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OUTGOING CODE CABLE

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TO: ANNAN/GOULDING , UNATIONS, NEW YORK

INFO: KITTANI/GHAREKHAN, UNATIONS, NEW YORK

FROM: SHAHARYAR M. KHAN, UNAMIR, KIGALI

Shaharyar Khan

DATE: 22 February 1996

NO.: MIR 4110

NO. OF PAGES: 2

SUBJECT: Meeting with President Bizimungu on 21 February 1996

1. I called on President Bizimungu on 21 February for a one hour meeting which I had requested to brief him on the outcome of my discussion in New York relating to United Nation's possible role after March 8.

2. I briefed President Bizimungu on the various Options, focusing in detail on B(i) - the civilian successor presence for UNAMIR and B(ii) the enlarged technical support option. I made it clear that while B(i) would present no problems of acceptance, B(ii) was not a proposal but the reflection of some ideas of some member states based on Rwanda's own expectations of United Nations. I added that B(ii) aimed to bridge the ideal with the practical but could not be guaranteed success even if Rwanda accepted it in principle. I referred to President Nyerere's discussion with the Secretary-General and the subsequent denial by the Rwandan Permanent Representative of any brief to convey Rwanda's acceptance of UNAMIR's continued presence. [The Rwanda Permanent Representative had later informed me that while Rwanda would not itself initiate the proposal, it would favourably consider such a proposal if made by a third party]. I also briefed President Bizimungu on the equipment issue.

2. I summarise below President Bizimungu's response:

a) A reply would be given after consulting the Government.

b) He confirmed the conversation with former President Nyerere rationalising the apparent Rwandese turnabout on UNAMIR by stating that Rwanda was against a United Nation's military presence signifying a continuing crisis in the country but would favourably consider a smaller presence that was helpful to Rwanda.

c) The President enquired about the number of technicians (engineers etc) that formed part of UNAMIR's current component. This loaded question gave me the opening to make it clear to the President that if it is decided to retain the present UNAMIR military component to perform infrastructure - restoration tasks, possibly with a changed name or mandate, no reduction of its strength could be contemplated.

3. My impression remains that although Rwandan leadership may have conveyed to Nyerere the message that the Government would agree to a UNAMIR military continuation, the RPA would raise insurmountable conditionalities of detail. The picture would emerge more clearly on Vice-President Kagame's return from Ghana next Tuesday 27 February.

Best wishes.



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TO: KITTANI/GOULDING/HANSEN, UNATIONS, NEW YORK

INFO: GHAREKHAN, UNATIONS, NEW YORK

FROM: SHAHARYAR M. KHAN, UNAMIR, KIGALI

Shaharyar Khan

DATE: 9 NOVEMBER 1995

NO.: MIR -2837

NO. OF PAGES: 2

SUBJECT: IWEWA ISLAND ATTACK

1. Please refer to your code cable no. 3495 on the above subject. A military assessment of the incident is being sent separately by FC. This code cable covers the political and information aspects of the RPA attack on Iwawa Island.

2. The bare facts of the incident are that at first light on Sunday 5th November, RPA launched an amphibious operation on Iwawa isle on Lake Kivu, fifteen kilometres West of Rwandan mainland and just inside Rwandan territory. The island was defended by a force of approximately 500 soldiers of ex-FAR who had dug in and were clearly preparing for guerilla operations on the Rwandese mainland. RPA crossed the lake at night in 3 high speed patrol boats (that RPA have recently acquired) and two large fishing vessels rowed in by RPA soldiers.

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3. The RPA attack lasted until Tuesday 7th and was completely successful. 171 ex-FAR were killed, about 50-100 drowned trying to escape. 35 prisoners^{es} were taken. RPA lost 5 killed, and seventeen wounded. FAR resistance was spineless, disorganized and sporadic. The island was cleared of opposition forces in 48 hours.

4. The RPA Operation was conducted professionally and in high secrecy due to the element of surprise. Cabinet members were not aware of the attack until victory had been gleefully announced to the media and press. Our own ability to monitor these developments was constrained by the fact that the only area in which the Rwandese army is ahead of UNAMIR is in its marine capability. It may be recalled that I had recommended that UNAMIR be equipped with fast patrol boats to monitor developments on Lake Kivu. We had suggested examining the possibility of buying Ethiopian naval craft. However the proposal was turned down and with their recently acquired high speed craft, the Rwandese are now capable of amphibious operations. Incidentally the high speed boats are of American manufacture but the US Ambassador informed^{me} that the US Government had not been involved in their acquisition by Rwanda.

5. While receiving the International Commission of Inquiry on Arms Flow on 9th November, Vice-President Kagame was clearly delighted with the success of the operation. He made the following points: a) that RPA was capable of containing and defeating attempts by the FAR to destabilise; b) that the RPA would not hesitate to clear out other pockets of infiltrators (ie on Zairean territory) and that FAR efforts to mount a destabilizing campaign did not cause undue concern to the Rwandese Government.

6. Kagame's confidence after the successful operation is understandable as RPA's morale has been boosted in inverse proportion to that of FAR. Kagame's threat of reaching out into Zairean territory to neutralise other centres of guerrilla warfare has been made before and could be translated into "hot-pursuit" type action if infiltration attempts continue. However, I feel Kagame was pitching his threat carefully to the Commission from whom he expects results in containing military infiltration from across the border.