

**PRESIDENCY
OF THE
REPUBLIC**

7 April 1994

*The General
Individual Chief of Staff*

- M E M O -

for the attention of the President of the Republic

very [*illegible*]

SUBJECT: Rwanda-Burundi – Situation after the death of the two presidents.

The aeroplane that was transporting the Rwandan president, Mr Habyarimana, and the Burundi president, Mr Ntaryamira, on their return from the regional summit of Dar Es Salaam (Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya) crashed yesterday evening in Kigali.

All the passengers, including 2 Burundi ministers, the military leaders of the entourage of the Rwandan president and the 3 members of the French team, died.

According to witnesses the aeroplane appeared to be brought down by rocket fire while it tried to land. But the probable hypothesis of an attack by the FPR will have to be confirmed by the investigation.

The situation in Kigali is confused. Violent exchanges of fire are taking place between the barely controlled Rwandan forces and the FPR battalion stationed in the town centre.

Mrs Habyarimana, currently under the protection of the Rwandan armed forces, has asked our ambassador for reinforcement of the French military assistants for the presidential safety.

The French nationals (450 in Kigali) do not seem to be under any immediate threat. Some isolated families have been rehoused close to the embassy. Contacts have been made with the Belgian battalion of the United Nations force (UNAMIR) to update the plan for protection and evacuation of the French and Belgian nationals.

The army staff has alerted the units in Bangui and in Libreville and a surgical branch in N'djamena. Elements of the special forces could be brought in from the metropolis in under 24 hours.

If the attack was of FPR origin, it could be the forerunner to action on a much greater scale with a view to taking power in Kigali.

In this scenario, the Rwandan armed forces would be able to control the town, containing the FPR battalion of eight hundred men and the infiltrated elements, but would be unable to keep the north of the country from where a new FPR offensive would spread with strong Ugandan logistical support.

In Burundi, where the situation is calm at the moment, the successive assassination, within a very short period, of two Hutu presidents will undoubtedly relaunch ethnic massacres.

Unrest in the area is probable.

General Quesnot