffer appallingly and the UN will be able to do little about it.

End Message