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DRAFTED BY: AF/C: KCAISTON

APPROVED BY: AF/FO: PXBUSHNELL

AF/C: AXRENDER

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY KIGALI PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY KAMPALA
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
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TAGS: PREL PGOV BY

SUBJECT: KANYARENGWE BLAMES IMPASSE ON ... (SURPRISE) HABYARIMANA

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY. IN A FEBRUARY 4 MEETING WITH AF DAS BUSHNELL, RPF CHAIRMAN KANYARENGWE BLAMED PRESIDENT HABYARIMANA FOR THE CURRENT IMPASSE OVER FORMATION OF THE TRANSITION GOVERNMENT. KANYARENGWE REPORTED THAT THE PARTIES HAVE SET A NEW DEADLINE OF FEBRUARY 15 FOR FORMATION OF THE GOVERNMENT. HE CLAIMED THAT HABYARIMANA ENGINEERED THE SPLIT IN THE PL PARTY AND IS TRYING TO FORGE AN ALLIANCE WITH THE PL TO OBTAIN A BLOCKING MINORITY IN THE TRANSITION GOVERNMENT. THE RPF BELIEVES THE TRANSITION ASSEMBLY SHOULD SEAT THE PL DEPUTIES

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CHOSEN IN SEPTEMBER, BUT WILL ACCEPT A COMPROMISE LIST IF THE COMPROMISE IS ACCEPTABLE TO THE PL FACTIONS THEMSELVES. DAS BUSHNELL TOLD THE RPF THAT THE PEACE ACCORDS MUST BE IMPLEMENTED AND THE GOVERNMENT FORMED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. SHE SAID THE RWANDANS RISKED A GREAT DEAL IF THEY FAILED TO HONOR THE COMMITMENTS MADE AT ARUSHA. SHE URGED THE RPF TO BE FLEXIBLE AND COMPROMISE ON FORMING THE GOVERNMENT, BUT CAUTIONED THE RPF AGAINST INTERFERING IN THE INTERNAL POLITICS OF OTHER PARTIES. END SUMMARY.

3. RPF CHAIRMAN ALEXIS KANYARENGWE CAME TO WASHINGTON LAST WEEK FOR THE CONGRESSIONAL PRAYER BREAKFAST. HE MET WITH AF DAS BUSHNELL ON FEBRUARY 4 TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT IMPASSE OVER FORMATION OF THE BROAD-BASED TRANSITION GOVERNMENT. ACCOMPANYING KANYARENGWE WERE SETH

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SENDASHONGA, NAMED BY THE RPF TO BE MINISTER OF YOUTH IN THE NEXT GOVERNMENT, LOCAL RPF REP CHARLES MURIGANDE, AND KANYARENGWE'S PERSONAL PHYSICIAN, DR. RICHARD MASOZERA. DAS BUSHNELL WAS JOINED BY AF/C DIRECTOR RENDER AND RWANDA DESKOFF AISTON (NOTETAKER).

HABYARIMANA BLAMED FOR IMPASSE; FEB. 15 DEADLINE SET

4. THE RPF PLACED THE BLAME FOR THE CURRENT IMPASSE SQUARELY ON HABYARIMANA. KANYARENGWE SAID THAT HABYARIMANA AND THE MRND ARE NOT HAPPY WITH THE BALANCE OF POWER BETWEEN THE PARTIES, AS SET FORTH IN THE ARUSHA ACCORDS. HE CLAIMED THAT HABYARIMANA IS TRYING TO REBALANCE THE POLITICAL FORCES AND FORGE AN ALLIANCE WITH THE LIBERAL PARTY (PL) IN ORDER TO OBTAIN A BLOCKING MINORITY IN BOTH THE GOVERNMENT AND TRANSITION ASSEMBLY. ACCORDING TO KANYARENGWE, HABYARIMANA WAS BEHIND THE PARTY SPLITS WHICH HAVE LED TO COMPETING PARLIAMENTARY AND MINISTERIAL LISTS. THE RPF FEARS THAT HABYARIMANA'S EFFORTS COULD UNDERMINE THE POWERSHARING ARRANGEMENT IN THE ARUSHA ACCORD, WHICH WAS DESIGNED TO ENSURE THAT NEITHER THE MRND NOR THE RPF WOULD HAVE THE BALANCE OF POWER.

5. KANYARENGWE SAID THAT THE RPF HAS HELD A SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH OTHER PARTIES (INCLUDING THE MRND), THE UN SPECIAL ENVOY, AND THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS IN AN EFFORT TO RESOLVE THE IMPASSE. HE ADDED THAT THE PARTIES HAVE SET A DEADLINE OF FEBRUARY 15 FOR INSTALLATION OF THE

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ASSEMBLY AND APPARENTLY PLAN TO HAVE THE CONSTITUTIONAL
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COURT SWEAR IN THE DEPUTIES WITHOUT HABYARIMANA IF HE
DOESN'T MOVE TO END THE IMPASSE BEFORE THEN.

RPF FEARS VIOLENCE; SEES POSSIBLE ECONOMIC RUIN, FAMINE

6. KANYARENGWE NOTED THAT HABYARIMANA STILL CONTROLS THE SECURITY APPARATUS. HE SAID THE RPF FEARED THERE MAY BE VIOLENCE IF THE OTHER PARTIES PROCEED TO SWEAR IN THE ASSEMBLY WITHOUT HABYARIMANA. HOWEVER, HE ADDED THAT VIOLENCE IS ALREADY A PROBLEM AND POINTED TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE MRND MILITIA AND THE SPORADIC BOMBINGS, SUGGESTING THAT THE RPF CONSIDERED THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER VIOLENCE FROM PROCEEDING WITHOUT HABYARIMANA TO BE WORTH THE RISK.

7. THE RPF CHAIRMAN CLAIMED THAT HABYARIMANA IS ARMING THE POPULATION AND ORDERING MORE WEAPONS FROM EGYPT AND SOUTH AFRICA, WHICH RAISED QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS COMMITMENT TO THE PEACE PROCESS. KANYARENGWE SAID THE RPF WAS VERY CONCERNED THAT THE CONTINUING IMPASSE AND REPEATED INCIDENTS OF VIOLENCE COULD LEAD TO RENEWED ETHNIC MASSACRES. HE ADDED THAT RWANDA WAS APPROACHING ECONOMIC RUIN. HE LAMENTED THE PLIGHT OF THE DISPLACED AND REFUGEE POPULATIONS AND SAID THE CURRENT DROUGHT AND ADDED DEMANDS PLACED ON THE COUNTRY BY "OUTSIDE" (I.E., BURUNDI) REFUGEES THREATENED THE POPULATION WITH FAMINE.

8. HAVING OUTLINED THE SITUATION AS THE RPF SEES IT, KANYARENGWE URGED THE U.S. TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE PEACE PROCESS AND TO PUT PRESSURE ON HABYARIMANA TO FORM
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THE GOVERNMENT. HE POINTED TO OUR CRUCIAL ROLE IN ASSISTING THE ARUSHA NEGOTIATIONS AND SAID THAT IT WOULD BE CHEAPER TO APPLY PRESSURE NOW THAN TO TRY TO CLEAN UP THE MESS IF HOSTILITIES WERE TO RESUME.

DAS BUSHNELL SAYS ACCORDS MUST BE IMPLEMENTED

9. DAS BUSHNELL REPLIED THAT WE SHARED KANYARENGWE'S CONCERN OVER THE CONTINUING IMPASSE. SHE EMPHASIZED THE

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OVERRIDING IMPORTANCE OF IMPLEMENTING THE ACCORDS AND ENCOURAGED KANYARENGWE AND THE RPF TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS AND BE WILLING TO COMPROMISE AND DO WHAT IS NECESSARY TO SEE THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS INSTALLED. SHE REMINDED KANYARENGWE THAT THE WAR WAS OVER AND URGED THE RPF TO CEASE ITS INFLAMMATORY BROADCASTS OVER CLANDESTINE RADIO MUHABURA, WHICH WERE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE TO THE PEACE PROCESS AND COULD INCITE THE POPULATION TO VIOLENCE.

10. DAS BUSHNELL WARNED THAT RWANDANS RISKED A GREAT DEAL IF THEY FAILED TO REACH A COMPROMISE AND FORM THE GOVERNMENT. SHE POINTED OUT THAT THE RWANDANS' FAILURE TO FORM A GOVERNMENT IS A TOPIC OF DISCUSSION IN THE UN AND THAT OUR CONGRESS AND THE USG ARE LOOKING MORE AND MORE CRITICALLY AT PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS. IF RWANDANS WANT TO ENSURE THE CONTINUED SUPPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, DAS BUSHNELL EMPHASIZED THAT THE RWANDANS MUST SHOW PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE PEACE ACCORDS. SHE URGED COMPROMISE BUT CAUTIONED AGAINST INTERFERING IN OTHER PARTY'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS. DAS BUSHNELL ADDED THAT WE ARE SENDING THE SAME MESSAGE TO HABYARIMANA.

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RPF NOT WEDDED TO SEPT. PL LIST

11. THE FOCUS OF THE MEETING THEN TURNED TO THE MAIN IMPEDIMENT TO FORMATION OF THE GOVERNMENT: THE SPLIT IN THE PL AND THE RESULTING COMPETING LIST OF ASSEMBLY DEPUTIES. KANYARENGWE SAID THAT HABYARIMANA IS USING THE SPLIT IN THE PARTIES AS A PRETEXT FOR CHANGING THE BALANCE OF POWER AGREED TO IN THE ARUSHA ACCORDS. HE SAID THE RPF ACCEPTS THE ACCORDS IN THEIR ENTIRETY AND DOES NOT WANT TO SEE THEM CHANGED.

12. AF/C DIRECTOR RENDER REPLIED THAT IT APPEARED BOTH HABYARIMANA AND THE RPF WERE TRYING TO DO THE SAME THING, I.E., TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SPLIT TO ENSURE THAT THE FACTION THEY FAVORED WAS SEATED IN THE ASSEMBLY. KANYARENGWE CLAIMED, HOWEVER, THAT THE RPF'S POSITION WAS BASED ON PRINCIPLE: IN THE RPF'S VIEW, THE LIST CHOSEN BY PARTY CAUCUSES IN SEPTEMBER, PRIOR TO THE REAL SPLIT IN THE PL, WAS THE LEGITIMATE ("BONNE") LIST, NOT THE LATER LIST NAMED UNILATERALLY BY PL PRESIDENT MUGENZI.

RPF TOLD TO LEAVE PL LIST TO PL

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13. DAS BUSHNELL AND AF/C DIRECTOR RENDER RESPONDED THAT IT WAS UP TO THE PL ITSELF, NOT THE RPF, TO DECIDE WHICH LIST WAS THE PROPER ONE AND THAT THE RPF SHOULD NOT INTERFERE IN THE PL'S PROCESS OF SELECTING DEPUTIES. SENDASHONGA, WHO TOOK OVER MUCH OF THE CONVERSATION AT
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THIS POINT, REPLIED THAT IF THE RPF HAD WANTED TO INTERFERE IN THE SELECTION OF THE PL LIST, THEY WOULD NOT HAVE COME TO KIGALI IN LATE DECEMBER WITHOUT SOME GUARANTEES ON THAT SUBJECT. IN FACT, SENDASHONGA SAID, THE RPF ARRIVED EXPECTING THE GOVERNMENT TO FORM THE NEXT DAY AND ONLY FOUND OUT LATER THAT THERE WAS A PROBLEM WITH THE PL LIST.

14. WHEN PRESSED, SENDASHONGA CONCEDED THAT THE RPF WOULD ACCEPT WHATEVER LIST THE PL ITSELF FINALLY COMPROMISES ON, EVEN IF IT'S NOT THE SEPTEMBER LIST, PROVIDED THAT THERE IS A CONSENSUS ON THE LIST WITHIN THE PL ITSELF. HOWEVER, AS LONG AS THE SPLIT REMAINS, THE RPF THINKS THE SEPTEMBER LIST IS THE MORE LEGITIMATE ONE.

RPF REMINDED THAT IT'S JUST A TRANSITION

15. URGING THE RPF TO BE FLEXIBLE, AF/C DIRECTOR RENDER REMINDED THE RPF THAT THIS IS JUST A TRANSITION PERIOD AND THAT THE COMPOSITION OF THE GOVERNMENT WILL ULTIMATELY BE DECIDED BY ELECTIONS AT THE END OF THE TRANSITION PERIOD. SENDASHONGA OBJECTED TO THIS LINE OF ARGUMENT, SAYING THAT THE TRANSITION WAS MORE THAN JUST A PRELUDE TO ELECTIONS. RATHER, THE POWERSHARING ARRANGEMENT AGREED TO AT ARUSHA WAS INTENDED TO PAVE THE WAY FOR PROFOUND REFORMS OF THE RWANDAN SOCIETY. IF THE MRND MANAGES, THROUGH MANIPULATION OF THE CURRENT PARTY SPLITS, TO GET A BLOCKING MINORITY THAT WAS NOT AGREED UPON AT ARUSHA, REFORMS COULD BE BLOCKED, UNDERMINING THE PURPOSE OF THE ARUSHA AGREEMENTS, AS THE RPF SEES IT.

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16. DAS BUSHNELL AND AF/C DIRECTOR RENDER AGREED THAT REFORM IS ALSO AT STAKE, BUT THEY EMPHASIZED THAT THE PARTIES HAVE TO LEARN TO ACCEPT THE RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTONOMY OF THE OTHER POLITICAL PARTIES INVOLVED.

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ALLIANCES OF SOME SORT ARE INEVITABLE IN POLITICS AND DEMOCRACY. DAS BUSHNELL REITERATED THAT EACH SIDE MUST RESPECT THE OTHER POLITICAL FORMATIONS AND THAT THE RPF SHOULD EXAMINE HOW IT AS A PARTY CAN HELP UNBLOCK THE IMPASSE, RATHER THAN FOCUSING ON WHAT OTHER PARTIES ARE OR ARE NOT DOING.

17. COMMENT: THE MEETING DID NOT SEEM TO MOVE THE RPF OFF ITS CURRENT POSITION THAT HABYARIMANA IS TO BLAME FOR EVERYTHING. WE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT THE RPF WAS CONCERNED THAT WE DID NOT IMMEDIATELY AGREE WITH THE LOGIC OF THEIR ARGUMENT AND JOIN THEM IN FINGERING HABYARIMANA AS THE VILLAIN. THEY REFUSED TO ENTERTAIN THE IDEA THAT THE THEY THEMSELVES MIGHT SOMEHOW BE PARTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE IMPASSE AND FAILED TO EVEN RESPOND WHEN DAS BUSHNELL CHIDED THE RPF FOR USING RADIO MUHABURA TO RAISE TENSIONS AND INFLAME PASSIONS. HOWEVER, SOME PROGRESS WAS MADE WHEN THE RPF CONCEDED THAT THEY WOULD ACCEPT A COMPROMISE PL DEPUTIES LIST, IF THE LIST IS ACCEPTABLE TO THE PL FACTIONS THEMSELVES. END COMMENT
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