CHAPTER 10
DETERIORATING SECURITY IN RWANDA AND THE NEGATIVE RESPONSE FROM NEW YORK FROM JANUARY UP UNTIL MARCH

10.1 POLITICAL DEADLOCK IN THE ARUSHA PEACE AGREEMENTS

The installation of the transitional government was originally planned for December 31, 1993, but the ceremony did not take place. The installation was postponed and would be postponed another five times. Eventually the government would not be installed before the outbreak of the genocide.

On December 31 the installation was postponed to January 5, 1994. On January 5 only President Habyarimana was sworn in. Due to a lack of consensus on the appointment of the ministers, the installation of the rest of the cabinet was postponed until February 14. By that date, the installation was postponed again to February 23, then to March 25, then to March 28 and finally to the beginning of April.1

Discussing the political deadlock in his second progress report of March 30, the U.N. Secretary-General, Boutros-Ghali, argued that during the previous months, his Special Representative Booth Booth (SRSG) had expressed his

1 The difficulties existed especially within the Liberal Party (PL) and the Mouvement Démocratique Républicain (MRD) regarding the lists of their representatives to serve as ministers in the Broad Based Transitional Government (BBTG) and as deputies in the Transitional National Assembly. Furthermore, Habyarimana, supported by the Hutu hardliners of the MRD and the PL, launched several challenges to the interpretation of the Accords. One of the challenges was the proposal to give the Coalition pour Défense de la République (CDR) a seat in the transitional government. For more information, see Filip Reyntjens, L'Afrique des Grands Lacs, en crise: Rwanda, Burundi: 1988–1994, pp. 17–18 (1994) (hereinafter Reyntjens); Alison Des Forges, Leave None to Tell the Story, Genocide in Rwanda (1999) (hereinafter Des Forges); Gerard Prunier, The Rwanda Crisis: History of a Genocide (1993–1994), p. 204 (1995) (hereinafter Prunier). Frontline interview with Beardsley, November 15, 2003.

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concern over the delay in the installment of the various political leaders. Boutros
Ghali further stated that Booh Booh had urged Habyarimana and other leaders
continuously to “expedite action for the establishment of the transitional gov-
ernment.” The Secretary-General argued furthermore that he himself spoke to
Habyarimana on a number of occasions by telephone and that he had written
him to convey his strong expectations, as well as the international community’s
expectations, that the transitional government should be promptly established.

This research will disclose that in the contacts between the Secretary-
General with both the SRSG and President Habyarimana about the political
deadlock and the failure to install the government, Boutros-Ghali’s response
consisted mainly of a threat to withdraw UNAMIR when no improvement was
seen. This was exactly what the extremists wanted to hear.

In this chapter we will substantiate this observation with an explanation of the
events in Rwanda and the subsequent reactions of U.N. headquarters in New
York during the months of January, February and March 1994.

10.2 JANUARY 1994

In the second half of January, the security situation deteriorated rapidly.
More violent demonstrations took place, and armed mobs started to riot in the
streets of Kigali.

On January 14 Booh Booh informed Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali by
telephone that the two parties in Rwanda had so far failed to respect the agree-
ment to establish the transitional government. Booh Booh stated that he was
trying to find a solution together with the ambassadors of France, Belgium, the
United States and Tanzania. Boutros-Ghali asked Booh Booh to meet Habyarimana to
express his concern about the situation and to explain that each
day of delay might cost the United Nations many thousands of dollars, because
the troops would be obliged to remain available for a long time and that for
this reason delays would cause problems with the Security Council.5 Whether or
not Booh Booh delivered this message to Habyarimana is unknown to the authors.

However, when the Secretary-General received a phone call from
Habyarimana that very same day, he got the opportunity to speak to the President
himself. The file of the telephone conversation states that:

5 U.N. Doc. S/1994/360, Second progress report of the Secretary-General on

United Nations, Report of the Independent Inquiry into the Actions of
the United Nations during the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda, December 15, 1999,
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