

RWANDA

RESTRICTED COUNCIL MEETING ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 3RD, 1993 (12 PM)

UNDER THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

PARTICIPANTS

President of the Republic – Prime Minister – Foreign Affairs Minister – Defense Minister – Minister of Cooperation – Mr. Védrine – Mr. Boidevaix – Admiral Lanxade – General Quesnot – Mr. Nicoulaud – General Rannou – Mr. Delaye.

SECRETARIAT

Mr. Denoix de Saint-Marc – Colonel de Bastier

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PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

Mr. Minister of Cooperation?

MINISTER OF COOPERATION

I have just returned from Uganda and Rwanda.

Concerning the presence of a French detachment, some say officially that such a presence is not necessary; everyone asks us in the small committee to “above all, stay here.”

President Habyarimana is disoriented and gasping for breath.

We gave rise to the press statement. The RPF has reinforced its positions, and it can now pursue its political and military offensive. The displaced persons could distort the situation, as they are potential targets for the RPF, which could fire at them with mortar in order to force them into Kigali.

The Rwandan forces fight unevenly.

If the RPF attacks Byumba, the Belgian government could ask its nationals to leave Rwanda. The question everyone is asking is: what will the French army do?

DEFENSE MINISTER

Mr. Debarge’s visit was very useful. I have just read two Rwandan documents that arrived this morning. The UN will have to send a mission there immediately.

The entry of the Security Council, if it resulted in a resolution, would permit our four companies to become UN forces or part of an international force. It would be appropriate for other countries to join this force.

MINISTER OF COOPERATION

Two propositions have been made:

- to secure a border control at the Ugandan-Rwandan border,
- to ask the RPF to withdraw to the February 7-8 line (through President

Museveni as an intermediary) and to create a neutral zone, controlled by an expanded GOMN.

The Ugandan president has not denied the influence that he has over the RPF and has proposed a discussion with them (they were most likely not far away). He wondered about the role of the French army: if it intervenes, it could last a long time, but it will win and the Tutsis will lose.

One realizes that:

- the Rwandan government either negotiates or makes war,
- the RPF negotiates and makes war.

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The situation is no longer clear. We must jump at these opportunities:

- in the 14 Rwandan political parties' declaration, point 8 asks for the entry of the Security Council,

- a cease-fire has been agreed upon.

We must support this request of the Security Council.

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

We must, as soon as possible, hand over our position to international forces from the UN.

Vis-à-vis the rest of Africa, if France pulls out, which would be wise, everyone will feel threatened. To stay would be to risk being helpless spectators of the conquerors' arrival. We should leave, but not under the current conditions.

While we are waiting for the UN forces, can we be certain of bridging the gap? The conquest could be accomplished in a few days. Can we put together a response in a few days?

Foreign Affairs must take charge of any action. If Uganda betrays us, Kigali will fall.

ADMIRAL LANXADE

The Rwandan forces are trying to retake the territory with our support. We can assure the security of our nationals and their repatriation but we cannot oppose the RPF.

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

It is not in our interest for the Tutsis to advance too quickly. We have to win more time, slow everything down by all diplomatic means, and continue to support the Rwandan army by supplying it with the munitions it needs.

Boutros Ghali's decision is urgent: if our soldiers become UN soldiers, that changes things. But we cannot be alone. We could participate in a UN force of one million men.

We must get hold of M rim e within the hour and hurry up to get the system in place. If there is no response from the UN, we will have a new meeting of the Restricted Council.