

CONFIDENTIAL

**NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE RWANDESE PATRIOTIC FRONT (RPF) AND THE
RWANDESE GOVERNMENT (GR) UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE FRENCH
GOVERNMENT (FRANCE) FROM 23RD TO 25TH OCTOBER 1991**

I. PREAMBLE

a) Reminder : The letter of 10th October 1991 from the RPF specifies the type of French mediation.

b) First Incident : Rejection of the RPF Chairman by France. France had requested a high powered delegation. Consequently, the RPF had sent a delegation led by its Chairman as well as three members of the Executive Committee and the representative of the RPF in Europe. The names of the delegation members had been transmitted to Paris on 16/10/1991. On his way through Kampala, the RPF Chairman had been received by the French Ambassador to Kampala on 17/10/1991 and on this date all the members obtained visas to France. It is during the night of 19-20th October 91 that the delegation, on its way through Brussels, was informed through one Mme BOIVINCE that the intermediary did not want anything to do with the RPF Chairman;

That without the Vice-Chairman himself heading the delegation, the interview of 23/10/91 could not take place; the reasons being that the RPF Chairman, Col. Alex KANYARENGWE, having been a member of the Rwandese government in the past, could not possibly come to an understanding with the Rwandese government delegation.

Secondly, the Vice-Chairman of RPF, MAJOR KAGAME was responsible for military operations and therefore as such should be present. The RPF gave them to understand that its Chairman directed both political and military operations of the Front and therefore whatever the theme adopted, there could not be a more suitable representative than the Colonel; that in any case they were not military negotiations; that being unable to agree with a former collaborator - himself refused for this sole reason - the Rwandese government couldn't possibly come to an understanding with those who it mostly considers as its enemy. In view of its firm refusal, the RPF Chairman had no choice other than to turn back.

France was in fact posing as the interpreter of Rwandese government position which had been communicated to the RPF on 14th-15th December 1990; having ethnicised the ongoing conflict just as it had ethnicised social life in Rwanda; the Rwandese government was rejecting the RPF Chairman on the basis of ethnic consideration.

During the night of 22nd-23rd October 91 however, the RPF was again contacted and informed that they had resigned themselves to accepting the RPF Chairman.

The intermediary was insistent, indicating that the Rwandese Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. BIZIMUNGU Casimir could not return to Kigali without having met with RPF. Since, in any case, the Chairman was no longer present, and that by all indications it was the RPF which was composed of high-powered officials, it was understood on all sides that any official delegation of the RPF would henceforth be accepted.

c) Second incident

However, on their arrival in Paris on 23rd October 1991, the RPF delegation was informed by the intermediary that the Minister BIZIMUNGU Casimir did not wish to meet them but was willing to wait for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for as long as was necessary, even a month. We had thus returned to the starting point. Finally the dialogue was permitted but Mr. BIZIMUNGU Casimir did not appear at the talks. At one point during the talks the presence of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman was again demanded, whereupon the RPF specified that if this did not involve a strictly personal invitation, the Front should have at its disposal the right to freely choose its delegations which could eventually but not necessarily, be headed by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of RPF. All agreed on this point of view.

d) Preliminary RPF-Dijoud Meeting :

- Mr. Dijoud, Director of African and Madagascar Affairs at the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- RPF represented by : Mr. BIZIMUNGU, Head of the delegation
Mr. BIHOZAGARA Jacques
Mrs. MILENGE Immaculée

As the talks began Mr. Dijoud regretted that the Vice-Chairman of the RPF, Major KAGAME had not come in person since we were going to discuss the restoration of peace in Rwanda. We then retorted that if it were military officers required then it was not Dr. BIZIMUNGU Casimir who should have represented the Rwanda government but General HABYARIMANA. He was therefore made to understand that he was insisting upon the presence of the Vice-Chairman instead of that of the Chairman, into the bargain!

He then indicated that the reason for the talks between the 2 delegations was not to examine "reciprocal positions" but to seek practical solutions; but he himself had no particular objection if we could convince the government delegation that we were in a position to take decisions. We told him we were regularly given mandate by the RPF; that this question had been settled the day

before; that it was in fact our group almost down to the last person, which had neatly concluded the negotiations for a ceasefire signed on 29/3/1991 at N'Sele.

Mr. Dijoud then delivered the following message:

1. You should seek reconciliation, without which there will never be peace in Rwanda.
2. A movement like the RPF can carry on negotiations with the state but remember that you are not on an equal footing, since the Rwandese government exists, it is legal; recognized internationally and carries out all the responsibilities of a State. You are not a State.
3. You should lay aside the spirit of revenge. It is no longer a fashion in the modern world; where all problems are solved by democracy.
4. When a State accepts to hold talks with a movement such as yours, it proves that it already practices democracy. The current regime in Rwanda has firmly laid the country on the path to democracy! It has already appointed a Prime Minister, authorised the existence of political parties, and is considering elections at a near date. It is in your interest to organise yourselves as a political party within the shortest delay if you don't want to miss your chance.
5. The refugees question is a real problem. The world should organize itself to solve it. In about 6 months, this problem should have received a response; and the authorities in Kigali have done everything necessary to achieve this.
6. The problem is not the question of whether Mr. HABYARIMANA is good or bad. You should admit that he is the Head of State and that you have to discuss with him; that the war is leading you nowhere; that it is causing problems for Uganda and is ruining your country.
7. You have certain things in common; the desire that democracy reigns in Rwanda, that there be elections;
 - The desire to hold talks in Paris in all confidentiality. France, which is your friend, will help you to settle the problem of insecurity in your country. She wants nothing else; if not, to stabilise the changes.
8. There are some tough problems:
 - a) Ceasefire. Why was it not respected? However, this is a problem between Rwanda and Uganda. France shall organise its own border-patrol in the same way as the GOM.

b) How can the RPF transform itself from a military movement into a civil organisation? Civilian jobs will have to be found for the RPF soldiers since their integration into the Rwandese army is a difficult exercise.

c) Could you be given a place in the interim government? Three reasons prevent the authorities from doing so:

- i) The Rwandese people who are against you;
- ii) The opposition parties who are against you;
- iii) It is not in your interest to be integrated into it since you are a minority and your resolutions would never be adopted.

Mr. Dijoud finished his speech by indicating that he was going to see the Minister, BIZIMUNGU Casmir.

The RPF requested leave to speak. After they had thanked France for its friendship, the RPF wanted to clarify its position on the different views of Mr. Dijoud. He refused, saying he already knew the RPF's point of views. The delegation insisted, stressing that Mr. Dijoud's statement simply restated the Rwandese government's point of view to the RPF delegates, it was thus normal that he hears that of the RPF and consequently convey it to the Rwanda Government delegates. He refused, claiming that such propositions revealed doubts to his objectivity and he closed the meeting.

II. RPF-GOVERNMENT OF RWANDA MEETING UNDER THE AUSPICES OF FRANCE (23RD-25TH OCTOBER 1991)

Delegates:

- French government:

Mr. DIJLOUD
Mme. BOIVINEAU: Deputy of DIJLOUD
Mr. ANFRE: Executive

- Rwandese government (RG):

Mr. KANYARUSHOKE Claver: Ambassador of Rwanda to Uganda.
Mr. NDAGIJIMANA J.M.V: Ambassador of Rwanda to Paris
Mr. BARAYAGWIZA J.Bosco: Director of the Rwandese Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Col. GATSINZI: Officer in the Rwandese Army

- Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF): see its composition p. 2

Opening the meeting at 17.15 hrs, Mr. Dijoud said France, a longtime friend of the Rwanda government and a new friend of the RPF had no wish to solve the problems in place of the Rwandese people. She did not even wish to involve herself in the numerous problems of the African continent. Our problem will be solved with the help of the OAU and the countries within the region. It so

happens that we are meeting during this particular moment of history. We have been led to understand that:-

. There has been much hatred in your country and people have been deeply scared by this.

. The country is changing very rapidly and deeply and it is in the interest of all to follow these changes, obliterating the events of the past.

Certain things are clear:-

- No-one can solve problems using force.
- The world evolution points towards democracy: it is elections, i.e democracy, which can settle your problems.
- There is nothing of strategical value which opposes you, except history.

Your meeting should be guided by these rules:

1. Confidential talks
2. Ready willingness to fight for peace
3. Accountable meetings; sometimes technical, sometimes political.
4. To be patient.

There are two ways to proceed:

- a) Giving the floor to each of the parties concerned to express its point of view.
 - b) Consider matters by means of their purpose; it is this method that we shall use. I shall ask questions on the objectives we want to achieve and each delegation will say whether it accepts this objectives for Rwanda.
1. Do all agree that Rwandese should be one and the same people?
 2. Do all agree that Rwanda should be a re-united, reconciled and democratic people, meaning there should be elections?
 3. Do all agree that the Rwandese who went to exile should return?
 4. Is it agreed that all Rwandese should have the same rights and chances; places being accorded by means of merit, work and elections?
 5. Is it agreed that the country should be party pluralist and have a free press?
 6. Is not the past something to be overcome? Should not there be protection of human rights and institutions like those of minorities?
 7. Is not peace necessary? Should not there be elimination of all that justifies war? However let us avoid discussing war straight away, and any other points whereby the 2 parties do not agree.

Taking the floor, the Rwanda government delegation indicated that the ceasefire agreement had failed, but we were not there to find the reason why; we have to find a way out of the impasse, giving priority to the way of peace. It stressed, in other respects, that in the past, resolutions resulting from meetings were published and this had not helped us very much. That is why it considered the idea of confidentiality, proposed by Mr. DIJOURD, an excellent idea. It finally stressed that the Rwanda government agreed with the 7 points objectives while insisting that the Rwanda government carry out the democracy process in Rwanda, the measures already taken for the refugees return, namely the amnesty, respect for the press, etc..

The RPF outlined that the 7 points are similar to the principles stated in its political programme; 4 comments however were made:

- Elections: Accepted, but they should not be manipulated. Sufficient time is needed to explain what is at stake and all Rwandese should have access to this.

- Amnesty to refugees: the refugees fled the country for reasons of insecurity and persecution mostly. The circumstances which led to their departure should therefore be got rid of and they should not be pardoned as if they were criminals!

- Protection of minorities: the Rwanda government has just admitted that all Rwandese should have the same rights and possibilities. What therefore, does "minority" mean and from where does the need to institutionalise the minority come from? At this point, the Rwanda government intervened to affirm that the minority problem is the origin of all Rwandese problems and that it was necessary to dwell at length on this question. Mr. DIJOURD retorted that the RPF was right and that it was advisable to talk about protection of human rights, period.

- The RPF insists that the causes of the war should be examined, analysed and eliminated. How to stop the war should therefore be the priority objective of our talks.

The Rwanda government delegation and Mr. Dijourd put aside the idea. The latter rather proposed the following themes as a topic to debate upon:

"How does one make Rwanda a shining example of democracy? Two themes should be examined on this subject", he continued.

a) There is no democracy without elections, (members of parliament, president....). These elections should be objective, secret, preceded by electoral campaigns by parties. International observers should be invited.

b) This democracy should be set up through the means of the current government which is legitimate and this should be done quickly.

RPF:

a) Democracy should not be confused with elections. In fact, every one, including HABYARIMANA himself, today admits that democracy should be installed in Rwanda. Indeed, since Mr. HABYARIMANA seized power in 1973, there has never ceased being elections in Rwanda; proof that elections, by themselves, are not democracy.

Elections are the expression of a choice of a society, of a representative, etc..). To exercise them, one has to be capable of choosing; namely possessing sufficient information on the stakes at hand, and being free to choose. There is neither one nor the other in Rwanda. Our country has been especially scared by divisions and the exclusion of its citizens. To calculate the elections on such a division would result in chaos. Democracy presupposes the people. We should therefore accept and conclude on a certain number of basic principles, namely equality of rights for all citizens, by virtue of which all Rwandese today and all political tendencies are placed on an equal footing. They should thus participate straight away, in the same manner, in the interim government.

b) In starting the war, the RPF was questioning the legitimacy of the MRND regime, this is obvious, because the MRND trampled the peoples' fundamental rights underfoot! Oppression and high handedness, institutionalisation of inequality of citizens, injustices, etc..

Mr. HABYARIMANA overthrew the (elected) regime in 1973. After which, he installed monopartism. Elections were a formality.

In quickly changing the constitution last June because it was anti-democratic, and imposing another, naming a Prime Minister called to form a coalition government, in programming the anticipated elections, Mr. HABYARIMANA himself admits by all these initiatives that his power is not legitimate. If it was, he would go right to the end of his mandate. Since it is not, why should the MRND regime assume the rights of solely arranging the future?

Mr. Dijoud: It is difficult to deny that there is a democratisation process in Rwanda. Let us rather allow the Rwandese delegation to remind us of the different achievements.

The Rwanda government indicated that President HABYARIMANA had started, before the war, a country wide Commission for Political Consultations (Commission de synthèse), to examine the political changes arising in the country and produce a national charter; he changed the constitution, introducing articles authorising multi-

partism; he had the law on parties voted in; on 16/8/1991 he summoned the latter to a meeting of constitution states that the current government becomes, in effect, the interim government he will soon propose an electoral calendar.

Mr. Dijoud considered that obviously democracy had advanced way ahead in Rwanda, but unfortunately the RPF kept away. What did it have against the current democratisation process?

The RPF then remarked that what had just been dubbed a democratic process was the very denial of democracy. There is just one person who calls the shots - today just as in 1973 - Mr. HABYARIMANA. He authorised the amendments of the Constitution, the formation of parties, etc.. He installed, in reality a democracy made to measure. Democracy is not the achievement of one man; it is plural. Why did he not permit the armed and non-armed opposition to participate in these decisions as soon as he realised that democratisation changes were necessary? If these changes were for real, the parties and free press would not, today be muzzled. There is really no democratic process in Rwanda.

Mr. Dijoud commented that the RPF intervention was too aggressive and was not to his taste; that the democratic changes in Rwanda were very much in evidence; parties and newspapers are springing up, which was not the case before the war. That we must believe that Mr. HABYARIMANA means well, he alone should speak on behalf of the people since he alone was elected by them, yet in spite of this he accepts to consult the parties! To round this up the Rwanda government delegation indicated that in his initiatives the President is seconded by the CND (parliament which is also a product of the people.

The RPF demonstration that the CND which was set up under the regime of monopartism emanated from MRND, the president's party which in reality has not changed in its philosophy or functioning. There can never be a start to the democracy process if the principle of equality for all and consequently for all political tendencies, is not accepted. This means the end of the hegemony of the "sole" MRND party. This demand is mutual to the RPF and the unarmed opposition. In addition, is demanded:

- a) To agree on conditions to end the war.
- b) To do away with all circumstances that forced certain Rwandese into exile and to proceed with their repatriation before the beginning of the new political system, notably the elections.
- c) An interim government on an enlarged base
- d) A large-scale national debate (national conference) to discuss especially the future of the country and its institutions.

The government delegation undertook to demonstrate that the number of Rwandese living in exile is quite limited, contrary to what is often claimed; that consequently this tiny minority can not paralyse the democratic process.

The mediator observed that it was advisable to avoid speaking of the war or other delicate subjects for which there is no consensus, or invoke the past. Rather the RPF should be asked why it does not lay down its arms and participate in the political changes, while constituting itself as a political party like the others.

In response, the RPF indicated that:

1. As has been demonstrated, there is no democratic process in Rwanda. The regime which is at the moment assassinating even innocent civilians in BIGOGWE, KIBILIRA, etc., cannot claim to be democratic. The RPF strongly demanded that such a false sense of decency be left out of the talks so that the true nature of the current Kigali regime be known to all. The RPF however stressed that whatever the nature of the current regime, it was willing to enter the political system on the following conditions.

2. The RPF will not lay down its arms for two main reasons:

a) Its protagonist, the MRND government, is not at all ready to lay down its arms. Proof of this is the RG's refusal to carry out rights to end the numerous resolutions, of the heads of states: Mwanza, Gbadolite I, II, III, Zanzibar, etc.. When there are two parties fighting, the wish to end the war should be mutual.

b) The RPF is fighting for political change in Rwanda, namely that social injustices cease. On this objective too, the goal is far from being achieved. Besides, RPF is suprised at the manner in which it is asked this question yet it is well known that being suspected of being an RPF sympathiser is reason enough to be arrested or killed. This is the excuse given out for the raids that began in October after the staging of an "RPF attack" in Kigali, for the killings of KIBILIRA and those of BAGOGWE which still continue. As for whether RPF is a party, the whole world knows that RPF is an armed political opposition (with a political program); that it signed the agreement to this effect on 23/3/1991 with the RG. It is not registered according to the decree of June 1991 - which was passed by a government that it is contesting and this is normal.

The Rwanda government delegation reacted, claiming that the raids and the killings belonged to the past: that the BAGOGWE MASSACRES took place in February and have ceased since then; that today democracy has changed everything; that whether we want it or not the path of democracy will forge ahead - it is irreversible.

On several occasions, the mediator attempted to summarise our discussions, saying that a consensus had been found and consequently a democratic process had already started in Rwanda, but the head of the RPF delegation continued to reject this claim. Having taken this for granted, however, the Rwanda government delegation requested for the RPF's opinion on the repatriation of the refugees saying it would do anything for their return, but nobody seemed to arrive.

The RPF, in turn, wanted to know if the RG wanted any contribution from it on this subject. The RG indicated this was the sole responsibility of the RG. Therefore if the Rwandese government claims to have taken all measures for solving the refugee problem, which was one of the 8 points of the RPF political programme, the RPF will follow up on the 7 other questions that remain.

Just before the end of the talks, the mediator accepted that we could talk about the war. If one excludes the recognition by the two parties of the agreements already signed (N'Sele Agreement of 29/3/1991 and its amendments of 17/9/1991) the other points of agreement - namely dwelling on the fact of the war intensifying opposition among Rwandese and raging in Rwanda itself - were eliminated from the final memorandum proposed by the mediator, from which the Rwandese government delegation also disassociated itself. The RPF accepted to sign the memorandum on condition that the whole chapter (of the war) would be considered since it had never been worked on, and should be integrated on the next occasion. The French representatives and the Rwandese government delegation insisted on the necessity of signing a memorandum on which the two parties (the RPF and the Rwandese government) would have no copy. This was apparently to safeguard the secrecy of the talks the contents of the memorandum were as follows:

1. The two parties agreed on the 7 objectives(.....)
2. The two parties recognized that there is a political process in Rwanda, of which the purpose is the country's democratisation: the RPF thinks that there should straight away be an enlarged interim government; the Rwandese government thinks that this should be achieved gradually. The RPF cannot participate in such a government if the war is not at an end.
3. The two parties recognise the N'Sele Agreement of 29/3/1991 as well as that of 17/9/1991.

At the end of the talks, Mme BOIVINEAU took the RPF aside to announce to them that (simply for its information) the Rwandese and the Uganda governments had agreed, in mid-August, to authorise a French team of two soldiers and 2 diplomats to monitor their common border.

P. BIZIMUNGU

I. MILENGE