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Your file:

Our file:

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FROM:	WELLINGTON	C24667/WN1	17-Jun-1994
TO:	NEW YORK PARIS		Immediate Priority
CC:	BEIJING BRUSSELS GENEVA LONDON MOSCOW SANTIAGO WASHINGTON WGTN UNSC	BONN CANBERRA HARARE MADRID OTTAWA TOKYO DEFENCE	Routine Routine Routine Routine Routine Routine Routine Routine

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

P/S MFA

DEFENCE HQNZDF (DSIA, OPS, DDI)

DEFENCE MOD (GENTLES)

Subject

U52093: SECURITY COUNCIL : RWANDA

Your C04628 and Paris' C01931.

Summary

2 - The French Ambassador called on us (Powles) today to explain French thinking and to seek support in principle for proposed intervention if fighting and massacres continue. He gave impression of a strong tactical element in Juppe's announcement - to put pressure on the parties to make the ceasefire stick, and to placate French domestic criticism.

- We said we shared French sense of urgency about the need to stop further massacres. We nevertheless saw a number of difficulties with the proposal. Our first preference was to speed up deployment of UNAMIR. We would need to take account of the evolving situation, including further discussions among UNSC members in New York. We would get back to him and would value further information as he received it.

Action Required

2 - New York to keep us informed of views of other Council members and Secretariat.

- Paris to continue dialogue with Quai contacts drawing on our comments below as appropriate, and keep us informed of

French views.

Report

4 The French Ambassador called on us today at short notice to talk about Juppe's announcement that France was ready to mount an intervention force in Rwanda. Reading from his instructions, the Ambassador described the situation in Rwanda as traumatic with continued fighting and massacres despite the efforts of the international community which was being blamed for lack of immediate action. The crucial question was whether the Tunis ceasefire agreement would be respected, or the massacres go on. Juppe had announced on 15 June that if they did not stop France was ready to launch an intervention on the ground with its main European and African partners with a view to protecting groups threatened with extermination. It would be a military exercise with a humanitarian vocation, would support UNAMIR in terms of SCR 925 op 4, and would aim to (a) ensure the security and protection of people threatened in several humanitarian sites, and (b) evacuate those threatened to safer areas.

5 The force would have a limited duration until UNAMIR was fully operational (including deployments drawn from UNOSOM II). In any case it would run for not longer than two months. France had no intention of acting alone and had sought participation from Belgium, Italy, Spain and its WEU partners, as well as African countries including Senegal and Ghana. The Ambassador said France wanted the force to have a WEU label. It would move forward only with support from the UN. Boutros-Ghali had already indicated agreement. The reaction of the Security Council remained to be determined. Coordination of the operation with UNAMIR would be assured. It would enter Rwanda by road from neighbouring countries and aim at reaching Kigali. France was urging other countries to support the proposal in principle.

6 He commented that the proposal clearly implied that the recently agreed ceasefire would not hold and that massacres would continue. The intervention would bring a necessary element of "military muscle" which UNAMIR was unable to do. This was how France envisaged it for the time being, but they were still in an exploratory phase and would be watching developments closely over the next 24-48 hours to clarify whether an intervention was necessary and the views of their partners.

8 In response we noted that New Zealand attached importance to a UN solution. Our preference was for a quick deployment of the strengthened UNAMIR which already had a presence in Rwanda. This was what we had been working for in the Council in cooperation with France. We asked whether France intended to seek support for their proposal in the Council. The Ambassador thought so. We foresaw some other members having difficulty with it given the history of discussions on the UNAMIR mandate. We agreed with France on

the continuing need to apply pressure to the two parties, but we saw problems with this particular course of action. We would want to take account of further consultations and clarification of positions among Council members and would be interested in responses of countries whose participation France had sought. We said we would consult the Minister on the Ambassador's approach and would appreciate further information as the Embassy received it.

Comment

8 While the evolving situation in Rwanda needs to be taken into account, we have serious reservations about the French proposed intervention which would "fight its way in" commando-style (according to the Ambassador) without the consent of all the parties. We agree with New York that this could considerably complicate and confuse subsequent UN action. On the other hand we are conscious of the public pressures to which the French are responding and the overriding need to stop further massacres in Rwanda.

9 We are aware too of arguments as to a right to intervene in extreme humanitarian situations (and the situation in Rwanda is pretty extreme), perhaps even unilaterally in some exceptional situations where, for example, the "government" concerned acquiesces and other action is not being taken. Where genocide is concerned, however, we note that the Genocide Convention itself supports multilateral (United Nations) action by virtue of Article VIII which provides that "any contracting party may call upon the competent organs of the United Nations to take such action under the Charter of the United Nations as they consider appropriate for the prevention and suppression of acts of genocide...". This supports the proposition that intervention other than by UN forces in the present case should at least have the general blessing of UNSC.

10 For Paris: New York's C04628. We would not wish you to take a firm stand against any French intervention in your contacts with the Quai. You should however express our considerable reservations about the practical implications of the proposal and our clear preference at this stage for action to speed up an effective UNAMIR response.

11 We did not take the opportunity to quiz de Bellescize about his reference to drawing on UNOSOM forces. But we would be cautious about this proposition too. Picking up troops (whose?) equipped, trained and mandated for the Somalia operation and putting them into Rwanda seems a recipe for confusion and worse. It also suggests UNOSOM troops are hanging around with nothing better to do. That might suit those wanting to pull the plug on UNOSOM but we have been among those arguing against stripping UNOSOM precipitately.

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End Message