

115/23/37

Your file: 115/23/37

Our file: 3/88/1

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FROM:	NEW YORK	C04628/NYK	16-Jun-1994
TO:	WELLINGTON PARIS	WGTN UNSC	Immediate Routine
CC:	BEIJING BRUSSELS GENEVA LONDON MOSCOW SANTIAGO WASHINGTON	BONN CANBERRA HARARE MADRID OTTAWA TOKYO DEFENCE	Routine Routine Routine Routine Routine Routine Routine

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

P/S MFA
DEFENCE HQNZDF (DSIA, OPS, DDI)
DEFENCE MOD (GENTLES)

Subject

SECURITY COUNCIL: RWANDA

Summary

- French are seriously considering mounting international force to intervene in Rwanda
- According to the British, the French do not propose to seek Security Council endorsement but are hoping for the blessing of the SecGen
- The French Mission are saying nothing for the moment

Action

We propose consideration of instructions to Paris to argue against any French intervention.

Report

Two minutes after sending our fax 2797 which downplayed media reports that France was considering mounting an intervention operation in Rwanda to halt the massacres, we received a call from the British who told us that the French were indeed serious and had approached the British "and others" to participate. The British said that the French had told them that the intention was only to stay in Rwanda until such time as the expanded UNAMIR was in place. The British also said that the French were not proposing to seek Council approval of such a mission but were trying to get the blessing of the

SecGen.

2 When we called the French Mission for further information and comment, we were told that the Mission knew little about the initiative and that they were waiting for further advice from Paris. They claimed that no action was currently underway in New York in relation to any French intervention.

3 The British said they were currently considering their position. A critical issue would be the attitude of the parties. Like us, the British thought that the RPF not be keen to see the French back in Rwanda given their close links to the Habyrimana regime. They did not know the timing of the proposed intervention but assumed that it was intended to take place very soon if it went ahead.

4 The British were interested to know our reaction to the possibility of French intervention given the role we had played in Council discussions on Rwanda. We said we would need to reflect on the news and its implications. Obviously, at one level, any action which brought an end to the massacres had to be welcomed. But the implications of unilateral intervention, whether by France alone or in the company of others, which took place without the sanction of the Security Council or the request/consent of the parties, were serious and could not be lightly glossed over.

RPF Reaction

5 The RPF have told us that they have issued a statement warning that they would oppose, by force if necessary, any French intervention.

Comment

6 It seems to us that this is an extremely dangerous development. Unilateral intervention could only complicate enormously the UN mission. It has all the potential to follow exactly the disastrous pattern of the US intervention in Somalia leaving an impossible aftermath for the UN to manage. In this case it would be even worse.

7 In practice it is impossible to see how a French intervention force could avoid being drawn into the conflict between RGF and RPF. At best they would be drawn into the kind of "buffer" which the UN definitely does not want to happen. At worst they would become part of the problem by being identified as protecting the RGF.

8 The most useful thing the French could do if they want to make "a grand gesture" would be to send a significant fleet of transport aircraft to Africa in order to uplift the UNAMIR contingents and for them to deliver at the same time the heavy equipment which they have promised to the Senegalese.

Recommendation

9 We recommend that you ask Paris to urgently indicate to the French grave reservations about any intervention other than by UNAMIR in accordance with the Security Council's existing resolutions.

End Message