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ACTION AF-01

RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

INFO	LOG-00	AID-01	CIAE-00	C-01	OASY-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00
	EUR-01	HA-09	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-16	LAB-01
	L-01	ADS-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	PA-01
	PM-01	PRS-01	P-01	SCT-03	SNP-00	SP-00	SSO-00
	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	SNIS-00	NISC-02	PMB-00

/044W

-----2EF136 111641Z /38

P 111637Z MAR 94
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5799
INFO AMEMBASSY KIGALI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KAMPALA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BRUSSELS 02763

DEPARTMENT FOR AF/C AND EUR/NE

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL, EAID, BE, RW, BY, UG, TZ
SUBJECT: FONMIN CLAES' INTERVIEW ON HIS TRIP TO RWANDA
AND BURUNDI AND ON SITUATION IN ZAIRE

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1. C - WHERE MARKED

2. (U) BELGIAN FONMIN CLAES DISCUSSED HIS END-FEBRUARY TRIP TO RWANDA AND BURUNDI WITH COLETTE BRAECKMAN OF THE INDEPENDENT DAILY "LE SOIR". EMBASSY'S INFORMAL TRANSLATION OF THE MARCH 10 INTERVIEW AS WELL AS COMMENTS FROM MFA DIRECTOR FOR SUBSAHARAN AFRICAN AFFAIRS ELABORATING ON CLAES' TRIP FOLLOW.

BEGIN EMBASSY TRANSLATION:

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: ARCHIE M BOLSTER
CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 1.4(B), 1.4(D)
DECLASSIFY AFTER: 11 MAR 2016
DATE/CASE ID: 06 MAY 2011 201005065

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Q. YOU HAVE JUST RETURNED FROM A TRIP TO RWANDA.
MINISTER OF DEFENSE DELCROIX IS LEAVING FOR RWANDA TODAY.
WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ABOUT THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND?

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A. I CANNOT HIDE MY CONCERN IN VIEW OF THE CURRENT
POLITICAL VACUUM, THE FREE FALL OF THE ECONOMY, AND THE
FACT THAT THE CONDITIONS THAT WERE SUPPOSED TO LEAD TO THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ARUSHA ACCORDS HAVE NOT YET BEEN
FULFILLED. MEANWHILE, WE CAN'T WAIT ANY LONGER. IT IS
NECESSARY THAT ALL PARTIES THAT CONSIDER THEMSELVES
CAPABLE OF PARTICIPATING IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
ACCORDS DO SO, EVEN IF IT MEANS THEY WILL BE JOINED BY THE
OTHERS LATER ON. OTHERWISE, I FEAR RWANDA WILL VEER
TOWARDS AN ALMOST STRUCTURAL CONFRONTATION BETWEEN ETHNIC
GROUPS.

Q. YOU WARNED YOUR INTERLOCUTORS AND THREATENED TO
SUSPEND COOPERATION. WERE YOU LISTENED TO?

A. MY REMARKS WERE NOT HEEDDED, TO SAY THE LEAST. WHILE I
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WAS THERE A POLITICAL LEADER WAS ASSASSINATED AND I KNOW
THAT MANY WEAPONS ARE CIRCULATED AMONG THE CIVILIAN
POPULATION. FOR ME, THERE IS NO OTHER WAY OUT THAN THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ARUSHA ACCORDS. BUT EVEN THEN, A
LOT WILL HAVE TO BE DONE: FUSE THE TWO ARMIES, DEMOBILIZE
A LARGE NUMBER OF ARMED MEN, PREPARE AN URGENT PLAN FOR
THE ECONOMY. THERE AGAIN, THE NECESSARY FINANCIAL
RESOURCES WILL HAVE TO BE FOUND.

Q. HOW DO YOU ANALYZE THE LATEST EVENTS IN BURUNDI, THE
NEW MASSACRES IN BUJUMBURA?

A. IT IS CLEAR THAT THE ARMY DOES NOT ACCEPT THE DIVISION
OF POWERS THAT TOOK PLACE AFTER THE ELECTION OF PRESIDENT
NDADAYE AND WHICH WAS REPRODUCED AFTER THE DESIGNATION OF
HIS SUCCESSOR.

Q. THE MORNING OF THE PUTSCH, BELGIAN MILITARY
INTERVENTION WAS REQUESTED IN ORDER TO AVOID FURTHER
CONFRONTATIONS...

A. THAT IS CORRECT. WE WERE ASKED TO SEND 2,000 SOLDIERS
BUT IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THE ARMY DID NOT WANT THEM. THERE
WAS, THEREFORE, A RISK OF A VIOLENT CONFRONTATION. IN THE

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AFTERMATH, IT WAS DECIDED TO SEND A STABILIZATION FORCE
COMPOSED OF TROOPS DESIGNATED BY THE OAU. BELGIUM WAS
READY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FINANCING OF THIS FORCE WITH A
CONTRIBUTION OF DOLS 2 MILLION.

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BUT EVEN THIS, THE ARRIVAL OF 180 MEN, THE ARMY DID NOT
WANT. IT THEN BECAME A QUESTION OF SENDING 65 ENGINEERING

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OR MEDICAL OFFICERS. WE WERE FAR AWAY FROM A
STABILIZATION FORCE. BUT THE ARMY OF BURUNDI CONSIDERED
THAT THIS INTERVENTION WAS ALSO HUMILIATING. DURING MY
MEETINGS WITH THE GOVERNMENT IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT THE
AUTHORITIES WISHED TO REORGANIZE THE ARMY: SEPARATE PURELY
MILITARY ASPECTS FROM GENDARMERIE DUTIES; CREATE A SORT OF
REPUBLICAN GUARD. BELGIAN AID WAS REQUESTED. BUT SHOULD
WE DECIDE TOMORROW TO REESTABLISH MILITARY COOPERATION
WITH BURUNDI, I ASK MYSELF WHAT SORT OF RECEPTION WOULD BE

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GIVEN TO OUR EXPERTS AND HOW THEIR SUGGESTIONS WOULD BE
ACCEPTED.

Q. BELGIUM IS STILL INTERESTED IN CENTRAL AFRICA. ISN'T
SHE ONE OF THE LAST COUNTRIES TO DEMONSTRATE SUCH AN
INTEREST?

A. THIS MORNING I EXPLAINED TO THE UNSYG'S REP FOR AFRICA
THAT THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES RISKED BECOMING
DISCOURAGED OVER AFRICA, THAT THEY WOULD TURN THEIR BACKS
ON IT, IF AFRICANS THEMSELVES GAVE NO MINIMUM GUARANTEES
OF STABILITY IN ORDER TO ALLOW FRUITFUL COOPERATION. YOU
KNOW, WITHIN THE EU, BELGIUM AND FRANCE ARE THE LAST TWO
ADVOCATES OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT. ONLY THE MAGHREB
COUNTRIES, ON ONE HAND, AND SOUTH AFRICA, ON THE OTHER,
ARE STILL CONSIDERED INTERESTING. I ALSO WISH TO POINT
OUT THAT 85 PERCENT OF THE BELGIAN COOPERATION BUDGET IS
STILL DESTINED FOR AFRICA. THIS COOPERATION MUST NOT
BECOME IMPOSSIBLE.

Q. SPEAKING OF ZAIRE, IS THE WESTERN TROIKA STILL IN
EXISTENCE?

A. AS WILL PARIS AND WASHINGTON, WE WILL ACCEPT THE

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OUTCOME OF THE EXISTING PARLIAMENTARY DISCUSSIONS. WE OBVIOUSLY RECOGNIZE THE NEW STRUCTURE (HIGH COUNCIL OF THE REPUBLIC - TRANSITIONAL PARLIAMENT) BECAUSE IT EMANATES FROM THE ACCORDS NEGOTIATED BY ZAIRIANS THEMSELVES. NEGOTIATED, BUT NOT YET SIGNED. JUST AS OUR PARTNERS, WE SUPPORT ANY PRIME MINISTER EMANATING FROM THIS NEW ZAIRIAN PARLIAMENT. IT IS NOT A QUESTION OF PERSONALITIES FOR US

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BUT OF PRINCIPLE. THE HCR/PT REPRESENTS TO US THE NEW SOURCE OF LEGALITY IN ZAIRE. BUT I REPEAT THAT BEFORE ANY RESUMPTION OF INTERNATIONAL AID, SERIOUS GUARANTEES WILL BE NEEDED.

END EMBASSY TRANSLATION.

3. (C) WILFRIED JAENEN, BELGIAN MFA DIRECTOR FOR SUBSAHARAN AFRICA, WHO ACCOMPANIED FONMIN CLAES DURING HIS CENTRAL AFRICA SWING, CONFIRMED CLAES' PESSIMISTIC EVALUATION OF THE SITUATION IN RWANDA AND BURUNDI. THE MURDER OF A POLITICAL LEADER JUST HOURS AFTER HE HAD PARTICIPATED IN A MEETING WITH CLAES HAD SHOCKED AND SADDENED THE FOREIGN MINISTER.

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THE GOB WAS PROVIDING APPROXIMATELY BF 1 BILLION IN DIRECT AID TO RWANDA. CLAES' MUCH PUBLICIZED THREAT TO REVIEW AID LEVELS ABSENT PROGRESS HAD NOT BEEN AN EMPTY ONE, JAENEN STATED. WHILE NEITHER CLAES NOR THE MFA HAD ANY "DROP DEAD" DATES IN MIND, THE UPCOMING UN REVIEW OF UNAMIR WAS A BUILT-IN DEADLINE. JAENEN SAID HE HOPED BOTH SIDES WOULD KEEP THIS IN MIND.

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6. (C)

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BELGIUM WAS
CURRENTLY ALLOCATING APPROXIMATELY BF 600 MILLION FOR
ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES AND DISPLACED IN RWANDA AND
BURUNDI. JAENEN SAID HE EXPECTED FURTHER BILATERAL
DISCUSSIONS WITH UGANDA, TANZANIA, AND KENYA ON THE
POSSIBILITY OF DEVELOPING A REGIONAL COOPERATION SCHEME
WITH AN EAST AFRICAN FOCUS.

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