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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

5700

July 21, 1995

ACTION

MEMORANDUM FOR ANTHONY LAKE
THROUGH: SUSAN E. RICE
FROM: SHAWN H. McCORMICK
SUBJECT: Lifting of the Arms Embargo on Rwanda



BACKGROUND

Rwanda has formally requested that the UNSC lift the arms embargo on Rwanda. Action will likely occur during the week of July 24.

Resolution 918 of May 17, 1994, barred the sale or supply of arms or other military material (including non-lethal equipment) to Rwanda. The embargo was aimed primarily at the former Rwandan government during the height of the genocide and civil war. Resolution 997 of June 9, 1995, affirms the arms embargo applies to the sale and transfer of arms to persons in neighboring states, if the arms are for use in Rwanda.

Nine votes with no Perm-5 vetoes are required to pass a UNSC resolution. We estimate Rwanda can count on NAM support (6 votes, including Rwanda), China (7) and possibly Russia and Argentina (9). USUN anticipates that France and UK will not veto, but likely abstain. However, we would not discount the possibility of a French veto. The Czech Republic, German and Italian positions are not known. Our vote may be pivotal.

OPTIONS

1) Support Lifting - The ex-FAR is actively rearming in neighboring states and possibly planning an August offensive. The GOR claims that it needs arms to exercise its right to self-defense (Article 51). The existing embargo clearly works in favor of the ex-FAR and militias. The GOR remains the main defense against renewed genocide.

Lifting the embargo will allow badly needed logistics, communications and transport equipment to enter the country. Lifting will also facilitate our IMET program and allow countries to train Rwandan troops in human rights and non-violent crowd control. DIA (Tab A) estimates ~~that~~ a lift will not result in a

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substantial amount of additional weapons entering the country, because the GOR already has them in supply.

If war resumes, some may label the UN and U.S. as complicitous. Several countries in the region are likely to oppose lifting the embargo. A vote to lift, however, may be exploited by those who argue for lifting the Bosnia embargo.

2) Oppose Lifting Arms Embargo - The GOR already violates the embargo and receives arms from Uganda and elsewhere. Lifting could enable the GOR to funnel surplus weapons to the Burundi army or associated Tutsi gangs. Reports of GOR-GOB military links are worrisome since the GOB military has been conducting genocide in northern Burundi. Lifting the embargo may also cause a diversion of funds from reconstruction and development programs. Finally, even if unenforceable, the embargo has significant symbolic value in communicating international concern about stopping weapons flows into the region.

3) Support Lifting for Non-Lethal Goods Only - Permit GOR to purchase trucks, communications gear, uniforms, etc. This had been the USG position because the UNSC would not endorse a full lift. While France and others may support this step, it does not address the full needs of the GOR, and would be interpreted as indicative of our lack of support for the GOR.

4) Support Lifting With Conditions - Lifting could be accompanied by conditions. These would include reaffirmation of the prohibition on arms transfers to persons in neighboring states (i.e. ex-FAR, Burundi military and militias) for use in Rwanda and the requirement that weapons be marked with the country of destination and registered in some fashion. Finally, UNAMIR should be mandated to monitor the Burundi border and, if feasible, increased in size to accomplish this additional task.

This move could increase our leverage to press the GOR to announce its intention to prosecute only those 400-plus people accused of war crimes - NOT the myriad of other suspects. This announcement should be coupled with a general amnesty for others to help allay Hutu refugees' fear of persecution. For its part, the international community must demonstrate its commitment to arrest and prosecute the key 400-plus war criminals.

AGENCY POSITIONS

All agencies (at the deputies level or above) support Option 4. They agree the resolution must include language prohibiting Rwanda from transferring arms to other countries as well as the other conditions described above.

The GOR will likely support UN conditions that ban transfer/sale of weapons to other countries and that mandate end-user certificates or markings. Kagame, however, is unlikely to accept any increase in UNAMIR to monitor the Burundi border.

Ambassador Krueger is likely to oppose Option 4, because of the potential effects of any lift on Burundi. If we decide to support lift, we must take care to put our spin on the decision rather than allow potential detractors to do so. We could accomplish some of this press backgrounders. We would also work with Legislative Affairs to apprise the Hill of our plans.

Concurrence by: ^{no copy provided} Alan Kreczko, Richard  Clarke

RECOMMENDATION

That you approve option 4. (If you approve, we will clear expected crosshatch).

Approve  Disapprove _____

Attachment

Tab A DIA analysis

