

[ 1 CONFIDENTIAL ]

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BOX 23

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**NOTE TO THE SRSG**

1. As you are aware, part of UNAMIR's mandate, as outlined in Security Council resolution 872 of 5 October 1993, is "to assist in the coordination of humanitarian assistance activities in conjunction with relief operations". Furthermore, by its resolution 873 adopted on 6 January 1994 following the Council's review of the first 90 days of UNAMIR's activities, the Council, *inter alia*, commended "the efforts of Member States, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations which have provided humanitarian and other assistance" and urged "others to provide such assistance". By the same resolution, the Council commended "in particular the efforts of the Organization of African Unity, its member states and agencies in providing diplomatic, political, humanitarian and other support for the implementation of resolution 872 (1993)".

2. As the humanitarian situation remains worrisome and in some instances may even have deteriorated dramatically, especially against the background of an overall worsening of socio-economic conditions and the continuing political stalemate in Rwanda as well as the seemingly unending ethnic violence in neighbouring Burundi, this aspect of UNAMIR's mandate assumes even greater significance and urgency. Moreover, as it is well-known, humanitarian-related concerns, especially the question of the possible repatriation and return of Rwandese refugees figured among the causes or triggers of the Rwandese war. As more and more Rwandese refugees leave the neighbouring countries to return to Rwanda, especially during this volatile transitional period, it becomes increasingly evident that the issue of refugees remains a potentially conflictual item in addition to being a source of major humanitarian concern. It therefore seems to me that the high level of attention you have devoted to humanitarian questions as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Rwanda and head of UNAMIR is not only justified and appropriate, bearing in mind UNAMIR's mandate, but also realistic, as the failure to address this aspect, especially if a major humanitarian crisis emerges here, could undermine or overshadow whatever progress may be made in the other areas of our mission.

3. Since I was assigned the humanitarian dossier as part of my areas of responsibility at UNAMIR, pending the arrival of your Humanitarian Affairs Adviser/Officer, I have had the opportunity to reflect on and to suggest for your consideration a possible programme of action by which UNAMIR can discharge in specific ways its mandate to assist in coordinating humanitarian assistance activities in Rwanda. The proposed plan is intended, above all, to be temporary, pending the arrival of your Humanitarian Affairs Adviser/Officer, and its various elements are indicative, not exhaustive. The programme's guiding principle is the need for intensified and coordinated United Nations activity to address the serious humanitarian concerns in this country in a way that helps those in need and also contributes to improving or, at least, does not further complicate the already difficult political and security situation.

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4. Despite the current political impasse, or because of it, the humanitarian domain constitutes an area where concrete progress is not only feasible but attainable. This can be done through enhanced cooperation between UNAMIR and UNDP, which is responsible for coordinating humanitarian relief activities in Rwanda, to ensure more effective and rational utilization of the resources of the various humanitarian agencies operating in this country. In fact, as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the most senior United Nations official in Rwanda, you can provide important and credible leadership in raising domestic and international public awareness of and interest in alleviating the humanitarian problems in the country.

5. I would suggest that the first element of a UNAMIR programme of action in the humanitarian field should be to put in place an integrated team composed of international and local staff with experience in relief work, civilian as well as military, to follow relevant developments and coordinate UNAMIR's role and activities in this area. I realize that our military contingent is already working extensively on humanitarian matters, including, in particular, providing escorts for delivery convoys and security protection for distribution centres and storage depots. However, I believe it is vital to set up a centralized, integrated policy unit, to plan and coordinate UNAMIR's role and activities and to advise you accordingly. Such a team, which could be set up on an ad hoc basis until the Humanitarian Affairs Adviser/Officer arrives, would liaise closely with UNDP and the various relief agencies, both intergovernmental and non-governmental, and would report to you through the Executive Director. The other elements of the programme would include the following:

- we should request the UNDP Resident Coordinator to convene a meeting of the heads of the various intergovernmental and non-governmental humanitarian agencies operating in Rwanda with you, to discuss UNAMIR's mandated role to assist in coordinating relief operations. At such a meeting, you could pledge UNAMIR's availability and readiness to work closely with the agencies in the humanitarian field and solicit their cooperation and collaboration to ensure the efficient and effective use of available resources to reach those in need.
- you may wish to continue to visit refugee camps and settlements for internally displaced persons. Such visits should be carefully planned, in cooperation with the agencies supporting or otherwise present in the areas to be visited. Government and RPF officials, as well as representatives of the local and international media should also be informed and encouraged to accompany you on such visits. You may, for instance, wish to schedule your next visit to an orphanage or to a facility for abandoned or handicapped children, if possible within Kigali. The emphasis on children, the most vulnerable group in society, is likely to appeal to all sectors of the population as well as to the media.
- you may wish to consider including humanitarian issues in your weekly and other press briefings, official statements or remarks to visiting dignitaries. In this connection, you may also wish to instruct UNAMIR's information department to include humanitarian issues in the weekly presentations over Rwandese Radio and Television.

- you may wish to associate UNAMIR closely with the preparations being coordinated by UNDP for the Round Table Conference for Humanitarian Assistance and Reconstruction which is expected to take place following the installation of the transitional institutions. Two important aspects, on which our military contingent has already done some useful work, would relate to developing proposed programmes of assistance for the demobilized and for demining.
- you may wish also to associate UNAMIR in the selection of settlement sites for returnees, especially in the DMZ area. UNAMIR should only participate if Government, RPF and UNHCR are also involved.

6. If you agree with the above, I would suggest for your consideration that the Executive Director be requested to put together for your approval, a small team of civilian staff members (perhaps 1 international professional, 1 international general service and 2 local staff members), which, together with the humanitarian unit within our military contingent, would constitute UNAMIR's humanitarian office. As mentioned earlier above, your Humanitarian Affairs Adviser/Officer would be free to review the situation upon his/her arrival and to suggest to you whatever proposed changes he/she may deem fit.

  
Sammy Kum Buo  
29 March 1994

cc.: Force Commander  
Executive Director  
Spokesman