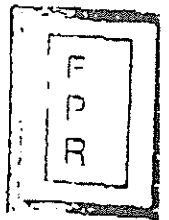


FRONT PATRIOTIQUE RWANDAIS

RWANDESE PATRIOTIC FRONT



H.E. Salim Bin Mohammed Al-Khussaiby
President,
United Nations Security Council,
New York

7
20 June 1994

Your Excellency,

RE: FRENCH MILITARY INTERVENTION IN RWANDA

The Rwandese Patriotic Front (RPF) is dismayed by the decision of France to intervene unilaterally in Rwanda. The purpose of the proposed military is allegedly to stop the massacres.

Your Excellency, many countries across the world have responded favourably to the request of the U.N. Secretary General for men and materials for a successful implementation of resolutions 918 and 925. To date, more than 7,000 soldiers have been offered, mostly by African countries. It is reported that some countries like Ethiopia and Zimbabwe have their own equipment. Others such as Ghana have agreed to provide troops so long as the necessary equipment is available. Some of the equipment, like the Armoured Personnel Carriers the United States of America promised to supply, is already in the region. With troop offers far exceeding what we consider adequate, namely a 2500-man mission, the U.N. mission in Rwanda should have taken off by now.

The prospect of a permanent member of the Security Council supporting and then ignoring Security Council resolutions to launch a unilateral operation in a country in which that permanent member has had a partisan and controversial involvement raises very strong questions about the motives of the mission. It does also raise the question as to what value members of the Council attach to its decisions. The direct responsibility which French governments, present and past, bear for the tragic situation in Rwanda is a matter which should be treated with the seriousness it deserves:

- i) France is a long-term supporter of the governments which organized and supervised the acts of genocide in Rwanda.
- ii) France has been and remains the principal arms supplier to the criminal regime (see the 1994 Arms Project Report of Human Rights Watch).
- iii) France trained the Presidential guards, as well as much of the regular army and the militia who are at the forefront of the ongoing atrocities.
- iv) French troops fought side by side with the discredited Rwandese government forces for three years to prop up the dictatorial regime of the late President

Habyarimana. Reputable human rights organisations such as Amnesty International and Africa Watch have documented how the Rwandese government forces killed thousands of innocent civilians during the three-year period (October 1990 to December 1993) when the French were still openly fighting on the government side. The French troops never intervened to stop those massacres, and the French government never condemned them.

- v) We have good reason to believe that there are even now French troops who are caught up in the besieged government army camps in Kigali. The proposed French operation, therefore, could indeed partly be a rescue mission, among other things. This may explain why President Mitterand finds the intervention so urgent that he had to declare that his operation cannot wait for Security Council authorization.
- vi) France is one of the few countries which have recognized the rump government, hosted some of its officials who are very notorious for their role in inciting atrocities through the media, and has granted asylum to the masterminds of the genocide in Rwanda who are commonly known as "Escadron de la Mort".
- vii) French political and diplomatic support for the regime of the late President Habyarimana encouraged intransigence on the part of the regime during the Arusha peace talks and stalled the process of implementing the Arusha Agreement.
- viii) It has recently been reported and repeated by very credible newspapers in Belgium that President Habyarimana's plane was shot down by French Military officers acting on behalf of extremists who wanted to derail the peace process.

In view of this very detrimental role of France in Rwanda in the recent past, her apparent good faith should not be taken for granted when the issue of the proposed French intervention is up for discussion. The intervention is, in our view, intended to assist the authors of the genocide in Rwanda to prosecute the war, to protect them from being brought to justice for their war crimes, and to preserve a role for them in the future politics of the country.

The RPF condemns the proposed French intervention unreservedly. We have, for the duration of the war in Rwanda, considered France a party to the conflict in every respect. We equally consider the return of France to Rwanda a hostile act of war against the Rwandan people, and the RPF will fight the proposed intervention by any means at its disposal for as long as is necessary.

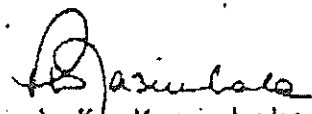
In the absence of a comprehensive ceasefire agreement between the parties, the RPF intends to proceed with its operations to rescue the Rwandese at risk, to restore law and order in the country, and to bring the criminals to justice regardless of the presence of the French troops in Rwanda.

We are of the firm opinion that the solution to the crisis in Rwanda must be found in the context of resolution 918 and 925/1994 of the U.N. Security Council, and we reaffirm our strong support for the U.N. humanitarian mission mandated by those resolutions. We request members of the Security Council to prevail upon France to illustrate its good faith in this matter by putting the resources which it plans to use in its unilateral mission at the disposal of the U.N. force.

Your Excellency, the RPF wishes to draw your attention and that of the Council to the very grave consequences which the intervention of France will give rise to. French intervention will have a destabilizing effect in the region. In Rwanda itself, it will bring to an end the ongoing ceasefire negotiations and it will lead to an escalation of the conflict as Rwandese government forces see the prospect of military backing by France. The RPF itself will be compelled to re-evaluate its commitment to the U.N. mission proposed by the Security Council.

Finally, the return of French troops to Rwanda may have severe repercussions on the continued relevance of the Arusha Peace Agreement as the basis for the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Rwanda.

The Rwandese Patriotic Front urges Your Excellency and, through you, all Security Council members, to recall and uphold resolutions 918 and 925 which authorized the Secretary General to expand UNAMIR and give it a humanitarian mission, including the protection of people threatened by genocide. These resolutions have received wide support both within the international community and in Rwanda. The Security Council must not allow France to usurp the role of the U.N. while furthering its own interests in Rwanda. It is indeed unfortunate, but nevertheless incumbent upon the Rwandese Patriotic Front, to point out that if the United Nations and all interested parties had heeded our warnings, Rwanda would have been saved the worst tragedy in its history. The task at hand is for all of us to avert any further catastrophe in Rwanda, which an intervention by France at this stage would inevitably bring about.



Patrick K. Mazimhaka

Vice-Chairman
RWANDESE PATRIOTIC FRONT

cc. The Secretary General
Member Security Council (all).