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- (U) BURUNDI: STATUS OF PEACE TALKS

AS OF 2200Z 28 FEB 00

- 1. PEACE TALK FACILITATOR NELSON MANDELA'S COMMENTS HAVE INCREASED TENSION AMONG BURUNDI'S RADICAL TUTSI ELITES.
- 2. (C) TO PROTEST MANDELA'S PUBLIC CRITICISMS OF TUTSI MILITARY, ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL DOMINATION, RADICAL TUTSI CONDUCTED AN ILLEGAL DEMONSTRATION ON 26 FEBRUARY IN BUJUMBURA, WHICH RIOT POLICE

BROKE UP. THE GOVERNMENT DENIED ORGANIZERS A DEMONSTRATION PERMIT TO

PREVENT THE SPREAD OF TENSION AMONG URBAN TUTSI.

- 3. (C) THE PROTEST WAS IN PART A RESPONSE TO MANDELA'S 21 FEBRUARY PROPOSAL AT THE ARUSHA PEACE TALKS TO INSTITUTE A 50-50 HUTU-TUTSI SPLIT IN A POST-ARUSHA-TALKS ARMY. MANDELA PREVIOUSLY HELD PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS WITH GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION LEADERS REGARDING THE 50-50 FORMULA. HOWEVER, HIS PUBLIC DISCLOSURE PRECEDED ADEQUATE REFORM-MINDED GROUNDWORK IN THE TUTSI-DOMINATED ARMY.
- 4.

 DURING A 7 FEBRUARY MEETING WITH BURUNDI PRESIDENT BUYOYA

 AND

IN LATER DISCUSSIONS WITH REGIONAL DIPLOMATS, MANDELA SUGGESTED THAT

BUYOYA STEP DOWN TO EASE THE PEACE PROCESS. MANDELA REPORTEDLY BELIEVES THAT BUYOYA, AS A SYMBOL OF CURRENT TUTS! HEGEMONY, COULD BE

A HINDRANCE TO PEACE TALKS. BUYOYA REPORTEDLY IS PREPARED TO STEP DOWN, OR CONVERSELY TO LEAD A TRANSITION GOVERNMENT, DEPENDING ON DEVELOPMENTS IN THE PEACE PROCESS.

5. \iff TUTSI EXTREMISTS WILL CONTINUE TO OPPOSE RAPID AND EQUAL INTEGRATION OF REBELS INTO THE ARMY. ALTHOUGH MANDELA'S INTERVENTION

REVIVED MORIBUND PEACE TALKS, HIS CRITICISMS OF THE TUTSI



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