

AIDE MEMOIRE  
AD HOC MEETING OF IASC-WG REPRESENTATIVES ON SUPPORT TO  
THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS MISSION IN RWANDA.

21 October 1994

At its 23 September meeting, the Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) agreed that its Working Group (IASC-WG) should take steps to facilitate the deployment and operationalization of the UN Human Rights Mission in Rwanda (the Mission). On 13 October a meeting of an Ad Hoc Group of the IASC-WG including representatives from the UN Centre for Human Rights, was convened in order to ascertain what concrete steps could be taken to this end.

### **THE PROBLEM**

The UN Centre for Human Rights (the Centre) had never undertaken to field a mission of this magnitude. In attempting adopt its normal administrative procedures to deploy personnel and put in place required logistics and operational support, the Centre had met with some difficulty. Though current staffing levels were not yet at the level required to carry-out the Operational Plan developed by the UN Centre for Human Rights, recruitment and deployment of personnel was not seen to be the first priority. In addition to specialized investigative staff, there were 30 Human Rights Field Officers in Rwanda for the mission and that number was likely to reach between 50 and 60 by November. Additionally, 25 UNV's will be available to the mission by 1 November. Recruitment of personnel was in fact being slowed, in order that necessary logistical and operational structures could be put in place before additional staff was deployed, given that UN Human Rights staff already deployed were unable to effectively carry-out their functions in the absence of essential equipment and support capacity. Urgent measures were therefore required to ensure that current staff and those who will bring the mission up to full strength receive the support and equipment they require. It was noted that the widely quoted number 147 total UN Human Rights staff in Rwanda corresponds to the number of communes in the country but was not likely to be reflected in final deployment, which was more likely to be between 110 and 120 total international staff.

### **NEEDS**

A number of extraordinary steps had been taken to provide the Mission with essential equipment, including the loan of vehicles, however, the majority of priority equipment needs remained unmet. The most urgent among which were:

**Vehicles:** The mission required an addition 30 vehicles by mid-November in order for staff to properly establish and begin activities outside Kigali.

**Satellite Communications Facilities:** As the mission was forced to borrow oversubscribed satellite communications facilities, resulting in periods of as much as two days during which Headquarters does not have substantive contact with the field. Full dedicated satellite communications for the Mission was, therefore required (fax, data and phone).

**Communication Equipment for Field Officers and Field Offices:** Lack of radio communications equipment was delaying or making impossible deployment of personnel to the field.

**Office Equipment:** Inadequate office facilities had presented the mission with serious problems relating to the security of documentation, a problem that would be solved by the provision of secure storage equipment (i.e. safes).

The UN Centre for Human Rights was soliciting any assistance that would facilitate the provision of this equipment to its staff, including and especially, the possibility of benefitting from streamlined administrative and procurement procedure developed by UN Operational Agencies and others.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

- I. **Field Level Initiatives:** Every effort must be made to explore the possibility of tapping resources already in the area. A number of IASC-WG representatives noted that their organization had stocks of some types of equipment in the area (e.g. field kits and hand-held communications units) Rapid access to this equipment must be undertaken at the field level in order to avoid delays.

*Action:* The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is finalizing an agreement with the Norwegian Government that would see one specialist in field administration and logistics support deployed to the Centre and one to the Mission. This new staff, working under the supervision of the Centre and the chief of the Mission respectively, should perform as focal points for issues relating to strengthening the logistical back-up and operational capacity of the Mission. These NRC secondees would be dispatched with satellite phones.

*Action:* Rwanda Field representatives of relevant organizations should be instructed to support the Mission as far as possible.

- II. ***UN Operational Agency Administrative Support:*** The location of UNHCR's administrative and procurement functions in Geneva, and their experience with rapid deployment of staff and equipment are well positioned to support the UN Human Rights mission.

*Action:* On 20 October, the Deputy High Commissioner of UNHCR (DHC) reviewed a list of equipment required by the field office of the UN Human Rights mission in Rwanda that had been submitted to the UNHCR Field Office in Kigali. Actions would be taken following this review.

- III. ***Targeted Enquiries:*** Organizationally relevant focal points should be provided to the Centre for Human Rights. Staff specifically charged with those actions relating to the provision of essential equipment to the field should be included in initiatives related to supporting the Mission in Rwanda. The ICRC will be contacting Mr. Gomez del Prado on the possibility of their facilitating the provision of a satellite phone/fax to the UN Human Rights mission.

*Action:* IASC-WG representatives will provide the Centre (Mr. J. Gomez del Prado tel 41 22 917 3834) with relevant focal points.

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It was agreed that the Centre would request a second meeting of the group, as required, following the completion of the above actions.