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	P-01	SNP-00	SP-00	SS-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00
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R 300623Z MAR 94
FM AMEMBASSY KIGALI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6081
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
SECDEF WASHDC
JOINTSTAFF WASHDC
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE//J4-SA/J4-SAA//
DIA WASHDC//CH-4//
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

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DEPT FOR PM/ISP, AF/RA, AF/C, AND IO/PHO

DOD FOR OSD/HRA

YAOUNDE FOR DAO

E.O. 12356:N/A

TAGS: MASS, MARR, PINS, PINR, PGOV, RW

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SUBJECT: RWANDAN REQUEST FOR DEMINING ASSISTANCE

REF: A) STATE 62321 AND B) KIGALI 421

1. SUMMARY. DASD IRVIN VISIT FOCUSES ATTENTION ON RWANDA'S LAND MINE PROBLEM. GOR ASKS FOR A U.S. MINE ASSESSMENT TEAM TO COME TO ASSIST UNAMIR WITH ITS DEMINING PROGRAM. START UP OF DEMINING ACTIVITIES AWAITS THE SETTING UP OF TRANSITION INSTITUTIONS. GOR READY TO SIGN PROTOCOL BANNING USE OF LAND MINES. END SUMMARY.

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RWANDA REQUESTS VISIT OF U.S. MINE ASSESSMENT TEAM

2. FOLLOWING THE RECENT VISIT OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (DASD) PATRICIA IRVIN, THE GOR OFFICIALLY REQUESTED U.S. ASSISTANCE IN EVALUATING ITS LAND MINE PROBLEM. THE GOR ASKED FOR A U.S. MINE ASSESSMENT TEAM TO VISIT RWANDA TO WORK IN COOPERATION WITH THE U.N. PEACEKEEPING MISSION (UNAMIR) TO "TRAIN THE TRAINERS" TO DETECT AND REMOVE MINES AND TO CONDUCT MINE AWARENESS PROGRAMS.

3. AS NOTED IN REF A, TIMING FOR THE VISIT OF THE U.S. MINE ASSESSMENT TEAM WILL BE CONTINGENT ON WHEN DEMINING OPERATIONS ACTUALLY BEGIN. WE EXPECT THIS TO START SOON AFTER THE TRANSITION GOVERNMENT IS SWORN IN. THE UN, THE RPF, AND GOR ARE ALL ANXIOUS TO BEGIN OPERATIONS; ALL SHARE A GROWING CONCERN THAT, WITH THE DAILY RETURN OF REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED

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PERSONS TO THE FERTILE NORTHERN AREAS OF THE COUNTRY WHERE LAND MINES WERE LAID, THE NUMBER OF MINE RELATED ACCIDENTS WILL INCREASE.

UN DEMINING PROGRAM COULD BENEFIT FROM U.S. EXPERTISE

3. AS DESCRIBED IN REF B, BOTH GOR AND RPF (RWANDAN PATRIOTIC FRONT) FORCES LAID OVER 50,000 LAND MINES IN THE NORTH DURING THE CIVIL WAR FROM 1990-1993. THE UN ASSISTANCE MISSION IN RWANDA (UNAMIR), CURRENTLY OPERATING IN COUNTRY, HAS AS PART OF ITS MANDATE TO ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A RWANDAN LAND MINE CLEARANCE PROGRAM. THE ENGINEERING GROUP WITHIN THE UN MISSION IS RESPONSIBLE FOR COMPILING DATA ON LOCATIONS AND TYPES OF MINES, PROCUREMENT AND TESTING OF DEMINING EQUIPMENT, TRAINING OF GOR AND RPF FORCES IN THE USE OF THE EQUIPMENT, AND SUPERVISION OF MINE CLEARANCE OPERATIONS.

4. DURING AN UNAMIR BRIEFING FOR DASD IRVIN, UNAMIR'S PLANS SECTION REPORTED THAT IT COULD BENEFIT FROM U.S. ASSISTANCE IN IMPLEMENTING ITS DEMINING PLAN. BASED ON THE MINE MAPS AND INFORMATION PROVIDED BY BOTH SIDES,

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U.S. MANUFACTURED MINES WERE LAID IN RWANDA. JOINT STAFF'S J-5, ACCOMPANYING MS. IRVIN, ADVISED THAT INFORMATION ON DEFUSING THESE MINES WAS CLASSIFIED AND COULD NOT BE RELEASED TO THE UN FORCES. INSTEAD, A U.S. MINE ASSESSMENT TEAM COULD PROVIDE THE TRAINING FOR DESTROYING (RATHER THAN DEFUSING) THESE MINES.

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RWANDANS REQUEST DEMINING ASSISTANCE

5. IN MEETINGS WITH THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE - AUGUSTIN BIZIMANA, THE ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF - MGEN NSABIMANA AND THE RPF FORCE COMMANDER - MGEN KAGAME, DASD IRVIN COMMUNICATED ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF PROPOSAL (REF A) FOR U.S. DEMINING ASSISTANCE. THE DEFENSE MINISTER TOLD DASD IRVIN THAT U.S. ASSISTANCE IN MINE CLEARANCE OPERATIONS WOULD BE VALUED BY BOTH SIDES. PRESIDENT

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HABYARIMANA CONFIRMED RWANDAN KEEN INTEREST IN U.S. HELP DURING HIS MEETING WITH MS. IRVIN. BOTH THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE AND MGEN NSABIMANA SAID THAT THEY HAD OFFICERS READY TO BE TRAINED TO BEGIN MINE CLEARANCE OPERATIONS AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY. LIKEWISE MGEN KAGAME SAID HIS MEN WERE READY TO BEGIN THE DIFFICULT TASK AS SOON AS A TRANSITION GOVERNMENT WAS IN PLACE. UNFORTUNATELY, BOTH ARMY COMMANDERS LAMENTED, NO OPERATIONS COULD BEGIN UNTIL THE POLITICAL IMPASSE WAS BROKEN AND A TRANSITION GOVERNMENT IN PLACE.

MINE PROBLEM MANAGEABLE ACCORDING TO UN PLANNERS

6. THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE WAS UNDER THE FALSE IMPRESSION THAT MINE CLEARANCE WOULD ONLY TAKE 2-3 MONTHS WHEREAS THE UN FORCES PREDICT THAT OPERATIONS WILL TAKE ALMOST TWO YEARS TO BE COMPLETED. DESPITE THE MISUNDERSTANDING ON TIMING, ALL PARTIES ARE CONFIDENT THAT MINE CLEARANCE OPERATIONS WILL BE SUCCESSFUL. AS THE UN'S CHIEF PLANS OFFICER COMMENTED,

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COMPARED TO OTHER COUNTRIES WHERE MINES WERE DISPERSED LIKE MOZAMBIQUE OR CAMBODIA, RWANDA'S MINE PROBLEMS ARE CONCENTRATED IN THE NORTHERN SECTIONS OF THE COUNTRY MAKING DEMINING A MORE MANAGEABLE PROGRAM. THE PLANS OFFICER TOLD DASD IRVIN THAT UNAMIR CURRENTLY HAS MINE MAPS SPECIFYING THE LOCATIONS OF A MAJORITY OF THE MINES, WHILE THE REST - LAID DURING BATTLE

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CONDITIONS WITH NO MAPS - CAN BE LOCALIZED TO SPECIFIC AREAS WHERE FIGHTING TOOK PLACE.

RWANDA READY TO SIGN THE PROTOCOL BANNING USE OF MINES

7. TO MINIMIZE ANY FUTURE LAND MINE PROBLEMS, THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE TOLD DASD IRVIN THAT RWANDA WAS READY TO SIGN THE PROTOCOL BANNING THE USE OF MINES UNDER THE TREATY ON CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS. THE MINISTER SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN PERSONALLY TOUCHED BY THE TRAGEDY LAND MINES WRECK ON PEOPLES' LIVES. HE SAID SOME OF HIS FRIENDS LIVING IN THE WAR ZONE HAD LOST LIMBS DUE TO MINE ACCIDENTS. THE MINISTER ESTIMATED THAT RWANDA CURRENTLY HAS APPROXIMATELY 10 MINE RELATED ACCIDENTS A MONTH. ICRC ESTIMATES ARE SLIGHTLY LOWER WITH 40 INCIDENTS OVER THE PAST SIX MONTHS.

DASD IRVIN VISITS WAR WOUNDED AT MILITARY HOSPITAL

8. AT THE MINISTER'S INVITATION, DASD IRVIN ALSO VISITED THE WAR WOUNDED AT THE KANOMBE MILITARY HOSPITAL. MOST OF THE SOLDIERS WHO HAD LOST LIMBS HAD NOT BEEN FITTED WITH PROSTHETIC DEVICES YET. ACCORDING TO HOSPITAL OFFICIALS, ONCE FITTED, THE SOLDIERS WOULD BE SENT TO A SEPARATE FACILITY FOR THERAPY AND TRAINING. THE PATRIOTIC FRONT TOLD DASD IRVIN DURING HER VISIT TO MULINDI OF A SIMILAR PROGRAM FOR ITS WAR WOUNDED IN WHICH SOLDIERS WHO HAD LOST LIMBS WERE GIVEN VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN CARPENTRY, ELECTRONICS,

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MECHANICS, HANDICRAFTS, TYPING OR COMPUTER SCIENCE.

8. WHILE ON THE VISIT TO KANOMBE HOSPITAL, DASD IRVIN ALSO VISITED THE PEDIATRIC CLINIC, FUNDED UNDER THE U.S. CIVIC ACTION PROGRAM. THE CLINIC WAS FULLY OPERATIONAL WITH DOCTORS ATTENDING TO MOTHERS AND THEIR CHILDREN. ONE WING OF THE CLINIC WAS BEING USED TO HOUSE WAR-WOUNDED AWAITING PROSTHETIC DEVICES.

9. ACTION REQUEST: A U.S. MINE ASSESSMENT TEAM COULD

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PROVIDE SUBSTANTIAL EXPERTISE TO UNAMIR'S DEMINING PROGRAM, CURRENTLY BEING DEVELOPED BY THE POLISH AND BELGIAN PLANNING SECTION. THE BANGLADESHI ENGINEERING COMPANY, WHO WILL IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM, HAVE NO SIGNIFICANT TRAINING IN MINE CLEARANCE OPERATIONS AND COULD ALSO BENEFIT FROM U.S. INSTRUCTION. THE EMBASSY PROPOSES THAT A MINE ASSESSMENT TEAM VISIT RWANDA IN EARLY MAY TO BEGIN ITS SURVEY. POC FOR COORDINATION OF THE PROPOSED VISIT WILL BE ECONOFF LAURA LANE, TEL (250) 75602, FAX (250) 72128. RAWSON

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