

Re: RWANDA

~~SECRET NOFORN WMINTEL ORCON~~

(b)(3)
30 SEP 93

ASSESSMENT:
PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN RWANDA

I. (U) KEY JUDGEMENTS

- (C) The military, political, social, economic, and operational conditions in Rwanda favor an economical and easily executed peacekeeping operation.
- (C) The United Nations peacekeeping plan for Rwanda is sound with room for some economies.
- (C) If adopted and properly executed, the United Nations peacekeeping plan for Rwanda has excellent prospects for success.
- (C) United Nations failure to provide a peacekeeping force to Rwanda will probably lead to a breakdown of the peacekeeping process, and increased regional instability adverse to US interests.

II. (U) BACKGROUND

(C) Historical Roots. The conflict in Rwanda is an historical and ethnic struggle between the Hutu (85% of the population) and the Tutsi (14%). Traditional Tutsi subjugation of the Hutu majority was sustained during Belgian colonial rule. However, a bloody but successful Hutu uprising at independence in 1959 brought down the Rwandan Tutsi monarchy and forced hundreds of thousands of Tutsi into exile into Uganda, Zaire, and Burundi. Periodic regional Hutu-Tutsi bloodbaths have occurred since, killing more hundreds of thousands from both ethnic groups, and sustaining Rwandan Tutsi expatriate covenants to return to Rwanda.

(S/NF/WN) The Current War. The Rwandan Civil War began in earnest on 1 October 1990. A large conventional military force, composed almost entirely of expatriate Rwandan Tutsi, attacked Rwanda from Uganda with the intention of militarily seizing the country from the single party control of the Hutu-led National Movement for the Development of the Republic (MRND). The invasion was stopped short of the capital of Kigali by a combination of Rwandan Army (FAR) counterattack, and reënforcement of Rwandan national defense by Zairian, Belgian, and French troops. The Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) was subsequently pushed back into Uganda by the FAR. For the next two years the RPF, supported logistically by the Ugandan government and National Army (NRA), conducted periodic conventional military incursions into Rwandan territory. In 1992 the RPF seized a measurable portion of land in the north (see attachment A), displacing almost a million Rwandan citizens. After this limited success the RPF sued for peace.

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(C) The Peace Accords. Internationally supervised peace talks concluded in Arusha, Tanzania on 4 August 1993 with the signing of a peace accord between the government of Rwanda and the RPF. The accords call for the cessation of hostilities, establishment of democratic government, demobilization and reorganization of the armed forces, voluntary repatriation of all Rwandan expatriates, and neutral international supervision of the process. The United Nations sent a peacekeeping assessment mission to Rwanda in August 1993, and on 24 September that mission rendered its report recommending the establishment of the United Nations Assistance Mission to Rwanda (UNAMIR).

(S/NF/WN) The Present Situation. Currently a cease fire is in effect and all offensive military operations in Rwanda have ended. The 20,000-man RPA controls 4% of Rwandan territory in the north, although the bulk of the RPA is in Uganda. (20,000 is a UN figure; E.O. 13526, 1.4(c) RPA troop strength as closer to 6-8,000.) The combat zone has clearly defined front lines, separated by a neutral zone all along the front except at the Byumba salient. Rwandan defense forces consist of the 23,000 man FAR and 6,000 man Gendarmerie deployed throughout the country, but concentrated along the front. Approximately 350 French paratroops, advisors, and trainers secure the Kigali airport and provide security assistance to the FAR. Both the FAR and the RPA are conventional, light infantry forces; adequately supplied and equipped. Morale and discipline are good. Although both armies started the conflict with exceptionally well-trained forces, rapid wartime expansion has diluted some of that capability. The FAR still has very good basic military infrastructure, to include a remarkably competent officer military academy. Extraordinary operational security and deception characterize RPA operations, which otherwise are conventional in nature.

III. (U) PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

(C/NF/WN) Operations Support and Logistics. Several factors will facilitate peacekeeping operations in Rwanda. The country is geographically small, and the country's road system is adequate to support vehicular deployment from Kigali to almost anywhere with only a few hours travel time, reducing transportation requirements and expenses considerably over other PKOs in Africa. The climate is mild and pleasant; well suited to troops from almost any country, although the altitude may pose some initial problems. Food, basic services and logistics are readily available. Adequate troop training areas, facilities, billets, and bases already exist or require only minimal upgrade. International and internal telephone and postal communications are excellent. The Kigali airport is very modern and fully capable of receiving strategic deployment of peacekeepers. All other airports are adequate for PKO. In short, support of UN operations should be inexpensive, uncomplicated, and far less demanding than the PKOs in Mozambique, Angola, Somalia, and elsewhere in Africa.

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(S/NF/WN/OC) The Political Environment. The population welcomes United Nations presence. Ethnic tensions are high and sometimes explosive, but the people respond well to military and police intervention. Only one or two very small ethnic organizations propound civil disobedience, usually in the form of small (5-25 person) sit-ins or demonstrations, and usually directed against the occasional inefficiency of UN relief agencies. Although in transition, the country is politically stable and the government has the support of the vast majority of the people; portending almost no civil disturbance problems. There is no terrorist threat. The majority of the military leadership in the RPA and FAR support the peace agreements, and will enforce respect for the security of UNAMIR troops. Furthermore, the leaders of both armies expect to surrender a certain amount of autonomy and authority to the UNAMIR commander. If the UNAMIR commander cultivates his actual and perceived authority and leadership position, the RPA and FAR will defer to him beyond that which is required under the Arusha accords, further enhancing PKO effectiveness. Members of both forces have the expectation of unequivocal UN military response to any military violations, to include consequence of arrest or use of military action, giving psychological advantage to UNAMIR.

(G/WN) Peacekeeping Operations. The actual conduct of peacekeeping operations should be easier than elsewhere in Africa. Rwandan terrain is hilly with low cultivated vegetation and only occasional forest, with excellent long-range observation from hill tops. Fewer observers are needed than in typical flat, African savannah. Infiltration routes from Uganda are predicable and accessible, and the small geographic area involved lends itself well to unattended sensor surveillance. In addition, the dense population makes covert or surprise military movement difficult. The conventional military situation is much easier to monitor than an unconventional war. Combatants are all uniformed, well organized, controlled, and disciplined. Front lines and unit positions are well defined and easily accessible.

(G) Mines. Mines were used during the war, but the problem is nowhere near that which of other African conflicts. Most mine fields, although unmarked, are known and placed in front of existing fixed defensive positions; easily recoverable. There are a few mines scattered in the countryside, but the number probably does not warrant a systematic search except in a few very small areas of past, intense conflict. Unexpended ordnance is a greater problem. The country, especially in the north, is littered with unexploded mortar rounds, hand grenades, and unexpended ammunition of all types. Casualties are a daily occurrence, especially among children.

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(S/NF/WN) Refugees. 600,000 of the 900,000 persons internally displaced by the war spontaneously returned to their homes after the signing of the peace accords. The remainder represent mostly those whose farms are in RPF territory. These persons will probably stay in their current locations until SEP 94, when the RPF has left the zone and the approach of the rainy season predicates planting. Tutsi and other refugees located outside the country will not begin repatriation in any numbers until the military and political processes have been nearly completed, and there is a reasonable security situation. The current United Nations representative for refugee affairs in Rwanda is generally regarded as incompetent by all parties in country, and ill-suited for supervising the resolution of the difficult refugee situation.

(U) The UN Plan. The UNAMIR mission includes security of Kigali, monitoring the cease fire and security situation country-wide during the entire process, mine-clearing and training, investigation of accord violations, and security of refugees and displaced persons during repatriation. The operational concept specifies a phased deployment of approximately 2,500 peacekeepers, to include a mobile infantry battalion in Kigali, and another in the neutral zone. Besides support elements, UNAMIR would include an observer force (to include the small Neutral Military Observer Group, NMOG, currently in Rwanda) and police observers to monitor the security situation elsewhere in the country

E.O. 13526, 1.4(c)

(C) Assessment of the UN Plan. The proposed UNAMIR structure and operational plan is technically sound and is likely to succeed. The force structure is economical. The 800-man figure for infantry battalions is probably a round number. 650-man infantry units would fulfill mission requirements as long as the units had four maneuver companies and all support elements. Rwandan terrain favors the use of light infantry (to include airborne, air assault, and commando). The battalions should have enough wheeled, armored troop carriers for one or two companies. Light wheeled vehicles, cargo trucks, and buses would suffice for the balance of the transport. The addition of a military police platoon to the Kigali-based battalion would greatly enhance the unit's urban operational capability. The police observer group is an excellent proposal, and will help liaison with the government in general. The air transport unit could consist of 2 (vice 4) utility helicopters and one small fixed wing aircraft, and an aero-medevac helicopter. This would reduce air transport costs at least 30%, and give UNAMIR an air-medical capability. If needed, additional air assets could be obtained from the FAR. The civilian support component of UNAMIR is entirely too large for the mission, which could be easily done with half (70) the number proposed.

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(S/NF/WN) The UN operational plan is very good and reflects the realities of the peacekeeping situation there. The proposal of an enforceable weapons control zone around Kigali is essential to avoid spontaneous violence between the RPF and FAR battalions based in the city. The exchange of liaison officers, not practiced at other UN operations in the region, will extend the UNAMIR commander's influence and help reduce communication problems. The plan has no provision for intelligence collection/processing, a major weakness considering the RPF's deception capabilities. Addition of a S5 Civic Affairs Officer, responsible for compiling operational information (from both external and internal sources), and a counterpart Operations Coordinator Officer in the S3, can fulfill the same role with no political ramification. In addition, the plan only glosses military-civil affairs, a crucial aspect of peacekeeping in the Africa region. Finally, the UNAMIR plan calls for support of 26 assembly and cantonment points and training centers (of 48 proposed by the belligerents. This number is far greater than needed or feasible. The same mission can be accomplished far more efficiently and economically (in terms of manpower, resources, and money) with around 10-12 points: 3 RPF points (one in each RPF command zone), and 7-8 FAR points (one at each major garrison).

(S/NF/WN/OC) Threats and Pitfalls. Should the United Nations fail to provide a peacekeeping force, or provide an ineffective force, the peace process will probably break down. While leaders of both sides want to end the war, they also realize that the underlying ethnic tensions are very volatile, and suspicions run deep. Revenge, retaliation, and reprisals are culturally embedded. The Tutsi culture dictates a continued struggle to rule the Hutu peasant, one they will not give up despite the pronouncements of the leadership. Similarly, the Hutu will never accept Tutsi rule. The intellectual desire to end the war is insufficient to overcome these emotions. An authoritative arbitrator, with power to enforce, is essential for any plan of reconciliation. Many of the leaders of both elements privately admit that they do not have the discipline to execute the peace accords themselves, and that they will exploit any weakness in the peace accords, or the authority of peacekeeping operation commander, to exact whatever retribution is still due the other side.

(S/NF/WN) UNAMIR composition cannot include certain nationalities without risking the viability of the force. The RPF will not accept French troops as peacekeepers under any circumstances. The FAR will not accept Ugandan peacekeepers. Both France and Uganda played key supporting roles in the war, and as a result lack neutrality. Neither force will accept Zairi troops, who fought against the RPF while looting the Rwandan countryside. Similarly, both sides feel that Tanzanian and Burundi units cannot be neutral because both armies have members of Tutsi and Hutu ethnicity.

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(S/NF/WN) The US has ~~EnO~~ 13526.1.4(c) capability in Rwanda, a serious shortcoming given the nature of the conflict. The US embassy in Kigali is too small and lacks qualified personnel to properly monitor and participate in the process. There is no resident military attache. A military TDY augmentation to the embassy staff, to support peacekeeping operational requirements for the duration of UNAMIR, will help fill the personnel void. E.O. 13526.1.4(c)

E.O. 13526.1.4(c) to round out country team efforts, and provide maximum effectiveness in liaison between UNAMIR, host country military units, and the US government.

IV. (U) OUTLOOK.

(G/NF) Rwanda is important to the stability of Central Africa, where internal security is precarious at best. Failure of the peace process in Rwanda, for any reason, would greatly increase the likelihood of increased regional ethnic violence. Tutsi-Hutu conflict could quickly spread to Zaire, Burundi, Tanzania, and Uganda. Other ethnic groups could and would retaliate, compounding social and political instability, generating international political crises in Burundi and Uganda, ethnic slaughter in Zaire, and continued civil war in Rwanda. None of these developments will serve any US interest or goal, and probably require evacuation of US and allied citizens from all these areas. In the end far more scarce United Nations peacekeeping efforts and resources would have to go into the region.

(G) The UNAMIR plan has an excellent probability of success. Competent execution of the plan will greatly enhance Rwandan stability over the next 3-4 years. This will further enhance political and social stability in the region, and facilitate international efforts to restore stability and effective government in Uganda and Zaire, and nurture the fledgling democracy in Burundi.

PREPARED BY:

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E.O. 13526, 1.4(c)