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MFAT (MEA, EUR, UNC, DP1, DSP1, EAB)

P/S MFA

Subject

SECURITY COUNCIL: RWANDA TROOP CONTRIBUTORS MEETING

Your C21870

Summary

- We as President convened meetings with all Troop Contributing countries to UNAMIR.
- This first time initiative was well received as long overdue and enabled TC countries to exchange views about UNAMIR participation at critical juncture in its future.

Action

For information only.

Report

In a major breakthrough in Security Council practice President convened meetings with ambassadors of troop contributing countries to UNAMIR today. First meeting (in the morning) was with larger contributors (Bangladesh, Belgium, Ghana, Tunisia, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Uruguay, Congo, Senegal, and Russia) together with France and US. Second meeting (in the afternoon) was with smaller contributors (Austria, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Egypt, Fiji, Hungary, Malawi, Mali, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Togo).

2 All participants at each meeting especially welcomed the initiative and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to exchange views and to communicate with President of Security Council about the very significant and grave situation in Rwanda at present. For two years, Egypt noted it had been advocating the need for this kind of get together. Other

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Ambassadors noted that they were forced to rely on the New York Times for information about conditions their forces in UNAMIR faced in Rwanda.

3 US later confirmed to President that they were extremely pleased with the format we had established and believed it was an excellent precedent for future such meetings. It confirmed their support for our initiative to try to formally capture this development in the procedures of the Security Council ("for the future when NZ is no longer in a position to take the lead").

4 President was able to advise Council at informals this afternoon of the meetings and to pass on the general sense of troop contributors that all were concerned about the safety and security of their forces and at the same time concerned with the possible perception that the UN might leave Rwanda prematurely. They universally expressed appreciation for the measures the Sec Gen had already taken for safety of personnel and were concerned about the modalities of UNAMIR and with what it would do both in the short and long term.

5 At the morning meeting, Belgium indicated that its government's view was that the Belgium contingent in UNAMIR was particularly at risk, given the continuing anti-Belge feeling in Rwanda at present. Because it would need to concentrate more on its own security than on carrying out any UNAMIR mandate, it was more of a liability to UNAMIR than a help. No other troop contributing country expressed desire to pull out of UNAMIR however.

6 Only difficulty for President came when Nigeria followed by Russia pushed the morning meeting toward a consideration of the future mandate of UNAMIR. This was clearly uncomfortable for France given its opposition to structured consultation with troop contributors but the process was preserved by the President underlining that the meeting was for an exchange of views and that he did not intend to sum up the outcome but would report all the trends to the Council. It is only regrettable that the sheer horror of the situation in Rwanda was the catalyst which enabled us to make a breakthrough on this important issue.

End Message