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U.S. MILITARY TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TEAM
FOR
REPUBLIC OF ZAIRE

7 March 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: OJCS (J5)
OSD (ISA)
Office, Secretary of State (African Affairs)

SUBJECT: Zaire Military Technical Assistance Team (MIAT) Report

1. In accordance with the agreement reached at my meeting with Mr. Mulcahy, Mr. Bader, COL Light and others at the State Department on 5 March, a final draft of subject report is attached for your review.

2. The Team made a positive effort to achieve the proper balance between austerity and credibility in recommending a force capable of defending the Republic of Zaire against a rather ill-defined external threat. I feel that the report not only achieves a reasonable balance, but that if fully implemented, would represent a quantum jump over current defense capabilities. Moreover, the recommended force is non-provocative in the sense that it is totally defense-oriented (e.g., an anti-tank defense is provided - but no tank; air defense - but no jet aircraft).

3. Although service action officers may find reason to question some of the detail contained herein, the real issue is not so much the precise organization of a credible Zairois military defense force, but rather to what extent the U.S. is willing to materially assist Zaire in achieving that end? Once the "real issue" is resolved, detailed doctrinal questions can be worked out. Since the "real issue" is beyond the scope of the Terms of Reference, it is not addressed in the report. Yet, it is so crucial in the overall political/military decision-making process, that I am taking this opportunity, as Team Chief, to convey my personal views on the matter.

4. MIAT members were thoroughly briefed in Washington by appropriate State and DOD personnel prior to their departure for Zaire. These briefings constantly emphasized two key points:

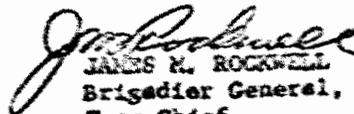
a. First, the MIAT should say or do nothing in Zaire that would indicate USG willingness to increase U.S. Military Assistance to Zaire beyond that "tentatively authorized for FY 75". (This point was also highlighted in the formal Terms of Reference.)

b. Second, that it is in U.S. National interest to maintain a close, "special" relationship with Zaire; and that we must demonstrate our intent to maintain that relationship "to the extent that our resources permit". Zaire is strategically vital to the U.S., we were told, because of its vast copper and other mineral resources; its potential as a strong, influential regional power; and its relatively well-developed facilities, such as airfields, which would be capable of supporting U.S. contingency operations in Africa and adjacent areas.

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5. As a result of many long discussions with key GOZ personnel, including President Mobutu, I now believe that the above two points (no increase in U.S. assistance/maintain "special" close relationship) are mutually exclusive. My perception is that if we are to maintain that close relationship, then the U.S. must increase its military assistance substantially above the current \$3.5 FMS credits and \$.25 grant aid.
6. Notwithstanding the fact that at every opportunity ZANISH, members of MDAT, and I emphasized constraints to increased USG assistance, the U.S. has already (perhaps unwittingly) signalled agreement, in principle, to increase U.S. military aid to Zaire. The signal was agreeing, in the first instance, to dispatch the team. I feel that Zaire has taken that as *prima facie* evidence that the U.S. has decided to increase military assistance to Zaire. In the eyes of the Zairois, the real purpose of the team visit was to assist decision-makers in Washington to determine the exact level of increased military assistance.
7. I return from Zaire with the distinct impression that should the U.S. simply send them a piece of paper - a report - with no indication that we are willing to increase our assistance to them in modernizing their military forces, then political relations between the two countries will deteriorate, thus jeopardizing U.S. military and economic access to Zaire. President Mobutu has said rather bluntly that he feels the U.S. has seriously neglected "a good friend in need" over the past four or five years. Contrary to other reports, I believe he has postponed extensive aid from FRC and North Korea because he would genuinely prefer to deal with the U.S. Moreover, his expectations of increased military aid from the U.S. rose sharply when we agreed to send a technical assistance team.
8. In conclusion, if indeed it is strategically vital for the U.S. to maintain access to Zaire, I strongly recommend that the USG, in its report to Zaire, indicate a willingness to tangibly assist Zaire in modernizing its defense force through increased FMS credits and/or grant aid. As a suggestion, the U.S. might offer to provide the air defense package, which better lends itself to accountability than the ground force; this would be particularly supportable in view of indications that FRC and North Korean ground force packages, including only organic divisional air defense, are in the offing.


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