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DEPARTMENT OF STATE SECURITY
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S/SE
Ref.: 434/023/0 VT
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Under the cover of the Chief of Cabinet

Recipients: The Chief of Cabinet of His Majesty the King
The Minister for Justice
The Minister for Foreign Affairs
The Minister for the Interior
National Magistrates A. Vandoren & P. Duinslanger
The Directorate-General for Policy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
SGR

To: The Minister for the Interior
60-62 Rue Royale
1000 BRUSSELS

Dear Minister:

Subject: RWANDA: the "Amasasu" Association.

I have the honour of sending you the following information, which has just reached us through an occasional and unverified source.

Colonel Augustin Ndindiliyimana, a native of Butare, former Minister for Youth in 1979, was an important member of the "Amasasu" Association. This association, the name of which means "cartridge" in the local language, was set up within the extremist Hutu section of the Rwandan army. The military association refused to accept the Arusha Agreements under any circumstances and warned President Habyarimana that the act of signing the Arusha Agreement would be seen as an act of weakness on his part and that he would pay for the gesture with his death. Tracts were circulated in Kigali saying, among other things, that Amasasu would "strike like an arrow". The Amasasu soldiers compiled a list of persons to eliminate, both Tutsis and moderate Hutus. The action to be taken by Amasasu formed part of a plan known as "Giraffe".

More than a fortnight before the attack on the presidential aircraft, Habyarimana was already being accompanied by a Rwandan or even foreign personage. This would explain the presence of the President of Burundi in President Habyarimana's plane.

A few minutes before the attack, when the presidential aeroplane had received the order, issued by the control tower, to circulate around the Kigali airfield, the Presidential Guard had taken out its heavy arms and started taking up positions in the city. Less than ten minutes after the crash, "Thousand Hills Radio" was giving out the names of the persons killed in the crash, on air.

The attack on the aircraft was carried out with missiles fired from the location known as "kilometre 27", near the "outer marker" signs of the ILS (instrument landing system) at the end of the Kigali airport runway. The teams of missile launchers arrived at that point during the day before the attack. They returned on the following morning and massacred the few people living in the area. Only one child survived this massacre.

Once the aircraft had crashed, the members of Amasasu put the "Giraffe" plan into operation and started systematic elimination of the people who appeared on their lists.

COMMENTS

1. The list of names drawn up on 14 July 1994 by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (FPR) included a Major-General Ndindiliyimana, Head of the Gendarmerie (No. 144 on the list, see my note dated 9 August 1994 under reference 434/023/O VT). This could refer to Colonel Ndindiliyimana.

2. The Amasasu organisation is not known to our department.

3. In her book "Rwanda, the story of a genocide", Colette Braeckman confirms the remarks about the unease of President Habyarimana. I quote: "(...) On Wednesday evening, Habyarimana, tired, perhaps sickened, decided to return to the country." "(...) At the last minute, Habyarimana, who perhaps wished to surround himself with as many guarantees as possible, suggested to his Burundian colleague (...) that he accompany him."

We consider it unlikely that the launchers were posted during any part of the day, at the end of the runway, to wait for the presidential aircraft, which was shot down at 2023. If the launchers had truly been there during the day, they would have run the risk of being seen by the Belgian blue berets of the Minuar, who were guarding the airport.

A number of testimonies are consistent on the way in which the aircraft was shot down. All the witnesses who saw the rockets launched, from far or near, are formal: the accuracy of the shot could only have been the work of professionals who were taking no risks in the fulfilment of their task.

Yours faithfully and respectfully,

B. Van Lijesbeth
Administrator-General

For the Minister