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14 December 1994

To : Dr. A.H. Kabia
Executive Director

From : Zena Zelleke
Political Information Officer
Sector V

Sub : Situation report

Attached please find situation report covering the period 5 December to 14 December 1994.

Best regards.

cc : Political Adviser

The items stated in
blue are most interesting.
JL

EJ
Acting FC
Sammy Bond

14 December 1994

SITUATION REPORT
5 December to 14 December 1994

1. GENERAL

Both the prefect of Gisenyi and Ruhengeri continue to hold mass rallies in their respective prefectures. The main theme of their speech is a call for peace and reconciliation. Following rallies were held during the reporting period :

Gisenyi :RWERERE commune about 2000 attending on 8.12.94

KANAMA commune about 3000 attending on 11.12.94.

RUHENGARI : RUHUNDO commune about 3000 attending on 6.12.94.
The bourgmaster of this commune was releived of his duties because of corruption and acts contrary to government objectives.

2. SECURITY

The security situation in Sector V remains calm on the surface but occurences of robbery with murder and infiltration from across the border are reported.

a) Ten armed people entered the sector of KAREBA, in NKULI commune on 9 December, guided by a local person, and opened fire ona familiy dwelling killing 4 persons and wounding 3, of which one was an RPA soldier. The family killed belonged to the 59/60 caseload and were resettled in the area only a month ago. RPA is investigating the case and so far have arrested one person suspected of collaborating with the infiltrators.

The same day MSF (Hol) was ransacked and medical supplies stolen, as a result the dispensary is closed.

b) In MUTURA commune one person was killed by unknown armed men and robbed of a substantial amount of money. RPA is investigating but MILOBS were prevented from entering the area. REPA soldiers are also accused of harassing the local population, e.g. in MUTOVU, by confiscating cattle. Villagers appealed to TUNBATT HQ in MARERU and requested protection.

Concerning the finding of mass graves reported in SITREP of 10/12 by TUNBATT, please find attached detailed report of findings of HFRO team.

3. REFUGEE MOVEMENTS

The refugee movement for the period covered totalled 7 658. It is noted that the number of refugees using the CYANIKA border has increased considerably, e.g. on 12.12.94 a record level of 1 244 returnees were recorded also the same can be said of those using the foot tracks over the mountains as in KINIGI where about 300 were registered over two days.

UNHCR started on 12.12.94 to resettle about 400 returnees of the 59/60 caseload in MUTURA commune on land provided by the government. In addition another 400 were transported to KIBUNGO area for resettlement.

PIO visited the resettlement area in MUTURA. The area is not cultivated as compared to other regions in the area. UNHCR is providing plastic sheetings as shelter. According to the representative of the Ministry of Rehabilitation, the returnees will be allotted 2 hectares of land. The immediate needs of the people are food and agricultural implements.

4. INTER-AGENCY CO-ORDINATING MEETINGS

The second general meeting between the Prefecture of Ruhengeri and UN/NGOs took place on 7 December 1994. The meeting started on a cordial note but discussion on substantive issues, e.g. food supplies, displaced children etc., demonstrated a continued source of conflict and finger-pointing between the various NGOs and local authorities in the prefecture.

The meeting in Gisenyi on 14.12.94 called upon NGOs to focus their activities more towards resettlement and rehabilitation of the returnees, women and displaced children, effects of war on the environment. The representative from the Ministry of Rehabilitation appealed to the NGOs and international community to assist the local authorities in identifying suitable land for resettlement and provide the necessary humanitarian assistance.

5. VISIT TO COMMUNES IN GISENYI PREFECTURE BY PIO

a) GICIYE

Population: 60,000 most of whom fled to Zaire during the the turmoil. Of these 37 000 have returned and resumed normal activities. There are at present about 3 000 returnees of the 59/60 caseload who are occupying land belonging to others who have not returned.

Education : 21 primary schools are operating although attendance is below standard. Secondary school not operating. Teacher's July salary only paid in September. School material insufficient.

Administration: Civil administration re-established composed of 34 civil; servants. As usual office material and equipment lacking. Salary not paid since September 1994.

Security :The area was a government stronghold. RPA has removed most of its forces in order to avert confrontation; the few forces that are present continue to assess and review the general security situation.

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b) GASEKE

This area was not affected by the war, although most people fled to Zaire because of uncertainty of the outcome of the change. Most have returned and have resumed normal activities.

Education : Fourteen primary schools with 6 000 pupils and 163 teachers. Attendance reasonably good.

Security : Very calm. No presence of RPA in the region.

Administration : Civil administration re-established. Qualification and experience of civil servants could be improved.

c) SATINSKI

Population : of the 68 000 that fled the country, about 80% have returned and resumed normal activities.

Education : 21 primary schools with 9 800 pupils are presently operating. Five secondary schools exist but not yet functioning. 10 % of the teachers are qualified.

Security : A number of people have been identified as participants of the April massacre and cases brought against them. These persons are now in prison at Ngororero or Gitamara. In general the relationship between the local community and RPA is good and their presence is highly appreciated.

Administration: Civil administration in place, composed of previous employees and new recruits. Ability and experience considered adequate.

To: William Clarence, Jim Scally
cc. MilObs Sector 5

From: Oskar Lehner (HRFO team sector 5)

Subject: Mass graves in Rushashi comm. (GR 8509)

Date: 09/12/1994

On 10/12/94 Human Rights team (Oskar Lehner), MilObs (Maj. Alam) and a patrol of TUNBAT carried out a patrol to RUSHASHI comm. (GR 8509), sector 5b to visit mass graves in that area.

1) Background: On 01/12/94 a joint patrol of HRFO and MilObs had liaised with the bourgmestre (BM) of RUSHASHI, Mr. MUNJANDAMUTSA Vincent, to get general information about the situation in that commune. HRFO asked for a list of the location of all mass graves (genocide) in that commune. BM promised to prepare that list by 10 Jan 95.

2) In its SITREP of 06/12/94 TUNBAT mentioned that it had received a list with locations of mass graves in RUSHASHI comm. Chief of UNHCHR mission got the information about these mass graves via Geneva or BBC. Chief of mission ordered HRFO on 09/12/94 evening to immediately start with investigation.

3) HRFO and MilObs liaised with TUNBAT HQ and got the following information. According to a list of the BM of RUSHASHI there are mass graves at the following locations:

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|-------------|-------------|-------|
| 1. BUHETA | (GR 7915): | one |
| 2. GINHINGA | (GR 7908): | eight |
| 3. GATARE | (GR 9010): | two |
| 4. RUKURA | (GR 8114): | five |
| 5. SHYOMBWE | (GR 8011): | two |
| 6. RUSHASHI | (GR 8509): | five |
| 7. JOMA | (GR 8410): | two |
| 8. KIRUKU | (GR 8207): | two |
| 9. RWANKUBA | (GR 8506.): | one |

4) Team liaised with the BM of RUSHASHA and learned that the list, which had been handed over to TUNBAT some days ago, was a list which was prepared for the ministry of rehabilitation and social integration. It was the same list which had been requested by HRFO.

Remark: This ministry has given the order to all BM, to produce a paper where all mass graves of April and Mai are listed up. Since the beginning of deployment HRFO (Roberto) is scanning the whole sector 5 according to these lists and visits the mass graves.

5) Together with the BM team visited several mass graves near RUSHASHI on 10 Dez 94. One grave was found 80 meters south of the RUSHASHI market place (approximately 250 bodies), several behind the bureau communal, one on the other side of the road. All bodies were buried either in deep holes (wells, latrines) or were covered with a thick layer of earth. Team therefore could not inspect the dead bodies.

6) About 200 meters north of the village team visited a mass grave that - according to a local guide - contained 17 bodies. Team dugged in the earth using a shovel of ICRC. After 1/2 meter team found the first human bones. The bones seemed to have been in the earth already for a very long time. There was no meat on the bones. BM stated that this mass grave was not mentioned on his list because it contained only a relatively small number of bodies.

7) The local population which observed our investigations confirmed that the people around RUSHASHI were killed in April and May during the period of genocide.

8) Finally team went to RWANKUBA cell. There the BM showed us a mass grave located in a forest near a foot ball field, some 300 meters east of the church. Team was led by Mr. KARAGIZI Silvere. Together with about 50 other villagers this man had buried the 30 victims last April.

9) Team interviewed a Spanish priest called BERENGER Amat. He is in charge of the church of that cellule and was an eye-witness of the massacre. According to his statement about 30 Tutsis were hiding in his church when the genocide began. On 10 April 94 members of Interahamwe, armed with machetes and knives came to his church. They stormed the building and killed all Tutsis in front of his eyes.

Remarks:

It seems that the list of mass graves, which TUNBAT had received, was meant for the HR-team. The TUNBAT patrol informed their HQ and the list was mentioned in the TNBAT SITREP. Somehow the information was passed to the press - or more likely - a journalist was monitoring the radio. This journalist informed London and the message was broadcasted by BBC. Via BBC the information came to the chief of mission and finally back to HRFO Gisenyi, where it originally should go to. Another example how small our world has become.