

(Page 1 and 2 in French in the original text)

**Identification:** A/921 of 18/04/94  
**Duration:** 60 minutes.  
**Quality:** Good  
**Broadcast:** Radio Rwanda.  
**Date of transcript:** 02/11/99.  
**Name of transcriber:** Uwamahoro M. Vianney  
**File:** 921.wpd.  
**Dictaphone:** Sanyo  
 Model TRC-8080  
 Serial No. P8806620

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**Speaker: Unidentified**

(Inaudible) having evidence for such assertions. This is therefore the statement of

Mr. Simbizi:

**Simbizi, member of the CDR party committee:** Well I should like to openly denounce the behaviour of the UNAMIR Belgians, which was such a disgrace for Belgium, that the competent Belgian authorities had to decide to withdraw the Belgian contingent from UNAMIR. However, whilst awaiting their departure from UNAMIR, the Belgian behaved in a scandalous manner and promised those who cared to listen, that before leaving, they were going to destroy the airport and that the remaining... structures, er..., concerning flight security will be destroyed by RPF. This means that the ... the Belgian contingent did agree with RPF to, well, destroy our air navigation infrastructure and I should like to bring to the attention of the Rwandan Government, well, the need to ...to complain at the level of the Security Council for the latter...to use all its powers to prevent Belgium from continuing to meddle in the Rwandan conflict.

Well. Belgium is a country that had colonized Rwanda in the past. It is therefore a country that has left sequels in the economy of the country; this is really not the time for Belgium, er, to undertake to destroy the entire economic infrastructure including the airport, well...quite recently, er...we learnt through RTL M broadcasts that the Belgian Government had decided to destroy that radio station before er...its contingent leaves Rwanda. That said, today RTL M was bombed.

Now we have information that the Belgians would also like to destroy the airport, the airport has been very costly for the country; it is an infrastructure to be amortized on a long-term basis. The Belgians who did not invest anything in the airport er... should not really be allowed to destroy this infrastructure, for which Rwanda contracted debts, well from friendly countries such as the Kuwaiti Fund [sic] and the like, we really er... we devoted a lot of effort to building the airport infrastructure, the Belgians should really not embark on this bid for destruction, and I call upon... I call upon the Government of Rwanda, in view of er... the Belgians siding with RPF, to accu... to accuse Belgium before the Security Council and secure its right to ... to appeal to the other friendly powers for Rwanda to heave itself out of the quagmire into which er.. Belgium wants to force Rwanda, er... I will leave it at that and

hope that the Rwandan Government will leave no stone unturned to prevent Belgium from destroying the economic infrastructure before it withdraws from Rwanda.

**RR Journalist Yacinthe Bicomumpaka:** *Mr Stanislas Simbizi, in charge of information in the CDR Party, Coalition for the Defence of the Republic, who gave us the point of view of his party on the behavior of ... the UNAMIR Belgian contingent in our country. He confirms that he has evidence of these allegations. Radio Rwanda, it is er.. .6 hours 49 minutes...(interruption) (in French in the original text).*

**Unidentified Speaker: Administrative (cut in recording)**

Unidentified speaker: ...for cooperation. We shall now hear an interview of Jérôme Bicomumpaka in Kinyarwanda and French about the present situation.

**Bamwanga, Journalist at Radio Rwanda:**

Dear listeners to Radio Rwanda, good day to you.

You should continue to stand in solidarity wherever you might be, during this war we are fighting. We are now here in our studios with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Mr. Jérôme Bicomumpaka. We are going to talk especially about the relations between Rwanda and foreign countries during these hard times that our country is going through. Mr. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, it is exactly eleven days since the Rwandan Head of State was ... murdered by enemies, and ten days since RPF resumed hostilities using as a pretext the trouble triggered by the death of the Head of State. It has been ten days since Rwanda has been at war, a war triggered once again by RPF-*Inkotanyi*, which used the upheavals that erupted in Rwanda after the death of the President as a pretext.

Mr. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, we should like to ask you what the status of relations between Rwanda and foreign countries is at present.

**Minister Jérôme Bicomumpaka:**

In reality, it is not easy to describe the present state of relations between Rwanda and foreign countries. As you know, following the death of the Head of State, Major General Juvénal Habyarimana, RPF immediately resumed hostilities on the northern front, that is Ruhengeri, Byumba and Mutara where the Rwandan Armed Forces were. They also attacked certain military camps and certain districts in Kigali and it was thus that war erupted. That gave rise to what seemed to be some disorder and killings in Kigali, and the employees of certain diplomatic missions and international organizations preferred to return to their respective countries because they did not feel sufficiently safe. Certain embassies therefore closed down because all their staff had gone back home. Chief among these were the embassies of France, the United States of America, Germany, Canada and others.

What this means is that, as far as foreign countries are concerned, they suspended all their diplomatic and cooperation activities in Kigali. However, on our side, we did not sit idle and that is the reason why right from the formation of the Jean Kambanda Government, we strove to meet the heads of diplomatic missions who were still in Kigali to try to review together, and in a general manner, the situation that obtained in Rwanda and to talk about the assistance that their countries could afford us to resolve our problem. Here, I am referring to the problem of the war, because RPF had resumed hostilities. We were able to talk to certain ambassadors, especially the Belgian and French ambassadors and the Papal Nuncio. We gave

all of them a portrayal of the present situation in Rwanda. We explained to them that RPF had resumed hostilities and that there had been subsequent killings, and set out what the Government planned to do to put end to such killings.

If one looks at it closely, one would see that many foreigners perhaps feared that the Rwandan Armed Forces might not be able to stand up to RPF troops in an effective manner and that led them to pack up and leave immediately. However, now, thanks to our consultations, they seemed to agree that they closed their embassies rather hurriedly. We, moreover, hope that very soon, certain diplomats will gradually return to Rwanda and the embassies will be able to resume their activities.

On the diplomatic plane, we are asking foreign countries to help us resolve this problem of belligerency. We did not initiate this war; it is RPF that triggered it. It is therefore a matter of course that it will be up to RPF to stop it. The war could be stopped in two ways: either through talks leading to a cease-fire, thus allowing the parties to negotiate putting an end to the war, or the war goes on until one of the parties becomes the victor. As you have learnt, this Government of Rwanda has asked RPF to lay down arms and to accept to talk so that we could establish the institutions of the Broad-Based Transitional Government for the situation to return to normalcy and security to be restored.

**Q:** Regarding talks, Mr. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, at one time, it was said that talks between the representatives of the Rwandan Armed Forces and RPF had started. Could you tell our listeners the status of those negotiations?

**A:** As you are aware, the RPF *Inkotanyi* says that it does not recognize the Rwandan Government, but as a matter of fact it is not up to it to recognize the Government. According to the Arusha Accords, there are two parties to the talks, the Rwandan Government and the RPF *Inkotanyi*. So, if RPF refuses to talk to the Rwandan Government, it refuses to put an end to the war, because it perhaps believes that it could win victory. Upon the initiative of UNAMIR, the UN contingent based in Kigali, the talks started and RPF has said that it could negotiate with the Rwandan Government. So, to negotiate with the Rwandan Armed Forces is tantamount to negotiating with the Government, for as long as the delegation of the military is delegated by the Government. The Council of Ministers has appointed senior officers who should negotiate with the *Inkotanyi*. These talks have begun, but as a matter of fact, they have come to naught to date because of the ill will of RPF. They demand the dissolution of the Government, the dissolution of the presidential guard and impose other unacceptable conditions. If the Government is dissolved, what will there be left?

That means that there will be only one party left, RPF. One could see that this is a ploy to allow the situation in Rwanda to so deteriorate that RPF could stand out and claim to be the only party able to restore security, which would enable it to seize power. That is a situation that the Government cannot tolerate, because what we are saying is that we stand to defend the entire population, that the Government is supported by the entire population and by the Rwandan Armed Forces and even by foreign countries, at least the majority. If RPF truly wants peace, it should therefore be reasonable and accept to negotiate with the Government so that we can together resolve the problem of the war. If not, since we have a strong army, we will fight as we have no choice. We believe that for the good of the people, the war must be stopped. When Rwandans fight and Rwandan citizens die and houses are destroyed, it is the country that suffers. Consequently and as it claims, RPF does have Rwandans in its ranks;

if it is fighting for democracy as it often boasts it is and for refugees, we call upon it to lay down its arms and talk to us so that we can forge real peace for all Rwandans to be happy.

**Q:** Mr. Minister of Foreign Affairs, there is a Rwandan proverb that says that it is in hard times that one knows who one's true friends are. Before the death of the Head of State and before the war caused by RPF *Inkotanyi*, Rwanda had always had good relations with other countries. It used to have very well known friends, especially those within the CEPGL and even had friends in the other continents.

I should like to know if you have sent a delegation, for example to Burundi, Zaire and France and even to Arab countries such as Egypt and Kuwait, countries that have closely monitored the problem in Rwanda, to explain to them the difficult times that the Rwandan people and Government are going through.

**A:** As you are aware, Rwanda has good relations with many countries whether in Africa, Europe or Asia. It is therefore totally natural that we do not keep the problem of the war that is raging in our country to ourselves without informing at least our friends and even seek their counsel. As I said to you earlier on, immediately following the formation of the Jean Kambanda Government, we did our best to talk to certain ambassadors who were in Kigali, including those of France, Belgium and the Vatican. However, those were not the only ones we met, since we also sent a delegation to other foreign countries. Whenever we were not able to go ourselves, we sent written messages. We sent such messages to the international community, UN, OAU and other organizations that have relations with Rwanda, as well as to many friendly countries. You mentioned the neighboring countries, you mentioned Burundi, Zaire, but there are also many African countries that I will not enumerate. What is the content of our message? In most cases, we explain to them the present situation in Rwanda: the fact that without any justification, RPF resumed hostilities following the murder of the President of the Republic and that, in reality, its purpose was to seize power, which is contrary to the democratic ideal and to the Arusha Accords which were to allow Rwandans to live in peace and enjoy true democracy. We also explained the situation in the battlefield. We have told them that our armed forces were valiantly defending themselves and that as a matter of fact the RPF-*Inkotanyi* enjoyed the support of certain personalities and certain countries for the destruction of Rwanda. Indeed, it has been realized that RPF has in its ranks people referred to as "*mercenaires*" (mercenaries) in French. These mercenaries who are fighting for RPF are reported to be more than five hundred. We have also observed the presence of military aircraft such as sophisticated helicopters and other reconnaissance aircraft overflying Rwanda. This therefore goes to show that RPF does have certain countries supporting it in its quest to back power in Rwanda. It is therefore understandable that in the face of such a situation, we resort to foreign countries so that they approach those countries which may be supporting RPF to desist from sowing disorder in Rwanda. We also asked them to impress upon RPF to demonstrate humility and to be reasonable and to enter into dialogue with the Rwandan Government so that we restore peace. We have also asked them to assist us in diverse ways, for example, by assisting those that are displaced because of the war. As you know, before the resumption of the hostilities by the *Inkotanyi*, there were about four hundred thousand war-displaced persons spread in different camps, but since the resumption of hostilities in Kigali, we estimate their numbers to be at least two million. So, these people are a multitude, there are children amongst them, women, the elderly and the sick who need urgent attention. They have many needs including food, medicine and tents, etc. We are therefore asking the international community to help us so that the deplorable conditions in which certain Rwandans live be at least alleviated.

**Q:** Have some of them already responded positively?

**Q:** Yacinthe Bicomupaka: I second Bamwanga. Mr. Minister, you have just said that there were countries that openly assist the *Inkotanyi*, countries which could even be said to have attacked Rwanda. I should like to know whether in such a situation, where one country attacks another, there are alliance treaties between Rwanda and friendly countries such as France or Zaire which we can rely on to ask them to come to our rescue in such difficult times.

**Minister Jérôme B:** Regarding Bamwanga's question as to whether we have received any assistance, I should like to inform you that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has already started supplying Kigali with food, although the quantity is still far from sufficient. For the time being, we are approaching other organizations such as WFP, UNICEF and other international organizations including UNHCR for assistance. We are asking them to mobilize various forms of assistance for refugees. In this regard, I should like to inform you that I have just returned from a mission to Bujumbura (Burundi) where I was able to have consultations with some of the executives of these organizations. Together, we are looking into ways of assisting certain people, i.e. the war-displaced. Of course, that requires considerable time, because one first has to count the number of refugees and list down their needs before making a report to the international community for assistance. We hope that very soon we will see the arrival of the first humanitarian assistance in Rwanda. I see that they have well understood our problem, that they are actively dealing with it and that they have compassion for these people in distress. Regarding the question asked by Yacinthe Bicomupaka, indeed, although RPF has some countries assisting it to fight democracy and against the Rwandans in order to seize power by force, it is not quite necessary for another country to fight for us to vanquish the enemy of democracy. We have enough troops able to fight and repel the enemy. Moreover, we are quite sure that if the enemy refuses to negotiate peace with us, in several weeks we will get RPF to retreat from Kigali and the north of the country, that is Byumba, Mutara and Ruhengeri. I believe you know how our soldiers fight so valiantly in the battlefield.

We must therefore put sufficient equipment at their disposal and provide the necessary reinforcement by recruiting other young Rwandans capable of fighting. On our side, we shall provide the moral support to enable them to stand up to RPF and compel it, at least, to negotiate or to beat it and thus bring this war to an end. We therefore do not see the need to call upon France or another country for them to come and fight for us, because we believe that our armed forces can rely upon themselves. However, if a friendly country were to assist us, we would be quite happy. If that were to happen, you would be probably informed. We are not isolated from the rest of the world; we have friends who wish us well.

**Bamwanga:** Mr. Minister of Foreign Affairs, we cannot hide this from our listeners, Belgium and Uganda are among the countries that have been accused of openly supporting RPF-*Inkotanyi*. We should like you to tell us the truth in this case, what you know about the support given to RPF by these countries, based on the situation at the front and on other evidence.

**Minister Bicomupaka:** Regarding evidence, I think you should refer to the Minister of Defence, because he is more informed than I am.

However, I can tell you that so far as Uganda is concerned, as you are aware, when the *Inkotanyi* attacked us in October 1990, they attacked from Uganda and they were part of the Ugandan armed forces. You would therefore understand that Uganda attacked us. However, with the development of the situation, with the negotiations, the problem is no longer the same.

At this time, according to the Arusha Accords, UNAMIR should be disarming RPF troops and the Rwandan Armed Forces. Yet, following the recent resumption of hostilities by RPF, we realized that RPF soldiers were using heavy artillery, which should have been recovered by the UN troops. This therefore goes to show that the *Inkotanyi* did not surrender such artillery to the UN soldiers or that they obtained it surreptitiously from abroad. As you know, RPF controls an area bordering Uganda. Moreover, the *Inkotanyi* uses PUMA helicopters, which are quite sophisticated from the military point of view. These helicopters transport RPF arms, the wounded and equipment. There is also other reconnaissance planes, which over fly the north of the country to pinpoint the positions of our troops and to disclose them to RPF. We know that RPF does not have any airfield in Rwanda. We therefore think that the take off and landing of these planes could only be done from Ugandan airfields. However, for that to be confirmed, we are awaiting the report of the UN contingent, which is at the border between Rwanda and Uganda and is in charge of monitoring RPF supplies in Rwanda, from Uganda. In the meantime, we have made it known to those concerned that they should seriously deal with this problem, to determine the true role of Uganda in this war. Apart from Uganda, I also mentioned the mercenaries that are fighting for RPF here in Kigali. We have said that they were more than five hundred, some of them, by the way, were killed by the Rwandan Armed Forces in battles that took place there at Jari. As regards Belgium, you know that it is a friendly country and we must not forget that it colonized Rwanda. We have enjoyed good cooperation for 30 years, but I dare say that our relations have deteriorated of late. The Belgians are saying that Rwandans hate them. I am saying that all the Belgians are saying so, but there are some who dare to say so openly. On the other hand, the Rwandans are saying that the Belgians do not like them because they are helping the *Inkotanyi* and that they do not want Rwandans to live in peace.

When you look into this situation, you will realize that all these mutual accusations have no real basis. However, on the whole, one sees that such suspicions, and misunderstanding are, perhaps, fostered by the fact that the RPF-*Inkotanyi* has a sizeable office in Belgium, comparable to an embassy. Belgium is the only country in the world that officially hosts an RPF office. On this issue, many Rwandans are asking themselves why they should have any good relations with Belgium, which plays host to RPF, knowing that the latter is fighting against democracy and wants to seize power by force.

Secondly, as it has often been said, when the *Inkotanyi* launched the war, Rwanda did buy military equipment from the Belgians. Later, the Belgians refused to deliver the equipment to us whereas our Government had already paid for it. You would understand then that if you are attacked and that the person who should help you does not deliver the equipment for which you have already paid, (overlapping voices) ...that gave rise to a misunderstanding between Rwandans and certain Belgians, but in reality, the two Governments continued to cooperate. Indeed, the Belgians maintained their considerable annual assistance and continued to send technicians and technical assistance personnel to Rwanda. Our bilateral relations continued to be good and our embassies did not cease their activities. However, many Rwandans deplored the fact that certain Belgian military elements in UNAMIR behaved poorly and did not accomplish their commitments.

As you know, sanctions were adopted against some of them who failed to discharge their duties. Yet, such acts did not cease. Indeed, during the war, we noticed that the UNAMIR Belgian troops seemed to have been collaborating with the *Inkotanyi* in the city of Kigali. Those UNAMIR troops supplied the *Inkotanyi* with munitions, moved them around and I do not know what. Such behaviour is totally contrary to the mandate of the UNAMIR troops. Moreover, because of the war, Belgian soldiers came to evacuate their countrymen that were in Rwanda. However, at the end of that operation, they did not go back immediately as previously agreed. We talked to the Belgian Government and told it that it would be better that the two parties, that is the Belgian Government and the Rwandan Government, abide by their commitments. We hope that things will soon come to normalcy and that relations between Rwanda and Belgium will thus be restored and even improved.

**Q:** Still regarding UNAMIR and Belgium, Mr. Minister, there are questions being asked. They are saying that it is the first time in history that in a territory where UN troops are stationed, two Heads of State have crashed at an airport guarded by the same troops. This is the basis of the suspicion expressed by people: "it was the Belgians who were guarding the airport and the Head of State died in that airport". What do you say about that? Not too long ago, it was being said that the Belgians had decided to destroy the RTLM radio station before leaving the city of Kigali: very soon after, that did happen. According to other information, the Belgians are still at Kanombe airport and they supposedly have plans to destroy that airport before they leave. I should like to know what the Rwandan Government intends to do to prevent these concerns of Rwandans from becoming serious problems.

**A:** I should like to reassure Rwandans by asserting that the Rwandan Government and the national armed forces are vigilant. The national armed forces will fight anybody that seeks to attack Rwanda, be they *Inkotanyi*, Belgian or otherwise. They will not hesitate to fight whosoever becomes a danger to the security or national territorial integrity, wherever they come from. However, I should like to tell you that the guarding of Kanombe airport was not entrusted to the Belgians but to UNAMIR. The UNAMIR troops consisted of soldiers from various countries. However, as one component of those troops, the Belgians were in charge of the security of the city of Kigali and its environs, including Kanombe airport. Immediately after the death of President Juvénal Habyarimana, President of the Republic, we called the UNAMIR leaders to a meeting to tell them about our concern about the fact that His Excellency the Head of State of Rwanda and His Excellency the Head of State of Burundi, Cyprien Ntaryamira, had been murdered by the ill-intended at the airport whereas the UN troops were there. We asked them to tell us what their troops had done to prevent such a tragedy or whether they had initiated inquiries to identify the criminals that murdered the two Heads of State. At that meeting we had with the representatives of UNAMIR, the latter came up with satisfactory answers. They argued that the UNAMIR troops were guarding the airport in collaboration with the national *gendarmérie*. However, in spite of such collaboration, it was the UNAMIR troops who were responsible for security. We therefore sought to carry out an inquiry to establish the truth, the identity of the persons behind the death of the President and to demonstrate whether those that were in charge of guarding the airport did do their work correctly or not.

**END OF SIDE A**

**Minister Jérôme Bicomumpaka:**

All of that will be clarified in the course of the inquiry, which will be carried out in the days to come. We believe that several inquiries will be carried out in the near future to establish the various responsibilities in the murder of the Head of State and to see whether it occurred as a result of ill will or incompetence of those that were in charge of guarding Kanombe airport. At this juncture, I therefore cannot tell whether such and such killed the President of the Republic or did such and such a thing. I should therefore like to ask you to patiently wait for the outcome of the inquiry. Whatever the case, the Rwandan Government has decided to conduct serious investigations in order to find out those responsible for the deaths of the Presidents of the Republic of Rwanda and the Republic of Burundi and to disclose their names to the public, they will then have to answer for their acts before the law.

**Yacinthe Bicomumpaka:**

Mr. Minister, still regarding the Belgians, recently they made the international community to believe that they were going to repatriate their troops that came under UNAMIR. We learnt, however that their planes arrived but no Belgian went on board. They remained at the airport, and according to certain sources, they will travel by land to Tanzania. Could you explain the situation to Rwandans, to get them to understand why the Belgians have decided to travel overland whereas they had planes at their disposal to go back home to Belgium?

**A:** I am telling you that the Rwandan Government requested the Belgians who had come to repatriate their fellow countrymen because of the insecurity that obtained in Rwanda, to go back with their equipment. That is what we asked them to do and we expect them to oblige. You certainly know that the French guarded the Kanombe airport.

Upon their departure, they entrusted the guarding of the airport to the Belgians to enable them repatriate the expatriates who were in Kigali. It is obvious that before leaving, the Belgians must entrust the guarding of the Kanombe airport to other troops. They could entrust it to the Rwandan Armed Forces or to the UNAMIR troops, which were originally responsible for it.

... I hope that the Belgians, since they say they wish to go back home, would actually go back home and peacefully so, under the modalities agreed upon with the Rwandan Government. Whether they go back overland or by air, that should be done with the agreement of the Rwandan Government. We should together look into the modalities of their repatriation so that no party complains about the actions of the "other party being disturbing". At any rate, whether their evacuation is done by air or overland, it must be done after an agreement between Belgium and the Rwandan Government. Let me reassure you, I do not think that the Belgians will say that they have been forced to leave and so they are leaving overland. Anyhow, we as the Rwandan Government, we have power. For as long as they are in our territory, they cannot act without consulting us. I therefore think that you do not have to worry because this problem is going to be resolved without any ado.

**Bamwanga:** Mr. Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, these past last few days (incomplete) in order to come to their assistance, but did they receive anything in advance, at least?



**Minister Bicamumpaka:** Indeed, as you know, this Government under Prime Minister Jean Kambanda was set up whilst we were at war. It was outright in war, in Kigali, the ministries were not functioning, the administration was not functioning, and in truth the authorities could not do anything. Following the swearings-in, the ministers committed themselves to getting the administration to work, but as you know, many Rwandans were confined to their homes and could not come out because of the gunfire and some even began to leave Kigali. The task was not easy.

However, to date we have been able to put some resources together, in cash and in kind, which will enable us to assist the war-displaced persons, who have been able to find refuge in the various regions of Rwanda. If one needs a ton of beans, it is impossible to purchase it if one does not have money, but even when one has money, one has to know where to get the beans. All of you know that famine is rife in Rwanda. Famine beset several *préfectures* in Rwanda. In other words one would need to look for beans, maize and even medicine elsewhere because they could not be found in Rwanda. So, it was firstly necessary to find money in Rwanda, ask for assistance from foreign donors and then find a source of supply. We are now doing that and things are going well. As I told you, I have had contacts in Burundi with some representatives of humanitarian organizations operating in Burundi, we have looked into ways in which these organizations could work with those that are still operational in Kigali, Rwanda and with the Rwandan Government to try and come to the assistance of these people. Things are moving and, moreover, my colleagues, the Minister of Planning and the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs have taken over and will be discussing this issue with the representatives of international organizations, so that very soon our fellow countrymen who are suffering from the war will be assisted. I should therefore like to ask you to be patient, we are dealing with a very complex problem. The Government is doing its best to satisfy primary needs and we hope that this will soon be done.

**Hyacinthe:** Mr. Minister, you have just spoken to us about contacts you had during your visit to Burundi. We know that you consulted with the President of Burundi, His Excellency Sylvestre Ntibantunganya. Could you briefly tell us what you discussed and what Rwanda is expecting from Burundi in these hard times, and whether you have had the opportunity to consult with other foreign personalities.

**Minister Bicamumpaka:** As a matter of fact, I went to Burundi as head of the Rwandan delegation. We went there to attend the funeral of the late President Cyprien Ntaryamira and we carried a special message from the President of the Republic, Dr. Théodore Sindikubwabo. We delivered the message to the President of Burundi, Sylvestre Ntibantunganya. It was a message of condolence expressing to the President of the Republic and to the people of Burundi our sadness about the death of the President of Burundi, the late Cyprien Ntaryamira. You know that he died in the company of President Juvénal Habyarimana whilst returning from Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, where they had attended a peace summit for the countries of the Great Lakes. Since he died unexpectedly in our country, we had to transmit to the Burundian authorities our condolences, our sadness and to stand by them in such trying times. We told them about the situation that obtains in Rwanda, because of RPF resuming hostilities in violation of the Arusha Accords, which should have brought us back to peace and democracy. We asked them to do their best, as they had always done in the past, to persuade RPF and their supporters to revert to reason so that peace is restored to Rwanda, all the more so as the problems of Rwanda and Burundi are similar. Burundi cannot live in peace if there is war in Rwanda, just as it would be difficult for Rwanda to live in peace if there is war in

Burundi. We must therefore collaborate with our Burundian brothers to resolve this problem in all transparency, democratically and without ulterior motives. We have nothing to hide from them and we wish them well.

The Burundian President received us in audience and favorably accepted the message we bore. He told us that Burundi would not interfere in Rwandan problems, but that it would help to resolve them. That was our wish and we were satisfied. During our mission to Burundi, we had consultations with many other personalities. Several delegations came from Europe, America and Africa and elsewhere to represent their countries at the funeral of President Cyprien Ntaryamira. We had talks with certain personalities and told them about the situation prevailing in Rwanda, the objectives of our Government especially in terms of the cessation of war and the restoration of peace in Rwanda, which objectives we wanted to attain through negotiations. They listened and all of them assured us of their support and asserted that it was the best course, for Rwanda needed peace based on negotiations. I do not think that it is necessary to enumerate all the personalities with whom we met, but you should know that, in general, all the countries of Europe and Africa with which we have relations were represented and we consulted with their representatives.

Our visit to Burundi also allowed us to meet with journalists, including those from BBC, based in England, and "La Croix" a newspaper published in France. We gave them some clarifications with respect to the situation obtaining in Rwanda, all the more so as RPF had disseminated unacceptable and defamatory information about Rwanda, information according to which the Rwandan Government - a Government of murderers - had killed innocent civilians. We therefore had to contradict such RPF allegations by establishing the authentic version of things. We explained that RPF had resumed hostilities which, as a matter of fact, were the cause of the trouble among the population. Indeed, the latter does not understand how RPF, which signed the Arusha Accords and which accepted to take part in the broad-based transitional institutions, could turn around and ignore all that and try to seize power by force. That is frightening for the population; moreover, we know that many an RPF agent has infiltrated the city of Kigali and other regions of Rwanda. In the battles that took place in Kigali, RPF used soldiers in military uniforms and others in civilian clothing. RPF had deployed soldiers in Rwanda, especially in Kigali, to protect some of their agents at their residences. This therefore means that in districts here and there, there were *Inkotanyi* protecting RPF supporters. It was therefore that factor that inflamed the war. Indeed, when you go to a given neighborhood and are met with *Inkotanyi* gunshots from the residence of somebody you know well and that fighting ensues, anybody that dies under such circumstances would be considered as a fighter who fell in battle. He would be considered as such, even if he was in civilian clothing. Even if he were not officially enlisted in the army, it would be taken that he fell in the battlefield under such circumstances. So, RPF continues to perpetrate killings in Kigali city...it has slain people in the Remera area - in the regions of Mutara and Ruhengeri. We have explained all of that to the international community and have asked it to enjoin RPF to cease the hostilities and, where necessary, to conduct investigations to determine the perpetrator of such killings and to punish him.

For our part, we are not afraid of investigations, being conducted. However, it is inadmissible to accuse people of being murderers without any evidence, whereas in reality it is you the accuser who exterminates people under the cover of night. So, the international community - journalists and others - have understood the situation and have, moreover, commended us for having given them true information, about the true situation that obtains in Rwanda. They have expressed the desire to regularly receive such information and the Rwandan

Government has committed itself to doing so. It is for this reason that right from today, despite communication difficulties, we are going to resort to other means of informing the international community and all Rwandans about the situation so that any country or humanitarian organization which comes to help us, can do so on the basis of authentic information about the realities in the field, without anybody hiding anything about such realities. That would make their assistance more effective.

I therefore call upon Rwandan citizens to remain calm. Let them know that their armed forces are committed to defending the country and that their morale is good. Ask them to fully support the Rwandan Armed Forces for them to be able to protect the territorial integrity of the country and do so with equanimity and without rush. They must act without rush and without harming their neighbours whom they might attack for nothing if they base themselves on suspicion instead of well-established evidence. In fact, RPF would like Rwandans to rise against each other, which will create chaos and disperse our energies, thus giving rise to a situation, which would enable them to seize power. So, Rwandans must know this, it is through their solidarity that the country will be defended for our victory. What does our victory mean? It means real peace and democracy.

Whether this goal is achieved peacefully or through a military victory, if our adversaries do not lay down their arms, our ultimate purpose, whatever the case, is peace and democracy. That will be possible if Rwandan citizens work hand in hand in all the *communes* of Rwanda, in all the Sectors and all the *cellules* and carry out night vigils to flush out possible infiltrators. Yet they must do so quietly and when they are faced with problems, they must convey them to their authorities for administrative solutions to be found, so that citizens do not engage in excess. This is what I ask of them. The people must also know that the Government is not oblivious of them; they must support it in all its actions, because as we have said many times before, whatever happens, Rwanda will come out victorious. I thank you.

**Bamwanga:** Dear listeners, you have just heard the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Mr. Jérôme Bicomumpaka. As he has asked us at the end of this programme, let us remain united wherever we are and refrain from tearing each other to pieces. As you know, if we are attacked from outside, we must not attack each other. Let us continue to work together.

(Page 20 to 25 French, the original language)

**Yacinthe Bicomumpaka:** It has been exactly 10 days since the resumption of hostilities by RPF. Since that aggression, internal security has deteriorated and could persist because RPF which still wants the war to go on could (inaudible) dialogue with the interim government legally instituted according to the Constitution. So far as international cooperation is concerned, I prefer to give the floor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who is here with us in our studios, Mr. Jérôme Bicomumpaka. Mr. Minister, what is the situation so far as cooperation between Rwanda and foreign countries is concerned?

**Minister Bicomumpaka J.:** Er... cooperation.. er... between Rwanda and foreign countries was well, but er... it was severely disrupted by er..., the resumption of hostilities, by er... the Rwandan Patriotic Front, er... on April 6 1994. A.. as you know, ..er... on 6 April ..er...in the evening, we learnt about er...the accident and the tragic death uh.. of the Rwandan Head of State, President Habyarimana Juvénal, er... as well as that of his Burundian counterpart er... President Cyprien Ntaryamira. Er... immediately after er... RPF started hostilities er... on the northern front, that is at ..Ruhengeri, Byumba and in Umutara, as well as in Kigali where RPF battalion was based at the CND building, also some...certain elements of RPF had already infiltrated Kigali and attacked er... the military camp of the Presidential Guard and certain ideal targets er... of certain neighborhoods of Kigali. Well, that created some more or less generalized insecurity and that gave rise to the departure of a certain number of diplomats er... the closing down of certain embassies in Kigali. I could mention the embassies of the United States of America, France and Canada, among others. Er... with the closing down of embassies er... that meant that cooperation between Rwanda er... and those countries er... suffered considerably, especially because the technical assistance personnel from those countries had to fly back er...er...to their respective countries. We thought that it was a conjunctures and therefore, a short-term problem, and because we... we thought that the war should end quickly enough in one way or the other and that cooperation between our country and foreign countries could... be... revived, and it is within that framework that we undertook negotiations, talks with foreign countries in Rwanda er... such as the Embassy of France, the Embassy of Belgium er... the Papal Nuncio, we also er... had talks with the representatives er... of certain countries that cooperate with Rwanda, during our last trip to Bujumbura for the er... burial er... of the late Burundian Head of State, Cyprien Ntaryamira, er...we had er...we had those talks and it is clear that cooperation should rapidly resume if er...peace and tranquility were to be restored in the country. We thus hope that er...very quickly, cooperation should resume between Rwanda and those countries.

- Er..., Mr. Minister, as you said, RPF resumed hostilities since the 6th er..of this month and er..since then the Government of Rwanda has attempted to go back to dialogue, but RPF has to date not responded positively. What do you expect at the international level? What do you expect from friendly countries in terms of their restimulating dialogue?
- Yes, RPF er..is saying that it does not recognize our Government, but as a matter of fact it is not up to RPF to recognize us. It is stipulated in the Arusha Accords that there were two negotiating parties that is: the Government of the Republic of Rwanda and the Rwandan Patriotic Front. Well, because of the murder of the Head of State of Rwanda, President Habyarimana Juvénal and that of Madame Agathe Uwiringiyinama, former Prime Minister, a political and institutional void was created, which we were able to fill er..by..by by applying an article of the Rwandan

Constitution, that is Article 42 according to which the head of ..in the event of a vacancy of the presidency, it shall be filled by the President of the national assembly.

Immediately after that, a ...coalition government was put in place with five political parties er..which were also in the two preceding governments, er..so our Government er..as soon as it was set up, we established contacts with er.. foreign partners for the purpose of asking them er..to ask RPF to quit the..the armed forces and to accept to negotiate for peace and democracy. Er.. we believe that er...negotiation is the best way, I say, I am not saying that it is the only means, I am saying that it is the best way to peace and harmony in the whole country, but even there, the two negotiating parties should accept that, the party that disrupted the Arusha Accords, the party that started the hostilities must change its mind, abandon the logic of war and thus accept negotiations and dialogue. Er..we believe that with er...with friendly countries intervening with RPF, with the determined resistance of the Rwandan Armed Forces on the military front, RPF will end up accepting dialogue and thus allow the entire Rwandan people er..to enjoy tranquility throughout the national territory.

- Corroborating sources have recently spoken, Mr. Minister, of the involvement unfavorable interference of certain foreign countries in this war er...and vis-a-vis Rwanda. Mentioned among these countries is Uganda, which allegedly er...sent helicopters to...er... the battlefield. Also mentioned was Belgium, which... fought on the side of RPF. Can you give any explanations, clarifications to...to enlighten the population?
- Yes, the information reaching us er...indicates, in actual fact, er...that RPF enjoys the er...military support of certain foreign powers and it is within that framework that we er...see the use of PUMA helicopters, which are sophisticated helicopters. They are used for the transportation of troops, supplies and er...and other operations er...there is the use of reconnaissance planes which over fly the positions of the Rwandan Armed Forces to identify them and transmit them er...to RPF and we know that RPF does not... does not possess such equipment, RPF does not have airfields of its own that it controls in its ..its area of occupation, and...those planes do not come from areas controlled by the Rwandan Armed Forces and since RPF controls an area at the border with Uganda and since it is that country that has supported RPF since October 1990 in its war against the Rwandan people, we believe that er...such er...such equipment is put at the disposal of RPF by that country. That said, er...or even if such equipment was not put at the disposal of RPF by that country, that country, that country grants facilities er...RPF for the acquisition of such equipment. Well, we will have to wait er... for the report of the m.. of the United Nations mission er...on the control of the Rwandan-Ugandan border, which will identify the movement of people and goods between Uganda and er...Uganda and Rwanda.
- Well, that report could allow one to shed light on the involvement er or the same involvement or the degree of involvement of Uganda er..in the war er..waged by RPF against the Rwandan people. Well, you have spoken about Belgium, as you know, Belgium is a friendly country with er... with which we have cooperated for a very long time, er...Belgium was er...was for us a partner of reference in the area of cooperation, er...but we have had to deplore certain attitudes er... which were inimical acts on the part of certain Belgian elements of the UNAMIR contingent. Er...as you know, even before the death of the Rwandan Head of State er...certain Belgian

elements of UNAMIR had made er...mistakes and were sanctioned by the UNAMIR management. Well, it so happened that since the resumption of the hostilities er...on 6 April 1994 er...certain Belgian elements, I am not saying all the Belgian elements, certain Belgian elements continued to... commit inimical acts against the Rwandan people, which acts consisted in logistical and technical support to the RPF elements who were based in Kigali, and we reported those acts to the UNAMIR leaders, to General Dallaire er...to his colleagues, and it was up to them to do all they could er...to resolve er...such problems. Well, another aspect of the Belgian-Rwandan problem was er... about the evacuation er...of the Belgian nationals who were in Rwanda. In actual fact, we contacted the Belgian Government to organize such an evacuation and facilitate it, which our Government er...rapidly accepted, but it so happened that the evacuation ended and after the evacuation ended, the Belgian contingent er...which had come for the evacuation did not...did not directly return to its country with the equipment that it had brought. Well, now they know that they are on the verge of leaving er...we believe that on that point...the operation will be carried out...we hope that the operation will be carried out in good conditions and that Belgian-Rwandan cooperation could rapidly er...resume and that...er...the mutual suspicion that was generated by certain schools of thought could er...either vanish or be attenuated, because that the Belgian people and the Rwandan people who are brotherly peoples er...must absolutely work together since we have many things that bind us, we must not highlight the small things which could...bring about differences and the denial of the profound realities that have linked our peoples for several decades now.

- Er, let us come back to this issue of the repatriation of..the Belgian troops which are here in the country, Mr. Minister, but er...the bone of contention is that the er...the repatriation of the Belgian troops is going to be ..done in a rather strange manner because the soldiers wanted to travel overland rather than return by air..er...by air. Is this not a trap, perhaps, that the Belgians could well use their travel to once again attack the Rwandans?
- Yes, er...that is a very good question. Er...as a matter of fact, er...the repatriation of the Belgian contingent overland, by air or...the problem that...is not there. In fact, whether the Belgians go back home to Belgium overland or er...by air, the essential thing is that it be done in consultation with the Rwandan Government. Er...I do not think that the Belgians er... could force uh.. er...could thus take action er...without referring er...to our Government uh.. I, I, I think that, well, within the next hours, this is a problem that is going to be looked into er...by the three parties together, and we will find the appropriate modalities which will allow the repatriation of the Belgians to proceed under the best possible security conditions that will also reassure the Rwandan side.
- Er...regarding the hostilities, Mr. Minister, I should like to put to you a question concerning Belgian-Rwandan cooperation, if it were to be established that the Belgian troops took part in the intense bombing er...of infrastructure in Kigali, er...in the intense bombing of certain buildings, do you intend to seize the Council..the Security Council of the United Nations of the matter?

- You know, er...a lot has been said about the activities of the Belgian elements of the Belgian army. If it happens that those Belgian elements did actively participate in the fighting on the side of RPF against the Rwandan army, occasioning massive destruction, er...death, er...investigations will be carried out and based on the finding of the investigations, the Rwandan Government will, obviously, take a series of measures er...a priori, I cannot tell you the types of action that would be taken, but at any rate we will not sit down with our arms folded, if it turns out objectively that er...elements of the Belgian army had actively participated.. in the fighting on the side of RPF.
- Er...following the resumption of the hostilities by RPF, many Rwandan citizen er...left the capital heading for Gitarama and Butare, er...that population is in a bad situation because apparently there are no supplies, is there any action taken precisely to er...meet the needs of those people who fled the...capital, have any contact been made precisely to give support to those people who are now in such a delicate situation?
- Yes, er...let me remind you that we were surprised by the resumption of hostilities on the one hand, and especially by the death of the Rwandan Head of State, er...which gave rise to a massive exodus of the civilian population er...as you know...those war-displaced persons were estimated at about 400 thousand er...about one month ago, at present they must be more than one million scattered from Gitarama...Butare, Kibuye er...Ruhengeri and Gisenyi. So, as you know, many NGOs...non governmental organizations, er...which contributed, which participated in humanitarian assistance programmes because of the state of war, most of them er...have stopped their activities in Kigali, their executives have returned home to Europe, including the MSF, only the International Red Cross stayed and we thank them er... and which er...last week managed, all the same, to move a food convoy to Kigali. So the...Rwandan Government presently has only one partner in Kigali to help those suffering people, there is also the Rwandan CARITAS but we are saying that the other NGOs have wound up their activities. It is within that framework that er...that we had the er...within the framework of our trip to Bujumbura, we had contacts er...with personalities er...within the framework of our mission to correct the problem of assistance to the millions of displaced Rwandans and er...we agreed to bring together the...the personalities concerned at the level of the Rwandan Government and the NGOs which operate in Bujumbura to quickly organize assistance for the war-displaced. Of course, we will firstly have to evaluate the number of persons er...identi...identify the areas where they are concentrated er...in those *préfectures* and then try to evaluate...

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