

*The General
President's Chief of Staff*

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to the attention of
The President of the Republic

S U B J E C T : Interview with President Habyarimana of Rwanda –
Monday, October 11th, 1993, at 6:30 PM
Defense issues.

The signing of the Arusha Accords, on August 4th, 1993, contributed to a reduction of tensions between the Rwandan army and the units of the RPF (Rwandan Patriotic Front) near the buffer zone. Incidents are rare, even though the RPF is continuing intensive training of some of its units, and discussions are continuing about the assignment of command posts.

The peace, however, remains fragile, and there are still numerous opponents of the Arusha Accords, in the ranks of the Rwandan army as well as those of the RPF.

The United Nations Security Council vote on Resolution 872 permits, however, the hope of the deployment, before the end of December, of the first part of the international force (UNAMIR).

With a final count of 2,500 men, this force's mission will be to supervise the implementation of the accords and to contribute to the security of the country. Its initial mandate is for 6 months, renewable until October 1995.

President Habyarimana considers, however, the maintenance of a French presence to be indispensable.

Currently, the NOROIT system (300 men), deployed in KIGALI and around the airport, guarantees the safety of our nationals. Its departure is planned, in accordance with the Arusha Accords, for as soon as the first detachment (1 battalion) from the United Nations arrives in Kigali at the end of 1993.

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President Habyarimana would like France to participate in the United Nations force (UNAMIR) by deploying a contingent. This participation does not seem feasible, because of the formal opposition of the RPF and the real risk of confrontation that would result from cohabitation of our forces with units that still consider us “enemies.” On the other hand, the Belgian authorities, who have historically supported ethnic Tutsis, have made declarations suggesting their participation in the international force.

Our military cooperation should, however, be maintained at the same level as before the events of 1990; that is to say, some twenty military assistants whose focus will center on the formation of the gendarmerie. But its renewal depends on the agreement of the future broad-based transitional government which will come into being after the United Nations’ deployment to Kigali. Until that date, the current arrangement, that is, 54 military assistants distributed between Kigali and Mukamira (President Habyarimana’s city of birth) will be maintained.

The President’s international tour and his work with the opposition parties associated with the government have reinforced his position. He remains the indispensable partner of neighboring countries and donors. The RPF is aware of this and is developing sharp published criticisms against him.

General QUESNOT