

Record of interviews by the Military Investigator N. Van Winsen, substitute for the Military Investigator Ver Elst-Reul with Mr Augustin NDINDI LIYIMANA, Head of the Rwandan Police until 5 June 1994, on 20, 26 28 July, 2 and 5 August 1994.

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General NDINDI LIYIMANA exercised his functions as Minister from 82 to 1991. He was Minister for Youth (8 ½ years) Minister of Transport (4 months) Minister to the Presidency (1 year) and Minister for Defence (3 months).

He was appointed Head of the Rwandan Police in June 1992. He received the title General in December 1993.

At the time of the events, the General had returned with his family to his village (BUTARE Region) for Easter. However he had wanted to chair a coordination meeting between UNCIVPOL and MINUAR and the Rwandan Police which was to be held at the Rwandan Police headquarters on 5 April 1994. That explains why he was in Kigali on 6 April 1994.

He spent the day of 6 April 1994 at this residence in Kigali and at the time of the attack he was there.

Major KARANGWA (RWA), liaison officer for the Rwandan Police with MINUAR, telephoned him around 20.30 hours to inform him that there had been an explosion and there had been a response from beside the airport. The General asked him to follow the situation and inform him of any further information.

About a quarter of an hour later, around 20.45 hours, the Minister Enoch RUHIGIRA, Cabinet Director for President HABYARIMANA, called him by telephone and reported to him the crash of the Presidential aircraft with no further comment. It seemed that he himself had returned from the airport (where he had gone to meet the President).

Usually the President is met at the airport at least by the Minister for the Interior and by the President of the Assembly Theodore SONDIKUBWABO. On 7 April 1994 the General saw the President of the Assembly at the EM of the army, in the company of the brother of President Habyarimana, the Director Seraphin BARARENGANA and the Chief of EM., GATSINZI, when he offered his condolences to the widow of President Habyarimana. The Minister for the Interior had remained in Dar Es Salaam and the President of the Assembly was at Butare on 6 April.

The General then went to the headquarters of the FAR (Kigali camp) which was not far from his residence, because it was there that he could obtain more information. At that time he did not know who formed part of the escort of the President.

Around 21.00 hours, the General first of all had radio contact with Colonel BAGOSORA, director of the Cabinet of the Ministry of Defence (MINIDEF) and he asked him to go to the headquarters of the FAR for more information. It was by chance that he had this contact over an open radio. He did not know where BAGOSORA was at that time and with whom he was in communication.

Around 21.30 hours, a first meeting, attended by, as well as the General, representatives of the Ministry of Defence (Colonel BAGOSORA, Major KAYUMBA) and the Chief of Staff of the army (MURASAMPONGO, GI; KANYANDEKWE, Officer of bureau 3; Colonel RWANANYA, G4, Lt Col RWABALINDA, liaison officer FAR – UN) took place, to get a progress report on the situation. At that time, the news of the death of the President was confirmed.

It was decided to set up a crisis committee, on a suggestion made by BAGOSORA. From the start of the discussions certain officers (in particular BAGOSORA, Major KAYUMBA..) recommended that the soldiers should take power. It should be noted that Colonel Serobuga contacted them by telephone during the meeting on the same subject. It can be admitted that this decision to take power by the army was in fact accepted. It was also decided to advise MINUAR and invite General DALLAIRE and Colonel Marshal. Furthermore they proceeded with the replacement of the chief of staff and Colonel GATSINZI was appointed and the decision was taken to organise for the following day 7 April a meeting with the Commanders of the units: the Commanders of the GISENYI, RUHENGERI, MUTARA, BYUMBA and RULINDO sectors, South sector, the Commanders of the Police groups in Kigali, GISENYI, RUHENGERI,, BUTARE, CANGUGU, the Commanders of the major units, the RECCE Battalion, the para Battalion, the PM Battalion, the Presidential Guard Battalion, the Commanders of the schools (ESM) and the Chiefs of the two office Headquarters (Gd and AR).

Once he had arrived, General DALLAIRE was informed on the subject of the crash of the presidential aircraft and the modus operandi of the taking over of affairs by the soldiers was explained. It was at that moment that General NDINDI offered to go and consult the UN representative BOH-BOH which was accepted.

At that meeting there was at no time a question of an involvement of the Belgians in the attack, nor of establishing “ROAD BLOCKS” whose existence General NDINDI did not observe.

On 07.04.1994 around 02.00 hours or later, Colonel BAGOSORA, returning from Mr BOH-BOH, informed them that Mr BOH-BOH had referred to the Arusha accords and had said that he assessed that they should continue to be applied therefore the MRND should appoint the President’s replacement.

A radio press release had been prepared by Major KAYUMBA and sent after the return of BAGOSORA who signed it. The General does not have the text of this press release.

After the departure of General DALLAIRE and before the return of Colonel BAGOSORA from Mr BOH-BOH, Colonel MARSHAL came to the meeting. The General explained the situation to him. The point of view concerning the takeover of power by the soldiers was explained by his partisans. The General said that they should wait for the results of the BAGOSORA - BOH-BOH meeting for this specific decision. General NDINDI remained the whole night at the headquarters of the FAR.

During the night of 6 to 7 April he learned from General DALLAIRE that the MINUAR could not reach the presidential residence to verify the aviation accident as a result of soldiers who prevented his passage.

On 7 April 1994, in the morning, the General returned to his house to then go soon after to the headquarters to prepare to participate in the meeting at the US embassy as proposed by Mr BOH-BOH. He went there in the company of Colonel BAGOSORA and Colonel RWABALINDA at 09.00 hours, but the meeting could not take place because the foreign diplomats could not get to the embassy of the EU as a result of the shots which could be heard.

From the US embassy he went to the ESM and participated in the meeting of the unit Commanders. This meeting, chaired by BAGOSORA, began around 10.00 hours. First of all this meeting officially announced the death of the President. BAGOSORA explained what had been done since the crash of the presidential aircraft. When he explained the point of view of BOH-BOH, some officers present, including Lt Col Leonard NKUNDIYE, former head of the Presidential Guard, at that time Commander of the Mutara sector and who had the mission of training the INTERHAMWE there, took a position in the sense of maintaining power in the hands of civilians. The crisis committee was furthermore confirmed. Col BAGOSORA gave the list of those who made up this committee and the name of the prefect of the town of Kigali, Lt Col Tanise RENZAHU was added.

To the question of knowing whether, during this meeting it had been a question of Belgians involved in the crash of the presidential aircraft the General replied: "No".

During this meeting the camp commander, Lt Col NUBAHA, came into the room to inform them that soldiers of the MINUAR were being threatened and that he had almost been overtaken by the events.

BAGOSORA replied to him that the meeting was almost finished and that they would see how to settle the problem. After the departure of the Colonel, shots were fired in the camp. The General saw a blue helmet of a black race cross the parking lot of the

ESM in the direction of the new buildings of the EM quad.

At the end of the meeting, General NDINDI insisted to Colonel BAGOSORA in order that he should go to settle the problems raised by Colonel NUBAHA but he does not know if he eventually went there.

To the question of knowing if General NDINDI was unable to intervene, he replied as a result of his particular situation, being Commander of the Gie, and for other reasons (departure from the army 10 years ago) he could not take the operations in hand.

During or at the end of the meeting, General DALLAIRE, accompanied by an officer, went to the ESM. General NDINDI does not know if it was intended that General DALLAIRE should attend this meeting.

According to the memory of General NDINDI, when they left the premises of the meeting, General DALLAIRE said that certain UN soldiers were sick in Kigali camp and that he wished to see them. General DALLAIRE had a private meeting with General NDINDI. General NDINDI advised General DALLAIRE not to go to the camp for reasons of security, believing that in the meantime the situation could be calmed down. General NDINDI does not know where General DALLAIRE went after this meeting.

General NDINDI returned to his domicile in Kigali and around 15.30- 16.00 hours he came across by chance General DALLAIRE and Colonel BAGOSORA at Minidef.

It was there that General NDINDI learnt for the first time, from the mouth of General DALLAIRE that 11 blue helmets had been killed. General DALLAIRE did not ask for anything about this matter from General NDINDI.

To the question of knowing if General NDINDI had an idea about the person or persons who had shot down the presidential aircraft, General NDINDI said that he was convinced that it was the FPR which had shot down the presidential aircraft.

Although nothing had led him to think that something was going to [illeg]. On 06.04.1994, a war preparation climate was felt at [illeg] P.R. The Rwandan army had intercepted and broadcast messages issued by the FPR. These messages spoke of restarting the war. He also remembers a message from the FPR intercepted by the FAR: "The FPR has succeeded in its coup with the team of Belgians". General NDINDI however does not know if all this information thus attributed to the FPR was authentic but he is convinced that the coup was carried out by the FPR.

General NDINDI does not know how the aircraft was hit. He did not go to the CRASH location.

He does not believe that a service of the Rwandan Gd went to the location.

It is true that a section of the Third Company of Remera being at Katuga regularly established roadblocks on the route to Kibungo at the level of Masaka. The General has no news of these people.

He remembers that, afterwards during the month of May 1994, in a letter from the Minister of Defence, it was asked that an inquiry be opened on the aircraft accident and on certain events which took place in the region of Masaka. The General was not aware of the results of this inquiry, if it took place since the place was occupied by the FPR.

He remembers that General DALLAIRE had communicated to the EM Chief that Belgium, France and the United States had each proposed to carry out an inquiry on the attack and that the Rwandan government should choose who should carry out this inquiry.

The FPR remained in its billets of the CND until 7 April 1994 at 16.00 hours, but it would have been materially possible for it to infiltrate as far as Masaka.

General NDINDI has no information concerning the projectiles used. The FPR has SAMs but he did not see them. The existence of these weapons was known to the information services of the army for several years.

General NDINDI does not have any information that can lead him to state that Belgians were involved in the attack against the presidential aircraft.

On this matter he does not have any evidence and the Rwandan police does not have any information in this respect.

The police have always wanted to be neutral with regard to any party. Hence it remained objective in the information supplied. In his view the extremists did not have any interest in eliminating the President. He did not see anyone who could claim to replace him.

General NDINDI was amazed that the President should have gone to Dar Es Salaam in the company of Colonel SAGATWA (special Secretary) as well as the head of the EM and the AR: General SABIMANA. Normally these two people did not travel with the President, especially when the Ministry of Defence was not in the country.

The Rwandan Gd had no catastrophe plan. It was totally involved in an integration structure (Arusha) and worked with MINUAR principally in applying the procedures for handover of weapons.

To his knowledge the AR did not have a plan in the event of disappearance of the President.

However, in the light of the development of events, General NDINDI thinks that the actions committed so quickly (for example massacre of Ministers and so-called opposition people) did not come from improvisation.

As regards the assassination of the 10 Belgians the General thinks that the security provided for the Prime Minister Mrs AGATHE UWILINGIYIMANA was covered by Rwandan police.

These police came from the most part from his original region, that is the south of the country.

It was Lt Col BAVUGAMENSHI who commanded the VIP Company Section, looking after security of important people, and the officer in charge of direct security for Mrs AGATHE was Captain NDAVISABA of the Rwandan army, originally from the south as well but who worked with the police.

As regards the arrangement, a dozen or so police were inside the plot while the blue helmets were at the entrance.

The General was not especially informed of the assassination of the 10 Belgian paras. He had been informed of the death and disappearance of the ministers. And as stated above he was informed of the death or of the disappearance of the 10 Belgians by General DALLAIRE on 7 April around 15.00 hours at the Ministry of Defence

DALLAIRE knew that there were “people” at Kigali camp. The situation was very tense. The life of General DALLAIRE could be in danger. In his view RTLM was broadcasting “If you can do nothing, go home”.

He was only certain that the Belgians had been killed when he saw their bodies at the hospital in Kigali. General NDINDI himself asked that the bodies be washed and made presentable. He himself promised the money necessary for that.

Regarding the name of the G4 officer who proceeded to disarm the blue helmets at the residents of Mrs AGATHE, the General stated that he had no information on this subject.

He had furthermore received no testimony on the “AGATHE” incident.

On this point it was the Military Investigator in Brussels who gave him information.

The General knew Major Bernard NTUVAHAGA but did not explain how this G4 officer was at this place with such a mission.

General DALLAIRE gave him information concerning the important people taken or killed on 7.07.1994; the Minister of Agriculture Mr Frederic NZAMURAMBAHO, the Minister for Social Affairs (NDASINGWA), the Minister for Information (RUCOGOZA), as well as the President of the Court of Cassation (RAVARUGANDA) had been killed or taken.

These important persons were protected in principle by two Rwandan policemen (10 for the Prime Minister) and for some of them by the blue helmets. He does not know what happened in each case.

As regards the massacres these were committed by extremists of which some well-known.

The massacres were ordered by extremists known to FPR and who are still in Rwanda.

The massacre of the Ministers must have been ordered, but he does not know by whom.

The massacres of the ministers were committed by certain soldiers in the presidential guard whose camp is located close to the district of their residences.

Certain soldiers at Kigali camp also participated in the massacres.

The General thinks that the events occurred at Kigali camp between 10 and 11 hours in the morning. The camp was the place of assembly of all the reserve units of FAR who had to carry out missions in the combat sectors.

As regards the subversive propaganda the General stated that RTLM was free therefore he could not act against it.

General NDINDI was also the subject of subversive propaganda: he was criticised for transporting members of FPR in armoured vehicles while the General used this vehicle for his own movements and, sometimes, to move threatened people.

After 7/4/94 during negotiations on a ceasefire with the FPR, the FPR put forward preconditions:

- 1) stoppage of the massacres
- 2) stoppage of the broadcast of RTLM
- 3) the [illeg] with the presidential guard

He saw Mr RUGGIU at Kigali camp at the start of the hostilities, in the officers mess and also at the diplomats' hotel.

As a result of the above-mentioned preconditions the Chief of EM , the crisis committee (Colonel BAGOSORA was not present) demanded of those responsible for the transmission to stop inciting massacres and apparently the message got through but it is surprising that they continued as before.

General NDINDI learnt that Mr RUGGIU had gone to the Kigali district to tell the people to protect themselves against the shelling.

The General discussed with certain officers at his headquarters about the RUGGIU case asking if the person involved was not a spy who had all the facilities of access, even to military secrets. No measure was taken in respect of him before his departure in June.

The manager of the 1000 collines hotel informed the General that he had also been threatened by RUGGIU.

#### As regards the role of the French

The General only had contacts with the French who cooperated with the police until the arrival of MINUAR in November 1993, that is to say:

- Lt Col G D DAMY , advisor to EM Gd
- EGD instructors, a Major and an officer
- A Lt Col for instruction within the mobile intervention group
- An officer for the criminal and documentation research centre

After the arrival of MINUAR, the cooperating French soldiers were stood down.

After the assassination of the President and when the FPR went on the attack the FGd instructor and a co-operating Frenchman working in the transmissions for the army were reported missing and Lt Col DAMY asked for the intervention of the GD but that could not happen.

The French put in place within the Rwandan police a criminal and documentation research service from June 1993.

Relationships between the General and the French were still not easy, especially at the start of his service with the police.

The General no longer met French soldiers in Rwanda between the events and his departure at the start of June 1994.

Signature

5.8.94