

**Telex #64, from MINAFET to DELBELONU**

**(sent by Foreign Ministry Chief of Staff, M. Willems, while Claes is still in Kigali) February 25, 1994**

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*“The situation’s significant deterioration, in terms of security in Rwanda, calls for the following reflections:*

*1. The political assassinations, the ensuing unrest, and the worsening of the climate of safety, could well lead to a new bloodbath.*

*2. It will be necessary to increase diplomatic and political pressure in order to achieve strict enforcement of the Arusha Accords in a calm environment.*

*3. The Special Representative of the General Secretary in Rwanda, Mr. Booh Booh, seems to have lost his local credibility.*

*4. Under its current mandate, UNAMIR cannot firmly maintain public order. There is a serious credibility problem.*

*Steps have already been taken at a high level in New York, but they have remained without result. The Security Council president’s last declaration concerning Rwanda (February 7<sup>th</sup>, 1994), “UNAMIR will be assured of consistent support only if the parties implement the Arusha Peace Agreement fully and rapidly,” suggests possible inactivity or stoppages of the operation.*

*5. Amidst assassinations and unrest, UNAMIR decided at the beginning of this week to put the operation on red alert, and consequently all the Blue Berets received the order to withdraw to their encampments and wait passively. If the situation had indeed degenerated and the aforementioned orders had stayed in effect, it would have been unacceptable, in the public opinion, for Belgian Blue Berets to be passive witnesses to genocide in Rwanda and for the United Nations to do nothing.*

*6. If conditions deteriorate, the United Nations and Belgium cannot really afford to withdraw from Rwanda. UNAMIR should be able to play a more active role and adopt a more marked profile in order to reinforce the international community’s credibility.*

7. *The question is to know whether this is possible without a new mandate from the Security Council. If attempting to strengthen UNAMIR requires a new mandate (a new Security Council resolution), we can expect difficulties, given the current policy in the United States on the matter. At this time, an extension of the operation (Blue Berets, financing) seems impossible in their view. Moreover, in the two resolutions themselves (872, 893), emphasis is clearly placed on the limited or recessive character of the operation (without putting UNAMIR's capability of fulfilling its mission at stake).*

8. *It has become very important to examine how we could strengthen the action within the framework of the current mandate (integration of Austrian Blue Berets? A larger margin of decision for Dallaire? Provisional displacement of Blue Berets from other operations in the region? ...), and how to effectively augment diplomatic and political pressure.*

9. *I would appreciate your remarks about all this. I insist that this must serve as a base for any decision concerning eventual future steps, but as of yet no stance has been reached on this subject.” (532b).*

#### **Reply from Ambassador Noterdaema, Telex 326. February 28, 1994**

The response is negative on the question of strengthening the United Nations action. Ambassador Noterdaeme, in his telex #326 on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 1994, declares that he has “*thought seriously about the way we could influence the United Nations’ action in Rwanda.*” He adds, “*I talked about it in detail with the principal members of the Security Council and with the Secretary of the United Nations. In theory, there are four elements on which we could draw:*

1) *The expansion of UNAMIR’s mandate or the strengthening of its numbers: ‘very improbable’*

*Not only are the United States and the United Kingdom against it, they may even, according to their delegations, withdraw UNAMIR altogether ‘in case of difficulties’ (this could even be the attitude of the entire Security Council.) There is a ‘financial logic’ behind this (the United States never wanted more than 500 men for UNAMIR).*

*There is also a political logic: the operations in Rwanda, Liberia, and Mozambique are covered under Chapter VI; in other words, the United Nations Security Council cannot impose a solution (in Yugoslavia and Somalia, this proved to be impossible even under Chapter VII).*

2) *The rules of engagement*

*The United Nations Secretary “is not inclined to adjust the rules of engagement.”*

*Militarily, it is too dangerous; the United Nations never has as much power as the parties;*

*Politically: if the United Nations uses force, it takes a side (is no longer neutral)” (524b).*