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TO: Ambassador Shaharyar M. Khan
SRSG

DATE: 14 June 1995

FROM: Ismaël A. Diallo, Spokesman *A. Diallo*
Shaka M. Ssali, Deputy Chief, Radio UNAMIR

SUBJECT: Ongoing Efforts to Improve Relations Between the Rwandan Government and UNAMIR

Personal Contacts with Senior Rwandan Government Officials and other Key Political Actors

An important public relations initiative whose objective is to improve the relationship between Rwandan Government authorities and UNAMIR, continues. The methodology remains deliberately informal. Contacts have been made with three key Rwandan political influential players: The Rwandese Patriotic Front Secretary-General, Major Theogen Rudasingwa MD, the Rwandese Patriotic Army Military Spokesman, Colonel Frank Mugambage and the Director of the Rwandan Internal Security, Lt. Col. Karenzi Karake.

The Meeting with the RPF Secretary-General

Major Theogen Rudasingwa MD, is the powerful Secretary-General of the ruling Rwandese Patriotic Front movement. Dr. Rudasingwa is known to be a very close confidant of Rwandan Vice-President and Defense Minister, Major-General Paul Kagame. The "Secretary-General" as he is intimately known in the RPF circles, is the man who chairs the Committee which identifies and allocates individuals to prominent and strategic positions in the State. It should be noted that the RPF Chief is the younger brother of the Directeur de Cabinet Ministry of Public Services, Gerard Gahima, another influential player.

Dr. Rudasingwa, Ismaël Diallo and Shaka Ssali, spent about two hours discussing about the role of UNAMIR and the general social and political dynamics in Rwanda. The meeting was held on Sunday June 11, 1995, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:10 p.m, at his Office in Kabuga's building, Muhima, downtown, Kigali.

The Secretary-General welcomed us and thanked us for seizing the initiative which might help to bring UNAMIR, the Rwandan Government and Community closer. It might be interesting to note that as a sign of the importance the "Secretary-General" attached to the meeting, he was behind his desk at the scheduled time.

Dr. Rudasingwa stated repeatedly that in his view there has been no relationship between UNAMIR and the people of Rwanda. He said that as far as he was concerned, our initiative was part of a first serious attempt to establish some form of interaction between the two parties. Like his colleagues, he told us that he had never met any member of UNAMIR to discuss such important issues.

The Secretary-General stressed that with the new revised UNAMIR mandate, there is urgent need for his Government and the UN to identify areas of mutual cooperation. Just like many of his colleagues, he also strongly endorsed the need for setting up a coordinating team between the Government and UNAMIR. But he stressed that such a team should function informally on a daily basis. He said that he was more than willing to participate in such an endeavor. Perhaps as an illustration of the urgency and significance of the need for the team, he suggested that we meet again on Thursday June 15, 1995, at 8:00 p.m. at his residence in Kigali. He said that on that evening we should expect to meet with RPA Chief of Training, Colonel Muhire, Directeur de Cabinet, Ministry of Rehabilitation, Ms. Christine Umutoni and two others who are yet to be identified from the President and the Vice-President's Office. We agreed that when we meet on Thursday, we should come up with a list of concrete ideas and a specific time line within which the team can deliver on the same. Finally, he reiterated the point that he was optimistic that with such a team the apparent communication gap between UNAMIR, the international community and the Rwandan Government and people could be bridged. He repeatedly said that the Rwandan people want to see tangible results - something they can touch and feel.

Meeting with the RPA Military Spokesman

Colonel Frank Mugambage is the Rwandese Patriotic Army official spokesman, member of the powerful military high command and a member of the Rwandan House of Deputies. He is a first cousin of another powerful member of the ruling elite, Health Minister, Colonel Joseph Karemera. Both are closely related to Claude Dusaidi, a political advisor to the Rwandan Vice-President and Defense Minister, General Paul Kagame and the RPA Chief of Staff Colonel Sam Kaka.

The meeting was held on Tuesday June 6, 1995 from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Mimosa a Posh restaurant in Kimuhurura, near the capital Kigali.

We initially met Colonel Mugambage at 1:15 p.m. at his residence in the elite neighborhood of Kiyovu, Kigali. After a brief introductory chat, Mr. Wilfred De Souza, Mr. Ismaël Diallo, Colonel Mugambage and Mr. Shaka M. Ssali left for a working lunch at the Mimosa restaurant.

For the next two and a half hours the four of us discussed various issues regarding the role and future of UNAMIR in the country.

During our discussions with the Colonel, we were immediately impressed with his style of frankness. He was extremely articulate and very firm in his presentation. Colonel Mugambage came across as a very practical man. But it was also obvious that the Colonel had a somewhat superficial view of the status of UNAMIR staff, their contribution to Rwanda or lack of it. For example, he stated that Rwanda cannot afford to have more than 600 UNAMIR diplomats. It's obvious from the preceding statement that Colonel Mugambage has the incorrect impression that all UNAMIR personnel have diplomatic status. He also said that in his view and that of his colleagues, UNAMIR is perceived (and acts in some cases) as a parallel Government. He stressed that UNAMIR should get out of the business of security and leave that to the RPA. "What is needed," he said, "is for the UN to help us with reconstruction and the rehabilitation of the economy". He further said that UNAMIR can justify its presence in Rwanda by helping the Kigali regime to provide what he characterized as socio-economic security. Asked for his views on the issue of establishing a coordinating team made up of UNAMIR and his Government, the Colonel did not sound enthusiastic. He said that formation of structures is not the best way to resolve problems. In fact, to drive his point home, he repeatedly mentioned the existence of an RPA Liaison Officer in residence here at Amahoro Hotel UNAMIR Headquarters. He said that in addition to that there is a group on the Government side headed by the RPA Chief of training and operations Colonel Charles Muhire, who interacts constantly with the SRSG, UNAMIR Force Commander and the Deputy Force Commander and yet so far nothing tangible has materialized. Unless we might have misunderstood Colonel Mugambage with reference to the above group headed by his colleague Chief of training and operations, our research thus far suggests that no such a team exists. And as for his criticism of structures being unable to deliver results, we think that he might be correct. But we have reason to believe that he may have misunderstood our idea of an informal coordinating team. We strongly believe that informal behind the scenes diplomacy may be the ideal medicine that the PR doctor ordered for. A Rwandan official recently observed that he thinks that what our team is trying to do is the best thing that has happened in the Central African Nation since the RPF seized power in Kigali.

Finally, Colonel Mugambage concluded by saying that his Government's communication channels remain open. He also said that he and his colleagues are ready and willing to debate how best the UN community and the Kigali regime can work together for the good of the people of Rwanda.

The Meeting with the Rwandan Director of the Internal Security Organization

Lt. Colonel Karenzi Karake or "KK" as he is popularly known among his close colleagues, is his Nation's Chief for the internal security apparatus. KK is also known to be one of the few players who are very close to the pinnacle of power. Clearly then, his office places him squarely in a strategic position to help shape and influence public opinion in this country. His close relationship with the VP, General Paul Kagame also makes him a significant player among the "hardline" member of the RPA military high command.

The Meeting was held on Monday June 5, 1995 from 1:15 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., at a restaurant at the Gregory Kayibanda, Kanombe International Airport, near Kigali. Suffice it to say that as a sign of the importance the Colonel attached to the meeting, he arrived at UNAMIR Headquarters to direct us to the meeting place on time.

At the restaurant, we were joined by two important colleagues of Colonel Karenzi: the Chief of Press and Audio Visual Service (ORINFOR) and elder brother of the Colonel, P.C Mweusi Karake and David Kabuye, Radio Rwanda Administrator and the husband of the Prefet of Kigali, Major Rose Kabuye, another important political player in her own right.

For two hours and forty-five minutes, Colonel Karenzi, Lt. Mweusi, Lt. Kabuye, Mr. De Souza, Mr. Diallo and Mr. Ssali discussed many issues matter of factly and at the same time exchanged social amenities. Perhaps as a sign of the importance that Colonel Karenzi attached to the meeting, he paid for our lunch.

The Colonel said that mistakes had been made by both sides - the Government and UNAMIR. But he added that in his view, the problem was more of perception than reality. He repeatedly stated that there is urgent need for both parties to identify areas of mutual cooperation.

The internal security boss informed us that he and his colleagues were ready and willing to support our initiative of trying to bridge the apparent communication gap between UNAMIR and the Kigali regime. He said that given that in the past the two parties had had an excellent working relationship, he is optimistic that such a goal could be attained. He specifically cited their working relationship with former UNAMIR Force Commander, Canadian Major-General Romeo Dallaire and the former Executive Director, Dr. Abdul Hamid Kabia. He also said that he and his colleagues in the Government have great respect for the SRSG, Ambassador Shaharyar Khan and the outgoing Deputy Force Commander Ghanian Brigadiere General Henry Anyidoho. But he emphasized that what is really needed is for UNAMIR to deliver tangible results and to interact more across the board.

Colonel Karenzi further said that although there is an RPA Liaison Officer stationed at UNAMIR Headquarters, his role is generally that of a technical and logistical nature - especially with the military component. But he said that he strongly supports the need for setting up a coordinating team between UNAMIR and his Government.

He stressed that such a team could help the two parties to come closer and together work for the benefit of the Rwandan people. He suggested that in order for such a team to succeed, it would have to work together very closely and perhaps on a daily basis. He said that it would have to monitor and report on accomplishments as they occur. He concluded by saying that it would have to be pragmatic, assertive but above all, result oriented, in order to win the confidence of the average Rwandan citizen.

Finally, he also suggested that we need to meet more influential people in the Government, military, business and the society at large in order to sell our initiative. We also agreed to meet again in the near future to continue with the dialog. *ue*

NB:

- **Contacts with Rwandan Social Cultural and Political Leaders continue.**