

SAS/SG/OAU: DIARY/NOTES
SATURDAY, MAY 07, 1994

Visit to South Africa

At about 1120 hours, we left Addis Ababa for Johannesburg on board Ethiopian Airlines, flight ET 863 (Boeing 757). I am going to Johannesburg to attend the inauguration next Tuesday (May 10) of the new President of South Africa - the first ever democratically elected President of all the people of South Africa, Nelson Mandela.

In this trip I am accompanied by M.T. Bandora, Deputy Director of Cabinet and Regis Mutsau, Deputy Chief of Protocol. The OAU delegation to the inauguration which I am leading will be joined in Johannesburg by Amb. Legwaila, my Special Representative and Brigadier Hashim Mbita, Executive Secretary, OAU Liberation Committee.

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Meeting with the UN Secretary General, Dr. Boutros Ghali

The meeting took place in the suite of the UNSG at the 20th floor of the Sandtown Towers Hotel (I was accommodated at the 18th floor).

The meeting was attended on the UN side by Lakhadri Brahima, UNSG Special Representative in South Africa and another Assistant. I was accompanied by Joe Legwaila and Sam Ibok.

The meeting which focused exclusively on the developments in Rwanda including especially the issue of a UN Force lasted some 30 minutes - from 1255 to 1325.

I briefed the UNSG on the latest efforts at Arusha and my discussion there with both the delegation of the RPF and by its Chairman, Col. Alexis Kanyarengwe and that of the interim Government led by its Transport and Communications Minister.

I pointed out that though no concrete agreement was jointly signed by the parties, there was significant movement of position and clarity on the following issues on which both sides seem to be committed:

(1) Commitment to a ceasefire; (2) Commitment to be ready to instruct Commanders in the field to work out modalities for the establishment and consolidation of a ceasefire; (3) the presence of an international (UN) Force for humanitarian assistance and monitoring of a cease-fire and (4) the mandate to the Commander of the UNAMIR forces to convene a meeting between the Commanders of the Forces of the two sides with the objective of achieving a ceasefire. I told the Secretary General that what we have to do is to build on the positive elements.

I then referred to the question of the Force. I recalled our telephone conversation with Boutros Ghali while he was in Geneva on Thursday, May 05, 1994 and my letter to him of the same date in response to his letter of May 02.

The UNSG explained his position as follows :

- He had tried to get the U.N. Security Council to be more committed to Rwanda but he was not successful. It is then that he referred to the Regional approach. But what he wanted was to have African leaders to declare their readiness to contribute forces. He has written to 40 African leaders but he has received no

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response except for my letter to him.

I interjected and explained that it would be difficult for African countries to agree to serve in a force unless they were assured that the UN will direct and finance that force.

And as a matter of principle, it was my firm opinion that it is wrong for the UN to appear to pass the back on Rwanda - a situation which the Security Council has been seized with but unfortunately took the tragic decision of drastically reducing UNAMIR strength at the very time when UN's contribution was most badly needed.

Thus in order to have an African response it was important that the UNSG should make it clear that the proposed force is to be a UN force i.e. an enlarged UNAMIR.

Dr. Ghali said that he has problems in the Security Council. And he is unable to ask Member States to contribute to a peace-keeping operation (in Rwanda), before the Security Council has taken a definite decision. His plan is that once he has responses from some African States pledging their preparedness to contribute troops then he can go to the Security Council and urge action.

He expressed understanding to my concerns on the UN being seen to pass the back but stated that his other reason for making his proposal on a regional initiative, he had also in mind what he called a full back position i.e.: that of an ECOMOG like operation in Rwanda in the event Council is not prepared to have UNAMIR expanded.

After some discussion, we agreed on the following :

(i) The objective would be to work for the enlargement of UNAMIR in Rwanda with an adjusted mandate to include (a) provision of humanitarian assistance; (b) provide protection to civilian population where relevant and (c) for the ceasefire when it is in place.

(ii) In order to enable the UNSG to recommend to the Council in this course of action, it was important that Africa leaders (whom he has approached) respond to his request for troops. They should indicate their preparedness to do so subject to the clear understanding that it will be a U.N. Force with all that it implies.

(iii) We shall use the time we are here in Johannesburg for the inauguration celebration of the new President to consult with as many African leaders as possible on the proposed course of action.

At 2100 hours, I went to the residence of Ambassador Legwaila Joseph Legwaila. We were there until 2230 hours.