

Annex No. One
To the Report No. 985/94
Of the Judicial Detachment – BRUSSELS

HEARING SHEET

On 13/06/94 at 09:00, the following party was heard by Fabrice BURETTE, 1MDL Head

SURNAME:	<u>TIMSONET</u>
FIRST NAME:	Maurice
PLACE AND DATE OF BIRTH:	MARCHE-LES-DAMES 01/05/51
DOMICILE:	Rue des Genêts, 2 5340 GESVES
SOLDIER:	Rank and Reg. No. Unit
	Major O 10823 2 Cdo EMS
Who declared to us:	

I wish to express myself in French and ask for judicial proceedings in this language.

GENERAL POINTS:

I have been assigned to the 2 Cdo since December 1990 and have held the position of second commander of the battalion there since this date.

I went to KIGALI with this unit on 23 March 1994 and held the position of second commander of KIBAT.

During the first week, my principal activity was to take over from/relieve the second commander of KIBAT 1 (cartage, transmission material, stationing, etc.).

I then fully took up my position as second commander of KIBAT. This position covers many logistical tasks, among which, principally, managing the food supply of various stations, preparation of the KIGALODGE station at the airport of KIGALI, reconnaissance of the different stations used and the updating of their respective dossier, making contact with the principal responsible parties by sector and by force. This list is evidently is not exhaustive.

ATTACK:

On the days preceding the attack, I did not hear any echoes which could have allowed me to prejudge the events which followed. Despite this, various rumours circulated around the city, but this had been true for some time, without them resulting in anything concrete. It should be pointed out that on account of my position, my first days in KIGALI were very busy and I really did not have an opportunity to 'take the temperature' in the city.

During a security meeting with the authorities of the Rwandan gendarmerie, chaired by the Gen-Chief of staff of the gendarmerie NDINDILYIMANA (the 5th (?) at 14:00),

I had the impression that this latter party, whom I had previously met (CTM between 1980 and 1983 and visit in November 1992), avoided advertising the fact that he knew me in the presence of his officers. At this meeting, it was decided that the weapons search activities carried out by the Rwandan gendarmerie in collaboration with UNCIVPOL, should take place starting from the night of 7/8 April. I also had the impression that this type of operation disturbed a fair number of officers of the gendarmerie present at this meeting.

Lt DECUYPER (S2 of KIBAT) also took part in this meeting, as well as Colonel MARCHAL and Major DELPORTE (the Commander of the Belgian UNCIVPOL detachment).

Major DELPORTE, who had been established for longer in KIGALI, had certainly had time to establish contacts with the various Rwandan milieus. It would perhaps be interesting to hear him on the subject of the evolution of local feelings with regard to the Belgian soldiers.

On the evening of 6 April, I found myself at PEGASUS. I remember that initially there was confusion and that the sector thought that a munitions depot had exploded on the KANOMBE side. The communications deriving from the airport group soon clearly indicated that it was a small aircraft which had been shot down with missiles. At this point I also said that if it was not a coup d'état, it bore a strange resemblance to one.

The confirmation of the assassination was given by VITAMINE, who had contact with the spouse of the pilot of the presidential aircraft.

The first measure was to recover the men on a sortie in the city. This was done before 2200, the normal time of the curfew.

A permanent officer, an operational sub officer (Campaign journal) and a transmission operator were permanently based at the operations centre. At the time of the assassination, in addition to the above staff, Colonel DEWEZ, Captain CHOFFRAY and myself were at the operations centre. Other people visited on an occasional basis but for shorter periods. I could no longer say who and when.

There were several conflicts to be managed during the night and I am thinking more particularly of what happened close to the airport. The situation in the city was tenser, which may appear normal in light of the events.

For the rest of the night, I spent most of my time at the operations centre. I rested for a couple of hours around 03:00 or 04:00 in the morning and advised all the staff of the operations centre who were not permanently based there to get as much rest as possible in view of the foreseeable evolution over the following hours.

ASSASSINATION:

During the night of 6 to 7 April, an order was received from K9 cancelling all escorts, including the permanent ones, hence that of AGATHE. The message announcing this decision derived from S 14 (Captain SCHEPKENS) who received it from the commander of the sector, Colonel MARCHAL. At this point, this decision was notified to the teams in question, including Y6. This measure seemed logical to me in view of the events. I am not aware that it was the fruit of coordination between KIBAT and the sector. It was simply announced by radio. Some time afterwards (18 minutes according to the campaign journal), the permanent escorts were re-established. The escort for AGATHE is a permanent escort. In the same fashion as the cancellation message, this latter order was broadcast and I could not say what the motivation for it was.

By permanent escort, one should understand that the staff carrying out this type of mission makes itself available to a designated individual and ensures the safety of his/her movements until this individual dismisses them.

After my rest, I returned to the operations centre. I could not define the time of my return precisely. I remained at PEGASUS until we moved out at the end of the afternoon of the 7th, i.e. after Lt. VERMEULEN was able to enter the stadium of AMAHORO.

I was thus present at the operations centre during the problems faced by the Yankees. I did not intervene personally on the radio. During moments of the crisis, Colonel DEWEZ notably insisted on making the decisions and the comments made on the radio.

During the AGATHE mission, the problems faced by Lt. LOTIN, difficulties in finding an open route, problems at the domicile of the minister herself, were serious but did not seem to us to be exceptional relative to other situations experienced in other places. In any case, an aggressive intervention to release them at this moment did not seem to be appropriate. It could, on the contrary have had a consequence of endangering the men sent to the location.

Around 07:00 hours (time of the previous day's log), Lt. LOTIN was asked to hand over his weapons. I remember at this point having spoken with the Colonel and having opposed this. After this, Y6 indicated that several of his men had been disarmed on the ground. This item of information entirely changed the data of the assessment and it became dangerous to envisage an armed conflict in a situation of such inferiority. Lt. LOTIN was then asked to undertake negotiations "à l'Africaine". This is probably what caused the proposal of the attackers to hand Lt. LOTIN's men over to MINUAR.

The fact that Lt. LOTIN's men were taken to the camp in KIGALI was not announced by radio. At the same point on the spot it seemed logical to us that he would still be at AGATHE's house. When he declared that he would be made available to the MINUAR, we implicitly thought of a station or to the sector HQ. The KIGALI camp did not correspond to such a location in our view.

Some minutes after the last message from Lt. LOTIN, who was at the KIGALI camp, Colonel DEWEZ made contact with Colonel MARCHAL to know whether he was aware of the gravity of the situation and to know which measures were envisaged at sector level. I do not know whether there was a response to this request and if there was one, what its content was.

Around midday, I made contact by telephone with the permanent officer of the operations centre of the general chief of staff of the FAR, which is located close to the KIGALI camp (a lieutenant) giving him the order to intervene immediately at the KIGALI camp and to report to me as rapidly as possible on the situation of the 10 Belgians who would be in danger there. Not receiving any further information, I attempted to make contact again with this individual, but was no longer able to reach him.

In parallel, our gendarmerie liaison officer made the same attempt (lieutenant Elisié by his first name), but this was also without result. These were personal initiatives.

I am unable to say whether other attempts to locate the ten soldiers were made at sector level or KIBAT level. I was not permanently based at the operations centre.

I received the news of the death of the ten soldiers from Colonel DEWEZ at the end of the afternoon or at the beginning of the evening. I could not say from whom he received this information. We then informed the para-commando brigade commander in Belgium at his residence around 22:00.

During the evening of the seventh, I heard Colonel POCHET (K2 assistant officer of the sector command) ask us to take care of the transport of the ten bodies of the CHK to the FAYCAL hospital and that we should use a MAN and 10 body bags. I then intervened strongly to indicate that such comments should not be placed on the command network at that point.

I have nothing further to add.

(After reading, he remained and signed this document with us).

In witness whereof.
++SIGNATURE++