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 TAGS: PREL, US, BY
 SUBJECT: TEXT OF DAS BROWN'S CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY

1. ~~THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF DAS BROWN'S TESTIMONY ON BURUNDI WHICH HE DELIVERED BEFORE THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS SUB-COMMITTEES ON AFRICA AND HUMAN RIGHTS ON SEPTEMBER 22. DAS BROWN OPENED HIS TESTIMONY WITH A BRIEF STATEMENT AND THEN SUBMITTED HIS FULL TESTIMONY FOR THE RECORD.~~

2. BROWN STATED THAT THE DEPARTMENT SHARED THE CONCERN OF CONGRESS OVER RECENT EVENTS IN BURUNDI AND NOTED OUR INTEREST IN CONSULTING WITH CONGRESS ON THIS ISSUE. BEGIN TEXT OF REMAINDER OF OPENING STATEMENT:

LAST MONTH, AFTER A HIATUS OF 16 YEARS, ETHNIC VIOLENCE BETWEEN THE HUTU MAJORITY AND THE TUTSI MINORITY ERUPTED AGAIN IN BURUNDI. IN TWO AREAS IN THE NORTH HUTU KILLED MANY TUTSI. IN RETALIATION, ELEMENTS OF THE BURUNDI MILITARY WENT OUT OF CONTROL AND KILLED EVEN MORE HUTU. SOME 60,000 HUTU FLED TO NEIGHBORING RWANDA. AFTER A FEW DAYS, CALM WAS RESTORED BUT FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY REMAIN. WE DO NOT KNOW HOW MANY PEOPLE WERE KILLED. ESTIMATES OF 2-3,000 TUTSI AND 5-10,000 HUTU ARE CREDIBLE.

BURUNDI PRESIDENT BUYOYA HAS DECLARED HIS GOVERNMENT'S INTENTION OF DETERMINING THE FACTS OF THESE EVENTS AND BRINGING THE GUILTY PARTIES TO JUSTICE UNDER THE LAW. FOR THE LONGER TERM HIS STATED POLICY IS TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AMONG ETHNIC GROUPS AND BRING ABOUT NATIONAL RECONCILIATION. THE ACTIONS OF HIS GOVERNMENT

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IN REGARD TO HUMAN RIGHTS DURING HIS YEAR IN POWER HAVE BEEN PROGRESSIVE AND HE DESERVES SUPPORT IN TRYING TO ACHIEVE THESE GOALS.

THE US AND OTHER DONORS HAVE PROVIDED EMERGENCY RELIEF, PARTICULARLY FOR REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS. WE HAVE URGED PRESIDENT BUYOYA TO TAKE URGENT STEPS TO IMPLEMENT HIS DECLARED POLICIES. WE BELIEVE HE WILL DO SO. IF THE POLICIES ARE NOT PURSUED, WE MUST REASSESS US POLICY AND PROGRAMS IN BURUNDI. END TEXT.

3. BEGIN TEXT OF FORMAL WRITTEN TESTIMONY:

MR. CHAIRMAN, MEMBERS OF THE SUB-COMMITTEES, IT IS A PLEASURE TO APPEAR BEFORE YOU TODAY TO TESTIFY ON THE SITUATION IN BURUNDI. AS YOU ARE NO DOUBT AWARE, THE RECENT OUTBREAK OF VIOLENCE IN THAT NATION IS THE PRODUCT OF A LONG HISTORY OF INTER-ETHNIC CONFLICT WHICH PREDATES BURUNDI'S INDEPENDENCE IN 1962. IN 1972, IN VENGEFUL REACTION TO A HUTU UPRISING WHICH LED TO 10,000-15,000 TUTSI DEATHS, THE TUTSI MINORITY SYSTEMATICALLY MASSACRED 100,000-200,000 MEMBERS OF THE HUTU MAJORITY IN ONE OF THE BLOODIEST EPISODES IN THE HISTORY OF MODERN AFRICA. THIS TERRIBLE EVENT HAS POISONED ETHNIC RELATIONS SINCE THEN, AND IS THE UNDERLYING FOUNDATION OF THE LATEST COMMUNAL VIOLENCE WHICH HAS WRACKED THAT NATION.

THE VIOLENCE THAT ERUPTED AUGUST 14 IN TWO AREAS OF NORTHERN BURUNDI APPARENTLY BEGAN WHEN SOME HUTUS, FEARING ANOTHER MASSACRE, LAUNCHED A "PREEMPTIVE" ATTACK ON NEIGHBORING TUTSI. WE ARE NOT SURE OF THE PROXIMATE CAUSE OF THIS OUTBREAK, BUT HAVE NO INFORMATION THAT HUTUS WERE ABOUT TO BE ATTACKED. WE ALSO DO NOT KNOW HOW MANY TUTSIS WERE KILLED, BUT THERE ARE CREDIBLE ESTIMATES OF 2,000-3,000 DEAD. THE TUTSI-DOMINATED BURUNDI ARMY WAS ORDERED TO INTERVENE TO RESTORE ORDER. IN THE PROCESS, UNCONTROLLED ARMY ELEMENTS MASSACRED MANY HUTUS, INCLUDING WOMEN AND CHILDREN, IN REVENGE FOR THE KILLINGS OF THE TUTSIS. AGAIN, WE DO NOT HAVE PRECISE INFORMATION ON THE NUMBER OF DEAD, BUT BELIEVE THAT THEY NUMBERED FROM 5,000-10,000, INCLUDING THOSE WHO DIED FROM HUNGER, INFECTION, AND EXPOSURE. IN ADDITION, SOME 60,000 BURUNDI, MOSTLY WOMEN AND CHILDREN, FLED TO SOUTHERN RWANDA, WHERE THAT GOVERNMENT IS COOPERATING CLOSELY WITH INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES TO ASSIST THESE REFUGEES.

THE SITUATION IN THE AFFECTED NORTHERN AREAS OF BURUNDI IS CALM FOR THE MOMENT, BUT REMAINS VOLATILE. HOWEVER OUR EMBASSY REPORTED A FEW DAYS AGO THAT THE MOVEMENT TOWARD NORMALITY IN THE AFFECTED AREAS IS ACCELERATING, AND AT LEAST SOME PEOPLE ARE BEGINNING TO TRICKLE BACK TO THEIR HOMES AND FIELDS.

THE BURUNDI GOVERNMENT HAS ADMITTED (AND REGRETTED) THAT IN ITS EFFORTS TO RESTORE ORDER, UNCONTROLLED ELEMENTS OF THE ARMY ATTACKED INNOCENT CIVILIANS. BUT THE GOVERNMENT DENIES SUCH ACTS WERE INTENDED OR ORDERED BY IT OR THE MILITARY. MOREOVER, IN MARKED CONTRAST TO 1972, IT IS THE STATED POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO INVESTIGATE THESE TRAGIC EVENTS AND TO BRING TO JUSTICE THOSE RESPONSIBLE. IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE VIOLENCE, THE GOVERNMENT HAS PURSUED A POLICY OF PROVIDING OPEN ACCESS TO THE NORTHERN PROVINCES. IT KEPT THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY INFORMED AND ALLOWED DIPLOMATS (INCLUDING OUR AMBASSADOR AND OTHER EMBASSY OFFICIALS), THE PRESS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS FREE ACCESS TO THE AFFECTED REGIONS. THE GOVERNMENT ALSO DECLARED ITS INTENTION TO SEEK NO REPRISALS, TO MOVE ACTIVELY TOWARD NATIONAL RECONCILIATION, AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE EARLY REPATRIATION

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OF THE REFUGEES IN CONDITIONS OF PEACE AND SAFETY. THESE POLICIES HAVE NOT BEEN IMPLEMENTED FULLY, BUT WE BELIEVE THAT BURUNDI PRESIDENT BUYOYA IS SINCERE IN HIS EFFORTS TO DO SO, AND WE HAVE URGED HIM TO CONTINUE IN THAT DIRECTION.

THE USG RESPONDED TO THE TRAGEDY BY CONDEMNING THE KILLING OF INNOCENT CIVILIANS AND BY CALLING FOR A RETURN TO CALM AND STABILITY. WE ALSO HAVE URGED THE BURUNDI GOVERNMENT TO INVESTIGATE THE KILLINGS AND BRING THE PERPETRATORS TO JUSTICE. ON SEPTEMBER 17, PRESIDENT BUYOYA, IN A PUBLIC SPEECH, SAID "WE SAY IT FOR NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCES. WE ARE PLEDGED TO RESPECTING THE LAWS AND REGULATIONS OF THIS COUNTRY. WHOEVER IS ARRESTED WILL HAVE THE CHANCE TO PRESENT HIS DEFENSE AND TO BE JUDGED. IF HE IS FOUND GUILTY, HE WILL BE PUNISHED. IF HE IS FOUND INNOCENT, HE WILL BE ACQUITTED."

WE HAVE ALSO URGED THE BURUNDI GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE THAT FULL INFORMATION, CREDIBLY DETERMINED, IS MADE AVAILABLE ON THE RECENT EVENTS AND TO MOVE RAPIDLY TO REMOVE THE CAUSES OF ETHNIC DIVISION AND TAKE STEPS TOWARD NATIONAL RECONCILIATION. IN THEIR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT, OTHER DONORS HAVE ECHOED OUR CONCERN ABOUT THE NEED FOR NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND HAVE URGED IT TO TAKE APPROPRIATE STEPS, INCLUDING THOSE WHICH WE HAVE SUGGESTED. IN ADDITION, WE HAVE URGED BURUNDI'S AFRICAN NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS TO USE THEIR GOOD OFFICES TO HELP EASE TENSIONS IN BURUNDI AND PROMOTE NATIONAL RECONCILIATION. ZAIRE'S PRESIDENT MOBUTU SESE SEKO HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY ACTIVE IN THIS REGARD. HE MET WITH PRESIDENT BUYOYA OF BURUNDI AND PRESIDENT HABYARIMANA OF RWANDA TO FORM A TRIPARTITE COMMISSION WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF CALMING TENSIONS AND MOVING RAPIDLY TOWARD AN EARLY RETURN OF THE BURUNDI REFUGEES FROM RWANDA.

AS FOR RELIEF, THE USAID MISSION IN RWANDA, IN COORDINATION WITH CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES, IMMEDIATELY PROVIDED 171 TONS OF FOOD FOR THE REFUGEE RELIEF EFFORT, AND IS PREPARED TO PROVIDE MORE AS NEEDED. THE REFUGEE BUREAU OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT NOW IS CONSIDERING A UNHCR APPEAL FOR \$4.7 MILLION IN LONGER-TERM AID FOR THE REFUGEES. THE PRINCIPAL EUROPEAN AID DONORS - BELGIUM, FRANCE, AND GERMANY - ALSO HAVE PROVIDED EMERGENCY AID. IN BURUNDI, OUR AMBASSADOR DECLARED AN OFFICIAL DISASTER ALLOWING THE USG TO DONATE \$25,000 TO UNICEF TO HELP DISPLACED PERSONS. THE U.S., TOGETHER WITH THE EUROPEAN AID DONORS, IS READY TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE TO THESE PERSONS AS SOON AS AN APPROPRIATE INTERNATIONAL OR NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION IS SELECTED TO COORDINATE THE RELIEF EFFORT.

IT IS SADLY IRONIC THAT THESE TRAGIC EVENTS SHOULD HAVE TAKEN PLACE UNDER PRESIDENT BUYOYA BECAUSE HIS GOVERNMENT HAS COMMITTED ITSELF TO POLICY REFORM AND ETHNIC RECONCILIATION. PRIOR TO HIS OVERTHROW IN SEPTEMBER 1987, COL. BAGAZA, THE PREVIOUS PRESIDENT, HAD UNDERTAKEN A CAMPAIGN OF PERSECUTION AGAINST ORGANIZED RELIGION - IN PARTICULAR THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. HE HAD GRADUALLY RESTRICTED RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, CLOSED CHURCH SCHOOLS, EXPELLED FOREIGN MISSIONARIES, AND IMPRISONED THOSE WHO DARED TO DISSENT. THESE MEASURES WERE WIDELY VIEWED AS AIMED AT UNDERCUTTING THE HUTU MAJORITY. THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION HAD BECOME OF SUCH CONCERN TO THE USG THAT OUR DIPLOMATIC AND AID RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BAGAZA REGIME WAS UNDER REVIEW AT THE TIME OF HIS OVERTHROW. BUYOYA'S COUP D'ETAT DRAMATICALLY ALTERED THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN BURUNDI.

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PRESIDENT BUYOYA FREED ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS, RESTORED RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, REINSTITUTED RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOL, REOPENED BURUNDI'S DOORS TO FOREIGN MISSIONARIES, AND PROVIDED LEGAL STATUS TO PROTESTANT SECTS SUCH AS THE SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS. WITH REGARD TO POLITICAL REFORM, BUYOYA INCREASED THE NUMBER OF HUTUS IN THE GOVERNMENT AT ALL LEVELS (7 OF 20 MEMBERS OF HIS CABINET ARE HUTU) AND PUBLICLY DECLARED HIS INTENTION TO MAKE ETHNIC RECONCILIATION THE CENTERPIECE OF HIS DOMESTIC PROGRAM.

IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE BUYOYA GOVERNMENT HAS REPAIRED RELATIONS WITH ITS IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS, RWANDA, ZAIRE AND TANZANIA. IT ALSO STRENGTHENED ITS TIES WITH BELGIUM, FRANCE, AND GERMANY. ALTHOUGH OFFICIALLY NON-ALIGNED, IT CLEARLY HAS MOVED TOWARD A MORE MODERATE, PRO-WESTERN STANCE. IN TERMS OF ECONOMIC POLICY, THE BUYOYA GOVERNMENT COMMITTED ITSELF TO STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT AND LIBERALIZATION. THE WORLD BANK REGARDS ITS APPROACH AS A MODEL FOR OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES.

FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF U.S. INTERESTS, PARTICULARLY HUMANITARIAN, THE BUYOYA GOVERNMENT HAS REPRESENTED A DISTINCT IMPROVEMENT OVER THE PREVIOUS REGIME AND THEREFORE HAS MERITED OUR SUPPORT. HOWEVER, THE RECENT TRAGIC EVENTS CLEARLY UNDERSCORE THE DEEP DIVISIONS BETWEEN HUTU AND TUTSI AND HOW MUCH FURTHER THE BUYOYA GOVERNMENT MUST GO TO OVERCOME A DECADES - EVEN CENTURIES - OLD LEGACY OF ETHNIC TENSION AND TO ACHIEVE JUSTICE AND ETHNIC RECONCILIATION. DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE HUTU MAJORITY CONTINUES, AND REFORM IS URGENTLY REQUIRED.

WE HAVE URGED AND WILL CONTINUE TO URGE THE BUYOYA GOVERNMENT TO ACCELERATE ITS ADMITTEDLY-TENTATIVE STEPS IN THE DIRECTION OF FUNDAMENTAL REFORMS. PRESIDENT BUYOYA HAS TOLD US THAT THIS IS HIS INTENTION. AT A PUBLIC RALLY ON SEPTEMBER 17, HE REITERATED THIS POSITION, REJECTING WHAT HE CALLED "THE SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE" AND THE "CONVICTION OF CERTAIN EXTREMISTS THAT PEACE WILL COME ONLY AFTER THE EXTERMINATION OF ONE ETHNIC GROUP BY ANOTHER." HE SAID BURUNDI HAD NEARLY FALLEN INTO A GREAT ABYSS, AND THAT IT WAS NOW ESSENTIAL THAT IT IMPLEMENT ITS POLICIES OF PEACE AND NATIONAL UNITY AND THAT THE BURUNDI PEOPLE "CULTIVATE A SPIRIT OF TOLERANCE AND MUTUAL PARDON".

THE NEXT FEW WEEKS AND MONTHS WILL BE CRITICAL FOR BURUNDI. A TENUOUS CALM HAVING RETURNED TO THE COUNTRY, AT LEAST A FEW PEOPLE ARE RETURNING TO THE AFFECTED AREAS. THE GOVERNMENT NOW FACES THE SHORT-TERM TASK OF HELPING ACCELERATE THAT TREND AND HAVING AN EARLY RETURN OF THE REFUGEES BY BRINGING STABILITY TO THE AFFECTED REGIONS. ITS MORE IMPORTANT LONG-TERM CHALLENGE IS, OF COURSE, NATIONAL RECONCILIATION. WE BELIEVE THE BUYOYA GOVERNMENT, WHOSE POLICIES IN ITS ONE YEAR IN POWER HAVE BEEN ORIENTED IN THESE DIRECTIONS, IS THE BEST AVAILABLE HOPE FOR ACHIEVING THESE OBJECTIVES.

MAINLY FOR THIS REASON, WE ALONG WITH OTHER DONORS HAVE CONTINUED OUR ECONOMIC AID PROGRAMS, WHICH ARE ORIENTED TOWARD ASSISTING THE INDIVIDUAL CITIZENS OF BURUNDI, NOT THE GOVERNMENT, AND WHICH SIGNIFICANTLY ASSIST THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN DISADVANTAGED BY DISCRIMINATION. OUR SMALL MILITARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM IS BEING USED TO TRAIN A FEW OFFICERS EACH YEAR IN VARYING FIELDS AND HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN EXPOSING TRAINEES TO U.S. DEMOCRATIC VALUES.

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AT THE SAME TIME, WE ARE WATCHING CLOSELY TO ASSURE THAT
THE BUYOYA GOVERNMENT FULLY IMPLEMENTS ITS STATED
POLICIES OF ELIMINATING ETHNIC DISCRIMINATION AND
PROMOTING RECONCILIATION. IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT
MOST OF THE OTHER DONORS ARE TAKING SIMILAR POSITIONS.
DIVERGENCE FROM THOSE POLICIES WOULD CAUSE US TO
RECONSIDER OUR POLICIES TOWARD AND PROGRAMS IN BURUNDI.

END TEXT. SHULTZ

END OF MESSAGE

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