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DTG

261705Z AUG 91

FROM

FM SSO DIA (b)(3):10 USC 424

TO

(b)(3):50 USC 3024(i)

CONTROLS

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SECTION 01 OF 04

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/***** THIS IS A COMBINED MESSAGE *****/

BODY

SUBJ: DIA COMMONWEALTH INTSUM--MIDDLE EAST/AFRICA 598-91/26 AUG 91

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(U) THE ITEMS CONTAINED IN THIS INTSUM HAVE BEEN AUTHORIZED BY

DIA (b)(3):10 USC 424

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BURUNDI-RWANDA: EASING TENSION. (U)

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BURUNDI-RWANDA: EASING TENSION. (U)

AS OF 2055Z 23 AUG 91

1. (⊖) OFFICIALS FROM BOTH COUNTRIES CONTINUE TO MEET IN HOPES OF DEFUSING RENEWED TENSION.
2. (⊖) THE TWO FOREIGN MINISTERS MET ON 6 AUGUST, SECURITY

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OFFICIALS MET ON THE 9TH, AND INTELLIGENCE COUNTERPARTS ARE TO MEET SOON. THE TALKS HAVE THUS FAR LACKED SUBSTANCE.

3. (S) SINCE LATE JULY, BURUNDI OFFICIALS HAVE CHARGED **RWANDA** WITH PERMITTING, IF NOT DIRECTING, A "CAMPAIGN OF DESTABILIZATION" AGAINST THE BURUNDI GOVERNMENT, CHARGES **RWANDA** DENIES. ACCORDING TO BUJUMBURA, **RWANDA'S** MAJORITY HUTU GOVERNMENT ALLOWS HUTU ACTIVISTS TO INCITE BURUNDI'S MAJORITY HUTU POPULATION AGAINST BURUNDI'S MINORITY TUTSI GOVERNMENT. THE ALLEGED CROSSING POINT USED BY THE HUTU ACTIVISTS IS IN THE SAME AREA WHERE INTERTRIBAL SLAUGHTER OCCURRED IN 1988. BURUNDI OFFICIALS ALSO CLAIM THAT INFLAMMATORY RWANDAN NEWSPAPER ARTICLES, RADIO BROADCASTS, AND POLITICAL TRACTS CONTINUE TO FLOW INTO THEIR COUNTRY, FALSELY ACCUSING THE TUTSI GOVERNMENT OF SUPPORTING **RWANDA'S** TUTSI REBELS.

4. (S) RWANDAN ACCUSATIONS STEM FROM THE BELIEF THAT A FEW BURUNDI TUTSIS HAVE JOINED THE RWANDAN INSURGENCY AND THAT SOME INSURGENTS HAVE BEEN ABLE TO OPERATE OUT OF BURUNDI. MONITORING SUCH MOVEMENTS IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT BECAUSE OF THE RUGGED TERRAIN ALONG THE BORDER. BUJUMBURA HAS DENIED ANY OFFICIAL SUPPORT FOR RWANDAN REBELS AND HAS STATED THAT IT HOPES TO AVOID INVOLVEMENT BY DENYING RWANDANS ENTRY VISAS. RWANDAN RUMORS OF A BURUNDI MILITARY BUILDUP ON THE BORDER APPEAR UNFOUNDED, BUT BURUNDI HAS CANCELED ALL MILITARY LEAVES FOR NOW. SINCE THE RWANDAN CONFLICT BEGAN IN OCTOBER 1990, BURUNDI HAS EXPRESSED SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT FOR THE BESIEGED RWANDAN GOVERNMENT AND IT PARTICIPATES IN THE REGIONAL CEASE-FIRE OBSERVER GROUP.

/***** BEGINNING OF SECTION 004 *****/

5. (S) COMMENT: BILATERAL RELATIONS ARE INHERENTLY TAINTED BY MUTUAL ETHNIC MISTRUST. EACH GOVERNMENT IS LIKELY WORRIED ABOUT DOMESTIC SUPPORT, EVEN WITHIN ITS OWN ETHNIC GROUP, AS EACH CAUTIOUSLY APPROACHES POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION. KIGALI WOULD PROBABLY PREFER A FELLOW HUTU GOVERNMENT NEXT DOOR IN ORDER TO LESSEN THE CHANCE OF TUTSI INSURGENTS' RECEIVING HAVEN, SUPPLIES, OR REINFORCEMENT THERE.

6. (S) ALTHOUGH BURUNDI REMAINS SKEPTICAL OF RWANDAN DENIALS, THE TWO GOVERNMENTS ARE AT LEAST TALKING, A LESSON PERHAPS LEARNED AFTER A SIMILAR PRESS INCIDENT IN EARLY SUMMER THAT LED TO SHARP DIPLOMATIC ATTACKS AND SEVERELY STRAINED RELATIONS. BOTH SIDES ARE WELL AWARE THAT THIS SPATE OF ACCUSATIONS TOO CLOSELY RESEMBLES THE ANTECEDENTS TO 1988'S ETHNIC SLAUGHTER, THE RECURRENCE OF WHICH IS NOT IN THE INTEREST OF EITHER GOVERNMENT. (~~DECL OADR~~)

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