

8-8-1994

### Press Guidance - August 8, 1994

US Embassy Rwanda

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Page: 1  
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PAGE 01            STATE    212243   082232Z  
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TO ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS PRIORITY  
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AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA PRIORITY  
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AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY  
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AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY  
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UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02            STATE    212243   082232Z  
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Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED

Page: 1

Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED  
Current Handling: n/a  
Document Number: 1994STATE212243

Page: 2  
Channel: n/a

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E.O. 12356: N/A  
TAGS: OPRC, PREL, XA, US  
SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE - AUGUST 8, 1994

1. THE FOLLOWING IS BURUNDI PRESS GUIDANCE (AF), RWANDA  
PRESS GUIDANCE (AF, DRL AND PRM), AND NIGERIA PRESS  
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 212243 082232Z  
GUIDANCE (AF).

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2. AF PRESS GUIDANCE - BURUNDI: SITUATION REPORT  
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Q: WHAT IS THE CURRENT SITUATION IN BURUNDI?

A: THE CURRENT SITUATION IN BURUNDI IS FRAGILE. THE  
ISSUE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION HAS NOT YET BEEN  
RESOLVED AS BURUNDI'S POLITICAL PARTIES WORK TO REACH  
AGREEMENT ON A REPLACEMENT FOR PRESIDENT NTARYAMIRA, WHO  
DIED IN THE TRAGIC AIRPLANE CRASH ON APRIL 6.

AT LEAST ONE ARREST FOLLOWED A SMALL DEMONSTRATION BY  
STUDENTS WHO SUPPORT A TUTSI ROYALIST PARTY ON AUGUST 7 IN  
BUJUMBURA. NO INJURIES WERE REPORTED IN SPITE OF THE

VIOLENCE AND MINOR LOOTING.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS,  
AND LABOR JOHN SHATTUCK IS CURRENTLY IN BURUNDI;  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS GEORGE  
MOOSE VISITED LAST WEEK. BOTH ARE URGING BURUNDIANS TO  
RESOLVE THE POLITICAL IMPASSE SWIFTLY AND TO AVOID THE  
MISTAKES WHICH HAD SUCH TERRIBLE CONSEQUENCES IN  
NEIGHBORING RWANDA. THERE IS NO VIABLE ALTERNATIVE TO  
PEACE AND RECONCILIATION OF WHICH ACCOUNTABILITY IS AN  
IMPORTANT PART.

Current Class: UNCLASSIFIED

Page: 2

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PAGE 04 STATE 212243 082232Z  
3. AF PRESS GUIDANCE - RWANDA: CURRENT SITUATION  
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Q: WHAT IS OUR RESPONSE TO THE ACCUSATION THAT THE WEST  
IGNORED THE GENOCIDE OF THE TUTSIS?

A: THE UNITED STATES AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY  
CONDEMNED THE GENOCIDAL KILLINGS FROM THE START. WE MADE  
STOPPING THE KILLINGS OUR TOP PRIORITY FROM THE TIME THE  
CRISIS BEGAN.

WE MADE REPEATED PUBLIC APPEALS AND PRIVATE DEMARCHES TO  
THE CIVILIAN AND MILITARY LEADERSHIP OF THE NOW DEFUNCT  
RUMP GOVERNMENT DEMANDING A HALT TO THE KILLINGS.

UNAMIR PLAYED AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN SAVING LIVES,  
PARTICULARLY IN KIGALI. IN MAY, THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL  
APPROVED EXPANSION OF UNAMIR WITH A NEW MANDATE TO HELP  
PROTECT CIVILIAN POPULATIONS. THE FOLLOWING MONTH, THE  
COUNCIL APPROVED THE FRENCH-LED HUMANITARIAN INTERVENTION  
TO BRIDGE THE GAP UNTIL UNAMIR COULD BE FULLY DEPLOYED.  
THE FRENCH OPERATION HAS SAVED UNTOLD LIVES.

THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION HELD A SPECIAL SESSION ON  
RWANDA IN MAY, WHICH LED TO THE APPOINTMENT AND DISPATCH  
OF A SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR. THE SECURITY COUNCIL  
SUBSEQUENTLY VOTED TO ESTABLISH A COMMISSION OF EXPERTS TO  
EVALUATE EVIDENCE OF GENOCIDE AND OTHER ATROCITIES.  
FOLLOWING THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION, WE HOPE THE UN WILL  
MOVE QUICKLY TO ESTABLISH AN INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL TO  
BRING THE PERPETRATORS TO JUSTICE.

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PAGE 05 STATE 212243 082232Z

Q: A SENIOR U.S. OFFICIAL SAID RETURNING REFUGEES ARE  
BEING KILLED. IS THIS TRUE? HOW ARE THEY BEING  
TREATED?

A: THERE ARE REPORTS OF ISOLATED INSTANCES OF REPRISAL  
KILLINGS AGAINST RETURNING REFUGEES. HOWEVER, THERE IS NO  
EVIDENCE THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT IS BEHIND THESE ATTACKS.

THE NEW GOVERNMENT HAS PUBLICLY STATED THAT IT INTENDS TO

RESPECT DUE PROCESS IN ARRESTING AND PROSECUTING SUSPECTED PERPETRATORS OF ATROCITIES. IT HAS CALLED FOR DEPLOYMENT OF EXPANDED UNAMIR AND OF HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORS TO PROVIDE REASSURANCE TO RETURNING REFUGEES.

WE STRONGLY CONDEMN ANY ACTS OF REPRISAL AGAINST RETURNING REFUGEES.

WE WELCOME THE NEW GOVERNMENTS CALL FOR DEPLOYMENT OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORS. UNDP SEES THE RWANDA ISSUE AS AN URGENT MATTER AND WILL IMMEDIATELY PROVIDE THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS CENTER WITH 20 VOLUNTEERS TO RWANDA, AIMING FOR A TARGET OF 50 WITHIN A SHORT PERIOD.

Q: COULD YOU UPDATE US ON THE ACTIVITIES OF U.S. AMBASSADOR DAVID RAWSON IN RWANDA IN THE PAST FEW DAYS?

A: AMBASSADOR RAWSON CONTINUES TO MEET REGULARLY WITH A FULL RANGE OF POLITICAL CONTACTS IN KIGALI. HE AND OTHER EMBASSY OFFICERS HAVE ALSO BEGUN TO MAKE SHORT TRIPS TO  
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PAGE 06 STATE 212243 082232Z  
OTHER PARTS OF RWANDA TO OBTAIN FIRST-HAND INFORMATION ABOUT CONDITIONS OUTSIDE THE CAPITAL.

IN MEETINGS WITH OFFICIALS OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT, AMBASSADOR RAWSON CONTINUES TO ENCOURAGE THE CREATION OF CONDITIONS WHICH WILL PERMIT THE SAFE RETURN OF RWANDAN REFUGEES. THE AMBASSADOR MEETS REGULARLY WITH U.S. MILITARY OFFICIALS, UNAMIR, AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS WORKING ON THE RELIEF EFFORT. OVER THE WEEKEND, AMBASSADOR RAWSON ACCOMPANIED THE VISITING ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND LABOR, JOHN SHATTUCK, AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, GENERAL SHALIKASHVILI TO MEETINGS WITH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY LEADERS IN THE NEW RWANDAN GOVERNMENT.

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4. DRL PRESS GUIDANCE - RWANDA: A/S SHATTUCK'S TRIP  
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Q: CAN YOU GIVE US AN UPDATE ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY SHATTUCK'S TRAVELS IN AFRICA?

A: JOHN SHATTUCK, ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND LABOR, IS ON A BRIEF TRIP TO RWANDA, THE GOMA REFUGEE CAMP IN ZAIRE, AND BURUNDI AND IS NOW IN BUJUMBURA.

IN RWANDA HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT FOCUSED ON  
THE GENERAL ISSUE OF CREATING STRUCTURES OF ACCOUNTABILITY  
FOR THE GENOCIDE THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE SUCH AS A WAR  
CRIMES TRIBUNAL. AMONG THE ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED WERE  
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PAGE 07 STATE 212243 082232Z  
HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORS, COOPERATION WITH THE UN HUMAN  
RIGHTS COMMISSIONER, ENCOURAGING RETURNEES, DETENTIONS OF  
PERPETRATORS OF GENOCIDE, AND SECURITY CONDITIONS IN THE  
REFUGEE CAMPS. IN BURUNDI, HE IS CONVEYING THE U.S.  
GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO AMELIORATE AND DEFUSE ETHNIC  
TENSIONS.

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5. PRM PRESS GUIDANCE - RWANDA: REFUGEE UPDATE  
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Q: WOULD YOU PROVIDE US WITH AN UPDATE ON RWANDAN  
REFUGEES?

A: ACCORDING TO UNHCR, THERE ARE CURRENTLY ABOUT 1.6  
MILLION RWANDAN REFUGEES IN THE NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES OF  
ZAIRE, BURUNDI, TANZANIA, AND UGANDA.

ZAIRE: 1.2 MILLION:

850,000 IN GOMA AREA

312,000 IN BUKAVU AND UVIRA

BURUNDI: 200,000

TANZANIA: 271,000

UGANDA: 10,500

ABOUT 90,000 REFUGEES ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE CROSSED BACK TO  
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PAGE 08 STATE 212243 082232Z  
RWANDA AS OF LAST WEEK.

AN ACCURATE COUNT OF THE NUMBER OF REFUGEES IS VERY  
DIFFICULT TO MAKE. EFFORTS TO BETTER ESTIMATE THE REFUGEE  
POPULATION ARE BEING MADE.

Q: WHAT IS THE HEALTH SITUATION OF THE REFUGEES IN ZAIRE?

A: THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN ZAIRE IS IMPROVING.

MASSIVE RELIEF EFFORTS TO PROVIDE CLEAN WATER AND MEDICAL CARE HAVE REDUCED THE NUMBER OF DEATHS FROM CHOLERA TO ABOUT 500 PER DAY, DOWN FROM BETWEEN 1,500-2,000 DEATHS PER DAY LAST WEEK.

UNFORTUNATELY, CASES OF DYSENTERY, MENINGITIS, AND MEASLES ARE ON THE RISE.

ONLY ABOUT 50 PERCENT OF THE WATER AND FOOD NEEDS IN THE CAMPS ARE NOW BEING MET.

INCREASING THE PROVISION AND DELIVERY OF CLEAN WATER AND FOOD CONTINUE TO BE THE MAIN FOCUS OF HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS IN GOMA.

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6. AF PRESS GUIDANCE - NIGERIA: SITUATION UPDATE  
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Q: COULD YOU GIVE ME AN UPDATE ON THE SITUATION IN  
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PAGE 09 STATE 212243 082232Z  
NIGERIA?

A: SOME FACTORIES HAVE REOPENED IN LAGOS. HOWEVER, MANY NIGERIAN WORKERS HAVE NOT RETURNED TO WORK. THE OIL WORKERS REMAIN ON STRIKE.

NO VIOLENCE HAS BEEN REPORTED TODAY. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION IS LIGHT AND SEVERAL POWER STATIONS REMAIN CLOSED DUE TO THE FUEL SHORTAGE.

TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, ALL AMERICANS ARE SAFE. NEVERTHELESS, WE ADVISE THAT AMERICANS AVOID UNNECESSARY TRAVEL TO NIGERIA.

WE CONTINUE TO MONITOR THIS SITUATION CLOSELY.

Q: WHAT IS THE STATUS OF CHIEF M.K.O. ABIOLA'S DETENTION AND TRIAL?

A: LAST FRIDAY, AUGUST 5, CHIEF ABIOLA REJECTED THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT'S BAIL OFFER. THE OFFER WOULD HAVE PREVENTED ABIOLA FROM LEAVING THE COUNTRY AND ENGAGING IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES.

CHIEF ABIOLA'S TRIAL DATE IS STILL SET FOR AUGUST 16TH.  
HE REMAINS IN PRISON.

Q: WHAT IS OUR OVERALL POLICY TOWARD NIGERIA?

A: THE UNITED STATES CONTINUES TO SUPPORT RESPONSIBLE  
EFFORTS TO RESTORE CIVILIAN, DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN  
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PAGE 10 STATE 212243 082232Z  
NIGERIA. THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT AND WILL NOT SUPPORT  
ANY INDIVIDUAL.

OUR PRIMARY GOAL IS IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AND RESPECT  
FOR AN OPEN, PLURALISTIC, AND DEMOCRATIC PROCESS THAT  
ENSURES THAT THE WILL OF THE NIGERIAN PEOPLE IS RESPECTED.

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7. AF PRESS GUIDANCE - NIGERIA: JESSE JACKSON TRIP  
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Q: WHAT IS YOUR READOUT OF JESSE JACKSON'S TRIP TO  
NIGERIA?

A: THE JESSE JACKSON MISSION LAST WEEK WAS A SUCCESS.  
REVEREND JACKSON CARRIED AN UNAMBIGUOUS MESSAGE FROM THE  
PRESIDENT TO HEAD OF STATE ABACHA. IN A TWO HOUR MEETING,  
HE CONVEYED OUR CONCERNS ABOUT THE LACK OF PROGRESS TOWARD  
DEMOCRACY TO GENERAL ABACHA.

WHILE IN NIGERIA, JACKSON ALSO MET WITH CHIEF M.K.O.  
ABIOLA, THE APPARENT WINNER OF LAST JUNE'S ANNULLED  
ELECTIONS, AND WITH HUMAN RIGHTS, PRO-DEMOCRACY AND LABOR  
GROUPS. HE GAVE THE SAME MESSAGE TO ALL.

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