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ENVELOPE

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SECTION 1 OF 7
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BODY

SUBJ: DIA COMMONWEALTH ASSESSMENT 061-00/17 AUG 00

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(U) THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED

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(U) BURUNDI: DUBIOUS PLAN FOR REGROUPMENT CAMP
CONVERSION

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(U) BURUNDI: DUBIOUS PLAN FOR REGROUPMENT CAMP CONVERSION
AS OF 2100Z 06 AUG 2000

1. ~~(S)~~ PEACE NEGOTIATOR NELSON MANDELA HAS DEMANDED THE CLOSURE OF
REGROUPMENT CAMPS. BUJUMBURA'S PROPOSAL TO CONVERT SOME CAMPS INTO
PERMANENT VILLAGES HAS LITTLE INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT. BURUNDI'S
INTRANSIGENCE COULD IMPEDE THE ARUSHA PEACE TALKS AND FURTHER
JEOPARDIZE THE STABILITY OF THE GREAT LAKES REGION.

2. ~~(S)~~ IN RESPONSE TO MANDELA'S DEMAND THAT BURUNDI CLOSE THE
REGROUPMENT CAMPS AS A CONDITION OF A PEACE ACCORD AT ARUSHA,
TANZANIA, BURUNDI PLEDGED TO DISMANTLE THE CAMPS BY 31 JULY. THIS
DEADLINE PASSED, AND THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED A PLAN TO CONVERT
SOME

OF THE CAMPS IN BUJUMBURA RURALE PROVINCE - STARTING WITH KABEZI,
MUBIMBI, AND RUZIBA - INTO PERMANENT VILLAGES. THE REGIME PRESENTS
ITS PLAN AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO FORCED REGROUPMENT; HOWEVER,
BURUNDI'S

HUTU MAJORITY SEES IT AS A WAY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO MAINTAIN
CONTROL

OVER THEM. HISTORICALLY, VILLAGIZATION IN BURUNDI HAS FAILED
BECAUSE,

UNLIKE OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES, THERE IS NO TRADITION OF VILLAGE
LIFE. PRESIDENT JEAN-BAPTISTE BAGAZA TRIED THIS APPROACH, WITHOUT
SUCCESS, IN THE 1980S.

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