

Pa Rwanda

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UNEP 062/80
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MY TELNO 1538 AND YOUR TELNO 622: RWANDA

SUMMARY

1. After extremely lengthy consultations Presidential statement in MIFT finally adopted early on 30 April. Presence of Rwandan Ambassador on the Council complicates the negotiating process.

DETAIL

2. Informal consultations of the Security Council on the revised draft Presidential Statement took place on 29 April. Broad agreement was reached fairly quickly on the bulk of the text but the language on responsibility for the mass killings of civilians and on genocide (para 1 of the original text) proved less tractable. The non-aligned caucus argued strongly for these references to be deleted while others, led by the Czech Republic and Spain with support from New Zealand (acting in a national capacity) argued for their retention.

3. The negotiations were further complicated by the circulation of the Secretary General's letter on the situation in Rwanda (my telno 1563 refers) which rather cut across the thrust of the draft statement. Council members agreed that, since delegations would require time to reflect and seek instructions on the letter, we should continue our work on the statement. We should amend it to indicate that we had received the letter and would be addressing it along with the other information sought from the Secretary-General in the statement, but should still aim for adoption of the statement on 29 April. Given the time already taken discussing possible action the Council should take some action immediately rather than wait to take action on the letter.

4. As the evening progressed the Rwandan Ambassador's continued insistence on seeking deletion of the language on genocide and to the RGF responsibility for the bulk of the attacks on civilians (on which he had some support from the NAM caucus, and, on genocide, from China) despite the efforts towards compromise made by the Presidency rather soured the atmosphere of the negotiations. The non-aligned (Brazil, Argentina, Spain, the Czech Republic and New Zealand) were particularly incensed and when at 300315Z we were still deadlocked the New Zealanders circulated, in their national capacity, a draft resolution indicating that it would be put into blue at 0359Z and voted on 24 hours later if a compromise could not be reached. This served usefully to focus minds.

5. I then suggested a compromise formula drawing on the Secretary-General's letter, and reordering slightly the contentious language and underlined the desirability of reaching the agreement to which we seemed so close. After a short break in the consultations to sell the package my approach generally found favour and the text was finally agreed at 0405Z (although not before the New Zealanders circulated their resolution in blue). The statement in MIFT was then adopted.

COMMENT

6. Seen from here the agreement finally reached is a satisfactory one. But the process of reaching it was more than usually tortuous and demonstrated for the first time the extent to which the presence of the Rwandan Ambassador on the Council for these discussions is becoming a problem. Despite being called in by Keating, who, as Council President, suggested that Bizimana refrain from obstructing consensus, he tried until the very last moment to slant the text in the interim government's favour. His interventions and the support given to them by the Africans

[REDACTED] were in large part responsible for the lengthy and at times acrimonious debate. This factor will no doubt also complicate discussion of any further Council action on Rwanda.

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