

Habyarimana Urges Understanding Within Government

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[Speech by Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana;
place and date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] Rwandans, last week there were demonstra-
tions and even fighting in some parts of the country. If

one gets to the bottom of things, one finds that the cause is just misunderstanding and lack of tolerance among the members of the parties. However, the real cause of such behavior is mainly found to be the way the last Arusha talks were carried out and the results. However, all Rwandans still continue to hope that the Arusha talks will help us to end the war. [passage omitted]

As I had earlier requested, I had hoped that the fourth round of talks would correct some of the earlier agreements. That is not the way it happened. The talks did not take into account the proposals of the majority of Rwandans, although this had been my wish. This is the cause of last week's disturbances. [passage omitted]

I would like to ask the parties to continue consultations so that some of the content of the agreements reached on 9 January may be corrected to the satisfaction of all, otherwise, we will have struggled for nothing, as some people would not respect the agreements. It would be sad to find such agreements, which did not come out of a consensus, become a source of fighting and misunderstanding.

Once again we request the mediation committee to continue to help us so that the talks produce leadership that would be advantageous to Rwanda and the times we are in. [passage omitted]

Once again, I ask the Rwandan Government to forge an understanding. Its members should understand each other. They should be dedicated to the interests of the country and not put their personal interests or those of their parties first. It is sad to note that on a question as important as that of Arusha, the Government of Rwanda cannot reach an understanding on ideas.

Instead of its directives being taken into account by the Rwandan delegation, the delegation gets directives from some institutions which sometimes have no authority to give them. Members of the government should represent all Rwandans. They should not mix their official duties with those of their parties. All Rwandans are watching them in their duties. Parties should understand each

other; they should avoid any source of misunderstanding and anything which could cause friction among Rwandans.

They should do everything possible so that the differences which are brought about by multipartyism are on the level of ideas aimed at policies meant to build the country. Rwandans, the next round of talks will center on the question of making the Rwandan Patriotic Front [RPF] soldiers part of the Rwandan Army. This is a technical question. I found that it is necessary for departments related to the Armed Forces to have an important role to play in the talks. That is why I appointed the minister of defense to head the Rwandan delegation. I request all Rwandans to support the Rwandan delegates to help them hold talks with the RPF and bring about peace to all Rwandans. I also ask countries which assist us in the talks to assist the Rwandan delegates to carry out the instructions given to them.

Rwandans, I decided to address you because it looks as if Rwanda is at the crossroads. It is therefore important that what happened last week, especially the disturbances which occurred in some corners of the country, end once and for all in our country. It is good that Rwandans chose the multiparty system. They should use it to bring together different ideas and forge an understanding. They should not however, listen to those who mislead them to fight each other under the pretext that they belong to different parties, tribes or regions.

The multiparty system, I remind you, does not teach Rwandans to confront each other. You should struggle for peace in our Rwanda so that all of us find a remedy to the problems facing our country. You should adopt the common objective of ending the war so that, as I requested at the beginning of this year, Rwandans unite further.

We should all fight for the unity of all Rwandans. This is the objective which the delegates at the Arusha talks should keep in their hearts. That way the results of the talks would be a source of hope for Rwandans in the future. We should keep in our hearts the sovereignty of our Rwanda, hoping that it continues to progress further. Thank you.