

INTER-AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE  
WORKING GROUP XVI<sup>TH</sup> MEETING  
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REPORT BY  
THE UN HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR  
IN RWANDA

**BACKGROUND**

An uneasy calm rests over Rwanda. Insecurity is increasing along the country's south-western border, and continues across Lake Kivu from the west. The perception of many in Government is that the nation is surrounded on at least three frontiers by hostile forces ready in waiting. The flow of assistance to the refugee camps in Zaire through Rwanda, itself, is regarded with bitter irony. Rwandese Patriotic Army forces, still unpaid after four months, watch humanitarian assistance pass border checkpoints on the way to camps controlled by former government officials, Interahamwe and the once defeated RGF.

Within Rwanda, itself, camps holding approximately 340,000 internally displaced people are regarded as havens for small groups of anti-Government elements and perpetrators of genocide. Government barely functions. A significant portion of trained civil servants reside outside the country, many in refugee camps, and the most basic equipment for individual ministries to operate are not in place. The Government continues to resent the large volume of aid provided through international organisations of which it has only received a minuscule amount. But, most of all it resents what it perceives as the vast discrepancy between aid given within Rwanda and that given to those Rwandans residing across its borders.

The complexities of land tenure and the acceptance of certain portions of the Arusha accords pose an ever more practical day-to-day problem. As the "59ers" - those who fled during the 1959-1962 struggles - return home following the installation of the new Government, rights of property have become increasingly difficult to enforce. Inevitably tensions intensify as the Government pushes for a return of the internally displaced at the same time that property has been occupied by returnees of an earlier era.

In all this concept and practice of justice remains in ferment and turmoil. For those survivors of the genocide, for those who have no access to property, for those who have no control over the resources that ostensibly flow into the country, justice is a visceral and searing subject with little rational outlet. There are few magistrates, lawyers or even books and paper. Justice, like other elements of governance, is an increasingly parlous state. Furthermore, appointed local authorities coming from other countries, still have to familiarise themselves with the traditional laws and customs.

Perhaps the most fundamental and urgent emergency in Rwanda that needs to be addressed by the international community is that of governance and societal dysfunction. The frustrations of Government itself seems to be perceptibly more in evidence as it tries to impose order without the capacity to do so. This can be seen on many levels, in the growing efforts to deal with non-governmental organisations, with increasing road searches and with the timescales that it imposes upon the removal of IDP camps.

This gloomy picture is counterbalanced by a tardy but increasing momentum to provide immediate assistance to Government. The Governments of the Netherlands and Eire have recently made substantial contributions that will make a start in addressing some aspects of the immediate crisis. The European Union has released 75 million ecus previously agreed for Rwanda, and a senior level Rwandese delegation has left at the end of November to continue discussions with the World Bank. Other governments according to the few missions here in Kigali are looking increasingly sympathetically upon the Government's present plight. And, at the same time, the humanitarian community is attempting to offer direct assistance to resolve one of the true sores of the Government, that of the internally displaced.

On this more positive side of the balance, one also might note that the theme of reconciliation was a clear feature in the opening of the Parliament on 25 November, and that there are certain recent Cabinet nominations, e.g., Minister of Foreign Affairs, that gives some hope for the reconciliation process.

Yet, with all this said, Rwanda remains at a very precarious juncture. It remains extremely difficult to know which way the scales will tilt.

## **DEALING WITH THE INTERNALLY DISPLACED**

The background to this highly sensitive and complex matter is well known. Approximately 340,000 internally displaced people in camps that are perceived by Government as "little Rwandas" in Rwanda. The camps belie the sense of normality which the Government seeks to foster. They occupy essential farming land, and are a source of friction between locals and camp occupants, not least because the displaced in camps are felt to have better life styles than

the locals. The camps add to the difficulties confronted by local authorities in their efforts to govern.

There have been several incidents in which the displaced have been "encouraged" to move. Such incidents most likely reflect a growing impatience by local authorities, including the RPA. They do not cohere with the declared policy of several senior officials in the central Government not to close camps forcibly, but can at the same time be understood in the context of recent Government broadcasts that the camps must be closed by the end of the year.

A variety of initiatives have been introduced to deal with this problem in past months, e.g., Operation Homeward, in conjunction with UNAMIR, UN agencies, multilateral agencies and others. Nevertheless, these initiatives require an approach of larger magnitude. The international humanitarian community has embarked upon a course to assist the Government in ways that are intended to be both expeditious and humane. In an effort to establish an "integrated humanitarian response", UN agencies, UNAMIR and a small group of NGOs as well as representatives of Government at the working level have developed a set of principles as well as an annex on operational considerations concerning the return home of the displaced. The draft, finalised on 24 November, was presented to Government on 28 November. While an informal green light to begin operations has been given, formal approval is still awaited.

The integrated humanitarian response reflects the humanitarian lead in this initiative. The set of draft principles, themselves, emphasise humane treatment and safe and secure return of the displaced. It stresses that there should be no forced closures of camps, and that there should be a timely withdrawal of assistance in the camps and a build-up of assistance in the return areas. It at the same time acknowledges the right of Government to pursue with due process of law those persons who have been accused of promulgating genocide.

Informal planning efforts to develop the plan of operations are already underway, but any official planning process must await Government's concurrence. The key to the operation is an integrated task force in which the expertise and assets of UN agencies, UNAMIR, NGO focal points and representatives of essential ministries devise and implement agreed plans of operation. The coordination centre of the operation will be Integrated Operations Centre to be located in the Ministry of Rehabilitation once the centre in that Ministry can be fully set up in less than one month. In the interim the IOC will use a vacated building adjacent to the UNAMIR compound. Above the operational structure will be a policy unit that will meet only when specific operational issues need to be resolved at the senior policy level.

The Integrated Operations Centre will begin its task during the week of 28 November, and implementation activities will begin as soon as possible thereafter. From an institutional perspective, the basic principle underlying this particular initiative is that one can have an

integrated response without trampling upon the individual mandates of participating organisations. Hence, the IOC will have three functions: (1) to monitor the implementation of agreed operational plans, and in so doing, to identify gaps; (2) to provide a centre for all information pertaining the operation; and (3) to be a centre for the exchange of resources for implementing the operation. Certain operational agencies have already agreed to provide seconded officials for the duration of the operations as part of the IOC.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORS**

No single operation can be in a more sensitive position than those presently engaged in the monitoring of human rights in Rwanda. Efforts to provide functional support to the efforts of the monitors have been reflected to date in a few ways. Recently, NGOs and UN agencies such as UNHCHR have been able to provide assistance that has enhanced the logistics capacity of the monitors. Some assistance to the monitor teams is being provided through UNREO field offices, principally in the area of Cyangugu and Gisenyi in the west of the country. Yet, the UNHCHR in-country seems at the same time to feel that its capacity is being increasingly effectively established through its own direct channels. It now has its own logistics expert, and a consultant team has just concluded its review of requirements for enhancing the training needs of the monitors.

## **THE CONSOLIDATED INTER-AGENCY APPEAL**

As so instructed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the forthcoming Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Rwanda will be for a one-year duration and cover the first stages of recovery as well as relief. It will endeavour to meet the timetable initially agreed by agencies. There had been some thought that the CAP would be delayed due to the proposed mid-December 1994 Round Table. The Round Table has now been postponed until 17 January 1995, and agencies' headquarters have been asked to confirm their position on the timing of the appeal.

While there is clear synergy between the CAP and the Round Table, the need to move quickly on generating resources for the IDP returnee programme and to provide immediate resources for Government counterparts as well as to maintain on-going programmes involving refugees nevertheless suggest that the two need not necessarily be issued at the same time or that the synergy between the CAP and the Round Table would not be maintained if the former were issued before the latter.

It might be worth noting in this regard that the Government has been closely involved in the appeal process, both through sectoral focal points as well as through the Ministry of

Rehabilitation. Hence, it is hoped that their earlier concerns about being isolated from the process has been allayed.

Based upon present plans, a final draft should be finalised by 19 December.